

Brethren-Related Curiosities and Miscellanea from the British Newspaper Archive

www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

Collected and transcribed by
Michael Schneider

Fourth, enlarged edition · November 2019

THE FAIR PENITENT.

(From a Brussels Correspondent of the *Court Journal*.)

The christmas gambols of feasting and dancing among the English residents at Brussels, have been diversified by meetings of a more serious nature, and of more moral tendency, which have attracted the graver class of the community. – Several families have opened their houses for the reception of all pious persons who prefer joining in acts of devotion, to passing their evenings in the frivolous pursuits of dancing, and the more destructive vice of gaming.

The chief ornament and attraction of these feats, if they may be so called, is the young, beautiful, and fascinating Irish widow, the [Viscountess Powerscourt](#), who has been here some months, living in the most perfect seclusion until lately, when she came forth, like a constellation, to illuminate the darkness of a long dreary winter! A few days ago, she made her third appearance at the assembly of Mrs. Steele,* and expounded the Scripture with an eloquence which would have done credit to Rowland Hill or Orator Irving! The writer of this had the good fortune to be one of this audience, and was charmed, as well as edified, by a discourse of two hours from this inspired priestess.

The company, which consisted of fourscore or a hundred well dressed persons of both sexes, had been assembled some time, sitting on forms, and preserving the profound silence of a Quaker's meeting; when, at length, folding doors opened, and the lady entered closely veiled, and equipped in a simple robe of sable velvet, but cut in the *dernier gout*. – With downcast eye, and the air of a

Magdalen, she touched a piano-forte, giving the melody and first stanza of a hymn, in which the party joined in sweet harmony. This prelude being accomplished, the interesting orator sat down to a table, on which was placed a copy of the Holy Scriptures; when, putting aside her veil, exhibiting a lovely hand and arm, white as the driven snow, she opened the sacred book, and turning to the first and second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, after a brief programme, she delivered an admirable lecture, without a moment of hesitation, and so impressive that I could only perceive two persons asleep when she closed the volume, and they were elderly dames, who had probably made a hearty dinner. To the lecture succeeded another hymn, and the ceremonies finished with a prayer, when the company retired with all possible solemnity.

To be serious – it is really melancholy to see a young and handsome woman of high rank, and to whom nature had been so bountiful, exposing herself to the gaze and remarks of an ill-judging world by such fanaticism, and haranguing a multitude, with whom she has no personal acquaintance, with a farrago of nonsense which she takes for gospel, and, with the usual cant of a methodist preacher, sending her audience to the devil if they do not mend their ways, by giving up all the vanities of the world, as she herself has done! In the mean time our fair and titled penitent is the theme of general conversation, and the cause of much gossiping. The audience was in hopes that she would have wound up her discourse by recommending acts of charity at this inclement season, when the thermometer stood at 26 degrees below Zero, and the poor perishing with cold. But faith was all she inculcated, leaving good works to follow if they pleased.

* The Lady is sister to Lady Powerscourt.

{*The Court Journal* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

The Western Times, Exeter, 24 Aug 1833, p. 3

PLYMOUTH AND DEVONPORT.

At the [Providence Chapel](#), on Sunday last, the beautiful Psalms of David, instead of being read as in most places of worship, were, for the first time, chaunted in four parts, and from the musical abilities of a large number of the congregation, we have no doubt but they will be performed in excellent style; however, the circumstance gave occasion to a wag to remark, that although the gentlemen who officiate there, had left the service of the church on a religious scruple; yet, by this it would appear to be their wish to make their chapel a cathedral!

The Waterford Mail, 1 Oct 1836, p. 2, Local Remarks

A house of worship is being built in Lady-lane, adjoining the Rev. Mr. Lawson's dwelling-house; the congregation are known by the name of *Darbyites*! In the sixteenth century, Staphylus and Hosius enumerated 270 religions. How many are there now?

THE NEWPORT-PRATT [DARBYITES](#) AND THE REV. WM. BAKER STONEY, PROTESTANT RECTOR.

(From a Correspondent.)

This day (2d January) the above reverend gentleman appeared before the magistrates of Newport-Pratt, at petty sessions, Mr. Connell O'Donel, of Seamount, and Mr. James T. S. Stuart, of Tymore, to prosecute three men of the names of O'Connor, Higgins, and Geraghty, and two of the name of Kine, for stealing his turnips. The case having been called on, Mr. Stoney came forward and stated to the bench that the persons who supplied him with his informations were Sergeant Ferris, Sub-constable Higgins, and another policeman, whose name we forget, three Protestants stationed at Newport-Pratt. Each of these police examined, said that whilst on duty they found turnips in the houses of the persons prosecuted, and communicated the same to Mr. Stoney, but could not take it on themselves to swear that the turnips were the property of Mr. Stoney. The defendants freely admitted they had the turnips in their possession, but neither fraudulently nor dishonestly, having got them, they said, from William Mairs, the land steward of Mr. Stoney, who, they insisted on, if called upon by the magistrates would on his oath tell the truth, and substantiate the correctness and accuracy of their defence.

William Mairs called on, appeared, and the book was handed him to swear, but he refused to take it, alleging that his new [Darbyite](#) religion would not grant him leave to swear.

Mr. Connell O'Donel – Sir, your new religion will not grant you license to swear. Pray, Sir, what is your religion? Are you a Quaker? No.

Are you a Presbyterian? No.

Sir, then, if you are neither, you must give here your testimony according to the laws of the country, or I shall commit you.

Mairs – I shall not swear for you.

Mr. Stuart – Sir, on what authority do you refuse to swear?

Mairs – On the authority of the word.

Mr. Stuart – Mairs, whatever your word may be, we can recognize here but one authority, and that is the authority of the laws of the country; and except you give us here your testimony in accordance with that authority, I shall consider it my duty to have you committed.

Mairs still persisted in his refusal.

Orders were then given by the magistrates to have Mairs taken into custody, which was done accordingly.

Mr. Stoney – Your worships, from the great reverence and respect I must entertain for the conscientious scruples of William Mairs, I shall, on this trial, be satisfied with his word.

Both Magistrates – Sir, we are here called upon to do justice. The party accused appeal to Mairs's evidence. He is your steward. He is in your employment. His evidence must be sworn, otherwise we

cannot take it. Should he still persist in refusing to give his sworn evidence, we must have him committed; or should you think proper to withdraw the prosecution, his evidence in that case will not be necessary, and the case can be dismissed.

Mr. Stoney – I demand and must insist on a conviction. – It is no more than six weeks since William Mairs appeared before your worships as a turnip swearer for me; I then convicted, and had a poor man fined 2s. 6d. on Wm. Mairs' Bible oath, when he swore for me voluntarily.

Mr. Stuart – It is all right. I saw him swear in this court fifty times; and except he gives his evidence on oath in this case I shall have him committed.

Mairs – You state what is not true, Mr. Stoney. I did not then swear voluntarily. I told you then I did not wish to swear, but you made me swear against my will.

This scene of palpable contradiction between Parson Stoney and his confidential house steward, Mairs, who has lately publicly renounced Mr. Stoney's church and religion, excited a thrill of indescribable disgust in the court.

N. B. – The Protestant established religion of this parish has, of late days, undergone a most extraordinary and visible revolution – mostly all the respectable Protestants here, together with Mr. Stoney's entire staff, comprising Mairs and his family, his parish clerk and family, his school-masters and families, Bible-readers and families, all in number exceeding sixty individuals, have publicly deserted his church, pronouncing the Protestant established religion erroneous and damnable, and become [Darbyites](#), who, it appears, hold it as a point of doctrine that it is against the word to swear.

The public will judge whether Mr. Stoney's prosecutions, for the last six years, of the poor of this parish for the English charity relief, sent to the poor of this parish during the starvation of 1831, and whose bones are at this moment rotting in the Castlebar gaol for that relief which he gave them whilst starving, has had anything to do in this revolution. Let the governors of Ireland, after suffering the poor of this parish to rot in Castlebar gaol, boast, if they please, of the justice of the mercy, and of the clemency of their laws. This evil has been often submitted to their consideration, and, strange to say, they left it to this moment unheeded and unremedied. May God, in his mercy, pity the sufferings of Michael Gannon, of Gurtfahy, and of Michael Murray, of Borrishoole, in this parish, who have been confined, during this joyous festivity, in a cold, dreary, dark, and humid dungeon in the Castlebar goal {sic}, by the Rev. William Baker Stoney, Protestant rector of Newport-Pratt. Two days since Gannon's wife called on Mr. Stoney, telling him, "let out my poor husband, and he will give you labour, as he has no other means to pay your reverence." Mr. Stoney replied, "no." It is a positive fact that these poor men have no means to pay this parson for this English charity, which he gave them whilst starving. Murray has some few potatoes, which are under seizure for the landlord's rent. Let the government consider whether this be the way to keep down Terry Alts.

THURLES SESSIONS – THE **DARBYITES**.

(From a Thurles Correspondent.)

The only case which excited public curiosity at the Sessions was that of *Smith v. Hall*. The plaintiff, it appeared, was a missionary of the new sect called *Darbyites*, and he brought his action against Mr. Hall for work and labour done in his vocation, viz., preaching, reading, and explaining the scriptures, visiting the sick, converting the poor benighted Papists to the *true faith* of *Darbyism*, &c., &c. His outward man was certainly far from being prepossessing, though I understand he was a prime favourite with the she Saints of Ormond, and according to several letters produced in the course of the trial, was of no mean importance in the eyes of the male portion of that holy district. Indeed, several of the letters addressed to him were from clergymen of the *Established Church*, and commenced with the words “dearly beloved brother,” “beloved friend,” &c., &c.!!! The plaintiff, I understand, was an “*old soldier*,” and the result of the trial shewed that he was an able one, for he succeeded in proving his case to the satisfaction of the court, and obtained a decree against the defendant for the sum of 13/ 10s. Our friend has promised to send the *Free Press* a detailed report of this ludicrous affair, which has certainly out-heroded any of the burlesque exhibitions of the modern Saints.

The Limerick Chronicle, 12 May 1838, p. 2

A great meeting of the religious sect (known as [Darbyites](#)) will assemble from various parts of England and Ireland in London, this month.

The Royal Leamington Spa Courier, 1 Jun 1839, p. 2

“THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).” – We are informed that the gentlemen composing this society, assemble this year in Leamington, and that their first meeting takes place on Monday next, at the Assembly Rooms. Several hundred “[Brethren](#)” from distant parts of the kingdom are hourly expected. The society will not adjourn until Saturday next; but we are unable to inform our readers as to the nature of the subjects which will occupy the attention of the members.

The Royal Leamington Spa Courier, 8 Jun 1839, p. 2

“THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).”

The annual assembly of this new sect, which has arisen to swell the number of those who have separated from the Establishment, has, this year, taken place in Leamington. The sittings of the “[brethren](#)” commenced on Monday, and terminated last evening (Friday.) About three hundred members have daily met at the Assembly Rooms, and their deliberations have excited considerable interest and curiosity. The hours of meeting were from nine till one, from four till seven, and from eight till eleven. On Tuesday and the two following evenings, two of the brethren preached in the open air and, of course, vast crowds of people flocked to the scene.

We shall not attempt to give a detailed report of the several meetings which we have attended; but as there is an universal inquiry “What are the religious principles of the [Plymouth Brethren](#)?” we

will answer the question by making the following extract from Bennett's *"History of Dissenters for the last Thirty Years"*: –

“THE **BRETHREN** DENOMINATED IN THE PARLIAMENTARY RETURN, ‘CATHOLIC, NOT ROMAN.’

“The name of **Brethren**, by which this division of Christians is more known than by any other, creates confusion; for it has already been appropriated to the Moravians. The new sect, however, is unwilling to take any distinctive appellation, and when the officer was making up, at Plymouth, the {re}turns ordered by Parliament, being told he might call them what he pleased, he chose to denominate them ‘Catholics, not Roman.’ They are as much anomalous as they are anonymous; for, with their reluctance to take a specific appellation, professing to be contented with the generic term Christians, or disciples of Christ, they have an equal aversion to creeds, contending that they are inefficient to secure either orthodoxy or uniformity of faith. Like the Independents in being without a creed, with them they are known to be firmly attached to what are called evangelical doctrines, which they think are better learned from Scripture than from any human formula. They attach great importance to the promise of the Holy Spirit, as the teacher promised by the ascending Saviour, to lead the Christians into the truth contained in the Scriptures, while many of them despair of his converting the world without the bodily presence of Christ. The **Brethren** are what would usually be termed Calvinists, some of them rather high, but all exercising forbearance with regard to the various modifications, if not to the system itself. They agree also to differ, without separation, on the questions which divide the Baptists from other Christians.

“This body of Christians expect the speedy coming of Christ, but without imitating the Irvingites in fixing the time; though contending that all believers shall prepare to meet him by what they call a

resurrection life, or an entire separation from the world, and consecration to the service and kingdom of Christ. They have, therefore, adopted what may be called a modified community of goods, not admitting that any one has a right to say to another, 'Your house, or money, is mine;' but contending that every one should practically say to his brother, 'All that I have is at your service.' Many among them having property, and making sacrifices to their principles, their sincerity and zeal cannot be called into question. In addition to these two excellencies, they profess a catholicity and expansion of view, for which some would not give them credit; but they contribute to missions not formed by themselves, and are editing valuable concordances to the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, which are to be published at low prices. Some of these Brethren are said to have been found in Geneva, in the year 1824, and it is thought that they appeared in Ireland about the same time. They have now formed societies in about seventy places, and each congregation has usually sprung up without any assignable connection with another. They abound most in the vicinity of Plymouth; but, meeting sometimes in chapels, and frequently in private dwellings, they may say, with the primitive Christians, 'The world knoweth us not.' It is, indeed, difficult for an inquirer to obtain information concerning them. Some have confounded with the Irvingites this less obtrusive body, especially when its preachers have, in the parks and streets of London, called men to repentance and righteousness. Consisting chiefly of proselytes from the Establishment, and including a considerable number of its clergy, this sect has many points of resemblance to the Quakers, especially in their horror of all pretensions to an order of priesthood, which they denounce as 'the sin against the Holy Ghost.' Young among dissenting bodies, they excite hope and fear; exhibiting so much truth and piety as to inspire expectations of their recovering from present errors; but betraying so much fanaticism as to make it probable that they will wander farther from the truth."

The following are the subjects which have occupied the attention of “the **brethren**” at their several meetings: –

MONDAY EVENING.

The value of Scripture knowledge – how may we discern that which is of the Spirit’s teaching, from that which is merely intellectual attainment?

TUESDAY.

Is the power in the Church of God the same now as in the days of the Apostles? – if not; what is the difference, and wherefore? – and what the consequent duty of the Saints?

Are there distinct gifts (according to the Scripture sense of the term) in the Church now? – do they necessarily accompany the indwelling of the Spirit? – how may any gift, or power, which we have of the Spirit, be ascertained, and directed to God’s glory?

What do we learn from Scripture should be the prayer of the Saints, concerning the Holy Spirit, as to his gifts, power, or indwelling?

God’s dealing with his people in communion, and in discipline – is it the Father or the Son? – what instrumentality, may we ask, does God use in discipline? – is joy the necessary result of communion? – may communion exist without a distinct consciousness of it?

WEDNESDAY.

The Olive-tree, the Vine, the Fig-tree.

Interpretation of Rom. xi. 17, in reference to our distinct standing in dispensation.

The import of the Scripture terms, *mystery*, *apostacy*, *remnant*.

What are the relations in which the word recognises the Christian, and which may be maintained to God's glory? – what is his duty as to those in which the word does not recognise him?

Is the honour, or power, of this world, any part of the endowment of the Saint, according to the word?

THURSDAY.

The special importance, as the day draweth nigh, of giving heed to the prophetic word – what light does it afford us as to the state of Christendom at the coming of the Lord? – the spirit in which we should ever come to it.

The Apocalypse, its structure, and interpretation – its relation to the book of Daniel.

FRIDAY.

The Bride, the Lamb's wife.

Messiah's kingdom, the means of its establishment, its duration.

Will the standing of the Saints on earth, in the millenium, differ essentially, or only in circumstance, from the standing of the Saints on earth now?

The fitting posture of the Saints at the present time.

The Drogheda Journal, 23 Nov 1839, p. 3

We have been informed, but do not pledge ourselves for the accuracy of the statement, that Mr. [DARBY](#), a gentleman possessed of large fortune, and we believe heretofore a principal and leading member of that body of Christians usually known by the name of “*Bereans*,” has withdrawn from communion with that off-shoot of the Established Church. We repeat, we do not vouch for the correctness of this statement; but it having been made to us by a highly respectable gentleman, two of whose relatives are at present in connexion with the “*Bereans*,” we deem the circumstance of sufficient interest to communicate it to our readers. – *Statesman*.

{The 1839 volume of *The Statesman* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

The Dublin Evening Post, 30 Nov 1839, p. 3

ESTABLISHED CHURCH IN IRELAND.

It is stated by a morning contemporary that the Rev Mr [Darby](#), the originator of a religious sect called Bereans, bearing in Ireland the designation of [Darbyites](#), has again become a member of the Establish {sic} Church.

PLYMOUTH AND DEVONPORT.

The new chapel, in [Ebrington-street](#), Plymouth, was opened for divine service last week. This extensive building has been erected by a body of dissenters generally designated "[Providence people](#)," but who we believe style themselves simply "Christians." Since the formation of this sect about 8 or 10 years since, their progress in this town has been very great, many persons of influence and property having joined communion with them. They endeavour to carry out into practice the most unbounded christian love, and in this instance certainly, present an example well worthy of imitation. In their discipline they act on the principle of "equality," conceiving no one man ought to be placed above his fellows in the christian church. This leads to the exclusion of a Ministry – all being allowed the liberty of addressing the congregation; and so far do they carry their notions on this point, as not even to admit of the erection of a pulpit, in order that none should have even the appearance of being unseemingly elevated. In consequence of their increasing numbers, about two years since they considerably enlarged their chapel in Raleigh-street; but that building being now found insufficient to contain their numerous followers, the chapel in Ebrington-street has been erected – the former, we understand, being in future to be styled "the Lower Room," the latter "the Upper Room." The appearance of the new chapel partakes of the singularities of the sect – the general characteristics of the building being quite different from anything before seen in the West. The front towards Ebrington-street presents a simple, but bold and not inelegant appearance – surmounted by a pediment which adds considerably to the effect of the front. There are also two projecting door-ways at each extremity of the front, of a plain neat appearance. From the Ebrington-

st. frontline, this building forms a regular figure of seven sides, presenting, on entering, almost a semi-circular appearance. The arrangements of the interior (which is very capacious, calculated to contain upwards of 1000 people,) are singular in the extreme. In the centre and lowest part of the chapel a table is placed, from which the seats rise on every side in amphitheatrical form. There are no pews, all the seats being open; nor are there any galleries. No ornamental work of any description is to be seen, in fact, a degree of rigid plainness has been studied in the interior arrangement, and from the absence of a pulpit also, a large number of the congregation are necessarily placed behind the speakers. On the occasion of this opening, the principal part of the service was conducted by Mr. Newton, who addressed the congregation from the 4th chapter of Revelations.

About a quarter past eight o'clock on Sunday night a very large concourse of persons were assembled in front of the Town-hall in this city, for the purpose of listening to a sermon by a gentleman (Lieut. Rhind) in connexion with the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The preacher was alluding to the uncertainty as to the time when the day of judgment would arrive, and had observed that there was no assurance that it might not take place that very night, when several persons came up in a phaeton, and the driver occasioned the utmost consternation by proceeding among the crowd. John Williams, a blind man, and an inmate of the Red-coat Hospital, was thrown down, and rode over, and his wife also received a very severe blow. The former was conveyed home, but it was found that no bones were broken, although he was obliged to keep his bed for some time. – On Monday Henry Hill, the driver of the phaeton, was brought up at our Guildhall on the charge of furious driving. It was deposed by three witnesses that the prisoner was proceeding with great speed; that a phaeton and a gig had previously proceeded without injury among the assemblage, who made a regular thoroughfare; that both wheels went over Williams; that the prisoner appeared to have done it for a “lark,” as there was room enough for him to pass; and that he proceeded quite as fast as he ought to have done had there been no obstruction whatever. On the other hand, a respectable witness deposed that the prisoner could not be said to be driving furiously, and Hill himself said that there was not room to pass in consequence of the building now going on at the end of Cabbage-lane. – Neither Williams nor his wife was able to attend, and the Magistrates, who observed, that the case might prove a serious one, admitted the prisoner to bail for his re-appearance to-morrow (Thursday.) – The Mayor and Magistrates directed the Superintendent of Police to prevent any obstruction of the public road in future.

Hereford Journal, 22 Jul 1840, p. 3

GUILDHALL. – On Thursday Henry Hill was fined ten shillings and costs, (making together 18s. 6d. besides the recognizances) for furiously driving in this city on the previous Sunday night. (The particulars were given in our last.)

The Hereford Times, 18 Jul 1840, p. 3

FURIOUS DRIVING. – *Henry Hill*, a journeyman baker, was charged with furiously driving past the Old Town Hall, on Sunday evening last, whilst a religious meeting, assembled in the market-square, was held in the open air. Wm. Williams, deposed that he was going past the market-house about a quarter past eight o'clock on Sunday evening, and observed a crowd of from three to four hundred persons, which filled the area in front of the market-house, listening to Lieut. Ryan, a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who was then preaching; he observed the defendant coming up the street in a phaeton driving at great speed as fast as the horse could trot, but whether the horse was running his own pace or driven he could not say; the off rein appeared tight, but he could not speak as to the near rein; a woman was knocked down against witness by the phaeton, and a blind man, her husband, named John Williams, an inmate of the red-coat hospital, was thrown upon the ground and the wheels of the vehicle passed over him. Corporal Lane, of the foot-guards, deposed, that within two minutes of the defendant coming up, a phaeton and a gig had passed by and had left an open thoroughfare without doing the slightest injury to any one; he observed the defendant on passing

the house of Mr. Vevers, ironmonger, bear very much to the right towards the crowd, and he, witness, was very near being driven over himself; the old man was knocked down at witness's feet, the first wheel passed over him and the second pushed him along the ground a short distance and then it also went over his body; he witness, could not say that defendant was driving at an unusual rate but he considered it must have been done for "a lark" unless the defendant was a very bad driver, as he was more than a yard out of the path made by the other carriages which had passed by. A person named Roberts also deposed that there was plenty of room for defendant to have passed without going into the crowd; the off rein was quite tight and the near rein slack; the defendant's driving appeared as though it was done on purpose. Mr. Western, chemist, High-town, deposed that he saw the accident from his window; it took place opposite the house of Mr. Watkins, grocer, and he must say that he did not consider the party was furiously driving, but, to use the words of one of the witnesses, it appeared as though it was done for "a lark." The defendant stated that he was obliged to drive near the crowd, as the scaffolding in front of the new building at the end of Capuchin-lane, stood out in the way. He was quite sober and the accident was quite unintentional. Since it happened he had visited the poor man and had offered recompence. Neither the old man nor his wife being able to attend, the mayor ordered the defendant to find sureties for his appearance on Thursday, himself in £20 and two sureties in £10 each.

THURSDAY.

The above defendant, *Henry Hill*, again appeared. His worship stated that the man who had been ridden over was considered out of danger, but he had been informed by Mr. Weston, that he considered it a complete act of wantonness. T. Davis, Esq. said that he had seen Williams's wife and she appeared very much hurt and was obliged to go to the infirmary. The mayor observed there was

one circumstance in the defendant's favour which was, that a mob was very improperly collected together, when the accident happened and which he would endeavour to prevent in future. – *Fined 10s and costs.*

On Wednesday, at 11 o'clock, a numerous assemblage of the religious sects or body called "[Darby-ites](#)," assembled at the Northumberland Rooms, Lower Cecil-street, for the purpose of discussing certain matters contained in the 2d and 3d chapter of Revelations. From inquiries made by our reporter at the meeting, we learn the principles upon which they profess to meet are "open communion," that is a willingness to receive all those that they can acknowledge to be real Christians, and "liberty of ministry," that is a willingness to allow all whom they so acknowledge as Christians to speak, if they can speak to the profit of those assembled. The discussion was principally carried on by Mr. Castles, of Cork, Mr. Thomas Mahon, of Ennis, Mr. Code, of Westport, Mr. Tweedy, and Mr. Bellett, of Dublin. The meeting was numerously attended and comprised a great number of ladies. Among those present we observed Sir Richard O'Donel, Bart., of Newport-house, county Mayo{;} Captain White, late 85th; Mr. Keane; Mr. Lysaght, and Mr. Bindon, &c. At three o'clock the meeting concluded, when upwards of seventy of the leading members sat down to a sumptuous dinner in the large ball-room, provided by Mrs. Quinlivan, of the hotel, William-street.

– *Limerick Chronicle*.

{In the copy of *The Limerick Chronicle* available in the British Newspaper Archive, this article can only be found in the issue of 5 September, headed "The following appeared in part of our last impression" (p. 2). Due to the binding, it is partly illegible.}

The Brotherhood, better known by the name of [Darbyites](#), reassembled at an early hour on Thursday morning, at the Northumberland rooms for the discussion of scriptural questions, and continued until six o'clock, when {sic} the assembly, comprising a number of and ladies {sic} gentlemen, broke up. At the dinner the evening previous, the company never tasted wine, or punch, but confined themselves to ale and cider.

Hereford Journal, 4 Nov 1840, p. 3

SINGULAR FUNERAL. – A funeral which attracted much notice from its singularity, took place in this city at the early hour of half-past eight o'clock on Monday morning. It was that of a female member of the religious community denominated [Plymouth Brethren](#). Early in the morning a prayer meeting was held in the Chapel, Bridge-street, whence the coffin containing the body was borne through the principal streets to the Baptist-burial ground, New-street, by 18 members, rich and poor taking equal part in the duty, and several projections from the bier enabling the bearers to walk three-a-breast whilst carrying the corpse. A numerous body of the members, male and female, accompanied the procession, all in their usual dress and without any outward indications of grief, with the exception of the chief mourner, who wore a piece of crape. The coffin was without any pall or covering. – On arriving at the spot, the body was quietly deposited in the ground, and after singing a hymn and offering up a prayer, those who had assisted at the funeral retired.

The Hereford Times, 7 Nov 1840, p. 3

THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#). – About eight o'clock on Monday morning last the funeral of a female member of this religious sect took place in this city, and from its singular appearance attracted much notice. Early in the morning a prayer meeting was held in the Chapel, Bridge-street, whence the coffin containing the body was borne through the principal streets to the Baptist-burial ground, New-street, by twelve members, rich and poor taking equal part in the duty, several projections

from the bier enabling the bearers to walk two a-breast whilst carrying the corpse. A numerous body of the members, male and female, accompanied the procession, all in their usual dress and without any outward indications of grief, with the exception of the chief mourner, who wore a piece of crape. The coffin was without any pall or covering. On arriving at the spot, the body was quietly deposited in the ground, and after singing a hymn and offering up a prayer, those who had assisted at the funeral retired.

The Western Times, Exeter, 7 Nov 1840, p. 3

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are making great progress in the work of proselyting in this pleasant watering place {i.e. Sidmouth}. Mr. Craik Baines, son of Mrs. General Baines, is the chief preacher, but some gloom has been cast over the body by the extinguisher which has been put on a bright and shining light {sic}.

Ibid., p. 4

THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

Sir, – Will you permit a constant reader of your truly independent paper, to give a word of exhortation to the new sect, the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who have so recently sprung up amongst us.

It is extremely painful for any of the church to make mention, even privately, of any of the sins or failings of others; but when this section have, from their first being heard of, been continually reviling, in no measured terms, all and every other section of the Christian Church, it would now, from a recent unhappy event, be well to remind them of their infirmity; and that, notwithstanding all their high words, and high boastings, they themselves are not perfect; indeed nothing upon earth can be perfect – there is only one perfect, and that is God. This should teach every christian humility, and above all things christian charity or love – without which the Apostle Paul tells us, be what we may, we are nothing, yea, and less than nothing.

It is to be hoped that this small section of the church will *now* give up their former boastings, and high swelling words, and vain imaginations, and allow others to worship God in that way and manner which shall appear to them as most agreeable to his divine will; and ere again they attempt to pull out the mote from their brother's eye, will fairly and honestly set about removing the beam from their own eye.

No one can doubt but there are good and bad, selfish and generous, holy and unholy, among every section of the Christian Church – who will dare say nay? – then why not in christian quietness allow every man and woman to act and think for themselves? in all ages of the church it has and will happen, that the high and lofty professor shall be cast down, if only to shew him his own weakness, and that in all things, both temporal and spiritual, he must realize his strength in Christ.

That the lesson the [Plymouth Brethren](#) must have learnt in the fall of one of their great ones, may have its due and becoming influence among them, is the sincere and faithful prayer of

Your obedient servant,

A. C. R.

29th October, 1840.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HEREFORD TIMES.

SIR – As clerical intolerance becomes more extended, so it should be the duty of every liberal journalist to expose the unchristian principles of those clergymen whose bigotry will not allow them to perform the last sad duties of reading the burial service over the dead bodies of their Dissenting brethren, because, forsooth, they were not baptized according to the forms of a Law-Established Church.

Permit me to lay before your readers a case of intolerance in our immediate vicinity, namely, in the parish of Hampton Bishop. John Smith, (an honest and industrious man) with his whole family of six children have been sadly afflicted for these last three weeks; this morning I met his wife, who, with tears in her eyes, told me that death had removed her youngest child, three months old. In the absence of the Rev. Incumbent belonging to the parish, the person who officiated in his stead, the Rev. C. J. Bird, upon being asked to bury their child, enquired where the parents attended the worship of God? He was answered by the woman, without wishing to conceal the truth, “in Bridge-street, at the meeting of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).” He then peremptorily told her he could not in conscience bury the child, but if they chose to bury it by night, they might do so. This was a severe blow for the already-mourning parents, and the weeping mother told me that she did not know what to do if it had not been for the kindness of the Baptist Minister, in Hereford, who most willingly allowed the child to be interred in the ground adjoining their place of worship, without any fee or reward, except that of an approving conscience. – Now, Mr. Editor, if such acts as these do not

open the eyes of the humbler classes to the intolerant system of the Law-Established Church, I do not know what will.

I am Sir, yours respectfully,

F. W. HOLLINGS.

Moorfield Place, Hereford,
Nov. 19, 1840.

CREDITON. – Our old friend, Gratitude Rowe, is ill at ease. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are making great inroads into his flock, and several of his choicest lambs have been abstracted. The [Brethren](#) are building a chapel in Narrow-street, Crediton, and several of the vicar's warmest adherents have already left him; and one of them went down to give him her reasons for doing so – a Mrs. T., a very clever woman, who proved more than a match for the rev. gentleman. The worthy lady gripped him so tight in argument, that the rev. gentleman, from his pulpit, has since charged his flock not to meddle with them, as they have the power to “make the worse appear the better cause.” The [Brethren](#), who first appeared in Plymouth, have now spread all over the county, and penetrated Somersetshire and Cornwall. They have a place of worship at Taunton, and intend sending the most eloquent of their ministers to Manchester – to try the effects of their doctrines in the cotton market. The secret of their success is their zeal and self denial, their abandonment of worldly distinctions amongst each other, and their liberal sympathy for the poor. They aim at resembling the primitive christians, and it is open house to all brethren with each of them; one part of their discipline may account for some share of their popularity with the ladies – they direct the younger brethren when to get married, and “select” from the sisterhood for them – at least so it is currently reported in Exeter.

The Western Times, Exeter, 16 Jan 1841, p. 2

The “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” at Teignmouth have removed their usual place of meeting for divine worship from the late Baptist chapel to an upper room over the market house, as they think it more in accordance with Apostolic, or primitive Christianity to do so, rather than in any way encourage such showy and carnal Buildings as progressing Christians have in these latter times adopted, whilst the poor saints have been almost entirely forgotten. The [Brethren](#) are adding to their members here.

{See also the articles of 25 Jul 1866, 24 Jun 1871 and 13 Jun 1873 in the present selection.}

A leader among the [Plymouth Brethren](#), about three sabbaths since, the eldest son of an hon. baronet, walked from Exeter to Dawlish and preached, then from Dawlish to Teignmouth and preached, thence to Newton and preached, the services being over, he stepped on to his residence at Tor; the next day he returned to Exeter on foot, making altogether a walk of between fifty and sixty miles!! If this be not equalling the celebrated John Wesley in making every possible effort, we know not what is; and should the [Plymouth Brethren](#) continue such apostolic zeal and love, they will, as a sect, at no distant period, become as numerous as the Wesleyans, or indeed as any section of the Christian Church. This ought to be a timely lesson to many a bloated pluralist of the State Church – to be up and be doing!! Even the good Bishop himself may learn christianity here. – [There would not be many “*bloated*” pluralists if they resorted to similar means.]

IMPROMPTU

On hearing the founder of a religious sect called "A Pope."

Said a [Darbyite](#) once to a Papist – "I hope
You'll allow that there is not much use in *a Pope*."
"I deny it," quoth he, "for 'tis very well known,
You acknowledge *Pope Darby*, as we did *Pope Joan*."

April 5, 1841.

West of England Conservative, and Plymouth & Devonport Advertiser,
Plymouth, 21 Apr 1841, p. 3

The Plymouth Brethren. – The secession of some clergymen from the Church of England, under the title of “The *Plymouth Brethren*,” must here be referred to. We question not the personal piety of many, at least, of these mistaken men, but we deplore that they have given occasion to the less educated and less pious enemies of the Church to rejoice. It is not by the multiplication of sects and denominations that a church is purified, reformed, or evangelized. John Wesley, George Whitfield, John Eyre, Rowland Hill, and many others we could name, would have gained indeed less worldly fame and renown for remaining closely attached to, and in connection with, the Church of England, but they would have rendered far more service to the cause of truth by seeking to improve the Church of which they were members, than by separating from it. We trust that the secession from the Church, under the title of “The *Plymouth Brethren*,” is one not destined to be of long duration. No established church on earth is so truly Catholic in its principles and conduct as the Church of England. Its articles are large, scriptural, and evangelical. The discipline is liberal, regular, and wholly exempt from arbitrary decisions and uncertain rules. Its pulpits are free as the air we breathe, and so long as heresy shall not enter them, the parochial clergy can inculcate such views of truth as they believe in their consciences to be in accordance with the Word of God. The cry raised against the “Ecclesiastical Courts” is both senseless and unprincipled – as their decisions are in accordance with the Protestant constitution of the country, with a perfect system of toleration to all Nonconformists, and with, at the same time, a wise and Christian spirit of protection towards the authorized clergy and the Established Episcopal Church of these realms. – *From “My Life,” by an Ex-Dissenter.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HEREFORD JOURNAL.

SIR, – In one of your late papers you have made some remarks on the Mormonites, or Latter Day Saints, with respect to which you have so well expressed my sentiments towards them, that I beg leave to use your own words, that “it is lamentable to think that such persons should thus so far pervert religion.” As you have also presented to your readers the heterodox views of this sect, I shall content myself with only a few observations, relative to their proceedings in this place. – On Tuesday week, after the preacher had been railing against every denomination of christians, he told his hearers, “that those who would not sell off all, and go to America, would be eternally damned;” and as if he anticipated their unbelief in what he said, he added, “I tell ye, you *won’t be saved*, you *won’t be saved*.” This was so well imitated by a youth on the *qui vive* for amusement, that not even the gravest face could preserve its gravity. One of the members of the [Plymouth brethren](#) (a cooper of the town) addressed the people on the heresy they had just heard, and the meeting separated by hooting the Mormonite mountebank from the ground. The last meeting on Tuesday night assumed a more peaceable aspect. The Mormonite had taken the precaution to deliver his address before the usual time, and his formidable antagonist, passing along the street with a badge of his trade upon his back, (some hoops and tools), called out in triumph, with a significant nod, “I shall soon be with you,” to the great amusement of the spectators. The Mormonite appeared confounded: he evidently did not wish to encounter him, and very soon after walked away, leaving the swaggering champion of the [Plymouth brethren](#) to beat out his tale of a tub to his own satisfaction. Now, Sir, I think you

will agree with me, that such irregular proceedings as these are calculated to do great mischief to the cause of our blessed religion.

Leominster, April, 1841.

I am your obedient servant,
CHRISTICOLA.

A TOUCH OF IRVINGISM. – An extraordinary scene occurred in the chapel of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), on the evening of Christmas day. The service was gone through in their wonted manner, until the preacher Capt. Hall, R.N. had proceeded a short way in his sermon, when all of a sudden he stopped, declaring his incompetency to continue his discourse, “not because he would not, but because he could not,” owing to the “*spirit being vexed*.” He then sat down. A death-like stillness prevailed for several minutes after this strange avowal, which was succeeded by prayers and singing for about an hour, with occasional intermissions of solemn silence, when the Captain chose another text, going on smoothly in his discourse to the end without any further interruption. The chapel was densely filled and the utmost decorum was observed throughout the whole of this curious incident. Were the above a solitary instance of the hallucinations under which these peculiar people labour, we should not have presumed to interfere by alluding to it, but when we hear that such extravagant scenes are by no means rare and uncommon, we see no impropriety in making mention of it: on the contrary we feel that we are doing good, because we remember well that it was a like delusion which was the forerunner of those fatal errors into which the followers of Edward Irving fell. “Where is the man who held multitudes suspended on his lips as he did, and where is the man who, as he, led multitudes astray?”*

* Hargrove’s reasons for retiring from the Established Church.

The Western Times, Exeter, 4 Jun 1842, p. 2

CREDITON. – Last evening (Thursday) three leading members of the sect called the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were publicly baptized at Salmon Hutch, near this place, and a large concourse of people were present to witness the ceremony, which was performed by the Rev. Mr. Busby, late minister of the Baptist chapel, after a long hymn had been sung, and an address delivered by one of their preachers amidst much uproar. One of the neophytes remained after he had been immersed and joined in a hymn, the water dripping from his clothes. While the ceremony was going on two large sheep dogs were set at the neophytes by some blackguards, and it was feared they would have bitten them. A respectably dressed young man was pushed off a hedge into the water, and was so bewildered that he hardly knew how to get up again. The scene altogether baffles description.

Hereford Journal, 20 Jul 1842, p. 4

The Freemasons' Hall which the [Plymouth brethren](#) have had in Bath is now to be sold, in consequence of which, they intend to meet in some other "room." – A lady who is in the habit of visiting the poor of that city says, "it is chiefly a love of self, and to have that opportunity of *showing off* in a little dissenting circle which they cannot have in the Church of England, which induces so many to leave her communion."

The Western Times, Exeter, 22 Oct 1842, p. 3

SPIRITUAL PEERS. – A correspondent sends us the following: – The new sect of christians, the [Plymouth Brethren](#), have now two Peers of Parliament among their teachers, the Right Honourables Lords Congleton, and Teynham. This alone, let the church say what it may, is a strong and undeniable evidence of the present rapid growth of dissent among the higher orders.

Whoever Mr. BOURNES, of the Dublin Conservative Society, may be, he is an ingenious and sagacious person; for he has found out something which, even in the judgment of that enlightened body, is “worse than Popery.” Had he flourished in the age of XERXES, he would certainly have won the prize offered by that luxurious autocrat for the invention of a *new pleasure*.

The “lower deep,” beneath the lowest, which this Mr. BOURNES has ferreted out, is the doctrine of the “*Darbyites*,” a sect of *Exaltés*, who have seceded from the Established Church under the leadership of a clergyman, named DARBY, and are carrying the principles of self-denial to an extent which may well fright your true rosy Churchman from his elbow chair. They hold that the labourer is worthy of his hire; but they must have a good day’s work for a very poor day’s wage, insisting upon their preachers doing the office of missionaries without ceasing, and in all parts of the country, day after day and all the day long, for what will scarcely provide them with the coarsest food and the most homely clothing. The *Darbyite* who indulges in the luxury of a carpet, or eats of two dishes, incurs the risk of a premunire. Hence it is plain that they are honest, though, it may be, very wild enthusiasts. Their doctrines are those of the Reformation, carried to a pitch of practical puritanism which interferes with the enjoyments of more fashionable piety. *An attorney*, for instance, has been known to abandon a practice worth five hundred a year, as soon as he joined this society, because an adherence to his “craft” appeared to him to be inconsistent with evangelical morality. Now some Church Christians can discourse as eloquently as St. PAUL himself about the necessity of taking up the cross, but

“Tho’ all cry down self, none means
His own self in a literal sense.”

That would disturb the established course and order of society; and the preaching, which insists upon a literal renunciation of the creature comforts, is therefore a more damnable heresy than the sacrifice of the mass.

Mr. BOURNES seems to hold it in this light, expressing the greatest alarm lest the [Darbyites](#) should possess themselves of the Advowsons now offered for sale by the Dublin corporation, and thus propagate their dangerous tenets through the authorised channels of instruction. “Their view,” says he, “was very obvious, namely, to place men in the pulpits who would advocate their opinions, which were not very conducive to the good and well-being of the Established Church. It was even worse than popery itself.” A Puseyite in the pulpit is bad, and bad enough, with his wax candles, crosses, and genuflexions; but he would stand by *the establishment*: none more resolutely. But the [Darbyite](#), though he denounces the Pope, and all his works, as vehemently as an O’SULLIVAN, is no stickler for *loaves and fishes*. He neither claims them for himself, nor justifies their present mode of appropriation; and, therefore, he is *worse than Popery itself*. We are sure Mr. Bournes is not singular in his opinion.

DESECRATION OF THE SABBATH AT OTTERY ST. MARY.

To the Editor of the Exeter and Plymouth Gazette.

SIR, – The usual quiet and orderly observance of the Lord's day in our interesting little town was sadly disturbed last Sunday, and the large and attentive afternoon congregation at our venerable Church interrupted and annoyed at the gates of the churchyard, by the vagaries of an itinerant orator – a member of that new-fangled sect of persons, commonly styled, from their place of origin, "The [Plymouth Brethren](#)." The effect of the orator's discourse was only to excite the jeers of the younger and less serious part of the crowd which he collected: but it was truly melancholy to hear the most awful doctrines of our holy religion caricatured, and the holy name of our Redeemer so repeatedly desecrated. The road was strewn with hundreds of printed papers, (under a shower of which the man made his retreat,) and it was most distressing to see these placards, bearing in large characters the holy name, and allusions to "the blood of Jesus," (our adorable Redeemer!) lying about soiled and disregarded, and "trampled under foot" by man and beast, in consequence of their irreverent and indiscriminate dispersion.

Like the now-forgotten emissaries of our notorious townswoman, Joanna Southcote, these wandering fanatics may be permitted for a little while to grieve the minds of the sober and religious part of the community, and disturb the heads of the ignorant and weak; but I am happy to say they will find no encouragement here. We have, thank God! no need of the officious interference of sectaries. Those who remember the place some years ago, bear witness to the gratifying progress in good

order and religious feeling that marks the present day. Never surely was a town better cared for, as to religious matters. Two new Churches have been erected and endowed in distant hamlets of our parish. We have our fine old collegiate Church open for the worship of Almighty God – always *once*, and more frequently *twice, every day*; and we have now an additional number of clergy attached to it, who are indefatigable in visiting the sick and the poor.

It is said that these extravagant crusades are sometimes imposed as a kind of penance, by the leaders of the sect, upon those of their converts who have been pre-eminently notorious for the previous profligacy and dissolute character of their lives. But may it not be suggested to the conscience of such persons, *if such there be*, whether a course of humble penitence and seclusion, of self-discipline and unobtrusive personal piety, would not prove less disgusting to others, and form a better evidence of their own real conversion to God, than the flippant assumption of a set of strange notions, and the display of an hyperbolic zeal, which is frequently the result of the mere exchange of one kind of excitement for another?

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

Ottery, March 7.

A CHURCHMAN.

West of England Conservative, and Plymouth & Devonport Advertiser,
Plymouth, 28 Jun 1843, p. 3

THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

In the West of England this sect has long been progressing, and making converts. We were not, however, aware that its pernicious tenets had spread “usque Auroram et Gangem.” Such would now seem to be the case; and it has been deemed of sufficient importance to be noticed by the Bishop of Calcutta, in his Metropolitcal charge. We extract his Lordship’s remarks, the more readily, because we believe that it is the first occasion on which Episcopal censure has been pronounced upon a heresy as pestilent and deadly, as any that has appeared in Christendom, since the first setting up of Quakerism.

‘Of {sic} the different forms in which the Apostolical order (of the Priesthood) is opposed in the present day in India, I need not speak. I know not that any particular controversy exists, except in one instance, upon which, as being new, I may be expected to deliver an opinion.

“Upon the pretences, then, of those who are termed ‘The [Plymouth Brethren](#),’ I cannot conceal my judgment that they manifest the most deplorable ignorance, conceit, and presumption. They overturn to {sic} once all order, all Churches, all Sacraments, all means of Grace, the very perpetuity of the moral law itself. This wildness is of the same character with that of Carolstadt at the period of the reformation, and of some of the English sects at the time of Cromwell. Under the name of the Spirit, they deify self. Claiming the bible as their only rule, they substitute their ignorant perversions of its meaning. Pretending to forsake the spirit of the world, they neglect the obvious means

appointed by the mercy of God, for the salvation of mankind. Affecting an equality of rank, they prepare for the enormous evils of social anarchy. Calling themselves brethren, they condemn and depreciate the holiest characters, if not following with them. But such folly is evanescent. It generally exhausts itself in the age which gave it birth. Some dreadful heresy is generated, and our people return to the good old way.

“We see in the troublous period of the English Commonwealth, when the clergy were silenced, the churches profaned, and the common prayer interdicted, how the dark clouds of error and heresy abused each other in rapid succession, till the whole nation sighed again for their NATIONAL CHURCH. Man, being as he is must have a Church. Christianity without order and authority is a dream, an enthusiasm: a desolation.”

SERVANTS ABOVE THEIR PLACE. – We were amused by the relation of the following Anecdote, in reference to the good people calling themselves [Plymouth Brethren](#), and give it as a fact: – A short time since a young female applied for service, and on being asked why she left her place, especially with such good and godly personages, made answer that her late Master and Mistress were very kind and so forth, but that she was not accustomed by her station in life as Servant, or did she feel comfortable to sit at meals and eat with them – nor did she like it, for she could not satisfy her appetite in their presence, and that was her reason for quitting.

The Western Times, Exeter, 4 Nov 1843, p. 4, Original Correspondence

PLYMOUTH BRETHRENISM.

Sir, – So long as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were in the habit, both in their public addresses as well as in their writings, of attacking every other section of the christian church, so long was it fair that they should be met in the same spirit by others; but now, that they have sobered down as a section of the visible Church of Christ upon earth, quietly preaching the Gospel of the grace of God to sinners, it behoves us who have hitherto conscientiously opposed them, to wish them in future “God speed;” inasmuch as they also are of the seed of the covenant of everlasting love.

The favour of your giving a corner to these remarks, will greatly oblige

Your obedient humble servant,

23rd October. 1843.

A BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

LIST OF APOSTATES TO PROTESTANT AND POPISH DISSENTS.

In laying before our readers the following list of those members of the Church who have apostatized to Protestant dissent, we may remark that we have inserted those names only for which we conceive that we have sufficient authority; should it happen that inaccuracies are discovered in it, we shall be most happy to correct them. As regards many of the names, we may mention that we have the authority of more than one correspondent. We have omitted the names of those Clergymen who have returned to the Church, or whose return appears probable: –

CLERGYMEN.

Rev. Andrew Jukes, B.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, in Deacon's Orders, and late Curate of St. John's, Hull. [[Plymouth brother](#).]

George Bird, Rector of Cumberworth. [Nondescript.]

Henry Baytiscombe, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and Curate of St. Giles', Cambridge.

— Weigall, Curate of Blackley, near Manchester.

Thomas Alfred Ashworth, Vicar of Farnworth, near Manchester, brother-in-law of the Rev. Hugh Stowell.

— Houghton, Incumbent of Ainsworth, near Manchester, ditto. [[Plymouth brother](#), we believe.]

Jasper Peck, (Bath) Curate of Chippenham. [Brownist, we believe.]

J. W. Peters, Vicar of Womersley, Yorkshire.

Bernard Gilpin, Hertford.

L. C. L. Brenton, M.A., of Oriel College, Oxford. (Bath.)

— Morshead, of Oriel College, Oxford; assistant Minister of St. Mary's Proprietary Chapel, Bath. [Brownist, or Independent.]

John Methuen, Vicar of Corsham. (Bath.)

J. A. Wallinger, Minister of Kensington [Bethesda?] Proprietary Chapel, Bath. [Brownist.]

H. I. Prince, Curate of Charlinch and Stoke-by-Clare. (Brighton.) [Nondescript. This unhappy person asserts, we understand, that he is possessed in a most – if not the most – extraordinary degree of the Holy Ghost.]

Arthur A. Rees, Curate of Sunderland, and Minister of Thomas St. Episcopal Chapel, Bath, and brother-in-law of Mr. Prince.

H. B. Bulteel, M.A., Fellow of Exeter College, and Curate of St. Ebbes, Oxford. [Independent or Brownist.]

W. Tiptaft, B.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge, Vicar of Sutton Courtney, Berks. [Particular Anabaptist.]

R. C. Philpot, M.A., of Worcester College, and Curate of Stadhampton, Oxon. [Particular Anabaptist.]

W. Caldecott, M.A., Curate of Claybrook.

Hon. & Rev{.} H. Bridgeman, Incumbent of Blymhill, and Rector of Teddington. [Particular Anabaptist, we believe.]

Rev. G. Freer, Incumbent of Yaxley.

Frederic Tryon, Vicar of Deeping St. James. [Brownist.]

P. Butler, Curate of St. Margaret's, Ipswich.

— Jeckell, Curate of St. Clement's, Ipswich. [[Plymouth brother.](#)]

— Earle, Vicar of Maddington.

— Harris, Incumbent of Plympton, near Plymouth. [[Plymouth brother.](#)]

LAYMEN.

Richard Burdon (now Sanderson), Fellow of Oriel College: Nephew of the late Earl of Eldon. [Brownist.]

G. Vicesimus Wigram, Examined Undergraduate of Queen's College, Oxford.

Benjamin W. Newton, B.A., Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford.

William Jarratt, Undergraduate of Queen's College, Oxford.

Francis Newman, B.A., Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. [Brownist, and brother, we believe, of the Rev. J. H. Newman.]

William Weston, Undergraduate of Queen's College, Oxford.

Henry Moncrieff, B.A., Gentleman Commoner of New College, Oxford.

— Lowe, a Lay Agent of the Pastoral Aid Society at Ipswich.

In addition to the foregoing names we have received the following, but without sufficient authority or particulars to justify us in entering them in our list.

Rev. J. Darby, (an Irish Clergyman.) [And the founder, we believe, of the new sect called "*The Plymouth Brethren*," and sometimes *Darbyites*.]

J. R. Pears, one of the Masters of the Endowed Grammar School, Bath, and, we believe, still Rector of Charlcombe, who, we learn from two correspondents, is in the *constant habit* of attending, with his family, at Mr. Wallinger's meeting house, ("Bethesda Chapel,") Bath.

In making this list public we shall not follow the one-sided example of *The Record*, *Standard*, and *Herald*, but shall add to it the names of those who have apostatized to Rome, taking our list from the latest edition of the foregoing journals subject of course to the same rules which we have applied to the above list.

CLERGYMEN.

Rev. Bernard Smith, late Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.

Daniel Parsons, M.A., Oriel College, Oxford. [This is at present doubtful, we understand.]

C. Seager, M.A., Worcester College, Oxford.

G. Talbot, M.A., St. Mary Hall, Oxford.

D. Wackerbarth.

LAYMEN.

Johnson Grant, Esq., St. John's College, Oxford.

Edward Douglas, Esq., Christ Church, Oxford.

Peter Renouf, Esq., Pembroke College, Oxford.

W. Lockhart, Esq., Exeter College, Oxford.

T. H. King, Esq., Exeter College, Oxford.

In this last list we have excluded "a Tradesman of Oxford," "A boy at Shrewsbury School," and four ladies, whose apostasy is so carefully chronicled by the Ultra-Protestant journals, because, were we to include such cases we might easily fill a column with those who have fallen into Protestant Dissent.

It is probable that we shall be told that the first list embraces a longer period than the second list does, to which we will reply, that we are quite ready to publish any additions which may be made to the second list within the same period of time, but we imagine that a retrospective range of a dozen years will not add half a dozen names to the list. – *The English Churchman*.

[We have put between brackets, thus [] the name of the sect to which we believe the parties at present belong. To the list may be added the name of the notorious R. M. Beverley, who was at Cambridge some time, but did not graduate we believe. He became, we were told, a Brownist, and then it was said a Quaker, and now he is a [Plymouth Brother](#). There was, we believe, some little time since, an Hon. and Rev. gentleman preaching amongst the Anabaptists at Frome. And we once met a Rev. gentleman who had become an Irvingite, but whose name we forget. The Rev. Charles Hargrove, an Irish Clergyman, and the Rev. S. Govett, late Curate of St. Stephen's, Norwich, have also apostatized.] – *The Church Intelligencer*.

{*The English Churchman* and *The Church Intelligencer* are not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

The Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard, Cirencester, 15 Oct 1844, p. 3

Two men and two women, belonging to the sect called “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” were on Sunday morning last baptized in the horse-pond at the brow of Cane-hill near Devizes. The ceremony was performed by Mr. Edward Austie. Water in horse-ponds is not the most pure, and therefore unsuitable for this symbolical ceremony.

West of England Conservative, and Plymouth & Devonport Advertiser,
Plymouth, 27 Aug 1845, p. 3

FORGERY AT TAVISTOCK. – Mr. Searle, woollen-manufacturer of Tavistock, has been committed to Exeter, on a charge of forgery. Some time since, he failed in business, for about £3000, and offered his creditors a composition of ten shillings in the pound. The offer was declined, and the management of his affairs passed into other hands. It is stated that forged bills for £25, £123, and £200 have been discovered. A bill for the latter amount, drawn by Searle, and apparently accepted by Messrs. Foster and Fison, Bradford, Yorkshire, was disowned by that firm, and returned to the bank of Messrs. Gill and Rundle, Tavistock, who, on Thursday last, had Searle examined before Mr. Carpenter, the magistrate, when he was forthwith committed for trial. Searle has a wife and two children; he has carried on the business of woollen-manufacturer for some years in Tavistock, and is a member of a religious sect denominated the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The Standard, London, 16 Dec 1845, p. 3

FULFILLED PROPHECIES.

A sect of Christians, called [Plymouth Brethren](#), predicted that the world would end on a certain day last September. The day was cloudy, and their prophecy was, they said, by that circumstance, "*substantially* fulfilled."

A newspaper, called the *Times*, predicted last week that a certain government would propose next session, in parliament, a repeal of the corn-laws. That government has resigned, and its prophecy is, it says, by that circumstance, "*substantially* fulfilled."

The Bath Chronicle, 8 Jan 1846, p. 3

CAUTION TO MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. – A person is going about endeavouring to collect subscriptions for a new “Church” on Combe Down, or thereabouts. It may be as well to remark that the intended “Church” is to be a place of meeting for the sect calling itself “The [Plymouth Brethren](#).”

The Bath Chronicle, 15 Jan 1846, p. 3

To the EDITOR *of the* BATH CHRONICLE.

Sir. – In your paper of the 8th instant, appeared a paragraph headed “Caution to Members of the Church of England,” respecting the erection of a church at Combe Down by the sect called “[Plymouth Brethren](#).” If by this title [Brethren](#) meeting together for worship in Parsonage Lane be meant, I beg leave, in the name of those [Brethren](#), to deny distinctly that any person whatever has been authorized by them to collect subscriptions for the purpose alluded to; and I beg further to state, that it is contrary to the principles of [Brethren](#) supposed to be indicated in the paragraph to ask indiscriminate help, by money or otherwise, for any purpose connected with the worship or service of God.

I trust to your candour to insert this notice. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

5, Somerset Place.

THOS. HAMILTON.

[The above statement is satisfactory, so far as concerns those of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) who meet in Parsonage Lane. We have, however, the best authority for reiterating the fact that subscriptions have been applied for under the circumstances mentioned in our last paper, and we again beg to caution our readers on the subject. – ED.]

The Western Times, Exeter, 16 May 1846, p. 4

NURSERY MAID.

WANTED in a highly respectable pious Family, a steady, middle-aged, pious FEMALE, capable of undertaking the care of a small family of children, the youngest of whom is above three years old.

No one in connexion with the [Plymouth Brethren](#) need apply. Letters addressed to M. M., at the Office of this Paper, stating particulars, will be duly attended to.

Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, Exeter, 16 May 1846, p. 3, Plymouth

The Plymouth Brethren. – There has recently been a split in this body at Plymouth, on a question of discipline, and one party has withdrawn from the other; and now, we believe, worship in a separate tabernacle. One of the Brethren at Exeter has published a tract on the subject, in which he says that the matter on which the separation has taken place is so trifling that “not one in a hundred can even understand enough of it to form an opinion!” The writer adds, “I have heard each of them [Messrs. Newton and Darby] give a statement of his views respecting the chief matter in dispute; and to me each appeared right at the time – although, of course, one of them at least must have been wrong. I do not know even now which of them is right, or whether they are both wrong.” Of course if an intelligent man like “T. T. T.” cannot comprehend the cause of quarrel, it must remain a mystery to the profane vulgar. – *Plymouth Journal*.

{The 1846 volume of the *Plymouth Journal* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

Hereford Journal, 3 Jun 1846, p. 2

For some months a difference of opinion has prevailed among the *Plymouth Brethren* at the town whence they take their name, and they are there worshipping in two district {sic} buildings.

The Western Times, Exeter, 11 Jul 1846, p. 4

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

“A CONSTANT READER” wishes to draw attention to the split in the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at Plymouth, that body having been for some time divided into [Darbyites](#) and [Newtonites](#). He says that “at the recent funeral of Mrs. Newton the [Darbyites](#), who attended out of respect for the memory of their departed sister, gave some offence to Mr. Newton, in consequence of their secession from his ministry, they most conscientiously believing him to be not orthodox in his views of divine truth.” Our correspondent goes into some general observations, which are likely to provoke controversy, and are not altogether suited to the columns of a newspaper. He should communicate his observations directly to the [Brethren](#).

The Globe, London, 20 Oct 1846, p. 4

REFUSAL OF INTERMENT AT BARKING, ESSEX. – On Sunday last an extraordinary degree of excitement was occasioned in the above place, in consequence of the Rev. — Denton, curate of Barking, refusing to inter the body of the late Mrs. Rushton. Due information had been given that the funeral would be at the church at three o'clock, but when the procession arrived at the church-yard gates (which are usually kept open on Sundays) they were found closed, and after stopping some time in the road, the mourners were obliged to retrace their steps. The deceased had been visited during her illness by one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), which circumstance among others, it is supposed, gave offence to the vicar and curate. The body of Mrs. Rushton remains still uninterred.

{The above article was reprinted in the *Daily News*, 21 Oct 1846, p. 4; a day later the following appeared in the *Daily News*:}

Daily News, London, 22 Oct 1846, p. 4

REFUSAL TO BURY. – In reference to this case a correspondent at Barking says: "The curate (the Rev. W. Denton) buried a body at two o'clock, after which he obtained the keys of the church and churchyard, locked the doors and gates, and carried away the keys. At three o'clock the body of the poor woman was brought to the gates, and admittance demanded without success: after a short delay the body was taken back again. The reason assigned for refusal was, that the deceased was an immoral character. A magistrate wrote to the Bishop of London, who commanded the curate to bury the woman, according with the usual ceremony, which was done on Tuesday afternoon."

Bristol Times, 22 Apr 1848, p. 4

A Descent amongst the Dissenters.

(BY ONE WITHOUT THE PALE.)

“Black spirits and white,
Blue spirits and grey,
Mingle.”

Bethesda (*Craik and Müller*) **Chapel**, GREAT GEORGE STREET. – Some time ago I was in Stuckey’s Bank, for the purpose of having my book made up, to see whether I could afford a set of new carpets, the urgent necessity for which my wife had been impressing upon me several previous mornings at breakfast, when, amid the crush and the elbowing of the numerous customers, I noticed a grave and somewhat tall and foreign-looking man take his stand close to me by the counter. He unrolled a package of bills, bank orders, &c., amounting to thirteen hundred pounds, as I could see by the paper which he pinned on to them, and passed over to some person or object’s credit, the name of which I could not hear.

When he had gone, the cashier inquired if I knew who he was; and, on my answering in the negative, told me it was George Müller, one of the two ministers of a sect certainly the most remarkable of any in this city. This sum which he paid in was only one of numerous deposits for the purposes of charity, the erection and maintenance of an Orphan Asylum, &c., and received from time to time, as he tells you himself, “in answer to prayer.”

This made me curious to know a little more about the religious body to which he belonged, so I bought the last published account of their proceedings, "A brief narrative of facts relative to the Orphan Houses and the other objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, at home and abroad." The first passage which met my eye on opening this tract was – *"Without any one having been personally applied to by me, the sum of £13,275 6s. 9¾d. has been given to me as the result of prayer to God since the commencement of this work,"* namely the establishment and maintenance of Orphan Houses, publication of tracts, bibles, &c.

The orphan institution (a charity of the most practical and positive kind) comprises four houses in Wilson-street, viz.: Nos. 6 and 4 for girls; that for infants, No. 1, and that for boys, No. 3. The admissions to these are made on a broad and liberal principle, there being no sectarian qualification necessary for the poor children, who must be bereaved of both their parents, and who are boarded, educated, and clothed from the funds so mysteriously and secretly supplied.

It is this mystery and secresy {sic}, and the faith which is so firmly relied upon for success, that eminently constitute the peculiarity of this particular body. Though the annual outlay of their Orphan Houses is over £1,500, they have not I believe any certain income or stated subscription of a penny to depend upon. It is all left to chance, as the world would say, – to Providence, as the promoters would tell you. And certainly it is most remarkable, on reading the diary of Mr. Müller, to see how the supplies come in – to see how the orphan bag (the little exchequer), which daily travels between Wilson-street and his dwelling on Kingsdown, and back again, is (shall I say) almost miraculously replenished – the last penny in the locker being often remitted for the day's wants, with a strong and cheerful reliance upon what the morrow might bring forth.

A perusal of this diary, as given in the "Narrative of facts," would repay any one, if it were only for the entertainment which a singular succession of straits and deliverances afford. Indeed, without reading it, you can form no idea of "the reckless faith" with which the founder and fosterer of those charities has abandoned himself to the motto of "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," and the surprising manner in which he has up to the present succeeded. In the last published statement of this diary, which he calls "an account of the way in which the Lord has been pleased to furnish me with means in answer to prayer only, without any human being having been applied to for help by me," and which extends over two years, occupies sixty-four closely printed pages; I must, therefore, content myself with a few extracts as a specimen of the whole.

July 25, 1844. We have again to go on day by day waiting upon the Lord for the necessities of 140 persons (teachers and apprentices included.)

July 26, 1844. Only 6d. has come in to-day, by sale of Reports.

Aug. 2. *The day began with 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. in hand.* A little before ten o'clock in the morning the letter-bag was brought from the Orphan-Houses for money, in which I found a note, stating that the need of to-day was £1 17s., but I had only 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to send. I wrote so to Brother R. B., intending to request him to send up again in the afternoon, for what the Lord might have sent in the mean time. When I was going to put the 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. into the purse in the bag, I found half-a-crown in the bag, which must have been slipped into it by some one in my house, before it was opened. This half-crown is a precious earnest that the Lord will help this day also. It was found by me just after I had risen from my knees, having been with some of the labourers in the work in prayer for means. Before I had yet finished the note to Brother R. B., master of the boys at the Boys' Orphan-House, a sovereign was given to me, so that I had £1 2s. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to send off. About two o'clock this afternoon I received: by sale of articles 10s. 6d., by sale of stockings 6s. 8d., and by the sale of ladies' bags 9s. 4d. Thus I could send off the 14s. 6d. which were still needed for to-day, and had 12s. left.

Aug. 6. Without *one single penny* in my hands the day began. The post brought nothing, nor had I yet received anything, when, ten minutes after ten this morning, the letter bag was brought from the Orphan-Houses, for the supplies of to-day. Now see the Lord's deliverance! In the bag I found a note from one of the labourers in the Orphan Houses, enclosing two sovereigns, which she sent for the Orphans, stating that it was part of a present which she had just received, unexpectedly, for herself.

Aug. 7. There came in, when there was NOT ONE PENNY in my hands: 4s. and 3s. 6d. as two donations; also 3s. I found in the boxes in my house, 10s. was given as the profit of the sale of ladies' bags, and 2s. 6d. as the produce of "A forfeit-box at a young ladies' school." Likewise was given to me: two gold rings, two gold watch-keys, a pair of earrings, a gold brooch, two waist-buckles, a pair of bracelets, a watch-hook, and a broken brooch{.} Thus we have a little towards the need of to morrow.

Aug. 9. It is just now striking eleven o'clock, and I have not yet one single penny towards the need of this day. The bag is brought from the Orphan-Houses for money, but I have nothing to send, and am therefore obliged to return the bag without anything. But my soul is waiting for help. The Lord has so repeatedly helped us again during the last weeks, and so He will surely do this day also. *Evening.* At half-past twelve this morning I received two notes from two sisters who labour in the Orphan-Houses, the one from the sister who, on the 6th, had sent the £2, being part of a present which she had received, and who now sent £1 more. She writes: – "The enclosed I *thought* of applying to another purpose; but *His thoughts* are not as ours. Please to use it as you think fit." The other sister, likewise one of the labourers, sent 10s. This £1 10s. met our need for to-day.

Aug. 16. Our poverty is extremely great. The trial of faith as sharp or sharper than ever. It is ten o'clock, and there are no means yet for a dinner.

Aug. 20. This 3s. was all there was in hand for this day, which was needed at the boys' Orphan-House towards the dinner. In the other two houses (for the inmates of one were in a farm-house in the country, on account of the house being painted and coloured,) nothing was needed, but at the same time NOTHING WAS LEFT TOWARDS THE NEXT MEAL. Two o'clock came, and we had nothing yet.

[In these last cases always something came opportunely in the nick of time, either in money or trinkets or clothes, to supply the want.]

March 15. Yesterday afternoon was brought to me from Mr. J. N. half a sovereign. In the evening came in 19s. 4d{.} by sale of articles. But this was not enough for the need of to-day. *While the Orphan boy was waiting* for the money, I received the following letter from Bath. [The letter encloses a seasonable supply.]

March 17, Monday. The sixpence which I took out of the box in my room on Saturday evening was all there was in hand, when yesterday came in the following donations: – A. A., £1 2s. 4½d., anonymously put into the boxes at [Bethesda](#), 6d., ditto with James i. 17, 2s. 6d.

But I need not go on multiplying my extracts from these

“Short but simple annals of the *poor*.”

Every second or third day you find “not a penny in hand,” or “not enough for the next meal,” followed invariably by some eleventh hour assistance “received in answer to prayer.”

Besides money, a large source of supply seems to consist in trinkets and odds and ends of other articles contributed. An inventory of those in the month of May, 1846 (which I take at random, there being one equally curious for each previous month), reads, from the multiplicity and variety of things therein enumerated, like a pawnbroker’s catalogue: –

5s. worth of postages. A card case. A gold chain, 2 small gold seals, a gold locket, a watch hook, a silver pencil case, and 2 purse rings. A small scent bottle in a silver case. A ring and 2 yards of print. 4 collars, 2 shirts, 2 night caps, a pair of boots, a pair of shoes, a pair of slippers, 5 waistcoats, 2 pairs of trousers, a jacket, a pair of gaiters, and a stock (all worn.) An homœopathic medicine chest. 2 netted bread basket cloths, and 4 babies’ pinafores. Some class lessons, some school books, 3 copies of Howard’s Lessons on the Old and New Testament, and 5 New Testaments. A box from Pershore, from

a few christian friends, the contents not to be mentioned. A white net veil. 4 large plum cakes, one for each house. 12 small preserving jars, and 32 {?} lbs. of beef. A packet of Ervalenta for porridge. 7 brown loaves. A cask of treacle. 10 quarterns of bread. A cask of treacle. 8 brown loaves. 4 pairs of socks, 1 silk handkerchief, 1 pair of gloves, 1 pair of slippers (all worn), and 8 little books. Some rhubarb.

From the audited accounts of the income and expenses of the institution, it appears the maintenance, &c., of the four Orphan Houses in Wilson-street, from July 14, 1844, to May 26, 1846 (the last report I can obtain), amounted to within a few pounds of £2,800; so that the largeness of the sum makes the singular manner in which it is provided for still the more remarkable, especially when you consider that the body commonly known as “the [Craik and Mullerites](#),” are not a numerous or wealthy community.

Under the head of “Supplies for the School – Bible – Missionary and Tract Fund, sent in answer to prayer,” I find the following, with which my extracts from Mr. Muller’s “Narrative,” or “The Lord’s Dealings with him,” must conclude: –

I think it well to state here again, what has been noticed in former Reports, that though the brethren and sisters who labour in the Day-Schools have a certain regular remuneration when there are means in hand, yet that I am not their debtor when there are no means; so that they have to look to the Lord their Master for supplies, and not to me. At the same time, however, I also add, that if they should not have had their regular remuneration, which for the trial of their faith the Lord has sometimes allowed, the arrears have been paid to them when He has sent in the means. From Oct. 1, 1844, up to the time when this Report closes, God always so seasonably supplied me with means, that there never has been a time when the salary became due and I was not able to pay it.

May 6. About six weeks ago intimation was kindly given by a brother that he expected a certain considerable sum of money, and that, if he obtained it, a certain portion of it should be given to the Lord, so that £100 of it should be used for the work in my hands, and the other part for another object. However, day after day passed away, and the money did not

come. I did not trust in this money, yet, as during all this time, with scarcely any exception, we were more or less needy, I thought again and again about this brother's promise; though I did not, by the grace of God, trust in the brother who had made it, but in the Lord. Thus week after week passed away, and the money did not come{.} Now this morning it came to my mind, that such like promises ought to be valued, in a certain sense, as nothing, *i. e.*, that never for a moment the mind ought to be directed to them, but to the living God, and to the living God only. I saw that such promises ought not to be of the value of one farthing, so far as it regards thinking about them for help. I asked therefore the Lord this morning, when, as usual, I was praying with my wife about the work in my hands, that He would be pleased to take this whole matter about that promise completely out of my mind, and to help me, not to value it in the least, yea to help me to treat it as if not worth one farthing, but to keep my eye only directed to Himself. I was enabled to do so. We had not yet finished praying when I received the following letter: –

“—, May 5, 1845.

“Beloved Brother, – Are your bankers still Messrs. Stuckey and Co. of Bristol, and are their bankers still Messrs. Robarts and Co. of London? Please to instruct me on this; and if the case should be so, please to regard this as a letter of advice that £70 are paid to Messrs. Robarts and Co., for Messrs. Stuckey and Co., for you. This sum apply as the Lord may give you wisdom. I shall not send to Robarts and Co. until I hear from you.

Ever affectionately yours,

“Jude 2.”

* * * *.”

Thus the Lord rewarded at once this determination to seek, not to look in the least to that promise from a Brother, but only to Himself. But this was not all. About two o'clock this afternoon I received from the Brother, who had, more than forty days ago, made the promise, £166 18s., as he this day received the money, on the strength of which he had made that promise. Of this sum, £100 are to be used for the work in my hands, and the remainder for another object. I took of these two sums, *i. e.* of the £70 and the £100, half for the Orphans and half for these objects. When this money came in, there was only very little in hand. The last Tracts had been given away, two or three days ago, but I had no money to order more: thus I was able to send off an order for 11,700. Bibles also needed to be ordered, but I had no money: I am

now able to order some. It had been much on my heart t{o} send {a} little help to some missionary brethren, as a token of affectionate interest, and this I am now able to do. The Lord be praised for His goodness in helping thus so seasonably!

Thus, it will be seen, that Mr. Muller (for by him the department of practical charity, Mr. Craik confining himself chiefly to preaching, is managed) has been living for a series of years in an atmosphere of benevolent difficulties – in a perpetual philanthropic money pressure – in which, however, he seems peculiarly to delight, with all the enthusiasm, though with a different motive from that of the young Emir in Tancred, who exclaims, “Oh my dear, beloved, cherished debts, what a state of miserable *ennui* must I exist in but for you, and the animation and mental activity in which you keep me,” or words to that effect (for I have not the book by me). As if to try his faith, Mr. Muller seems never to have “a large balance” on hand for the purpose of maintenance; for there are sometimes rents coming due, meals to be provided, and the boy from the Orphan House knocking with the “bag” at his door in Paul-street, when there is “not a penny” to send back in it. The knock of any one calling for money, when you have not got it, is never a pleasant thing, and it is teasing {sic} to the nerves to hear that “dun knock” repeated, while you are devising {sic} a decent excuse – but never, however plausible, half as satisfactory as the money – within. But Mr. Muller has not merely to think of himself in the matter, but of one hundred and forty mouths which have to be daily filled in Wilson-street – of one hundred and forty brisk appetites that will not cease, even though there be “nothing towards the next meal.” Oh! to see that little orphan runner daily pass the window, and trot up the steps of the house in Paul-street with his bag, and no supplies awaiting him, must require all the faith and all the zeal of even Mr. Muller. Alluding to these occasional and recurring straits of the good man, a bluff friend describing them said to me one day, “He (Mr. Muller), Sir, is always at his wits’ end for money, but never stumped up for twenty-four hours together – always

pulling the devil by the tail for the good of poor orphans, and always getting into difficulties for the glory of getting out of them.”

Nor is this faith confined to Mr. Muller: all the servants, teachers, &c., of the Orphan Houses, schools, &c., largely participate in the feeling, and the confidence with which they open the receiving box, after a visitor has been through any of their institutions, with the “sure and certain hope” of receiving a £5, eminently deserves the success with which it is not unfrequently rewarded. I have heard that the principle is – not to go into debt for anything (unless the current quarter’s rent), to pay for everything the moment it is received, and if there is no money in the bag to buy nothing. Thus, if the milkman or baker come to the door, and there are no funds, to have neither milk nor bread. The healthy and happy appearance and condition of the children, however, shows that this is a contingency which must very seldom occur.

It having been sometime since determined to raise one edifice for the orphan children, instead of having them dispersed over four houses as at present in Wilson-street, contributions for this object, without any public appeal whatever, began to pour in upon Mr. Muller, and I believe between nine and ten thousand pounds were received before the work was begun. How much of this the benevolent German received in silver thimbles, pencil-cases, turquoise brooches, and worn trousers, I cannot say; but there is some tradition of a singular dream in connection with the sale of the site on Ashley-down. The ground, I am told, belonged to Mr. Alfred Thomas, and Mr. Alfred Thomas will pardon me if I am wrong in my information; but so the story runs, that he one night had some revelations in his sleep that induced him to take fifty per cent. off the purchase money – a dream creditable to Mr. Thomas’s benevolence, and very fortunate for the buyers.

Of course, there is a great deal which we cannot understand and do not pretend to unravel in the singular confessions of Mr. Muller's diary. People, too, may put down as ordinary and natural results what he wishes us to consider miraculous interventions; and think these constant prayers to heaven for necessary supplies answered by pencil-cases, thimbles, and trinkets, (always seeming to come in so "providentially") hardly consistent with our notions of the grandeur and dignity of the God-head. Nevertheless, these Orphan Houses are a noble and an excellent charity, which do credit both to the faith of the preacher and the liberality of the people. We may have difference of opinion upon religious institutions, education, and other matters, but upon the simple and enlarged benevolence which provides for those helpless little things, whom death has cast upon the world, there can be no difference. Mr. Muller and his friends have in this done a great social good, for which society is indebted to them.

Like the Moravians, this religious body pursue the noiseless tenor of their way and worship in quiet and retirement. You never hear of them or their preachers in public or in politics; and there is a story told that so single-minded and secluded a life do Messrs. Craik and Muller themselves live in this respect that, notwithstanding all the bruit of the contested election of '41, neither of them knew of such a thing having been until days after it was decided. They might have seen the names of "Berkeley," and "Fripp," and "Miles," painted on the walls as they took their morning walks; but they passed by unconscious of their import. Of newspapers, periodicals, &c., they are innocent, and will probably never read what is now said of them. Should any one of their friends or congregation tell them of such a notice, I scarcely believe they will have the curiosity to ask to see it. And, let me tell you, a minister must be very far removed from the world, or absorbed in his work, who has conquered that very natural desire to see what others have said of him.

I passingly alluded to their “morning walks.” Both Messrs. Craik and Muller are great rambles in the fields. I am fond myself of a rural saunter before breakfast in the same neighbourhood, and I hardly ever go out without meeting one or the other. Carrying his camp-stool or sitting on it by some pleasant old tree, or picturesque green spot, Mr. Craik may be seen almost every summer morning in the fields about Cotham and Redland, always in a studious mood, as if premeditating some subject – it may be his sermon. Mr. Muller himself alludes to these rambles as a sort of regular matin duty, for he says, “This morning walked in another direction, and met a physician, who gave me £2 towards the Orphan Houses” – a deviation which, according to his usual course, he puts down as providential. You may depend upon it, however, that these quiet morning walks have much to do with refreshing the heart, and giving a generous bounty and benevolence to its operations.

“One impulse from the vernal wood,
May teach us more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all that sages can.”

The peripatetic philosophers of old, who wandered musingly into the fields were not less learned than those who studied in the “dust of the schools.”

In observing on their charities, I have left myself little room for reviewing the history of this people as a religious society. I hardly know amongst what class of dissenters to place them. They are, as a denomination, *sui generis*, though perhaps more allied to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) than to any other body. They practise adult baptism, when required.

ORIGIN. – When the late Rev. Mr. Wooldridge relinquished his charge at Newfoundland-street, for the purpose of going out as a Missionary to Jamaica, he was succeeded in the pastorship by Mr. Craik, who previously had some spiritual charge somewhere in Devonshire. With him was subsequently associated Mr. Muller, who came from Germany. After a while they took the chapel in Great George-street, built by the Rev. Thos. Conelly Cowan, who, as the reader is aware, seceded from the Church, having previously been curate of St. Thomas's parish. Mr. Cowan having preached for some time in this chapel, afterwards gave it up, finding, good easy man, that his congregation were as much inclined to borrow from him as to listen to his sermons. For some time after their entrance upon the building in Great George-street, Messrs. Craik and Muller continued to hold Gideon chapel: the latter, however, they subsequently relinquished, and now confine their ministerial duties to the former and Salem Chapel, in St. Augustine's-place.

[Bethesda Chapel](#) is in a pleasant and respectable situation, being built on the slope of the hill which good St. Brandon of old selected for his hermitage, and close to the pulpit where the Rev. J. Hopper is gracefully affected every Sunday for the good of two thousand intent and transported listeners.

At the porch of the [Bethesda](#) there is a request, that those who are not professing members should occupy the galleries. In compliance with this order I went up stairs, and found there only one young man, who abashed at his own awful solitude was in the act of retiring. This arrangement, I believe, was adopted as the Lord's Supper is administered every Sunday, and it is desirable to keep the lower part of the building for communicants alone. There are no seat-rents or collections whatever made; but boxes are kept at the doors to receive voluntary contributions. A little orphan girl acted as door-keeper; and the array of quiet black and white straw bonnets and grey dresses within were a sober, but substantial, monument to Mr. Muller's faith.

Mr. Craik, who is the principal preacher, is energetic and eloquent in the pulpit, and there is about his manner, as well as that of his colleague, the most perfect sincerity and kindness.

At first starting Messrs. Craik and Muller were in a slight measure associated with the other Dissenting Ministers of the city; but very soon a coolness became apparent, as the peculiar notions they embraced did not tally with the sentiments of “the city ministers;” and this distance has continued until very recently when, I understand, during the absence of Bishop Davis from King-street, and Broadmead having no supply, Mr. Craik was invited to preach at both these places, which he did, and was much liked by their respective congregations.

Bristol Times, 20 May 1848, p. 4

In my paper on the [Bethesda Chapel \(Craik and Mullerites\)](#), I stated that I heard the site for the new Orphan House, at Ashley-hill, was given for somewhat less than half its value by the late Mr. Alfred Thomas, owing to a dream which he had, encouraging him to this act of liberality. The land was sold by the executors of the late Mr. Thomas at a very low price, for the purpose stated, such being, as it was ascertained, that gentleman’s wish; but I am assured there was no truth in the story of the dream, which was purely a fancy or invention on the part of some persons. I might as well add that I make this correction at the request of a respectable member of the family, who with a good temper, that argues good sense, has set me right.

STRANGE DOINGS AT KILKEE. – The People of Kilkee were a good deal puzzled and surprised to behold a few mornings since all the dead walls, blind windows, neglected gates, and timber pillars, placarded over with solemn looking posters, containing mysterious prophecies of spiritual ruin, and warnings not a few to make straight the path of life – for the end of the world. Stark staring notes of admiration, stood like tall May-poles perpendicular and stately in different parts of every manifesto; and hues as many as a shower announcing rainbow distinguished the type. Many and various were the surmises among the knowing ones, and profound the conjectures on the origin of the placards. Some thought that Lord Clarendon had become sanctimonious, and in a pious fit of duty had betaken himself to parables; while other supposed that the Cummunists {sic} and Jacobins, about whom so much is said in Dublin, but about whom nothing is known hereabouts, were really and actually living and existing, and had fixed upon Kilkee as a scene of operations. At length, when ingenious conjecture was utterly exhausted, it was positively ascertained to the astonishment and amusement of the *habitants* of Kilkee, that a private individual was author of the documents, and that though he was not Lord Clarendon, nor yet a functionary from the Castle – he was a pious propagandist of new-fangled doctrines – an Apostle of New Light – an adventurous [DARBYITE](#), who, wonderful to say, had long vegetated in Tipperary of all other places in the world, and fixed first upon Kilkee as the theatre of action. The gentleman rejoices in the large clan name of Ryan; and to promote his own bodily, and the spiritual health of the natives of Kilkee, he had visited the place and resolved to inoculate sojourners and residents with his particular tenets; and instruct them in the right way of arriving at bliss. The Kilkeeonians are not stiff-necked; they are wax to receive and

Marble to retain; they are docile and eager for heavenly admonition; and they sought out the Apostle, and decorously addressing him, asked him to propound. This of course was his object; and the great good man consenting, the “Amphitheatre” was chosen as the place for holding forth. The day, the hour, and the spot so appointed, thither he repaired, and there was followed by a considerable audience, thirsty for knowledge, burning with eagerness, celestially intent, but humanly curious to behold the development of that purifying light, of which the Apostle promised to afford the first revelation. The sacred writings told him, and we know it to be true, that the Christian Church was reared on a rock, for its foundation; and remembering the precedent it WAS upon a rock the [Darbyite](#) missionary took his stand, when he essayed to establish *his* church at Kilkee. It was a truly striking picture; – the [Darbyite](#) perched on the elevated mass of *green* stone; the crowd grouped below looking up in all wonderment; and near at hand just outside the rim of the “Amphitheatre,” the ocean rolling and roaring, dashing and splashing down upon the shore. The Apostle began; the Ocean wouldn’t stop; the Apostle exclaimed, the Ocean spoke more loudly! The Apostle raised his voice, the sullen ocean grumbled! The Apostle shouted lustily; the vocal ocean roared! No word could be heard. The Apostle gesticulated; he stamped the rock with vehemence; he disclaimed *just* like Demosthenes by the sea-side in a storm; but it was all to no purpose; lungs couldn’t stand it; and the hoarse spiritual orator baffled by the harsher surge, paused for a while to look at his auditory. Had he looked at them narrowly he might have detected disconcerted indications. In many an eye the merry twinkle was furtively dancing; and many a mouth was half distended with a rather palpable grin. But his mind was above; he did not observe them; and the moment being favourable, a woman approached him for the purpose of ministering to his personal comfort. She carried on her head a large basket of perriwinkles: she proffered them with gravity; she asked him to feast, but he was a scorner of things fishy and fleshy, and he rejected the boon with a wave of his hand. The celtic

woman was offended; her proper pride was roused; and seizing the basket in an adroit manner, she disburthened it at once; and the head of the apostle received – not manna from Heaven, but a shower of perriwinkles that fell pettering on his castor, like big hail from the clouds. Loud then was the shout that rose from the “Amphitheatre” – ringing and resounding was the almost inextinguishable burst; the hoarse surge itself was not hoarse enough to drown it. It startled the seagulls that floated near the shore; and reaching the censorium of the poor human gull upon the rock, he, like them darted from the scene; surpassing, though unwinged, the speed with which they left the re-echoing amphitheatre and its humbuggers behind. – *Limerick Examiner*.

{I have not been able to track down this article in the *Limerick Examiner*.}

Roscommon Weekly Messenger, 27 Sep 1848, p. 4

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN OR DARBYITES. – A division has taken place amongst the Darbyites in England, on the subject of the ministry; some contending for the necessity of it, others denying it.

THINGS GREAT AND SMALL.

{...} We had heard often enough of the “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” and we ever understood that they justified to the full Swift’s remark that Dissenters were schismatics in temporals as well as in spirituals,* but we were not prepared, we confess, to find these Brethren pronouncing themselves Church of England men, and simulating a reverence even for Episcopacy itself. However, in Plymouth, where, as we understand,

“Serious footmen advertise for place,
Full six feet high, and thriving babes of grace,”

all sorts of anomalies are perhaps to be looked for. {...}

* It is well known that the “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” are, in their temporal views, attached disciples of that amiable philanthropist, M. Barbes. They discover the root of all social evils in the institution of property. They are, in short, Communists. The following anecdote has been circulated in reference to their views in this respect. A young lady, a daughter of an English clergyman, formed an attachment to a member of the sect. She was entitled to property to the amount of 400*l.* a year on her marriage, provided such marriage was contracted with the assent of her father. This assent was readily given, on the understanding that the property was settled upon the young lady herself, or at least that some arrangements were made to insure its not being absorbed into the *corpus vile* of the [Brethren’s](#) joint-stock fund. To this the community loudly objected. Such a thing was never heard of, and many a holy text was launched at the unhappy head of the unbelieving father, who persisted in his resolution. However, his threat that he would exercise his plenary authority at last terminated the dispute, and the [Brethren](#) agreed that an exception should be made in favour of a young lady with four hundred a year! The near relative of a London banker was a prime mover in these discreditable “proceedings.”

The Western Times, Exeter, 17 Nov 1849, p. 7, Dawlish, Petty Sessions, Nov 10

AN ERRING BROTHER.

Mary Ann Curtis, aged 19, daughter of Mr. S. Curtis, tailor, of the parish of Dawlish, attended to swear an illegitimate child on WILLM. ENGLAND, baker, of Brook-street, Teignmouth, and one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The girl had been living in the family of the defendant, who is a married man and has a large family, as a servant, and she dated the commencement of the intimacy from the 3rd of August, 1848, from which time up to nearly the time of her leaving, about two months before Christmas, the connexion was of very frequent occurrence. The charge was fully proved, and an order was made on the defendant for 2s per week. [Our correspondent says, that “public opinion is hardly satisfied with the order of the magistrate. The defendant has always been a most devout professor of extreme religious opinion. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) have again received him amongst them.]

The Western Times, Exeter, 10 Aug 1850, p. 5

The [Plymouth Brethren](#), who begun by calling themselves a perfect church, have divided themselves into so many sections, that it is proposed to call them the old Plymouth, the new Plymouth, the high Plymouth, and the low Plymouth.

Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, Exeter, 21 Sep 1850, p. 5, Dawlish

On Sunday, a number of persons were congregated near the Parade, where a Mr. Soltau, one of the new lights, or [Plymouth Brethren](#), was expatiating from the Acts of the Apostles. His harangue was of the ordinary blasphemous character. The people of Dawlish, he said, were as bad as the people of Athens, they were worshipping the Unknown God, but he evidently knew little of the principles he professed to teach.

DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT OF A "MORMONITE." – Margaret Holloway, a young woman of respectable appearance, made complaint to the Magistrates of ill-usage she received from her husband on the previous evening.

It was only on Monday week that the complainant's husband appeared before the bench on a similar charge, and the case was then dismissed, as he promised to behave better in future to his wife. It appears that Holloway belongs to that peculiar sect of religionists, known as the "Mormonites," and failing in making a convert of his wife, who is member of an equally peculiar body, the "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," he has subjected her to all kinds of annoyance, and occasionally rough treatment. He renewed his violence on Tuesday evening, without the slightest provocation having been given by her.

The Mayor said, that the man having broken the promise he made to the Magistrates last week, he should feel it to be his duty to afford this woman every protection, and would issue a warrant for his immediate apprehension.

The warrant was put into the hands of an officer at a subsequent part of the day, and then he learnt that Holloway had left per train that morning for Bristol.

The defendant was a nut and bolt maker at the Katesgrove Iron Works, and was in the receipt of 30s. to 2*l.* per week.

The Warder, Dublin, 16 Apr 1853, p. 1

In a few days will be Published, price 1s.,

THE HAYNAU OF THE **DARBYTES**; being an Exposure of the Dark Doings of the Religious Rabble called

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

The profits of this Work are intended to create a Fund to protect and aid a Victim of one of the Principals of the above Sect in resisting a most infamous and obstinate persecution; and it is earnestly hoped that Christians who have been shocked at the atrocities of a Foreign Tyrant will now record their testimony against an equally cruel and ferocious fanatic in Ireland.

Subscribers' names will be received by Mr. D. E. HEFFERNAN, C.E., at his Offices, 44, Lower Sackville-street, and 77, Middle Abbey-street, Dublin.

CASE OF MR. ALEXANDER, OF EDINBURGH.

Lord PALMERSTON, in answer to Mr. Bright on the subject of the committal of Mr. Alexander, of Edinburgh, a member of the “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” to prison for 30 days, for refusing to take an oath in a court of justice, stated that the sect in question was not exempted in law from the obligation of taking an oath. The case of Mr. Alexander, however, would be looked into, to see how far the imprisonment may not be shortened.

NEWTOWNLIMAVADY QUARTER SESSIONS.

The Assistant-Barrister was occupied on Friday and Saturday last, hearing the case of Donaghey v. the Rev. David Perry, a missionary and teacher of the sect called Brethren, Christians, [Plymouth Brethren](#), and [Darbyites](#). Plaintiff's daughter, a young girl of nineteen years of age, was servant to defendant, and had a child after leaving his service. The action was brought for £40 damages. The jury, after sitting three hours, disagreed, and were discharged at ten o'clock on Saturday night. The case had been already tried in Derry, and owing to a similar disagreement, there being nine for plaintiff and three for defendant, was adjourned. In this case ten jurors were for plaintiff and two for defendant. – We made arrangements to have a special report of the plaintiff's case, which was heard on Friday, but through some mistake, it has not reached us. Our own Reporter was present on Saturday, and has full notes of that day's proceedings. We will return to the subject. The case now stands over for the Assizes. A great deal of interest was exhibited in the matter, and the Rev. Mr. Perry was accompanied to the court by the Rev. Mr. Lancey and several others of the "Christian community." The girl's case was ably conducted by Messrs. Haydon, Proctor, and Lane, Alexander Curry, Esq., counsel, with Mr. Henry M'Cay, solicitor, defended the Rev. Mr. Perry.

The Dublin Evening Mail, 17 Sep 1856, p. 2

A NEW RELIGIOUS SECT. – A fashionable lady, who is more conversant with matters appertaining to the gaities of high life than with those which relate to theological beliefs, was lately deploring the number of religious sects which exist, and was especially distressed at the idea that the number was still increasing. Among the new sects, she added, which had recently sprung up, there were two to which she principally objected, namely, “The [Plymouth Brethren](#),” and “The Yarmouth Bloaters.”

Yeovil Times and Sherborne Mercury [BNA *Sherborne Mercury*],
Sherborne, 4 Nov 1856, p. 4, Miscellaneous

A NEW SECT. – A fashionable lady, who is more conversant with matters pertaining to the gaities of high life than with those which relate to theological beliefs, was lately deploring the number of religious sects which exist, and was especially distressed at the idea that the number was still increasing. Among the new sects, she added, which had recently sprung up, there were two to which she particularly objected, namely, “The [Plymouth Brethren](#),” and “The Yarmouth Bloaters.”

{Between 17 Sep and 3 Dec 1856, this anecdote appeared in at least 28 newspapers held by the British Newspaper Archive. See also the articles of 22 Nov 1867, 21 Jan 1882, 17 Jan 1889, 21 Jul 1891, 24 Mar 1892, 16 May 1896, 21 Dec 1906 and 6 Mar 1956 in the present selection.}

A MYSTERIOUS TRAGEDY IN IRELAND. – On Friday, at the Broadstone terminus of the Midland Great Western Railway, Ireland, the body of Mr. George Little, the cashire of the company, was discovered in his office, with the throat cut in a frightful manner. Some hundreds of pounds in gold, silver, and notes were found piled upon the table. It is stated that the deceased was of a melancholy and religious turn, and that he belonged to the sect called [Derbyites](#) {sic} or [Plymouth Brethren](#). He was a man of exemplary character. The surgeons who made the post mortem examination of the body report that the deceased was murdered. The coroner's jury have returned a verdict of "Wilful murder" against some person or persons unknown. This is a most mysterious murder.

The King's County Chronicle, Offaly, 5 Aug 1857, p. 3

ACCIDENT TO [WILLIAM H DARBY](#), ESQ. AND MRS DARBY OF LEAP CASTLE. – On Friday last, Mrs and Mr Darby had left Leap Castle to drive in a poney phaeton; when they were on the road at Longford they were met by a number of cars returning from a funeral, which alarmed the poney and it ran off. The phaeton was overturned and the shaft broken. Mr and Mrs Darby were each severely injured, especially the latter, which occurred to her in consequence of her efforts to save one of her children, who was in the carriage. We are happy to learn that though the injuries are severe, no permanent bad results are probable {sic}. The feeling of regret at this accident is general, there being few so much respected and esteemed as this gentleman and his lady.

The King's County Chronicle, Offaly, 12 Aug 1857, p. 3

It affords us much pleasure to learn that Mr and Mrs Darby of Leap Castle, are recovering from the effects of the injuries received by the overturning of their poney phaeton, as mentioned in our last. Mr Darby is able to leave the house, but Mrs Darby is still confined to her room.

SOUTHMOLTON. – *Singular Proceedings in a Chapel.* – On Sunday morning last the Baptist chapel in this town was the scene of rather extraordinary conduct. It seems that the presiding minister, the Rev. Mr. Little, left a few weeks since on his wedding tour without having made any arrangements for carrying on the services of the Chapel during his absence. On Sunday the deacons availed themselves of the assistance of Mr. R. Ware, of Barnstaple, who was about to commence the service, when Mr. Little, who had only returned the previous evening, entered the chapel, and, walking up to the pulpit, ordered the astonished occupant to quit it. The congregation looked on in amazement, wondering what would take place next. Mr. Ware, however, very quietly surrendered his post and left the chapel, accompanied by the bulk of the members present, who thus unequivocally testified their sense of the rev. gentleman's conduct. Mr. Ware and those who left with him at once adjourned to the Rooms occupied by the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

A MOST REMARKABLE CIRCUMSTANCE. – One day last week a rather sudden death occurred {sic} in Berrington-street, in this city, which was preceded by a remarkable and almost incredible circumstances {sic}. At the residence of Mr. Bannister, builder, in the locality we have referred to, lodged an elderly and, as the sequel will show, rather eccentric woman, named Mary Lewis. Not far distant from Mr. Bannister's abode lives Mr. George Trilloe, a baker. Mr. Trilloe had a valuable and favourite cat which he highly prized, and between "Pussy" and the woman, Lewis, a mutual attachment seems to have subsisted. "Pussy" was the frequent visitor of the old lady, who was wont frequently to feed her and caress her. Unfortunatly {sic} for "puss," and unfortunately for the old lady, Mr. Bannister is about to change his place of residence, and of course, as was his duty, had informed the old lady of his intentions. Although, we believe, he was quite willing to receive his lodger as an inmate of his fresh habitation when he should have removed from the old one, yet there was one circumstance which seemed to hang upon the old lady's mind, and that was the prospect of losing the society of Mr. Trilloe's favourite cat. She was often heard to address the cat and to say to her "Poor pussy! I don't know what you will do when I am gone;" and we believe this pathetic lamentation over her dumb companion was uttered but a short time before the hand of death was upon her. We hear that the old lady, though respectable, was poor; and, as she belonged to the "[Hallites](#)" or "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," she was often visited by some of the members of that religious society, and received from them that kindness and assistance which they are proverbial for bestowing upon those who are of the same "household of faith." On the day particularly referred to, which was the last the old lady was destined to spend in this world, a noise, as of something failing, was heard in the bedroom, of which little notice was taken, as it was conjectured that she was packing up her goods preparatory

to going to fresh lodgings. One of her friends soon afterwards, however, called and asked if she were at home, and on being answered in the affirmative, as she had been heard up stairs just before, the visitor proceeded to the room, but could not at first gain admittance. This at length being effected the old lady was found on the floor with her head underneath the grate. She was not dead, but the hand of death was strong upon her. She never spoke afterwards, and was, as we have been informed, a corpse at five o'clock on the following morning. Mr. Kidley, surgeon, and we believe another gentleman were called in, and their satisfactory cause of her death accounts for the coroner's inquest having been held on her remains. But now comes the strangest part of our tale, the part which will cause some "Thomas-a-Didymus to be struck with unbelief and to cause some curious contemporary to exclaim, perchance, "this is only the work of a 'Penny a Liner!' Let the sceptics then inquire for themselves and they will find our apparently romantic tale substantially true. Enquiries were made for Mr. Trilloe's cat, it was lost, and the loss was regretted. In the old lady's room was found a bucket of water which it was ascertained had been supplied to her by a neighbour a short time before the fatal attack. Shortly afterwards was found a basket in which was discovered the defunct body of "poor puss," laid out and carefully covered over with a white cloth. The body of the animal was wet and it was evident that the old lady had procured the bucket of water for the purpose of drowning her favourite, which she seemed to think would fare badly when she had left the locality, and whose contemplated ill treatment she thought she would put an end to by putting a close to her existence. The cause of the old lady's death now only remains to be considered; and whether it proceeded from excitement arising from disease of the heart, or whether it was produced by "apoplexy" from leaning over the fire to dry her clothes, we are at a loss to conjecture. As we before stated an inquest was held over her remains, and the medical gentleman who attended her previous to death can doubtless give a very satisfactory account.

Bristol Police Court.

YESTERDAY.

Magistrates present: Messrs. Barrow, Herapath, and Lunell.

{...}

ROBBING AN EMPLOYER. – John Mountain, a boy in the employ of Messrs. Naish and Co., Castle-street, was charged with stealing 2s. 7½d. from the till of that firm. A dilemma occurred in this case in consequence of the only witness, John Downs, an assistant in the firm, refusing to be sworn. Witness stated that he was connected with the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and his religious principles forbade his being sworn. He could not give any special reason, but he had never been placed in such a predicament before.

Mr. Brice said that probably his objections were conscientious, but he would caution him that by thus refusing to be sworn, he would not be fulfilling his duty to his employers, whose property could be stolen from them without the possibility of redress.

Witness – We are commanded in the Bible to swear not at all.

Mr. Williams – But this is a lawful oath in a Court of Justice, and for the purpose of furthering the claims of justice.

Mr. Brice – The magistrates would be sorry to be compelled to use the stringent measures the law allowed in such a case, but by refusing to take a lawful oath in a court of justice you render yourself liable to imprisonment.

Mr. Naish attended, and stated that he was not aware of the conscientious objections the witness had to swearing, but he thought it right to state that he considered him an honest, conscientious, upright man. Mr. Naish, being a member of the Society of Friends, was then affirmed, and deposed what he knew of the robbery, stating that he believed he could produce sufficient evidence to prove the case if the magistrates adjourned it for a day or two.

The prisoner was then remanded, the Magistrates expressing a hope that the witness would, in the meantime, reconsider his objections with regard to swearing.

{...}

The Banner of Ulster, Belfast, 21 Aug 1860, p. 4, Summary of News

WILLIAM MOSS, a preacher amongst the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at Wednesbury, who has lately manifested indications of unsoundness of mind, jumped from his bed-room window the other day, but was not fatally injured.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

Modern society has seen innumerable attempts to create within its bosom an alien society, conducted on different principles, and yet only thriving by its sustaining care. In a country where individuals exercise so much freedom, and where the Bible is so widely read as in England, nothing can be more natural than that these alien groups should connect their existence with some portion of Scriptural history which they think neglected by the world around them. Especially the dream of a pure, united, peaceful Early Church comes across the minds of those who are pondering over the records of early Christianity, and the picture drawn of the first Christians in the Acts of the Apostles is taken to furnish an example for the life of all Christians in all ages. At present the [Plymouth Brethren](#) afford the most conspicuous instance of a body separated off from society at large by a disposition to see the only true type of society in the community of early Christians. The Quakers used to be a much more striking example in the early days of their history; but now there is something grotesque in a rich comfortable banker, who forces early pines and is particular about the matching of his carriage-horses, thinking himself more like the ideal early Christian than his neighbours because he uses an obsolete form of the personal pronoun. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) do really try to carry out their programme. They especially adhere to the community of goods which distinguished the early Church, and they literally share among each other all, or nearly all, they have beyond the mere necessities of life. Of course different individuals have different notions as to what necessities are, but, as a general rule, we may say that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) share their worldly possessions and devote a very large portion of their time to spiritual exercises. They also live,

clearly as any of these societies within societies ever lived, by the help of the society from which they differ. The Quakers could advocate in comfort the doctrine that war was unlawful, because they lived in a nation sufficiently warlike to preserve them from the consequences of their own doctrines. The [Plymouth Brethren](#), in like manner, are almost exclusively, we believe, persons of small private fortune, and without active employment. They get from the society with which they disagree the goods that furnish them with an opportunity of carrying out their theory; and the whole machinery of society which permits them to go through their spiritual exercises in tranquillity is carried on for them by others.

It is evident that [Plymouth Brethren](#), if they rested on their right to remain apart from general society on the plea that they leavened it with good, would really occupy exactly the position of a monastic body. They happen, indeed, to be often like monks, and yet in a worse position than that of monks. For monks acknowledge the impossibility of men at once cutting themselves off from society and remaining in it, and do not connect themselves with their lay fellows by any strong personal ties. But the [Plymouth Brethren](#) often ally themselves, or are already allied, by the strongest personal ties to other people. They are husbands and fathers, and are apt to be very indifferent ones. For they are in a wrong position, and do not know what to make of it. Are they to educate their children, and put them out in the world? Practically, they scruple to say that they ought not, and yet they cannot set about it heartily. The moment they begin to busy themselves with the instructions of their children in secular learning, and to cast about for a good opening for them, they begin to sever themselves from their own little society. How can a man who thinks he ought to share all things in common, and spend his time in spiritual exercises, take care that his daughter has a good French accent, and that his son should get into a house of business likely to push him! Either he

neglects his family, or his family corrupt the pure do-nothing, have-nothing atmosphere of his society. Therefore there is an objection to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) which there is not to other monastic bodies, while the objection that lies against all monastic bodies may be urged against them. They do not do the greatest amount of good that lies in their power. If experience has settled anything, it has settled that the good done by those who mix with society, and strive to take it as it is, and make it better, is greater than the good done by those who hold themselves aloof from society. We cannot say that monks and [Plymouth Brethren](#) are not as good as the best of men, but they do not do the most good. There is thus a definite point on which their excellence falls short, and this would, we think, be a sufficient argument in itself to shake their position. – *Saturday Review*.

{The *Saturday Review* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

A TROUBLESOME MEMBER OF A CONGREGATION. – A female, a widow, named Elizabeth Jennings, and residing about four miles from Bristol, in the direction of St. George's, was brought up for annoying Major Tireman, residing at Buckingham-vale, Clifton. At first the complainant was not present, and as the woman refused to promise not to repeat the offence, the Magistrates being unwilling to decide upon the case without his evidence, the Major was sent for. The gallant complainant, who is, we believe, a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), stated that he had a chapel in St. Philip's, where he preached the gospel; the prisoner had been in the habit of attending his services regularly for three years, walking in early in the morning and in the evening, a distance of four miles, to be present. Of late, however, she had been very eccentric, and annoyed him by calling at his house at Clifton, and ringing the bell at all hours. Considering her to be of unsound mind, he was unwilling to give her in custody, until the annoyance became intolerable. Thursday night he was returning to his residence, when the prisoner met him, and, abruptly addressing him, said – "Major Tireman, I'll stand this no longer; you know I am appointed by God to save souls, and you must no longer bring to your church those stinking w—s." He passed on, but she followed him to his residence, where she rang the house bell, and called out so loudly in a similar strain to the speech she had already made to him, that he was reluctantly compelled, on her annoying the neighbours, to send for the police, and give her in charge, the annoyance having gone on so long. Subsequently she was discharged from custody at his wish, but returned to his house and repeated the offence, when she was again handed over to the police.

The woman, who evidently was out of her mind, denied the charge in an incoherent manner, saying that, though the Major “preached the best doctrine under heaven,” all he had just stated was untrue, and added something about his being bound to marry her.

The Magistrates had her remanded, with the view, should the impression of her insanity be confirmed, of having her committed to a lunatic asylum.

The Isle of Wight Observer, Ryde, 23 Feb 1861, p. 3

PREACHING IN A THEATRE. – On Sunday evening and on Wednesday afternoon and evening Mr. Andrew Miller, belonging to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), preached sermons in the theatre {sic} to crowded congregations. We do not like this appropriation, for, as somebody pertinently remarked, one would as soon think of going to a church to witness a play, as to a theatre to hear a sermon.

Rodney Stoke.

OPEN AIR PREACHING. – On Tuesday last the Rev. — Heath, of Bristol, of the “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” preached a sermon at the ancient market cross in this village, selecting as his text Acts xvii. 30, 31. The rev. gentleman’s discourse was impressive, and was listened to with marked attention by a numerous and respectable audience; but scarcely had he returned thanks for the courtesy he had received than, we are sorry to say, some of the roughs of the place got up a dog fight, causing quite a disturbance. Where are the police?

SECESSION. – We are sorry to notice an occurrence which shows how essentially necessary it is that a strict surveillance should be observed over our parochial schools in connexion with the Church of England. For some time our church national day and Sundays schools, have been ably supported, and we were not aware but they were under the superintendence of a mistress of pure orthodox principles. Recently, however, a teacher in the Sunday School has been led away by a sect which numbers only a very few followers in the town, the [Plymouth brethren](#). We believe he has likewise succeeded in inducing the late mistress of the school to become a follower of the same persuasion. So far we can find no fault, as probably they have both followed the dictates of their conscience; but whilst receiving the pay of the Established Church as the teacher of the rising flock, she admitted one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) to the school, and the children were addressed by him. These proceedings could not, of course, long remain undiscovered, and another mistress has been obtained. The rector feelingly touched on this subject in a discourse of extraordinary ability on Sunday morning last, and whilst expressing his regret that the unwary had been drawn from the fold of his church, he enforced on his hearers the beauties and simplicity of our Liturgy, the excellency of our church government, and its exact resemblance to the government instituted by the Apostles, and assured them that in that church they possessed indeed “a goodly heritage.” We believe the rev. gentleman has been urgently asked to publish the sermon, and we trust he will accede to the request.

OPEN AIR PREACHING. – Last Sunday evening, one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), following the example of the Bible Christians and Particular Baptists, held a service under the lamp-post on the Esplanade. Suppose if Roman Catholics were to begin thus to proselytise by obstructing the highways and disturbing the peace with processions of the “host,” would not these various sects be foremost in invoking the aid of the law to put such practices down? As there is no lack of consecrated and unconsecrated, licensed and unlicensed, places in the town for decent observance of religion, we will suggest a text for the next street preacher, “Do unto others,” &c. Our “saving clause” is, we view this and all other questions as civilians, not as theologians; so maintain that public highways ought not to be obstructed to suit the caprice of individuals.

The Western Times, Exeter, 19 May 1863, p. 8, Bideford

The [Plymouth Brother](#), who has been holding forth here lately, lectured again on Friday evening at the Mansion House. The bills requested that “no unconverted sinner was to attend.” There were few of any sort present. The subject was “What is the Church – its condition – and what it should be.”

The Western Flying Post [BNA Sherborne Mercury], Sherborne, 1 Dec 1863, p. 3

EAST COKER. – On Sunday week, seven persons belonging to the congregation of [Plymouth Brethren](#) were publicly baptised by Mr. Joseph Stancombe, in a cistern of water in the open air. Three of the candidates were Mr. Stancombe's boarders, two others, namely, Maria Lucas and Sarah Nutford, were married women, and Mary Ann Pudden and John Parsons. The last named being a very stout gentleman nearly capsized the party officiating, which raised a smile in the countenance of the lookers-on. A large concourse of spectators were present to witness the novel proceedings.

The Western Gazette, Yeovil, 26 Dec 1863, p. 3

EAST COKER.

On Sunday morning last, seven persons, four of whom were females and three males, were publicly baptised by immersion; the ceremony having being {sic} performed by Mr. Stancomb the minister of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), of this place. Of those who then made a public profession of their faith, two were very young – we should judge, from their appearance, not more then {sic} 12 or 13 years of age. The rite was performed at the baptistery, which is situated in a plot of ground adjoining the “room.” A considerable number of persons were present; we regret that some of these did not appreciate the solemnity of the occasion, their unbecoming behaviour calling forth reproofs from Mrs. Stancomb. The morning was a very cold one; and we could not help feeling that the sudden plunging of

a female into the water must cause a considerable shock to her nervous system. Yet, this did not appear to be the case; so we presume that the fervour of the religious enthusiasm of the candidates, must have rendered them insensible to any such physical inconvenience. It was only a few Sundays ago that several others were baptised at East Coker; it is, therefore, obvious that, here at least, the “Brethren” are rapidly increasing in numbers.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.
NINTH DAY. – WEDNESDAY.

{...}

MEMORIAL FROM THE REV. MR. STEWART, LATE OF STAFFORD.

Dr. KIRKPATRICK read a memorial from the Rev. Mr. Stewart, who formerly belonged to the Dublin Presbytery, and who went to Stafford, where he was minister of a Presbyterian congregation. He afterwards attached himself to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He now saw his errors, the memorial stated, and wished to be taken into connection with the General Assembly. Dr. Kirkpatrick read letters from the Rev. Dr. Munro, of Manchester, and others, bearing testimony to his high character and worth, and Dr. Cooke and Mr. Speers testified to his excellence as a minister of the Gospel. On the suggestion of Dr. Dill the application was referred to the Dublin Presbytery, to consider whether they should take him into conection {sic} with the Church.

{...}

REV. C. H. SPURGEON ON THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#). – “[Plymouth Brethrenism](#) is as bad as all these [Established Church and other denominations] put together. Wherever our churches have been established, there are always [Plymouth Brethren](#), who have come out from the Established Church or from Presbyterianism. They agree with us to a great extent, but they are sure as soon as ever the Church has risen to a state of something like stability to create a schism amongst us. (Cheers.) Of all sects they are the most sectarian; of all Christians the most unchristian in their spirit; of all separatists they are the most separated from others; and yet of all men I will say personally they are the best of men. I am on terms of personal intimacy with very many among the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and I respect them as men; but whenever they enter our churches they cause divisions, for their spirit is division. Without a minister the churches never grow, and never will grow. I believe the ministry is God’s agency, and where that is despised we shall never see the power of God’s Spirit poured forth to any great extent. But these people will not hear ministers, and, consequently, though the services may be profitable to the few believers, they never will be attractive to the outside world. I would prefer, above all things, to spend my Sabbaths with Christian people, in breaking bread and prayers. It would just suit my flesh. It is just what my carnality pants for, for I can tell you I do not find it always easy to go into the pulpit and face the mass of people. I have a considerable lazy bump on my head, and should be glad to have the opportunity of sitting still sometimes. But a church will not last without a minister – it will soon go to pieces. These friends have a perfect right to secede from us and hold their own views and principles, but inasmuch as they have always amalgamated with our churches, and then seceded, causing heartburnings and bitterness and I know not what, I can but look upon them as hindrances to the spread of the Gospel.”

OTHERY.

PLYMOUTH BRETHRENISM AT THE PARISH CHURCH. – A correspondent writes as follows. We do not necessarily endorse his opinions: – Last Sunday week, several of the above fraternity attended the above church, and partook of the Holy Sacrament. We thought that it was contrary to the laws and usage of the Church of England for a clergyman to administer Holy Communion to such schismatics and heretics as the [Plymouthists](#), especially they being non-parishioners. Again, it seems, after all, that the [Brethren](#) do value a stated ministry, and that of the Established Church in particular; for they might have had the Holy Sacrament administered to them by some Dissenting minister, if they did not think it valid enough in their “room” at Langport. At all events, we hope that the Rev. Mr. Roberts was satisfied that all the parties had been duly baptized and confirmed, and had also repented of their heretical notions and schismatic practices.

The Western Gazette, Yeovil, 1 Oct 1864, p. 3

OTHERY.

To the Editor of "The Western Gazette."

SIR, – You will oblige me by correcting an erroneous statement in your paper of the 24th to the effect "that several of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have attended the parish church of Othery and partaken of the Holy Communion."

It is quite unknown to me if any of that sect have been among my congregation. I am sure that none but communicants of long standing in the Church of England have come to the Lord's table.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,

HENRY ROBERTS.

Othery Vicarage, 27th Sept., 1864.

To the Editor of "The Western Gazette."

Sir, – I think that doctrinal discussions are out of place when received into your columns; they ought not to be sought there, and it should be matter of surprise when they are found there. I mean long-winded and wire-drawn discussions as of Baptism and Apostolic Succession. I would leave the descendants of the apostles to glory in their fancied distinction, and all the world to laugh at them.

But yet the public acts of religious professors, especially when attended with marked peculiarities, appear to me very proper subjects of local intelligence. Of this kind and class I particularly regard an article in your last *Gazette*, of a company of [Plymouthists](#) coming from Langport to take the sacrament in the parish church of Othery; and a vote of thanks is due to the correspondent who communicated that spicy scrap of ecclesiastical intelligence, especially with the suggestions which accompanied the said article.

It has been understood that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have a ceremony substitutional for the Holy Sacrament, and with which many have been content; but whether this has been proved defective, or a charge desired, or whether the said stray communicants have seceded from the flock at the Langport room, does not appear, and information on the point would be appreciated. I should like also to know, if your correspondent himself regards the [Plymouthists](#) as schismatics and heretics or if he means they are usually so regarded by the Church of England. On the latter hypothesis, it is certainly remarkable that such characters as schismatics and heretics should be welcomed to the highest privilege of fellowship in that church. But if starving at home, was it necessary to journey five miles in order to gather a few crumbs? There is a parish church at Langport, and a Congregational church also. Would neither of these do for the occasion, or would the said parties be welcome

at neither? These questions have a public bearing; therefore, “Mind your own business,” would not be a sufficient, proper and present answer.

And the worthy vicar of Othery – I could wish that your next and forthcoming number of the *Gazette* may be honoured, and your very numerous readers instructed, by learning from him whether those persons, the [Plymouthists](#) from Langport to whom he administered the Holy Sacrament, had ever been duly regenerated in Baptism, and received the grace of responsibility by the rite of Confirmation; or whether these things are of no consequence, and may be thus occasionally dispensed with. Apologising for intrusion, and patiently waiting for further light on this interesting subject,

I am, Sir, yours &c.,

LECTOR.

[“Lector” will see, from the letter which precedes his own, that the statement on which his queries and speculations are founded is authoritatively {sic} denied.]

BARNSTAPLE.

NORTH DEVON ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

The Ministers and Delegates from the fourteen churches included in the above Association, held their Autumnal Meeting in Barnstaple, on Wednesday last (yesterday). {...}

Rev. W. CLARKSON offered a few practical remarks on the several topics introduced in the speech of the Chairman. He remarked on the strength of the social bond among the Wesleyans, who thereby robbed the Independent churches. If Wesleyan pulpits were filled by men of mediocre talents, called local preachers, during the absence or illness of the Minister, their chapels would still be filled, and that Sunday after Sunday; but if Mr. Coster or himself (Mr. Clarkson) placed such men in their pulpits their chapels would soon be deserted. (A laugh.) He did not say this to the prejudice of the Wesleyans, but to shew the effect of the societizing principle and how firmly they were united together. The same might be said of the Brethren. When first they started at Plymouth, they adopted the idea of a community of interests. A Plymouth brother took hold of a man and said, "I have a table, come and sit down. I have a house, come and take a bed. I have money in my pocket, come and share it." Thus they made their way and won converts to Brethrenism; but by so doing they also detached members from the Congregationalists. He would have them to profit by experience: they might be assured that Independency would get on better if the members were cemented together by the power of Christian love. Religion must be social to be influential; it was so in the days of our Lord and in the first ages of Christianity, and they should ardently desire and pray for more of the primitive spirit. (Cheers.)

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AT CREDITON.

The Holy War between the two sections of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), is still raging here, to the scandal of pious souls. The difference between the two bodies is very slight in outward aspect, as is often the case in disputes of unusual asperity. It is said to be mainly this – whether the elect have imputed righteousness, or imparted righteousness. This is the account given of the difference by an experienced theologian. The seceders in this town have a very able preacher in the person of Mr Le Sœul, of Parks. They have taken the Public Room for Divine service, which is held once on Sunday. The split extends through the North of Devon. The seceders refuse to the {sic} ‘break bread’ with the old orthodox [Brethren](#), and many families are divided by it. This gives much scandal to {sic} religious world. The [Brethren](#) of Exeter are said to be split, on different grounds; but of the split there is no doubt. The [Brethren](#) have done a great deal of good in their time, but the extreme severity of interpretation which they adopt, and the arrogance which some individuals assume, on the ground of their assured salvation, has given pain to the most modest, and not less religious of the [Brethren](#).

The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian, Cardiff, 17 Feb 1865, p. 7

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN. – An amusing story is current in Clifton to the effect that the other day a stranger asked a gentleman if he was going to church. The questioned man replied he was one of the Plymouth Brethren. This apparently much surprised the stranger, who asked if they had any connexion with the “Brothers Davenport.”

AXBRIDGE.

OPEN-AIR PREACHING. – Handbills were posted in this town and neighbourhood a few days ago giving notice that a Mr Baxter would attend in the Marketplace and reveal the mysteries of Holy Writ. He was supported by Mr Mogford, of Cheddar, an elder of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and a very large number congregated there, but the language of the speaker soon caused the more religiously disposed to withdraw from the assembly. Amongst his prognostications he asserted that in the year 1873 the world would be at an end, and that the parish of Cheddar would be destroyed three days before Axbridge, and that he was sure of being on the White Thorne {sic}. His remarks became so outrageous that he was many times hissed and contradicted. The Rev. Mr. Hopper, an Independent minister of this neighbourhood, endeavoured to hold an argument, but Mr. Baxter soon made himself scarce; and the rev. gentleman addressed those present, and controverted the assertions of the would-be-prophet, and plainly showed, by various texts of Scripture, that the doctrine he had attempted to impress on their minds was quite contrary to the Bible. He was very attentively listened to, and after a short exhortation the meeting closed, but was afterwards the principal topic for discussion both in public and private.

A CRUEL HUSBAND.

In the London Divorce Court on Friday, a Mrs Phillips craved to be divorced from her husband, a dentist at Tavistock. She stated that the marriage took place in August 1861, and that four or five months afterwards her husband's conduct began to be peculiar in many respects. He would get up in the middle of the night and leave the room without dressing himself, and be absent for more than an hour. He generally refused to give any explanation of his absence, but on one occasion he told her that he had been assailed by a violent temptation and had gone into the next room to pray. He was formerly an Independent, and afterwards associated himself with the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He expressed very peculiar religious opinions. He insisted on absolute obedience – that of a child to a parent – from her. He allowed no appeal from his judgment, and he insisted on carrying out his views as to the management of their child. Her first child was born in July 1862. He would not allow the child to be in her bedroom, he interfered with its food, and he showed an imperious and tyrannical temper. He contrived after a time to intimate to all her friends that they were not welcome to his house. Her brother came one evening, intending to sleep there, but although there was a bedroom vacant her husband would not allow him to remain. The reason he gave was that he would have no one in the house who did not hold the same religious opinions as himself. There was nothing remarkable about her brother's religious opinions, but they did not agree with those of her husband. During her confinement her husband never came to see her except when she sent for him, and even then very rarely. He avoided every indication of affection. When she was ill he would come suddenly into her room at different hours of the night on some trifling errand or another for the

purpose of frightening her. He would not allow her to fasten the doors, and she could never sleep securely. About three years ago he began to occupy a separate room, and he had done so ever since. He continued to come suddenly into her room at all hours of the night. He had frequently called her "a liar" and "a wicked woman" in the presence of servants and assistants because she did not agree with some of his religious opinions. He used to open her business and other letters after she had written them, and to alter her subscription, "Yours obediently" into "Yours disobediently." In her last confinement he refused to allow her usual medical man to attend her because he was a Unitarian. Her last confinement was in July 1864. He treated her with utter neglect. Mrs Phillips then gave evidence of her husband's ill treatment during the illness which followed this confinement. It was of such a nature that it had seriously aggravated her illness, and her medical man warned him that the consequences might be fatal, and added "If she dies I shall be an awkward witness against you." By the doctor's advice a lady sat up with her for two nights, but on the third night Mr Phillips turned her out of the house at eleven o'clock. His ill treatment continued, and in September Mrs Phillips set on foot an inquiry into his state of mind, but the medical men who examined him were of opinion that he was perfectly sane. She then separated from him, and presented this petition.

The petitioner's evidence was fully corroborated by Mr Leman, the surgeon who had attended her, and who had also examined the respondent with the view of testing his sanity. He had known the respondent ever since he was a schoolboy, and said that he always entertained peculiar opinions and was eccentric, but he showed no symptom whatever of insanity. A nursemaid who had lived in the petitioner's service also corroborated her, and added that on one occasion the respondent had put boiling water in the child's mouth in order to stop its crying.

The JUDGE-ORDINARY said the respondent had been guilty of most unmanly and violent conduct, and as there was no reason to suppose that he would not be guilty of similar conduct if the cohabitation were resumed, the petitioner was entitled to a decree. – Judicial separation decreed, and the custody of the children given to the petitioner.

The Sheffield & Rotherham Independent, Sheffield, 12 Jun 1865, p. 3

DIVORCED FROM A MANIAC.

In the Court of Divorce, on Friday, Mrs. Phillips, who carries on the business of a bookseller and stationer at Tavistock, petitioned for a judicial separation from her husband, a dentist at the same place. Mrs. Phillips stated that the marriage took place in August, 1861, and that four or five months afterwards her husband's conduct began to be peculiar in many respects. He would get up in the middle of the night and leave the room without dressing himself and be absent for more than an hour. He generally refused to give any explanation of his absence, but on one occasion he told her that he had been assailed by a violent temptation and had gone into the next room to pray. He was formerly an Independent, and afterwards associated himself with the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He expressed very peculiar religious opinions. He insisted on absolute obedience – that of a child to a parent – from her. He allowed no appeal from his judgment, and he insisted on carrying out his views as to the management of their child. Her first child was born in July, 1862. He would not allow the child to be in her bedroom, he interfered with its food, and he showed an imperious and tyrannical temper. He contrived after a time to intimate to all her friends that they were not

welcome to his house. Her brother came one evening, intending to sleep there, but although there was a bedroom vacant her husband would not allow him to remain. The reason he gave was that he would have no one in the house who did not hold the same religious opinions as himself. There was nothing remarkable about her brother's religious opinions, but they did not agree with those of her husband. During her confinement her husband never came to see her except when she sent for him, and even then very rarely. He avoided every indication of affection. When she was ill he would come suddenly into her room at different hours of the night on some trifling errand or another for the purpose of frightening her. He would not allow her to fasten the doors, and she could never sleep securely. About three years ago he began to occupy a separate room, and he had done so ever since. He continued to come suddenly into her room at all hours of the night. He had frequently called her "a liar" and "a wicked woman" in the presence of servants and assistants because she did not agree with some of his religious opinions. He used to open her business and other letters after she had written them, and to alter her subscription, "Yours obediently" into "Yours disobediently." In her last confinement he refused to allow her usual medical man to attend her because he was a Unitarian. Her last confinement was in July, 1864. He treated her with utter neglect. Mrs. Phillips then gave evidence of her husband's ill-treatment during the illness which followed this confinement. It was of such a nature that it had seriously aggravated her illness, and her medical man warned him that the consequences might be fatal, and added, "If she dies I shall be an awkward witness against you." By the doctor's advice a lady sat up with her for two nights, but on the third night Mr. Phillips turned her out of the house at eleven o'clock. His ill-treatment continued, and in September Mrs. Phillips set on foot an inquiry into his state of mind, but the medical men who examined him were of opinion that he was perfectly sane. She then separated from him and presented this petition.

The petitioner's evidence was fully corroborated, and judicial separation was decreed, the custody of the children being given to the petitioner.

The Manchester Courier, 13 Jun 1865, p. 4

PIOUS CRUELTY. – A Mrs. Phillips, of Tavistock, has applied for a judicial separation from her husband, a dentist in that town, on the ground of cruelty. Mr. Phillips, it appears, is a [Plymouth Brother](#), and a man who entertains very peculiar views on religious subjects. He would not allow his wife's brother to sleep at his house when he came one night on account of a difference in religious opinions. In Mrs. Phillips's last confinement he would not let her usual medical man attend her because he was a Unitarian. He often called Mrs. Phillips a liar and a wicked woman in the presence of servants, because she did not agree with his religious views. His conduct to her in her last confinement was so cruel that the doctor told him the consequences might be fatal, and that if they were he (the doctor) should be an awkward witness against him. The Judge-Ordinary said Mr. Phillips had been guilty of most unmanly and violent conduct, and granted the judicial separation.

COURT OF PROBATE AND DIVORCE.

JUNE 9.

(Before the Judge Ordinary.)

{...}

PHILLIPS v. PHILLIPS.

Dr. Spinks for the petitioner. The marriage was in 1861, the petitioner being at that time a book-seller, and the respondent a dentist at Tavistock. The respondent had been an Independent, but he became about the time of his wedding a [Plymouth Brother](#). His habits were very peculiar, and he used to insist upon the most implicit obedience from his wife. He also had a habit of getting up in the night and going into an adjoining room, for the purpose of "wrestling with Satan," for an hour or two at a time. Nevertheless his conduct towards the petitioner was shown to have been of a very unmanly character. So extraordinary was it that his wife thought him insane, and applied to two medical men for a certificate in order to have him placed under restraint; and on their refusal she filed her petition.

Judicial separation, with custody of the children of the marriage.

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

Our acquaintance with this sect is slight; and after reading a *Catechism* on their doctrines, by Rev. Thomas Croskery, Presbyterian Minister of Clonakilty, Cork, we should be very cautious of closer relationship. On one occasion we had the favor of an interview with a pair of the disciples, – for we believe they go on the mission in pairs, – and for the credit of our common Protestantism and its various churches, we trust all the Brethren are not like these Brethren. As far as we could judge – but we do not set up as theologians – this pair of evangelists were grossly ignorant of the rudiments of Christianity, as one of them certainly was of the rudiments of secular knowledge. This one, the junior Apostle, knew nothing at all about churches, and yet he ridiculed them all. Reason as we might, he could not understand how any one was stupid enough to be an Episcopalian Protestant, and he looked up to the ceiling and prayed that the ignorant person he was conversing with might be pardoned for that sin; but by-and-bye charity welled up in his heart, and before he would bless or curse any more he coolly asked what was meant by an Episcopalian, humiliatingly acknowledging he had never before heard of such a word. He had come over to enlighten and convert us poor Protestants; and this is a specimen of the knowledge he brought with him to the task. Then we spoke to him about Presbyterianism, and Calvin, and Knox, and he knew as much of the one as the other. Either of the three may have been very good *men*, he observed, but “he had never heard nothing about them.” All that we could get out of the pair as a reason for the faith that is in them – if they have any faith – was misquoted and misapplied Scripture. They refused the right hand of fellowship to their inquisitor, and in charity before we parted they prayed openly for the conversion of the misled, misguided Episcopalian.

Never were we so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of a Christian ministry, educated and set apart for the high and holy office; and never did we feel so ashamed that the liberty which Protestantism vouchsafes was prostrated to such base uses. We could have wished these [Plymouth brethren](#) confined to Plymouth; for we felt that they were sowing broadcast the seeds of a fatal heresy – a heresy which may be a fruitful crop, and whose influence would be to lead men to destruction. We could not even trust the [Plymouth brethren](#), if we had met a fair specimen of the community, to be teachers of morality, because the natural tendency of their system is to confound morality and immorality, so that in their hands you cannot tell which is which. As we understand one of their dogmas, the believer can do no sin. The act which is criminal in the unbeliever, may be committed with impunity by the believer. In the one case it is a vice; in the other it is a virtue, by a false process of reasoning to which the [Brethren](#) resort. Morality and immorality cannot be classified, and would very soon be confounded altogether under such instruction; and the results would be fatal to our present social condition, if we never had any regard to the future. We are not here offering any opinion on will-directed, properly qualified lay effort. We are alluding exclusively to the [{p. 3} Plymouth Brethren](#), which Mr. Croskery's Catechism brought to our memory; and we recommend his *brochure* to all who would learn a great deal that is useful concerning that wily sect and its slipshod teaching. We can believe at once that "we are all teachers now," as the [Brethren](#) say; but that does not mean supplanting the Christian Ministry. We can teach in the sick room, and in the school-room, and in the society-room, and we can teach in private and public by example, the most forcible of all teaching; but we may not ape the minister, nor wander over the kingdom, nor expose our ignorance, nor bring truth into contempt. The beauty and strength, humanly speaking, of the Christian church, is the variety of its officers and the diversity of their gifts, among which we see no room for the [Plymouth](#) peripatetics, as at present constituted.

The Irish Times, Dublin, 23 Sep 1865, p. 3

“BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF JESUS.” – This is one of the latest novelties brought out by the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and is being very prominently put forth by them, especially in Ireland. Some of the leaders in connection with the “Merrion Hall,” Dublin, who have for many years resisted all instruction as to believer’s baptism, have at once been taken by this “novelty,” and have submitted to immersion, in the name of Jesus only. The Rev W Turpin, lately a minister of the Established Church in Dublin, and for a short time in Glasgow, has also been baptized after this fashion. The question was brought before the late meetings of the Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland. On reference for counsel and advice from one of the Churches, whose members had been disturbed by some of the itinerant advocates of this “new thing,” and after a very careful and deliberate consideration of the matter, the association unanimously expressed its disapproval of baptism being so administered, in direct violation of Christ’s command to baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

– BAPTIST FREEMAN.

{*The Baptist Freeman* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

For the first time yesterday a Court of Equity was moved, to prevent two children being brought up in the religious system known as [Plymouth Brethrenism](#). The application (which came before Vice-Chancellor Stuart) was by the Rev. Henry Cadell, Vicar of St. Peter, Colchester, the next friend of the infants, William Frederick Hoyle Newbery and Mary Alma Victoria Newbery, about the age of fifteen and eleven years respectively. The father, who died in 1861, was a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England, but his widow had since his death joined the "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," who were, as described in the affidavits, "Christians meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus," and she was educating, as alleged, her children according to her own views. The mother and the next friend were joint guardians, and they, of course, differed in opinion as to the proper system of education of the infants. The question for the court was as to allowing the mother the custody of the infants. The boy made an affidavit that he had given some attention to religious matters, and conscientiously associated himself with the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and earnestly implored that he might not be taken from his mother's care. He had been and was now under the care of a clergyman of the Church of England. The girl was now with her mother. Evidence was adduced on behalf of the petitioner, Mr. Cadell, who was the joint-guardian named in the will, to the effect that the father was a member and a clergyman of the Church of England. The scheme proposed was that the boy should be sent to school at Wimbledon, and the girl to a school at Abbey Wood. The Vice-Chancellor considered that he had no option in the matter. It was proved that the father was a clergyman of the Church of England, that he died in the faith of that Church, and there could be no reasonable doubt that he would have wished his children to be brought up in its tenets. An order to that effect was therefore made, the details to be settled hereafter in chambers.

Vice-Chancellor Stuart heard an application some time since in the case of two children, a boy and girl of fifteen and twelve years of age respectively, the son and daughter of a deceased clergyman of the Church of England, made on behalf of the Rev. Mr. Caddell, who is co-guardian of the children with their mother, to prevent the latter from bringing them up in the religious system known as [Plymouth Brethrenism](#). It was shown that the father (Mr. Newberry) died in the faith of the Church of England, and there was no reason to suppose that he wished his children to follow any other. For Mrs. Newberry it was contended that the deceased clergyman had shown great liberality towards Dissenters, and it was thence to be inferred that he would not object to what his widow was doing, while as to the children themselves, a statement was put in from the boy to the effect that he felt disposed to attach himself to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The Vice-Chancellor decided that the children must be brought up in the doctrines of the Church of England, and their mother then appealed to the Lords Justices, who gave their decision yesterday confirming the Vice-Chancellor's judgment and dismissing the appeal with costs. Lord Justice Knight Bruce said the proposal of the mother appeared to him to amount to bringing up the children to no religion at all. It had been argued that the court ought to see the children, but it would be useless to do so, for even if they were desirous of joining such a body as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) his lordship would feel it his duty to disregard their wishes. Lord Justice Turner fully concurred with his learned brother, and warned Mrs. Newberry against interfering with the religious education of the children, and against taking them to meetings of the [Brethren](#), as it might become necessary, in that event – a necessity which, he hoped, would never arise – to remove her from the guardianship.

The Pall Mall Gazette, London, 29 May 1866, p. 5

Vice-Chancellor Stuart had before him again yesterday the case of the Newbery children, in which, it will be remembered, the question was whether the children, who had lost their father, should be brought up in his religion – that of the Church of England – or in the faith of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), to which their mother had conformed after her husband's death. Mr. Newbery, who was a clergyman, by his will appointed his widow and a Mr. Cadell (also a clergyman of the English Church) guardians of his children. In December last an order was made, on the application of Mr. Cadell, restraining Mrs. Newbery from taking the children to any place of worship other than one belonging to the Established Church in this country. Mrs. Newbery had, notwithstanding that order, taken them to the meetings of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and an application was now made to the court for an order directing her to deliver the children to Mr. Cadell's care and custody. Application was also made that Mrs. Newbery might be committed to prison if she refused to obey the order now applied for. The Vice-Chancellor made an order directing Mrs. Newbery to deliver her two children to Mr. Cadell on or before twelve o'clock at noon to-day, or, in default, to be committed to prison.

The Pall Mall Gazette, London, 2 Jun 1866, p. 7

Mrs. Newberry, the mother of the children of the late Rev. Mr. Newberry, whose name has so often appeared in Chancery reports lately in connection with her efforts to make the children "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," refuses to obey the order last made upon her by the court to give the children up to the

co-guardian, the Rev Mr. Cadell, notwithstanding she has been threatened with imprisonment. Yesterday, therefore, Vice-Chancellor Stuart made an order that the officer of the court should take the children from their mother by force, and deliver them to Mr. Cadell as asked.

On Sunday last, great excitement was caused here on its becoming known that a public baptism amongst the members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) would take place in the Moor. The weather was cold and rainy, and some doubts were entertained as to whether the ceremony would be postponed till a more convenient season. However, it was evident that it was intended to take place, as several labourers were employed to bay or pen back the water in a brook, which caused considerable damage by the adjoining lands being inundated. At the time appointed in the afternoon, several hundreds of people had congregated together, when it was discovered that the water was too deep, and a great quantity had to be let off, and during the interval a public service was performed. Then commenced the ceremony of immersion. Mr Bickley, of Yeovil, officiated, assisted by Mr Myers, of Bristol. Mr Rogers, a youth in the employ of Mr Green, grocer, of Axbridge, and Mr Broom, shoemaker, of Cheddar, with an old woman of Cheddar, by the name of Hutson, were the converts. A good deal of amusement was occasion {sic} by the difficulty experienced in endeavouring to keep down the woman's dress, which was extended, and became similar to an inflated balloon, and rendered it necessary to perform the ceremony of dipping twice. The parties wore their own clothes. One of the men bolted as soon as he got on *terra firma*, bare-headed, shivering, and dripping wet (he had to go nearly half-a-mile before he had the opportunity of getting a dry suit), while the others were taken back in a coburg.

The Cornish Telegraph, Penzance, 25 Jul 1866, p. 4

BRETHREN DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY. – Mr. Walker, who for many years has been the teacher of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) meeting in the Baptist Chapel, Bitton-street, Teignmouth, has by reason of that body refusing to leave the chapel, though, in his opinion, it does not belong to them, resigned his post, and will soon commence preaching in one of the ante-rooms at the Assembly Rooms. There will then be three parties of [Plymouth Brethren](#) in that small town. – ‘Western Morning News.’

{The 1866 volume of *The Western Morning News* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive. – See also the articles of 16 Jan 1841, 24 Jun 1871 and 13 Jun 1873 in the present selection.}

The Banner of Ulster, Belfast, 28 Aug 1866, p. 3

A FEMALE PREACHER IN LARNE. – Miss O'Callaghan {sic}, a member of the society usually designated as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), preached in Larne one evening last week.

AWFUL CATASTROPHE AT OTTERY.

EIGHT PERSONS KILLED.

On Sunday evening a disaster, a consequence of the great fire, took place, more terrible than even the late conflagration itself. That only destroyed houses and goods – money's worth which money could restore – but this has destroyed no less than eight lives, which no grief or gold can bring back, and injured eight or ten other persons, some of whom, it is feared, will not recover.

There appeared in the streets of Ottery that day a phenomenon – a young woman addressing such of her fellow creatures as chose to listen to her on “righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.” She selected for the place of her pious labour the scene of desolation left by the late destructive fire at the bottom of Tip Hill-street. The accessories were well adapted to make the speaker solemn and the hearers serious. It was a great infraction of religious decorum, and not ordered by any rubric. The nearest like it that anybody could remember was that most beautiful creation of modern fiction, Miss Evans' “Dinah” in *Adam Bede*. The Dinah of this dreadful day was Eliza Hawker, a young woman of Exeter, about 25 years of age. She lives there with her aged grandfather, John de Ville, a name so manifestly French that you will take him for a descendant of the Huguenots. She belongs to the people called [Plymouth Brethren](#), dutifully keeps a clean hearth for her grandfather, and works during the day at a gentleman's house in Clifton-place, Exeter. She had gone to see the wife of Robert Denning, an old friend in the bible class, and while there was “pressed in spirit” to utter her parable amidst the burnt ruins of “Jesu”-street. She had delivered one address in the

afternoon of the day, and about half-past seven in the evening she stationed herself upon a low portion of the broken down front wall of a house at the left hand corner as you come down from Tip Hill-head into the street above named, which was occupied before the fire by Mr. A. Harding, grocer. Opposite, on the other side of the way, once stood the house occupied by Mr. Windover, saddler, now in ruins. The front wall was down, but about fifteen feet back stood a tall brick chimney, all its usual surroundings gone – there it had stood an object menacing the safety of every man and beast which had passed by since the great calamity. A workman on the spot judged it to be 36 feet high; a common observer set it at 30 – either way, a perilous object to be left standing, as was sadly proved. The ground floors near the foundation walls of the chimney had been broken up and the wood removed. On the morning of Sunday there was heavy rain, and the water had accumulated within the area once covered by the floors of the ruined house, to a depth of some twelve or fourteen inches, and was there silently and unconsciously assisting to prepare a treacherous trap for the destruction of many precious lives.

The people whose curiosity, or other motive, induced them to stop to listen to the young woman's discourse, stood on the road and the footpath across the street in front of the speaker, while at their back, as we have said, stood the isolated chimney like a tall traitor prepared, when least expected, to spread death and destruction on all around. After the manner of the [Brethren](#), there had been no preliminary devotional exercises, but a section of Scripture read as the ground of discourse. In the present instance portions of the 6th and 7th chapters of the book of Revelations, and by a fearful coincidence it contained that terribly sublime passage – “And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together and every mountain and island where {sic} moved out

of their place. And the kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks and mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.”

The shades of evening were falling, the preacher was drawing to the close of her discourse, the hundred and fifty people more or less were intently listening amidst the gloom of that “burnt row,” when, without a moment’s warning, down toppled the lofty structure with a mighty crash, throwing its death-dealing bricks across the street 30 feet from its base among the hapless congregation. Isaac Cox saw the chimney vibrating, he says, and shouted, but all was too sudden for anyone to benefit by the alarm. The cries, the consternation, the agony of that fearful moment no tongue can utter, no pen describe. Near twenty were knocked down, half of whom were buried under the fearful wreck. The bodies were extricated as quickly as possible, and every attention which friends, neighbours, and the family could give, were rendered to the poor sufferers. Dr. Whitby, with Messrs. Edwards and Davy, surgeons, were in immediate attendance, doing all that mortal man could do, and Mr. Shepherd set off to Honiton for additional surgical help, which was promptly answered by Dr. Jerrerd and Dr. Mayne. As the poor creatures could be got out, their mangled bodies were placed on shutters or other convenient thing at hand and conveyed to their homes, or to the nearest places where further assistance could be most readily had.

The following are the fatalities: – Elizabeth Callow, 18, her mother a widow; Mary Ann Bishop, 52, widow, who buried her husband (a miller) only last week; John Gillham, 8, son of Mr. W. Gillham, watchmaker; Jane Lang, 23, wife of James Lang, carpenter; and Emma Rowe, 17, daughter of George Rowe, thatcher – were all taken out dead or in a dying state, and expired within an hour of the

accident. Elizabeth Davey, 17, dressmaker, who resided with her grandfather, a mason, died during the night. Emma Hake, 15, daughter of John Hake, of the Lamb and Flag Inn, died the next morning. James Lang, 25, the husband of Jane Lang, mentioned above, died on Monday afternoon, at five o'clock, from concussion of the brain. John Baker, 50, under-gardener to Sir John Coleridge, was conveyed to the Devon and Exeter Hospital with a broken thigh. George Pyle, 8, son of Mr. Pyle, of the Volunteer Inn, had his ancle {sic} dislocated. Henry Churchill, 23, labourer, had his foot bruised. Elizabeth Rounsevell, 22, daughter of Philip Rounsevell, a labourer, and Fanny Temple, 21, daughter of a gardener living in Mill-street, were dreadfully injured in the head, their recovery being almost despaired of. Mary Gillham, 17, sister of the little boy Gillham who was killed, sustained severe contusions. Mrs. Emmett, John Littley and wife, persons about 50; Bridget Jeffery, 16, daughter of Mr. Jeffery, of the Five Bells Inn; Elizabeth Green, 21, daughter of a shoemaker; Elizabeth Brown, 25; Joseph Brown, 31; Robert Channon, 24, mason; and Anne Brown, 37, sustained contusions more or less severe.

The sufferers, it will be seen, are chiefly young persons, but the calamity has caused the most heart-rending sorrow and the deepest sympathy throughout the town and neighbourhood. The destruction of life would in all likelihood have been more deplorable had it occurred a little later. The congregation from one of the chapels augmented the assembly at half-past seven, and that of the Independent Chapel, after a prayer-meeting, was but just dismissed, and the young people were making their way into the street when the shrieks were heard from the scene of the catastrophe.

There will in this case be fairly a further claim upon the plentiful funds for the relief of sufferers by the late fire, as this disaster is a direct consequence therefrom. The cause of the chimney and wall

falling is thought to have been the heavy rain of the morning softening the foundation, and a rather strong wind was blowing at the time.

When the feelings are much excited by personal suffering and bereavement, or by strong sympathy with those who suffered, the judgement gets bewildered and comes to wrong conclusions, There must be "blame somewhere" is a popular conclusion; but the inquest has passed without fixing it anywhere. Clearly enough no unsound part of a building ought to be left standing after a fire to become a destructive trap for luckless mortals thereafter. The fire at Ottery occurred near three months ago, and up to the day of this calamity dozens of chimneys and walls were left to take their chance to stand or fall. Some few had been taken down on account of their threatening aspect, but only, it would appear, on direct complaint. As soon as a chimney has fallen and killed half a score people and maimed so many more, a number of workmen are sent into the ruins, and chimneys come down by the dozen. "That's what I zay," said a labourer among the bricks, "'tis locking the stable-door arter the hoss ez stoled." The premises, in which stood the isolated chimney more than thirty feet high unsupported on its narrow foundation, belongs to Mrs. Sanford, a widow, who had been negotiating {sic} for its sale with Mr. Windover. It is desirable to save the chimney to form part of the building when the house is restored; time goes on and the elements continue their steady work of sapping if not mining, but the purchase does not get completed, and consequently, the building operations do not go on. Was there no official eye to see the danger in a town with a Board of Health? or unofficial observer to give timely warning? The rain and wind of Sunday only completed the work which had been going on ever since the first spark fell upon the unlucky building. The jury finds nobody to blame whatever the public may think. One here and there ventures to lay the blame upon the young woman who was the cause of so many people being gathered at that

particular point. "Ought'n to be allowed," grumbled a man whose daughter had been dreadfully injured, "these people gwaïn about praïching, but for that my daughter would'n a been there, nor the other girl, nice girls both of 'em – got a good character in all the town." Of course there was the entire absence of reason in the complaint – the preaching and presence of the people in the street had no more to do with causing the fall of the chimney than Tenterden steeple with producing Goodwin Sands. The poor young evangelist herself was filled with a grief too deep for tears; but neither censure nor sorrow will recover the dead.

Among those who came to an untimely end by this calamity, none is more touching than the deaths of James Lang and Jane, his wife. They were a young couple who had married only about {sic} a twelvemonth; the wife, it may be said, was killed on the spot, and the husband expired from the injuries received on the following afternoon. His was the last of the eight, dying just in time to be included with his companions in misfortune at the inquest then sitting.

THE INQUEST.

The inquest was held at the King's Arms Inn on Monday afternoon, before S. M. Cox, Esq., coroner, when the following evidence was taken: –

Isaac Cox, mason, of Ottery, said – About half-past seven on Sunday evening I came up Mill-street, and crossed Broad-street. I saw a crowd at the corner of Tip Hill. A woman was standing on the wall preaching, and the crowd were listening to her. She was the cause of the crowd. I should think there were 50 or 60 persons when I first saw them, but they increased to 150 or 200 from persons coming from the Independent Chapel and other places. She said something about the rocks and mountains falling on us. She mentioned this many times – I believe in reference to the Day of Judgment. I saw

her preaching in the same place about four o'clock in the same afternoon. After I had been in the crowd a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes, and was standing with my back to the preacher and face towards the building, I saw the chimney begin to vibrate. It turned over in a solid body, and did not fall to pieces until about two-thirds of its way to the ground, when it broke. I shouted the moment I first saw it move, but it fell on the crowd, killing some and injuring others. I saw Emma Hake, whose face was covered with blood, and I helped to carry her home. I saw Jane Lang in the crowd before the accident, and afterwards saw her dead at the Lamb and Flag. The house to which the chimney belongs was burnt down at the late fire. It is the property of Mrs. Catherine Sanford, widow. It was last occupied by Mr. Windover, saddler. I have heard that he agreed to buy it, and I saw him clearing out the rubbish about six weeks ago. It was a tall chimney, and appeared likely to fall with wind. It seemed to be in perfect condition, but it was unattached. A great many other dangerous chimneys were standing, many more dangerous in appearance than the one that fell. I have seen nothing done to the chimney lately. I think no one was touching the chimney when it fell. A horse and four-wheel carriage passed by about a minute before the chimney fell. There was considerable wind blowing, and there had been heavy rain in the morning. The crowd caused an obstruction in the highway so much so that Mr. Salter was obliged to stop his carriage whilst the crowd separated to allow him to pass. The chimney stood about fifteen feet in from the road.

Catherine Sanford – I am the owner of the property to which the chimney belonged. The house was burnt down in the late fire, and the chimney was, I believe, left standing alone. It never occurred to me that it was dangerous, and no one ever told me so or asked me to have it taken down. Mr. Windover occupied the house at the time of the fire as my tenant, and he was about arranging with me for its purchase. We fixed the price, but we found that I could only sell it for my life. He never

took possession as purchaser. I think Mr. Windover cleaned the premises and piled up the bricks. This he may have done in anticipation of purchase.

William Windover – I was tenant to Mrs. Sanford, landlady of the house to which the fallen chimney belonged. I had verbally agreed with her to purchase the house after the fire, about three months ago. I cleaned up the bricks and packed them back, with a view to rebuilding after I made the agreement. This was about six weeks ago, and about that time I found out she had only a life interest, and it was then understood that the bargain was off. I purchased other premises about a fortnight ago. I thought the chimney was in a good state, and I meant to leave it to serve as a chimney for the house to be newly built. It was of brick throughout, was about 27 or 28 feet high, was quite perpendicular, and not supported by any walls, and never was, but it had partition work adjoining, and was surrounded by the wood-work of the roof. I spoke to Mr. John Digby, mason, when I bought it, and he said the chimney would do very well for a new building. I did not ask him, nor did he say, whether it was safe as it stood. A regular pond of water got round the chimney in consequence of the rain on Saturday morning.

Charles William Whitby, M.D – About eight o'clock last evening I was called into Yonder-street. When I came I found Elizabeth Callow, Mary Ann Bishop, and Elizabeth Davis lying on the ground, and I also saw Gillham taken from the ruins. They had all received serious injuries about the head. I had them put on doors and taken to their homes. I subsequently saw Emma Rowe, Jane Lang, Emma Hake, and James Lang. Callow, Bishop, Rowe, James Lang, and Gillham all died within an hour of the accident. Mr. Edwards also attended, and Drs. Jerrard and Mayne from Honiton. I did not notice the state of the ruins. All the eight persons clearly died from the effects of the accident.

Samuel Norrington – I am the surveyor of highways and inspector of nuisances under the Local Board. I consider it part of my duty to notice buildings that are dangerous to the public. I had often seen the chimney that has fallen, but I did not consider it to be dangerous, and for that reason I gave no notice. I understood that Mr. Digby, as a builder, would allow the chimney to form a portion of the new building. I had all the chimneys I thought dangerous knocked down. I had several knocked down last week; I should always do so if my attention were called to them.

The room was cleared and the jury consulted together for a short time. On the re-admittance of the public the Coroner said the jury found a verdict of “Accidental Death” in all the cases, and they wished him to state that the number of deaths was greatly increased by reason of a concourse of people stopping to hear street preaching from a woman named Eliza Hawker.

The Scotsman, Edinburgh, 12 Oct 1866, p. 2

THE UNION BANK NOTE FORGERY. – We understand that the two men at present confined in Edinburgh Jail charged with forging and uttering a number of Union Bank of Scotland notes made a full confession to the Procurator-Fiscal yesterday regarding their share in the transaction. They state that Greatrex, the photographer, was in Edinburgh on the day they were captured in Dalkeith, and that immediately on learning their apprehension, according to a preconcerted plan, he left the city for England. He has been tracked by Mr Alfred List, Chief-Constable for the county of Edinburgh, to Liverpool, and thence to Manchester and Carlisle. It is confidently expected that the fugitive will soon be in the hands of justice. Greatrex is described as a man about thirty-eight years of age, nearly six feet in height, and rather stout. He has a military bearing, is fair complexioned, and has large bushy whiskers, moustache, and beard. He belongs to a religious sect called the “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” {sic} and occasionally preached on the street.

The Leeds Times, 22 Dec 1866, p. 7

TRAPPING A RELIGIOUS BANK-NOTE FORGER. – A Glasgow contemporary gives the following curious particulars respecting the antecedents of Greatrex, the photographer, who was recently arrested in New York on the charge of having been the principal in the late extensive forgery of bank-notes in Scotland: – “He was known in Glasgow as an active member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). In this circle he frequently preached, and is said to have converted some well-to-do citizens, who are now

zealous in the faith. The talent which he possessed for this kind of harangue was strikingly exhibited on the occasion of Pritchard's execution, when, mounting a rostrum erected near the Green railing about three o'clock in the morning, he sought to improve the coming spectacle to the assembled multitude. The same ostentatious display of piety led him to exhibit a series of boards bearing Scriptural exhortations, such as appear on the wall of schools, in the showroom of his photographic establishment; and his studio, also, was well supplied with books of a religious character. Added to a very prepossessing appearance, his gentle and dignified manner was well calculated to gain for him the favourable regard of those with whom he came in contact. In short, he possessed all those graces of person and manner which, if employed only as a mask for hypocrisy and deceit, make a man one of the most dangerous enemies to society. Whatever fears Greatrex may have at first entertained as to his apprehension, he had evidently adopted the belief latterly that his plans to outwit the authorities had been completely successful. Accordingly, we find from a letter which has just been received from the bank clerk who went to America along with Superintendent M'Call, that he had commenced operations as a preacher and revivalist in New York and its neighbourhood, and had seemingly attained a measure of popularity which was denied him in this country. It would appear that after his arrival in America, Mr. M'Call advertised in the *New York Herald* for a first-class photographer, the advertisement being worded in such a way as was thought most likely to attract the attention of the person 'wanted.' Amongst other replies to the advertisement was one which, from its guarded tone, and the character of the handwriting, Mr. M'Call, believed to be from Greatrex. This letter appears to have communicated the applicant's address, and the clue thus gained was at once followed up. Mr. M'Call with one of the New York detectives and the bank clerk, who knew Greatrex by sight, went on an early morning to a German lager-beer saloon, commanding a view of a boarding-house in which Greatrex was supposed to have taken up his quarters. Several

hours passed away with no result; but they were by-and-by rewarded by seeing Greatrex and the young woman who went after him from this country pop their heads out of the window as a band of music passed along the street. The officers waited until Greatrex quitted the house for an afternoon stroll, when they followed him. He had taken off his beard and whiskers, and wore his hair after the manner of the Yankees, but notwithstanding this change in his appearance the bank clerk at once identified him. The American detective then came forward and quietly slipped his arm within that of Greatrex, accosting him by name, while Mr. M'Call took him by the other arm, and the trio walked in the most friendly way along the street. Greatrex did not speak for some time, but when addressed by the bank clerk he started, his face became flushed, and he affected not to know the person who was speaking to him. As we have already hinted, Greatrex had so improved the shining hour in America as a preacher and revivalist, that at the time of his apprehension his settlement over a Baptist Church near New York was considered an extremely probable matter. He occupied one of the New York pulpits in place of the Rev. Dr. Adams, who appeared to have been pleased with him, and recommended him as a suitable pastor to a congregation out of town which had been deprived of its spiritual guide. With a view to secure this appointment, in all likelihood, Greatrex had laboured for four or five days in the neighbourhood of the vacant church, where a great work of revival was going on. He also turned his talents to account in seeking to convert his fellow-lodgers in the boarding-house. Upon this point a writer says: – 'I know most of those in his lodging. He was there very busy in what he called the Lord's work. The lady of the house, aged about sixty, I think, he had been very anxious about, and had marked a number of passages in her Bible, and reasoned often on others. He prayed regularly in the house, and altogether was very good. Greatrex told that he was a victim – a sort of martyr for others. However, none here who knew him would receive a word he says.'"

NEWS NOTES FROM GLASGOW.

(From our Own Correspondent.)

{...}

GREATREX, THE PHOTOGRAPHER, BAPTIST PREACHER, AND SUSPECTED FORGER.

We have the reverse of any inclination to write the least disparagingly of religion in any of its professed forms, but really the revelations which, during the last few years, have been made to us through our bankruptcy and criminal courts here, regarding persons holding high positions in our churches, and making extraordinary professions of religion, have somehow caused a new association of ideas to arise in our mind. The sight of a foaming-mouthed revival street preacher, or an officious inquisitive pretentious long-winded prayer making elder, or deacon, or superintendent of Sabbath schools, at once suggests thoughts of cant and hypocrisy, as a covering for a multitude of sins. The biographies of a M'Donald, a Wallace, a Taylor, a Monteath, a Strachan, a Pritchard, and fifty others at least, might well be written and called cant and hypocrisy unveiled. But Greatrex (whether guilty of the forgery or not), is another to the long list. He came from London a few years ago and settled in Glasgow as a photographer, and became a member of the Photographic Society. At the meetings of that society he was a regular attender, not so much on account of any active part he ever took in its legitimate affairs, but he had a fine appearance and good address, and he continued, by his manner and canting words, to inspire his brothers with a peculiar feeling of awe akin to

reverence of him, which gratified his vanity. This effect was aided much by the thought that he was one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and a popular preacher among them. Nay, he was seen haranguing the crowd gathered to witness Pritchard's execution, and was regularly to be seen holding forth at the street corners and bye-ways in Glasgow, with the peculiarly vociferous eloquence of our open air revival preachers, from the rivet boy with a jingle of words and no ideas – who evidently makes the occasion a pastime to at least himself – who seemed to make it his apprenticeship to the ministry of a Baptist Church in America, though in practice he was a true Mormon, with divers wives or concubines – at least, one in his studio and one in his house, presiding over his family circle, and ultimately one in New York, and another in Glasgow. He has not been convicted yet of the forgery, or of being concerned in the forgery, of the Union Bank Note, but meantime we need have no hesitation in saying that the various circumstances connected with that highly finished artistic piece of business, seemed very suspicious, and to show an urgent reason for his so strenuously opposing a warrant being granted under the Extradition Act to bring him back to Glasgow. But consider for a moment, the fact of that man Greatrex, with a large number of these bank notes in his custody, living with a young woman as his wife, under the name of Mr and Mrs Parker, while his lawful wife whom he has deserted was living in Glasgow, and there was he preaching regularly with great acceptance to the folks of New York, and at the time of his being so cleverly apprehended by our Superintendent M'Coll {sic}, was actually on the eve of being appointed minister over a congregation, a short distance from New York. There, we suppose Mr Greatrex, *alias* Parker, would have taught his hearers sincerely the Moral Law by precept, while Mrs Parker's virtuous life and exemplary conduct would have been considered worthy of imitation. Greatrex is expected here by the beginning of next week, escorted by Mr M'Call, but if by any means he should get quit of this charge of forgery, we do not suppose it likely Mr Parker the preacher will hold forth at the corners of our streets for a time.

CAPTURE AND TRANSFER TO GLASGOW OF THE FORGER, GREATREX. – Amongst the arrivals at Liverpool by the City of Paris, from New York, were Superintendent M'Call, of the Glasgow detective force, and John Henry Greatrex, who was captured in New York on the charge of forging upon an extensive scale 1*l.* notes on the Union Bank of Scotland, in connection with a man named Grimshaw. Greatrex was accompanied by the young woman whose description was circulated in advertisements along with that of the prisoner. M'Call and a clerk of the Union Bank went to New York some time ago in search of Greatrex, and by advertising for a first-class photographer got a clue to his whereabouts. Greatrex having been known in Glasgow as an {sic} excellent photographer. They discovered him in consequence of his putting his head out of the window of his lodgings to look after a military band which was passing, and at once arrested him. In Glasgow Greatrex was also known as a street preacher and revivalist in connection with the [Plymouth brethren](#). He is a native of Gravesend, is 38 years of age, somewhat commanding in appearance, and most fertile in resources. His companion, with whom he eloped from Glasgow, was an assistant in a photographic studio there. Greatrex was sent from Liverpool to Glasgow yesterday.

{See also the article of 12 Nov 1924 in the present selection.}

WESTBURY-SUB-MENDIP.

PUBLIC BAPTISM. – Sunday afternoon last was the day appointed for baptising at the new meeting house in connexion with the [Plymouth Brethren](#). This being the first time any thing of the kind has ever been witnessed in this place, and a new baptistry having recently been built adjoining the meeting house in the centre of the village, considerable excitement was caused. On the day in question the weather was very favourable, and not a few people congregated together, the number being estimated at about 600 or 700. At the appointed time for the public meeting Mr. Goodridge, from Bath, commenced and gave an address, after which Captain Mires, from Bristol, gave some advice to those who were about to commemorate the ordinance of baptism. Mr. Felton, of Congresbury, then proceeded to the Baptistry adjoining the road, accompanied by the scholars of the Sunday-school, and the parties about to be baptized, and after reading a few portions of Scripture, he went into the water and commenced first with the females, two in number, viz., Mrs. Broom, of Cheddar, and Miss Champion, of Westbury. Then came the males, viz., Mr. Hudson, of Cheddar; Messrs. John Daw and Stott, of Westbury, and Mr. Mapstone, of Axbridge. The meeting then closed, and in the evening Mr. Felton preached to a crowded audience, from John vi. 37 – “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

WESTMINSTER.

Lord Congleton was summoned on Saturday, by Thomas Martin, a cabman, for 6d.

Complainant said that on the previous Monday he drove his lordship from Adam-street West, Bryanston-square, to Victoria Station. He demanded 1s. 6d., as the distance exceeded two miles, but his lordship refused to give him more than 1s.

Lord Congleton said that he had paid the driver his proper fare. He repeatedly travelled the same distance, and always paid 1s., which was deemed by other drivers to be the proper fare.

As the fares for this particular distance could not be found in the tables published under the authority of the Commissioners of Police, and as his lordship and the cabman were both of opinion that they were right, they willingly deposited five shillings each to have the ground measured.

Yesterday George Webb, the court messenger, said he had measured the ground. The distance was one mile, three-quarters, and a hundred and fifteen yards.

Mr. Selfe (to the cabman). – You have lost your 5s. (the deposit for the measurement).

The Cabman. – Yes, sir, I am sorry to say I have; but I made sure I was right. It is not my fault. I was misled by the book of fares which we are to go by, and which makes it two miles and seventy yards to Chester-square.

The summons was, of course, dismissed.

MR. SPURGEON AND CERTAIN [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#). – The January number of the *Sword and Trowel* contains the following paragraph, written evidently by Mr. Spurgeon himself: – “We have been requested to reply to a small tract which has been given away at the door of the tabernacle, by one of the ‘[Plymouth Brethren](#),’ but it is so devoid of all sense, Scripture, and reason, that it needs no reply. We have not learned the art of beating the air, or replying to nonsense. The only meaning that we could gather from the rambling writer’s remarks was a confirmation of our accusation, and a wonderful discovery that a long controverted point is now settled: the unpardonable sin is declared to be speaking against the [Darbyites](#). Our portion must be something terrible, if this be correct, but we have so little faith in the spirit that inspires the [brethren](#), that we endure their thunderbolt as calmly as we would those of the other infallible gentleman who occupies the Vatican. Another of this amiable community, having detected an error in one of our printed sermons, has most industriously spread the tidings that Mr. Spurgeon is a blasphemer. – At the doors of their meetings and by enclosures in letters, this sweet specimen of Christian charity is abundantly distributed; more to their shame than our injury. We are persuaded that neither the writer of that cowardly anonymous fly-sheet, nor any other [Plymouthist](#), believes in his heart that Mr. Spurgeon would knowingly blaspheme the glorious name of Jesus, and therefore the issue of the pamphlet is, we fear, a wickedly malicious act, dictated by revenge on account of our remarks upon their party. Our name and character are in too good a keeping to be injured by these dastardly anonymous attacks. Neither Mr. Newton nor Mr. Muller would sanction such action; it is only from one clique that we receive this treatment. It is worthy of note that even the printer was ashamed or afraid to put his name to the printed paper. Our error was rectified as soon as ever we knew of it, and, being fallible, we could do no more.”

To the Editor.

SIR, – Every now and then I hear some one complaining in your columns of clerical intolerance. I cannot surely commend our clergy for all their religious scruples, but there is one thing to be said, they are bold and straightforward. Now, there is a party in Stoke-sub-Hambdon who take to themselves the title of [Plymouth Brethren](#), which title by no means becomes them, as they show no marks of brotherhood. There is more cause to complain of those religious bigots who only want the power to rule men, &c., to make them more tyrannizing than our clergy. I have heard of the dog in the manger, and of the snake in the grass, which is too true a picture of such men. In passing through the above place last week, I was not surprised to find circulars slyly put into the hands of a few who, no doubt, they hope to make hypocrites as well as themselves, which, for rubbish, I have never seen equalled. The substance of it is an open condemnation of every section of the Church of Christ apart from themselves. Now, it is pretty generally known that, in almost every place where these so-called saints exist, they are for ever quarrelling among themselves, and forming themselves into different parties – in some places four, in others six, and, I am told, in some nine. Now, sir, if the religion of these so-called devoted saints leads them to continual quarrels, who can envy their prospects. In reading the circular, I must confess I never before saw so bright a picture of the Scribes and Pharisees. It does seem a pity that, in a place like Stoke, just two or three men have conceit enough to condemn almost every one who attends any place of worship except their own.

Did the Apostle condemn all who did not fully accord with him in everything? Or did he say – “Grace be with all those that love our Lord in sincerity.” I would ask these wise men, as they call themselves, to study Christ and not cant.

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

The Western Gazette, Yeovil, 3 May 1867, p. 6, Correspondence

THE STOKE BRETHREN.

To the Editor.

SIR, – It was with sorrow I read the remarks of your correspondent of the 17th inst., who gave himself the taking name “Liberty of Conscience,” for he displayed little of that spirit he was professedly contending for. His uncalled-for attack on the Brethren at Stoke – not Plymouth Brethren more than he is a Petherton or Bristol Independent – is much more uncharitable than I would wish or dare to write of any Christian community on God’s earth; but I presume he was acting on the principle of a solicitor for the defendant who desired his counsel to throw all the dirt he could at the plaintiff, so that some might stick.

As to the statements made, they are so at variance with the facts of the case that, if Mr. “Liberty of Conscience” will emerge from the secrecy that he has enveloped himself in, I will gladly meet him face to face, before any number of Christian Independents or Baptists of his own choosing, and

disprove all that he has written respecting the disseminating of tracts in the parish slyly, and his own friends will be able to judge whether cant, snakes in the grass, so-called saints, Pharisees, hypocrites, are such terms as one Christian should write of a body of believers, who, if not talented, are acting up to their light, and doing it not for the purpose of being approved of man.

There is another thing I should like your itinerant friend to do, and that is, explain how it is there are so many inducements held out for these hypocrites, snakes in the grass, &c., &c., to become members of other Christian bodies in the village; for certainly such elements as above enumerated are not to be envied in any communion.

If in future, before wildly rushing into print with half a statement, he would call on any Brother, I have no hesitation in saying he will find one and all most willing to answer any questions as to our proceedings, and more ready to hold out the hand of fellowship than some of our neighbours give us credit for.

I have never seen but one of the tracts complained of, and not to my knowledge have I read it through, but if any should be anxious to see that which called forth such unkind remarks, I will gladly remit one by post.

I am, yours faithfully,

G. N. SHORE.

West Stoke, April 30th, 1867.

STOKE-SUB-HAMBDON.

To the Editor.

SIR, – I have carefully read the circular complained of by “Liberty of Conscience,” and must confess that it is most unchristian like and quite uncalled for, {sic} It is very vexing that “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” should circulate anything in the shape of condemnation of other sections of the Christian Church, which Mr. S. and others must admit the circular complained of does. I hope, however, that “Liberty of Conscience,” will have no further room to complain, and that this newspaper war will soon cease, as it is in no way calculated to further the cause of Christ.

Yours truly,

A LOOKER-ON.

To the Editor.

SIR, – I am pleased to find that the solicitor’s dirt has found a suitable place on which to stick, and hope it will remain until Mr. Shore and his companions feel the unchristianlike proceedings of condemning members of other communities. I am not the least surprised to receive an open challenge, inasmuch as quarreling, separating, and forming fresh parties are very congenial to the feelings of a [Plymouth Brother](#). But, sir, I am happy to say I am not a [P. B.](#), and sincerely trust I never shall be. Mr. S. now talks of Christian Independents and Baptists. I have sometimes seen one child

knock another down in the street, and, when the blood begins to run down the sufferer's face, the other says, "Never mind, I won't do it again"; whereas, as soon as the blood is washed off, and a few minutes elapsed, he is prepared to knock him down again. Is this a fair specimen, sir, of hypocrisy?

Again, he says he has never seen but one of the tracts, and, to his knowledge, he has never read it through, and yet he is ready to supply the public on application. Will any reasonable man suppose that such abominable [Plymouth-Brethren](#)-like tracts is {sic} kept in store, circulated and talked about in the streets, &c., as being Scriptural, without being read? Mr. S. says they act up to the light they have, although less talented. Here I see another fair picture of the Pharisees. Has Mr. S. ever been asked why he so often changed, and replied, "Well, you see, we get wiser and wiser; and in Ephesians iv. you learn that the work of God cannot be carried on by one man, and thus he raises up and brings out men for the building up of the church." I was once told by a [P. B.](#) – "*You* are called to go into the highways, &c., and *we* are called to feed the Church of Christ.

I have no doubt that, in London, a school might be found to teach boys to quarrel and fight, but I have no desire to place my own under such teachers. I would rather they hungered than be fed with such a quarrelsome spirit. Will Mr. S. inform me what has become of all the devoted men of Plymouth, the birth-place of [Brethrenism](#)? as I am informed that quarreling, &c., has gone on so long until every ring is broken. Mr. S. again complains of inducements being held out at Stoke. I am sorry to inform him that I am not prepared to answer this, as I am not one of them; but if his insinuations are quite correct, I would thank Mr. S. to see them, and ask them to call themselves by their proper name, [Plymouth Brethren](#). He well knows that all parties of Brethren once belonged to other communities{,} himself among the number. "Church-robbers" is a well-known title richly gained by [P. B.](#) I have just been told of two young ladies, one a [Plymouth Sister](#). They slept, read, and prayed

together for some time until the [Plymouth Sister](#) found she could not induce the other to leave her own fellow believers and join her party. Then she said “We cannot read together any longer, unless you join us.”

As to Mr. S., it is only due to him to say that as a man and a gentleman, I respect him; but if he agrees with all the traits {sic} circulated by the [P. B.](#), and with all their proceedings, I cannot but regard his religious views as absurd and erroneous.

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

The Western Morning News, Plymouth, 28 Sep 1867, p. 2

The Mormonites are not the only religious body in a state of civil war. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are just now torn by a quarrel between two parties, headed respectively by a Mr. Newton and a Mr. Darby. Heresy and mendacity are freely charged by each against the other; and one is accused of holding doctrines similar to “the revived Mahometanism of Central Arabia.” One of the chapels is described as “a terrible sink of evil – the wickedest place on earth,” rather than enter which the author of this energetic language would be burnt.

BROSELEY.

(H)ERRING BRETHREN. – The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are erecting a handsome little chapel near the Town Hall, Broseley, and the circumstance has given rise to a good deal of gossip amongst those who have probably heard of that respectable body for the first time. Among these was an old couple who, after discussing their merits, and agreeing that they were a good sort of people, came to the name which they had heard but had forgotten. The old lady appealed to the husband, who, not liking, we imagine, to confess his ignorance, after sundry preparatory declarations that he was not quite sure, but thought he had heard it, said that he believed they were called “the Yarmouth Bloaters!”

On Monday and Wednesday evenings, a Mr. Thorne “preached the Gospel” in Mr. Stone’s School-room, Wine-street. There was a large attendance on each occasion. Mr. Thorne is understood to be associated with one of the sects of [Plymouth Brethren](#), and his addresses referred mainly to those points on which the [Brethren](#) insist most strongly. Much time was devoted to an exposition of the preacher’s opinions as to the judgments foreshadowed in the Book of the Revelations. Seeing that almost every expositor of the part of Scripture in question has his own peculiar views on the subject (some even asserting that the judgments in question are long past, having been associated with the destruction of Jerusalem,) no great weight can be attached to the opinions of any one theologian. The interest excited by the lectures in question affords only another illustration of the unfortunate tendency of the religious public to discuss unpractical and purely speculative topics in preference to those which concern the well-being of society at large. We suppose, however, such a preference is perfectly consistent with the views of those who regard a select few as the favourites of Heaven, and who believe that nineteen-twentieths of the children of the Great Father are given over to the Powers of Darkness.

The Evening Citizen, Glasgow, 11 Jan 1868, p. 2, General Intelligence

A VIOLENT PROTEST. – An ecclesiastical dispute has disturbed the quiet of the pretty town of Gromont, so well known to South Wales tourists. It appears that the rector (the Rev. W.H. Twynning), as a trustee of the town-hall, refused to let the Primitive Methodists and [Plymouth Brethren](#) have the building for a tea-party. A monster procession was formed, the town-hall door was broken open, and the meeting was held in defiance of the rector. An appeal to the law will be the result of these proceedings.

LAY PREACHING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SENTINEL.

SIR – A letter which I received this morning contains a request that I should contradict the following report, which, my correspondent informs me, has been circulated by certain lay preachers who have visited your city. I give the report in the very words of my correspondent: – “Mr. Nangle at first was glad to receive us, and then, on finding his bishop opposed to us, he turned against us.” Whether my correspondent has been rightly informed as to such a report having been circulated by the lay preachers I cannot tell; but to the report itself I give an unqualified contradiction. I received the lay preachers into my parish, supposing that they were sincere and truthful in assuring me that their only object was to bring souls to Christ, and not to form a sect. I never had any communication with my bishop about them. I gave them up without any reference to what the bishop might have thought about them, simply because I discovered that they were teaching false doctrine, and creating among Protestants a spirit of sectarianism as bigoted and bitter as that of Popery itself, thereby creating division in Protestant congregations and disturbing the peace of Christian families. – The preachers cannot be ignorant of my reasons for withdrawing from all connection with them, as they were fully stated in two pamphlets, entitled “The Lay Preaching and its Fruits, good and bad, with Reasons for Withdrawing from the Movement;” and “Christian Truth and Christian Ordinances Vindicated, and the Heresy and Schism of certain Lay Preachers Exposed.” I believe that both these publications are now on sale at Mr. Hempton’s, in your city; and, whoever will take the trouble of reading them will,

I think, be persuaded of the need of applying the apostolic rule to these self-constituted preachers: – “I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them, knowing that they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies; and, by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple.” – I am, sir, your faithful servant,

EDWARD NANGLE.

Skreen, Ballisodare, County Sligo,
February 24, 1868.

The Londonderry Sentinel, 10 Mar 1868, p. 4, Correspondence

THE LAY PREACHERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DERRY SENTINEL.

SIR – I observed a letter in your paper last week, from the Rev. Edward Nangle, in reference to the lay preachers. Allow me to state some facts concerning them. The question is asked continually, are they [Plymouth brethren](#) or not? I have known many of them, and I never yet knew a [Plymouth Brother](#) to acknowledge that he was one, except one very open-minded Brother, who told me at the same time that several other gentlemen, who had denied to me and others that they were [Plymouth Brethren](#), were just what he was himself. I was overwhelmed with astonishment. I found out that because they did not reside in Plymouth, or because they differed from one or other of the Plymouth

parties, they were not [Plymouth Brethren](#); but they held Plymouth doctrines, and lived apart from all other denominations, and “ate bread” by themselves every Lord’s Day. If I wanted to know whether the lay preachers of Derry are [Plymouthists](#){,} I would never think of asking the question – “Are you a [Plymouth Brother](#)?” – (for you will always get a negative answer) – but, “where do you communicate or break bread? Is it in any of the existing Churches, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Methodists? or, by yourselves?” Or, I would ask, “do you believe such and such doctrines – say, that the moral law is not binding on believers as a rule of life, that there is no Sabbath in Christianity, that believers are justified from eternity, that there was no Church in existence till the day of Pentecost, that there is no Ministry in the Church, according to Evangelical ideas?”

Allow me to tell you some facts. I know a minister who was most favourably disposed to the lay preachers. He lent them his church, believing that they were not [Plymouth Brethren](#), and believing their statement, which was reiterated again and again, that their object was not to found a sect, but simply to preach the Gospel and convert souls. The minister was warned by his brethren that he was encouraging men who, *in other places*, had founded sects; but all in vain. When he spoke to the leading gentleman who brought the lay preachers to the district, concerning these warnings of his brethren, the uniform answer was – “By no means; we don’t mean to take people out of their churches, but to do good to them as they stand.” Well, time wore on. The minister began to hear that, after the public services were over, it was usual for meetings to be held in the drawing-rooms of interested parties, at which the peculiar views of the [Plymouthists](#) were brought out, and believers were specially urged to be re-baptised. By and by, it turned out that the very gentleman who had induced the minister to open his church to the lay preachers, had gone off very secretly to a neighbouring town to be dipped by a Baptist or a [Plymouth Brother](#). By and by, the minister heard

that this gentleman celebrated the Lord's Supper every Sabbath morning in his own house with a few others. By and by, a [Plymouth Brother](#) was honest enough to tell the minister that he really was one, and that the other lay preachers (mentioning the names of several) were what he was himself. Then it was that the minister closed his church against them. A new place of meeting was procured, and there is a [Plymouth Society](#) in that place to this very day. I have not told all the deception that was practised on this minister. He was deceived by the way in which they decried all sects, as if they were not bent upon adding another to those already existing.

I wish that good people would not be deceived by their policy or their statements. The Rev. William Crook, a Wesleyan Minister, the author of "Lay Preaching in Ireland and the New Gospel," says (p. 12), "But we shall be told that these gentlemen have no idea of forming a church or a society, but merely wish to 'preach the Gospel, and do good.' ... What does this plausible speech mean? Was it not under the cover of a pretext like this that [Plymouthism](#) wormed itself into Dublin, Coleraine, Portrush, Newtown Limavady, Derry, and many other places? ... And what about the 'upper room' in Coleraine and elsewhere, and the anti-sectarian sect of 'believers' worshipping there now? We have had a rare opportunity of watching their operations in various parts of Ireland, and we here register our testimony that we never knew an individual who became a convert to the Plymouth gospel who was not alienated from the Church to which he belonged, maimed for life, and practically worthless to the cause of Christ?"

Several of the lay-preachers that have visited Derry, *I know* never "break bread" in any of our evangelical churches. I am not acquainted with the rest. They *were* Episcopalians a few years ago. Perhaps they are so still; but I doubt it.

I do not say whether the [Plymouthists](#) are [Darbyites](#), [Mullerites](#), or [Newtonites](#), who all hate one another with uncommon heartiness, as their publications testify; but if any one wishes to know what quarrelsome and devisive {sic} Christians the [Brethren](#) are, notwithstanding their apparent gentleness and Catholicity and love, read Howard's "Caution against the [Darbyites](#), and the testimony of Lord Congleton," which latter is as follows: – "Have you tried these [Brethren](#) (the [Darbyites](#))? I have tried them (try the spirits whether they are of God), and found them *false* prophets – in every sense of the word *false*. They are false in what they say of their Brethren, they are false in doctrine, they are false in their walk." If I mistake not, this Lord Congleton is a [Brother](#). What "brotherly" brethren! The quarrels of [Brethren](#) are proverbial. Don't be deceived by the Derry lay preachers denouncing [Darbyism](#); for all the "[Brethren](#)," who are not [Darbyites](#), do this heartily. A [Mullerite](#) lately preached in the Corporation-Hall.

It may be interesting to Derry Christians to know that Derry is being earnestly prayed for in the Merrion-square meetings, in Dublin, from which these gentlemen come. They don't think of Christianising the poor and the outcast in the lanes and alleys; but they always come to a religious district, and their converts are often those who have been converted already in other Churches. Let Episcopalians read the Rev. F. F. Trench on the Lay Preachers; or Wesleyans, the Rev. W. Crook's pamphlet. Let all read Mr. Nangle's, and they will hear of some strange doctrines – quite as strange as that of one of the Derry preachers, that the angels who veiled their faces, under the Old Testament dispensation, in the presence of God, do not now do so since the death and resurrection of Christ. – I am,

AN ANTI-PLYMOUTHIST.

CHALFORD.

BAPTISM BY IMMERSION. – On Sunday last, the inhabitants of Chalford were again called upon to witness the ordinance of baptism in the open air – an event that has now become very customary in this village, since the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have established themselves here. In connection with this denomination, seven persons were immersed in the Pill at the New Mill, by Mr. Nobbs, of Gloucester, one of the society's principal ministers. There were a large number of persons present, both on the canal bank and from the side of the railway, who viewed the ceremony with much interest. Addresses were delivered, some hymns sung, and prayer offered, after which the service terminated.

THE ANDERSON WILL CASE.

A CURIOUS will case has just been decided in the Court of Probate. The testator, Mr Wm. Anderson, a retired merchant, died at Torquay in Nov. 1867. He was upwards of ninety years of age, and very infirm. For a year or two before he died his articulation was so indistinct that even those constantly with him could hardly understand what he meant except by signs. In 1863 he gave £20,000 by deed of gift to his only surviving son, William, to whom he also bequeathed the bulk of his property by a will made in the following year. Mr Hunt, the testator's former partner, and Mr Gotbed, a gentleman of independent means at Torquay were named executors along with the son, with a legacy of £100 each, another of £150 being left to Miss Clarke, the testator's nurse. Towards the end of 1865 the testator became very weak in his mind, proposing marriage not only to his nurse, but to several other ladies, notwithstanding his infirm and almost imbecile condition. A consultation was held, at which Mr Gotbed, being one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) and very pious, 'laid the matter before the Lord.' The son suggested that he should have a power of attorney to manage his father's affairs, and left one with Mr Gotbed to be filled up, but this was never done. In the beginning of 1867 the son was induced to deposit all his father's papers and securities with the family solicitor. Mr Gotbed continued prayerfully attentive to the testator and his affairs; Mr Hunt made repeated visits to Torquay, and Miss Clarke remained as nurse. When the old man died the son was astounded by the production of a will dated March 1867, of which he had never before heard. This left him only £10,000, the property being mainly divided between Hunt and Gotbed, Miss Clarke's share having grown since the former will from £150 into an annuity of £100 a-year. Mr Hunt and Mr Gotbed,

declared in court that they had done all they could to persuade the testator to make the will in his son's favour. The jury seemed to have thought that they would therefore not be sorry to see their own wishes fulfilled, and cancelled the will of 1867. At the same time the jury relieved them from the imputation of undue influence and fraud.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE [PLYMOUTHISTS](#) – HOPKINS MOBBED. – The agent of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) who has his head-quarters in Orkney appears to have thought that it would be a good thing to celebrate numerous recent cases of dipping regeneration by making some sort of demonstrations at Kirkwall at the New-Year season. Accordingly, invitations were sent to the converts in all parts of the Mainland to attend a great tea-and-prayer meeting which was appointed to take place in “Swannay’s Chapel” on New Year’s Eve. From the regions of Harray and Sandwick, Evie and Orphir, a number of people, responsive to the invitation, attended the meeting, which also attracted the disciples {sic} of the dipping creed in and around Kirkwall. Mr Hopkins was assisted on the occasion by sundry well-known orators, who relieved each other occasionally in the course of the ten hours during which the meeting dragged its weary length along. The opening harangue by the well-beloved Hopkins lasted, we understand, from 7 o’clock in the evening till 10 30, when he graciously vouchsafed to pause and tell his hearers that they could now be allowed ten minutes to refresh themselves and discuss a cup of tea. After this the performance went on till midnight – when the Old Year marched out and the New Year marched in – and on still past the small hours till five o’clock in the morning, when half-asleep the victims toddled away to their respective abodes. For most of them it must have been a novel way of passing their New-Year, and attended with considerable discomfort, we should imagine, in the case of the people from the rural districts, who had left their families behind them at the festive season. At the dusk of New-Year’s day, the weather being very inclement at the time, Mr Hopkins was busily engaged at the shore immersing some two or three additional converts, when a crowd of people, who had collected at the spot, began to shew their

disapprobation of the unseemly {sic} proceedings by giving vent to sundry exclamations, and ultimately compelling the Plymouthists to beat a retreat. There is no doubt that the most of the converts or perverts believe that the process of immersion, as performed by Hopkins, amounts to baptismal regeneration, and that they arise from the water with all their sins washed away. A grave responsibility is incurred by the man who gives encouragement to any superstition of the kind.

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) have this week met at the Temperance Hall, Friars. The gatherings were rendered of some importance by the presence of the well-known Mr. Darby, to whose influence and labours the origin of the body may be ascribed. There have also been present deputations from various parts of the country – amongst them Captain Wellesley, of Bath, nephew of the late Duke of Wellington. The [Brethren](#) are but thinly represented in this city {i.e. Exeter}, where their place of worship is in Friernhay street. The body sprang into existence in 1830 35, and, as is well known, are dead against ecclesiastical ceremonial of every kind. They are particularly modest – so modest indeed that to get a list of the delegates was an insurmountable difficulty to our reporter. They would blush to find their names in print, and we desire not to wound their feelings. On the continent of Europe they are generally known as the “[Darbyites](#).” Mr. Darby, their leader, has just returned from Jamaica, where he went last November. His history is pretty well known. He started as a barrister, and, under deeply religious impressions, became a minister of the Established Church. It is reported that in the county of Wicklow, Ireland, when separated from his friends he lived for some time in a mud hovel. From conscientious scruples he left the Church of England, and, as an evangelist unconnected with any denomination, he subsequently preached with much zeal and ability throughout Europe in English, French, and German. The venerable gentleman met the [Brethren](#) on Monday morning for special prayer. Since then he has met them for the reading of the Scriptures. On Tuesday and Wednesday evenings he delivered addresses in exposition of the Scriptures. On Wednesday evening proceedings were to commence at half-past six, but it was seven

before the opening hymn was given out. The Brethren were seated while singing, which was followed by a brief prayer offered by Mr. Darby. His discourse was based on St. John x., 14 – the subjects being the Lord's Coming Again and the Gift of the Comforter. In a lucid manner he explained the Scriptures, and avoided doctrinal questions.

PICKINGS FROM "PUNCH."

{...}

Archdeacon Denison has lost all interest in harvest homes, cricket clubs, church unions, the *Daily Telegraph*, &c. It is rumoured that if he is passed over in the nomination to the vacant Deanery of Ely, he will either head a party of seceders, and build a cathedral in the Falkland Islands, or remain at home and join a neighbouring sect – the [Plymouth Brethren](#). His unceasing regret is that he is not a Member of the Chapter of Exeter, and so loses the chance of enjoying all the consequences of a *præmunire*.

REV. GEO. GILFILLAN'S LECTURE.

ACCORDING to advertisement the Rev. George Gilfillan delivered a lecture on Monday in the U.P. Church, on "Dr Arnold, of Rugby." The attendance was small in comperion {sic} with that which might have been expected. After opening the meeting with prayer,

The Rev. Mr Galletly said it afforded him pleasure to preside. {...} There was another matter on which he wished to speak. It was a small matter, but it showed how the wind blew. He was astonished to find on entering the church on Sunday evening that the pews were filled with tracts, and on taking up one of which, he at once recognised it as belonging to that sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He wished them to understand that neither he nor any of the officials of the church knew anything about them. Some one had stolen into the church, and, no doubt with a good meaning, but yet in a very senseless manner, laid these before them.

{...}

"**DARBYISM**" IN PERTH. – Not a little commotion has been caused among the religious public of Perth of late by an attempt to disseminate the doctrines of the sect called the "**Plymouth Brethren**," or rather an extreme section of them, better known as "**Darbyites**." It would appear that one of their first efforts is to estrange earnest minds from our various churches by representing to them that their ministers fail to preach the gospel in all its fulness and simplicity. We have reason to believe that for some months past a Mr Edward Cross, who hails from Blairgowrie, has been in the habit of visiting Perth every Thursday evening, and holding a Bible reading in a private house, to which several persons were invited. At those select meetings, Mr Cross did not fail to impress his own particular views of divine truth, the result being a few converts, and a number of sympathisers, which very naturally excited some attention. Rather more than two weeks ago, Mr Cross announced that as "certain statements" had been circulated as to the doctrines of "**the brethren**," he would give special lectures explanatory of their belief. The first of these meetings was held in the Guild-Hall on the evening of Tuesday, the 1st instant. Before commencing the lecture, Mr Cross said he would be glad to answer questions and give any explanations which might be felt to be necessary. Accordingly, he had not proceeded far with his lecture when several persons availed themselves of his offer, and the result was a pretty sharp discussion, in the course of which some pointed questions were put. Next evening there was again a good attendance, and at the lecturer's request the questions were reserved till the close of the meeting. Mr Cross, however, spoke till a quarter to ten o'clock, and was about to dismiss the meeting when several gentlemen reminded him of his promise, and insisted on putting questions, and a pretty smart skirmish followed. On the following

(Thursday) evening there was a much larger audience – the hall being well filled – and a “scene” took place. Mr Cross, after praise and prayer, said it had been represented to him that it was not for edification to allow any more questions. One of the audience ventured to suggest that the voice of the meeting should be taken on the matter, which met with general approval; but Mr Cross promptly called him to order, and told him to sit down. Another enquired if Mr Cross would allow him to reply at the close of the lecture, but only to receive a similar rebuke, if possible more imperative – “Certainly not; sit down, sir.” Thereupon a large number, nearly half the audience left the hall *en masse*, showing very unmistakably what they thought of the proceedings. The lecturer was then allowed to proceed in peace, no doubt glad at having got rid of the disturbing element. Mr Cross delivered other three lectures in the same hall, last week, but the attendance was not so large, nor the interest manifested so great. The above are the facts. We offer no comment, but leave our readers to draw their own inferences.

PREACHERS AND PREACHING IN THE NORTH. – From the news notes of our Eday correspondent it would appear as if that island was being depopulated, no fewer than fourteen individuals having arranged to leave for Otago and the United States during the present month; among them the Baptist minister, who has been compelled to emigrate owing to the spread of [Plymouthism](#) in his congregation, coupled with an inordinate craving on the part of some of his members to do the preaching themselves. In Kirkwall it is said there are two firms who keep private chaplains! but in Eday it seems every man aspires to be his own minister. [Our P. D. informs us the Kirkwall chaplains are both from Eday, therefore we conclude the male inhabitants of that island are subject to a sort of mild insanity, which, when fully developed, manifests itself in pulpit oratory.]

The Belfast News-Letter, 29 Aug 1870, p. 2

{excerpt from an article about the Franco-Prussian War}

In short, every able-bodied man in Germany is now practically either in the field or ready to take it, unless, indeed, he happens to be a member of that unwarlike sect whose kingdom is peculiarly not of this world. We learn, however, that the members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), to whom this exception has been granted, have consented to assist in tending the wounded in battle – an office which cannot fairly be supposed to jar with their conscientious convictions, if they keep out of mind the fact that they are thereby leaving less scrupulous persons free to fight.

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

That sect of Christians entitled [Darbyites](#), or [Plymouth Brethren](#), or Christian Believers, for they are known by many names, demands more than a passing notice at the present moment. They have succeeded in insinuating many of their peculiar opinions into the minds of professing Churchmen, and part of that agitation at present existing in favour of extreme changes in the Prayer Book owes its existence, no doubt, to their influence. In saying this we concede that they are a power, and we fear we must add an increasing power in the world of creeds, or of no creeds. They are, under guise of being simple primitive Christians, the most assiduous and intolerant of proselytisers. They are well known to many pastors seeking to feed their flocks in quiet resting-places. Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and Congregationalists as a rule know them not. These bodies are too well up in their respective creeds and church histories to be beguiled by their smooth ways, but they find their battenning ground in the rich and rewarding soil of the Churches of Ireland and England. Here it is that they have settled down and depastured for many years gone by. What faithful, earnest shepherd is there that knows them not, and who has not been tortured and fretted by their entrance into the fold, carrying away, not the careless and the ungodly, but the very choicest of the flock! And one thus gained over, becomes with marvellous zeal the magnet to draw away others from the Church, and so the contagion spreads until sometimes whole families become missed from the parish church. And what is the attraction? This question, we feel, is more easily asked than answered. Bright glances from tender eyes, soft words, warm pressure of the hands, a mystic language, a kind of spiritual eclecticism, these things no doubt go far towards gaining some. Their proselytes are

generally from the weaker sex, for the sect is essentially feminine, and the more robust intellect of a man as a rule rebels against their fascinations. One of the bad results that follow their proselytising efforts is divided households. It is frequently the case that one or two members of a family break off from all the rest. They will no longer kneel with them round the same family altar, nor worship with them in public in the same house of prayer. Let not our readers think that we are drawing on our imagination. We are speaking sober reality, and that which has come {sic} under our own personal knowledge in more than one instance. And, now, do our readers ask for information regarding the doctrinal specialties of this sect? We confess it is difficult to furnish them with an answer at all satisfactory. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) have no creeds, no confessions of faith; they appeal to the Bible, but so do heretics, so do the wildest of those churches which the fertile pen of Mr. Hepworth Dixon has so graphically painted for us in "*New America*." They call themselves "[Brethren](#)," but so do the Jesuits, the Mormonites, the Moravians, the Agapemonites, and many other bodies of professing Christians. They confess they seek their ideal of a church in the New Testament, and in apostolic teaching. But so does the Papacy. No church would willingly sever itself from that connexion. As a consequence of keeping all their opinions in a state of flux, the [Plymouth Brethren](#) are exposed to the danger of accepting the wildest errors. Their views range from the Irvingite doctrine of the peccability of our Saviour up to the high sacramentarianism of the Ritualists. With the Rationalists they are inclined to throw the Old Testament overboard, and say that its teaching belonged to an old-world system, and that it falls far below the spirituality required by the Gospel dispensation. With the Antinomians, they reject the binding authority of the ten commandments, and refuse to use the Lord's Prayer because it teaches us to ask for forgiveness of sins. With the Positivists, they ignore the Divine sanction of the Sabbath Day. With the respectable body of people known as Friends, they have no ministry, and any one within their community may take that

office upon himself. With the Glassites or Sandemanians they insist upon the sufficiency of “a bare belief of the bare truth.” They are spiritual Ishmaelites; their hand is against every other communion, and every other communion is against them. They are a spiritual Israel and have “light in their dwellings,” while all around them is Egyptian darkness. Like that Semitic chief to whom we have ventured to compare them, they prosper and increase in numbers, and if twelve princes have not been begotten from them, at any rate they have succeeded in winning over some very respectable members of society. The founder of this sect is (for we believe he is still living) a very estimable gentleman, a Mr. Darby, who has given one of their many names to his followers. Mr. Darby, who is an Irishman, was originally a barrister. He then became an Episcopal clergyman, and for some years he lived in a mud cottage in the county of Wicklow, where he devoted himself to Evangelistic labours{.} Becoming dissatisfied with the Church, he resigned his office and devoted {11} himself as a kind of irregular, owning no master, to missionary work at home. He subsequently visited the Continent, and being a good linguist, was able to discourse in several European languages. Besides writing several works, he founded *The Christian Witness*, which became the organ of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The sect has derived this name, we believe, from the unusual numbers which attached themselves to Mr. Darby, as a new religious teacher, in that town.

[Plymouth Brethren](#) may be regarded as religious eclectics, and their founder as a kind of spiritual Plotinus. They believe the whole Christian Church to have declined from the truth, and that it is their special mission to preserve it, and they consider those gathered out of the various religious communities into fellowship with themselves as alone the true Church of Christ and the chosen ones of God. For this reason their members undergo a fresh baptism, as then, for the first time, being joined to the Church. They hold remarkable views as to unfulfilled prophecy. The “Secret rapture”

of the saints is one of their favourite tenets. They believe that all true Christians – query, themselves – will be quietly and secretly caught up into the air before the tribulation of the last days. No one will know anything about them more than that they have suddenly disappeared. Such are some facts and features connected with this body, whose special mission it seems to be to cause divisions among those who ought to be united. Neither do they agree among themselves, as is evident from the schism which sprang up amongst them in Plymouth, Bristol, and other places, on the question of the human nature of our Lord. In some parts of the Continent of Europe they have given great trouble to those connected with Protestant Evangelistic labours, by their opposition to all ecclesiastical order or organization. Such are the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and, while we would be sorry to say there are not some excellent well-intentioned persons amongst them, we believe they have done much mischief by breaking into folds, violating the unity of Christ's Church, disturbing humble Christians, and separating choice friends.

CONVERT FROM **PLYMOUTHISM**.

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle.)

SIR, – The following letter will explain itself. Mr. Dorman held an important and prominent position as one of the leaders amongst the **Plymouth Brethren** for more than a quarter of a century. His eyes have at length been opened to “the chamber of horrors” connected with that most tyrannical and Jesuitical sect; and he has had the honesty and manliness to come straight out. His testimony is of overwhelming importance, because his character stands beyond reproach, and also because he is thoroughly conversant with all the peculiarities of the system. His letter runs thus: –

“Reigate, Surrey, Dec. 12, 1870.

“DEAR DR. CARSON, – I feel that I have no title to obtrude myself upon your notice, or to take up your time, which has, doubtless, sufficient claims upon it; but I have just read your book on ‘The **Plymouth** Heresies’ – which I had not seen in the pamphlet form – and on this account I venture to send you a line. In the first place, I may say that – if here and there I do not exactly agree with your statements – I think so highly of its force and purport that I heartily wish your book may gain all the attention from Christians that you can desire for it yourself. To me it possesses a melancholy interest which perhaps it could claim from few besides, because it puts its seal upon the judgment that I had come to four years ago – viz., that I had spent 28 years of most energetic labour in building up what I (now) believe to be the worst sect in Christendom, instead of accomplishing the

union of all Christians apart from sectarian distinctions, and placing all ministry under the power and guidance of God's Spirit, instead of under man's appointment and control – which were the sole objects that drove me amongst the [Plymouth Brethren](#) 32 years since. I will not, however, say any more about myself, as my object specially in writing to you was to place before you a very striking proof that you had not mistaken your point in so pertinaciously charging on Mackintosh the heresy of denying the proper humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Extracts.

“Our Lord received *no nature from the first Adam at all* (that is, at His birth); but on the Cross did take the Adam position, nature, and life, and then ended the whole in death.’ ... ‘Does Scripture teach thus – I mean that Christ took a nature on the Cross which He had not before? Assuredly it does.’ . . ‘God made Him to be sin for us, put on Him the iniquity of us all; *and more than that*, made Him to be sin *itself* – all that was in root, as well as in fruit, *at enmity to God*, and then, and so judged, that is damned, sin in all that it was, in nature, character, power, life, practice.”

“I do not know Mr. Pressland personally, but if these extracts from what he teaches and writes are shallow and stupid, and contain as many heresies as sentences, they are at least his rendering of the more subtly-stated doctrines of his great teacher, Mr. Darby.

“I am entirely outside every shade and division of [Brethrenism](#); and you will probably say, *not before it was time*.

“Pardon my intrusion, and believe me, yours faithfully in Christ,

“W. H. DORMAN.”

As Mr. Dorman in early life held an influential position, as I am informed, in the Christian ministry, and afterwards acted a consistent part as one of the leaders of the [Plymouths](#), I considered his testimony so very important that I asked permission to publish the contents of his letter. He at once sent me the whole correspondence in manuscript, with permission to use any part of it I thought proper. This correspondence, I find, was carried on in the year 1867 between Messrs. Bessant, Edmonds, Newman, and Townsend on the one side, and Mr. Pressland on the other (all [Plymouths](#)). It was finally referred for decision to Mr. Wigram; but he returned the documents with the remark, that "the less said upon these matters the better." It would never suit to raise opposition in the [Darbyite](#) sect against the heresies which the leaders were trying to promulgate. – Yours truly,

JAMES C. L. CARSON, M.D.

Coleraine, Jan. 2nd, 1871.

Southern Times, Weymouth, 11 Feb 1871, p. 4, Yeovil

A WEDDING took place at the Registrar's Office on Wednesday morning. The contracting parties were Miss Helen Petter, elder daughter of Mr. John Petter, ironmonger, of the Borough, Yeovil; and Mr. Samuel Page, of Gloucester, merchant. The bride's family belong to a small sect which is a kind of local subdivision of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and is familiarly called the "Petterites;" Mr. Petter, sen., being the leader. The chapel in which they meet – the old Quakers' room in Kingston – not being licensed for the solemnization of marriages, the ceremony was arranged to take place as above stated, before the local Superintendent-Registrar of Marriages, Mr. Elias Whitby. The party drove to the union in three or four carriages, with pairs of greys, at about eleven o'clock, but were delayed twenty minutes by the absence of Mr. Whitby, who did not attend (probably through some misunderstanding) until sent for. The civil contract being performed, the bride and bridegroom proceeded with their friends to the meeting-house in Kingston, where it was said they intended to spend an hour in "meditation" according to the custom of their persuasion. The singular nature of the wedding has occasioned considerable interest in the town, Mr. Petter being one of the principal tradesmen of the place. A numerous party of friends were entertained at an elegant wedding-breakfast, provided at Mr. Petter's private residence, Hendford-hill; and the *employés* of his business establishment were also to share in the festivities.

A “[PLYMOUTH SISTER](#),” WHO COULD NOT LEAVE MOTHER. – The meeting-house at Hopton, belonging to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), having lately been licensed for the celebration of marriages, and a couple living at Thetford, belonging to that persuasion, having agreed to be made one flesh, it was thought a fitting opportunity to make a “high day” amongst the sect, and *accordingly the ceremony* was arranged to take place at Hopton one day last week, when it was understood the minister of the chapel would provide the wedding breakfast, several friends from *Thetford* being invited. The expectant bridegroom arranged with the Registrar for his attendance and kindly promised that if he would get forward on the road he should be picked up by the loving couple and carried on to Hopton. So far all went well, but on Tuesday morning, on the would-be Benedict going for his promised bride, the lady coolly announced that she could not leave her mother. The jilted gentleman undertook the very awkward duty of informing the parties assembled at Hopton of the disastrous turn things had taken. Overtaking the Registrar on the road, he told him of the state of things, and proceeded on his way to Hopton, where the disappointment did not prevent the assembled company from doing justice to the wedding breakfast, although there was no wedding.

The Torquay Times, 24 Jun 1871, p. 5

TRIENNIAL MEETINGS OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

A gratifying amount of success has attended the triennial meetings of the Western and Devon Associations of Baptist Churches, held at the Upton Vale Baptist Chapel during the week. There was a large attendance of ministers and their friends from all parts of the West of England. {...}

The afternoon meeting was devoted to hearing the reports of the various churches constituting the two associations. {...} At Salcombe a new chapel was to be opened on Thursday. Teignmouth was discouraged; the [Plymouth Brethren](#) would not give up possession of the Baptist building, and no suitable place could be built. {...}

{See also the articles of 16 Jan 1841, 25 Jul 1866 and 13 Jun 1873 in the present selection.}

SILCHESTER.

DEATH BY HANGING. – On Tuesday an inquest was held at the “Crown” Inn, before Spencer Clarke, Esq., touching the death of James Myland, who was found dead in his own house on Friday evening, Oct. 27. He did not come to the office for the letters as usual at 4.40, and soon afterwards enquiries were made, and his house was found locked up, but no one had seen him leave. The policeman was sent for, and having entered the house, found him dead on the floor. The deceased had placed a butter tub under a staple in the ceiling, tied some string round his neck, then stepped on the tub, secured the string to the staple, and thus hanged himself. The string broke and he fell, but he is supposed to have been dead before the fall. The deceased lived with his family at Sherborne St. John, and returned there every evening; but through the day occupied a cottage at Silchester, in which he has lately opened a shop. The jury returned the following verdict: “The deceased killed himself by hanging; but there was not sufficient evidence to show his state of mind at the time.” The deceased has been rural messenger between Sherborne St. John and Silchester about 11 years, and was 35 years of age. He has left a widow and five young children. He was a member and preacher of the “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” persuasion.

The Express, Dublin, 29 Nov 1871, p. 2

SCENE IN A GRAVEYARD.

[SPECIAL TELEGRAM.]

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

Sligo, Tuesday.

A very unpleasant scene occurred to day at the burial-ground of Kilross, near this town, which has created a great deal of excitement in the neighbourhood. It was occasioned by the interference of a number of members of the sect known as [Plymouth Brethren](#), who would not allow the Burial Service of the Church of England to be read over the remains of the late Mrs. Ormsby, of Castle-dargan. The deceased lady, as well as all her friends, had been always a member of the Irish Church, but when living in Sligo, she used to attend and take part in the services of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The most prominent members of the sect, male and female, thought this was sufficient to justify them in interfering in the burial arrangements of the deceased lady, and accordingly, as the funeral *cortege* entered the graveyard, and the coffin was placed in the family vault, they made a rush and surrounded the grave. The Rev. Mr. Lucas, the parish clergyman, who was there, at the request of deceased's son, to read the Burial Service, was jostled out of the way, and a Mr. Hook mounted the vault, calling upon the friends of the deceased to leave the "bone dust" alone. He then gave out a hymn, which was sung in a high key by his female followers, after which he delivered an oration. The friends of the deceased had to withdraw; at least they preferred to do that rather than create an unseemly row on such an occasion.

AN EXTRAORDINARY SCENE.

SPECIAL TELEGRAM.

(From our Correspondent.)

Sligo, Tuesday Night.

A very extraordinary and unpleasant scene took place to-day at the burial-ground of Kilross, in this county, and on the occasion of the burial of a Mrs. Ormsby, widow of Captain Nicholson Ormsby, who only outlived her husband by a few months. As the deceased lady belonged to an old and respectable family, a large number of respectable friends and acquaintances assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to her memory. Amongst these was the clergyman of the parish, the Rev. Mr. Lucas, who came to read the Burial Service, at the request of the brother and son of the deceased, the funeral cortage, however, had scarcely reached the burial ground when a party of strangers from Sligo drove up and took possession of the space round the family vault, driving off the friends of the deceased, and particularly the Protestant minister; this party consisted of men, women and children, members of a Bible sect in Sligo, who go by the name of [Trenchites](#), [Newlights](#), and [Plymouth Brethren](#), they claimed the bone dust, as they called the remains, as their own; the indignation of the friends of the deceased lady may be better imagined {sic} than described; the attack was so sudden that interference was utterly impossible without creating an unseemly row and using physical force. A hymn was immediately given out by a strange gentleman, and those enthusiasts sung it as loud as they could bawl, after which a discourse of a very rambling character was delivered.

THE ALLEGED "SCENE IN A GRAVEYARD."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY EXPRESS.

SIR, – My attention has been called to a paragraph in the *Daily Express* of yesterday's date, which is headed "A Scene in a Graveyard," and dates from Sligo, on Tuesday last. Such statements, whether true or false, are never worth much notice; but out of respect for the memory of my lamented and Christian mother, I feel I am bound to assert that almost line for line and word for word of your "Sligo Correspondent" is utterly untrue. First of all, there was not a semblance of "a scene at the graveyard." On the contrary, the respect paid to the gentleman who preached the Gospel on that solemn occasion was most marked and respectful by all, save, perhaps, "Your own Correspondent," whose paragraph clearly shows that his respect for truth is rather doubtful. Secondly, I deny that there was a rush to the grave on the part of a single individual, as all approached with that calmness and conduct which has always characterized our countrymen on such a solemn occasion. Thirdly there was no interference, either directly or indirectly, with me on the part of the "[Plymouth Brethren](#)." It is not true, on the part of your correspondent, that I had asked Mr. Lucas to officiate at my mother's grave, as that gentleman belongs to a neighbouring parish, and not to mine. It is not true that any of my friends had to withdraw from the graveyard, nor were they jostled out of it by any one. I am myself a member of the "Church of Ireland," as all my forefathers were on both sides, but of late years my mother had ceased to be a member of that Church, for reasons best known to herself, and as her last request was that one of the [brethren](#) should preach the Gospel to the people

over her grave, I wrote to my parish minister, the Rev. Mr. Knox, that I would carry out my mother's wishes, and he, like the gentleman and Christian that he is, never interfered in the slightest with our proceedings. Mr. Hooke came, and over the grave of my mother he delivered a sermon that called forth the admiration and respect of every one present. Hoping, therefore, that if your correspondent happens to attend another funeral, such as he attended at Kilross, he will not take liberties with the name of the deceased, or their friends for the purpose of making them a cloak for an attack on a body of Christians, who, I am sure, despise such falsehood and trash. – I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN R. ORMSBY.

Castledargan, 30th Nov., 1871.

∴ We have communicated with our correspondent, who informs us that he was deceived by a person upon whom he thought he could rely, but who practised upon him a stupid and mischievous hoax. We regret extremely that an unfounded report which was calculated to wound the feelings of respectable families should have found its way into our columns.

THE LATE STRANGE SCENE IN SLIGO.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE FREEMAN.

SIR – Will you be so good as to publish a complete denial of the statement sent you by special telegram from Sligo on November 28th, with regard to the burial of Mrs. Ormsby? It is the least you can do as a gentleman and the editor of a widely circulated paper. Mr. Ormsby, of Castledargan, has written to the editor of the *Express*, as it was in that journal he first saw the statement sent you by, apparently, the same correspondent, and in all probability he has not seen the *Freeman* of Nov. 30, and I write as a friend to request as full a contradiction as you gave publicity in circulating a most untruthful account of a solemn scene, and which inexpressibly grieved many of the relatives, friends, and acquaintances of the deceased lady. It was her dying request that the Gospel (which she loved, which told her of a Saviour-God, in whose all-sufficient atonement she trusted) should be preached at her burial, and her son, who loved her, had her wish carried out, and there was no one who could or would oppose what he willed to do. – Truly yours, H.

I enclose my card, but not for publication.

Reynolds's Newspaper, London, 3 Dec 1871, p. 1

A DISPLEASED DENOMINATION. – Her Majesty's Government are supposed to be highly popular with Nonconformists in general; but there is one particular sect of Dissenters whom it is evident that they have grievously offended. They are manifestly in deep disgrace with the [Plymouth Brethren](#). – *Punch*.

THE WOMAN ABOUT TOWN.

{...}

Of all the advertisements I ever saw, the following, cut from a “religious” paper, is, I think, the most outrageously indecent. Here it is *verbatim*: –

“TO YOUNG MEN. – Wanted, a young man, who through slight infirmity, requires some light employment. He must be highly respectable and trustworthy, a true Christian, and one of the so called [exclusive brethren](#). He must be free from all cant phrases. He must know, and state in a letter of his own composition and his own hand-writing, why he knows that all his sins are forgiven. He must state his age, which must be between twenty and thirty years. He must state the nature of his ailment, and what kind of employment he has been used to. He will have to board with two highly respectable maid servants, but spend the day in the library, writing and preparing parcels for the book post. He will lodge in the house, and must not be above cleaning his own boots if it needs be that he should have to clean them. It would be a great help if he would send his photograph, which shall be returned if so expressed. It is requested that he will not send any testimonials, but the name of last employer, and that he will read again and understand this advertisement before answering it.”

I would give worlds to see the portrait of the young man who gets this place. An “[exclusive brother](#),” with a “slight infirmity,” who can state, without using “cant phrases,” the reasons “why he knows all his sins are forgiven,” must be a sort of individual who is in existence purposely to be kicked severely by his fellow men. As for the long-faced, blasphemous scoundrel who inserted the advertisement, I have no patience to talk of him. Yet he evidently knows the world. See how warily he words his advertisement. You will have to clean your own boots, he says, in effect, but then, on the

other hand, you will have the advantage of boarding with “two highly-respectable maidservants.” O! the humbug! “Need not send any testimonials.” As if highly-respectable maidservants would live with such a canting rogue; or as if the “[exclusive brother](#),” with the wooden leg, or the cork arm, or whatever his slight ailment may be, would have any testimonial to send, unless it was a “ticket of leave” or an application order. It is a pity the pillory no longer exists, and that such a sanctimonious rascal as the author of the above advertisement cannot be placed in it and pelted to within an inch of his bad and worthless life. I have half a mind to hide a riding whip in my petticoats, and answer the advertisement myself in person. I think the advertiser would soon find out that all his sins were not forgiven.

{...}

STELLA.

The Carlisle Patriot, 8 Mar 1872, p. 3

WANTED, A DISABLED YOUTH.

In the columns of a religious contemporary there is a curious advertisement. It is addressed to “Young Men,” and states that there is “Wanted, a young man who, through slight infirmity, requires some light employment.” This is explicable enough; we all of us sometimes have to go in for cheap and nasty labour. But this “slightly-infirm” youth must, it appears, be “one of the so-called [exclusive brethren](#),” and must “Know and state in a letter of his own composition, and in his own handwriting, why he knows that all his sins are forgiven.” And what do our readers suppose will be the duties of

the “exclusive brother,” when the photograph, which he is afterwards asked to send, has proved satisfactory? – “He will have to board with two highly-respectable maid-servants, but spend the day in the library, writing and preparing parcels for the book post. He will lodge in the house, and must not be above cleaning his own boots, if it needs be that he should have to clean them.” We hardly know whether most to pity his prospective condition, or that of the “two highly-respectable maid-servants;” for we fear that, notwithstanding his “slight infirmity” and his religious condition, he is not likely to prove a success in the kitchen as well as in the library.

The Bucks Advertiser and Aylesbury News, Aylesbury, 9 Mar 1872, p. 5, Northchurch

On Wednesday evening, the 29th ult., an unusual ceremony took place at the Little Baptist Chapel. The [Plymouth brethren](#) of this town, who, it appears, believe in baptism by immersion, administered that religious rite to 12 candidates at this place of worship, not having one of their own.

THE MILD MAY PARK CONFERENCE.

{...}

It ought to be added that it is the meeting-point of the milder “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” and indeed of the best members of all and sundry Protestant sects, with the Church of England. The more furious fanatics who use the designation of [Plymouth Brethren](#), and who count it a sin to enter a church, or to kneel in prayer (as we have heard), even with Wesleyans or Independents, are not to be found at St. Jude’s. Indeed, they could not have taken part in the (frequent) celebrations of Holy Communion, in which many hundreds of persons, we believe, joined in St. Jude’s Church, both during and at a solemn conclusion of the Conference. But within these wide lines, all is apparently open. Lord Radstock, Mr. Blackwood, and other prominent specimens of the more advanced school of “Christians unattached,” are among its lights and oracles; and indeed any one who will come among them, on a certain undefined condition, unexpressed but perfectly well understood, seems to be impartially welcomed. That condition is simply a certain subjective experience of the individual Christian, and its sole and separate supremacy in the system referred to may be inferred from the subjects of the Three Days’ Conference just ended, which were grouped thus: “The Gift,” “The Gift received,” “The Gift ministered.” Under one or other of these headings were arranged all the topics of interest, foreign or domestic, to a miscellaneous congregation of Christians; and we may just refer to the addresses of the Rev. Hudson Taylor, a missionary in China, and of the Rev. W.M.A. Aitken, formerly curate of St. Jude’s, as full of general interest to all believers, and the latter especially, as indicating

points of contact with other schools of thought most grateful to minds which find themselves too often repelled by a tone of assumption and exclusiveness on the part of too many of these dogmatic-undogmatic Protestant Christians. We hope to return to both of them, and, if possible, to describe in more detail the charitable works already referred to.

{...}

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND GOOD TEMPLARISM.

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle.)

SIR, – The Christians called by this name having adopted excommunication as their summary mode of argument with one of their members who upholds Good Templar principles, it may be of some interest to your Christian readers to hear some of their counter statements. I have these statements in writing, and can give them at full length if called upon to do so, but at present I shall only give you a sample as follows: –

“Man in his fallen state has no rational common sense by which to preceive {sic} *self-evident* truth. Being incapable of judging *self-evidence*, he has no moral power which can be acted upon by moral suasion; and, consequently, he has no moral power to abstain from any lust of his fallen nature, but is like a partly inflated bladder, which compressed in one place extends in another, so that any attempt to compress the bladder is another remedy for sin than the Blood of Christ.”

So then it is better to let the drunkard go on, for if the “bladder” is compressed in this direction it may extend into adultery, and any remedy to stop the adulterer is another remedy for his sin than the blood of Christ. All philanthropic societies which aim at the suppression of vice and the promotion of virtue among unconverted people are not only labouring in vain but actually dishonouring the blood of Christ. Mental culture of all kinds may be stopped, for man has lost his moral perception. The savage is as useful a member of society as the sage.

Now, if Good Templarism aimed at preparing men *for heaven* by sobriety, or making sobriety in any degree a *helper* to the all-sufficient atonement of Christ, I for one would abandon its ranks with horror. Or, if by associating with those who deny the Godhead of Christ, *in reclaiming the drunkard*, I was *obliged* to deny, or in any degree compromise, the glorious truth of the Godhead of Christ, I would not remain a single hour with Good Templars.

There is no necessity for running to extremes on any side. While it is blessedly true that the spirit of God alone can give divine power, and quicken the *dead* sinner into spiritual life, it is also true that God has reserved from the wreck of man's fallen condition the conscience to testify for Him in man's bosom, so that by the voice of conscience the rational understanding is still accessible, and man thereby can "approve of the things that are more excellent" when they are placed before him; therefore, his failure in doing the things that are excellent arises from his *unwillingness* to do them; hence his guilt. Thus man is called upon by God to "consider," as the turning point from evil. If a man can be led to consider his own *self-interest* a great first step is gained, either in relation to his present life or the life that is to come. The Gospel itself addresses a man's own *self-interest*; but even that our poor fellow man cannot be prevailed upon to consider his latter end, should we, on that account, cease our exertions in persuading him to consider his welfare and the welfare of others *in this world*.

Rather than adopt the Brethren's views on this question, I have suffered them to expel me. I would rather return to the old Presbyterian Church where I was brought up, where there are established order and fixed standards, than drift away on such a wild sea, without either compass or helm. – Yours very truly,

VANCE MACAULEY.

Maddybenny, Nov., 1872.

THE SPECIAL SERVICES AT HOLLOWAY HALL.

On Wednesday evening last a tea and public meeting was held at Holloway Hall, in connection with the special services held there on Sundays and Tuesdays by Mr. W. Forbes. {...}

Mr. W. FORBES gave a statement in reference to the services, which had been carried on since December last. There were three services on Sunday, morning, afternoon, and evening, the morning service being for children. There was also a service on Tuesday evening. The movement was purely evangelical, and ministers of all denominations took part in the services. They had had Church of England ministers, and next Sunday the afternoon service would be conducted by a member of the Society of Friends. There was no desire or expectation that a Church would be formed out of this movement, nor did they desire to take a single person from the surrounding churches. They appealed to a class who did {not} attend any place of worship, and their wish was that when they had awakened any of these to induce them to attach themselves to some established cause. Before this meeting, he took the liberty of calling on the members of the surrounding churches, and explained the matter. He was received very kindly, and they all wished him God-speed, and that he might go on and prosper. (Cheers.)

{...}

The Rev. G. PLAFORD (of St. Paul's Church, Kingsdown-road) made a bitter and personal attack on the religious body known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and said he was under the impression that these

services were carried on by t his {sic} body. He was glad to find it was not so, for he came prepared to oppose them, and to affirm, as he had affirmed before, and was ready to do again, that their teaching was contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. This insult to a respectable and earnest body of Christians was delivered in a loud, harsh voice, and with energetic action – in fact, with as much “rant” as it was possible for the speaker to throw in. Strange to say, no one objected to this offensive onslaught, either at the time or afterwards, and this in the face of the fact that a [Plymouth Brother](#) paid the hire of the Hall for the first ten weeks of Mr. Forbes’ services! With great taste Mr. Plaford proceeded to boast of his own Evangelical labours in Holloway for the last eleven years among the navvies and brickmakers, and assured the meeting that he knew what ought to be done. For five years he preached in the open air, in the highways and hedges, and on Sundays in the Grove-road School-room; and if he found a person attending his services who belonged to another church, he told him to go elsewhere. As he was about to resign his charge at St. Paul’s he would have some leisure, and if they wanted his assistance in a purely evangelical work he would give it. In conclusion, Mr. Plaford stated that this afternoon he had heard that children had been taken from his schools and drawn to the services at Holloway-hall. This was not evangelical work, and he hoped such a thing would not occur again.

{...}

CORRECTION.

SIR, – My attention having just been called to your report of the meeting at Holloway-hall on Wednesday last, allow me to correct an error, which, if allowed to pass, may lead to some misapprehension.

{...}

I also attempted to combat the objections of the Rev. G. Plaford in the main, but I was allotted so short a space of time that I was compelled to confine myself to generalities, regretting I had not opportunity to say more. So your statement that he remained unchallenged is scarcely correct.

I am, &c.,

C. A. HODDINOTT.

[{...} Our statement, that Mr. Plaford's unwarrantable attack on the [Plymouth Brethren](#) was unanswered, was perfectly correct. – ED. *I. G.*]

FRANCE – PRACTICAL PEACE.

The London *Herald of Peace* says: – “We have received intelligence from France of the existence of a sect of anti-war ‘[Plymouth Brethren](#),’ named ‘[Darbyites](#),’ or ‘[Darbistes](#),’ after John Nelson Darby, a well-known Irish gentleman, long associated with Antony N. Groves, Benjamin Newton, and other ‘[Brethren](#),’ whose earnest evangelistic labours in many parts of the European and American continents have been attended by much success. These French ‘[Darbyites](#)’ hold similar views, in respect to war, to those of the Friends or Quakers, and it now appears that they are as faithful and self-denying in carrying them out thoroughly and consistently. Their adherents are mostly recruited in the two departments of the Drome and the Ardeche, and their existence as a sect was scarcely known to the great majority of Frenchmen until a soldier belonging to this body was recently tried by court-martial for insubordination. This young man, named Ernest Combier, who had been sent to join his regiment, refused to carry arms, declaring that he was ready to submit to any punishment, even that of death, rather than repudiate his principles. The colonel had no alternative but to send him before a court-martial for breach of discipline; and, in the course of the trial, the schoolmaster who had been called as a witness stated, that though he had done all in his power to eradicate these ideas, the prisoner had held fast to his original purpose. When he told him that in the event of a battle, he would always be able to fire in the air, the young man declared that he would not do that, because it would be an act of treachery towards the Government, and that he preferred stating the case to his superiors when he was called upon to join the army. On similar grounds he refused to purchase a substitute, and, in reply to the warning of his schoolmaster that he would

render himself liable to be shot for insubordination, he avowed his readiness 'to add another to the three millions of martyrs who have already died for their faith.' His behaviour at the trial is said to have been most exemplary, and when questioned by the president of the court, he confessed that he had disobeyed the military laws, but had acted in conformity with those of the Gospel. He was sentenced, by a court-martial held at Paris, to undergo one year's imprisonment in the prison of Cherche-Midi. The following questions were put to him by the Court: – Q. You have refused to bear arms with your comrades? E. C. Yes. Q. Why have you arrived at this determination? E. C. Through obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Q. Where did you find these religious principles which forbid you to bear arms? E. C. In the Gospel. Q. Are you not aware that, by your disobedience, you have rendered yourself liable to a severe punishment? E. C. I am quite aware of it. The law must take its course. If I deserve death, I am quite resigned to undergo it." The *Herald* remarks: – "If Frenchmen, Germans, and other Continental nations generally, would follow the excellent example of those conscientious Christian '[Brethren](#),' and of the Quakers in England, Ireland, and America, it would be impossible for despots to wage war, or for demagogues to excite revolutionary violence. Nor is it cowardice that prompts the [Brethren](#) in their passive non-resistance. On the contrary, it is the very highest form of bravery, the utmost example of courage to act out conscientious principles at the cost of being fined, imprisoned, or even shot for such fidelity to God's commands.

{The *Herald of Peace* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

The Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, Exeter, 13 Jun 1873, p. 6

TEIGNMOUTH.

An unseemly quarrel has occurred between the [Plymouth Brethren](#) and the Baptists. The former held possession of a building to which the latter have recently set up a claim. On Friday night the Baptists entered the chapel and remained there some time, and it was with great difficulty that the place was cleared. There will be work for the lawyers.

{See also the articles of 16 Jan 1841, 25 Jul 1866 and 24 Jun 1871 in the present selection.}

MATRIMONIAL NOVELTY. – On Friday, a couple from the Blairgowrie district waited upon one of the local Justices of the Peace in Perth, and asked to be united in the bands of matrimony, at the same time stating that, as they belonged to the sect known as [Plymouth Brethren](#), they considered marriage to be a legal contract, and, as such, beyond the control of the clergy. The Justice being satisfied that the parties were in all respects entitled to the benefits (or otherwise) of the existing Act, performed the marriage ceremony in the presence of the requisite number of witnesses, but at the same time informed the contracting parties that the performance of the ceremony would require to be certified by the Sheriff, which was done in course of the afternoon, and the newly-wedded pair went on their way rejoicing.

A FIRE STOPPED IN TIME. – On Sunday morning last, at 3 a.m., P.C. Bailey, of the Borough force, having observed a strong light in the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Room, adjoining Mr. Messer's timber-yard, Queen's-road, Reading, looked through a window and saw a quantity of chips on the floor on fire. He at once forced open the window, entered the building, and extinguished the fire before the floor had become ignited. It appears that a stove in the chapel had been lighted overnight, and a quantity of chips being left near it, on becoming dry, they ignited.

STRANGE DOINGS BY A SOI-DISANT **PLYMOUTH BROTHER**. – Some of the inhabitants of the town of Banff were between Friday night and Saturday morning thrown into a state of alarm by hearing a man on the street crying out “Woe unto the Bloody City.” He walked through the principal streets of the town between one and two o’clock in the morning, crying out at the pitch of his voice. He was taken cognisance of by the police; when he gave his name as Thomas King. On Sunday morning, he was again found on the streets, and requested to be taken to the house of a gentleman in Bridge Street. He was taken there, and remained till four o’clock on Sunday afternoon. He went to the Banff Parish Church on Sunday evening; and, after the minister had finished his sermon, King rose up in the gallery, and cried out “The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” The exclamation occasioned great surprise among the congregation. About nine o’clock on Sunday evening, King was wandering about Deveronside; and, when above the bridge opposite Duff House, he plunged into the river, and swam across. He rang the bells at Duff House, and frightened the servants, who had to get aid to see him out of the grounds. On Monday King wandered about Macduff and Banff, and was taken into custody. He says that he is a native of Queen’s County, is 34 years of age, that he was a clerk in the London and North Western Railway, but for the last two years and a half had been a preacher of the Gospel. He describes himself as a **Plymouth Brother**, taking a preaching tour in Scotland, previous to going to China, to proclaim the Gospel. He has been in prison in Forfar, Montrose, and other towns, and had evidently been in communication with some people in Fraserburgh, from which he came to Banff. After examination King was allowed to proceed.

THE GOOD TEMPLARS OF WINDSOR.

On Wednesday evening the Good Templars of Windsor formally inaugurated the hall which they have just erected in the Spital-road. {...}

Mr. RAE (Reading) next addressed the meeting, and referring to the opposition they had experienced from medical men and ministers, said that the former were not so much at fault as the latter, who had stood out against almost everything that was good. Still, they had hundreds of medical men with them, and many ministers of the Gospel. In America there were 25,000 ministers who were Good Templars, including men like Beecher Stowe. He alluded to the great opposition which the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in particular had offered to the order. But notwithstanding all, a hundred thousand drunkards had joined the order, a hundred and fifty thousand moderate drinkers had joined the order, two hundred and fifty thousand men, women, and children had banded themselves together to destroy the evil drinking customs of the land.

{...}

OUR REFORMER IN GREAT WATERFLOODS.

DEAR SIR, – Having returned from the south to spend the summer months again by the sea-side here, for the good of my health, I have entered once more upon my mission of reform, and have now to report progress.

Poking about in odd nooks and corners, I found my way one evening lately into a meeting of a new religious sect that has arisen among you, the members of which call themselves [Christian Brethren](#) or [Plymouth Brethren](#), although I ascertained that they admitted sisters. One of the [brethren](#), who seemed to be a pillar – a pillar of salt, I thought, he dropped so bitterly on regular ministers and existing churches – I had heard holding forth in the open air some time before; and saying to myself, like Jaques in “As you like it,”

“To him will I; out of these convertites
There is much matter to be heard and learned.”

I had made enquiries and effected an entrance into the conventicle of the true church.

The brother I had heard in public, having opened the meeting, proceeded to expound a portion of scripture, and then intimated that the subject would be open for discussion. Thereupon several others of the fraternity engaged in an animated debate about the exact sense of the passage. I listened with much interest. I could not always see through the arguments, but one thing was clear

– whoever did not see things in the same light as [Plymouth Brethren](#) must be “carnally-minded.” At last I said – “ May I be permitted to ask for a little enlightenment?”

“Oh! certainly,” answered the chairman.

“Well, it appears you base your articles of faith on passages of Scripture?”

“Yes, we do.”

“Yet you seem to have strong objections to a regularly trained ministry.”

“Yes, we have; what is wanted is the teaching of the Spirit.”

“Just so; but the Spirit may teach those who would interpret Greek to learn it first. Supposing I should say, now, that the English translation you have been dealing with does not convey the true sense of the original text, or that the whole passage is a fabrication, how would you deal with such an objection?”

“We should refer to standard authorities.”

“Very well; your method is the strongest possible argument for the classical education of religious teachers, and yet you seem to set light by college training.”

“What we object to is the hiring of such learning for the service of the Church. It should be given freely, “without money and without price.”

“It seems to me,” I answered, “that you people take a most perverted view of the pecuniary connection between pastor and people. Here is a company of sensible people, we’ll suppose. Most of them

are engaged in arduous occupations throughout the week. They desire spiritual instruction, and they come together, as you have come, to search the Scriptures. Important questions are started in these discussions. They feel they have not learning sufficient to grapple with them. They feel they have not sufficient leisure throughout the week to prosecute the necessary enquiries regarding them. What is to be done? There is one of their number, let us suppose, pre-eminently thoughtful and studious. The rest appeal to him and say, 'You must take up these subjects and sift them for us, and let us have your mind upon them.' He replies, 'I have no classical knowledge; I have little time to read; I have no leisure for the prosecution of the necessary studies, for I must attend to my business.' But the rest reply, 'Our need of enlightenment is urgent; you must give up your business and *take* leisure to study and think for us, and we will see to it that you do not starve in consequence.' Here you have the root and rise of ministerial salaries. It is absurd to imagine you can have the products of study and thought unless you make it possible for those who minister to you to study and think. It is mean and despicable to require services which demand long hours of concentrated thought on the part of those who would render them, and yet make no provision for their deliverance from the worry of the wolf of want. Hence it seems to me that the foundations of your system are entirely rotten. No sensible person will ever find a habitation of the Spirit in it. It may serve the purpose of a few narrow-minded, self-willed, conceited gabblers, well-named [Ply-mouth Brethren](#), but –"

Here the President {sic} of the assembly started to his feet and, coming towards me, exclaimed, "We cannot allow such language here, you must leave the meeting."

"Leave the meeting yourself!" I replied; "I am only exercising the liberty you claim for yourselves, and with the measure ye mete measuring you again. You have been ring-leader of these simple-

minded creatures long enough; I mean now to assume the office myself, and knock your nonsense out of them.”

Hereupon he seized me by the coat collar and commenced, with the assistance of several others, to push me towards the door. You know that though I am a most peaceful individual, “yet I have in me something dangerous,” and this treatment roused all the spirit of resistance in me. I closed with the leading brother, and then commenced a fearful scuffle! On one side of the room there was a large portable tin tank full of water, wherein the proselytes were immersed. In our struggle we came against this obstacle with such violence that we both went slap into it and turned it right over upon us. I was carried across the floor some distance by the flood of spilt water; but on regaining my soundings I found that my opponent had entirely disappeared, the bath having come down over him like an extinguisher! The whole meeting rushed to his assistance through the raging tide. The water rushed down stairs, I with it! Reaching the entry door, I turned to shout upstairs to my discomfited assailants, “*Apiés {sic} moi le deluge,*” when a woman, mad with rage, sprang upon me out of a dark passage and belaboured me about the face with a wet dishclout, shrieking, “This is a bonnie hoose ye’ve made tae me wi’ yer bapteezin’, ye [Plymouth](#) Horse Marine! The bairn nearly droont deid in’ts craadle, and half the plaister o’ the ceilin’ lyin’ i’ the fleer! But I’ll see if the police are tae alloo folk tae be washen intae the street in this gate!”

“My good woman,” I replied; “you are mistaken! I am not one of the boat’s crew upstairs! They’ve had a spill. Their craft’s upset, and I’m escaping for my life. Go upstairs and tackle them!” She went immediately, with the wet dishclout in her hand. What followed, I can only vaguely imagine!

ELGIN – A RELIGIOUS MANIAC. – On Sunday evening rather a remarkable episode took place in the Free High Church, Elgin, during the evening service. The Rev. Mr Macphail had just announced the place where his text was to be found, but before he had time to find the verse a middle-aged individual who had entered the church as the congregation were concluding the singing of a psalm, startled the assemblage by rising to his feet and proclaiming in sepulchral tones that “The coming of the Lord draweth nigh,” and immediately after withdrew from the church. The abruptness and unexpectedness of the remark, more than the nature of the disclosure which the man meant it to convey, produced a great temporary sensation in the church{.} The rev. gentleman in the pulpit seemed to share in the universal amazement. The eccentric person who conducted himself so strangely, and who belongs to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) sect, only the other week made himself notorious in Banff by his denouncements. While there one day he plunged into the Deveron, coming out however, safely on the other side. Having been forcibly compelled to make his exit from Banff, he came to Elgin, where he first visited the most of the schools, standing up before each teacher and telling him in a deep-fetched breath that “The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” Then dwelling-houses were next visited, and the same message delivered, the man introducing himself as a “commissioner of the Lord.” New Elgin had in its serenity broken upon by this pretended vicegerent, who denounced that munticipality {sic} as a perfect Sodom, and Elgin had woe pronounced it as being a perfect Choroazin, on which judgment – inevetable {sic} and speedy – will descend. On Saturday night and Sunday morning the streets were made to resound with the cry “Woe to this bloody city.” – *Elgin Courant*.

{The 1874 volume of the *Elgin Courant* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN** AND THEIR PECULIAR DOCTRINES.

SIR, – During these past weeks a few of the sect called the **Plymouth Brethren** or Darbyites, have been going through our northern district on what they are pleased to call an evangelistic tour, and have been prosecuting their peculiar mission with a zeal and energy which, to say the least of it, is worthy of a better cause. Why they should have chosen this particular time for perambulating the district it would not be very easy to guess, but, as we understand, their object is not so much to evangelize as to proselytize. They may judge that as the present is a time of general religious awakening, and as the minds of many are in an unsettled state, it will be advantageous in the way of their gaining some new converts to **Brethrenism**. They look upon churches and chapels as being objects of aversion and horror, and so they denounce them in no measured terms; nay, they have even in their prayers been heard to thank God that they are not confined to buildings hung with tapestry and all the gaudy tinsel of this vain world. No doubt they are devoutly thankful that they are privileged to hold forth within the radius of a tent, or better still with the broad earth for a platform and the open canopy of heaven for a sounding board. They look upon ministers as being a set of lazy and unprincipled hirelings who ought not to be supported; consequently when the **brethren** come into any district, they generally cry down the ministers as being, almost without exception, unconverted men, men who are walking in the broad road themselves, and therefore it is not to be thought that they can lead their hearers into the narrow way. They do not stop there, however, but with unrelenting hand they consign ministers to a certain place which we shall not mention here, but where the predominating element is *heat*, and as they have a firm conviction that

the punishment of the transgressor in that dismal region will be proportionate to the measure of the offence, they consider that there will be a certain space in that perfervid locality set apart for the special accommodation of ministers, where the furnace, of course, like that of Nebuchadnezzar, will require to be heated seven times! Now, we do not say that all the ministers of the gospel are duly alive to the great responsibility that rests upon them. In all the other professions of life there are to be found men who have mistaken their calling, and we are not to suppose but that the same thing may occur in the ranks of the ministry. But what would be thought of the Queen of Great Britain if she should propose to disband the standing army because it was found that there was a few soldiers who were either incapable or false to their colours. If such a step as that was taken would it not be a strong temptation to our enemies to “come in like a flood,” and we cannot help thinking that the same result would follow if we were to disband our trained ministry and leave the field to these raving [Brethrenites](#). However feebly some of our ministers may preach the truth, yet they do preach it, but if these ignorant and foolish babblers were to take the place of a learned ministry we should soon witness a state of things which a great poet describes as being “confusion worse confounded.”

With regard to the support of a stated ministry, however {sic}, we think there is a gross inconsistency on the part of the [Brethren](#). How are they supported themselves? In our peregrinations through the country not long ago, we alighted at a certain village where the [Brethren](#) had pitched their “moving tent,” and where four or five of them were prosecuting evangelistic work. The thought instantly occurred to us, who pays them? and if they do not accept pay, then how do they live? Judging by their physical aspect they looked like men who could, and no doubt did, enjoy a good dinner. Where did it come from? Did they receive a miraculous supply from day to day, or did they, like the monks in the church of Rome, set out after their evangelistic services were over *cum sacco percivitatem* –

that is, with their bag through the town. Be that as it may, it certainly confirmed us more and more in the opinion that “they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” But we do not forget that it is not exactly on account of having the ministry to support that the [Plymouths](#) object to it, but it is because we allow this *one man ministry* to usurp the place of the Holy Ghost. The [Brethren](#), of course, would have us believe that the Holy Ghost is President in all their assemblies, and that all who speak in the assembly are under his special inspiration. It is well they have told us so, for when we go into any of their meetings and hear the blasphemies, heresies, and arrant nonsense which they give utterance to, it would be a long time before we should come to the conclusion that they are being led by the special direction of this divine agent. But however much they may ridicule the one man system, and however much they may boast of the special presidency of the Holy Spirit, it is a well known fact that they cannot get along unless when some influential brother comes among them, to be principal leader and speaker. Now, sir, it would encroach much too far on your valuable space to bring forward all their absurd views; but with your permission I would like to say a word or two on another point, viz., *perfection*. It is well known that one of the doctrines of the [Plymouthist](#) is, that when his conversion takes place from that moment he is as holy as he ever can be; and that this being the case, he is not under the necessity of praying for the pardon of sin any more, like the rest of us poor sinful mortals. Now, “this is a consummation devoutly to be wished for,” if it were only possible to attain to it. When a brother is caught tripping, however – in other words, committing breaches of the moral law – and, we believe, such things pretty frequently occur – how does he reconcile these delinquencies with his doctrine of perfection: “Oh!” says he, “What have I got to do with the law? I am entirely free from it. When I was converted I got another nature, which cannot sin, and as for these things which you consider sins, they belong to the *flesh*, and I am not to be held responsible for them.” In short, their doctrine is that, with regard to these two natures, the one is

sinless, therefore they are perfect. The other is that which is described as the old man, and there is no use in trying to improve him in any way. The old man they look upon as being utterly incorrigible; he has been addicted to bad habits for six thousand years, and it would be a hopeless task to try to patch or mend him. Now, this old man will be sure to break out at times, and will have his own way, and may even lead a brother to do things which some people would call sin; but then said brother is not to consider that he is a whit less perfect on that account, or that he is to be held responsible for what this bad neighbour of his, viz., the old man, may hurry him into. If this doctrine of the [brethren](#) were carried out to its legitimate issue, we think it would be (not to use too strong a term) Anti-nomian heresy – we would be disposed to call it by that name – but we have a strong suspicion that a writer of great authority, who lived some eighteen hundred years ago, would be disposed to call it “*damnable heresy*.” Surely this doctrine of their’s is free grace with a vengeance; it is free grace and free living at the same time; if this be not going on to sin because grace abounds we don’t know what it is; and if it can be shown that the high moral character which obtains amongst the [Brethren](#) is a sufficient refutation of any such charge, no thanks to their creed for it. For if it be true that man cannot sin after his conversion, then the great and good King of Israel’s adultery was no sin at all, and that matter of Uriah, which we have always been taught to regard as a scandalous piece of business, from end to end, was a mere trifle not to be taken any notice of, and the prophet was guilty of great impertinence in charging it home upon the King as a most outrageous sin. It is quite clear, however, that the chief actor in that scene regarded himself as a very heinous {s}inner; but if he had been better informed, in other words, if he had been indoctrinated in the peculiar tenets of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), he might have saved himself a great deal of sorrow and anguish of heart.

However comfortable this creed of their's may be, we must say we have no faith in it; and, moreover, we think it will be a long time before it regenerate society, and instead of hurrying on the millenium, it will postpone it to an indefinite period. With regard to the Second Advent, we believe the view which the Brethren take of it is, that the Saviour will come secretly, and take his Church – that is, the Brethren – to himself at any moment. Well, if this is the sort of gospel which they are to propagate, the sooner they are translated so much the better for the world. I am sure we shall not grudge them. They are the troublers of society, whose peculiar mission seems to be, not to gather in the outcasts, but to prowl around the sheepfold like greedy wolves, and snatch away those who have already been gathered in with much painstaking and care. Such being the case, instead of mourning their departure, we will be tempted to say, “Keep them, and we will sing their requiem.” We wonder that ministers allow these peace-breaking Brethrenites to pass unquestioned, or that they are not more careful to warn their hearers against them. They work incalculable mischief, breaking up the peace of happy families, and sowing discord where harmony formerly prevailed. Ministers may think, and rightly enough, that they are “foemen unworthy of their steel,” yet since they do succeed sometimes in misleading simple and ignorant people, it is the duty of ministers to sound the note of warning, so that the unwary may escape the snares, which with Jesuitical cunning these Plymouthists spread for them.

VERITAS.

The Coleraine Chronicle, 18 Jul 1874, p. 3

AHOGHILL AND CULLYBACKEY.

Both of these villages celebrated the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne in a large field at the Loan, near Cullybackey, on Monday. Both villages were extensively decorated particularly Ahoghill, in which village the [Plymouth Brethren](#) are making a great many converts, and one of their leaders had suspended from his window a large sheet of paper, with the words, "God is Love," printed thereon. {...}

The Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald, Ardrossan, 9 Jan 1875, p. 4, Local News

EVENING SERMON. – On Sabbath evening the Rev. Jas. Treadwell of Stevenston preached a sermon on the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Free Church, Ardrossan. He took as his text, John 1. 14. “And the Word was made flesh,” and in an able sermon showed that Jesus is truly and properly Man, and not as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) would have him to be only *divinely human*. The collection was in aid of the poor of the congregation.

The Crewe Guardian, 23 Jan 1875, p. 5, London Letter

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) have lately been made the subject of a severe attack. Dr. Wm. Reid has written a book published by Oliphant and Co., of Edinburgh, entitled "[Plymouth Brethrenism Unveiled and Refuted](#)." He says that they who quarrel with all other religious communions are themselves the victims of incessant internal feuds. Mr. Dorman, who was for 28 years associated with the sect, says, "no religious movement perhaps ever so thoroughly succeeded in defeating its own ends. Instead of union it has produced a fruitful harvest of the bitterest animosities, and most hopeless and heartless contentions and divisions that perhaps ever passed current under the specious pretence of zeal for Christ and care for the truth." The [Brethren](#) are said to be doing a great deal of mischief to Christian missions both in India and Italy. I suppose they will have something to say in their own defence.

BARNSTAPLE.

DAILY UNITED PRAYER MEETINGS are being held in the public Schoolroom in this town. The first meeting was held on Sunday evening, after the usual services in the chapels, in the Music Hall, which was crowded in every part. The meetings are held from twelve to one o'clock at noon, the one on Monday being largely attended. The committee sent invitations to all the churches. The Church of England and [Plymouth Brethren](#) do not join the movement, but a very friendly letter was received from the Rev. G. I. Wallas, the Vicar of Barnstaple. People are invited to attend the services as often as they can, if they only remain a few minutes. On Sunday the Dissenting ministers interchanged pulpits. With the one exception mentioned, there is complete unity among the various dissenting churches of the town, and it is hoped that these special services will result in a revival of religion among the masses.

LECTURE ON "THE FOUR JUDGMENTS." – A lecture in connection with the [Plymouth Brethren](#) was delivered in the Queen's Road Room, on Tuesday evening last, by Mr. Howard, the subject being "The Four Judgments." The meeting was opened with singing and prayer, after which the lecturer read several passages from the New Testament having reference to the last judgment. He then proceeded to point out that, as he understood these various Scriptures, they referred to four distinct occasions, one of which was past, the others being future. The judgment which was past was that fulfilled in the death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross as the representative of sinners. The three future judgments were based upon a belief in the pre-millennial doctrine of the coming of Christ to earth again to reign with his glorified saints in visible majesty, for a period of a thousand years. The first of these future judgments, the lecturer contended, would take place just previous to the coming of Christ, and would be a gathering-in of all the believers alive on the earth at that time. This would be immediately followed by the resurrection of all believers who had died up to that time; and the second future judgment would be the gathering-in of these also. Then would commence the millenium, when Christ would be visibly present on earth with his saints for a thousand years. At the end of this time Christ would leave the earth, and his saints would be left here to spread the Gospel to every creature. Then would ensue a time of great commotion and trouble, after which the final judgment, referred to in the 20th chapter of Revelations, would take place. The lecturer pointed out the difficulty which he thought those who did not believe in the pre-millennial doctrines had to meet in explaining the passage occurring in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew, where three distinct classes of beings are referred to, namely – the sheep, the goats, and the brethren. He believed that

the sheep represented the saved; the goats alluded to the lost ones; and the brethren to the saints who had been left by Christ on earth after the thousand years had expired. – The lecturer constantly referred to Scripture in support of his arguments and deductions, and during the hour and a quarter he was speaking he commanded the closest attention of his hearers.

The Liverpool Mercury, 3 Apr 1875, p. 7, Our London Correspondence

A curious fact is noted in regard to Messrs. Moody and Sankey's converts. They do not like to become "sectarians," and so refuse to join any church; and, finally, drift to the narrowest of all bodies, the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

SCENE AT BARON PIGOTT'S FUNERAL. – We regret to record a scandalous disturbance at the burial of the late Baron Pigott on Wednesday, at Sherfield Churchyard, near Basingstoke. The baron had been dead more than a week, but it was not till the day before the funeral that his two sons, who are members of the sect known as the "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," intimated that they did not wish the Church Service to be used. Mr. Osborne Morgan's opinion was at once telegraphed for, and he replied that, the deceased having been baptised, the clergyman was bound to read the service over the body, but that, if the clergyman was interfered with, he might shut up his book and walk away, but the burial could not be stopped. The clergyman, the Rev. A. G. Barker, went early to the churchyard, and exhorted the crowds to seemly and decent behaviour. He and his curate, the Rev. H. Sandall, afterwards met the funeral at the gate, and proceeded with the words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," when some of the mourners shouted to him to stop, and others to go on. Meanwhile, the bearers, commanded by one of the Baron's sons, pushed along, and threw the coffin into the grave near the gate. A solicitor was then sent to say that in the name of the executors he protested against the service being read. The rector shut his book, and walked quietly away with his curate. The churchwardens have served a notice on the solicitor for the two sons, stating that they hold him legally responsible for stopping the rector in the performance of his duty. The great crowd then quietly dispersed. There is much indignation at the outrage, especially as it would have been quite easy to bury the deceased in Basingstoke Cemetery with any ceremonies the relations might have thought proper.

The Standard, London, 8 May 1875, p. 5

FUNERAL OF THE LATE BARON PIGOTT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

SIR, – I am the younger of the late Baron Pigott's two sons, and having seen a paragraph in the *Standard* of to-day, headed "Scene at Baron Pigott's Funeral," I wish to state that I am not "a member of the sect known as [Plymouth Brethren](#)," and that I did not "intimate" to any person at any time "that I did not wish the Church service to be used."

CECIL E. PIGOTT.

May 7.

The Eastern Daily Press, Norwich, 12 May 1875, p. 2

OUR LONDON LETTER.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

{...}

It is stated in a Scotch paper, with reference to the unseemly scene at Baron Pigott's funeral, that he joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#) three weeks before his death. I believe that his secession from the

English Church to almost the smallest of all the sects was of considerably earlier date than this. There is in Marylebone, not far from where the learned judge lived, a house which has been fitted up as a chapel for the [Brethren](#); and for the last two years it has been no uncommon thing to see outside the door a notice saying that the service would be conducted by Mr. Baron Pigott. It is feared that legal proceedings will arise out of the unfortunate scene at the funeral. Certainly, this *contretemps* will not do much to assist Mr. Osborne Morgan's Burials Bill.

Dumfries and Galloway Standard, Dumfries, 19 May 1875, p. 4

LONDON LETTER.

{...}

You will have seen within the last few days a good deal in the public journals relative to a scene which took place at the funeral, on Saturday week, of the late Baron Pigott. It is necessary to mention the circumstances in order that what I shall have to add may be better understood. The circumstances are thus stated in the *Weekly Review*, a journal well-known, I have no doubt, to the bulk of your readers: "A scandalous disturbance took place at the burial of the late Baron Pigott, at Sherfield Churchyard, near Basingstoke, on Saturday last. The day before the funeral his two sons, who are said to be members of the '[Plymouth Brethren](#),' intimated that they did not wish the Church service to be used. The clergyman went early to the churchyard, and exhorted the crowd to seemly and decent behaviour. He and his curate afterwards met the funeral at the gate, and proceeded with

the words, 'I am the resurrection and the life,' when some of the mourners shouted to him to stop, and others to go on. Meanwhile, the bearers, commanded by one of the Baron's sons, pushed along, and laid the coffin in the grave near the gate. A solicitor was then sent to say that in the name of the executors he protested against the service being read. The rector shut his book, and walked quietly away with his curate. The churchwardens have served a notice on the two sons, stating that they hold them legally responsible for stopping the rector in the performance of his duty. The crowd then quietly dispersed."

I have since seen it stated in some of the public journals that Baron Pigott himself, a few days before his death, joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#). I cannot contradict the statement, but I can correct the other statement that two of his sons are [Plymouth Brethren](#). Only one of them is so; while with regard to the late Baron himself I can speak in the most positive terms to the fact that he was a Baptist, and a member and regular attendant at Dr Landell's Baptist Church, in Regent's Park. He was led to adopt Baptist principles, and, what is better, sound evangelical doctrinal views, through Mr Justice Lush. The last time I was in Dr Landell's place of worship I chanced, in going in, to meet the latter learned judge, one of the three judges in the memorable Tichborne case in the Court of Queen's Bench, and having personally known him for years before, he immediately said to me, "Come along with me. Our pew will be full, but there will be room in Baron Pigott's, which is next to mine, as he will not be here to-night." I mention this little incident simply to shew that Baron Pigott had been a Baptist and a member of Dr Landell's Church until a comparatively recent date. Of course I cannot say that at a later period of his life he did not become a [Plymouth Brother](#). If so, I have not seen it stated which of the sections he joined, whether it was the "[Exclusive](#)" section, of which Mr Darby is the leader, or the "[Open](#)" section, of which Mr Miller {sic} is the head. There is all the

difference in the world between the two classes of “[Plymouth Brethren](#).” The Darby section are so “exclusive” that they would not allow the most eminent Christian in all Scotland, if not belonging to their own section, to sit down with them at the Lord’s Table. The “[Open](#)” or Miller section require no other “qualification” for communicants, if I may use the word, than the evidence of a holy walk and conversation, that they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

{...}

The Standard, London, 3 Jun 1875, p. 4

Mr. ARTHUR PIGOTT, eldest son of the late Baron PIGOTT, was charged before the Basingstoke magistrates with having created a disturbance at the funeral of his father, in the churchyard at Sherfield-on-London {sic}. The rector and curate said they began to read the service, but were prevented from completing it by the action of the defendant, who asserted, on the other hand, that he had a perfect right to claim that the body of his father should be buried without any religious service being read over it. The bench, after a consultation, fined the defendant 1l., and he gave notice of appeal.

The Standard, London, 3 Jun 1875, p. 6

*THE DISTURBANCE AT THE FUNERAL
OF THE LATE BARON PIGOTT.*

Mr. Arthur Gouch Pigott, eldest son of the late Baron Pigott, appeared yesterday before the county magistrates at Basingstoke, upon a summons taken out by the churchwardens of Sherfield-on-Lodon, on behalf of the rector of that parish, the Rev. Alfred Barker, charging him with having created a disturbance on the occasion of the burial of his father. Mr. Arthur Walker, his solicitor, was also charged with the same offence, but as that gentleman in the part he took was only acting under the instructions of his client the summons against him was withdrawn before the case was formally opened. – The magistrates on the bench were Mr. Sclater, Sir Nelson Rycroft, Mr. W. W. Beach, M.P., Major Warren, and Captain Fitzgerald. Mr. Staveley Hill, Q.C., who appeared for the complainant, in opening the case, said that the late Baron Pigott died suddenly at Sherfield, where he had resided for some time. The Rev. Mr. Barker, who was the clergyman of that parish, was absent at the time of the death; but he had been carrying on a correspondence on religion, notwithstanding which they continued on most friendly terms. After the death of the baron a correspondence took place between the rector and Mr. Arthur Pigott, who belonged to a religious body known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), with reference to burial. Mr. Pigott desired that the Church of England service should not be read over the body, but the rector insisted that it was his duty to read it, and proceeded to the churchyard with that object on the day of the funeral, having in the meantime prepared a protest in case he should be interrupted. Whilst the curate was reading the defendant insisted upon the service being stopped, although there were signs on the part of many present that they desired it to

be proceeded with. The learned gentleman contended that the rector was bound, with certain exceptions, to read the service over all persons buried in the churchyard, and under the 23d and 24th Vict. any person disturbing such service was liable on conviction to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.*, or, if the justices thought fit, to a term of imprisonment not exceeding two months. With his eyes open to the law Mr. Pigott had disturbed Mr. Barker whilst celebrating the rites over his father, and Mr. Barker's wish in instituting these proceedings was that it should be known that the defendant was wrong, and that he was determined to maintain, for the good of the public and for the good of the Church, the rubrics of the Prayer Book. If Mr. Pigott at that moment would admit that he had done wrong the rector did not desire to press the charge. – The first witness called was the Rev. Alfred Barker, the rector of Sherfield-on-Lodon, who bore out the statement of the learned counsel with reference to the religious controversy which had been going on between himself and the baron. He said that he had had several communications with Lady Pigott and the defendant with reference to the burial, and that he had been told that it was desired, at the request of Baron Pigott, that the interment of his body might take place without the ordinary Church of England service. On the day of the funeral he went to the churchyard to meet the body, which arrived at about four o'clock in the afternoon. He waited at the gates with the curate and two churchwardens. When he met the funeral at the gates the undertaker said, "You are not to read, sir." He said he would do so, but before he had got to the end of the second sentence the coffin had been lowered half-way into the grave. He told Mr. Sandall, the curate, to read his part, and many others around, amongst whom were members of the family, said, "Read on, sir, do." Mr. Sandall said, "I can't read, because of the row." He was reading the words, "O God, most Holy," when he heard Mr. Arthur Pigott say to Mr. Walker, 'Go and stop him." Mr. Walker thereupon said to witness, "As the representative of the executor I protest against the continuance of this service." The churchwarden handed the defendant

a protest, which stated that he would be held responsible for having interfered with the service, and the clergymen left the ground. – The witness was cross-examined by Mr. Pigott, with a view of showing that he, complainant, knew that the late baron was a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and that he (defendant) had urgently requested that no service might be performed at the grave. – Mr. John Sandall, the curate, gave evidence similar to that of the rector, which completed the complainant's case. – The Defendant, in his address to the bench, argued that, in the first place Mr. Barker was not performing his religious duty, inasmuch as his presence was not desired; secondly, that if he were performing his duty, he was not disturbed within the meaning of the act. He was anxious that it should be known that the proceedings were carried out with the sanction of his late father's friends and relatives, and at his father's desire, and he would be able to show, beyond question, that there was no unseemly disturbance. The only thing approaching disturbance was when the coffin arrived at the grave. Mr. Walker then touched him on the shoulder and said "Shall I protest against this proceeding?" and he replied, "Certainly." That was all he said. He urged that the Church burial service was looked upon as a privilege, and any one could be buried without it if the friends so desired, and stated that he had begged the rector not to present himself in the churchyard. He called Colonel Pigott, brother to the late baron, Captain Pigott Carlton, his cousin, Mr. Arthur Walker, the solicitor, James Moody and John Hill, undertakers, Wm. Franklin, and John Brown, all of whom said that there was nothing approaching disturbance or unseemly haste at the funeral. The magistrates, after having heard the counsel for the complainant, retired, and after a brief absence found the defendant guilty of having disturbed the rector of Sherfield in the performance of the rights of burial, for which they fined him 1*l.* and costs. – Mr. Pigott gave notice of appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench.

Mr. Arthur Pigott, eldest son of the late Mr. Baron Pigott, was charged before the Basingstoke magistrates yesterday with having created a disturbance at the funeral of his father, in the churchyard at Sherfield-upon-Lodden. Mr. Staveley Hill, Q.C., who appeared for the prosecution, said that the family of Baron Pigott had long been closely connected with the parish of Sherfield-upon-Lodden. The deceased Baron had entered into a religious controversy with Mr. Barker, the rector. On the 26th of April the Baron wrote a letter to him, for the length of which he apologised, saying it was necessarily long, as it related to the eternal welfare of the soul. The rector had posted his reply, when he received a telegram informing him of Baron Pigott's death. The Baron had never in his letters renounced his Churchmanship, but as Lady Pigott, the widow, had desired that the Church service should not be read, the rector obtained a legal opinion from Mr. Osborne Morgan, who stated that where the deceased had been baptized, and had not committed *felo de se*, the rector or other clergyman of the parish was bound to read the service, and if any one prevented him he must shut his book and walk away, the responsibility being on the person who interfered. Mr. Barker was called, and described what took place at the grave. Some of those present who were [Plymouth Brethren](#) desired the service not to proceed, and others, friends of the family, said, "Read on, sir; read on, do," many of the members of the family joining in the desire to proceed. When the curate had said, "O God, most holy!", the defendant said to a friend, Mr. Walker, "Go and stop him," and that gentleman, as the representative of the defendant and his sister, desired the service not to proceed. The rector then closed his book, said, "Very well," and directed his churchwarden to hand to the defendant a protest against the interruption. The defendant, who cross-examined the rector, and,

it is stated, was only prevented by the earnest remonstrance of the Bench from entering into discussions on divinity and doctrine, said that there was no disturbance at the grave beyond a protest against the service. He had tried to find a friend to read a service, but could not succeed. The late Judge had deliberately left the Church of England, and joined “the [Brethren](#),” with whom he had “broken bread.” It was his wish to be buried with his relatives, and it was understood that the burial could be performed without a service. He had asked the rector to absent himself from the churchyard and thus prevent any disturbance. After hearing the evidence of several persons who were present at the funeral, the bench fined the defendant £1 and costs. Notice of appeal was given.

The Standard, London, 22 Jun 1875, p. 5

THE LATE BARON PIGOTT. – A correspondent of the *Liverpool Post* says he has received a copy of the last letter ever written by Mr. Baron Pigott. It is dated from Sherfield Hill. The learned baron combats the theory of apostolical succession, and challenges his opponent to show that bishops, priests, and deacons were orders instituted by the Apostles. In another letter the baron states that for five years back he had been a member of a very liberal Baptist chapel, but his views being modified he had joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and “broken bread” with them the very day before he fell from his horse. He then rejoiced in the fact that at length his mind had become perfectly calm and settled in regard to religious matters.

{The 1875 volume of the *Liverpool Post* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

The Morning Post, London, 13 May 1875, p. 1

A LADY is anxious to FIND a HOME for a Young Lady, in whom she is deeply interested, as WIFE to a man, with or without children. She has good health, good temper, cultivated mind, quiet and homely tastes, deep religious principles, devoted to children. A [Plymouth Brother](#) would be preferred. Any one who gets her will bless God for such a life companion. – Address M. J., care of Frederick L. May and Co., advertising agents, 160, Piccadilly.

The Dundee Courier & Argus, 28 May 1875, p. 6

A CHANCE FOR A [PLYMOUTH BROTHER](#). – The following singular advertisement appeared in Thursday's *Morning Post*: – “A lady is anxious to find a home for a young lady, in whom she is deeply interested, as wife to a man, with or without children. She has good health, good temper, cultivated mind, quiet and homely tastes, deep religious principles, devoted to children. A [Plymouth Brother](#) would be preferred. Any one who gets her will bless God for such a life companion. Address,” &c.

Paisley & Renfrewshire Gazette, Paisley, 5 Jun 1875, p. 2

PUBLIC IMMERSION OF **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN** IN THE CLYDE. – Quite a sensation was created on Sunday by a number of **Plymouth Brethren** assembling on the banks of the Clyde, in a romantic spot near Carmyle, and going through the ceremony of “dipping” converts. There could not be less than 1000 onlookers attracted by the spectacle, and a number of “street arabs” from Glasgow improved the occasion by dipping one another in imitation {sic} of the rite which was being performed by the **Brethren**.

Penrith Herald [BNA Cumberland & Westmorland Herald], 24 Jul 1875, p. 4, Local and District News

BAPTISM BY IMMERSION. – For the first time, we should imagine, in the history of Penrith, a baptism took place by the mode of immersion, the subjects being adult believers, on their profession of faith in Christ. As our readers are aware, a small hall has recently been erected in Queen Street, in which the so-called “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” meet, they themselves, we believe, not recognising that title. Whilst holding fundamental evangelical doctrines in common with other christians, the two principal features which distinguish their practice from others is the weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper, and the practice of baptism as above. In accordance with this view, a pool or baptistry has been formed in the new building, and on Wednesday evening the very solemn ceremony of baptism in this form took place, when four persons publicly thus avowed their faith in the crucified and and {sic} risen Saviour.

The York Herald, 16 Aug 1875, p. 5

EXTRAORDINARY SCENE AT AN EXECUTION. – At the execution of Joseph Philip Le Brun at Jersey on Thursday, for shooting his married sister, Nancy Laurence, an extraordinary scene occurred which caused no small amount of excitement. Mr. John Beaumont, a minister among the [Plymouth Brethren](#), had been with the condemned man in his cell all night, and accompanied him to the scaffold, rendering all the spiritual aid he could to the unfortunate man, who, at the foot of the scaffold, repeated his protestation of innocence, Mr. Beaumont went with the culprit on to the drop, and on taking final leave of him, pressed him to his heart, and kissed him most fervently. The moment the drop fell Mr. Beaumont, who was in a very excited state, cast up his hands and eyes to heaven and cried out in loud tones, “Innocent! It’s innocent blood! innocent blood! There has been great carelessness here, but, thank God, he is saved! He is an innocent man, but a saved man! He has obtained peace with God, and he could not die with a lie on his lips. He is an innocent man, and God will clear it up!” Mr. Beaumont continued in a similar strain for some time after leaving the scaffold.

The Star, Saint Peter Port, 19 Aug 1875, p. 1

MR. JOHN BEAUMONT’S APOLOGY.

At the service held on Sunday evening last at the Theatre, Gloucester Street, which was literally crammed from floor to ceiling, Mr. John Beaumont, who conducted the service, made a public

apology for his unseemly conduct on Thursday morning last, on the occasion of the execution of Le Brun; and expressed his deep regret that he should have been led away by his feelings, he having passed a week of great anxiety on account of the wretched man, and was at the time labouring under great mental excitement. He said no pressure had been put upon him to apologise, that he did so of his own free will, as he considered it his duty as a Christian and a preacher of the Gospel. He was bound to respect the law, and the authorities who were vested with the power to carry it out; and he bore testimony to the attention and care of the prison officials, from the gaoler downwards. The apology was full and unreserved, and was quite becoming a Christian man and a gentleman. – *Jersey Express* of Tuesday.

{The *Jersey Express* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

The Western Morning News, Plymouth, 19 Aug 1875, p. 2

[FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.]

LONDON, WEDNESDAY EVENING.

{...}

The *Times* to-day contains an advertisement stating that on July 13th a lady and her four children left Sheffield, and said they were going to North Devon, but they have not been heard of since. A reward is offered to anybody who will say where they are, but as the amount is only £10, £2 a head that is, the desire to see them again cannot be very fervent.

The Western Morning News, Plymouth, 21 Aug 1875, p. 3

A MOTHER AND FAMILY LOST.

A correspondent writes: – The persons referred to under this head in Thursday's issue, are the wife and four children of a prominent member of the Council of one of the municipal boroughs in North Devon. The wife is believed to have eloped and gone abroad with a Dissenting minister, taking four children with her, and leaving her eldest child only behind. Much sympathy is felt for the husband, who is greatly respected.

The Pall Mall Gazette, London, 21 Aug 1875, p. 7

ELOPEMENT WITH A WIFE AND FAMILY.

An advertisement has been appearing in the *Times* offering a reward for information respecting a lady and her four children, who had left Sheffield, ostensibly for home, and had not since been heard of. Respecting this advertisement the *Western Morning News* says the persons referred to are the wife and four children of a prominent member of the council of one of the municipal boroughs in North Devon. The wife is believed to have eloped and gone abroad with a dissenting minister, taking four children with her, and leaving only her eldest child behind. Much sympathy is felt for the husband, who is greatly respected.

The North Devon Journal, Barnstaple, 26 Aug 1875, p. 8, Southmolton

A WIFE AND FAMILY MISSING. – The annexed advertisement appears in the ‘Times’ and other papers: – Missing. – Ten pounds reward. – Left Sheffield, on the 13th of July last, with the avowed intention of returning to her home in North Devon, a lady and four children, two boys and two girls. They are supposed to have arrived at Paddington Station on the evening of the same day, since which nothing of them has been heard of. The lady is about thirty years of age, has dark brown hair, dark blue eyes, height about 5ft. 2in., and walks with a slight limp. The children’s ages are as follows: – Two girls aged nine and two years respectively, and the two boys aged 7 and 5 years respectively. Any person

giving such information as shall lead to their discovery shall receive the above reward on applying to E. W. Crosse, solicitor, 7, Lancaster-place, Strand. – EDWARD WM. CROSSE. – Witness, John Thomas Sweet. – It is no secret that the persons advertised belong to Southmolton, and rumour has it that a Dissenting minister has had something to do with the disappearance.

The Western Morning News, Plymouth, 31 Aug 1875, p. 2, West of England News

THE MISSING DEVONSHIRE FAMILY. – The wife and family of four children who left Sheffield about six weeks or two months ago to return to her home in North Devon, who have been missing ever since, and for the discovery of whose whereabouts a reward of £10 has been offered in the leading London newspapers for some time past, has been found. A telegram arrived from the husband's solicitor, who is at Paris, on Sunday morning last, where he had gone to institute enquiries, to the effect that he had found the wife and children there with the object of her supposed elopement and affections, the late pastor of her flock. On receipt of this news, the husband proceeded at once to Paris in order to obtain possession of his children again.

SOUTHMOLTON.

A BAD WIFE. – We have hitherto refrained from noticing the following unfortunate affair, but as the matter has become of public notoriety, and advertisements having been issued in some of the London newspapers, offering a reward of ten pounds for the discovery of the errant wife, it is but due to our readers to state the circumstances connected therewith. About two months ago the lady in question – and who is the wife of our chief magistrate – was discovered in the hedgetrough of a secluded field in company with a young preacher belonging to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The next day after this discovery the guilty pair left the town – the lady taking with her four of her children. Accounts have from time to time reached this town as to the whereabouts of the lady, but nothing definite until Sunday morning, when a telegraphic message was received by the dishonoured husband from Mr. F. Day – Crosse and Day, solicitors, of this town – that he had discovered the truant wife and her guilty paramour in Paris. Such was the rumour circulated throughout this town during the above day, but it remains to be seen whether such rumour is founded on fact, or the reverse. The injured husband, in company with a friend, left the town about midday on Sunday *en route* for Paris.

The Pall Mall Gazette, London, 31 Aug 1875, p. 5

THE MISSING DEVONSHIRE FAMILY.

Our Plymouth correspondent reports that the wife and four children of a resident in North Devon, who left Sheffield some weeks ago for Devonshire, and for information respecting whom a reward has been offered, have been discovered, the husband's solicitor having telegraphed from Paris that he had found the wife and children there with the man, a Dissenting minister, with whom she is supposed to have eloped. On receipt of this news the husband proceeded at once to Paris, in order to obtain possession of his children.

The Staffordshire Daily Sentinel, Stoke-on-Trent, 31 Aug 1875, p. 2

An unusual event has recently occurred which will cause some little excitement in North Devon, and especially in certain religious circles of that county. A married lady with four children, has, it is said, eloped from North Devon with the minister officiating at the chapel which she had been in the habit of attending. The parties have been followed as far as Paris. The runaways must have had a tolerable amount of courage to take four children with them.

The Tiverton Gazette and East Devon Herald, 31 Aug 1875, p. 8

SOUTHMOLTON.

SOUTHMOLTON ELOPEMENT. – A telegraphic message reached this place on Sunday last, containing news that the missing lady and her four children had been discovered at Paris. The husband, for whom great sympathy is felt by all who knsw {sic} him, left here in the course of the day *en route* for London.

The Western Morning News, Plymouth, 2 Sep 1875, p. 3

THE RECENT ELOPEMENT FROM SOUTHMOLTON.

There no longer remains any reason for holding back the complete details of the Southmolton elopement. The lady is the wife of the Mayor of Southmolton (Mr. Alderman Tanner), and in the month of June, with her children, went to pay a visit to her parents at Sheffield. A day or two prior a tale of scandal had been spread as to certain undue familiarities between Mrs. Tanner and the Rev. Mr. Vanderquast, a Dutchman, pastor of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Chapel, Southmolton, at which place of worship the husband and family used to attend. On the 13th July the wife and children left Sheffield to return home, but instead of doing so suddenly disappeared. Last week Mr. F. Day (of the firm of Crosse and Day), the husband's solicitor, proceeded to Paris to make inquiries there, and found the missing ones in that city, Mr. Vanderquast being there as well. Mr. Tanner, on receipt of this news, at once left Southmolton en route for Paris, in order to recover possession of his children.

The Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 4 Sep 1875, p. 2

ON THINGS IN GENERAL.

[BY OUR ERRATIC CORRESPONDENT.]

{...}

My impression was that your true Dutchman could love only his pipe and schnapps. This, however, is a popular error. He can also love – somebody else’s wife. For an illustration of this new phase of the Dutch character, we have to thank the Rev. Mr. Sandergrast {sic}, who ran away with the Mayor-ess of Southmolten {sic} – or the Mayoress with him. The lady’s parents reside in Sheffield – to which town she came for a little while before eloping. Really – with all respect be it said – no, I will not say it. The Church, in a metaphorical sense, takes us all to her bosom. But we don’t want ministers of any Church to take our wives to their bosom in a literal sense.

{...}

ARCTURUS.

The Western Morning News, Plymouth, 6 Sep 1875, p. 3, West of England News

News has been received at South Molton from Mr. Alderman Tanner, now at Paris, that he and his lawyer have succeeded, by the aid of the French laws, in obtaining possession of all four of his missing children. His wife he has left with her male companion.

The Western Times, Exeter, 7 Sep 1875, p. 7

SOUTHMOLTON.

THE BAD WIFE whose evil ways we called attention to the other day, has, it appears, been found in Paris, and our Mayor, the injured husband, has succeeded, by help of the laws of France, in recovering the four children she had taken with her when she deserted him.

The North Devon Journal, Barnstaple, 7 Oct 1875, p. 5, Barnstaple

We learn that the venerable Rev. R. C. Chapman, of this town, has gone to Paris on a very painful errand. The public have heard enough, and more than enough, of the Southmolton scandal – the elopement of a minister of the [Brethren](#) there (a foreigner) with the wife of a gentleman of his congregation. Mr. Chapman knew the unhappy lady and her friends, as well as her guilty paramour; and his visit was dictated by the desire to awaken them to a sense of the wickedness of their conduct. In this he is believed to have succeeded; and we learn that she has returned to her father's house in another part of this county. The children were brought home by their father some weeks ago.

BIGGLESWADE.

SERIOUS CHARGE OF ROBBERY. – Some excitement was caused at the above, {sic} place on Thursday last, owing to a robbery having been committed on the premises of James Rennie, Colporteur of the Bedfordshire Association of Christians, the delinquent being a woman named Sarah Peacock, a member of the religious body known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). She was apprehended at the instance of Mr Supt. Bedlow, and on Thursday was taken before Colonel Lindsell and remanded, being admitted to bail, her husband in £50 and two sureties of £25 each. We may state the woman is charged with stealing nearly £5 from a bureau in the colporteur's office.

The Shetland Times, Lerwick, 16 Oct 1875, p. 2

SACRILEGE. – One day this week some unprincipled individual obtained admission into the Mason Hall, at present occupied by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) as a place of worship, and handled a box containing their communion elements so roughly that some bottles of wine contained in it were broken and the wine spilled.

The Bath Chronicle, 4 Nov 1875, p. 2

A daughter of Mr. S. Morley, M.P., has now become a preacher, her sphere being the villages of Kent. She is a member of the sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The Belfast News-Letter, 3 Dec 1875, p. 4

A LADY PREACHER. – A daughter of Mr. Morley, M.P., is now widely know {sic} as a preacher among the villages in the neighbourhood of Tenbridge. She is a member of the [Plymouth Brother](#) sect.

INTERFERING WITH THE RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF HOSPITAL PATIENTS.

COLCHESTER, Thursday.

This afternoon, an important matter in regard to religion in public hospitals was discussed by the governors of the Colchester Hospital on the occasion of the appointment of a medical-officer. A request was made for an explanation of the resignation of Dr. Boodle. It appeared that complaints had been made that Dr. Boodle had recently left the Church and joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and had attempted proselytising amongst the patients. The subject came to an issue on the Rev. B. Gould writing to the management complaining that a servant of his, after having been in the hospital, had been influenced to change her religious views. The woman having been in a Catholic family used to cross herself, but after being spoken to by Dr. Boodle, she had left this off, and received so much benefit that in gratitude she could go on her knees. The committee requested Dr. Boodle to abstain from interfering with the religious teaching, except as laid down in the rules. He considered this an infringement of the liberty of a Christian, and resigned. Messrs. J. S. Barnes and H. S. Goody objected to the action of the committee, and the Rev. J. W. Irving defended it, arguing that it was as as {sic} much out of place for medical men to interfere with the religious tenents {sic} of patients as for clergymen to dispense medicine.

OPEN-AIR PREACHING. – The efforts of Mr. Taylor, [Plymouth brother](#) and dyer, to make himself heard from the steps of the Assembly Rooms on Sunday evening last, were anything but successful. The crowd, instead of listening in respectful silence, indulged in the singing of songs of a profane, rather than a sacred, character, and swayed to and fro like the waves of the surging sea. If people do not care to listen, they should at any rate refrain from molestation, and leave Mr. Taylor to say what he has to say in peace.

The Daily News, London, 23 Dec 1875, p. 6

CURIOUS ABDUCTION CASE. – Mr. Jameson, a tea merchant, of Belfast, and a local leader of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), was brought up at the Belfast Police-court, on Tuesday, charged with abducting a young girl and keeping her four weeks against her parents' will. On being asked to return home she refused, saying she wished to serve the Lord. The magistrate ordered her mother to take her home and give her a whipping. The case against the defendant was adjourned.

The Freeman's Journal, Dublin, 23 Dec 1875, p. 5

WE are informed on fair though poetical authority that for ways that are dark and for tricks that are vain the heathen Chinees is peculiar. Well, the [Plymouth Brethren](#) also have their little singularities. Not all who may have noticed this religious denomination among the motley of sects returned in the national census have any idea of its origin and character. It has suddenly grown worth while to note them briefly. Just forty years ago certain zealots started what Deacon HIRAM BLOWHARD would call a fresh trail to Glory in the shape of a new religion, invented and improved altogether by themselves. Its tenets were strictly Calvinistic, and included those of original sin, the efficacy of the Sacrifice, the operation of the Spirit, regeneration, sanctification, and so forth. A further doctrine of the communion was the necessity of re-baptism. On these grounds they put up a claim for special sanctity, calling themselves "the Saints," and looking from a height of holiness on the poor sinners of every other creed. It was as a [Plymouth Brother](#) the favourite revivalist, H. GRATTAN GUINNESS, made

himself so prominent; it was in the same connection the ex-barrister DARBY achieved a certain publicity. This gentleman, quitting the Bar for the Church of England, quit that too, and without joining the Brethren distinguished himself as a sort of apostle unattached, a spiritual minister without portfolio, or rather a free lance in the battle of the beliefs. He did a little of the amateur hermit in a retirement in the county Wicklow, but his imitation of Saint SENANUS does not seem to have inspired his followers, who do anything but shun the society of the fair sex. We must judge so from a very ugly exposure made at the Belfast Police-court on Monday, when a man named JAMIESON appeared to answer the charge of DOROTHEA M'CLURG that he unlawfully took her daughter ELIZA JANE, a young girl of fourteen, out of the possession and against the will of her parents. The case, as detailed, was a striking instance of the extent to which the most silly and odious influences may be made to prevail over a young, simple, and enthusiastic, or it may be an unnaturally precocious and prurient, mind. Mr. M'MORDIE, the solicitor representing the distressed parents of the girl, stated the pitiful story. It seems that certain evangelists, among whom were JAMIESON, and other men named SMITH, IRWIN, and CAMPBELL, descended upon a district called Ballywoolan, where they held "services" and began to influence young persons to leave their homes. Among those so acted on was the girl M'CLURG, who, being prohibited by her parents from attending these meetings, was induced away from her home and brought to Belfast, where she was placed in the house of the man JAMIESON, where she remained fourteen days. The "religious ruffians," as Mr. M'MORDIE warmly described the fellows who had taught her to spurn her parents' authority, displayed great boldness and a wonderful command of Scripture in carrying out their designs. IRWIN wrote a letter addressed to "My Sister in JESUS, dear M'CLURG," and overflowing with a cant worthy of Mr. CHADBAND, but infinitely more sickening than anything that moist missionary ever uttered. In offering his female neophyte "a loving word of counsel," IRWIN describes himself as one "who has known the love of JESUS and also

the wishes of Satan for a good many years." He urges her to disregard her parents' injunction, and blasphemously hints that his unctuous letter to the foolish girl was inspired by the Lord. This was the part IRWIN played. CAMPBELL and SMITH appear rather to have confined themselves to addressing Presbyterian clergymen in epistles bristling with damnatory clauses and denunciations of the Divine wrath. "BILLY" JAMIESON was the prime mover. He it was who inquired particularly about the girl's weekly earnings. He it was who pronounced favourably regarding her personal appearance, and it was he who, Bible in hand – for JAMIESON seems to have been as inseparable from his Bible as HERBERT himself – succeeded in superseding the father and mother, and putting the spiritual "comehither" on the girl-disciple. The magistrates pronounced the correspondence to be "horribly blasphemous," "sickening productions," which it will be seen they are, especially for a community like that of Belfast, where, according to the same bench, there are "plenty of saints," and "some very holy ones too." This Belfast bead-roll, with its gradation of sanctity, is queerly represented by the STIGGINSES, who have misled poor DORCAS M'CLURG. The fellows made an impudent defence; and it was plain enough that they had instructed their victim, for when the girl was produced she declared that if compelled to return home she would leave it on the first opportunity, that "she would follow the Lord if she died for it," that she "wished to go to Heaven," and that she would obey her parents only "in the Lord." The presiding magistrate chilled the martyr-spirit of the girl considerably when he advised the mother to whip her into plain language, and to "knock that nonsense out of her head." Ultimately the case was adjourned for a month, and it does not seem likely that the girl's friends will get much good of her by that time or after it. At all events, she is at present a stubborn [Darbyite](#). Without repeating Mr. M'MORDIE'S denunciation of "religious ruffians," it is impossible to read this case of sanctimonious scoundrelism without wishing that there were some law sharp and decisive to protect the masses from the low knaves who prey upon their credulity.

{The first sentence is an allusion to Bret Harte's poem "Plain Language from Truthful James" (1870): "Which I wish to remark – / And my language is plain – / That for ways that are dark / And for tricks that are vain, / The heathen Chinese is peculiar."}

The Manchester Weekly Times, 24 Dec 1875, p. 7

AN EXTRAORDINARY ABDUCTION.

At the Belfast Police Court, on Monday, before Mr. O'Donnell and Mr. Orme, William H. Jameson, Skipper-street, was summoned at the instance of Dorothea M'Clurg for that he did, within the past four weeks, unlawfully take an unmarried girl, being under the age of sixteen years, to wit, Eliza Jane M'Clurg, out of the possession and against the will of her parents, they having the lawful charge of her. Mr. Hans M'Mordie appeared on behalf of Dorothea M'Clurg, the girl's mother. The defendant was not represented.

Dorcas M'Clurg deposed, in answer to Mr. M'Mordie, that she lived at Killyleagh, in the county Down. She had a sister named Eliza Jane M'Clurg. She was fourteen years of age in October last. She had not seen her for the last three weeks. She had lived with her father up till that time. She saw the defendant at a Mrs. M'Cleery's, at Ballywollen. He was preaching. He announced himself as "Billy Jameson." Her sister was with witness on that occasion. Mr. Jameson prayed as well as preached.

To Mr. Orme: The people say that Mr. Jameson is not married.

Examination continued: Witness knew two men named Campbell and Smith. They were called “[Christian Brethren](#).” My sister, Eliza Jane, was baptised. I was also baptised in the river by Mr. Campbell. I had a dress on me. Mr. Campbell pushed me under {t}he water, and baptised me in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I visited Mrs. M’Cleery’s house. Mr. Jameson asked if I was saved, and Mrs. M’Cleery said I was. He inquired my name, and where I was from, and I told him. He asked was there an Eliza in the family. I said that there was, but that she had left on Sunday week, and we had been informed that she was in his house. He said my sister was there, but he did not know where she was then. He told me that she stopped in his house at night, and went out amongst “the saints” during the day. He spoke of dressmaking, and said he did not know what to do with her. He said he thought I could do as well if I would come to Belfast and both work together. I said I did not think it would be right to knock my parents to desolation. He said we could do as well there, and if we liked we could send some money home to our parents. He said I ought to “force” and go to the meetings, meaning that I should go against my parents’ will. I told him I could live for Christ at home as well as in Belfast, and he said I could not. He said he made sure work about my sister before he took her in hand, and that he had gone to an attorney or magistrate, who said she was fourteen years of age, and was fit to choose her own religion. He opened a Bible and said, “Is there any place in the Bible where it says my parents will not let me go?” I remember on Wednesday last coming to Belfast and making search for my sister. She has not come home yet.

To Mr. O’Donnell: He did not say who the attorney or magistrate was.

Defendant: Did I tell you I would advise her to go home if your parents would permit her to go to the meetings?

Witness: You said you would let her go home if her parents would let her attend the meetings.

Defendant: Did you say that you did not want her home?

Witness: No. We only wished to know where she was, and we would not do anything on you.

Defendant: I have no other question. Her evidence is generally fair enough.

Dorothea M'Clurg examined: I have a daughter called Eliza Jane. She is 14 years past. It is three weeks since I saw her. I do not know where she went to. I heard my daughter was in a Mrs. M'Loughlin's, in company of Jameson. I was told she left on Monday. I called him a kidnapper, and he said he would not speak to me, as I was not a child of Christ. I want to get my daughter back.

To the defendant: I got a letter from my daughter in Belfast.

Alexander M'Clurg, brother of the girl, having been examined,

Mr. O'Donnell, addressing the defendant, said: You are charged with having taken out of the possession and control of her parents this young girl. The will of the girl herself makes no difference, and, from the evidence of her sister, there is a *prima facie* case against you. Whatever your motive may be, you are not justified in law in taking her from under the control of her parents, and if you don't restore her you will be sent for trial.

Defendant: She came and sought protection in my house, and said that her parents and brother had beaten her. I never asked asked {sic} her to come, but took her in charity.

Mr. O'Donnell: Where is she now?

Defendant: She is safe with friends.

Mr. O'Donnell: Whatever attorney or magistrate you refer to did not give you a right opinion. There is no doubt she had a right to change her religion, but, even with her own consent, you cannot take her out of the custody of her parents. You are a tea dealer?

Defendant: I am.

Mr. O'Donnell: Then there is an old maxim it would be well you should not lose sight of – *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*. Confine yourself to your legitimate trade of selling tea, and leave the teaching of religion to those who are ordained.

Defendant, in reply to the Court, said the girl could be here in a few minutes. A friend would go for her, but she did not wish to go home.

Mr. O'Donnell: You are not the judge of that. You are in custody now, and will be till she is produced.

The girl having been brought into Court, she was placed beside her mother, whom she did not seem to recognise.

Mr. M'Mordie said he had a letter which had been addressed to the mother by her daughter. He was of opinion the child was thoroughly in the hands of those unscrupulous men. The child sat down beside her mother and never spoke to her. This Mr. M'Mordie attributed to the teaching and instruction of the parties with whom she had been staying, and whom he termed "unscrupulous and immoral ruffians."

“My dear father, – I write you these few lines to let you know that I am well. Dear father and mother, – I believe you have been up in Belfast looking for me, and I want to let you know that I am willing to go home again if you will let me serve the Lord. Please write by return of post.” The letter went on to say that she had left home of her own accord, and she would like to obey the Lord in everything that was right.

Mr. M'Mordie said that there could be no doubt that the letter had been dictated. (To Eliza Jane M'Clurg:) At whose dictation did you write the letter?

The child: I wrote it myself.

Mr. M'Mordie: Who told you that your mother had been in town looking for you?

The child: Miss Campbell.

Mr. M'Mordie: Where did you live?

The child: I was living in Mrs. Hamilton's, Lisburn Road.

Mr. M'Mordie: Suppose we let this case stand adjourned till this day month.

Mr. O'Donnell (to the child): You will now go home with your parents.

The child: When I go home the very first opportunity I get I will leave; for I will follow the Lord if I die for it.

Mr. O'Donnell: You ought to be learning something useful, and to obey your parents should be your first duty. These people have gained some ascendancy over you, and have taught you what Mr.

M'Mordie properly calls religious slang, hypocrisy. You have not been taught to obey moral law, for you are talking words you do not understand. You have now to go home to your father and mother and obey them.

The child: I won't stay with them.

Mr. O'Donnell: Were your parents unkind to you?

The girl: I never came home into the house but they beat me because I went to meetings. I dare not go to hear anybody preaching the Gospel.

The mother said that her daughter came home after eleven o'clock at night from these meetings, and then her father beat her.

Mr. O'Donnell: Very properly.

Defendant (to the girl): Did your brother in the middle of the day drag you out of meetings where you were praying?

The child: Yes. I will go to heaven in spite of them all.

Mr. M'Mordie: If you got a cold water bath it would do you good.

Mr. O'Donnell: What your father and mother should do is to whip you, and, in plain language, knock the nonsense out of your head. I think these people have much to answer for for perverting your mind. – Mr. O'Donnell further stated that if the defendant or any of his colleagues interfered with the girl again he would send him for trial.

The case was then postponed for a month, the girl to go home to her parents.

The Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 24 Dec 1875, p. 2

A CERTAIN amount of admiration for their preacher is usually expected of the feminine members of every flock – especially when the divine is young, interesting, and unmarried. But when this admiration is manifested for an itinerant Evangelist by a girl of fourteen it is apt to become embarrassing to her parents. A few weeks ago ELIZA JANE M'CLURG went to hear a certain revivalist of the Baptist persuasion named "BILL JAMESON," preaching at Ballywollen, and so strongly was she impressed by his utterances that she left her father's house and took up her abode with the preacher at Belfast. As the revivalist is said to be an unmarried man the girl's parents were by no means satisfied with this arrangement, and a sister went to Belfast to bring the wanderer home. But Mr. JAMESON, who seems to have a well-developed taste for female society, not only declined to send the younger sister back, but pressed the elder also to leave her home and come to live with him at Belfast. The girl replied that she did not like to "knock her parents to desolation," and that she "could live for CHRIST as well at home as in Belfast." These opinions the revivalist denounced as rank heresy, and pretended to prove from the Bible, and from consultation with a solicitor, that he had a right to keep the girl from the custody of her parents. The magistrates before whom he has been charged with abduction were of a different opinion, and having denounced him as a canting kidnapper, ordered him to send the child home to her parents and to cease from any further interference with her under pain of being sent for trial at the Assizes. A case like this affords a

striking illustration of the danger of ill-regulated religious enthusiasm – which stands next to excess in strong drink as the cause of filling our lunatic asylums. The Irish magistrates recommended whipping as a cure for the girl, but perhaps the whip would have been more effective if applied to the preacher. A doctor's prescription would probably do ELIZA M'CLURG more good than any number of sermons.

The Bucks Herald, Aylesbury, 1 Jan 1876, p. 3

A maternal whipping has been prescribed by the Belfast bench for a damsel of tender age, who, having thrown in her lot with the local leader of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), refused to return home, on the ground that she wished to serve the Lord. That [Plymouth Brother](#) has been disconsolately remanded.

The Liverpool Mercury, 24 Dec 1875, p. 7

A RELIGIOUS RAID ON SHETLAND.

The Lerwick correspondent of the *Dundee Advertiser* writes – “A few years ago an Edinburgh newspaper was hoaxed by a Fenian raid on the Island of Unst, but the islands have been for several months past besieged by two different parties, namely, the [Plymouth Brethren](#) on the west side of the land, and the Unitarians on the east side. Both are said to have Fenian proclivities; but, be that as it may, both are breathing out threatenings against the existing churches and their pastors. As yet, neither are likely to get a good footing in the islands, although a few have already adopted their views. The same thing is going on in Iceland with the Mormons, who seem to have had better luck than their contemporaries, for they count their converts by the clad score in Reykjavik, and their numbers are being daily increased.”

{The 1875 volume of the *Dundee Advertiser* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

EXMOUTH.

A MANIAC AT LARGE. – The village of Withycombe was thrown into a state of consternation at an early hour on Thursday morning, in consequence of a young married man named Horn – a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and who has for some days been suffering from religious mania – having got away from his keepers; and, after smashing the windows of Mr. Goodland (who is also a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#)), made his way to the residence of Mr. Hall, at Withycombe, where, arming himself with a stick, and uttering the most fearful imprecations, he defied any one to come near him. He was eventually secured, and has since been removed to the County Asylum.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN. – *Sander's News Letter* says: – The Presbytery, of Comber has just come to the following finding: – “The Presbytery having met to inquire into the action of Mr. Joseph Gilmore, one of the session, alleged to be injurious to the Church of which he is a ruling elder, finds that persons, commonly known as ‘[Plymouth Brethren](#),’ have been labouring for some time in the town and neighbourhood of Killyleagh; that they have been in the habit of speaking all manner of evil against the ministers of the place, to the attempted detriment of their character and influence; that they have endeavoured to withdraw members and adherents from the Evangelical Churches, and, in some cases, succeeded; that they have ignorantly and presumptuously pronounced judgment on the spiritual state of many in the community, consigning them, without evidence, to hell; that they have interfered with righteous parental authority, and sown dissension among families; that they have established religious services at the usual hours of public worship, and re-baptised by immersion; and that Captain Gilmore has, by word and deed, encouraged them in their proceedings. Therefore, the Presbytery, believing this action to be inconsistent with his office as ruling elder, and in violation of his ordination vows, requires him either to desist from it or demit his office, and appoints a commission to confer with him, &c.”

{The 1876 volume of *Sander's News Letter* [recte *Saunders's News-Letter*] is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

THE CREWE WESLEYANS' FIELD-DAY.

This pleasing yearly event in connection with that most prosperous and energetic religious body, the Mill-street Wesleyans, took place on Tuesday and Wednesday, in a pretty field near Crewe Mills, which was kindly lent by Mr. Hilditch. {...} A platform had been erected in the centre of the tent, upon which were – Mr. Hilditch (chairman), the Revs. J. Kirtlan (superintendent of the circuit), J. Boulter, S, {sic} Miles, and Messrs. Fear, Simpson, H. Wood, &c.

{...}

The Rev. J. Boulter was characteristically amusing, and “sat” upon the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He said that when he was down south, he was curious enough to enquire who the [Plymouth brethren](#) were, and he was informed that they were people who said – “You should not be anything at all – Methodists or Churchmen, or Primitives, or Baptists – but [Plymouth Brethren](#).” (Laughter.) They did not like distinctions; but on further inquiry he was assured that of these very unanimous folks there were three sects in the town in which he was staying; and there were about forty different sorts of them altogether. (Laughter.) All this, he urged, showed the futility of endeavouring to make people think and act alike. {...}

The Londonderry Sentinel, 12 Aug 1876, p. 1

THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN**. – The **Plymouth Brethren** have been very busy lately in the city of Limerick. Two of their body – the Earl of Carrick and a Mr. Mandeville, formerly a lieutenant in the Royal Navy – have been holding “evangelistic services.” The result has been the “baptism” of twenty-eight adults at the residence of a leading member of the sect, who lives a short distance outside of Limerick.

The Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald, Ardrossan, 3 Feb 1877, p. 2, General News

– A Conference for Believers (generally known as [Plymouth Brethren](#)), which extended over three days, was concluded on Saturday evening. There was a large attendance, and the following gentlemen took an active part in the proceedings. – Messrs Dyer, Bath; Boswell, Bedford; Caldwell, Glasgow; Scott, Ayrshire; Allan, Edinburgh; Ritchie, Inverurie; and Masson, Footdee, Aberdeen.

HAWICK.

REV. JOHN THOMSON ON THE [OPEN BRETHREN](#). – The Rev. John Thomson, of St Mary's, has just published the following characteristic letter, which he says he addressed to 'one of the young men who left the Presbyterian Church and joined the [Open Brethren](#)': –

DEAR MR ——— – To profess one thing and do another is very base conduct. Hypocrites and sycophants behave in that way. You should honestly and boldly publish your intentions. I believe from what you said to me on Monday night, the following is really and truly your position. If I am wrong, I hope you will put me right. It might be stated as follows: –

We, the undersigned, believe John Knox, Luther, Melancthon, Patrick Hamilton the martyr, and other martyrs, all the great men of the Reformation, and all the Covenanters who laid down their lives for Christ's cause and crown, did not understand their Bibles, and reared up the Presbyterian Church on an unscriptural basis. We therefore resolve to do everything in our power to overturn the present Church Government established by these same stupid Reformers and Covenanters. We reject the ordinances they taught, such as ordination to the work of the sacred ministry, see 1st Timothy iv. 14th; also all such orders as those mentioned in Ephesians iv. 11–12, and 1st Cor. xii. 28, and the example of one minister being set over the flock in connection with the seven churches in Asia. We resolve to have a free and easy church, without discipline, without order, any one entitled to *grab* the elements and hand round the sacred symbols of our Saviour's dying love.

Alas! alas! I am sorrry {sic} to think you should encourage such disorder and confusion. – Yours ever truly,

JOHN THOMSON.

The Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, Exeter, 24 Aug 1877, p. 4

WANTED, an earnest Christian woman as COOK, not under 25. One who has been in the habit of meeting with Brethren preferred. – Apply, stating wages required, E. H., Belgrave House, Budleigh Salterton, Devon.

The Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, Exeter, 14 Sep 1877, p. 3, Varieties

GREASY. – Here is a chance for a cook: – “Wanted, an Earnest Christian Woman as Cook, not under twenty-five. One who has been in the habit of meeting with Brethren preferred. Apply, &c.” The place offered as above, in the *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, is evidently a situation in a “serious family” of the Plymouth Brethren persuasion. For a cook in any other the habit of meeting with Plymouth Brethren would be deemed a decidedly objectionable antecedent. The rule would be, on the contrary, “No Plymouth Brethren allowed.” No doubt the advertiser trusts that a Sister of the Plymouth Brethren, answering for herself to the description of “an earnest Christian Woman,” would never sell dripping, or otherwise embezzle kitchen-stuff, dressed or raw, or cheat by collusion with tradesmen, or in any other way, but would always, to the very best of her ability, do her employer’s dinner, and never her employer. – *Punch*.

LECTURE BY THE REV. J. PARK.

The annual opening lecture in connection with the Bedford Street Young Men's Association was delivered, as usual, by the President, Rev. J. Park, in the larger schoolroom at Bedford Street, on Monday evening, there being an excellent attendance, and many persons being unable to procure a seat. The chair was taken by Mr JOHN RANDALL, and the lecture, which was listened to with marked interest and attention, was on "Some characteristics of Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen," and was agreeably illustrated by songs typical of the character of each nation by Messrs Powell, Thomas, and Grant.

{...} The Irish made laughter unwittingly, sometimes better because they appeared so innocent of any mistake. Their richest bulls were perpetrated when they wished to appear most serious and devout. He quoted instances, to the great amusement of his hearers, from the sayings of Sir Boyle Roche and others, among them being clergymen. Yet he should be sorry to see Irish wit and humour passing into decay, for the loss of it would be a national misfortune, and they would be in danger of becoming monks, *extreme* [Plymouth Brethren](#), or some other persons who made life a howling desolation. {...}

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

To the Editor of the Stroud Journal.

Sir, – Will you kindly insert these few remarks on the following paragraph in the Rev. Mr Park's lecture to young men inserted in your last issue? It runs thus: – "I should be sorry to see Irish wit and humour passing into decay, for the loss of it would be a national misfortune, and they would be in danger of becoming Monks, extreme [Plymouth Brethren](#), or some other persons who make life a howling desolation." In the first place, if Mr Park had substituted Dervishes for Monks he would have hit the mark, as it would have been an historical fact. I fail to see their connection with [Plymouth Brethren](#), who are as a body both quiet and unassuming, being in their services most decorous and devout, and as Home Missionaries in the truest sense, seek out cases both of spiritual and temporal destitution in order to relieve them, thus endeavouring to make the howling desolation a garden of the Lord. I guess their offence consists in the fact that they dispense with hired preachers, each one giving or receiving instruction from a brother, each working willingly in God's vineyard, expecting their reward in Heaven. Who the other persons alluded to may be is a matter of conjecture. I presume all are included outside the gentleman's clan or who cannot utter his shibboleth. I trust he may teach his young men modesty and himself exercise Christian charity.

I am, sir, yours respectfully,

TANNA.

THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

To the Editor of the Stroud Journal.

Sir, – In your last you insert a letter professing to defend the [Plymouth Brethren](#) from certain criticisms. I repudiate the defence; it is not by one of us; it is, I dare say, by one of those Bethesda people. They are lax. We are the people of God. Life *is* gloomy, and earth a prison house, and such lectures as those alluded to are too frivolous for immortal souls. I wish people would try to understand us better. Only to-day a friend asked me if the Davenport brothers were [Plymouth brethren](#), or only cousins. They are not related at all. They may be Bethesda folk.

Yours, &c.,

The Thrupp.

L.

To the Editor of the Stroud Journal.

Sir, – “Tanna’s” description of the members of this denomination wants only one quality to render it charming and attractive. This quality is unfortunately an essential one – truthfulness. Who that knows the *modus operandi* of this body will admit that its members are “home missionaries in the truest sense, seeking out cases of spiritual destitution in order to relieve them”? Is it not a fact that the most characteristic and successful {sic} of their missionary labours are carried on not amongst the spiritually destitute but amongst the members of other Christian communities, and with the result

certainly not of relieving them at all, but rather of imposing on their consciences {sic} scruples and obligation foreign to the spirit of true Christianity?

As to their having “dispensed with hired preachers,” this may commend them to “Tanna” and to those who prefer their money to their religion, but the Church Catholic will still abide by the apostolic rule that “they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel,” and that “the labourer is worthy of his hire.”

Yours truly,

NIL DESPERANDUM, AUSPICE DEO.

Nov. 21st 1877.

Stroud Journal, 1 Dec 1877, p. 4, Correspondence

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

To the Editor of the Stroud Journal.

Sir, – Of all controversies perhaps religious controversy is most to be deprecated in a public newspaper, unless it is for the purpose of eliciting truth, and it is much to be lamented that members of a christian community should think proper to speak disdainfully one of another, as is the case in the letters which have recently appeared in your *Journal* on the above subject. But what is to be said of the euphonious (?) language employed by one of your correspondents, *e.g.*, “It is not by

one of us – it is, I dare say, by one of those Bethesda people. They are lax; we are the true people of God. They may be Bethesda folk.” Your readers must bear in mind that “Bethesda” is not used here in its legitimate sense, but as a term of reproach. Is it not in its very essence the self-laudation of the Pharisee in the Temple?

Let “L.” mark, learn and inwardly digest the 13th chapter of St. Paul’s 1st Epistle to the Corinthians; it may do him good, certainly it will do him no harm.

Yours, &c.,

H. L.

To the Editor of the Stroud Journal.

Sir, – Having seen a letter in your impression of the 25th inst., signed “L,” Thrupp, which signature is manifestly only a *nom de plume*, I venture to suggest whether it is not an abuse of your privilege to publish that which in effect is liable to hold up a company of people to ridicule by its absurdity, and bring religion into contempt.

May I ask you to be good enough to publish this?

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM ELLIOT.

Whitehall, November 28th, 1877.

[We have received several other letters on this subject, but as they trench on theological ground they are not suitable. "Common Sense" sends a very vigorous letter, in which he attacks Brethrenism severely, having, as he says, "been behind the scenes." A controversy of this character would be extremely undesirable.]

ISLINGTON CLERICAL MEETING.

This meeting, the fifty-first annual one of the kind, was held in the Memorial-hall, Church-street, on Monday, the Rev. Prebendary WILSON, the Vicar, presiding. There was a large attendance, those present including the Bishop of Sidney, the Dean of Carlisle, the Dean of Ripon, Bishop Ryan, the Ven. Archdeacon Prest, the Rev. Canon Auriol, the Rev. Canon Ryle, the Rev. Canon Hoare, the Rev. Prebendary Cadman, the Rev. C. F. Childe, the Rev. R. C. Billing, Captain the Hon. F. Maude, R.N., &c.

{...}

The Rev. F. F. GOE then delivered an address on "The Validity of the Ministry Itself, with Reference to the Theories of [Plymouth Brethren](#)." He said – In endeavouring to expose the falsity of the theories of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) touching the ministry, we labour under this great disadvantage, that they have no confession of faith to which we can appeal. They call upon Christian men to come out of all systems, and therefore are compelled to profess that they have none of their own. This disadvantage in argument, moreover, is increased by the fact that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have no history properly so-called. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are not yet fifty years old. And brief as this period of existence is, they have spent much of their precious time in internal divisions and recriminations. The chief ecclesiastical event of their half-century is their separation into two hostile camps, under the respective banners of Mr. Darby and Mr. Newton. The subject may be best discussed in the form of an attempt to furnish an answer to two questions. 1. What is the Church? 2. What means has our Lord Jesus Christ provided for the perpetuation and growth of the Church?

1st. The controversy on this question has always lain chiefly between Romanists and Protestants; for it did not take formal shape till the period of the Reformation. {...} Now, having briefly compared the Romish and the Protestant conceptions of the Church, let him turn to the position taken up up {sic} the [Plymouth Brethren](#). In a little book, entitled "The Assembly of God; or, the All-sufficiency of the Name of Jesus," he found the following statement, which appears intended to convey an answer to the question now under discussion – "God has an assembly upon the earth." This definition of the "assembly of God" applies only to what is called in the New Testament "the body of Christ," the true Church. But the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have now to explain in what manner the Church of Christ is made known in the world. The [Brethren](#) cry "Christendom is in ruins." "Come out of all systems, for they are not gathered upon the ground of the assembly of God." "Whither then shall I fly?" asks the distracted and terrified occupant of some chamber in Christendom, as he gazes through Plymouth spectacles at its rent walls and tottering gables. Whither shall I fly? The [Plymouth Brethren](#) point to their societies, and declare in effect, "The Temple of the Lord are these." "Why," says one of them, "should the regenerated seek any ground beyond or different to that of the Assembly of God? We repeat with emphasis, either that or nothing." Here, then, we have a reproduction of the Romish theory of the Church, viz., that the mystical body of Christ has its counterpart on earth. Secondly, What means has our Lord provided for the perpetuation and growth of the Church? To those who accept the Protestant view of the Church as the one most in accordance with Scripture, it will appear to be God's appointment that His Church, the mystical body of His Son, shall be perpetuated, built up, and extended by the agency of particular visible societies or churches. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) delight to adduce Matt. xviii., 20 ("Where two or three," &c.), as warranting their rejection of human presidency in the assembly of God. But, in truth, its meaning, so far as it has any bearing upon the matter in question, is merely this, that even when a small society of Christians is gathered

together in Christ's name, to seek by prayer guidance for the exercise of discipline in the case of an offending member, their {sic} Christ promises to be present, and to help them to arrive at a wise judgment; but surely there is nothing whatever to decide the question of a human ministry in favour of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) theory. To return to the direct evidence which the New Testament supplies of a human ministry in the visible church. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) say, "Jesus is all-sufficient; we can trust Him to keep order in His house." But we find, as a matter of fact, that He appointed apostles to preside over the newly-formed church, giving them the power of exercising discipline in the words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven," &c. This power was soon called into exercise in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. Again, the possession of this power was claimed by St. Paul, when rebuking the conduct of the Church in Corinth. There is ample evidence that while the apostles lived Christian societies were governed by men. And when we are told that the name of Jesus ought to be all-sufficient in Christian assemblies, in such a sense as to supersede a human ministry, we reply, without hesitation, that "from the beginning it was not so."

{...}

The Rev. W. GIBBON said with regard to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), he honoured their zeal, but lamented their earnestness to get hold of people. He had seen great sufferings in families as arising from the professedly Christian teaching of this body.

Bishop RYAN narrated an instance of the pain he had experienced in reference to [Plymouth Brethrenism](#).

The Rev. T. H. Fox said that no one was more grateful than he for belonging to the Church of England. But they should be on their guard lest Evangelical clergyman should become too “churchy,” whether in contending against [Plymouth Brethrenism](#), or in view of the dispiriting influence of the age.

{...}

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir, – My attention has been drawn to an article in the *Luton Borough Register* for this month, entitled “Modern Priests in the light of Scripture.” The points brought forward and the line of argument used smell very strongly of “[Plymouth Brethrenism](#).” The whole article is a barefaced impertinence, and an utter disregard of the plain teaching of scripture, and of the universal practice of the Catholic (I do not mean Romish) Church from the Apostle’s times to the present moment, as illustrating the teaching and practice of those Apostles. To take one point only. It is quite true in a sense that “the feeblest member of the household of faith is as much a priest as the Apostle Peter himself;” but in another sense it is equally *untrue*. Else why do we read that Christ hath set in His Church, not *all*, but *some* to be Apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. (Eph. iv., 11–12)? And why does the Apostle ask (1 Cor. xii., v. 29), “Are all apostles, are all prophets, are all teachers?” if there is no difference between apostles and those to whom they are sent? No difference between the prophets and those to whom they prophesied? No difference between the teachers and the taught? Again, St. Peter, speaking to Christians says, (1 Pet. ii., v. 5–9) “Ye are ‘an holy priesthood,’” and a “royal priesthood.” But we must remember that similar language is addressed to the Jews of the Old Testament (Ex. xix, v. 6) “Ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of priests;” and yet Korah and his company were punished by God for saying that “all the Congregation is holy,” and for invading the office of the Priesthood (see Num. xvi, v. 3–40). And Uzziah the king

was smitten for presuming to offer incense (2 Chron. xxvi, v. 18). Speaking of the history of Uzziah reminds me of an article I saw some months ago in a periodical intended for distribution among children, and evidently published for the dissemination of “[Plymouth](#)” opinions. After giving an account of the sin of Uzziah, and his signal punishment, it took occasion to instil the false doctrine in words something like these: – “My child you must remember these times are passed away. This sin cannot be committed now, because there are no priests now-a-days; all are equal in the Church of Christ; all believers are priests. The so-called ministers and clergymen are not sent by Christ; they have no right whatever to teach,” and so on. Thus in the midst of much that is good and serious intended to work on the religious feelings of the young, these periodicals endeavour to instil here and there a drop of erroneous teaching and false doctrine, which is all the more dangerous on account of the religious sentiment under which it appears. My attention was directed to this by monthly periodicals sent to my children for their spiritual edification by kind hearted relations who belong to the “[Plymouths](#).” But no sooner did I discover the tenor of such teaching than I instantly forbade their continuance and destroyed all that I found at all savouring of their peculiar and erroneous tenets. These good people profess to be “led by the Spirit of God,” – to be “taught of God,” and so taught as not to need the help of any human ministry, even though that ministry has existed in the Church from the time when Our Blessed Lord appointed His twelve Apostles, to the present day. Does it not seem strange and somewhat presumptuous for this sect which is but of yesterday to set itself in direct opposition to such an established and universally recognised fact as the Christian Ministry? Does it not appear a little barefaced that they should so utterly ignore the teaching and example of both Old and New Testaments, and the practice of the Christian Church for 1800 years, to lay down as an indisputable fact that there is no difference between clergy and laity? The writer of the article referred to, asks us to read I Pet. v. 2, 3, where the original word for

“heritage” is “clerus,” whence the modern “clergy.” I do not see that this proves his argument at all. In fact the whole passage is dead against his theory. In the first place I would remind him that the whole Jewish nation was God’s “clerus” or heritage; at the same time there was one tribe (Levi) which God especially claims as His “clerus,” and which He was pleased to bring especially near unto Himself, for to them was committed the care of the Tabernacle and its furniture and sacred vessels, and certain lower offices connected with the services of the sanctuary. And further, God chose one particular family out of that tribe, every male member of which family was consecrated to the priesthood for ever – and one particular man of that family to be the High Priest, and on no account would God allow the special prerogative and duties of that Order to be infringed or usurped. So we see that although God had said that the whole nation should be a kingdom of priests, yet He appointed High Priest, Priests, and Levites to attend upon the services of the sanctuary and to be the human means of intercommunication or mediation between God and His people. And in like manner, though all Christians as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are “holy” and “called to be saints,” – a “holy priesthood” and a “royal priesthood,” – yet there ever was, and still is, and without the shadow of a doubt was intended to be, certain persons to whom the special ministration of God’s Word and Sacraments is committed, who accordingly have, in Scripture, special designations as being separated for the work, whereunto they were called (Acts xiii, 2). They are especially God’s “clerus,” or heritage, – not so much on account of their own personal sanctity and goodness, as on account of their sacred office, because they have “addicted themselves unto the Ministry,” and been duly ordained thereto by the “laying on of hands” (I Tim. iv, 14. Comp.; II Tim. i, 6: also, Acts xiii, 3; I Tim, v, 22, &c.). But secondly, I would ask the writer to read that passage (I Pet. v. 2–3) himself; also, Acts xx, 17, 28–30, and many other like passages. To whom, I ask, are these words spoken? Not to *all* believers, certainly; but to the “clerus” or clergy. They are spoken or addressed to the “elders,”

or, as the Greek has it, “presbyters” (or priests); which shows very plainly that the Christian Church in Asia Minor was already organised under a settled Ministry, even in Apostolic times. And St. Peter, though an Apostle, calls himself also an elder or presbyter; so, also, St. John (2 John 1, 3 John, 1). (And it may be well here to remark that a presbyter is not called a bishop by ancient ecclesiastical writers, though a bishop is often called a presbyter. Just as now, in the three orders of the Christian Ministry, bishops are also priests, though a priest is not necessarily a bishop). But in the passage referred to above, I would ask if there is no difference between the flock and the shepherd who is commanded to feed the flock? Is there no difference between those who are governed, and those who “bear rule over them”? The fact of Christ being called the Chief Shepherd shows that there must of necessity be *under* shepherds. And the Apostle says if the *under* shepherds do their duty faithfully in feeding the flock of God committed unto them, they shall receive a “crown of glory which fadeth not away.” It would be just as unreasonable to argue that because all believers are “kings” as well as “priests,” (Rev. i. 6), therefore all civil authority and civil distinctions are contrary to Scripture, and consequently ought to be ignored and set at nought. As far as I can see, the two things stand upon the same footing. On the one hand we read, “No man taketh this honour unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron” (Heb. v. 4); and on the other, “The powers that be are ordained of God” (Rom. xiii. 1).

I would beg the writer and every [Plymouth brother](#) or sister to read carefully the pastoral epistles of St. Paul (viz. I. and II. Tim. and Titus) – epistles written to those who had evidently been ordained and appointed to the special oversight of certain Churches as their bishops, and entrusted with power to ordain presbyters and deacons under them. I would beg of them to read these epistles not to support their own favourite theory respecting “modern priests,” and the “equality of clergy and

laity" &c., but read them in the light of the early history of the Christian Church, and the testimony of those who were companions of the Apostles, or who lived in the period immediately succeeding them. The thing is so plain to any but the most wilfully blind and self-opiniated {sic} that I am at a loss to understand how any one can read their New Testament without seeing it. The fact that the Apostle Paul, before he quitted the scene of his labours invariably "ordained elders (presbyters) in every city," and before his martyrdom left certain men as bishops (Timothy and Titus were such) empowered to ordain others to be presbyters and deacons, and also wrote epistles to them giving them full directions as to the qualifications, &c., of those to be ordained: – These facts, I say, show that the Christian Ministry was not a thing just confined to the Apostles' times, but was intended to exist to the end of time, as Christ himself said "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world," – with you by my Spirit individually and as a Church, – with you by my Sacraments, – with you by my ministry. If the writer wishes to be taught, I would refer him to an able treatise on the "Outlines of the Christian Ministry," by Bishop Wordsworth, of St. Andrew's, and a capital article on the Pastoral Office, by Dr. J. C. L. Carson, in a work of his called "The [Plymouth](#) Heresies." The subject is very clearly and forcibly treated in both these books, better than I can pretend to treat them. I will forward him a copy of the former if he will send me his name and address, and promise to read it when sent.

Feb. 20, 1878.

Yours truly,
CLERUS.

THE CHURCHES AND CHAPELS OF NOTTINGHAM: THEIR MINISTERS AND CONGREGATIONS.

(By "CRITICUS.")

No. 36. – *"Criticus" Amongst the Plymouth Brethren.*

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are not at all proud, and yet they do worship very frequently in upper rooms, where they are above everybody else. This peculiarity led me into a slight dilemma the first time I ever paid a visit to the "[Brethren](#)," though that is some time ago now. Having seen an announcement, in another town, that a special address would be delivered at the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Meeting-room, 82½, Division-street, I went, though I did not quite like the idea of a church or chapel meeting-room being at numbers eighty-two and a half – it sounds so *half-hearted*. When I got to the place one Sunday evening, I went up some stone steps, and having ascended as many steps as I thought sufficient, observing one or two doors, I opened one and entered the room. There were about a dozen persons present, most of them being seated at a long table at the upper end of the room. I went forward and seated myself comfortably at the table. My arrival seemed to make a considerable commotion, and the good people present began smiling upon me very graciously but still in a peculiar and mysterious manner. Now I do not like to smile much, particularly on a Sunday; but as the people were all smiling upon me I determined that I would not be outdone in civility, and so I smiled back upon them in return. This only made them smile all the more, but no one spoke a word or uttered a sound. Two or three, however, got up, and raising their fingers above their heads, pointed repeatedly and significantly at the ceiling. I looked up at the ceiling, but could see nothing

the matter with it. It was all right, and there were no signs of it falling; so I said to myself, "*Fiat justitia ruat cælum.*" Still everyone was silent, and not a word was uttered. At this juncture I looked down upon the table, and saw a number of books, lettered "*Deaf and Dumb Institution.*" Being very quick of apprehension (like a policeman) I saw through it in a moment – I had got into the "Deaf and Dumb Institution" instead of into the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Meeting Room, and the people who were pointing up to the ceiling were saying in their own way – "Friend, go up higher." I went up another flight of steps, and found myself at last "the right man in the right place."

Now, I did not make a similar blunder when, last Sunday morning, I paid a critical visit to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) meeting in a room over the Co-operative Stores, Great Alfred-street. I could not very well stumble into the wrong place on Sunday, because it is not there at all that Mr. Councillor H. S. Cropper is to be found pursuing his work amongst the Nottingham deaf and dumb: and, consequently, upon passing Woodborough-road Baptist chapel, and ascending one flight of steps in the Co-operative Stores building next to that place of worship, I found myself at once amongst the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The "upper room" is plain and unattractive. The walls are whitewashed, as also is the ceiling, and without any ornamentation of any kind, unless it be a clock over the entrance door. There are five windows, each containing four large panes, through which there is a fine view of slanting roofs and chimney pots, the two windows at the far end alone being covered with blinds. It being a beautiful morning, and the sun proportionately inquisitive and persistent, I was glad that these blinds at least were drawn down, as, the teaching of certain genial moralists notwithstanding, it is sometimes possible to have too much sunshine. The room is supplied with open benches, those at the upper end being grouped in the form of a square, in the centre of which is a table, which upon the occasion of my visit was covered with a snowy white tablecloth, upon which rested a plate

containing a small loaf, and a bright vessel containing wine. There were no reserved seats, or scarlet-backed pews, or other similar positions of honour – all the Brethren appear to stand (and sit) upon one common level. This is an arrangement I am not just now disposed to find fault with; it prevents pride, envy, or jealousy. Many will remember that on a certain occasion the Duke of Wellington once knelt in prayer within a quiet English church, when a villager entered, and not knowing the rank of the Duke, knelt by his side. The sexton was about to request the man to retire, when the Iron Duke interposed, remarking, “Let the good man stay where he is, please, *we are all equal here.*” It would be well if this choice sentiment was never forgotten – if in spiritual worship distinctions and barriers were removed, and all recognised as equal.

The morning service usually commences at half-past ten o’clock, but it was a little later on Sunday last when the proceedings actually commenced. At that time there would probably be from 20 to 30 people present, but in a few minutes more the number was considerably increased, until at twenty minutes to eleven there would be as many as 120. The majority of the worshippers, upon entry, knelt down before taking their seats, and a number carried Bibles in their hands, though they were not used at all during the service, no Scripture lesson being read or address given. The class of people present seemed mostly to belong to the better order of society, and appeared highly respectable. Their proceedings were quiet and reverent. A hymn, No. 110, was first sung, all remaining seated, including even the brother who gave out the number. Seeing “Criticus” in a back seat unprovided with a book, one of the brethren near the table courteously came and handed him one. Opening it, I found it entitled, “A few Hymns and some Spiritual Songs, selected 1856, for the Little Flock.” The various compositions are evangelical in tone, and free from any very striking peculiarities. There are a number of Wesley’s hymns, most of which have been slightly altered, though I

cannot say, improved; nor, indeed, would Wesley himself, were he living. But the attempted “improvements” are not made to alter or mutilate the doctrinal sentiments, as far as could be gathered from a cursory examination of the volume. The singing of the hymn was just such as one would hear in a village Wesleyan chapel, the tune, moreover, being of the old-fashioned sort common amongst the earlier Methodists. The words were sung with much pathos, rather slowly, and with a subdued cadence – several of the congregation sitting with closed eyes, as if in rapt and solemn worship. Five minutes’ perfect silence followed; then a number of the men nearest to the table stood up, some knelt down, and the rest of the people lowered their heads, while a brother offered up a plain and thoroughly Scriptural prayer, as he stood erect with arms folded. Then another period of silence succeeded. A different brother then quietly gave out the 275th hymn, and after he had read the verses, the people sang them, all seated as before. In this hymn I thought I detected a spice of Calvinism, one verse reading –

As Thine, Thou didst *foreknow* us,
From all eternity;
Thy chosen, loved ones ever
Keep present to Thine eye.

The succeeding verses, however, referred to “the Lamb once slain for men,” and “Thy Spirit,” which “formed our souls anew.” There was nothing in the sentiments the orthodox (whatever that may mean) could take exception to. This hymn having been gone through, several placed their heads in their hands, and resumed communion with their own thoughts, but after a few moments’ silence, several again rose to their feet, and the person next to the one who had first prayed, then offered up a fervent but reverent prayer. There was no excitement, and no undue raising of the voice, but a

somewhat pathetic and subduing petition. It was such a one as may any Sabbath be heard in our ordinary Nottingham churches and chapels. Another brother then announced hymn 287, the first verse of which he read. There appeared no brother in particular whose stated duty it was to give out the hymns and conduct the devotions, any one who liked apparently being at liberty to select a hymn as he felt moved so to do. The first verse read thus: –

As ground, when parched with summer's heat,
Gladly drinks in the welcome shower,
So would we, listening at his feet,
Receive His words, and feel His power;
Have nothing in our hearts remain,
Like the great truth, "The Lamb was slain."

This hymn, like the rest, was well and feelingly sung, and then came silent meditation once more, even the females sitting with closed eyes; the stillness at length being broken by a brother, rather intellectual-looking and well-dressed, approaching close to the table and offering up another prayer. That done, he took up the small loaf and broke it with his hands into three pieces, handing the plate to the brother who sat the nearest to him; who, after taking a small piece of the inner, soft part of the loaf, handed the plate to the next, and so on, each passing the bread in turn to his or her neighbour. This was only done amongst those sitting on the benches around the table, the occupants of the back benches, consisting chiefly of young persons, with three or four upgrown people, probably strangers, like "Criticus," having no opportunity of "breaking the bread"{}. One of their hymns speaks about

... Their table richly spread,

Where strangers cannot find a place,
Where saints alone are fed.

These lines express a perfect truth at Great Alfred-street Meeting Room, where an invisible wall of partition separates saints from sinners. After partaking of the bread, the brethren and sisters closed their eyes, or covered their faces, and another brief interval of stillness followed. The last brother again prayed, after which he uncovered the sacramental cup, and handed it to the one next to him, who, after drinking, passed it to the next, the vessel being handed from one to the other as the bread had been. This part of the ceremony did not occupy much time, the good brother who had just prayed drinking the last of all, after which he replaced the cup on the table. The 37th hymn was then sung, it being one having reference to the priesthood of Christ: the tune was peculiarly sweet, and the “little flock” evidently entered fully into the spirit alike of the sentiments and the music. Another prayer followed, and then all was over, as I thought. I rose to go; but not wishing to give the brethren the idea that I was in haste to leave them – or that any carnal recollection of dinner put speed into my feet – I took down my hat and lifted up my umbrella with due dignity and deliberation, resolved to go out amongst the last. I found, however, that to carry out my virtuous resolution would require some patience. Not a single (or married) brother or sister made for the door. Was there to be more? The clock already showed 12.5 p.m., and, not being of a greedy disposition, I felt quite satisfied with what I had got. But I waited on a little, and asked an amiable-looking neighbour – in a nice new bonnet – what they were waiting for now? The answer was, that they always saluted one another in a friendly way, after worship. I blushed. I felt myself blushing. I declare I could not help it, a passage of Scripture came so forcibly to my recollection about one special form of “saluting the brethren.” “Ah!” I thought, “when the [brethren](#) are so thoroughly Scriptural, perhaps they insist

upon this fine old Scriptural rule." I resolved to stay, wondering if strangers would be permitted to participate in this part of the service. I was, however, deeply disappointed to find that "saluting the brethren" simply meant the most common-place proceeding, in short, shaking hands. I heard the brethren making inquiries about absent members of families; and occasionally I could detect a gentle reproof in the inquiry. "Brother" and "Friend," sometimes emphasised into "Christian brother," and "Christian friend," were the forms of expression used in addressing one another. Occasionally, as in the case of other Christians, the arch-enemy of mankind permitted thoughts of trade to intrude into the meeting-room. As I passed one brother I heard him say that "business had been bad lately," and that "So-and-so would not pay much." "Ah!" I thought, with a sigh, "alas for our poor humanity! Churchmen, Dissenters, and [Plymouth Brethren](#) – Jews and Gentiles – they are all alike in one thing. Sunday cannot be kept for Sunday thoughts;" and so thinking, "Criticus" became conscious that musing on other people's infirmities was not in itself the highest of Sunday employments.

I understand that at the evening service there are exhortation and speaking. It is several years since I attended one of the Sunday evening services amongst the [Plymouth Brethren](#); but I remember that a Mr. Goodall, a gentleman from London, preached on that occasion from John, xiii, 10, and that in some parts of his sermon he was very exact. He repeatedly appealed to "Dean Alford's new reading," of which he approved, especially in one place connected with his text, where he said "Supper being ended" should read "Supper being begun," Mr. Goodall adding, "which is a very different thing, you know, from supper being ended." The brethren saw the joke, and smiled. I also recollect that Mr. Goodall took occasion to enforce the chief point in the [brethren's](#) creed. "I do not like paid agents for the Father; we can do it all in ten or fifteen minutes, and no longer, for there is no necessity to have

it." If Mr. Goodall meant that what they could do "in ten or fifteen minutes" was the sermon, he allowed himself considerably more time, for I have not forgotten that his "remarks" occupied one hour less five minutes.

In their manner of worship the [Plymouth Brethren](#) resemble the Society of Friends more than any other body I have seen. The people are not very numerous, but they appear to be generally of fair social position and standing. There was no excess or extravagance; everything was orderly and decorous. A few inclined to quiet enthusiasm, occasionally gave vent to ejaculations such as, "Do, Lord," "Oh, let it be so, Lord;" but these were exceptions. I was particularly struck with the friendly interest they took in one another. Had they all been separated for years, and brought together again by a miracle, they could not have been more kindly or demonstrative in their hand-shaking and inquiring. One young female was brought to the street door in a wicker carriage, and then carried upstairs into the meeting house, so I should fancy that their members are generally rigidly punctual and scrupulous in their attendance at the ordinary services.

Although the body are known as "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," they themselves regard the term as a misnomer. They assume no name but that of "Christian," or "[Brethren](#)," have no written creed, renounce all personal claim to their property, and are strongly opposed to a separate order of ministers, maintaining that, as the gifts of the spirit (1 Cor., 12th chap.) are still enjoyed by the Church, the ministry ought to be open to all the members. No [Plymouth Brother](#) can be a magistrate, and the body also repudiate the exercise of any political right or privilege, so that Mr. Saul Isaac, Mr. W. E. Denison, the Hon. A. Herbert, and other aspirants for Nottingham honours need not pay court to Alfred-street Central Meeting-room. The [Brethren](#) do not co-operate with other Christian societies for the attainment of a common object. The management of their affairs, both as respects

the admission of members and the distribution of funds, is lodged in the hands of a select inner circle, who do not appear to be responsible to their Brethren{.} They observe the Apostolic practice of showing forth the Lord's death – or, as they call it, “breaking bread” – every Sabbath day. The [Brethren](#) may be said to have sprung into existence in 1829. In that year a number of men became dissatisfied with the existing state of things in the Church; all the ecclesiastical organisations were, as they thought, barriers in the way of that unity prayed for by Christ that He and his followers “might be one.” At that time a Mr. A. N. Groves, of Exeter, was at the Dublin University preparing for “orders” in the Establishment, and he and a few others met continually for prayer and reading the Word. One day, Mr. Bellet, a barrister at the Irish bar, said to a lady, “Groves has just been telling me that it appeared to him from Scripture that believers meeting together as disciples of Christ were free to break bread together, as their Lord had admonished them, and that in as far as the Apostles could be a guide, every Lord's day should be set apart for this remembrance of the Lord's death and obeying his parting command.” This suggestion of Mr. Groves was immediately carried out by himself and his friends in Dublin. This was the beginning of what have been called Separatists, or “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” – the term “Plymouth” being no doubt applied because Plymouth was one of their earliest and strongest places. In some towns the ranks of the [Brethren](#) have been recruited by clergymen and ministers who have renounced their livings and churches, though I cannot find an instance of this in Nottingham. The nearest instance of the kind is at Worksop, where the Rev. Mr. Ugill, an Independent minister, “came out,” and brought his congregation with him. They did not, however, go right over to the [Brethren](#), but were known in local history as the “Ugillites.”

STREET PREACHERS IN WEST HARTLEPOOL.

For some time past, a system of street preaching and singing has been extensively carried on in West Hartlepool by the sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), the noise created by whose services in the leading thoroughfares, and the consequent street obstruction, has long been a subject of serious complaint among the major portion of the tradesmen residing in Church Street and part of Lynn Street. Yesterday, nine of the offenders were summoned before the West Hartlepool County magistrates (those present being Messrs Geo. Pyman and Thos. Walker) on a charge of obstructing the footpath in Church Street on the 18th inst. – The names of the defendants were Wm. Williams, Jno. Dayberry, Ann Culwall, Albert Cromley, Christian Lund, Wm. Reynolds, Wm. Taylor, Wm. Reed, and James Andrews. – Mr H. S. Simpson was for the defence. – The principal witness, Sergeant Bowman, stated that about 7'30 on the above evening he saw all the defendants standing upon the crossing near the railway subway. A crowd of 200 or 300 surrounded them. Addressing himself to Dayberry, he told them that they were causing an obstruction, and told them to move away. The female defendant was then preaching, and a cart and a cab going to the station were obstructed some minutes. Ultimately Mr Supt. Manley came up, and spoke to them, when they moved away in the direction of Whitby Street, where they renewed the obstruction. The complaints against them had been numerous and frequent. – Sergeant Cowen said that he was present when, some time back, Sergeant Bowman cautioned them about preaching near Mr Black's shop, and also in Do{illegible}n Street. Since then they had not obstructed these places. – Mr Superintendent Manley also gave evidence as to the obstruction, the orders he gave to the sergeants, and the many com-

plaints made to him on this matter. – In cross-examination, all three witnesses admitted that the crowd was partially composed of the opponents of the defendants. The flourishing of umbrellas, and shouting and yelling made it very dangerous for horses to pass; but no accident had occurred. The proceedings were taken under sec. 250 of the West Hartlepool Improvement Act of 1870. – Mr Simpson addressed the Court, urging them to dismiss the information. – Their Worships said that they had carefully considered the evidence, and although doubtless the defendants might be actuated by good motives, they could not be allowed to break the law. They were satisfied that they had received ample caution, and they would therefore each be fined 1s and costs, but they must understand that they could not be allowed to cause an obstruction.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN HERESIES.

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle.)

SIR, – During the middle ages of Christianity men’s minds were chained in superstition; but, as soon as the Reformation opened the prison, we find speculation at its old work. Socinianism invented a Son of God who, in its opinion, is not entitled to *Divine* worship, and whose death made no atonement. More recently Unitarianism denies both the deity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Ghost.

It is with deep sorrow of heart that I come now to “Brethren.” Mr. J. N. Darby has made a new translation of the New Testament into English, French, and German. In his English translation he renders the Greek word for worship (*proskuneo*) rightly in reference to God the Father; but, in reference to God the Son, he renders the same word by *homage*, with one exception. In his French and German translations he invariably renders *proskuneo* by the equivalents for our word *homage*, without a single exception, when the word refers to Christ. For example, when the Lord ascended to Heaven in presence of His disciples, our authorised version says: – “And they worshipped Him.” But Mr. Darby renders it – “And they having done *homage* to Him.” Thus Mr. Darby, in company with Unitarian translations, systematically substitutes *homage* for *worship* in reference to our blessed Lord. The word *worship* may be used either in a civil or divine sense; but the word *homage* never can be used in a divine sense. The late Dr. Carson, in his reply to the Unitarian, Doctor Drummond, says – “There is not in the Greek language a higher word for worship than *proskuneo*.” But Mr. Darby

translates that word, in reference to Christ, by the low word – *homage* – which cannot rise higher than *civil* respect. Again, Mr. Darby in his French translation excludes the capital letters from the name of our Lord, and of the Holy Ghost. For example, in James ii., 1, he has printed in French the equivalents of “Our lord Jesus Christ, the lord of glory.” And in Heb. x., 15, he has printed the equivalents in French of “Whereof the holy ghost is a witness to us.” The Frenchman has thus the capital letters excluded from two persons of the Godhead.

We shall now glance at Mr. Darby’s teachings about the *sufferings* of Christ. In his writings, he says: – “Christ took our *old nature* and the fallen Adamic life to which sin attached, and the relationship to God in which the old nature stood. Being in that condition, he was smitten under the hand and wrath of God; but not as a substitute for us, or in atonement for our sins. He had to die to that state of life, and the sin that attached to it, to get His perfect place of acceptance, as man with God. But had He not made atonement, the wrath of God which was upon Him would have coalesced to final wrath.” Such is his speculative outcome of the phrase “the two natures of Christ.” Mr. Darby had written in reply to Mr. B.W. Newton, in 1847, that “to speak of Christ suffering wrath at the hand of God, which is not vicarious, is pure unmingled heresy.” He has thus passed the sentence, upon his own writings, of “*pure unmingled heresy*.” Other teachers on his side inculcate the following: – (1). Atonement is not by the cross of Christ. (2). Atonement is not by Christ enduring the curse of the law. (3). Atonement is not by Christ being smitten by God on the cross. (4). Atonement is not simply by Christ’s death. Mr. Kelly (a teacher in Mr. Darby’s section of [Brethren](#)) quotes the following passage from Mr. Newton: – “And Jesus, as man, was associated with this place of distance in which man in the flesh was, and he had, through obedience, to find his way to that point where God could meet him, and that point was death – death under the wrath of God.” Mr. Kelly’s comment on this

passage is: – “If Christ, not vicariously, had to find his way to death, as a meeting place with God, all foundations are gone, and he must die for himself; and, therefore, not for us. The partner in a bankrupt firm is necessarily liable.” All foundations then are gone on both sides, Mr. Darby’s as much as Mr. Newton’s; and Mr. Darby’s side have refused to listen to the most affectionate appeals from other Christians to re-consider. The doctrines have been endorsed by his party, and if any person objects he is excommunicated as a heretic for neglecting to hear the Church. After dishonouring the precious name of Jesus, and taking away from us the atonement, the “[Exclusive Brethren](#)” take Church ground which they call – “God’s assembly gathered unto the name of Jesus. This assembly of God (they say) is like the House of Commons, and all other Churches are like clubs. A very few members of the House of Commons, with the Speaker in the midst, would constitute a House; but a hundred members met in a club could not make a House. [For example, in Coleraine, those who meet in the Long Commons, constitute {sic} the House of Commons in Coleraine, having the Speaker in the midst, and the authority and power of Christ, and all the other meetings of Christians in Coleraine are clubs.] Then if a Christian comes to a place [Coleraine for instance], and is at a loss to know where the unity of the Spirit is, God has left landmarks. I search for the children who gather unto the name of Jesus, [in the Long Commons] and this is the way to keep the unity of the Spirit in a place. Our business is to cleave to the Church God has made, and repudiate all rivals, and come out from them.”

I simply give this brief sketch of [Brethren](#)’s attempt to be wise above what is written, in connection with the recent case of supposed heresy brought before the Presbyterian Synod in Coleraine, if haply it may help to preserve our young people from speculative interpretations of mysterious cases, such as the sovereignty of God over the heathen. Nature has its mysteries as much as religion.

The infinite divisibility of matter is an axiom of natural philosophy, and the question starts up in the mind – “Is there no point at which matter ceases to be divisible?” but the mind answers its own question. A particle of matter must be divisible as long as the mind can conceive of it as matter. It would cease to be matter if it ceased to be divisible. The mind cannot explain *how* it is so. Also, personal identity is a doctrine which commands our belief; but *how* it is that I am the same identical person to-day that I was on the day of my birth, although there is not now a single original particle in me, I cannot explain. Our *sense* of the divisibility of matter is limited even by the aid of a microscope; and our *sense* of the change of particles in a person is nowhere, yet we have no difficulty in receiving both as natural facts. The limit of our knowledge of *how* things are as they are, is owing to our limited faculties, and we can only explain any thing to the extent of our faculties – beyond that it is only foolish, and, in sacred things, *wicked* speculation. – Yours truly,

VANCE MACAULEY.

14th May, 1878.

The South London Press, 8 Jun 1878, p. 11

The Registration Office at Brixton was the scene of more than usual excitement on Tuesday. The sensation was caused from the fact of the marriage of Dr. Wolaston {sic}, of Edinburgh, with Miss Mary Lean, daughter of Mr. Francis Lean, late paymaster in the Royal Navy, and for many years a resident at Kennington. Several carriages were waiting outside the building, and as many as 40 spectators, more or less, were present. After the formal ceremony had been completed, the doctor and his bride proceeded to the chapel in the locality attached to the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The Exeter and Plymouth Gazette Daily Telegram,
Exeter, 16 Jul 1878, p. 3, North Devon Jottings

On Sunday morning last a very curious custom which prevails at Barnstaple was observed. A number of young people belonging to some religious sect, the [Plymouth Brethren](#) I think, locally called [Chaplainites](#) {sic}, went down to the river Taw about six o'clock, and were there baptized by their pastor, Mr. Chaplain. They go down to the large quay, Mr. Chaplain stands in the river up to his waist, and the candidates walk down the slip into the river, when he dips them, at the same time pronouncing a blessing. They then walk back to their homes in different parts of the town with their wet clothes entwined about them. A large number of people witnessed the ceremony.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

BY "LEPROGHAUN."

Some people have a peculiar way of spending their spare time. While on a visit to Hebburn New Town the other week, I heard a "discord of melancholy sounds" in the next street to where I was. Out of curiosity I went into the street to "see what there was to be seen," and this is what I saw: three respectably-dressed men, singing. Thinking them too well dressed for those poor unfortunates who "sing for their supper," I drew a little nearer. They even had small books in their hands, and with downcast looks moved slowly up the street as they sang. Not a soul was to be seen in the streets but themselves, and this was the part of their song that struck my ear, "See the mighty host advancing." I looked about but could see no host, mighty or otherwise. When they got to the end of the street they stood still, and after a while began a new hymn, the burden of which was "Rescue the perishing." As they still had no listeners, I became rather doleful, and going to a distance, listened and watched afar off. Not a soul came near them. It was just at the "gloaming," when no one was to be seen save now and again a woman as she flitted out of one house into another, or one of the "lords of creation," as he entered or left the "pub." at the end of the street. I turned away, wondering what on earth these men were, or what they were about. I had not gone far till I met two "guardians of the peace," who soon enlightened me. "Oh, these are the [Plymouth Brethren](#); they have a gospel hall somewhere about here." One of them added another remark or two which might shock the "[brethren](#)," so I will not repeat them. Could these men not employ their time better in some other

way? Is there nothing better for them to do in Hebburn? They were calling aloud for some one to rescue the perishing{.} Would it not be better for them to do a little of the “rescuing” business themselves. In my daily and nightly visits to Hebburn I have seen a good few who seem to be perishing both in body and soul, and if they would only set to work instead of singing, they would perhaps do some good.

{...}

EXTRAORDINARY THREATENING LETTER CASE. – A special petty session was held at Lisburn on Saturday for the purpose of hearing a case in which a great deal of interest was manifested. Henry Montgomery, farmer, of Ballygarricknaddy, was charged by Sub-Inspector Tilley, of Lisburn, with having, on the 29th August, at Drumandoff, Balinderry, fired a shot into the dwellinghouse of Mrs Margaret Hatton, and also with having written two threatening letters – one to Henry Crawley, the other to Margaret Hatton. It appeared that a series of meetings in connection with the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were being held in the neighbourhood, and that Montgomery's wife, a well-looking young woman, with a baby some six months old, became a regular attendant at the meetings. Mrs Hatton was one of the leaders in connection with this religious movement, and at a late hour on the night of the 29th of August her house was fired into, and both the front and back windows shattered. Threatening letters were also received by Mrs Hatton, and also by James Gawley, stating that if the "Dippers" – meaning thereby the [Plymouth Brethren](#) – were not sent away and the preaching discontinued, there would be numerous pains and penalties. It was on Gawley's farm that the meetings were being held. Sub-Inspector Tilley's evidence was to the effect that a recently-discharged gun was found in the house of the prisoner, whose handwriting corresponded (in the sub-inspector's opinion) with that in the threatening letters. The case was returned for trial at the assizes.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN. – At the Lisburn Petty Sessions on Saturday, a curious case was heard, in which Henry Montgomery was charged with firing at the dwelling-house of Mrs Hatton, and also with writing two threatening letters to Mrs Hatton and a man named Galway. It appeared that the **Plymouth Brethren** had been conducting service in a tent adjacent to Montgomery's residence, and that his wife attended the meetings. This displeased Montgomery, and it is alleged that the reason he fired the shot and wrote the letters was that Mrs Hatton and Galway took an active part in connection with the meetings. He was returned for trial on both charges.

The Sligo Champion, 5 Oct 1878, p. 4, Current Topics

On Sunday afternoon there was a rumour of a disturbance at the Custom House, Belfast, in connection with some religious open air services which were conducted there by some of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The preachers were groaned and hooted, and only that a body of constabulary were present matters would have been more serious. On taking their departure the [Plymouthists](#) were followed through several of the streets by a disorderly mob, as they were on the previous Sunday evening.

The Sligo Champion, 12 Oct 1878, p. 4, Current Topics

On Sunday there was a renewal of the disturbances in Belfast in connection with the open-air services held in front of the Custom House. Several preachers were in attendance. The singing of a hymn was commenced whereupon a numerous body of roughs commenced to shout, cheer, whistle, and also to sing songs. A numerous body of police in attendance dispersed them and chased them down the quays. Several arrests were made. The would-be preachers were [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The Morning Post, London, 15 Oct 1878, p. 3

Yesterday afternoon the disturbances which have taken place for several Sundays past in connection with the open-air religious services conducted by the [Plymouth Brethren](#), at the Custom-house, Belfast, were renewed and were more formidable than on any previous occasion. The mob which assembled numbered several thousands. They hooted and hissed the preachers, and also indulged in stone throwing. A body of constabulary present charged the roughs, and also lashed them with whips. Several arrests were made, and for a time the proceedings were of a very turbulent and threatening character.

THE AULD KIRK O' DUNSE.

UPON ITS DESTRUCTION BY FIRE, ON THE
MORNING OF THE 17TH FEBRUARY,
1879.

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
Hoo often has it warm'd the heart
On Sabbath days, when prayer an' praise
Rose upward frae the poopit airt:
A rev'rand Granny vow'd tae me,
The warmth that sooth'd puir erring sows
Was concentrated sae in thee,
Till it consum'd thy very bowels.

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
How sweetly o'er the senses stole
Those warbling notes, from organ throats,
Those heavenly chords that fill'd thy soul,
Until it seem'd as though a choir
Of Angel harpers throng'd the air,

That sought to fix our thoughts on higher,
And purer bliss that waits us there.

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
A woefu' look is thine this day;
Yer e'en sae braw, yer heid, an' a'
Yer ither cherms are wede away.
Like vacant holes, in giant skulls,
That scare the timid as they pass,
Thy winnocks, noo, let daylight through
Upon a charr'd an' blacken'd mass.

O' Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
Thy faes 'ill girn tae see thee noo,
An' mony a cheil, wi' sauntly zeal,
Gloat, herpin,' ower thy fa,' I troo.

But while the life-bluid warms ma hairt,
An' common-sense will guide ma e'e
'Tween right an' wrong, I'll tak' thy pairt,
An' redd a freendly screed tae thee.

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
Ye've won a mair than local fame,
Though mony a dark, unseemly mark
Has marr'd thy fair, time-honoured name.
Thae symbols traced on scarlet baize,
Was *Mystery*, harbour'd in thy breist;
'Twas said, in 'pocalyptic phrase,
Ye bore the image o' the *Beast*.

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
I hear it said in oor auld toon,
By yin whas sneer, an' wutless lear
Shaw'd little credit tae his croon;
Quo he, "the Auld Kirk's spent its speed;
Lies brunt an' reekin' i' the mire;
It might, some day, rise purifeed
Frae oot its purgatorial fire."

O, Auld Kirk, O, Auld Kirk!
Ye dree'd a wordy war yestreen;
Thus yin amaun the lave began,
(An' troth! she was a pirrie quean)
Quo she, "Twas nocht but judgment gaur'd
The scand'lous object reek an' reel,
I'd sink the site o't if I daur'd,
An' spurn its ashes wi' ma heel."

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
I met a fae o' thine ae nicht,
Whas very e'en seem'd fraucht wi' spleen –
A sickly veesag'd [Darbyite](#) –
Quo he – wi' mony a mystic word,
That filled my awesome hairt wi' dool –
"I'm gled, that frae yon ruins, the Lord
Has rescued *me*, a *precious jewel*."

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
Ae sanctimonious heepocrete,
O' jaundic'd e'e, fell foul o' me,
An' cast his spittle at ma feet;
For why? because I said, forsooth,
Should saunts, who held them free frae sin,

In *their* ain kirks haud tae the truth
Nae errors, syne, wad enter in.

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
Nae doot ye hae o' fauts, a few,
But where ava is there, 'mang a'
The kirks, Desenter, Pape, or Jew,
The yin whas stock o' Faith an' Deeds
Hauds guid their vaunted purity?
But whas maist orthodoxal creed's
Wrapt up in some obscurity.

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
Gin ye hae fauts yer no' yer lane;
We ken gey weel the anxious Deil
Keeks through them a,' exceptin' nane:
While yin avows the doctrine fause
That sinners will wi' sinners horde;
The next denies, in language worse,
The inspiration o' the Word.

O, Auld Kirk! O, Auld Kirk!
I wonder when the times will mend,
When strife be hurl'd frae aff the world,

That love may reign frae end tae end:
Oh! could we a' look mair abune,
Tae Him who reigns oor faithfu' Heid,
Millennial peace and smile aroon,'
An' kirks, as *yin*, be a' agreed.

T. WATTS.

Broomhouse, Dunse, 22nd Feb. 1879.

BURLESQUING RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

SIR, – Allow me to draw the attention of your readers to a very extraordinary occurrence which I witnessed last Sabbath evening, and which I hope no one will ever witness again – in the interests of decency as well as of religion. A sect known as [Plymouth Brethern](#) ^{sic} (or, as they choose to call themselves, “[Christian Brethren](#)”), who detest learning and educated preachers of the Gospel, are trying to establish themselves in Bute, and are conspicuous by their ostentatiously immersing their proselytes in the sea, which performance they call baptism. I do not doubt that the men who are the acting spirits of this sect here imagine they are “the salt of the earth.” Indeed, the chief who addressed the assemblage (numbering about 1000,) on Sabbath evening compared all who were not bapti{s}ed according to his way of thinking to the heathen Zulus, and his charity re-iterated to them the tidings that unless they believed and were baptised they would be damned. Now, just allow me to show that their conduct is entirely uncalled for. They maintain that no child can be baptised, on the ground that it is an unbeliever. Now, in the Mosaic economy (which was restricted to the Jews) a believing parent got the ceremony of circumcision administered to his child on the eighth day after birth, and is the Gospel of Christ – which is free to all – to be circumscribed at the whim of uneducated and ignorant men? – who assume positions for which they were never intended. It was right to administer circumcision to the Jews’ children, and it is equally right to administer baptism to the Christians’ children. Then, regarding immersion – that is impracticable in many countries, and our Omnipotent Saviour did not establish a ceremony that would require a miracle to enable those for whom it was intended, to observe it. I will perhaps require to show what I mean more

plainly: immersion could not be practised in a country where there is not sufficient water to irrigate the ground, and where famine, as a necessary consequence, ensues – it would be preposterous, and would hinder the spread of the Gospel, to tell converts in these regions that they must be immersed. Again, in the Arctic Regions, where the water is frozen, it would be equally absurd to insist upon what is altogether unnecessary. I hope that wiser judgments will actuate the “[Christian](#)” [brethren](#) of Rothesay. In conclusion, allow me to ask these “Christians” (whom I will assume are sincere and religious) if they do not consider that their circumscription of the Gospel of Christ to those who consent to be plunged into the sea may not tend to create sceptics of “weak brethren” – who see nothing but absurdity in what they (the [Plymouth Brethren](#)) call religion. Such a thought must be very serious to the truly religious mind. It seems to me supremely ridiculous that men, proud of their ignorance and antagonism to learning, should imagine that the teaching of eighteen centuries is all wrong, and that no one can be saved unless those upstarts and their proselytes. Their profession and practise is directly against the Gospel. – I am, &c.

ANTI-HUMBUG.

PLYMOUTH BRETHRENISM IN SYRIA. – The Rev. Dr Jessup, American missionary, writes from Syria as follows: – “The mission continues to be tried by the fanatical propagandism of the ‘**Plymouth Brethren**,’ {sic} a sect which may be regarded as the enemy of all order, edification, unity, and spiritual growth in the Christain {sic} Church. With the most specious and oily-tongued professions of piety, brotherly love, and zeal for purity, it soon reveals a spirit the most intolerant, self-seeking, exclusive, and denunciatory. The five men who followed the Plymouth apostle in Beyroot, will now neither commune with him nor with one another. The ‘**Brethren**’ break the Sabbath openly, going to the market and doing worldly {sic} business, as they are ‘not bound by the law.’ Teaching that in regeneration the ‘old Adam’ remains unchanged, they disavow all responsibility for their evil deeds. One of them, a young man in Hums, robbed the shop of a brother ‘**Plymouthite**.’ The rest called him to account. He replied that he had enough to do in looking after his new nature, and had no time to manage his ‘old Adam,’ for whose deeds he denied all responsibility. The Plymouth virus is about exhausted in Syria now, but it has left its brand of spiritual indifference and disorganisation on all who had fallen under its influence.”

QUEER CHRISTIANITY.

SIR, – Can you inform me what is the name of the sect (also enlighten me as to the tenets held by its adherents) that meets in a hall in [Park-street](#). Last Sunday morning the sacrament was administered, and the service, which continued for some time after, was closed by someone rising and requesting those in communion to remain, while all others were requested to retire. Being naturally of an inquiring disposition, I, although a stranger, did not conform to this request. When the hall was supposed to have been cleared of all except the faithful, there ensued a scene that baffles all description; had I not known of the service that preceded it, I should certainly have thought I was assisting at a meeting of a debating society conducted on strictly anti-temperance principles. From what I could gather during this general uproar, it appeared that some of the speakers wished to expel from this sect some old member, who according to others, was a member before most of his accusers were born. However that may be, if the venerable gentleman in question is not sufficiently strong-minded to separate voluntarily from such an uproarious and (according to my experience of one morning) ill-behaved sect, he is to be congratulated on the fact of his expulsion.

Apologising for taking up so much of your valuable space, but pleading my natural curiosity as to what can be the tenets of such a peculiar sect,

I am &c.,

26th August, 1879.

INQUIRER.

NONDESCRIPT CHRISTIANS.

[COMMUNICATED.]

A letter from an "Inquirer" on "Queer Christianity," which we published on the 29th of August, attracted our attention to the hall in [Park-street](#), where this queer Christianity is supposed to exist; and on Sunday last we paid a visit to the place that we might see what it was like. On arriving at the entrance we were doubtful whether we were not intruding, till we saw on the door a notice, evidently intended for the public, that "the Gospel is preached here every Sunday at 6.30." Upon this we ventured to proceed up a long, dimly lighted, passage that eventually led us to the hall, and on entering were surprised to find so large a place; it is a plain, clean-looking hall, with bare white-washed walls, and seated with common wooden forms, for about 500 people, but only about half that number were present, most of them women and children, the whole place having a cold, uncomfortable appearance. The form of service seems to be much the same as any other dissenting church; the singing could hardly be called good, though every one did the best they could, no one being too particular as to time or tune, if they did not all manage to finish the verses at the same time, they at least tried to begin them together, and with a certain amount of success. The service was theologically sound, and though it was not delivered with that force of persuasion that is so necessary in a preacher, none could have listened to it attentively without having derived some benefit from it, even though it was nothing more than the exercise of their patience, and the controlling of their temper, at having to sit for upwards of an hour (on an uncomfortably-hard seat)

trying to follow the thread of as monotonous a discourse as one could well have had the misfortune to listen to. When a man is set apart for the ministry, and can devote the principal part of his time and energy to preparing weekly instruction for his congregation, who have been worried with the cares and trials of life during the week, surely they require, and may expect, something more than a desultory comment on a subject that, apparently, was not quite clearly understood by the preacher himself. But notwithstanding this little defect, they seem to be a well-meaning people, thoroughly in earnest, and, with a little more practice, will no doubt some day become a good and useful denomination.

Islington Gazette, 26 Sep 1879, p. 3, Correspondence

NONDESCRIPT CHRISTIANS.

SIR, – Some of your correspondents seem, by the tone of their remarks, to have lighted on a live “Dodo!”

Perhaps it is a pity that the principles of those “queer Christians” are not better known.

The body of Christians of which, or strictly, one section of which the meeting in [Park-street](#) forms a part, are generally known as “[Brethren](#),” or “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” although they themselves repudiate all distinctive names as being sectarian; which at first sight seems somewhat {sic} anomalous, seeing that their section has practically become the most exclusively narrow of all.

Some 50 or 60 years since several small companies of believers in Dublin and Plymouth, impressed by such Scriptures as John xvii., 21, 1 Cor. iii., 3, &c., sought to solve the question as how they might exemplify the unity of all God's children by meeting simply on the primitive basis of a personal interest in Christ and consistent life. Much spiritual power and blessing was realised, and their numbers rapidly increased, many men of talent and scholarly attainments joining the movement, perhaps unfortunately, for a dispute arising between two of them, Mr. D— and Mr. N—, on matters of doctrine, Mr. D. adopted the high-handed course of excommunicating Mr. N. and all his adherents.

Personal theological feuds are mostly very bitter, and this was no exception. Many who, whilst not siding with Mr. N., objected to so wholesale an abandonment of their principles as to meet on the platform of an obtuse doctrine – either *pro* or *con* – took neutral ground, and were styled by the D.-ites as “loose” brethren, who in turn retorted by the term “[exclusives](#).”

The scene of which your correspondent was a (somewhat unwarrantable) witness was evoked by one of their number – [Park-street](#) meeting being on the “exclusive” side – having committed the unpardonable sin of “fellowship” (*i.e.*, partaking of the Lord's Supper with a company of believers outside their theological walls!)

But truth never dies, however ill-treated, and wise men think too deeply to ridicule any earnest seekers who fail to exemplify her teaching.

I am, &c.,

F.

The Huddersfield Daily Chronicle, 11 Sep 1879, p. 4

EXTRACTS FROM THE COMIC PAPERS.

FROM "PUNCH."

{...}

THE FLESH POTS. – The Parson: I'm very sorry to hear, Mrs. Brown, that you were present last night at a [Plymouth Brethren's](#) tea meeting. I have often told you that these doctrines are highly erroneous. – Mrs. Brown: Erron'ous, sir! Their doctrines may be; but their cake with Sultany raisins is excellent!

{See also the article of 25 Nov 1898 in the present selection.}

The Barnet Press, 22 Nov 1879, p. 8, Original Correspondence

SALISBURY-ROAD ROOM.

To the Editor of the Barnet Press, Finchley News, and Edgware Chronicle.

SIR, – I and my neighbours were yesterday favoured with a call from Mr Herbert Taylor, who left me the following written note, without address and without signature: –

Fellow traveller into eternity
are your feet treading
The narrow path
that leadeth unto Life Eternal, or
The broad way
that leadeth to destruction?
Which?
God loves you. Christ died for
the ungodly.

We affectionately invite you to
Salisbury Road Room
Wednesday night, Nov. 19th,
7.30,
When the gospel will be, God
willing, preached by
Mr C. Russell, Hurditch.
Seats free. No collection.

As the young gentleman did not wait for conversation, but delivered his letter after the manner in which many years ago *Punch* represented Lord John Russell as chalking up “No Popery” and running away, I shall be obliged if you will permit me through your paper to ask some of the questions which I should have put directly, had he given me the opportunity.

I should have commenced by reminding Mr Taylor that I had notoriously been an accredited member of an universally recognised Christian Church from many years before he was born; that during all those years I had never had a charge of un-Christian conduct brought against me; and that, so far as I know, my neighbours do not entertain suspicions of my integrity. And then I should have asked – Knowing as you may and ought these fact {sic}, on what grounds do you put these questions to me? Who authorised you to interfere with the discipline of my own Church, to which alone I am amenable? What do you know about me, which compels you, out of concern for my welfare, to intrude on a line of things in which you have no authority, and for which you have no vocation? You either addressed these questions to me wittingly or unwittingly. If unwittingly, do you not see that they are very impertinent? But, if wittingly, are they not insolent?

Your judgment of my case is so unfavourable that you deem it necessary to press me to attend at the [Salisbury-road Room](#), on Wednesday next, that I may hear the Gospel preached, of which, from your note, I am supposed to be ignorant. During many years I have heard the Gospel expounded in Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist, and Methodist Churches, so as to give assurance of pardon and regeneration to every man who, with a broken and contrite heart, returns to God by the New and Living Way; so as to prompt to, and give assurance of help for, the full developement {sic} of the charity, purity, righteousness, and truth of the New Life; and have heard the whole emphatically enforced by the guarantee of Eternal Life furnished by the resurrection and reign of

the Redeemer. Are you so ignorant of the religious condition of this country as not to know that the Gospel, so understood, is the substance of the teaching and exhortation administered from the pulpits of our churches from week to week? Or, have you another and better gospel than the "Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God"? Either the one or the other of these conditions is yours, or your "affectionate invitation" to me is irrelevant. I suppose you will accept the irrelevancy, as you will scarcely affirm that you have attained to a knowledge of the way of life which the whole Christian Church, "instantly serving God day and night" through more than eighteen centuries, has failed to acquire. But in the irrelevancy is involved something which I am sorry to say I cannot regard as either honourable or manly. You know you have nothing good to offer which I and thousands of others have not already; but, by imperfect, one sided, and misleading representations, you try to persuade us to leave our friends, to forego the gratitude we owe for their improving influence, and to renounce the Church of our spiritual birth and training, simply that we may go with you. And for what? Shall we have better opportunities of "serving our generation by the will of God" than we have in our present homes? Shall we be likely to receive sounder and more thorough scriptural teaching in a community where every one who has never learned assumes the Doctor's chair? Unless we have descended to the condition described by St. Paul (2 Tim. iii, 6) you must not expect success. Nor must you say I am unwarranted in the inference I have drawn from your present action. Number the congregation now meeting on the Sunday morning in the [Salisbury-road Room](#), and how many will you find who have not on various pretexts been inveigled from other churches? The avowed purpose of all other churches is, and has been, to bring sinners to God. The practice of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) has been from the first to seduce the weak brethren of other churches to fill their own ranks. I would, therefore, recommend you, that you may give proof of your apostleship, to seek out the neglecters of public worship, the open and gross violaters of the Divine

law, and “persuade them to to {sic} reconciled to God.” You will then find your godly neighbours wishing you good luck in the name of the Lord. But so long as you remain an Ishmaelite, as a necessary consequence every man’s hand must be against you.

I am, Sir,

ONE OF MR. HERBERT TAYLOR’S
FELLOW TRAVELLERS.

Barnet, Nov. 18th, 1879.

STRANGE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE THROUGH RELIGIOUS MANIA.

A governess, named Florence Sippell, well-dressed, was charged at Clerkenwell Police-court, on Wednesday, with attempting to commit suicide under the following circumstances. Chief-Inspector Richard Williams, of the Great Northern Railway, said the defendant was brought to his office, and charged with being in the tunnel for the purpose of committing suicide. Where she was found, had a train passed, she must have been cut to pieces, for though she was not actually standing on the rails, the ballast would not let her get too close to the wall. She had no business in that tunnel, which was only used for luggage, and passenger trains never passed through it. He asked her several questions, but she was very reticent, and would answer none of them; but at last she wrote, "I have no home, I am not able to live at home. I can't write to where I have been living. I only left this morning." By dint of perseverance it was ascertained that on Monday she left Barnet with some friends to visit the Zoological-gardens, Regent's-park, and there she left them, saying she would meet them at the railway station. It was stated that the defendant was very self-willed, that she belonged to a sect called the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and that all that she did, however strange it might be, she believed, or stated she believed, was done by order of God. The defendant, when before the magistrate, did not utter a single word. Mr. Hosack remanded her to the House of Detention, and directed she should be seen by the chaplain of that establishment.

FAREWELL MISSIONARY SERVICE. – At a special service held at the Castle-street Congregational Chapel, on Sunday morning, the Rev. James Emlyn, missionary from Travancore, preached his farewell sermon, previous to the departure of himself and wife on Tuesday last, to return to their missionary labours among the Hindoos. {...} Mission work in Travancore was chiefly conducted among the poor and ignorant, in consequence of the prejudices of caste among the higher and wealthier natives. {...} They had nevertheless made great progress, and were gaining the respect and esteem of the higher classes. But the work was now threatened by a danger which resulted from sectarian differences among the Christians themselves. The preacher alluded to the injury which Christianity was likely to sustain from the influence of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and of the Church of England missions. The former had been making Christianity ridiculous, by teaching the natives that Christ would appear in 1881, and the latter had introduced a sectarian element which would have a very prejudicial effect. {...}

The Ross Gazette, Ross-on-Wye, 14 Oct 1880, p. 4, Local News

THE NEW BURIALS ACT. – The first interment of a Nonconformist in Ross churchyard under the new Burials Act took place on Friday afternoon, when the body of Miss Scrivens, a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) denomination, was consigned to the grave. The proceedings were orderly and simple. No bell was rung, and, after the corpse was lowered into the grave, the 15th chapter of the 1st Corinthians was read, then a hymn from their own hymn book was sung, and a short extempore prayer by Mr. Royce concluded the service.

THE RECTOR OF WOOLWICH ON NONCONFORMITY.

PLYMOUTH BRETHRENISM.

The last of the special sermons on Nonconformity delivered by the Rector was preached on Sunday evening, the 10th inst., the subject being as above, and based upon the texts: – 1 Peter, 2nd chap, 9th verse, “Ye are a royal priesthood,” and 2 Cor., 13th chap., 14th verse, “The communion of the Holy Ghost.”

The Christian body, said the Rector, of which we have to speak this evening can hardly claim to be ranked in importance with the other great denominations of which we have spoken. In including it in this course, I have reason to believe it has made some way in this town, and it may, moreover, be considered to rank first among what may be called the minor sects. Its peculiarities also, which separate and make the wide line of demarcation from all the others we have noticed, and the principles of which it may be interesting for us to enquire, and, lastly, there are those who don't actually join the body, but become tainted with some of the erroneous doctrines of the Brethren, and are carried away by what they think is the truth. Of the history of the Brethren it is, fortunately, unnecessary to say much. They arose in the year 1830, almost simultaneously in Dublin and Plymouth, from which latter place they received their name. As in the Wesleyans, persons met together for mutual edification, the study of prophecy and prayer, only while the meeting of the Wesleyans was to increase their individual holiness and help one another to greater activity in winning souls to Christ, the object of the Brethren in their meeting was simply the enjoyment of the

religious Communion by those who, as they express it, “were gathered together out of the world by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit; and were in very deed united to Christ, and in him made perfect.” There was at that time a great revival of religious life, the evangelical movement of the last century was rapidly losing its power and vital energy, and becoming but the maintenance of certain dry doctrines, chiefly Calvinistic. At Oxford, men like Dr. Pusey and others perceived what was necessary to keep up this new life was to supplement it by the fuller and more prominent provision made by Christ himself in his Church. They went back to the too long forgotten writings of the first ages of the Church in her primitive purity and zeal, and showed the world there was a mine of theology there deeper, richer, purer, more manly, and intellectually satisfying than either the teachings of Calvin, Luther, or the Puritans on the one hand, or the medieval Romanism on the other. They reminded the Church, in a time much needed, that in the ordinances of the Church, as in a beautiful casket, men could find the fullest satisfaction of all their deep spiritual desires, in a legitimate, because a distinctly appointed manner. It is not to be wondered at that others, desirous to maintain a deep spiritual life, the earnest impulse of the heart, however unrestrained by historical or theological knowledge, should have gone forth to seek what they thought a pure spiritual worship, in ways {sic} of their own devising. We all know how easy it is for men to mistake the promptings of their own soul for the guidance of God’s Holy Spirit. In the middle of the 17th century arose one who concluded that the Church and all Christian bodies lacked spirituality. He realised also, as he said, “to be bred at Oxford and Cambridge was not sufficient for a minister of Christ.” He realised that God, who made the world, did not dwell in temples made with hands; that the Scriptures should be read by the light of the Spirit; that none could read Moses aright without Moses’s spirit, nor the words of Christ without His Spirit. Sacraments were but the outer clothing of spiritual realities, and therefore he argued dispensable. This young man, who thought he had received a new

light direct from heaven, was George Fox, who gathered to himself and left behind him the once great and influential body of the "Friends," called "Quakers." The great truths he thought he had discovered was the old possession of the Church and the article of her creed – "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life," under whose dispensation we now live, whose presence the Church has ever taught can alone give vital energy and power to any ordinance, ministry, or ministration; whose guidance alone can lead to truth, and whose power alone can give to each soul that holiness, that goodly and progressive sanctity, without which no man can see God. This is the very aim of the Church's teaching. George Fox forgot that while man is composed of body as well as soul, he needs, at least ordinary men need, an outward leader and sacramentor. In both the [Plymouth Brethren](#) and the Quakers there is the belief that their assemblies are under the immediate guidance of the Holy Ghost. They discard all that is external, all Church ministry or organization. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) profess to be not a Church, "for all churches," they say, "are in utter ruin, the evil having so mingled with the good that God has altogether departed from them, and any effort to repair the ruin is even sinful." They, therefore, meet only as God's assembly, called out of the universal ruin by no will of their own. "A few sinners," to use their own words, "saved by grace in separation from ecclesiastical faith, owning no other gathering power but the Holy Ghost, and no other centre to which to be gathered but the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and no other creed but the Word of God." They discard all forms of prayer, even the Lord's Prayer, being considered alone intended for the time before Pentecost. Of their hymns, they will not select before, but only as the spirit guides at the time. They say it is wrong for a believer to pray for pardon of sin because he is already justified, and therefore pardoned; forgetful that the dust of earth will sully the purest, and daily needs washing. "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet"; he does need that continuously {sic}. They say it is wrong to pray for the Holy Spirit, as the believer is fully sanctified by

the act of faith which united him to Christ. Certainly St. Paul, who spoke of progressive holiness, knew nothing of such a perfected work of sanctification here on earth. It would be incredible, did we not know how easily men become victims of spiritual delusion, to think how any person could look honestly into his heart and believe that the work of sanctification, except by some kind of theological subterfuge, was complete. With somewhat less consistency in discarding outward forms, as the Quakers, the [Plymouth Brethren](#) maintain after a manner the Sacrament. There is no consecration of the elements. They baptize all who join them, whether previously baptized or not, in the name of the Lord Jesus. That which chiefly divides the [Plymouth Brethren](#) and the Friends from other denominations, as far as outward organisation is concerned, is that they discard all kinds of ministry. All other bodies acknowledge the necessity of some form of ministry. In departing from this order, [Plymouth Brethren](#) and Quakers have certainly most widely and strangely departed from the universal custom of the Church, and the clearest declaration of God's will, as revealed in holy Scripture. They, however, cannot avoid some form, as their time of meeting, sacrament, waiting for the spirit, and other things, are just as much matters of human arrangement as any service in the Church. To say that the Holy Spirit is only manifested in a certain manner is, I hesitate not to say, most unwarrantable, nay even blasphemous to attempt to limit the operation of that Holy Spirit. I ask further if these extempore prayers are not frequently repeated time after time, and that in the very language, it may be, of the Church's collects learned in childhood? The presumptuous pretension which such ideas must inevitably develop was soon seen even amongst those who professed to have no creed. About fifteen years after it began, one who had been from the beginning a leading member amongst them remonstrated strongly, both publicly and privately, against certain doctrines, errors which had crept in amongst them, in connection with their prophetic views. They retaliated by charging him with heresy. Mr. Darby vehemently led the opposition, and soon set up

another gathering. The seceders called upon the [Brethren](#) to avoid the heresy which had crept in amongst them, on pain of excommunication. George Millar {sic}, with several others, refused to do this, and his chapel was excommunicated, and it became what was henceforth called the [Exclusive Brethren](#), a synonym for blasphemy. They were called the “Bristol blasphemers,” and the watch-word with the [exclusives](#) was, “Have you decided the question,” meaning the question of excommunication, and that is the great test question of faith amongst them. Mr. Groves, one of the first members, speaks of it as “a system in which the worst vices of human nature, those defiling things that proceed out of the heart of man, are brought into exercise, and sanctified in being made the foundation of union and Communion at the Supper of the Lord. A system that falsely charges godly men with blasphemy, and makes the acceptance of such charges the ground of Christian fellowship.” Thus we see to what rejection of the Church’s time-honoured creed may lead. They have been recruited mainly from the pious and earnest, but have they made them still more charitable, loving, and helpful? Alas! too often experience has proved just the contrary, “We see on every side, wives refusing to pray with their husbands, brothers estranged from brother, daughters leaving pious and loving parents to lead a life apart, ties of friendship and affection severed; and this is not as it might be thought from individual faults of temper or bitterness of spirit, but from principle distinctly, and so to speak conscientiously, carried out.” They say the world is helplessly damned, and a Christian should come out of it and have nothing to do with it. It is no business of his to help to better it. Even religious associations, such as missionary societies, are so mingled with the evil that we are told we should have nothing to do with them. Christians, it is plain, have no need to improve this present world. Can anything be more contrary to the spirit and teaching of Christ? What would have been the condition of the world if Christians had acted thus? Christ said he prayed not that his Father would take his people out of world, but keep them from the evil, they that are in the world,

but not of it. As leaven working secretly in its midst, as salt purifying and preserving it, this was their mission, as it was His, who came not to call the righteous, but the sinners to repentance. But, my Brethren, notwithstanding all these grievous and damnable errors, there are some great truths which these people, however ignorantly, were feeling after. Take their rejection of an external ministry. There are those in the Church who forget the part which the laity are called upon to do. The Church even officially recognizes to the full, that the clergy are merely representatives to the whole body of the Church, and that body not merely clergy, though to them are committed ministerial exercises. The whole body of the Jewish Church were called priests before God, and so are we as Christians. Yet as there was a special order for the service of the Temple, so is there now among Christians. "Ye are a holy priesthood," says the Apostle, "by virtue of your incorporation into the mystical body of Him, who is the Great High Priest." Each one may, and should, this is his privilege, join in offering up that sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving by which the Church on earth is ever pleading that offering once for all made on the cross of Calvary. In that feast you will observe, it is always, "we offer and present unto Thee," the priest acting, but the laity consenting. Would that all would recognise their great and glorious privilege; then there would be no discarding the properly constituted ministry. Then soul might teach soul. What was this, however, but a yearning for the realisation of that which we are too apt to forget, "the Communion of Saints," that life which is hid in Christ Jesus. This Communion of Saints can only be a matter of faith here on earth, to be realised in that new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. What is it makes the Brethren think they have this heart's communion? It is because they believe sincerely in the presence of the Holy Spirit amongst them, because their minds are stirred with the communion of heart with heart; but the bond must be deeper than such visible emotion, like the under current of the ocean that flows on far beneath the mere surface of the foam crested wave. If we truly and sincerely believe

that, besides the great objective act of the Church's properly ordained form of worship, which they entirely lack, but which Scripture distinctly tells us is acceptable to God, is the visible expression of his favour, if besides this each heart feels that it is truly joined to all others, not only in the same assembly, but wherever throughout the whole world there are true, earnest, faithful worshippers, a great power would inspire and flow from our worship, which too often now it is to be feared it lacks. Devout and earnest souls may indeed often pray for a deeper realisation and experience of this communion. We want more to realise that the substance of our hope and joy lies far beyond the shadows and things that are seen, and those things which are not seen but eternal. We will not believe that God has left this vital truth to be discovered more than eighteen hundred years after the death of Christ. We will not dishonour God by believing that He has left His Church to be so truly ruined as they tell us it is. We will not be so uncharitable to the millions of Christians throughout the world as to believe that *they* (the [Brethren](#)) alone have the privilege of communion with that Holy Spirit. We will believe rather, that all that is healthful, all that is possible by experience in this spiritual communion here on earth, is to be found in the good old path trodden by the saints of old, and by men who found therein satisfaction for the deepest longings of the soul, – more devout and more spiritually-minded than it is to be feared any of ours are – men who truly breathed the atmosphere of Heaven and counted their very life as nothing, so that they might be found in Christ. We will walk patiently in those well-tried and well-trodden paths, striving to the best of our power to do the work which God has given us to do, watching and earnestly praying that when the Lord himself shall again return in the glory of his Father, surrounded by His angel hosts, and attended by His saints, we may be found ready to meet Him and worthy to join in that glorious throng of the redeemed, then, and for evermore, to know all the unspeakable fulness and joy for which we have longed here, which is to be even in His presence, and in company with those who are truly His. Oh,

God! grant that we may indeed be better and better able to use those words that we have already sung this evening –

“Oh, my spirit longs and faints,
For the converse of Thy saints;
For the brightness of Thy face;
For the fulness of Thy grace.”

The Kentish Independent, Woolwich, 23 Oct 1880, p. 8

THE RECTOR'S SUMMARY ON NONCONFORMITY.

To complete his series of discourses on “The Truths of Nonconformity,” the Rector preached a sermon on Sunday evening last, in which he summarised the addresses already delivered, and adduced several reasons why he thought the Church of England was entitled to the first place among all religious bodies, the text was Acts, 2nd chap. 42nd verse, “And they continued steadfastly in *the Apostles’* doctrine and fellowship.” {...} Do the [Plymouth Brethren](#) long for a closer and more spiritual Communion among those really Christ’s, and hold that all outward ministrations and ministries are as nothing in the life-giving influence of the Holy Spirit? This is nothing more than the Church teaches, but she knows also that these things are helps and means, and God’s own appointed way, and, therefore are not to be dispensed with merely because man thinks he can walk more spiritually without them. Thus, my Brethren, have I endeavoured to show that all that is truly good and helpful in these various systems may be found abundantly in the holy Catholic Church. {...}

THE RECTOR'S SERMON ON THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

To the Editor of "*The Kentish Independent*."

Sir, – I have just read in *The Kentish Independent* the report of the Rector's sermon delivered last Sunday week, the 10th inst, on, or rather against, the so-called "[Plymouth Brethren](#)." Whether, under any circumstances, it is a wise thing for one in his position, thus publicly and from the pulpit of his establishment to attack those not of his way of thinking, I must leave it to others to judge (though it forcibly reminds me of the proverb, that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones), but this may safely be asserted, that those who undertake to enlighten the public as to the tenets or history of a body of Christian people, are morally and in honour bound to make themselves acquainted with the truth of the case (and, in the present instance, there is a well-known literature to appeal to), and to abstain from prejudicing the minds of the public by false and unfounded statements. It is with no less regret than surprise I find that the Rector has acted as he has, for he has proved himself alike ignorant and prejudiced as to his subject, – an inexcusable fault in a preacher or lecturer.

I see that Mr. Wilson, in preaching at the Parson's Hill Chapel recently, very properly observes that he takes his stand upon the 26th Article of the Church of England, that "Nothing shall be required of any man to be believed, except what is found in, or can be proved by the Holy Scriptures." Why, Sir, the formularies of the Church of England are a parody upon its own article, and its State is a parody on its creeds. Whether articles or creeds, you may, as a member of the Church of England, "drive a coach and four through them;" are these then the people to assail those who disown any ecclesiastical text book, or spiritual authority whatever, but the word of God? The Rector's boast of the early

Church may do him service in the case of the ignorant or credulous. But we have the Word of God and the spirit of God as well as they, and though, doubtless there were bright and happy individual exceptions, yet every one who knows something of Church History, and of the witness of the “Father,” knows pretty well where the early Church was, in doctrine and in morals. No! let us thank God that He has in these days again brought prominently forward His Word, and that, as the above truth, the exclusive authority. If men speak according to this, well and good, but no other ecclesiastical standard, no other siritual {sic} authority for us. We people of England have a choice before us, and each must quickly decide for himself – there is Scripture and tradition, spiritual Christianity, and Popery, nor is there any consistent ground between them, and the time is fast approaching when this will be apparent. It requires no prophetic spirit to see that the days of the Establishment are numbered – not that the “Brethren” rejoice in this, or would aid in its demolition – they simply think that those sometimes do it must {recte most?} harm who think themselves its best friends. Every right-minded Christian must deplore the state of division in which the Church is, but no right-minded Christian will make use of this to commend and bolster up error. Ardently is “the Unity of the Spirit” to be desired, but better even division than a unity in error. A temple built of living stones, and bound together by the power of the Spirit, is one view of the Church (and a Scriptural one too), but Babylon, or bricks for stone and slime for mortar, is another view. The Rector somewhat glories in the recognition by the Established Church of the Holy Spirit’s presence and agency. The Church of England does *theoretically* acknowledge the Holy Spirit; practically, however, baptismal regeneration is the denial of the Holy Spirit’s sovereignty in grace, and apostolical succession is the denial of the holy Spirit’s sovereignty in gift. Between these doctrines the Holy Spirit has little else than a nominal recognition.

As regards the Brethren, no body of Christians more emphatically upholds ministry than they do – ordination they *reject*. As to baptism, some of them hold baptist views, others are pedobaptists. The former would not re-baptise if they considered that a person had already been baptized as an adult believer. The latter would in no case re-baptize where infant or adult had already been baptized in the name of the Trinity, according to Matthew, xxviii., 19.

As to Sanctification, that section of the Brethren with which I am best acquainted hold that there is a sanctification (or *setting apart for God*), which is once for all and absolute when a person is converted, according to 1 Cor., vi., 2; 1 Peter, i., 2; and they agree with all other Christians that there is a sanctification which is progressive, as when we are told “to follow after holiness,” and to “perfect holiness in the fear of God.” We hold that whilst “accepted in the Beloved,” and “complete in Christ,” yet that in ourselves we are prone to err, or fall into sin, and that we need daily, indeed constant cleansing, “the washing of water by the Lord.” We hold that “if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Why then are we to be charged with holding “grievous and damnable errors?” I cannot doubt but that the rector, as a Christian man, will sooner or later see and feel the mistake he has made in traducing from the pulpit a body of Christian people.

As regards the disunion amongst the Brethren, he is equally unjust to the side he opposes. A very systematic and insidious attempt was made at Plymouth many years ago to undermine the principles which the Brethren avowed. This was followed by the equally insidious propagation of doctrine concerning the person of Christ, which every orthodox Christian should repudiate.

There were in different individuals different degrees either of sympathy with, or repugnance to, this doctrine{.} Moreover, there were different views as to the principles of Church action, some inclining to Independent principles, others holding by a corporate unity. Hence the division. The former now, I think, almost universally accept Baptist views; amongst the latter a large and influential proportion practice infant baptism. In fact the term “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” has become vague and indefinite as a definition, so much diversity is there amongst those commonly so-called, both as to doctrine and practice. It is consequently only fair when these are in question, with a view to enlightening the public on the subject, that all accessible evidence on either side should be consulted. This does not appear to have been the case in the present instance, and the result is the most complete and injurious misrepresentation which perhaps this series of sermons or lectures contains.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

CHRISTIANUS.

Woolwich, 17th Oct., 1880.

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

To the Editor of "*The Kentish Independent*."

Sir, – "Christianus," in his letter in your last, accuses me of "false and unfounded statements," of having proved myself "alike ignorant and prejudiced," of "traducing a body of Christian people," of "complete and injurious misrepresentations." This is a goodly string of charges, but I am not very much surprised at it; for I certainly did not try to hide my opinion of the erroneous and injurious nature of the principles of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and people are always wont to consider those who disagree with their pet opinions, "ignorant," "prejudiced," and so forth. However, I would remind "Christianus" that the strongest words used in my sermon were quotations from the writings of those who had had practical experience of these principles, and were not my own words. Since then, a "[Brother](#)," and, if I am not very much mistaken, the same who writes under the name of "Christianus," has very kindly lent me a book of tracts on the subject of [Plymouth Brethrenism](#). After having read them, I can only say that I see no reason whatever to alter one single word that I previously wrote. The only thing upon which I have perhaps been a little more enlightened, is the extraordinary divergence of views held by [Plymouth Brethren](#), and the contradiction that there is between what they profess to hold as their main principles and much of their actual practice and teaching. If I have in any way misrepresented the views held by "Christianus" personally, perhaps his own words will be an amply sufficient excuse: "In fact, the term '[Plymouth Brethren](#)' has become vague and indefinite as a definition, *so much diversity is there amongst those commonly so-called,*

both as to doctrine and practice." Is this, then, really the state of those who profess to have been called out "from all existing Churches as '*the Assembly of God*,' and to be under the special and immediate guidance of God's Holy Spirit?" But there is one question that I should like to ask "Christianus," or Mr. Wilson, whose allusion to this subject he quotes with approval, and I trust either will give a plain and distinct answer. If they "disown" any "spiritual authority whatever but the Word of God," by what right do they say that Unitarians, who deny the Godhead of our Lord, are in error? Unitarians appeal to that Word of God as well as we do. Who is to decide which interpretation is right? Is every child, and every unlearned man to be made to enquire for himself on a matter that has been a subject of controversy among the most learned, and which certainly requires some knowledge of the original language in which the Word of God was given, and even of the science of metaphysics? When we learn from some "authority" external to the Bible, whether an individual teacher, a parent, or a Church, that this is the interpretation which has been universally received, each one may plainly trace how it is found in Scripture. But this is a very different matter to each one *discovering* it there for himself, and *deciding* that it is the Truth. But "Christianus" speaks of a "systematic and insidious attempt" having been made "*to undermine the principles which the Brethren avowed.*" Did these persons appeal to any other authority but Scripture? and, if not, how could they undermine those principles which utterly repudiate all "other spiritual authority?" What right had the [Derbyites](#) {sic}, on their principles, to call the [Bethesdaites](#) "blasphemers?" For a plain and reasonable answer I, and I am sure many more, would be greatly obliged. When our Article (the 6th), to which both writers allude, says "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation," it

by no means infers that all authority by which that Scripture is to be *interpreted* is to be excluded,
as they would seem to argue. – I am, Yours obediently,

ADELBERT A. ANSON.

Woolwich, Oct. 27th, 1880.

BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL MEETING. –

A NEW SUIT FOR MACE BEARER – THE TOWN HALL
REFUSED FOR SUNDAY RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

The quarterly meeting of the Town Council of Buckingham was held on Monday last, February 7, the Mayor in the chair. There were also present – Aldermen Bradford and Ridgway, and Councillors Hawkins, Gough, Reynolds, Small, Ward, Mayor, Holton, J. T. Harrison, and E. H. Ridgway. The previous minutes were read and confirmed.

{...}

The Mayor informed the Council he had received an application for the use of the Town Hall for three months on Sunday afternoons and evenings. The offer came through a Mr. Bailey, who had charge of the services recently held in the hall, and who now offered to pay the sum of £6 for the use of the hall for three months on Sundays. The Mayor said this application came to him privately, but he preferred to lay the matter before the Council.

Mr. Holton said he rose to make a proposition that the hall be granted to Mr. Bailey for this purpose, at the sum named. The gentlemen who had the hall before were certainly unfortunate in their choice of the week to visit Buckingham, as the very severe weather hindered very many people from attending the services, and there were several other gentlemen, including Mr. Herbert Taylor, a son-in-law of Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P., and a Russian Prince, and several others who would have come

down from London, but were hindered by the very bad weather. He (Mr. Holton) attended one or two of these services himself, and he believed they were thoroughly appreciated, and were highly acceptable to a very large number of people in the town and neighbourhood. He would therefore propose that the hall be granted for the purpose. (Hear.)

Mr. Ward had very much pleasure in seconding Mr. Holton's proposition. These services would be held at an hour when they would not interfere with other religious services. He attended some of these services, which had been referred to by Mr. Holton, and he saw very many people there who did not go to any other place of worship, and they seemed very attentive indeed. He thought from a business point of view the Council should accept this offer of £6 for the use of the hall for these services, especially as he believed they would not affect any other place of worship.

The Mayor said the Council had always been ready and willing when any place of worship had been under repairs, or anything of that kind, to grant the hall for religious purposes, but this seemed to him to be a very different case altogether. (Hear.)

Ald. Ridgway said on the previous occasion he was against the hall being let for any such purpose, and he should be so again on this occasion. He did not think the Council would be acting wisely to give up the hall to the use of any person or persons for three months, especially to any body or party of men who were not a recognised religious body in the town. From what he could hear he understood that the men who had the use of the hall recently belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), whatever that sect might be. As the Mayor had remarked they had always been willing to lend the hall when any place of worship was undergoing repair, but as this (the hall) was only a secular place, he did not see the desirability of letting it for religious to any strangers who chose to come into the

town. Mr. Ward had said it called those together who did not attend any other place of worship, and he (Alderman Ridgway) said more shame to those who didn't go while there was room, but even if it did get together the "waifs and strays" in some instances, it was very likely they would take away money required by other religious bodies. Looking at the matter altogether he considered it was most undesirable to give up the hall to these people for a quarter of a year for these services, which some people did not approve of even on account of the doctrines which had been propounded. He would therefore propose that the hall be not granted for the purpose.

Mr. G. Mayor said he fully endorsed all that Ald. Ridgway had said. There were other places of worship for people to go to without going to the hall, and he should feel pleasure in seconding the amendment.

Mr. J. Small said Alderman Ridgway had spoken as though money was an object with these men, but that was a very wrong impression, as they were men in good position, who did what they did for the love of it. He attended two or three of these services, and should do so again if there were any, but at the same time he knew that some of the ministers in the town were opposed to those services. He had also heard that in places where these men had been strife and division had been caused among existing congregations. He was well aware that people who did not attend places of worship were drawn to the special services, but they could not make an excuse and say there was no room for them elsewhere. Under all the cuircumstances {sic}, he felt bound to support the amendment. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. J. T. Harrison said it had been remarked on a former occasion that the Council were willing to let the hall for theatrical purposes, or for any other tomfoolery which might happen to come into the

town, and in this case he thought the Council should look at it from a business point of view. If these people were willing to pay £6 for the use of the hall, and give a guarantee that they would pay for any damage which might arise, then he thought the Council should decide to accede to these terms. If the public chose to go to the hall to a religious service merely by way of amusement, or because they thought it would do them good, by all means let them go. This was not for the Council to judge of, and he should support the motion that their money be received. (Hear.)

Alderman Bradford felt the Council could hardly sanction the use of the hall for amusement on Sundays, nor grant the use of the hall merely on the grounds adduced by Mr. Harrison. He (Alderman Bradford) knew nothing what doctrines these people taught, but there was plenty of room in other places of worship, and he should support the amendment.

Mr. E. H. Ridgway said Mr. J. T. Harrison seemed to mix up religion, amusement, and gain in a very strange manner, or to associate novelty and religious feeling in a very incongruous sort of way. If these services were held every Sunday for three months it might happen that religious feeling and novelty would pass away altogether. He had no doubt these services had an attraction for some natures, but he supported the amendment of Mr. Alderman Ridgway.

Mr. Ward said he should like to say a few words about a remark made by Mr. Small. Mr. Small had said that some of the ministers in the town were opposed to these services. He (Mr. Ward) could'nt {sic} understand why this should be, except that these ministers were afraid the people should go and hear something better than they (the ministers) could tell them (laughter). He didn't know at all who Mr. Small referred to, but that was his idea on the matter. These gentlemen had been

recommended and introduced by Mr. Brown, a well to do tradesman in the town, and he (Mr. Ward) felt sure Mr. Brown would not recommend anything to injure the town or its inhabitants.

Mr. Small said it had been stated to him that more than one minister in the town objected to these services. What their motive was in objecting he could not say.

Alderman Ridgway said the names of three nonconformist ministers in the town had been mentioned to him that morning as disapproving of the services.

The Mayor put the amendment, and eight voted in its favour; Councillors Holton, Ward, and J. T. Harrison, voting for the original motion.

{...}

The Bicester Herald, 25 Feb 1881, p. 7, Correspondence

THE REFUSAL OF THE TOWN HALL, BUCKINGHAM, FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES. – PROFESSIONAL SELFISHNESS.

To the Editor of the Bicester Herald.

SIR, – Like many others of your numerous readers I was completely disgusted with the conduct of certain members of Buckingham Town Council, who, being in a majority, at a recent meeting, decided not to allow the Town Hall for religious services on Sunday afternoons and evenings. I was

even more disgusted with those Nonconformist ministers, who, according to the statements made at that meeting, were so strangely, and, to me unaccountably opposed to these services. It looked to me like nothing less than a bit of trade jealousy. If the lawyers in Buckingham had been “polled” to decide if another of their profession should make his *debut* into the town the majority would probably have voted “Nay.” If the doctors had been called upon to vote as to the entry of another practitioner, the chance is the nays would have had it, and it seems to me that this was another parallel case. I admired the courage of Councillors Holton, Ward, and J. T. Harrison, but with the conduct of the majority who voted against the hall being granted, I must again confess the most perfect disgust. The silent votes were bad enough, the reasons given for some of the majority votes were worse, and will not be easily forgotten. Scores, aye, hundreds of persons went to hear those simple and earnest men when the hall was open a little while since. Men and women who do not attend any place of worship as a rule, were attracted thither to hear the message of mercy, and to listen to the story of the cross, and very many were rejoicing in the prospect of a continuation of these services. These pleasurable anticipations were however cut short by the action of a majority in the Council, who took into consideration the objections of certain Nonconformist ministers, and decided that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) should have no further accommodation in the Town Hall. Those who did not hear these men were strongest in their condemnation of them. Many of those who heard them did so with joy. It is stated that, after all, some arrangements may be made for these simple and earnest men to come and deliver their message in Buckingham. Let all the existing places of worship be filled ever so thickly, and there will be a large surplus who cannot get in. Those who do not attend any place of worship were strongly condemned, but a large number of these are still to be found. The lost sheep was considered of more value than the ninety-and-nine which went not astray, and the missing piece of silver of more consequence than those pieces safe in the coffer.

Surely the seekers after these lost ones should be commended, and not hindered in their work. Those who are determined to try and “Rescue the perishing,” and who really do “Care for the dying,” and who “Work for the night is coming,” must expect slight and contumely from the cold and the lukewarm, but they will have their reward and “will come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them.”

I remain, sir, yours obediently,

A LOOKER-ON.

Buckingham, February 21, 1881.

The Bicester Herald, 4 Mar 1881, p. 8, Correspondence

THE REFUSAL OF THE TOWN HALL, BUCKINGHAM, FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

To the Editor of the Bicester Herald.

SIR, – The Buckingham ministers of religion, in opposing the letting of the Town Hall for religious services, show more care for their temporal interests than anxiety for the spread of Christian principles, and they have supplied another indication that, to them, organisations of professional Christianity are now but little more than associations for the benefit of parsons. We are accustomed to the stock complaint about the indifference of the masses to Christianity. Why does this indifference exist? Because modern Christianity has departed from the communistic brotherhood, the

loving unselfishness, and the pure simplicity which characterised Christ's teaching (which the "common people heard gladly"), and which were faithfully observed by the early Christians. They exercised a power among the masses by these means, which is sadly wanting in our time. Professional Christianity is now a queer mixture of modified Judaism and a sort of commercialism. The first evidenced by the efforts to set up a priesthood – hence vestments from the ritualists' array to the non-cons' straight cut blacks and inevitable white tie, and titles, from "the Vicar of Christ," down to simple "Rev.," with the useless ceremonies their holy hands only must perform. The second ingredient is shown by the prevalent ideas of giving up pleasures here to gain a larger number of them hereafter, and that, adding your name and paying money to some church or cause as you would do in a joint stock company, is the right and only way of entitling yourself to a heavenly inheritance. When will Christianity resume its ancient purity and power, is, Sir, the enquiry of

TRUTH-SEEKER.

February 28, 1881.

BUCKINGHAM TOWN HALL REFUSED FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

To the Editor of the Bicester Herald.

SIR, – Will you allow me through the medium of your columns to inform A LOOKER-ON, whose letter appeared in your issue of last week, that we hope, ere long (D.V.) to announce a continuation of the services lately held in the Town Hall. We shall this time have recourse to God's free air, and also tent meetings. I am sorry to say that impressions similar to those mentioned by him are forced upon the

mind, and one is bound to come to the conclusion that it is a money, and not a gospel matter with some of the persons mentioned by him. I had an interview with each of the Nonconformist ministers in the week previous to the meeting of the Town Council, and left them with the impression that we should have their hearty co-operation in the work. A report however appears to have been afloat that the "Evangelists" from Aylesbury intended to establish a meeting here permanently, and of course this has been the cause of the opposition shown by these persons through the agency of one of that company who are elected to represent the interests of the ratepayers, but which I fear has not been done in this case. I am informed a rental of £85 per annum has to be paid for the Town Hall by the ratepayers, and, looking at the matter from a business point of view, I should think £6 would have been acceptable to the said ratepayers. It seems to me a great pity that party feelings should hinder, instead of assist, those whose object is to preach the gospel apart from any sectarian dogma or doctrine, and also that prophecies of smaller congregations and less subscriptions to their party should affect men whose object is said to be the same, but who evidently mingle with that object what our friend styles in his letter "trade-jealousy." Apologising for the length of my letter,

I am, Sir, yours truly,

C. H. BURCHELL.

Bristle Hill, Buckingham, March 1, 1881.

P.S. – I shall be very glad if A LOOKER-ON will communicate with me at the above address. – C. H. B.

BUCKINGHAM TOWN HALL REFUSED FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

To the Editor of the Bicester Herald.

SIR, – I have read with some interest the correspondence on the above subject, which has appeared in your columns. The attack has mainly been directed against the ministers of religion resident in the Borough, because they ventured to express to a member of the Town Council their disapproval of the letting of the Town Hall to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Each of your correspondents has assumed the character of an exemplary Christian, thundering against the insincerity of the ministers of Buckingham! Truly this is no light matter, and the ebullitions to which we have been treated savour either of the “whitest virtue,” or of the qualities of those who “rage, and imagine a vain thing.” “A Looker-on” closes his opening epistle with charges of “coldness and lukewarmness,” and under the head of “professional selfishness” slanders honest men by accusing them with “trade jealousy.” “Truth-seeker” extends this charge to “modified Judaism.” C.H. Burchell endorses the charges made by “Looker-on.” Now, when this vexed question was introduced in the Town Council, something about commercialism was insinuated, but the worthy member who quoted the opinion of the Nonconformist ministers plainly stated that no such reason had been assigned by them as the ground of their opposition, or to quote your report, sir, Mr. Small said, “What their motive was in objecting I cannot say.” It further transpired that the preachers who were engaged by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were for the most part men in good position – men who took no fee for their labours. How then came those exemplary religionists to the conclusion that it was a question of filthy lucre which

had influenced the ministers of Buckingham? For the sake of the “ancient purity and power” of Christianity I would beg of them to refrain from that unchristian “judging” which Christ condemned. I think it will not be difficult to find some other motive which would more probably influence the ministers of the town; I say *probably*, but far be it from me to impute *any* motive. The Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A., in a recent lecture dealt with the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and from his remarks it would seem that their extremely literal interpretation of scripture led them to false and conflicting notions, and that they were the only sect of protestant Christians in this century who resort to systematic proselytism from existing bodies of believers, under the absurd pretence that their position is “infallible.” The lecturer said that “The influence exerted wherever the sect has made itself at all felt has been disintegrating, disturbing, and dividing.” If these be the true characteristics of the sect, they have only met with a “Roland for an Oliver” in their proselytising mission to Buckingham. Everyone knows that the [Brethren](#) have many very praiseworthy qualities, and I confess my surprise that in the present controversy they have not shown themselves to possess in an eminent degree the charity which “thinketh no evil.”

Yours, &c.,

NONCONFORMIST.

March 9, 1881.

The Bicester Herald, 25 Mar 1881, p. 7, Correspondence

EVANGELISTIC SERVICES AT BUCKINGHAM.

To the Editor of the Bicester Herald.

DEAR SIR, – In your issue of March 8, I saw a letter signed “Nonconformist,” in which he asserts that the gentlemen conducting the services at Buckingham, to whom the use of the Town Hall was refused in a spirit more becoming the days of John Bunyan than these of religious liberty and toleration, are [Plymouth Brethren](#). I have no desire to enter into the discussion further than to state that if they are [Plymouth Brethren](#) they recognise all sects as brethren, for I myself have heard them speak and preach in the Evangelistic Hall, at Aylesbury – where the services are conducted on the same principle as at Buckingham – Churchmen, Wesleyans, Baptists, &c., so that there appears to be no bigotry existing in the ranks of the management of the mission, and one and all have preached that which is “a faithful saying,” that salvation is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. What is the result at Aylesbury? Why one which should cheer the heart of any Christian – the drawing together weekly a large congregation of poor people who, three-fourths of them never attended any place of worship before. Why this opposition? Are not all labourers?

Yours faithfully,

Aylesbury, March 15, 1881.

OBSERVER.

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

In a recent lecture on this subject Mr. Rogers, of London, said that the [Plymouth brethren](#) were hardly more than half a century old. They were among the creations of the age, and despite their stern opposition to the present evil world, it was easy to see the influence of the age upon them. From very early days there had been in the Church those who had distinguished themselves by a severe asceticism, an extreme liberalism in the interpretation of Scripture, a protest against the corruptions which they alleged to be prevalent in the Church. What the Donatists were in the Early Church, what the severe monastic orders were to Rome in the days of their pristine purity, so were the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in relation to Protestantism. The rise of [Plymouth Brethren](#) was almost contemporaneous with that of Tractarianism, and, far apart as the two systems appeared to be, they were partly due to the action of similar causes. At the root of both lay a deep discontent with existing Churches, and especially with the Church of England, from which the early [Brethren](#) were seceders. Perhaps there was no feature in [Brethrenism](#) so offensive as its pretence to infallibility. For what else could be the meaning of the assertion that the “assembly” is the true body of Christ, and that it is the duty of all its members to gather Christians out of the corrupt communities to which they at present belong? It was that exclusiveness, involving as it did an essential claim to infallibility, and placing their sect on a level with the Romish Church, that gave distinctive character to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and justified other Christians in regarding them with distrust, and meeting their proselytising efforts with determined resistance. Mr. Rogers then dealt with the theological and ecclesiastical ideas of the [Brethren](#), and the type of practical Christianity exhibited

by them. Perhaps, he said, they bore a closer resemblance to the Society of Friends than to any other Christian denomination. But the Friends had been foremost in every struggle for liberty, in every enterprise of philanthropy, in every testimony for righteousness and for peace. No such story could be told of the Brethren. The latter proclaimed Christendom in ruins, and, so far as their efforts were concerned, in ruins it would remain. Not by such an agency as that was sin to be vanquished, the world to be redeemed, and the kingdom of Christ to be established in its power and in its glory.

A CHURCHMAN AMONG THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

To the Editor of the Barnet Press, Finchley News, and Edgware Chronicle.

SIR, – Partly from the repeated invitations (extending over some period) of a London friend, and in some measure from a lecture delivered last week in London on “The [Plymouth Brethren](#),” I decided to break through my usual privileged and dutious {sic} habit of attending church, and on Sunday evening last I made one of the “assembly” at the Salisbury-road Room. I will frankly own that, after the “hard knocks” dealt to the [brethren](#) in the said lecture, I went in a spirit not altogether divested of criticism, for to summarise the charges brought against the brethren by the lecturer, I think I may put them in this way: – “The [Plymouth Brethren](#) were hardly more than half a century old. They were among the creations of the age. ... They declare themselves a protest against corruptions which they allege are prevalent in the church ... Instead of being (as intended by the founders) an informal fellowship of men of all churches, they became an aggressive and often violent crusade against every church, and indeed against the radical idea of the church ... The influence of the sect had been, wherever it made itself at all felt, disintegrating, disturbing, and dividing. ... Where-ever they went their path was marked by discontent in churches, heart-grief to pastors, divisions in families, and separations among those who had been as choice friends ... With rare exceptions the converts made by the [brethren](#) were lacking in robustness of intellect ... The fundamental idea of the system was ‘Christendom in ruins,’ but,” said said {sic} the lecturer, “so far as their efforts were concerned, in ruins it would remain ... It was not the religion of the poor ... Perhaps there was no

feather in [brethrenism](#) so offensive as its pretence to infallibility. For what else could be the meaning of the assertion that the assembly 'is the true body of Christ, and that it is the duty of all its members to gather Christians out of corrupt communities to which they at present belong?'"

Now, without defending or upholding the particular theological creed of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), a brief notice of my experience of them at their meeting room last Sunday evening may not be out of place. A gathering of, say 150 people, at a modest reckoning, who I believe were composed chiefly of the poorer class (which is in antagonism to the lecturer's statement aforesaid), joined in worship, which was pervaded with extreme simplicity. The hymns, from a selection called "The Joyful Hymn Book," and somewhat after the Moody and Sankey type, were sung with earnest vigour and distinctness, although it seemed to me that an organ or harmonium to lead the singing would improve the same, and I wondered if like the ancient Scotch Presbyterians they believe a musical instrument a defilement in worship. The prayers were impressive, and seemed devout and earnest, especially so if the oft times "amen," uttered with much fervor by some of the worshippers, is a criterion thereof. The preacher was the widely known Mr H. W. Taylor, and I speak with a due conviction of truth when I say I listened to him with a much greater sense of profit and enjoyment of the truths of religion than I have sometimes done to ministers of the Established Church, and if "the [brethren](#) are lacking in robustness of intellect" I am sure there was no fatuity of mind observable when the preacher read and explained "the words of life," for the features of his audience seemingly betokened attentive thought and reverent feeling. I will add that I saw nothing throughout the meeting in which a Churchman could not heartily join. – I am, Sir, yours truly,

EXPERIMENTUM CRUCIS.

NONCONFORMIST JOTTINGS.

BY

NONCON. QUILL.

{...}

The Rev. J. Guinness Rogers, B.A., the Hector of Dissent, as I ventured to call him when he visited Cardiff last year to help in the celebration of the Sunday School Centenary, is the Congregational lecturer for the year. {...} The subject of his lecture last week was “[Plymouth Brethrenism](#).” As the [Plymouth Brethren](#) and Sisters are as militant in their views as any Brethren or Sisters you can name, a larger audience came together to hear the rev. gentleman than on any previous occasion. It was pointed out that Tractarianism and [Plymouth Brethrenism](#) started simultaneously, and are probably traceable to the same cause – dissatisfaction with the superficiality of spiritual life at the commencement of the century, both in the Church and in Dissent. Many earnest men yearned for deeper spiritual experience. With this object in view, John Henry Newman joined the Tractarian movement, and his brother, Francis W. Newman, joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#) movement. But he soon retired from it. John Henry Newman and the Tractarians fell back on the Church of the past, and endeavoured to find in it what they failed to find in the Church of the present. The [Plymouth Brethren](#), on the other, formed a little select society, outside of all churches and sects, but in fellowship with them all. They had not the remotest idea of starting a competitive sect; but the

movement once started could not be checked, and has developed – so say the authorities – into the narrowest and most bigoted sect in Christendom. Still I think the [Plymouth Brethren](#) remain more faithful to the doctrine of salvation through the death of Christ than any modern Christians; at all events, they give it greater prominence in their public exhortations and present it more vividly to the minds of anxious inquirers. Other sects can show preachers of greater ability, of more ornamental oratory, of more pleasing manners; but none can apply the Atonement to the conscience more effectually than they. This I consider their chief commendation. *Apropos* of this permit me to insert a story of the popular Evangelical preacher, Mr. Cecil. Several young men were invited to his house to spend a day in meditation and prayer preparatory to their ordination for the Christian ministry. To impress upon their minds the importance of ever making prominent in their preaching Christ and His Atonement, he told them he once had occasion to consult a physician of great celebrity. The physician said there was but one remedy for him, which happily was a perfectly simple one. Mr. Cecil rose to go. But the physician said he had often wished to speak to him and urged him to sit for half an hour that they might have a chat together. So they chatted away to each other's mutual delight and profit. On returning home Mr. Cecil told his wife he had been to a most agreeable doctor, of much originality of thought, having a great command of language, and possessing seemingly an inexhaustible fund of anecdote. "But what did he prescribe to you?" asked the wife. Mr. Cecil paused and considered, then said, "I have entirely forgotten the remedy; his charms of manner and conversation put everything else out of my mind." Turning to the candidates for the ministry, Mr. Cecil said, "Young men, it will be very pleasant for you if your congregations go away saying, 'What eloquence! what original thought; what an agreeable delivery.' *But take care they do not forget the remedy.*" To the credit of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) be it said – They do not forget the remedy.

Evening Telegraph, Dublin, 23 Mar 1881, p. 4

Perhaps the commonest craze to be met with in the families of the nobility is the religious or ecclesiastical. Each member of the house is a little “gone” upon some different form of faith. One is suddenly received into the congregation of [Plymouth Brethren](#); another precipitately flees to the Church of Rome; another has recently embraced the creed of Buddhism; a fourth is a crypto-Mahometan; a fifth an Irvingite, and great upon the gift of tongues; a sixth a furious and embittered Atheist. People smile and look knowingly when you mention the names of the representatives of this race. It is allowed that they are, severally and individually, by no means fools; but they are, each of them, pronounced a little queer. Never mind; it cannot be helped – it is “in the family.” – “World.”

{*World* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

WEEK EVENINGS AT HULL CHURCHES AND CHAPELS.

XXI.

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

This undemonstrative phase of religious life came into existence about fifty years ago, and, considering its unproselytising disposition, has made considerable progress. Its native place is Plymouth – a rather warlike region for so peaceable a child. [Plymouth Brethrenism](#) seems, however, to thrive in various climates, and must, therefore, have a tolerably robust constitution. It has extended itself considerably throughout the British dominions, and is no stranger in France, Italy, Switzerland, and the United States of America. Its origin was probably a reaction against High Churchism and the formalism of unevangelical doctrine. “Many of the first members of the new religious communities formed at Plymouth and elsewhere were retired Anglo-Indian officers, men of unquestionable zeal and piety, and these communities began to appear almost simultaneously in a number of places. Their origin is, however, very much to be ascribed {sic} to the labours and influence of Mr Darby, from whom the [Plymouth Brethren](#) on the continent of Europe are very generally known as [Darbyites](#). Mr Darby was a barrister, moving in the highest circles of society; and under deeply religious influences became a clergyman of the Church of England, and lived for some time in a mud hovel in the County Wicklow, devoting himself to his work, but afterwards left the Church of England from conscientious scruples and became an evangelist unconnected with any church. In this character he laboured both in England and on the continent of Europe, preaching in English,

French, and German.” He also gave his religious views to the world in pamphlets and in the *Christian Witness*, a quarterly periodical, which for several years was the chief organ of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The theology of this religious community is what is called Evangelical, with an element of Calvinism {sic}, and also of Millenarianism. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) have not a formulated creed in unbiblical language. They profess to take the Bible and the Bible only as their rule of faith and practice. They seek the truth of God in the pages of the Bible. The sacred books are their gold mines of religious treasure, and they are convinced that they have found much spiritual gold therein. They are not like some people who are always talking about seeking truth, but never seem to have found any, or if they have found a little are afraid to be dogmatic about it, because all truth attainable by man is relative. The [Brethren](#) have some truth, and hope to find more in their spiritual diggings.

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) have not any church organisation, and do not believe in any. They disapprove of any association of Christians for any object, and therefore have not any Sunday Schools, missionary or other benevolent societies. They have not any special ministers or clergy. They insist on the right of every *male* member of the church to speak or preach in religious assemblies. In their meetings, after each hymn and prayer, there is generally a pause, that anyone moved by the Spirit may speak or pray. They take the Sacrament every Sunday, but any member of the church known to be guilty of gross sin is excluded from partaking of this rite till he has repented of his sin.

Even the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who take the Bible as their sole rule of faith and practice, could not all agree to live together in Christian fellowship. A division took place among them in consequence of certain doctrines held by some of the [Brethren](#) respecting the human nature of Christ. Mr Darby

opposed these views as dangerous errors, and he and his theological sympathisers separated from the reputed heretics, and compact, mighty Rome smiled again at the legion of Protestant sects. The people commonly known as [Plymouth Brethren](#) disown this designation, and wish to be known simply as “Christians.” The humorous young lady turned the prose of grammar into poetic romance, when, to the question of her teacher, “Is the word kiss a common or a proper noun?” she replied, “It is both common and proper.” It is both common and proper to employ some designation by which this class of religionists may be distinguished from other sections of Christians, though at other times courtesy may induce us to speak of them by the name they prefer – “Christians.”

The [Plymouth Brethren](#), or “Christians,” of Hull, worship in an “upper room” in Vernon-street, Savile-street. It is a plain but clean, comfortable room, without the least appearance of church or chapel. There is not any reading-desk, pulpit, platform, or clergyman. I entered the room at 7.30 on Thursday evening, the 31st ult., and found several people assembled, young and old, and middle-aged. At the table, at one end of the room, sat a senior member of the church, with Bible and hymn-book beside him. There were several other arrivals of men and women, and young men and maidens, after I entered. After a long silence the man at the table announced a hymn, which was sung in a pleasant, devotional manner, the congregation sitting during the singing. Another long pause, followed by a prayer. Then a still longer silence, broken at length by the reading of 1st John, iii. chapter. Silence again, ended by a brother being moved to speak about some portion of the chapter which had been read. Several other brethren made remarks and asked questions as to the meaning of different parts of the chapter. In this way quite a variety of subjects were introduced – Christ and anti-Christ; the old man or the flesh; the new man or the spirit of man; when the Devil began his wicked work; the certainty of the wicked being cast into Hell; could a murderer have

eternal life; beggars, and giving to him that asketh; the love of God in Christ, and the duty of Christians to lay down their lives for the Brethren. There was not the slightest manifestation of a controversial spirit in the treatment of these topics. The speakers did not rise from their seats. The expositions, remarks, and questions, were all conducted in a calm, conversational, fireside sort of manner. Occasionally there was a humorous remark and an amusing illustrative anecdote, which excited a smile or laugh in the Brethren and Sisters. The men were plain, realistic looking people, and the women had none of the vanities of fashionable attire; they were plainly but neatly dressed. The senior, fatherly sort of man, who sat at the table, and who did not appear to have the gift of tongues, closed the meeting with hymn and prayer. He kindly informed me that they "sought to know the will of God from His own word."

On the whole the meetings of the "[Christians](#)" in Vernon{-}street are rather too slow and prosaic for this sensational age {-} an age of fever in religion as well as in almost everything else. The "[Christians](#)" are commendable for keeping themselves serene amid the ecclesiastical fastness and fever around them. They assemble in pretty fair number on Thursday evenings, and show by their regular attendance that they find real interest in the slow, common-place treatment of Divine things. They are in earnest, and love their cause. They know nothing of the uncertainty which comes of free, half-thinking, a state of mind which regards all right and wrong in morals as debateable questions, and goes for know-nothingism so far as God is concerned. Whatever may be the intellectual errors of the "[Christians](#)," they have the inner vision of a Father's hand to help and bless them, and they feel the thrill in their hearts of a love which is infinite. They have the spiritual vision which sees through the Providential problems which baffle the intellect. That vision saves men from increasing the number of the unhappy race whom Shelley describes in Peter Bell: –

To Peter's view, all seems one hue;
He is no Whig, he is no Tory;
No Deist, and no Christian he –
But is so subtle, that to be
 Nothing is all his glory.

J. M. D, {sic}

{The quotation in the first paragraph is taken from *Chambers's Encyclopædia. A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge for the People*, vol. 7, London (Chambers) 1868, p. 613.}

The Eastern Morning News, Hull, 21 Apr 1881, p. 3

HULL CHURCHES AND CHAPELS.

SIR, – Your correspondent “J. M. D.,” in his article on “The [Plymouth Brethren](#),” has fallen into the common error of those who write with an imperfect knowledge of their subject, and whilst his article, considering all things, is fairly accurate, yet in some important details it is not true – notably where he says they have no Sunday Schools, to which assertion the notice board over the door in Vernon-street gives an emphatic denial. Again, whilst it is true that the Christians known as “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” do not form societies for united action in supporting “missionaries,” yet it is a fact that large sums of money are collected from the various towns and sent abroad for the help of those who have gone into foreign lands with the message of God's grace and love. – Yours faithfully,

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE VERNON-STREET SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Hull, April 18, 1881.

EXECUTION OF THE GRAVESEND MURDERER.

The soldier, Albert Moore, aged 23, who was convicted before Mr. Justice Hawkins at the late Kent Assizes of the wilful murder of an old woman named Mary Anne Marsh, at Gravesend, by cutting her throat with a razor on the night of the 14th of February, was executed on Tuesday morning within the prison at Maidstone. The prisoner never denied his guilt, and, indeed, the principal evidence against him was a statement he voluntarily made to a Gravesend constable who had him in charge, and which was to the effect that he wanted the deceased woman to lend him some money, and upon her refusing to comply he took up a razor in order to frighten her. This, he said, made her scream, and being fearful that passers-by would come into the house, he cut her throat, but he declared that the act was entirely unpremeditated. This statement he has adhered to ever since his conviction, and a memorial, founded upon it, was sent to the Home Secretary, praying for a commutation of the capital sentence, but he declined to interfere, and left the law to take its course. The prisoner was visited on Thursday last by his father and an uncle, and on Friday his wife, a young woman about his own age, accompanied by a little girl three years old, paid their farewell visit to him. Another child a little boy, was too young to accompany the mother on the occasion, and the scene, as may be imagined, was of a very distressing character. The prisoner belonged to the religious fraternity known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), but since his conviction he has paid great attention to the ministrations of the Rev. Mr. Harrison, the chaplain of the prison, and that gentleman seemed to be of the opinion that he was sincerely penitent for the terrible crime he had committed. The prisoner appears to have enjoyed several hours of sound sleep every night since his conviction, and on

Monday morning when he awoke, about five o'clock, said that he wished it was Tuesday instead of Monday, as he was quite prepared to die, and wished it was all over. Since the passing of the Prisons Act the hour for carrying out the death sentence has been altered from nine to eight o'clock, and a short time before that hour Mr. F. Scudamore, the under-sheriff of Kent, accompanied by some of his officers, arrived at the prison, and Marwood, the executioner, at once proceeded to perform the operation of pinioning, during which the prisoner did not utter a word. A procession, headed by Mr. Green, the governor of the prison, and the under-sheriff, was then formed, and the culprit walked to the place of execution without any assistance. When the bolt was withdrawn the culprit fell a distance of eight feet, but notwithstanding the fearful shock he must have received, he appeared to struggle for a minute or more before life was extinct. The black flag was then hoisted, and the usual printed certificate, signed by the governor and the under-sheriff, was posted outside the prison. It is rather a noticeable fact that there were not half a dozen persons outside the prison at the moment of the execution. A coroner's inquest was held upon the body immediately after it was cut down, and the usual formal verdict was returned by the jury, after which the body was buried within the gaol.

SURREY SUMMER ASSIZES.

CROWN COURT, TUESDAY.

Baron HUDDLESTONE took his seat in this court at about 10.30 this morning, and continued to assist Mr. Justice FIELD with the remaining civil causes.

{...}

CULVER v. WALTON.

The plaintiff is Mr. J. Culver, chemist and dentist, carrying on business at London-road, West Croydon, and the defendant is Mr. William Walton, residing at Croydon and secretary to the London Cemetery Company. The action was brought to recover damages on the allegation that defendant on the 27th February, 1881, falsely and maliciously published a libel about the plaintiff, whereby he had suffered damage to his reputation in his business. – Mr. Talfourd Salter, Q.C., with Mr. Lyon appeared for the plaintiff. The defendant conducted his own case, and in his pleadings contended that the libel was true in substance and in fact and he that {sic} wrote the libel solely for a collect body of Christians known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). – Mr. Talfourd Salter, Q.C., in his opening statement said both the defendant and the plaintiff were members of a community known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and until a few months back both parties worshipped in the same place. But it happened that in the year 1880 there arose a discussion amongst those of the congregation assembling in London-road meeting-place with regard to some new form of worship. A gentleman of the

name of Dr. Woolston conceived a different mode of conducting the services, and he desired to introduce that change and there was no doubt that that gentleman was perfectly sincere in his belief that the mode he wished to introduce was the best. The plaintiff and others, however, differed and the result was that Dr. Woolston and the defendant were not content with obtaining and abiding by the opinions of others of their community in regard to this matter, which would have been the most legitimate way of deciding the question, but the defendant – and it was the defendant with whom the court that day had to deal – commenced what he believed the jury would say was a most harsh and cruel system of warfare against the plaintiff. After making various charges against the plaintiff, defendant ultimately proceeded to use his influence to obtain his expulsion from the body, and plaintiff thereby suffered considerable pecuniary loss in his business, which had formerly been almost exclusively supported by the [brethren](#), it being the rule of the body to deal with one another. The reasons that were given for this persecution were very trifling, and could be detailed in a very few words. It seemed that on the 27th December last there was a trial in the Croydon County Court between Martin, the plaintiff, and Thomson, the defendant. The action was brought to recover £4 10s. for work done by Martin as a dentist, and the present plaintiff, Mr. Culver, was called as a witness in that County Court action to give his professional opinion as a dentist in respect to the reasonableness of the charge and the proper execution of the work done by Martin. During the County Court action Mr. Culver, when in the witness-box, was asked what business he carried on, and he replied “that of a chemist and dentist,” and he was then asked how long he had been in business, and he replied “five years.” That evidence was made a pretence for charging the plaintiff with such conduct as had led, not only to his expulsion from the [Plymouth Brethren](#), but to the sentence of excommunication being read at all the public meetings, and in every church where those particular people worshipped documents containing the sentence were laid on the table or

placed in some prominent part of the building. The fact was that the plaintiff had carried on his business for some years, and had a partner of the name of Gilbert, who was qualified to sell all sorts of drugs, but the plaintiff himself did not possess that qualification. After the plaintiff had said in his evidence that he had been practising as a dentist for five years, he was called upon by one of his [brethren](#) to reckon, and he accordingly reckoned, and found that he had been practising five years less five weeks. Plaintiff, however, was merely at the County Court as a witness, and had to give his evidence from recollection, but because he had accidentally happened to credit himself with having been in business five weeks longer than he had really been, the defendant thought proper to charge him with having given false evidence, which legally meant that plaintiff had been guilty of perjury. The defendant asserted that he and others had consulted the Holy Spirit on the matter, that the Holy Spirit was against the plaintiff, and on the 27th Feb. the culminating point of this persecution of the plaintiff was reached, the following document being publicly read out on that date: – “Our brother Culver having been guilty of unrighteousness and untruthfulness and of railing, it is proposed that he be put away from amongst us. If the Lord wills, this proposal will have effect next Lord’s Day.” After the publication of that libellous document plaintiff found that his business decreased, and he could now count 30 to 40 customers who had actually left him in consequence of the defendant’s accusations. – The Judge, after looking at the statement of defence, remarked that it appeared defendant argued that in substance the statements made with reference to the plaintiff being unrighteous, untruthful, and guilty of railing were true. – Defendant: Yes, my Lord, and that they had no connection or referred to the County Court evidence. – His Lordship said the first question was whether what defendant had written was a libel – anything calculated to bring the plaintiff into contumely. The next question was whether what was said, which amounted to a libel, was true or not. It appeared to be a very unfortunate case, and did not the parties think that if two independent

gentlemen, entertaining the same religious feelings, were left to settle the difference existing, it would lead to a more desirable end than having a public inquiry before a legal tribunal? – Defendant said if that was the proper time he should be glad to make some remarks to his Lordship. – The Judge said he felt it was not desirable in a case where people entertained conscientiously strong religious convictions that the whole question in dispute should be agitated before a public court, and he thought that it would be for the interest of all parties that this matter should be settled by some private friends. He dare say that Mr. Culver would be able to find one person to represent him, and the defendant was, no doubt, prepared with some friend who would act for him. – Defendant replied that he entirely deprecated the action of Mr. Culver in bringing the case to that court. He took no steps to bring it there. He refused to respond to Mr. Parry's (plaintiff's solicitor's) letters, because he wholly deprecated the question of law in such matters. When served with the writ he merely accepted it, and he considered it calmly with his [brethren](#), and it was agreed that he would not be obeying "the powers that be" if he did not put in an appearance. Therefore it was that he had put in an appearance in person. He was prepared to go through the whole case if necessary, to show that the statement made by counsel was not correct, although, doubtless, it was exactly according to the learned gentleman's instructions. He was prepared to give to the whole case a very different complexion. It was a matter which had been settled by the [brethren](#) themselves as a domestic tribunal. They believed that they had received Divine help in their determination, and, therefore, whatever might be the result of that action, they could not revoke the decision they had come to. He would have happily agreed that the whole case should here cease, but he was prepared to give such evidence, and so turn the matter before the court as would claim from the court a distinct verdict for himself, as defendant, that he had acted without malice, and in what the law called a privileged way. – His Lordship: You say, then, that the occasion was a privileged one, and that you were only

communicating that, in which you had an interest, to others having a corresponding interest, and that you did not publish it to the world generally. – Defendant: That is so, my lord. I might say that the opening statement of the learned counsel is misleading, I do not say intentionally, when he referred to there being five or six places of worship of the [brethren](#) in Croydon. There are only three places where we meet. – His Lordship said defendant had expressed his case very clearly, and, for an unprofessional person, with remarkable accuracy. The arguments, however, were going away from his suggestion, which was that rather than the matter should be agitated in a public court it should be referred to some private tribunal. – Defendant said he could not conceive how such a matter could be satisfactorily referred to two gentlemen. – His Lordship: Very well, we will try the case. – Mr. Lyon then called the plaintiff, who said: I am a dentist and chemist, carrying on business in the London-road, Croydon. I formerly resided at Bournemouth. I am one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and have been so for 13 years. The defendant is the secretary of the London Cemetery Company, Bridge-street, Blackfriars. I have known defendant ever since my introduction to Croydon. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) have three worshipping places and two Gospel meeting places here. [Brethren](#) are admitted to the fellowship by expressing a wish to join, after being examined by a deputation of [brethren](#). It is customary for the [brethren](#) to deal with one another in the way of trade, and after I was admitted and had established my business I was patronised by them very considerably. Dr. Woolston is also one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in Croydon, and he held his dispensary at my shop in London-road. Dr. Woolston is one of the teachers of the [brethren](#), and some difference occurred between Dr. Woolston and I as to the purpose of the Sunday morning meeting. This occurred about four months before the publication of the libel. It was about October. On December 20th, 1880, I attended the County Court in a case of *Martin v. Thomson*. That was a case in which Mr. Martin, a dentist, was seeking to recover £4 10s. from a Mrs. Thomson, and I was called to depose

to the reasonableness of the charge and the goodness of the work done. In the course of my evidence I was asked how long I had practised dentistry, and I said five years. Shortly after the trial I had an interview with Dr. Woolston, who came to my shop. A report of the trial had appeared in the local papers, and Dr. Woolston spoke to me on the subject of my evidence. After this a meeting of the [brethren](#) was held in the London-road room on the subject. Dr. Woolston preferred a charge of untruthfulness and unrighteousness against me. Defendant was present at that meeting. Several of the [brethren](#) repudiated the charge as being frivolous and not capable of proof. The reason for the charge was that I had stated that I had practised dentistry for five years and it was not five years. About six meetings were held to prove the charges, at which there was great opposition against the defendant and those who preferred the charge. At the first meeting Dr. Woolston produced the paper containing the report of the County Court case. I gave an explanation. As a matter of fact, I had not been five years practising dentistry. It was five weeks short of the five years. I was very cross, and stated that it was a wicked attempt on Dr. Woolston's part to stain my character because I differed from him in his teaching. I told the [brethren](#) I had no books to refer to and had to give evidence from memory. At that time I was also carrying on a chemist's business in partnership with Mr. Gilbert, who is a duly qualified chemist. I have no qualification beyond 13 years' experience. After the charge had been made there was quite a division in the meeting. On the 8th February there was another meeting, and there were about 25 members present. Defendant and Dr. Woolston were there. These charges were then discussed, and Dr. Woolston proposed that a notice should be drawn up and publicly read. On the 27th February there was a worship meeting in the London-road Chapel, and about 150 in fellowship were present, and about 20 or 30 strangers. At that meeting the defendant read out this notice: – "Our brother, J. Culver, having been guilty of unrighteousness and untruthfulness and of railing, it is proposed that he be put away from amongst us. If the Lord wills,

this proposal will have effect next Lord's Day." I protested, and stigmatised it as a wicked action. I advanced to the table, took the paper in my hand, asked defendant if he was the writer, and he replied he was. I asked him if he had sent a copy of it to each of the gatherings of the [brethren](#) in Croydon, and he said he had. I then put the paper in my pocket and went away, and the meeting broke up in confusion. – The Judge here remarked that the question for him to decide was whether the occasion was privileged, and the question for the jury was whether there was malice. – Mr. Walton said he took it that the question raised by his Lordship was one of fact, and he might inform the court that he should be able to prove that there were no strangers present at the meeting on the 27th February. – Plaintiff, continuing, said – Another meeting was held on the 8th March, and there were a great many [Plymouth Brethren](#) present, amongst them being the defendant. This was a meeting of the community only. The charge of untruthfulness had exclusive reference to the evidence I gave at the County Court. I am now avoided by my [brethren](#), and they do not trade at my shop. About 40 have ceased to deal with me, and my net loss is from 15s. to £1 per week. – Cross-examined by Mr. Walton: I remember you suggesting at the meeting on January 7th, that the graver question of unrighteousness should be taken first. You stated that my position in the County Court was the natural outcome of the low moral condition arising from my position in business. My reply was not "What have you to do with my state of soul." I did not protest against the graver question being taken up first. I told you I had been advised by my lawyer, who was one of the [brethren](#), that I could enter into partnership with Mr. Gilbert legally, and therefore I did so in good conscience. I did not say the law in respect to chemistry was an unjust law, and not binding upon my conscience, but I did say that all laws were not binding upon Christians. I remember it being stated that the secretary of the Pharmaceutical Society had said that my case could not be touched. I remember Mr. Sharp asking me whether I bowed to the words contained in the 1st and 2nd verses of the 13th

chapter of Romans. I replied that I did. – At the request of the Judge, Mr. Walton read the passage referred to, which was as follows: –

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

– Cross-examination continued: The custom is to put the motion on one Lord's Day, and carry out the proposal on the next Lord's Day. – It is also the custom to ask all those who are in fellowship to stay back and listen to the proposals. – His Lordship said he was inclined to hold that the occasion was privileged, and he should like it to be shown whether strangers were present. – Mr. Walton here handed to his Lordship several records of other [brethren](#) who had been "put away" on account of either untruthfulness and unrighteousness or drunkenness, which his Lordship read, and afterwards asked what became of the [brethren](#) who were "put away." – The inquiry created considerable laughter, and the plaintiff said that in all cases where a brother had been put away it had been done by the wish of the whole body, but in his case only the defendant and a few others turned him out against the wish of a great many [brethren](#). – The defendant occupied a considerable time in cross-examining the plaintiff, and the learned judge was frequently obliged to interpose on account of the irrelevancy of the questions put. – At the request of his Lordship, the plaintiff mentioned the names of several of the strangers who were present when the libel was read out by the defendant. – James Brice, residing in London, but frequently attending the [Plymouth Brethren](#) meetings in Croydon, said he was present at one of the meetings at the London-road when the proposal was read. It was a public meeting, and anyone could come in and worship. The object of the meeting was the breaking of bread, but the strangers did not take part in the ceremony. When the proposal about

the plaintiff was read out, ten persons present protested, and then the meeting broke up. He had since been present and heard that the charge of untruthfulness was based upon the evidence given by the plaintiff in the County Court. The charge of unrighteousness was based upon the position plaintiff held in his business, and the basis of the charge of railing was the manner in which the plaintiff had met the charges of untruthfulness and unrighteousness. Witness had heard these explanations from Mr. Walton. – Mr. William Snell was the next witness, who said he had belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) for about ten years. He attended a meeting in the London-road on a Tuesday evening in Feb., and he remembered Dr. Woolston producing a cutting from a local newspaper, containing the report of the county court action, and Dr. Woolston accused the plaintiff of untruthfulness. At a subsequent meeting the charges against the plaintiff were gone into, and at a later meeting the defendant rose up and read the notice about the plaintiff, which had been produced in court. The witness now corroborated the evidence of Brice, as to the basis of the charges, and he added that he did not attend any further meetings on the matter, for he observed that the whole affair was concocted. – Walter Harvey, living in Inglis-road, Croydon, and a member of the same religious persuasion, also deposed as to the bases given by the defendant of the charges preferred against the plaintiff. Witness was one of those members who protested. When the proposal was read the strangers present were not asked to withdraw. – The further hearing of the case was here adjourned until Wednesday morning at 10.15, Mr. Talfourd Salter, Q.C., informing his Lordship that he had 27 more witnesses to call for the plaintiff.

NISI PRIUS COURT, WEDNESDAY.

Before Baron HUDDLESTONE.

CULVER v. WALTON.

In opening the proceedings his Lordship said he had referred to the authorities, and arrived at the conclusion that the occasion referred to in this action was a privileged one. This decision would shorten the case by confining it to the question of malice. It would, therefore, not be necessary to add to the testimony given, except to prove that the defendant acted *bonâ fide*. Whether by accident strangers were present did not affect the case. – Edward Bullen, builder, Queen’s-road, Croydon, was sworn, but not examined, except to show that the defendant had no malice. – The defendant, Mr. Walton, London Secretary of the Cemetery Company, was examined, and his Lordship repeated his previous observations. Defendant said the plaintiff’s case was brought before him, Dr. Woolston, Mr. Benson, and Mr. Gill (2, George-street), primarily, on the County Court evidence, and also on the graver charge of trading unlawfully. An enquiry was ordered to be made by himself, Dr. Woolston, and Captain Scott, and nine meetings were held, the plaintiff being present at five of them. At witness’s suggestion the charge of unrighteousness was first taken – whether, as a chemist unqualified, he was not put before the world in a false position, and whether if he were proceeded against, their community would not be disgraced. Plaintiff was asked if there were any way of getting out of the difficulty, but persisted that the law could not touch him. He subsequently admitted that he was evading the law, and as the brethren sought to help and not condemn, they were glad to hear his proposal to obtain a qualified assistant and prepare himself to be placed on the register. Witness was thankful to hear this, and advised that the proceedings be delayed. He called upon plaintiff on

the 15th, and earnestly and affectionately begged him not to take such high ground, or consider that the brethren were all against him. He again called in the afternoon, when he received a sealed letter, which was put in and read. – Mr. Hutchinson said that a chemist could not take a partner who was not qualified. – Witness resumed: The letter was not thought to be satisfactory, as Mr. Culver did not admit himself to be in the wrong. Dr. Woolston and witness were blamed for having gone three years, and the letter was refused. On the 17th witness called again, and on the 22nd it was resolved to wait no longer. A further resolution was drawn up in the form of a notice and read on the following Lord's Day, and also on the next Lord's Day, sisters being present. The community had heard that the Pharmaceutical Society had refused to allow him to follow his design, and as there was no sign of contrition it was agreed that he should be put away. His behaviour became outrageous. He took the bread and wine, and the body were obliged to quit the place and take another room. To show that he had no malice, notwithstanding his anger, witness desired the plaintiff to join him in a latter, or to write himself, or to go to the solicitor of the company, but he would do nothing. Cross-examined by Mr. Talfourd Salter, Q.C. – There had been previous differences. Witness had taken part with others in censuring the plaintiff. He visited the Pharmaceutical Society, and soon after the secretary wrote to plaintiff. Witness did not remember saying that plaintiff had told lies, but if he had confessed it the brethren might have overlooked it. The community would have been glad to take him back. The letter was unsatisfactory, but witness did not think he had applied the term "liar" to plaintiff. He might have said "lie." The dismissal was read to three congregations in Croydon, and 30 in London. – Captain R. G. Scott, a retired army soldier, said he was one of the visitors, and drew up the resolution charging plaintiff with unrighteousness, untruthfulness, and railing. In carrying the resolution there was not unanimity. – Mr. Walton addressed the jury in defence, contending that the brethren had followed the usual precedents in their proceedings. Sometimes

the offence was doctrinal, and sometimes in conduct. Witness had resided in Croydon sixteen years, and had been in the brotherhood twenty years. – Mr. Culver stated that he commenced practising as an operating dentist five years ago. He learned in a week all he wanted to know. The question of his truthfulness referred to his evidence in the County Court, wherein he stated that he had taken thousands of models. His unfaithfulness was based upon his having put up the name of Mr. Gilbert as partner, although that gentleman was at the time living at Bournemouth. – Mr. Salter also addressed the jury on behalf of plaintiff, complaining that he had no legal opponent, and had been obliged to put up with irregularities in consequence, such as appeals to the feelings and general statements of motives, &c. A system of Boycotting had been applied to his client which amounted to persistent persecution, making the man an outcast and seriously affecting his earning a livelihood. It was difficult to believe that these proceedings were void of malice. His Lordship had ruled that the occasion was privileged, but that did not affect the question of malice. If the jury found that such a feeling infected the defendant's mind, they would give his client the verdict. There was a division in the society on this matter, and much exaggeration prevailed. They (the jury) would be guided entirely by evidence. All of them might be committing offences unknowingly, but that was not moral turpitude. Plaintiff had taken precautions. Before entering into partnership he consulted two lawyers, who bade him go on. The defendant did not go to the moral part of the subject, but only the legal, and it was impossible to feel that his conduct had not been actuated by malice. The learned counsel then read Mr. Culver's letter. – His Lordship summed up the case. The jury had nothing to do with the decisions of the brotherhood. They had to do with the questions of fact; he (the judge) with law. There were occasions when men must speak disparagingly of others, for instance, in questions of character or credit; and there were meetings of private interest that were clearly privileged. These people were conscientious; they did not seek to injure others; and the defendant

must show them that he was free from malice in his conduct. If he did not, the verdict must be for the plaintiff. – After the jury had been absent for some considerable time his Lordship directed that they should be requested to return into court. Having done so his Lordship asked them if they were agreed upon their verdict. – The Foreman: No, my lord, we have not arrived at any determination. His Lordship: Are you likely to agree? – The Foreman: All of us agree but one, my lord. – His Lordship: And don't you think you will be able to agree? – The dissentient jurymen: I am afraid not, my lord. – His Lordship: Very well, gentlemen, I will discharge you.

{...}

CULVER v. WALTON.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CROYDON GUARDIAN."

SIR, – At the trial of Culver v. Walton, held at the Court on Tuesday and Wednesday, eleven of the jury stated publicly that they were agreed to a verdict for plaintiff. Is it asking too much that the fact may be stated in your account of the trial, as it is all important to me?

Yours respectfully,

J. CULVER.

THE case of CULVER v. WALTON which occupied Baron HUDDLESTON and a jury for a not inconsiderable length of time is interesting in more ways than one. Both parties belong to a Sect which is sometimes ridiculed but invariably respected, and it was strictly as [Plymouth Brethren](#) that the dispute arose between them. The defendant, who is secretary of one of the largest of the metropolitan cemetery companies, was alleged to have written and published a malicious libel whereby the plaintiff's credit and business had been injured. It seems that there was recently some kind of split in the [Brethren's](#) camp at Croydon, and that the plaintiff and the defendant did not take the same view of the matter in dispute. It was alleged on the part of the plaintiff that the defendant could not agree to differ with him, but had taken the first opportunity that arose to have his revenge. That opportunity arose when the plaintiff was summoned as a professional witness in a case tried in the Croydon County Court. The defendant took exception to a statement made in evidence, and brought the matter before the [Brethren](#), who seem to carry out the ancient scriptural law in the matter of disputes very strictly to the letter. The plaintiff said in his evidence that he had been in practice as a dentist for five years, whereas it was proved on calculation that he had only been in the tooth-extracting line for four years and forty-seven weeks and perhaps an odd day or two. Possibly the plaintiff might have considered himself entitled to reckon the days consumed in preliminary negotiations and in making up his mind to go into the business, and that being so he might not have been intentionally mendacious when he roundly stated that he had been in practice for five years, particularly as no one would presume to take the answer to mean that he actually commenced on the 20th December, 1875, or exactly five years previously. A very reasonable latitude to the extent

of a few days or weeks should be allowed even by a [Plymouth Brother](#), and had Mr. WALTON charged Mr. CULVER with “unrighteousness” for no graver offence, we should say that his conduct was ridiculous as well as malicious. But although the counsel for the plaintiff endeavoured to make it appear that this trivial inaccuracy was the sole charge that could be brought against the plaintiff, such was not really the case. The graver charge against him was that he was evading the law and was really practising as a chemist without being legally qualified to do so. He is a partner in the firm of “GILBERT & Co., Chemists & Druggists,” which firm consists of a Mr. GILBERT and himself. The former gentleman is a duly qualified man and is in practise {sic} at Bournemouth, while the plaintiff is to all intents and purposes in practice at Croydon. As the judge pointed out, such a subterfuge is clearly an evasion of the law, and as such it appeared to offend the keen susceptibilities of the defendant, and the sect of which he was a member.

The matter was brought before a meeting of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and it was found necessary to “consult the Holy Spirit” on the subject. We are not aware how this was done, whether by the flight of birds, or by the burning of sacrifices, or by any other revival of the customs of the ancients; but the determination of the Spirit seems to have been against the unqualified chemist and druggist, and finally the [Brethren](#) came to the conclusion that he had been guilty of “unrighteousness, untruthfulness, and railing,” and decided that he had put himself beyond the pale of the Brotherhood. Notwithstanding the fact that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) are a decidedly practical class of men, who believe in everyday religion and absolute consistency, we are inclined to think that the wording of the charge was much more severe than the offence merited. As to the punishment, it was of two kinds, which we may call the spiritual and the temporal. The former comprised exclusion from the Society, the members of which would Boycott him. It is true, as the poet tell us, that the robbery of

one's good name, enriches not the thief and leaves the victim poor indeed; but few people would call upon law to compel their re-introduction into a society which had recently kicked them out. But the temporal punishment, or rather loss resulting from it, was more to the point. It appears that [Plymouth Brethren](#) support one another in trade, and that whenever any of the local brothers or sisters were seized with toothache they hied to the shop of the plaintiff, who skillfully extracted the aching member, or supplied something which stopped the pain. But since he has been, at the instance of the defendant and his friends, found guilty of unrighteousness, untruthfulness, and railing," his late fellow-worshippers have Boycotted him, and have their tooth-drawing done elsewhere, the result being a course of considerable diminution in the takings and profits. The defendant conducted his own case, and was complimented by the judge on the way in which he acted. The jury failed to agree as to their verdict, and accordingly a large quantity of dirty linen had to be washed for nothing, and no good has been done to a highly respectable religious sect. We agree with the judge, that the case was one that ought never to have been brought into Court at all. It related solely to one particular religious congregation, and among them' {sic} and them alone, it should have been settled.

{See also the articles of 22 and 28 Jan 1882 in the present selection.}

The Dundee Courier & Argus, 22 Sep 1881, p. 3

A [Plymouth Brother](#) was asked the other day why they never spoke of the [Plymouth Sisters](#). “Oh!” was his answer, “the Brethren embrace the Sisters.”

The Penrith Herald [BNA Cumberland & Westmorland Herald], 21 Jan 1882, p. 6, Varieties

An old lady was once discoursing on the evil of multiplying religious denominations by causeless divisions. "Why," said she, "there are now so many different sects that you hardly know which to choose. You have the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians; you have the Methodists and the Baptists; you have the [Plymouth Brethren](#) and the Yarmouth Bloaters.

QUARRELSOME [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

The case of “Culvers v. Walton” was tried on Friday in the Queen’s Bench division. It was an action for libel, in answer to which the defendant pleaded justification. – The plaintiff, Mr. John Culvers, is a dentist, carrying on business in the London-road, Croydon, and the defendant, who is the Secretary of the Economic Funeral company, New Bridge-street, Blackfriars, resides at St. James’s-park, in the same town. Both are members of the religious society known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), at Croydon, and the circumstances under which the present action was brought were briefly these: – The plaintiff having given evidence in a case tried in the Croydon County court, the defendant, on the 29th July, 1881, wrote and published of him the libel complained of, in which he said, “Our brother, J. Culver, having been guilty of unrighteousness and untruthfulness, it is proposed that he be put away from amongst us. If the Lord will, this proposal will have effect next Lord’s Day.” As the result of this publication the plaintiff, after several meetings of the brotherhood, was expelled, and had lost customers and considerably suffered in his business. The defence was that the alleged libel was true in substance and in fact; and that its publication was not the personal act of the defendant, but was the result of many deliberative assemblies of a collective body of Christians, gathered at Croydon in the name of the Lord Jesus, and who had decided that, as plaintiff was not a duly qualified chemist, but was in partnership with one who was under the style of Gibert and Co., and personally vended poisons, his conduct was unrighteous and his representation untruthful, and therefore “he ought to be put away from amongst them.” As a further defence, it was alleged that, at the meetings of the society, the plaintiff was “violent and indecorous in speech and manner, so

much so, that some of the meetings could not go on; and therefore he became a railer, on which ground he was also put away from amongst the [brethren](#), according to Scripture.” – The jury found a verdict for the plaintiff, with 50*l.* damages.

Croydon Guardian, 28 Jan 1882, p. 2

LEGAL INTELLIGENCE.

CULVER v. WALTON.

This was an action for libel, heard on Friday last, in the Queen’s Bench Division, before Mr. Justice Denman and a common jury. The case has been previously heard before Mr. Lushington, in the Croydon County Court. The defendant now pleaded justification.

Mr. Talfourd Salter, Q.C., Mr. Lyon, and Mr. W.B. Moseley were for the plaintiff; defendant conducted his own case.

Mr. John Culver, the plaintiff, stated that he formerly resided at Bournemouth, where he was engaged as manager to a homœopathic chemist, but he now carried on business as a dentist at London-road, Croydon. For 13 years he had been an active member of the sect known as “[Plymouth Brethren](#).” Defendant, who was secretary to the Economic Funeral Company, was also a member. There were 300 or 400 [brethren](#) in Croydon. In addition to his business as a dentist, plaintiff was in partnership with a Mr. Gilbert, a properly-qualified man, as chemist. In December, 1880, he was

called as an expert witness in a County Court action, and, in the course of his evidence, stated that he had practised dentistry for five years. Exception being afterwards taken to this statement, he turned to his books, and found that the length of the period had been overstated by five weeks. The verdict in the action was for the plaintiff, by whom he was called. In October or November, 1880, plaintiff spoke to Dr. Woolston, one of the [Brethren](#), respecting a service which the latter was in the habit of conducting. He suggested to the doctor that as the meeting for preaching the Gospel was very thinly attended, an evening meeting for reading the Scriptures should be substituted, whereupon Dr. Woolston retorted that it was “a Satanic attempt on plaintiff’s part to turn the Gospel out of doors, and that he would put his foot firmly upon it.” After that Dr. Woolston joined the defendant in the proceedings in respect of which the present action was brought. Some time afterwards a young servant girl applied to be admitted into the fellowship of the [Brethren](#). Plaintiff was deputed to visit her for the purpose of ascertaining her motive in wishing to join the body. On that occasion Dr. Woolston remarked, “I question our brother’s moral fitness to visit this young person.” (Laughter.) Plaintiff asked him what he meant. Dr. Woolston answered that plaintiff had told untruths in court, and that his position in business was illegal, inasmuch as he had not passed as a chemist. One of the untruths was alleged to be that plaintiff said at the County Court that he had practised dentistry for five years. Plaintiff said that, as Dr. Woolston had been plain, he would also be plain; and then he told them that he believed it was because he had not agreed with him in matters of Gospel work that he had brought charges of untruthfulness and unrighteousness in the conduct of his business. Plaintiff several times protested that Dr. Woolston was acting in a malicious spirit; but the defendant took up the charges of untruthfulness and unrighteousness and pressed them. The accusation of untruthfulness was that plaintiff stated at the County Court that he had taken thousands of models or impressions of people’s mouths. That, however, was perfectly true; but it was

assumed that he meant that he had put in thousands of sets of teeth – an idea which never entered his mind. Meetings were afterwards held for the investigation of the charges. At the first one many of the [brethren](#) protested against them as frivolous, and the meeting adjourned without any decision being arrived at.

Mr. Lyon – I believe that in your body proposals are not carried by majorities, but by the leaders professing to be guided by the Holy Spirit? – As a rule proposals are carried unanimously; if there be no unanimity, we wait until there is, and then we take up the ground that the decision has been arrived at by Divine guidance.

The Judge – Do you overrule {sic} minorities by the aid of Divine assistance? – In my case, the minority was overruled.

Examination continued – At a meeting on Jan. 4th the defendant very strenuously endeavoured to prove that plaintiff was guilty of perjury at the County Court, {sic} There was then a long debate, and much division of opinion. The meeting broke up in confusion without arriving at any conclusion.

Were several members at this meeting threatened with excommunication? – Yes; it was held out as a threat to frighten. Two of the [Brethren](#) were expelled as participators with me.

Plaintiff went on to depose that on February 27th there was public worship at the London-road chapel, about fifteen or twenty strangers being present in addition to the [Brethren](#). Advancing to the table, defendant said: – “I have a proposal to make,” and then read as follows from a paper: “Brother J. Culver, having been guilty of untruthfulness, unrighteousness, and railing, it is proposed that he be put away from amongst us. If the Lord will this proposal shall take effect from the next Lord’s

Day.” Ten of the Brethren solemnly protested against this action, some stigmatising it as wicked and malicious. In reply to plaintiff, defendant at the time admitted that the proposal was in his handwriting, and that he had sent copies to each of the six gatherings of the Brethren in Croydon. Plaintiff told him he hoped he would repent. Defendant replied that he had Divine inspiration for what he did.

Did he say there was no appeal against the decision of the Holy Ghost? – He did say so, but not to me.

Examination continued – At a meeting subsequently held a resolution that the plaintiff be put away was carried by a faction – not by a majority. Plaintiff did not bow to the decision, and continued to go to the meetings. He had a conscientious conviction that he ought to break bread as he had been in the habit of doing. In consequence of the action of the defendant and his supporters, plaintiff had lost about forty of his customers, all of them Plymouth Brethren. There had, in consequence, been a reduction of £1 a week in his takings.

In cross-examination, the plaintiff said that he charged the defendant personally with having acted maliciously towards him. He did so because he was very active and determined in his efforts to brand him, as he had done. It was hinted to plaintiff some years before that he was in an illegal position in regard to the chemist’s business, but he could never get the name of the person from whom the suggestion emanated. He did not at any of the discussions state that he knew he was evading the law, and meant to evade it. He told the brethren {sic} that they might call his position an evasion of the law if they liked. Subsequently, having been informed by his solicitor that his position

was one of uncertainty, he had resolved to place an assistant in his place until he could pass an examination. Defendant replied, "Brother Culver, I thank God from the bottom of my heart for that."

Defendant – What did you think was my feeling at that moment? – Why, that you saw your way out of the charges without withdrawing them. (Laughter.) One of the Brethren suggested a humiliation meeting for mutual confession.

The Judge – That is being held in this court. (Laughter.)

Defendant – Did I not say that you must confess you have been very wicked? – I don't remember that.

Did I not say I was willing to defer any further proceedings in order to give you an opportunity to pass an examination? – I do not remember.

Mr. Salter – Do you know what is meant by the charge of railing? – I suppose that I answered with some warmth in defending myself.

The Judge said if the plaintiff (who had given his evidence with great volubility) had talked in a Church of England church as he had talked to-day in the witness-box, he would have been open to a charge of railing. It seemed, however, that the sort of business they had heard of that day was generally carried on in the places of worship of the Plymouth Brethren at Croydon.

Mr. Salter – The chief business seems to be in discussing the conduct of one another?

Plaintiff – In my case it was so. The meetings were degraded in that way.

Have you ever heard of any **brethren** being expelled upon charges such as those brought against you? – Never.

Expulsion has always been for moral delinquency {sic}? – Yes; drunkenness, immoral conduct, and such like.

Do you know of any case in which unanimity was obtained, as in your case, by a threat of excommunication against those who did not join in the vote? – It is a novelty in Croydon.

Re-examination continued – He never admitted that he had wilfully done wrong. The defendant and his supporters wished to get from him an unconditional confession.

Did the defendant ever say what would happen if you made a confession of wickedness? – He said that if I did so the matter would end. I said I could not accept such an alternative, and that if they would they must thrust me out.

Mr. James Bryce, storekeeper, and Mr. William Snell, baker, two of the **Brethren**, were called in support of the plaintiff's case. The latter admitted that, amongst other personalities he told Dr. Woolston he was acting in a subtle, deceitful, and underhand way, and that he was false and hypocritical. He apologised for that language, but what he said was true. (Laughter.) It was, however, language which ought to be avoided, especially among Christians. It was added to his bull of excommunication. He was formally expelled, but he did not choose to go.

This was the case for the plaintiff.

Defendant, in opening his case, explained to the jury that it was owing to conscientious convictions against the employment of counsel that he appeared to conduct his defence in person. The first point in his defence was that the alleged libel was true in substance and, in fact, that it was written without malice. He wrote the libel, not as his own act, but as setting forth the conclusions of many deliberative meetings, and as the solemn convictions of a body of Christians meeting in Croydon. The Brethren took the Word of God as their guide, and, in accordance with Scripture, put away from amongst them any whose conduct was judged to be contrary to its teaching. The plaintiff himself had taken part in various acts of discipline belonging to the sect. In the present instance it had been decided that the plaintiff was guilty of “untruthfulness and unrighteousness” in holding himself out as a properly-qualified chemist. The charge of untruthfulness was not made in connection with the evidence given by the plaintiff in the County Court. There was no intent on his part to impute perjury. The allegation was founded entirely on Mr. Culver’s partnership in the chemist’s business and the adoption of a title which implied that he was properly qualified. As to the allegation of railing, defendant pleaded in his statement of defence that the plaintiff in his speeches was violent and indecorous, so much so that some of the meetings could not be carried on.

Defendant then went into the witness-box. He said it was well known to the plaintiff that for some time his conduct was the source of much trouble and sorrow to the minds and conscience of several of the Brethren. As far back as 1877 the matter of plaintiff’s connection with the chemist’s business was brought under notice, and whatever was subsequently done was done in the bonâ fide and conscientious belief that Mr. Culver was breaking the law. Plaintiff had stated that he did not intend to pass his examination, and then the Brethren felt they could no longer forbear, as they had foreborne {sic} for three years in the hope that the plaintiff would put himself legally right. The Act

of Parliament which showed that plaintiff was acting illegally in holding himself out as properly qualified was read by Mr. Harvey at one of the meetings.

The Judge – It seems to me perfectly ludicrous that you should discuss Acts of Parliament at your meetings.

Defendant – I agree with you, my lord; it was worse than ludicrous. However, we all came to the conclusion that the plaintiff was breaking the Act; and that was the ground on which we said he was guilty of untruthfulness and unrighteousness. As to the suggestion of malice, it was negated by the fact that he drew up a proposal that a deputation of four should wait upon him to “exercise his heart” so as to get him to “confess and forsake the wrong.”

Mr. Salter – Did you ever tell Mr. Harvey that self-conceit was the bane of your life?

Witness – Yes.

And is it true? – Well, self-occupation or self-conceit. I may have confessed that to him privately. Perhaps you don’t understand the distinction which I should make between the characteristics of the natural man and the characteristics of the man under the grace of God.

Do you mean to say that in all you did about the plaintiff you acted in sorrow for his wickedness and hope for his reformation? – Most distinctly.

Dr. Christopher Woolston, Mr. Thomas Oliver, Mr. Edmund Patmore Bullen, and Captain Scott were called in support of the defendant’s case. The first-mentioned stated that he offered to find plaintiff money to enable him to pass his examination as a chemist, but he declined.

The defendant and Mr. Lyons having addressed the jury on the whole case, the judge summed up. The jury, after a short consultation, returned a verdict for the plaintiff on all points, damages £50. The judge said that was the amount he had fixed in his own mind as being the right one.

{On John Culver, see also the article of 27 Feb 1904 in the present selection.}

"HOME MISSIONS."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MARYPORT ADVERTISER.

SIR, – Will you allow me, through your columns, to call public attention to a letter which appeared under the above title in a contemporary under date February 4th, and signed "Amen." The writer proposes that a large hall, or meeting-house, or church, should be built in Maryport, to accommodate the vast crowds that attend the services, and he seems to intimate that an appeal for funds will be made soon to the people of our town. Now, as an inhabitant of this place, I want to know, before I give my money, what is the nature of this "Home Mission," – what Christian Church it is connected with, who are the parties who conduct it, and what are their doctrinal views? If it is outside all Christian Churches, and ignores them all, then I, for one, have no faith in evangelistic or mission work carried on in this manner, and the people of Maryport ought to pause before they give permanence to such a movement. I will notice, in due course, the two grounds of appeal for funds – the great success of the Mission, and the inefficiency and uselessness of the churches and ministers already planted in our midst.

If I mistake not this movement was begun, and is mainly carried on, under the auspices of the Messrs. Carr, biscuit makers, of Carlisle. They have all along, I understand, been sending relays of evangelists, and probably supplying a good deal of the funds. I presume, then, that the doctrines taught at these services, and the methods pursued, are in harmony with their views. What, then, is the creed of the Messrs. Carr? This is a perfectly fair and reasonable question. I don't know whether

these gentlemen are at present connected with any Christian Church, but I happen to know a little of their antecedents. They were originally Quakers, or members of the Society of Friends. When the Rev. W. Reid was ordained as minister of the Presbyterian Church, Warwick-road, Carlisle, they, I believe, left the Friends and connected themselves in some shape with his congregation. It turned out, in course of time, that Mr. Reid was really a [Plymouth Brother](#) in disguise – or, at all events, held the peculiar views of that sect – and was eventually removed for this reason by the Cumberland Presbytery. I presume the Messrs. Carr disappeared from that church along with their friend. It is not uncharitable to infer that similarity of views led them to this connection with Mr. Reid, and it is not uncharitable, therefore, to infer that their views are substantially those of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), whether they are openly connected with that sect or not. The teaching and modes of operation of Mr. Reid were all formed on the lines of [Brethrenism](#). The question then arises: What are the doctrinal opinions of the [Plymouth Brethren](#)? This is most important, because it decides the teaching and the practices which will be carried on in this great meeting-house, for which funds are to be asked. Those who manage the movement will probably repudiate the name. But this is childish, if not something worse, when their doctrinal views and attitude toward the churches are unmistakably [Plymouthist](#). There are two questions which I hope “Amen” will answer in his next, when he appeals for funds, and that too in the name of the chief conductors of this movement: – Do you believe that the moral law, or Ten Commandments, is binding on Christians? Would you “break bread,” or take the Communion, in any of the Protestant Evangelical Churches? After the contemptuous manner in which the churches and ministers of Maryport are spoken of in the letter, I presume “Amen” can scarcely answer the latter question in the affirmative. Nine out of every ten self-made and self-appointed peripatetic lay-preachers are tinged with the [Plymouth](#) doctrines. These doctrines differ from all the Evangelical Churches. Their teaching about the ministry, the moral law,

baptism, and the Sabbath are peculiar, and altogether unscriptural. The same may be said of their views of the church, the Holy Spirit, prayer, repentance, justification, sanctification, faith, and conversion. When they first appear in a town or district it is usually their practice to say nothing in public about their views of the ministry, baptism, the moral law, and the Sabbath. They come simply to “preach the Gospel” they allege – they come to labour among the non-church going – they even invite the countenance and co-operation of ministers, and especially of church members. But all this is done with a view to an end. Their practice is to gather churches out of churches, leaving to others the rough work of the lanes and alleys, and confining themselves to the easier and daintier business of making proselytes of those who have been gathered into the fold. In due time, when matters are ripe, they show “the cloven foot,” cut the parsons whom they have duped, openly denounce all churches and withdraw their converts from their several churches, though at the commencement they disclaim all intention of “founding a sect.” It would seem that the Mission movement in Maryport has now got to this stage: – they propose to set up housekeeping for themselves, and they do so, according to “Amen’s” letter, on the distinct ground that our ministers and churches are not doing God’s work, and they propose to do it for them. I expect this letter will bring out from the leaders an avowal of their doctrines and practices, and I am much mistaken if the good people of Maryport give them money to found a new sect which will be gathered from our churches. They have no doubt indoctrinated many church-goers with their views, and think them ripe for secession.

Let me now say a word about the boasted success of the movement. The writer of the letter referred to says: – “It is pleasing to see the vast amount of good it has accomplished. The members have increased to vast numbers, and the meetings are crowded.” I ask, “crowded” with whom? I answer, without fear of contradiction, mainly with church-going people. Nineteen out of every twenty are

such. Let all who are members and adherents of our churches keep away next Sabbath, and the boasted crowds will dwindle down to small dimensions. Would it be any gain to the cause of religion to form a new sect by emptying or half-emptying our churches? Let another test of the great success be given. Let a trustworthy list of all the non-church-going, godless, drunken, and immoral they have impressed and changed be given and examined, and I am greatly mistaken if it will bulk large. I shall be surprised if they can muster 50 after being nearly two years at work. Lay-evangelists often speak in a way calculated to disparage the regular work of the churches, and unduly exalt their own.

The churches and ministers of Maryport, it seems, are in a deplorable condition. "There appears to be a lack of energy in our churches and chapels. Our pulpits must be warmed up. The service must not be poor or tame. Sensation is the spirit of our age, and we must vary our attractions, or men will not worship in large numbers." Such are a few of the compliments "Amen" pays to the parsons. It is a great mistake to suppose that the cure for the indifference and godlessness of the world, and the supposed coldness and ineffectiveness of the church, is to be found in self-made lay-preachers and evangelistic meetings. Before we turn the parsons out, we should be sure we are putting better men in their places; but lay evangelists are certainly not such men. It is a mistake to suppose that working men prefer to be addressed by ignorant lay-preachers. There is nothing pleases them better than to be spoken to pithily by an educated man of good sense. It is only well-meaning but weak-minded members of our churches who have embraced the notion that any men can teach and preach but those who have been specially trained, and educated, and set apart for the work by competent judges. An ignorant preacher of this description, in conversation with the witty Dr. South remarked, "It pleased the Lord to open my mouth without going to college." "Indeed," replied South;

“is it not remarkable that we have a similar case in the Bible?” “Oh, what is it?” enquired the other. “Why,” replied South, “we are told that the Lord opened the month {sic} of Balaam’s ass, and he certainly had never been to college.” Some of our modern wise men seem to believe that the Lord, now-a-days, opens the mouth of every lay-evangelistic ass, but withholds his gifts and graces from the regular parson! Poor fellows, how much they are to be pitied. It seems they get little sympathy, encouragement and help from some of their own people.

I ask the intelligent church-going people of Maryport to be cautious about giving permanence to this “Home Mission” movement as it is called; and before supplying funds to have an open and distinct avowal from the leaders as to their religious views, and what church they are working in connection with – if any. I do not wish to be misunderstood. I am a warm friend to home mission work carried on by gifted ministers or properly qualified evangelists and lay-preachers working from Christian Churches as centres. I wish such success, and bid them God-speed.

It is only necessary to say, in conclusion, that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) arose about 60 years ago at Plymouth. The sect was originated by Darby, an ex-parson of the Irish Church. The system, however, came into the world with a rope round its neck that will hang it eventually – I mean that it contains in itself the elements of dissolution. Already the “[Brethren](#)” are divided into at least three hostile camps; the leaders vigorously denouncing one another, and calling each other “false prophets, false in doctrine, false in heart, and false in character”! These are their own words. And this is the sect the good people of Maryport are modestly asked for funds to enable them to extinguish our Christian Churches! No one but a [Plymouth Brother](#), or one holding the same views, could or would write the letter to which I have referred. I hope the church-going people of Maryport will show their loyalty to their own churches and ministers by absenting themselves next Sabbath from these services, and

then we will be able to judge of their boasted success and crowded meetings. This is a perfectly fair challenge. – Yours, &c.,

A LOVER OF MARYPORT.

Maryport, February 7th.

ASSESSMENT APPEAL COURT.

An Assessment Appeal Court was held yesterday in the Burgh Court Hall. Councillor Jackson presided, and along with him on the bench were Bailies Dickson and J. S. Hamilton, Councillors W. R. W. Smith, Gray, and Shaw. {...} The next case heard was that of an appeal against taxation being levied on premises in Cathcart Street, on the ground that they were used solely for evangelistic purposes. One of the appellants, who appeared in support of the appeal, explained that the meetings held in the hall were in connection with no church. Those who met in the hall were known as [Plymouth Brethren](#), but they did not recognise that name. Bailie Hamilton – Why? Appellant – We do not recognise it or any other name, because we believe that names tend to divide. Mr Jackson – In this case you require to take the name of a religious body in order to get free from taxation. The Appellant – Well, for the convenience of the Court, I will say – Mr Lang (the Clerk) – Oh, but it is not our convenience. The thing is that you are only exempted if you are a religious body. Appellant – We really belong to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Mr Jackson – And you appeal as such. Appellant – No; but we are actually known as [Plymouth Brethren](#). The appeal was sustained, on the ground that the hall was used exclusively for religious purposes. {...}

TRAGEDY AT ST. HELENS.

A terrible discovery was made shortly after six on Tuesday night at a house at Mill Brow, Sutton, St. Helens, occupied by Mr. Alfred J. Rawlinson, manager of the Lancashire Agricultural Chemical Company Limited, whose works adjoin the St. Helens line of the London and North-Western Railway at Bold. Mr. Rawlinson's family consisted of his wife, whose maiden name was Mary Ellen Arnold, 27 years of age (and who was the daughter of a well-known boiler manufacturer of that name at Barnsley), and a child named Arnold John Rawlinson, two years. Mr. Rawlinson left home as usual on Tuesday morning, and proceeded to business, returning about six o'clock in the evening. He was then told by the servant that Mrs. Rawlinson and the child were upstairs in the bedroom, and that shortly before she (the servant) had knocked at the bedroom door and told Mrs. Rawlinson that tea was ready. The latter had replied, "All right; I'll be down in a few minutes." As she did not come down, Mr. Rawlinson went upstairs, and found the chain on the bedroom door, so that he could only open it a few inches. He called to his wife several times, but received no answer, and, putting his back to the door, burst it open. A horrible sight then presented itself. In the middle of the floor lay Mrs. Rawlinson, with a dreadful gash in her throat, and a razor lying near. A basin was also close to her partly filled with blood, deceased having apparently gone on her knees, and, inflicting a deep gash in her throat, remained in that position until, from loss of blood, she rolled over and died. The horrified husband then looked for the child, which he found in its cradle close to the bed. It also was dead. Mr. Rawlinson went for Mr. George Parr, the owner of the property, and a near neighbour, who visited the place, and a messenger was despatched to St. Helens for Dr. Twyford. On

his arrival he pronounced both mother and child to be dead, but said he could not account for the death of the child until a post-mortem examination had been made. Recently Mrs. Rawlinson had been home to Barnsley, where there was trouble and sickness in the family, and stayed a week. She has since received letters from home, after which she appeared depressed. When Mr. Rawlinson went out in the morning they kissed each other, and she followed him to the gate with the child in her arms. During the day, which was washing day, she helped the servant in many ways; and after going upstairs she came down for the baby's dinner, but partook of none herself. A letter was found behind a picture in the bedroom which solves the mystery as to the cause of the child's death. The letter was in the handwriting of Mrs. Rawlinson, and addressed to her husband. In it she states that she cannot exist any longer, and that she must take Arnold (the little child) with her. She attaches no blame to anyone, but says she had the kindest of husbands. Dr. Twyford again visited the house on Wednesday afternoon, and upon the production of this letter externally examined the child, which is black upon the body, and expressed an opinion that it had been smothered. The deceased lady was a member of the religious sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), or Bible Christians, and was always looked upon as an earnest and devoted Christian. She was very regular in attending the meeting house in St. Helens. On Tuesday morning she was playing the pianoforte and singing some sacred hymns, and, though of late she had become rather quieter and less cheerful, nobody had the least suspicion that she would commit the dreadful deeds she perpetrated on Tuesday night. The greatest commiseration is expressed for Mr. Rawlinson, who is a son of the Rev. J. Rawlinson, Congregational minister, Manchester.

The Manchester Weekly Times, 8 Apr 1882, p. 6

THE ST. HELENS TRAGEDY. – On Saturday afternoon the bodies of Mrs. A. J. Rawlinson and Arnold John Rawlinson, the victims of the shocking tragedy at St. Helens, were interred at Barnsley, where the lady's father and mother reside. Although the interment was kept as secret as possible, a large company assembled. The corpses were borne from the cemetery gates to the grave by members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), of which the deceased was a member. Deceased's parents are also members of the same sect.

The Hereford Times, 10 Jun 1882, p. 9

THE SALVATION ARMY AND THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
AND THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN**.

To the Editor of the Hereford Times.

SIR, – Painful as it must necessarily be to draw public attention to the bickerings of religious sects, a few remarks promptly spoken will possibly save much hereafter bitterness. As every reader of the *Hereford Times* is aware, the Salvation Army have commenced a religious campaign in our “anciente { } city.” The opening services have been very successful, and bright hopes are entertained of permanent good to Hereford. One would have thought that no opposition would have been offered to these noble men, who are working so energetically for the welfare of the poorer classes and the community in general. But not so in Hereford. On the third day of their sojourn here they are met with the most determined antagonism of a so-called religious sect, hitherto considered to be lying dormant in our midst, and gladly considered by many “men of light and leading” and the majority of true Christians to be gradually dwindling numerically away. Rival open-air meetings were held, immediately after a Salvation Army meeting on the exact spot; rival processions paraded the streets and bribes in the shape of buns and tea were freely offered to recruits. Surely this is not the true spirit of Christianity? If so none of it for me! Would the Great Teacher have done the same?

This is not all. Opposition has been offered in a more secret yet far more deadly form. The following document has been received by a Christian gentleman who welcomed heartily the “Army” on their entrance to Hereford, and has identified himself with the movement: –

“From ‘the Saints’ meeting at — Room.

The ‘Saints’ meeting at the above room have requested us to announce to you that as a result of your extraordinary and unique conduct you are expelled their Society. – On behalf of the ‘Saints’, we are, yours of old,

Mr. ——

——.”

The extraordinary conduct referred to was the welcome and co-operation given by the expelled member to a most earnest and humble branch of the Christian community. Rather peculiar “Saints” to become such rigid excommunicators! One is forced to call in question their “Saintly attributes” and bring to mind the still true old rhyme –

“When the Devil was sick
The Devil a Saint would be;
When the Devil was well
The Devil a Saint was he.”

I am sorry for the Young Men’s Christian Association that their temporarily indiscreet executive should have aided such a design. They of all associations should go hand in hand with the noble Salvation Army.

Hereford, June 8th, 1882.

VOX POPULI.

The Hereford Times, 17 Jun 1882, p. 16

THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN** AND THE SALVATION ARMY.

To the Editor of the Hereford Times.

SIR, – Your correspondent “Vox Populi” has been, I suspect, led into error, and the making of a false statement, by one of those silly people who can see no harm in the practice of lying by way of a joke.

Having a very sincere regard for many of the members of the two congregations of **Brethren**, I made a point of seeing some of the seniors connected with the assemblies at both the Barton and St. Owen’s-street plans {sic} of worship. The result was exactly such as I felt assured it would be. No letter, or notice of expulsion, has been sent to anybody since the arrival of the Salvation Army in Hereford.

Hereford, June 15th, 1882.

X. Y. Z.

The Western Morning News, Plymouth, 3 Jul 1882, p. 2, Notes in the West

Another addition has been made to the places of worship at Penzance. The local “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” have erected a habitation for themselves wherein they can conduct service in accordance with their views. The building is in Causeway Head, and is a monument of simplicity. It has none of the beautiful ecclesiastical characteristics of which the Bishop of Exeter spoke so approvingly at Ivy-bridge recently. But if it is not what lovers of decorated churches would consider “a pleasant place to watch and pray” it has the recommendation of being convenient, in which respect the “[Brethren](#)” of Penzance have rather suffered hitherto. Accommodation is provided for 300 persons. There is neither pulpit, platform, nor rostrum; the person who addresses the congregation will speak from a table. But, unpretending as the building is, it better serves the purpose of the “[Brethren](#)” to possess it than to be compelled to hire the lecture hall of the Public Buildings for their devotional exercises.

The Cornish Telegraph, Penzance, 6 Jul 1882, p. 5, Local and District Intelligence

THE Society of Christians commonly known as the “[Brethren](#),” and as they themselves object to, as “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” formerly met in a room in Alverton-road. Finding their numbers increasing, they removed to the Lecture Hall, St. John’s Buildings. A short time ago some old cottages in Causewayhead were purchased and pulled down. On the site a meeting room has been erected, and was opened on Sunday. The room has been built for convenience, without any attempt at ornamenta-

tion, or distinctive ecclesiastical characteristics. The walls are stuccoed, and the woodwork of red deal and pitch-pine, stained and varnished. The seats are moveable, and will accommodate about 300 persons. At the further end is a smaller room to accommodate about 60, and which is intended to be used for meetings on week-days. There is no pulpit, rostrum, or platform, a table being used by the person who addresses the congregation.

The Penrith Herald [BNA Cumberland & Westmorland Herald], 12 Aug 1882,
p. 5, Original Correspondence

GOSPEL TEMPERANCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

SIR, – I was pleased to notice a letter in a recent edition of the *Herald*, by the Rev. J. Monahan, Wesleyan Minister, calling attention to that excellent movement, the Blue Ribbon temperance agitation. In my view, it was just what was needed – an association of the gospel with temperance, showing the poor victim of Drink that his hope of deliverance lay not in his own strength, but in Him who came “to seek and to save.” The complaint of the past has been that too many temperance advocates put temperance in the place of Gospel, and the Blue Ribbon or Gospel-Temperance movement, wisely seeks to join the two in their proper relationship the one to the other. On Sunday night, however, I had the pain of listening to a most fanatical denunciation of the movement. Attending, as I occasionally do, the meeting of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in Penrith, a stranger occupied the rostrum – one of those unctuous, dogmatic creatures – a sort of Protestant Mendicant Friar, so common to the sect – who, whatever he does not believe in, believes in himself. Professedly, his discourse was directed to show the necessity of regeneration and faith in Christ, but really, it was used as the medium of denouncing the “Gospel Temperance” movement, a name which, he said, was coined in hell. Such, I find, is the constant practice of these narrow-minded sectaries. Professing to be unsectarian, they are the most sectarian of all the sects; and doing nothing themselves in the great movements which God is calling forth to bless the world, they are continually carping and

finding fault with those who are earnestly seeking to follow the example of the blessed Master, who went about “doing good” in every way, both to the bodies and souls of men. Christian Associations, Temperance Societies, and Temperance itself, alike come under the scathing condemnation of these modern Pharisees. To such, I would recommend the counsel of Gamaliel – “Let them (the Blue Ribbon promoters) alone ... if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it – lest haply ye be found even to fight against God” – which in my humble opinion is the very thing the [Plymouth Brethren](#) are continually doing.

ANTI-HUMBUG.

Penrith, 11th Aug. 1882.

The Southend Standard, 6 Oct 1882, p. 2, County, Home, & Foreign Items

The first funeral conducted otherwise than by a clergyman of the Church of England, in the Church burial ground at Mistley, took place on Saturday, when two elders of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) from Colchester performed the burial service at the interment of Mr. Arthur Newman. – The first funeral conducted by a nonconformist minister in the church burial ground at Leigh, took place on Tuesday in last week, when two elders of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) – Mr. J. Neate, of Leigh, and Mr. Dunstall, of Gravesend – performed the burial service at the interment of Mrs. Duncan.

STRANGE SCENE AT A FUNERAL. – Last week the remains of Mrs. Williamson, wife of Mr. Williamson, shipbuilder, Workington, were interred in the Cemetery at Cockermouth. The only relatives who followed the deceased to her resting place were Mr. Williamson and his son, Mr. Harry Williamson. At the grave, Mr. Williamson made a few remarks to some of the by-standers, as to the sin there was in engaging a minister to perform the burial service, where it could be done by a relative of the deceased person. The speaker then, with a spade, threw a quantity of earth upon the coffin, and exclaimed “My labours are now done.” It is believed that Mr. Williamson is a member of the sect termed “[Plymouth Brethren](#).”

The Surrey Advertiser, Guildford, 9 Dec 1882, p. 3, Staines

HALE-STREET ROOMS. – Special services have been held by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at the above rooms, and interesting lectures delivered by a working man on Sunday and Thursday.

“THE YEAR THAT’S AWA’.”

{...}

By far the saddest portion of our task is to glance over the many eminent and loved names contained in the year’s obituary. Many have passed away in 1882 who hare figured conspicuously in the ecclesiastical, the literary, or the political world, whose departure leaves a blank difficult to fill, and whose memory will be tenderly cherished. On December 3d Archibald Campbell Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury, ceased to exist. He was within a few days of completing his 71st year. Amongst others famous in religious circles, the Rev. Ed. B. Pusey, after whom the “Puseyites” are named, died on September 10th; and on April 29th passed away the famous John H. {sic} Darby of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) movement. {...}

THE VICAR OF RUGELEY AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

The following letter has been addressed to the Editor of the *Diocesan Magazine*: {...} I have known many a one who for years has been sober, and so far as man can judge, earnestly religious too, yield to the temptation to which the example of good christian friends has exposed him, and relapse into his old bad habits. Occasionally too, I grieve to say, I have known a reclaimed drunkard misled and ruined by their unwise advice. Some time ago in one of our garrison towns there were two excellent ladies, of whom one laboured to make the soldiers sober, and the other succeeded in making them drunk. For when the former, who was a Quakeress, had induced one of them to take the pledge, and he had kept it for a time, the latter who was, I believe, whatever stands for the female of [Plymouth brother](#), not frequently persuaded him “that he might venture to return to a moderate use of one of God’s bounties, and so show himself once more a free man.” The consequence invariably was a return to his horrid sin. The good woman it appears to me, made a capital mistake. {...}

R. M. GRIER.

BLUE RIBBON DEMONSTRATION AT THE DRILL HALL.

A temperance demonstration in connection with the recent Blue Ribbon Mission at Kingston, took place on Tuesday evening at the Drill Hall, which was well filled. As had been previously announced Major Poole presided, and both he and Mrs. Poole were cheered upon entering the hall. {...} – Canon Wilberforce then proceeded to address those present, in most forcible and eloquent language, his remarks lasting an hour and a-half. {...} It was no use trying to sneer down the blue ribbon. They could not do it, as its power had gone all over the world. If they left the consequences with God there could be no real failure, and in donning the blue ribbon they enrolled themselves among God's witnesses. They had got the most active opposition, perhaps, that could be brought against any movement in the world. It was what might be termed the opposition of the three P's. It was the publicans, the parsons, and the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who were fighting against them now. {...} He had seen little tracts published by the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and had seen them in publichouses, but if they knew that the Gospel of Jesus was being approached in England by the piece of blue they would rather split their pens in sunder than write a single word against the movement. {...}

A PREACHER "WHITE-WASHING"
HIS CONSCIENCE.

AN unusual incident took place in connection with a service held in the Congregational Chapel, Foula, the other Sabbath evening, by a Mr Kelly. This gentleman had been in the island for nearly a week dispensing homœopathic medicines and holding professedly evangelistic meetings in one or two of the cottages. As he professed a desire to hold fellowship with all Christians, the Congregational Chapel was placed at his disposal for one service on the Sabbath and the Established Church for another. Before commencing the service in the chapel, Mr Kelly made a statement which he said was necessary to clear his own conscience for appearing in the chapel at all. He had come, he said, simply to preach the Gospel, but not to be identified with any sect or party. He had long since by grace been freed from the sects – of which he was told there were 1400. He had no connection or sympathy with any of the sects, though he believed there were Christians in each of them, but he hoped all true Christians would yet see their way to come out from among them. Having made this statement, Mr Kelly proceeded with the service. At its close, Mr Morrison, the young pastor of the church, rose and assured the congregation that he was as much surprised at Mr Kelly's impertinent preface to the service as they could possibly be. "In the expectation," he said, "that Mr Kelly was at least a gentleman, and would conduct himself as such, I offered him the use of this chapel. I regret that in this expectation I have been dissatisfied {sic}. Had I known that Mr Kelly's conscience would require such an elaborate process of white-washing for condescending to worship God along with us, he should certainly not have had the opportunity of, or necessity for, performing that operation

here to-night. Most of you are, I suppose, as able to judge of your duty in relation to the different sections of Christ's Church as he is; and notwithstanding his professed contempt for sects, I tell you here, in Mr Kelly's presence, that he is well-known as a member of that "company of believers" – or brotherhood – (or whatever he chooses to call them) known as the [Darbyites](#), or [Exclusive Brethren](#) – the most sectrarian {sic} sect in Christendom." – *Orkney Herald*.

{The 1883 volume of *The Orkney Herald* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

East Aberdeenshire Observer [BNA Buchan Observer],
Peterhead, 21 Aug 1883, p. 3, Fraserburgh Police Court

REFUSING TO TAKE THE OATH – AN AMUSING INCIDENT. – A very amusing incident took place in the Police Court here yesterday in connection with a prosecution for a breach of the harbour bye laws. A witness belonging to Portessie, a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), was called, and on being asked to take the oath refused, on the plea that his religion forbade him. After considerable alteration {sic}, the Fiscal told him that his conduct would render him liable to be imprisoned, but the witness would not give way, intimating that he was prepared to go to jail, but would not sacrifice his religious principles. The magistrate accordingly ordered the police to lock him up, and the prisoner was marched downstairs between two of them with the air of a determined martyr, but on seeing the cold, uninviting appearance of the cell, his enthusiasm was considerably damped, and considering discretion the better part of valour, intimated quickly that he was prepared to be sworn. He was brought back to the Court, to the no small amusement of the spectators in the room, and took the oath without any further comment.

The Whitstable Times, 8 Sep 1883, p. 3

BAPTISING IN THE SEA. – An immense crowd of people gathered together on the sands on Wednesday, to witness the rather novel ceremony of the baptising of a visitor in the sea. The officiating gentleman was Capt. Thorp, belonging to a sect called the [Open Brethren](#), who are holding services in the Foresters' Hall. Soon after seven o'clock the two men were conveyed in a bathing machine to the breakwater which runs out into the sea near the Royal Crescent. They were dressed in black gowns lent for the occasion by the Baptist minister, and, after the singing of a hymn, and an address on baptism, the two men walked into the water up to their waists, where the ceremony of baptism was performed in the usual way, after which they were driven ashore in the bathing machine. Beyond a little cheering when the gentleman was being "dipped," the affair passed off in quite an orderly manner.

The Kentish Independent, Woolwich, 8 Sep 1883, p. 5, County Intelligence

MARGATE. – BAPTISING IN THE SEA. – On Wednesday evening, a novel ceremony was performed close to the breakwater, which runs into the sea near Royal Crescent, namely, the baptising in the sea by Captain Thorp, of a visitor belonging to a sect known as [Open Brethren](#). An immense crowd of people had gathered on the sands and breakwater to witness the ceremony, and soon after seven o'clock their curiosity was directed to a bathing machine being driven up towards them, from which two men emerged, dressed in long black gowns, which were kindly lent by the Rev. J. Drew, the

Baptist minister. After the singing of a hymn and the delivering of an address on baptism, the two men walked into the water up to their waists, and the ceremony of baptism was performed in the usual way, after which they entered the machine again and were driven ashore. Beyond a little chaff and cheering when the gentleman was being “dipped,” the affair passed off in quite an orderly manner. A young lady while standing on the breakwater was forced into the water by the pressure of the crowd behind her, but she was promptly pulled out.

TOWN HALL, This day. – Before J. Watts Hallewell, Esq., (in the chair), E.C. Little, Esq., J.C. Little, Esq., F.A. Hyett, Esq.

{...}

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE VACCINATION ACT.

John Hixon Irving, of Chalford, a minister of the sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), was summoned under the Vaccination Acts of 1867 and 1881, for not having his daughter, Martha, vaccinated within three calendar months of the birth of the child.

The defendant admitted that the child had not been vaccinated. He had a conscientious objection to vaccination; he had seen so much injury resulting from it, that he believed it would be better not to risk his child. He attended to her health in every way, and she was perfectly healthy. He could not see why he should be obliged to have the child vaccinated.

The Chairman said the defendant might have an objection, but the law directed that every child should be vaccinated, and they must see that the law was carried out.

The Bench imposed a penalty of 5s. and 7s. costs.

Mr. Baily, Vaccination Officer, stated that defendant told him he should not have his child vaccinated, and that if proceedings were taken he would commence an agitation in the district. Witness asked the Bench to specify a certain period in which the child should be vaccinated.

The Chairman said the defendant must have sufficient time in which to comply with the requirements of the act; and if he did not do so he could be summoned again.

In answer to the defendant the clerk stated that the proceedings had been taken under the 29th section.

Other police news unavoidably crowded out.

Stroud Journal, 17 Nov 1883, p. 4, Stroud Police

FRIDAY, Nov. 16. – TOWN HALL. – Before J. Watts Hallewell, Esq. (Chairman), E. C. Little, Esq., J. C. Little, Esq., and F.A. Hyett, Esq.

{...}

CONSCIENCE V. VACCINATION.

Rev. John Hixon Irving, pastor of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) connection at Chalford, was summoned by the Stroud Union, represented by Mr Baily, vaccination officer, for neglecting to have his child, Martin Irving, born on the 11th May, 1883, vaccinated, according to the provisions of the Vaccination Acts of 1867 and 1881, within three months {sic} of its birth, without reasonable excuse.

In answer to the bench defendant said he supposed {sic} he should have to plead guilty; the child was not vaccinated because he had a conscientious objection to vaccination. He had seen so much

injury to children through it, he believed it a dangerous thing, and he did not feel inclined to have his child subjected to it, and to run risks he thought children did run. He attended to the health of his child in every way; it was perfectly healthy, and he did not see why –

The Chairman said he must see that however conscientious his objections might be, as long as it was the law of the land that children should be vaccinated they must see that the law was carried out.

Mr Irving said he saw that, but urged that they had the power to inflict a nominal fine only.

In answer to the Bench Mr Baily stated that he was duly authorised to take proceedings in this case, and he called on Mr Irving on the 8th November and asked him why he had not received the certificate concerning the vaccination of his child. He was then just ready to go out, and walked with him in the direction of Stroud for some distance. Defendant told him that he did not consider it necessary to have his child vaccinated; he had done what he could for it, given it good food and kept it clean. The law was not made for such a person as himself, but for poor people. Witness asked him if he knew what step he should take next, and defendant said he did not, but if he was summoned he should get up an agitation in the district.

The Bench fined the defendant 5/- with 7/- costs. If he continued to set the law at defiance he could not expect to get off with so low a fine as 5/- again. They could fine him 20/-.

Mr Baily asked if the bench fixed any time within which compliance with the law was to be made by defendant.

The Bench said it was not for them to do that: if defendant failed to comply he would have to be summoned again.

Mr Irving asked if, after this summons, the case did not come into the hands of the Guardians, so that Mr Baily could not summon him again without liberty to do so being given him by the Guardians.

Mr Baily said he had permission to prosecute in this case and should have to get that permission again.

Defendant then asked under what section of the Vaccination Act he was summoned, and was told the 29th.

Defendant then paid the money and left the court.

AN UNRULY SALVATIONIST. – On Sunday morning a Salvationist named Popplestone, who until very recently was connected with the [Plymouth Brethren](#), sought to gain an entrance to the latter's chapel, at Kingsbridge. He was requested not to come in, but he persisted, and had to be removed by force, when he caused considerable disturbance, and the police interfered. Popplestone is better known as the seller of the *War Cry* in the Dodbrooke and Kingsbridge markets, and is continually preaching through the markets and streets of the town, but as he keeps on the move he has hitherto not been interfered with. On Sunday, on his being removed, he instantly fell on his knees and prayed that God would give him strength to resist. On Sunday week he insisted on preaching at the chapel at Frogmore, where his brother was announced to preach, and the brother carried him bodily out of the chapel. He then fell on his knees, and prayed earnestly that God brought him to the chapel, but man had removed him, and these words formed on Sunday the points of his prayer on his being removed.

A TWENTY YEARS' IMPOSTURE.

An extraordinary case of imposture said to have been successfully practised for 20 years, is reported from Whitstable. A woman named Frances Wood, otherwise Fanny Jordan, when about 15 years old took to her bed, and gradually grew worse in appearance until her face was completely blackened, with the exception of a white mark down the centre of the nose. She lost the use of her whole body except one arm, and could take only brandy and water and light dainties. Her case called forth much commiseration, and elicited substantial aid from every part of England. Besides the local practitioners she baffled the questions and skill of three medical men of standing and repute from other districts, and has received relief from both the parochial authorities and the Whitstable charity trustees. Her piety and resigned patience were talked of as most edifying and "beautiful," and a few years ago she was the subject of a long article in *Faithful Words*, wherein her unparalleled suffering and perfect resignation were recorded. Hearing on Sunday week that her brother had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment she suddenly recovered her natural hue, and when discovered by her mother said, "I felt as if something gave me three raps on the head, and a thrill passed through me." She afterwards sent for a person who had often visited her, and confessed that during all these years she had acted the hypocrite, and had been perfectly able to use her limbs all the time. She had systematically and gradually discoloured her features with burned cork, which she kept in a box with a candle beneath her bed. These marks she hastily wiped off with a flannel when she heard the postman telling her mother of the imprisonment of her brother. She

died on Wednesday at the age of thirty-five. Her mother declared that she was quite unaware of her daughter's deception.

On Monday Mr. T. T. De Lasaux, coroner, held an inquest on the body of Frances Wood alias Fanny Jordan, aged 85 {sic}

Harriet Jordan, mother of the deceased, said that her daughter was an illegitimate child, born before her marriage, the father being Edward Jordan, her husband's brother. Deceased had never been very strong. When she was fourteen years of age she was afflicted with typhoid fever, and when she got better she went to a situation, but did not stay long. When she was 15 years of age she had a fright. A deaf and dumb man used to come to the house, and she was always alarmed at him. On one occasion she saw him with a large knife in his hand, and she was so frightened that she was never well afterwards. She was for eight weeks an out-patient of the Kent and Canterbury hospital, and after that she took her bed. She could not eat anything that was solid, but lived upon wine, brandy, custards, jellies, sponge cakes, and oysters. She was apparently paralysed, with the exception of one hand, but with this hand, however, she could write letters. For many years, her face had been almost black, with the exception of a white streak down the nose. Witness had never suspected all this time that her daughter had been practising a wicked deception, but a fortnight ago she confessed that she had done so, and had carried on the imposture for twenty years. Witness happened to say to deceased, "Fanny, you don't seem happy. Have you anything on your mind?" She said she had a load on her conscience, and she then confessed that she had never been paralysed, that she had the use of both hands, and that the dark hue of her face was artificially produced, she having blackened it by means of burnt cork.

Replying to the jury, Mrs. Jordan said the blackness of her daughter's face disappeared all at once, and when she questioned her about it deceased attributed it to the shock she sustained upon learning that her brother had been committed to prison. All these years witness detected no black marks upon the sheets or pillows of deceased's bed. Deceased always wore a handkerchief over her face and head, and witness never saw her put it on or take it off. (Sensation). Deceased always threw the handkerchiefs into the hand basin herself, and she never noticed any discoloration of the water. Deceased would have no difficulty in getting corks, because she frequently had ginger-beer and other bottles. She also had a piece of candle always at hand, as she rubbed her sore side with tallow. Witness admitted that she had never washed the deceased. (Sensation). She used to take water to deceased for that purpose, but never remained while she washed. Several medical men had seen deceased, but not of late years. She did not seek their aid because she thought they could do her daughter no good. She remembered Lady St. Vincent calling to see deceased on one occasion. She understood that her ladyship expressed the opinion that the deceased's face was painted, but she (witness) took no steps to satisfy herself whether or not such was the case. Witness declared emphatically that the deception practised by her daughter had not been carried on by her connivance; she had no suspicion of it until her daughter confessed it.

Later on, the Coroner said that in his long experience as a coroner this was the most extraordinary case which had come under his notice, and he was bound to say of Mrs. Jordan what he had never said of a witness before – that he did not believe a single syllable of her evidence.

Dr. Hayward said he had made a post-mortem examination of the body, and found tubercular disease of the lungs, showing that diseased had suffered from consumption, but not of long standing. If deceased had received proper treatment, her life might have been prolonged. The body was

extremely emaciated, and there was not a vestige of fat to be seen, and the muscular tissue had nearly all disappeared. The intestines and bladder were perfectly healthy.

Alfred Reeves, a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who had visited the deceased for many years, deposed to a confession made voluntarily by her to him, which was in very similar terms to that deposed to in Mrs. Jordan's testimony. Deceased said to him, "Mr. Reeves, I declare to you before God that my mother knew nothing of this" (referring to the deception).

The jury returned a verdict that the deceased died from disease of the lungs and consumption, and they expressed the opinion that gross deception had been practised, as well as neglect shown in not providing sufficient medical attendance.

East & South Devon Advertiser, Newton Abbot, 9 Feb 1884, p. 4

THE EXTRAORDINARY IMPOSTURE AT WHITSTABLE.

The remarkable imposture of the woman Frances Wood, otherwise Fanny Jordan, of Clapham-hill, Whitstable, continues to be a subject of absorbing interest in the locality. A proposal has been made that the case should be laid before the Public Peosecutor {sic}, but it was thought fit to give the local poor-law authorities and charity trustees, by whom relief has been regularly supplied for several years, an opportunity of moving first in the matter. The funeral of the deceased has been duly conducted at the Whitstable Cemetery. The general feeling of indignation at the deception practised being well known, the proceedings were carried out as quietly as possible, but about 300 persons,

principally females, were present. Deceased belonged to a denomination springing from the [Plymouth Brethren](#), but calling themselves merely "Brethren and Sisters in Christ." The chief of the sect in the district is Mr. Jull (formerly an army captain), of Ramsgate, but the [Brethren](#) refused to have anything further to do with the family under the circumstances, and the burial service had consequently to be performed by the Rev. H. M. Maughn, the vicar of Whitstable. The chief mourners were Mrs. Jordan (the mother) and her husband, a married daughter and her husband, and a brother and sister of deceased's. The coffin was an elm one studded with nails, and bore upon it the simple inscription, "Frances Wood, died Jan. 23, 1884, aged 35 years." Every respect was shown by the persons assembled until after the interment, but as the mother and other mourners were leaving the cemetery there was a slight demonstration of disgust and contempt.

The Londonderry Sentinel, 21 Jun 1884, p. 4

A FEW nights ago a tent belonging to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), situated in the townland of Boland, midway between Brantry and Aughnacloy, was maliciously burned. The canvas and seats were completely destroyed. The tent had been used for religious services, and was largely attended by the inhabitants of the district. The constabulary from Aughnacloy are making every inquiry, but for so far have been unable to discover the miscreants who committed the outrage.

WE – well here is the paragraph in its entirety: – “I hear,” says a correspondent of a Sussex paper, “that two gentlemen of Eastbourne connected with the [Plymouth Brethren](#), accompanied by three ladies, proceeded to Langney early on Sunday morning last, when the ladies underwent the ceremony of total immersion in the sea.” Where were the police? Sunday morning was not quite as warm as toast, and the sea by all accounts was as rough as the hair on the back of an Irish terrier. We would allow Wesleyan Methodists to hold love-feasts, and Salvationists to blow horns, and agitate the big drum anywhere out of Fleet-street. We have no objection to good men wearing “M.B. coats,” or to Baptists believing that the road to another and a better world lies through the font, but to totally immerse tender and delicate women in the cold sea at this time of the year appears to be carrying zeal a trifle too far.

{For “M.B. coats” see Eric Partridge, *The Routledge Dictionary of Historical Slang*, abridged by Jacqueline Simpson, London (Routledge) “2006, p. 3200: “A long coat and/or a cassock waistcoat worn by some clergymen [...]. Ex ‘mark of the beast’ in reference to Popery.”}

RELIGIOUS WORK AT CLAPTON.

Clapton Hall, in the Alkham road, will be for ever sacred to the memory of many Christian workers. Here have they been fed with the choicest of spiritual nourishment. Here have hundreds been brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. From hence have many gone forth to tell of a Saviour's love in heathen lands. Some of the most honoured have here, or at the former 'Iron Room,' sweetly and rightly divided the Word of Truth. Among such, now deceased, we think of Henry Moorhouse, and W. H. Williams; and of those still spared to minister amongst us, we have the dear and familiar names of J. Denham Smith, J. G. McVicker, Shulldham Henry, C. Russel Hurditch, &c.; and we pray, that for a long time yet to come, they will be spared to the work.

How the good work done at this hall must rejoice the heart of its noble benefactor, and builder, Mr. John Morley! How glad of heart he must feel as he sees the crowded place on Sunday evenings as when Mr. J. Denham Smith is preaching. We know that it is his one desire that this hall which he has built may be more and more honoured by the Master, as being the birthplace of souls, and the feeding place for many days yet to come of the saints. It is also a happy thing to think of the many earnest workers banded together in this fellowship.

This hall stands as a mighty protest against all sacerdotalism on the one hand, and latitudinarianism on the other. Here the fellowship of saints may be enjoyed and understood. All here takes of the simple and primitive form of Christianity. Sensationalism of any kind is foreign to this place. Everything here is primitive in its simplicity; but earnest in its character. All who are in fellowship

here seem cemented together in affectionate brotherhood; striving by work and prayer to do all in their power to spread the name and the fame of Christ their Lord.

Let those who think the Gospel to be an effete thing come to this hall and witness its power. And those who think that it is hard to draw in the working class to religious services should see what may be done by simple and sincere Gospel preaching.

The service of the greatest interest to the Christian, is that of breaking of bread on Lord's-day morning. This is as beautiful as it is impressive. The mode of conducting it cannot fail of commending itself to many sincere Christian students. Here all (as disciples of our one Lord) are held to be equal. The table is the Lord's. The Master being absent his chair is vacant. None takes upon himself the Master's position. No minister or priest is needed here. No human ordination can here find a place. There is no prearranged or concerted plan for the conducting of this service. The motion of the Spirit is looked for by the faithful amongst the leaders, and never can we remember a service here that has not been a blessed means of grace.

To this service any Christian of any other fellowship is heartily welcome upon giving in his name to Mr. Hill or one of the elders. Here every Christian brother may find scope for the exercise of the particular gift that he has of the Spirit. Here those that are zealous of spiritual gifts seek that 'they may abound unto the edifying of the church.' Here there is free room for the manifestation of the Spirit as it is given to every man. But all these work the one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to each one, even as he will. Here the incautious brother is soon restrained by the greater caution of the others. Here the brethren all strive for each other's good.

One noticeable feature of this fellowship is the spirit of love that resides amongst them, and has continued with them throughout their existence as a fellowship. No unholy rivalries have gained a footing.

Social distinctions are unknown, and surely it should be so. Here cannot be found the seat for the rich man, and in the inferior portion of the building the poor man's seat. No such monopoly is allowed, all worshippers are on an equality. Seat rents, the curse of so many places, are unknown here.

And it is the Gospel that is preached: a full, complete, and present salvation; but a salvation only in Christ. No uncertain sound goes forth from this platform. Faithful indeed has ever been the preaching here, and faithful may it ever continue to be.

In one more distinct sense this Hall stands as a witness for the Lord in our midst. Here is distinct and emphatic teaching concerning the prophetic scriptures. These faithful men, who believe that we are living at the very close of 'the times of the Gentiles,' do not hesitate to express their conviction. They are looking for the immediate return of their dear Lord and Master. And while they wait his appearing they do their best to cry: 'Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him.' Blessed indeed is this feature. But in all this teaching, especially the Divine Word is simply followed; for here will be found no prophets that are wise beyond what is written.

We may be permitted one more remark. It seems that many in the district look upon the Clapton Hall friends as belonging to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). This is not so! They wish simply to be known as Christians. They are unconnected with any one sect, and so far as being [Plymouth Brethren](#) are

concerned, they deny it on the one hand and the Brethren themselves do not own them on the other.

Let us rejoice that we have in our midst such a centre of usefulness and activity, and pray that its usefulness may be yet further extended.

GEO. N. WILLOMATT.

PREACHING IN THE STREETS. – On Wednesday the following members of the society known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were summoned by the Workington Local Board on a charge of willfully obstructing the public streets in the town of Workington, namely: – Thomas and Robert M'Ard, joiners, Tangier-street, Whitehaven; David M'Call, ironworker, Lonsdale Ironworks; William Hawley, engine-driver, Workington; Thomas Gorton, engine-driver, Workington; Thomas Ray, postman, Workington; and Robert Bragg, joiner and builder, William-street, Workington. – The defendants pleaded not guilty. – Mr. J. Warwick (clerk to the Local Board) appeared to prosecute, and in opening the case said the information was laid under the 28th section of the Town Police Clauses Act, and that the offence was committed about half-past six o'clock on the night of the 26th of December. The defendants, on the night in question, collected together in several of the public streets, and caused a crowd to assemble. Several of the defendants were either preaching, or lecturing or praying in the public streets, and a crowd assembled around them to such an extent as to cause an obstruction and a great deal of inconvenience and annoyance to the public generally. – Sub-inspector Reed was then called by Mr. Warwick to give evidence. He said that on the 26th ult. his attention was called to a crowd of people collected at the top of Pow-street. They were formed in a circle, and were holding meetings. Mr. Bragg was speaking. Witness waited till he had finished, and then went up to him and told him they would have to move from there. Mr. Bragg told witness that he seen {sic} Mr. Kirkwood, and that nobody could interfere with them. Witness again requested them to leave the public street, when Mr. Bragg said they would do so. They went, however, into Bridge-street, where they continued holding services and obstructing that street. Witness went to

the police-station, and spoke to Inspector Dodd, who told him to go back and get the names of the parties. Witness went back, when he found Thomas M'Ard was speaking. After this man had finished witness told them he should require their names and addresses. The defendants, however, all went down street without giving their names, with the exception of Mr. Bragg, who said that if witness would go down to the Good Templars'-hall they would give him their names. He did so, and finally got their names and addresses. – Mr. Bragg said there was a little misunderstanding. They did not say that they had authority from Mr. Kirkwood. They simply said "We asked Mr. Kirkwood respecting a certain resolution." When the officer asked them to remove from the front of Mr. Banks's shop they did so, and when they moved to the end of Bridge-street he made no objection, and they took it from that it was quite right to continue the meeting at the end of Bridge-street. – Police-constable Oldcorn gave corroborative evidence, adding that the street was blockaded from side to side. – Mr. Ray: I would say he is entirely wrong on that question. There was plenty of room on both sides for people to pass by. There was a cart passed by while we were there, and it passed all right along. – Mr. Hawley: It was not blockaded. There was a passage on either side, and it was not a busy night at all. – Mr. Bragg said on the night in question it was a general holiday, and all the shops were closed. They had been in the habit of holding religious meetings there for a period of ten years, and they never had the slightest objection raised before. Mr. Banks had always given them permission. One of his brothers had seen Mr. Banks this morning, and he said he never made any objection to them. They never went into Washington-street. – The Bench: You are not Salvationists? – Witness: No, sir. – Mr. Warwick: We stopped the members of the Salvation Army preaching, and there has been no offence committed by that body since. – Mr. Thomas M'Ard, addressing the Bench, said that, coming from Whitehaven, he was not supposed to know what the regulations might be here; but, as on previous occasions, they from Whitehaven had come here and enjoyed a few happy hours of

fellowship with their Christian friends. He thought they could come on that day and occupy a certain place without interference. They had instructions from God's Word to obey the magistrates and others in authority, and therefore he wished to assure their Worships that they were exceedingly sorry that they were here at all. They could only say that they had no intention whatever of doing wrong. – The Chairman said they considered the case proved, and they would each have to pay the costs amounting to —. – Mr. Thomas M'Ard: Be as lenient as you can; they are poor working men. – The sum was fixed at 7s. 6d. each. – The defendants paid the amount of the costs, and left the court.

The Shetland Times, Lerwick, 21 Feb 1885, p. 2

NEW ERECTION.

A plan, submitted by Mr Charles Spence, of a hall proposed to be built in Navy Lane for the use of the body called [Plymouth Brethren](#) was approved.

The Shetland Times, Lerwick, 28 Feb 1885, p. 2

MR CHARLES SPENCE AND SO-CALLED "[PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#)."

SIR, – As my name is associated with the application for the hall to be erected for the body "called [Plymouth Brethren](#)," perhaps you will kindly insert a note to say that that name is a mistake. The people so called neither take nor acknowledge such name, but only the Scriptural name of *Christian*, as we find the disciples {sic} were first called.

My object in writing is to remove a false impression from the public mind. They might have found a better *sobriquet* than [Plymouth Brethren](#) as it is so absurd looking. No person locally situated in Shetland can be called a [Plymouth Brother](#), unless he comes from Plymouth. We hope to hear the last of this popular delusion that no one has taken the trouble to dispel, although it is only one out of *many* that is believed and promulgated concerning us. – I am, &c.,

C. SPENCE.

Lerwick, 27th Feb., 1885.

THE SO-CALLED **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN**.

SIR, – Since you have inserted the letter of Mr C. Spence in your paper, you will perhaps be kind enough to allow a few more words to be said in reference to the subject with which he professes to deal, for it appears to me that this “popular delusion” (?) will not be so easily *dispelled* as Mr Spence seems to think. Indeed, it is not clear to my mind that it is a *delusion* at all; and if a fact, then the public ought not to be blamed for believing and promulgating it. I would like to ask Mr Spence in what terms permission to build the said hall was asked? Did they ask to be allowed to erect it for the body “called **Plymouth Brethren**?” If so, it looks very much like acknowledging the *sobriquet* (I hope your readers have dictionaries) when convenient, and repudiating it when inconvenient.

Might I presume to inform Mr Spence, lest he should give the “public a false impression,” that the disciples were not “first called Christians,” but they were *first called disciples*; and it is probable that the name Christian was first applied to them by opponents, certainly never by Christ, though they afterwards recognised and used it.

As to the absurdity of the title, and his remarks in reference to it, I will only say that it does not speak much for his philological knowledge, or he would know that such use of local and other terms is quite legitimate.

By inserting this to show Mr Spence that he has not heard the last of his “popular delusion” you will oblige. – Yours truly,

NOT A P. B.

SIR, – I am a stranger to Mr C. Spence, but from his letter in the *Shetland Times* of last week I must infer that he is an amusing gentleman. He tells us there that the designation [Plymouth Brethren](#) is a “popular delusion,” giving as proof that a sect so named must have come from Plymouth where, it appears, he has not been, and therefore the name is absurd. If this is not a joke, what in the name of common sense is it?

His letter was written to remove from the public mind this popular delusion. Comparing the end with the means Holloway’s Pills are not to be compared to his epistle. But I fear popular delusions are not so easy of cure, and very likely the [Plymouth Brethren](#) as the name of a sect which arose at Plymouth will continue, regardless whether Mr C. Spence has been at Plymouth or not. It may soothe Mr Spence to know that letters as convincing as his have failed in their mission. – Yours, &c.,

PEERIE TAMMIE.

The Shetland Times, Lerwick, 21 Mar 1885, p. 3

THE SO-CALLED [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

SIR, – Will you allow me to say a few words in reply to “Not a P. B,” seeing his mind seems to be unsettled as to whether the name [Plymouth Brethren](#) when applied to Christians not residing in or belonging to Plymouth is a popular delusion or not. He is doubtless ignorant of the fact that Christians whom he and others are pleased to call [Plymouth Brethren](#) neither take nor call themselves by such a name. True, there may be some who either ignorantly or unguardedly take this name, but

such cases are happily few. Now, suppose that some person were to persist in calling “Not a P. B.” by some name that he repudiated, I doubt not that he would consider that the term, *a delusion*, would be quite mild enough to apply to him.

But he may say – Why object to the name; what harm is there in a name? A great deal, for it is just in taking and using party names wherein one of the greatest evils connected with sectarians consists. This was the error into which the early Corinthian Church fell, and we see in I. Cor., chap. I. and III. how it was reproved by Paul in no measured terms. Now, if it was wrong and condemned by him and all through the New Testament, surely it cannot be right in our day. Let it be further observed that all through the New Testament the terms employed by any one Christian when addressing others, and which it is needless for me to enumerate here, were always such as was calculated to lead to *unity*, and to embrace *all*, and was therefore of course quite different and distinct from those party names which are at the same time so strongly deprecated. With regard to this popular delusion not being “so easily dispelled,” I would just remind him that however high he may rank as a *philologist*, yet I fear that his *logic* is somewhat indifferent. Why plead for a thing being retained simply because of the difficulty in the way of its being overturned? If a thing is wrong, it is wrong, irrespective of who believes it, or whether it can be dispelled or not, and it will be a long time ere this sort of reasoning ever puts anything that is wrong right.

“Peerie Tammie,” by the way, reasons in the same strain, and as this is the only thing he uses in the shape of an argument, his letter is truly *very peerie*. – I am, &c.,

A.

THE SO-CALLED **PLYMOUTH BRETHERN** {sic}.

SIR, – There is in the letter of your correspondent “A,” (who appears to have come forward to champion the cause of Mr C. Spence), issued in your last week’s paper, such a strange piece of imputation that it would not be right to let it pass without notice. He concocts a piece of argument, of course laying his premises, then drawing his inevitable conclusions, and at once sets it down as being mine; then, with a would be witty stroke of the pen, he “fears *my logic* is somewhat indifferent.” It is very kind of him thus to do, but since it is purely a child of his own imagination, and not of my producing, I must ask him to be kind enough to own it as his offspring. Anyone looking at my letter will easily see that I neither produced argument nor made statement, for either the *rightness* or *retention* of sectarian names, nor do I propose to do so at this time, simply because that is not the point raised in the letter of Mr Spence and discussed in mine, and since, to run from one point to another causes endless confusion, I prefer for the time being to deal with the one, asking “A” or “Mr C. Spence,” if either of them condescends to write again, to do the same.

Now sir, the point raised and discussed was not the rightness and wrongness of sectarian names, but whether the party, body, sect, or brethern, whichever they please, *represented by Mr C,* {sic} *Spence, ever acknowledge or use the name “Plymouth Brethern.”* And in spite of the general assertion *that they do not*, and of which I would not be ignorant since Mr Spence has made it, much less can I now that the illumination {sic} of “A” is brought to play upon me, I am still in doubt as to whether they did not both acknowledge and use it on the occasion referred to by Mr Spence, and reported by

you. Now, had either of them answered the simple question that I asked, that doubt would have been removed, and as far as I know they, the [Brethern](#) in Lerwick, would have been clear from the acceptance of it. But no, instead of answering they tried to lead me off the scent by introducing another question. Now sir, I am not to be duped in that way, and unless either Mr Spence or “A” (giving his name that we may know that he is an authority upon the subject), say *no* to the question I again ask, I shall have to conclude that your report was right, also that they acknowledge it when convenient, and hence, that it is not a “popular delusion.” Did you, sirs, then ask permission to be allowed to erect the hall for the body called [Plymouth Brethren](#).

I would also say, before closing, that if they have neither used nor acknowledged it, that does not prove it to be a *delusion*, for if they are not a *sect* (and, I think, it would not be difficult to show that they are) then it cannot be wrong for a sectarian name to be applied to them. – I am, &c.,

NOT A P. B.

DEAR SIR, – Kindly allow me a suggestion or two on the subject of finding a suitable name for the sect at present known as the “[Plymouth Brethren](#).” Mr Spence claims for them the title of “[Christian Brethren](#),” a very good name if they have got any claim to it, or if it could in any way distinguish them from other so-called “Christian” sects – but if Mr Spence has at all qualified himself as a religious teacher, he must know that the “Copyright” title to the name “Christian” rests with the Catholics, afterwards known as the Roman Catholics, who were the sole custodiers of the title until a few hundred years ago. They it were who collected or composed the various narratives, epistles, &c., which go to form the New Testament, and they also promulgated the dogmas which, in one form

or another, still continue as the basis of the "Christian" faith, and therefore it is evident that dissenters, viz., Protestants, whatever shade of dogma they may hold, can lay no claim to the word "Christian" as distinguishing them from sinners in general. The other word in the title, viz., "[Brethren](#)," has been applied to all sorts and conditions of men for ages, and the idea of applying it exclusively to designate a sect, four-fifths of whom are women, does look a little absurd.

The word "Sisteren," (if one may be excused for coining a word) seems more applicable, only it has a certain German sound; but if it were spelt "Cistern," it would, by the ordinary association of ideas, at once suggest water, and so turn the thoughts to the principal sacrament of the so-called [Plymouth Brethren](#). I am, however, afraid that there are several of the leaders and devotees belonging to that body who would object to being called "Christian Cisterns," however full they might fancy themselves to be of living water, and besides, the name could only apply in a figurative sense. Might I therefore suggest that a name which has often been applied to that body should be permanently adopted by them, that is "Dipped's." The name is in every way applicable, it being a fundamental principle of their creed that without dipping there is no salvation, whereas the "dipped" have not only their past sins forgiven, but are absolved from the consequences of all sin in the future; and therefore to call a person a "Dipped" is sufficient to announce to the world outside that they are no longer sinners "such as other men are," and the long sounding words "Christian" and "[Brethren](#)" would be quite superfluous. Further, seeing that members of the sect in question very strongly object to the use of such appellations as "Church" or "Minister" in connection with their worship, the name "Dipper" might be aptly applied to those who cater for, and "dip" converts to the order.

In conclusion I may remark that the pleasures to be derived in this life from joining this sect seems to be very little understood, possibly because the initiated {sic} wish to keep the good things to

themselves, otherwise hundreds of young men who now stand aloof would hasten to swell their ranks; for what young man with any sense of the beautiful in him could be insensible to the intense pleasure of dipping a bevy of young and beautiful females. I feel confident that if our young men could only experience the beauty of this form of religion very few would hesitate to take a spell at the Market Cross for the sake of making and dipping the converts. – I am, &c.

CON AMORE.

Lerwick, 26th March, 1885.

The Shetland Times, Lerwick, 4 Apr 1885, p. 3

THE SO-CALLED [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

SIR, – “Not a P. B.” is still anxious to know how the Hall was applied for. In my own behalf and others, to erect a public hall, not stating who was to occupy it, whether body, sect, sisters, brethren from Plymouth, Lerwick, or anywhere else.

The question was needless. One was not going to apply for a hall for [Plymouth Brethren](#) and then say that was not their name. Anyone who understands the subject knows [Plymouth Brethren](#) is not acknowledged: see Chambers’s Encyclopaedia, and so down.

I did not intend to answer any letters, but must notice “Con Amore.” I never claimed the title of “[Christian Brethren](#)” for any people. His letter is a deplorable production. He is not content with

mockery only, but writes what he should know to be *slander* in the following sentence: – “It being a fundamental {sic} principle of their creed that without dipping there is no salvation, whereas the ‘dipped’ have not only their past sins forgiven, but are absolved from the consequences of all sin in the future.” Such a statement from one who pretends to be an authority shows an amount of credulity or ignorance seldom seen. Perhaps he will kindly give his authority for such a horrid creed; Satan could not invent a better. Such slander, if not denied, leads people to believe falsehoods. I shall give him a good reward when he proves the truth of his assertion. He can have our creed for 1s: it is called *The Bible*, and there find about forgiveness of sins. It is strange that those who always adhere most closely to the truth is {sic} sure to be most defamed. The two seem to be inseparable, so all church history testifies. So long as we hold to the truth and reject all else, we know to receive contempt and scorn, and will expect it. – Yours truly,

C. SPENCE.

P. S. – I don’t know “A,” but endorse his sentiments.

C. S.

SIR, – Allow a word by me about the so-called [Plymouth Brethren](#). I am no learned man, and therefore do not put myself in balance with those well-educated parties who have been writing during the past two or three weeks concerning the above. What I have to say is, that if these letters are not a case of necessity, as I do not think they are, I agree with many more in saying the sooner they are given up the better, as it is only a simple argument. I fancy the “So-Called [Plymouth Brethren](#)” is going to be another “Papa Baptism.” That edifying discussion went on for surely two months, at the end of which period they got tired of writing and gave it up. Now all I wonder at is why Mr. C.

Spence ever started this subject, for he sees now as before whenever a man belonging to their Society says anything about the same, the most of the community come down black on him, and he, in consequence, has to give up writing and let them have the whole play to themselves. If Mr C. Spence would consider a bit what need he care what they are called if they are only stiled {sic} in a christian name and preach the christian gospel, whether they be called [Plymouth Brethern](#) {sic}, Dippeds or Christians, I should fancy it did not matter. – I am, &c.,

PEERIE WILLIE.

The Shetland Times, Lerwick, 11 Apr 1885, p. 2

THE SO-CALLED [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

SIR, – I am sorry to see that Mr Spence has taken so unkindly my well-meant efforts to find a suitable name for the sect to which he belongs; and because in trying to shew the appropriateness of the name I suggested, I innocently referred to their creed, he accuses me of slander, and tries to draw me into a theological discussion; but I am not to be drawn.

I will, however, answer his question. My authority for the statement I made as to their creed was one of the “dipped” brethren, who does or did worship in the Hall Mr Spence attends, and whose voice has been heard at the Cross. He explained his creed substantially as I gave it. It may be, as Mr Spence says, the “Devil’s best creed,” but I am not responsible; nor does it follow that it is Mr Spence’s creed, for in a nameless religious sect, without written creed, articles, or confession of

faith, and devoid of pope, council, convocation, assembly, synod, clerical union, ordination, or even clergy, it is open to any “dipped” brother to take the shilling creed-book Mr Spence refers me to (viz., the Bible), and therefrom to twist and teach such a creed of morality, immorality, sense or nonsense, as may best suit his inclination; and who can say him nay?

Mr Spence fails to say whether he does or does not approve of the name I suggested, but he will surely not adopt it without at least thanking me for helping him out of the difficulty. Meanwhile I will take “Peerie Willie’s” advice, and bring my share of this correspondence to a close. – I am, &c.,

CON AMORE.

THE "CAMEL-ITES" AND THEIR ORIGIN. – If he is a benefactor to the species who makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, what may be said of him who makes two congregations out of one and adds yet another sect to Christendom? In South Norwood the [Plymouth brethren](#) met in love and unity, and as their manner is, one of them expounded the Word. The subject was Isaac and Rebecca. The preacher was a deeply spiritual man, and he recognised the Church in Rebecca and the Lord in Isaac, and further, in the camel Rebecca rode upon he discerned the Holy Spirit. But unto this last some of the brethren would not follow him, and so grievous did the controversy wax that it led at last to a disruption. And there are now two congregations in South Norwood, both of them still [brethren](#), we hope, but the name given to one by the other is the pretty name of "*Camel-ites*." – *Christian Leader*.

{The *Christian Leader* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

A REVOLTING TRAGEDY IN AMERICA.

AN ENGLISHMAN DISMEMBERED.

A cruel and bloodthirsty murder has been perpetrated at St. Louis, New York, Mr. C. A. Preller, a commercial traveller, being the victim. It seems that the deceased, in company with a person who styled himself as Dr. Hamilton, put up at the Southern Hotel, St. Louis, and as the doctor somewhat suddenly and hastily left the hotel, a search was made for his companion, when the officials of the hotel were horrified to find Preller's body completely dismembered and placed in a box. Mr. Preller had gone out to America to represent the firm of Mr. J. H. Dixon, worsted manufacturer, of Bradford, Yorkshire. Mr. Preller's father, who is a silk agent, carrying on business at 80, Wood-street, Cheapside, London, first became aware of the tragic occurrence in a most singular fashion. He was travelling from Clapton, where he resides, to town by one of the early morning trains, and while scanning his daily paper came across the New York telegram describing the horrible details of the murder. With a curiosity quite pardonable in a newspaper reader, he commenced to read the account, and, as can easily be imagined, was horror-stricken to gather from the first few lines that his son had been foully murdered. With hasty step he left the train, and with all possible speed made his way to the Wood-street office. There his worst apprehensions were at once confirmed, for awaiting him on the desk was a telegram from a cousin named Schlesinger in New York. It ran briefly thus: "Arthur reported dead; details will be mailed." In the course of the morning, Mr. Dixon, who had likewise received an intimation of the sad occurrence, arrived by one of the early trains

from Bradford, and proposed that he should himself at once proceed to America for the purpose of investigating the matter. Mr. Preller, however, thought that to be unnecessary, and acting upon his advice, Mr. Dixon telegraphed to the cousin of the distressed father in New York, asking him to do all that was possible in the matter. It is not known what money Peller {sic} would have in his possession at the time, but in the event of his having succeeded in collecting some of the firm's accounts, it is thought that he would in all probability be possessed of a considerable sum. Only last week a letter was received from Preller by one of his sisters, and it was couched in most affectionate terms. – Mr. Carr, of the firm of Messrs. F. B. Carr and Co., of 80, Wood-street, who had known Preller for three or four years, describes him as a fine young fellow of dark complexion, but not bearded. He was extremely religious, fond of art and music, and extremely good company. He was very popular amongst those with whom he mixed. He started in the best of spirits for New York, at the end of January, on an extended tour for his firm through America, Australia, and India. He did not, however, seem to much appreciate the idea of going to America, which he had already visited several times. At the time of the murder he must have been on his way to San Francisco.

Maxwell has been traced to San Francisco, where he registered himself on April 11th under the name of D'Augier, and claimed to be a French army officer. He sailed under the same name for Auckland, in New Zealand, on the following day. He may stop at Honolulu, whence the steamer touches, and take a passage for China or Japan. As there is no cable communication with Honolulu, an order of arrest was sent by letter by the steamer which sailed shortly afterwards. If he goes to Japan or China he is likely to sail before the letter reaches Honolulu. The motive of the murder is still believed to have been Preller's money. Maxwell, it is said, was in needy circumstances at the time. Deceased recently joined the religious body known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The Coleraine Chronicle, 15 Aug 1885, p. 6

MATTERS ECCLESIASTICAL IN
P O R T R U S H .

THE contribution on “Church Life on Holiday” which appears in the current number of the *Presbyterian Churchman* deals largely with Portrush. We have only room to quote the following extract from this graphically written article: – “In matters ecclesiastical Portrush is well furnished, as it possesses a Presbyterian church, a chapel, a Methodist conventicle, an Episcopal church, and, of course, the usual upper-room where the [Plymouth Brethren](#) meet to canonise themselves and excommunicate all other sects as sinners ‘above all the Galileans.’ {...}

The Morning Post, London, 9 Oct 1885, p. 2

THE CHURCH CONGRESS.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

PORTSMOUTH, THURSDAY.

The sittings of the congress were resumed to-day, and the attendance of members in both sections showed no diminution, notwithstanding the inclement state of the weather. In the Congress-hall the chair was taken by the president (the Bishop of Winchester). The subject for discussion was "The Teaching Work of the Church: (a) Exegesis of Scripture; (b) Doctrine and Ethics; and (c) Church History."

{...}

Lieutenant-Colonel EVERITT said that dissent in the royal navy was very rife, and 99 out of every 100 of the religious men in the royal navy belonged to the strictest and most exclusive form of dissent, the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He believed that all attempts at compromise would fail, and their greatest successes had been in those cases where the truth had been put forth plainly and uncompromisingly, but in a spirit of sincere practical charity. (Cheers.)

{...}

The Hackney and Kingsland Gazette, Hackney, 25 Nov 1885, p. 3

It is said that the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who are pretty numerous in Central Hackney, refuse to vote either way at the present election.

The Hackney and Kingsland Gazette, Hackney, 30 Nov 1885, p. 3, Correspondence

[PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#) AND ELECTORAL DUTIES.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR, – I notice a paragraph in your issue with regard to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) refusing to vote at the Central Hackney Election.

Allow me in justice to say that there are many Christians meeting simply in the name of the Lord Jesus, commonly known as [Plymouth Brethren](#), who believe that they should intelligently exercise their responsibility in this respect in common with their various other duties in life for the ‘Glory of God.’

Of course a vote can be withheld for the same reason, but what I desire is, if possible, to correct any wrong impression that absolute non-participation in such matters is part of the creed of those whose sincere desire is that the Word of God should be their only guide of conduct in the sphere in which God has placed them.

G. B.

26th November, 1885.

The North Devon Journal, Barnstaple, 31 Dec 1885, p. 5

A PLYMOUTH PAUPER AND HER MONEY. – At the Plymouth Board of Guardians yesterday morning, it was reported that a pauper had died in whose possession £150 had been found. She had a crippled son, and the two had been regularly relieved for thirty years. But for the contending claims of relatives, the discovery would not have been made. Deceased was stated to be a member of the [Plymouth Brethern](#) {sic}. The Board decided to claim the recovery of twelve months' allowance.

Edinburgh Evening News, 1 Jan 1886, p. 3

A WEALTHY PAUPER. – The Plymouth Board of Guardians have resolved to sue the executors of a lately deceased pauper. In consequence of a family feud the relieving officer had ascertained that the woman died with a bag of £150 in her room. She and her crippled son, who were [Plymouth Brethren](#), had received a weekly allowance for more than 30 years. The board decided to sue for a twelvemonth's amount {sic}.

THAT THERE BE NO SCHISM IN THE BODY. – 1 Cor. xii. 25.

To the Editor of the Isle of Wight Observer.

Sir, – It may be an interesting speculation to discover if the real outcome of Sectarianism be opposition to Church unity and order, just as socialistic revolt from national order pursues a policy of Fenian or nihilistic state disestablishment. It really looks like it, and like causes produce like effects. It is curious too to see how the point of contention of the sects one with another should be the same in kind as of the point of the whole against the Church. {...} I must close the endless history of honest dissent by a little word about the “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” – I beg their pardon – I should have said “the assemblies of the saints.” These saints of the Lord “came out” to be “on the ground of separation {sic}.” The Church – and the sections included – is in ruins, they say. And as the Israelites first separated from Egypt, the world, and then a second time separated {sic} unto Moses in the wilderness, so they have “come out on the ground of the Lord.” These Brethren appear still to be developing, and have not yet crystallized into a complete section. They teach that they are the only church for “testimony,” as all others are in Babylon yet. We have to touch this last phase of faith tenderly, as indeed the principle is going on amongst them of “the survival of the fittest.” Darwin missed his chance in not waiting a few years longer, and though we say this, it is not in our heart to be severe with a people who include many truly fine characters. No one name will or can possibly designate them however. Indeed, the titles one bears are not all accepted. But we have out of the “[Plymouth Brethren](#)” those called [Darbyites](#) {sic}, [Newtonians](#), [Kellyites](#), [Loose Brethren](#), [Close Brethren](#), [Open](#)

Brethren, Exclusive Brethren, Brethren in Christ, “Brethren” par excellence, and “Christian Brethren.” Then there are Brethren who immerse, and Brethren who baptise children – we have also the non-immortality Brethren. Now what is remarkable about these saints is this – that though all of them are having a deadly pitched battle one with another, with the sects and the church, that they are of one heart with the section in their crusade against the church, and this is my one excuse – nay, my imperative obligation – for enumerating them with all the other aliens to the Church of England. It is well, too, to marshal Brethren with the others, because of the “damnable heresies” which they themselves allege to assist in their very midst. It is of service to my argument to do this, that the plea of re-union may be strengthened, and the impossibility of co-operation for the truth’s sake will be seen, unless all come back to the dear old Church once more. Now, just see how these “Brethren” do not love one another. There is no kind of religious bitterness in the known human family equal in its intensity to that which is cultivated amongst “Brethren.” I know of two ladies, in London, daughters of one mother, who will cross the street to avoid meeting each other, because one is an “Exclusive Brethren” sister, and the other is not, and did not “judge the question” of the “dishonour of our Lord,” on the part of the Newton Brethren. These dear saints, however, “all came out of system” to be separate and on the Lord’s side. There is more than one way of doing so. Let me illustrate. I once met an old lady out on the western prairies who had taken to preaching for a livelihood, and having an evening to spare I accepted an invitation to go and hear the female evangelist, in a Temperance Hall. I give the narrative in her own manner. “Brethern,” she began, “I want to tell you gis war I stan’ to-night. Ye see brethern I was borned a quaker, an’ I got tired o’ that, and then I jined the Baptises. Then arter a while I left them, an’ I jined the Come-outters.” Well, I thought to myself, I am afraid there is not much to edify here, but I held on, and the good old lady proceeded to say, “I wants you all to see how as ye mus’ come out and be on the Lord’s side like I

does. Now, brethern, ges' you think on it, these ere sees is wrong, and I'm a goin' around to preach 'em down. Only think, brethren, what this sectarianism is. Now, have you been a readin' in the Revelations about that ere man called Anti-Christ. Well, you known his number is 666. Thats the number of the man of sin, and is the mark of the beast, brethern, an' I have counted all the sects, and there is ges 666 of 'em, and sectarianism is Anti-Christ, and the real mark of the beast of the Revelations, brethren." But I have gone beyond my limit, and will, if permitted, send even one letter to conclude.

Yours, &c.,

J. SABINE KNIGHT.

CHURCH AND DISSENT AT THE LYE.

The school anniversary sermons in connection with the Lye Congregational Chapel, were preached on Sunday last, those in the morning and evening by the Rev. J. Tucker, pastor. {...}

The Rev. J. Tucker preached in the evening, from the words of the 29th verse of the 28th chap. of Exodus, "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breast plate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually." {...} As he looked at this beautiful breastplate as designed by God, he saw in it an emblem of the Church of Christ as it appeared in the eyes of God to-day. {...} He believed that the various sections and denominations of the Church of Christ were divinely ordained for a wise purpose. Some of the twelve stones on the breastplate were as far as it was possible for them to be placed apart on the same breastplate, and yet each one of the twelve was worn on the heart of the high priest. What a picture we had in that of the Church of Christ to-day, and he thanked God that the Old Testament contained such a picture. There was the high priest worship in the grand old cathedral, with the pealing anthems; and away in the far distance there was the good [Plymouth brother](#) who would not go into a cathedral to worship, and would think it almost a sin to worship in a Congregational chapel, but in any cottage, barn, or building he was quite at home, and there he was breaking bread and trying to reproduce literally what Christ and his disciples did. Both were parts of the breastplate, and both were worn on the heart of Christ. After all they were nearer in spirit than they

appeared to be, for if they were on the heart of Christ they could not be far apart, and there was unity amid all the diversity, and in every section of the church they would find that there was love for the Master. {...}

The Penrith Herald [BNA Cumberland & Westmorland Herald], 19 Jun 1886,
p. 5, Original Correspondence

PLYMOUTH BRETHERN IN WESTMORLAND AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

SIR, – The [Plymouth Brethren](#) abstained from voting at the last election. They thought, and I presume still think, that it is their duty not to take an interest in political matters and not to record their votes. If they give diligent heed to the all wise command, “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are His,” they can no longer doubt that it is their solemn duty to exercise their rights of citizenship in this world, as much as it will be their privilege to enjoy the true citizenship in the next world. As to how the [Brethren](#) ought to vote, there can be no doubt. Their fullest sympathy is with the party whose principles of religious liberty and equality alone permits of their existence as a religious sect; with the party that has broken down the barrier to religious freedom and thought; with the party whose highest aim is the independence and {sic} therefore the happiness of all classes; with the party to which, wherever a noble blow is struck, wherever high aspirations are entertained, the eyes of the oppressed are turned; with the party whose glory it is to honour man as man, to recognise the fact that in the sight of God all men are equal, and to legislate in the spirit of Him who is not ashamed to call us brethren. Bearing this in mind, the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in North Westmorland cannot fail to vote in favour of Alderman Whitehead, a firm supporter of the Liberal party, and therefore of those principles to which I have just referred. In the coming struggle for a [Plymouth Brother](#) to refrain from voting for the Liberal candidate can be counted little less than a sin against a righteous cause. – I am, sir, yours, etc.,

A. B.

POLICE COMMISSIONERS.

(Sederunt as before.)

THE SALVATION ARMY.

Commissioner Alves, in making his motion to put a stop to the public performances on the streets of the town of the Salvation Army, remarked that the subject was rather a delicate one, but he had no delicacy in proposing that they should deal with it. There would have been no ground of complaint had they conducted their processions as they did when they started their services in Forres, but when it came to be that they stood opposite one's own door, bawling and howling at the top of their voices, it was high time it was put a stop to. His remarks were also directed to the services of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), which were most annoying, for he could plainly hear them on a Sunday evening from his own garden. He did not believe in that form of worship, which he looked upon as a Pharisee sort of business. Whether he got a seconder not {sic}, he begged to move that the authorities should put a stop to the performances he had referred to.

Bailie Sim hoped the motion would not be seconded; if it were he was prepared to move that those people be allowed to worship God in their own way and he wished them God speed.

The subject then dropped.

MURDER BY A MOTHER.

Particulars of a frightful murder by a mother at Warrington, in county Down, have reached Dublin. The wife of John Johnston, a damask weaver, seems to have had her brain affected after attending the [Plymouth Brethren](#) meetings. On Monday evening she took up her youngest daughter, aged four months, and asked her husband, "Don't you see Christ in her face?" She then carried her daughter to a retreat in the garden, where she placed her head on a block, and severed the entire organs of the throat to the bone. This completed, she returned to the house, a bloody table knife in her hands. She was then laughing, and told her eldest son that she had "killed the God of the world." Her husband a few minutes afterwards found the lifeless body of his child, and the mother was arrested by Constable Mulanify{.} On Monday an inquest was held in the Orange Hall, when a verdict of wilful murder was returned. Dr. Frier said he considered the accused, who is the mother of thirteen children, in a state of insanity. Much sympathy is felt for the accused's family.

The Banbury Advertiser, 30 Sep 1886, p. 5

AL FRESCO BAPTISM. – A unique and picturesque scene was witnessed by about 1000 persons from the banks of river Stour on Sunday afternoon last, near the village of Sutton-under-Brailes, at a point a few yards above what is called Sutton Washbrook. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) held a mass meeting and open air baptism in the Stour. The ceremony was carried out in a devout manner. A hearty service was held, and hymns rendered with much devotional spirit, and at the appointed time Mr. Norris walked into the river, and three parties came to him to be baptised. Good order prevailed and a large open air meeting was held, the weather being favourable.

The Banbury Advertiser, 7 Oct 1886, p. 5

AL FRESCO BAPTISING.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir, – Will you please to correct a mistake that appeared in your paper of September 30th. Your correspondent says that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) held an open-air meeting and open-air baptising. Will you please to say that if there were any [Plymouth Brethren](#) there they were unknown to me, as the brethren that held the meeting came from the following villages: – Brailes, Sutton, Stourton, and Cherrington, and the only name that they recognise as believers in the Lord Jesus is found in Acts xii, 26, that is “Christians,” and the name that they meet in is found in Matthew xviii, 20, that is the

name of the Lord Jesus; and the only person that they recognise as head over them is the one that the disciples were told to hear at the Transfiguration, and that is Jesus only; see Matthew xvii, 5–8.

I am Sir, your humble servant,

WILLIAM NORRIS.

Stourton, Shipston-on-Stour.

The Wiltshire Times, Trowbridge, 20 Nov 1886, p. 3, General District News

On Sunday evening the congregation attending the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Meeting Room at Stroud was suddenly augmented in numerical strength by the entrance of a monkey belonging to the manager of the baths which adjoin the meeting room. The service did not proceed smoothly until, with the aid of a broom, the animal had been ejected.

The Staffordshire Chronicle, Stafford, 1 Jan 1887, p. 2

A ROBUST THEOLOGIAN.

A very human heart linked Hugh Stowell Brown with everybody – clergymen, Catholic priests, drunken captains, deacons, and dock labourers. They were all human; that was enough for him. Humanity had many faults, but uncharity was more than them all. {...} He loved an honest man whether behind an oath or a psalm. “The [Plymouth brethren](#),” he said, “never preach the Gospel until people have had their tea. Divine grace, with the help of a teapot, does wonders.” {...}

{Hugh Stowell Brown, *b.* Douglas, Isle of Man, 10 Aug 1823, *d.* Liverpool, 24 Feb 1886, was a renowned Baptist preacher and social reformer.}

SINGULAR SCENE IN A CHAPEL.

During the recent floods a singular and amusing scene was witnessed in the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Chapel, Kendal, which is situated near to the bed of the river Kent. It was intended to conduct a service of baptism in the chapel, and several members had assembled for the purpose. The baptism, according to the principle of this religious sect, is by immersion. The whole of the candidates had entered the bath in the centre of the chapel, and the service was about to commence, when, owing to the rapid rise of the river the water reached the gas meter. The result was that the chapel was placed in total darkness, and considerable surprise and consternation ensued. It was considered undesirable to proceed with the service that evening, and the parties left the bath, assumed their attire, and the baptism was postponed until Saturday evening, when it was satisfactorily carried out.

A VERY MYSTERIOUS RING. – Mr. J. N. Carr, of Carlisle, in the course of an address at a service in connection with the Maryport Home Mission on Sunday, spoke on the subject of ghosts, first reading about the witch of Endor. He said 99 out of the hundred stories about ghosts were fictions, but he could tell them a true story, which was vouched for by two [Plymouth Brethren](#). A young woman who attended one of their meetings was converted, and she told them that she had been possessed of a devil which tormented her fearfully. She went to a certain person in the immediate neighbourhood, who told her that as long as she wore the ring which was then placed on her finger she would never be troubled. She had worn the ring for two years, and she had not been attacked. The men prayed about the matter, and the decision they came to was that the ring should be removed. On removal it was found that inside the ring was printed, “Don’t trouble this woman till she’s in hell.” (Sensation.) Immediately the ring was withdrawn fits came upon the woman, and she was tormented for nearly two hours before the demon left her, and after this she never had another attack.

Totnes Times, 28 May 1887, p. 7

KINGSBRIDGE.

The only body of Nonconformists in Kingsbridge that has refused to join in the procession on the Queen's jubilee day is the [Plymouth Brethren](#). It should, however, be stated that they are not the less loyal for this, as they have subscribed liberally to the jubilee fund, and they also mean to celebrate the jubilee day in their own way at their own place of worship in Fore-street, where a tea, &c., will be provided.

INQUEST AT WORKINGTON.

An inquest was held on Monday afternoon, in the restaurant of Mr R. Musgrave's Royal Hotel, before Mr John Webster, coroner, Mr G. Suart being elected foreman, on view of the body of William Myers, a tailor, residing in William Street, who had been found dead in bed.

{...}

Thomas Ray, who described himself as a Christian, a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), said that he would not swear. They were told "not to swear at all," and he had conscientious scruples against swearing. – The Coroner remarked that was not what was meant or intended. – Witness then made an affirmation, and said that he was a coal agent, and knew the deceased very well. {...}

ALLEGED IMPROPER MEDICAL TREATMENT.

ON Wednesday morning Dr. G. Danford Thomas, coroner for Central Middlesex, held an inquest at the Workhouse Infirmary, New-end, on the body of Miss Mary Ann Mosedale, aged sixty-four, a single woman, said to have formerly {sic} been a maid in a noble family, who died on Monday morning at 17, Fordwych-road, West Hampstead.

Mr. Arthur Toovey, of Somerset-street, Portman-square, deposed that the deceased was his sister-in-law. She was of independent means and lived by herself at George-street, Portman-square, though for the last two or three weeks she had been living at 17, Fordwych-road, where she had been undergoing a course of homœopathic treatment under Mr. Dunki, who was of the same religious persuasion as herself. They both belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Last Monday evening witness, who was in the country, received a telegram, upon the receipt of which he at once went to Mr. Dunki's house, where he found that his sister-in-law was dead, and he also ascertained {sic} that she had not been seen by a medical man before her death.

Emil Dunki, who spoke with a foreign accent, said that he was the occupier of 17, Fordwych-road, and was a private gentleman of independent means. He had known the deceased for two or three years. She had been staying at his house for the last three weeks, and had complained of being ill, though she had had no medical treatment. He had given her some homœopathic {sic} remedies, and had advised her to have a doctor, but she declined. There was no marked change in the condition of

her health until Sunday morning, when she was very ill, and she continued so all day and during the night. She died on Monday morning.

Miss Sarah Howe said that she was a relative of the last witness's wife, and that the deceased died between three and four o'clock on Monday morning.

Dr. A. P. Wells, of Belsize-park, said that he was fetched by Mr. Dunki at half-past eight on Monday morning, and was told the same history as that now given. On arriving at the house he found Miss Mosedale dead, and, on making a *post-mortem* examination, he found that death was caused by syncope following the rupture of an ovarian tumour in the abdomen. He had no sympathy whatever with the Metayer system of treatment, but was of opinion that this case could have been favourably operated upon if the deceased had gone to Dr. Carter or any other physician skilled in the treatment of the diseases of women.

Mr. Toovey complained very strongly to the coroner of the behaviour of Mr. Dunki in treating the deceased when he was incompetent to do so. His sister-in-law had informed him that she had paid 4s. to Mr. Dunki for every visit, and witness knew that she went to his house for the purpose of being treated by him. He also complained of the fact that none of the friends of deceased were informed of her death until seven o'clock in the evening, although she died at three o'clock in the morning. Mr. Dunki had arranged for the funeral, and, when witness and his friends went to the house, he told them that Dr. Wells could tell them all about her death, and that Dr. Wells saw her three weeks ago.

Mr. Dunki denied having received money for his visits to the deceased, though he admitted that he had received payment for the remedies he had procured for her and had also received presents from her. He also denied having said that Dr. Wells saw the deceased three weeks ago.

A gentleman sitting near, but who was not called as a witness, said that Mr. Dunki did make those statements, and that he was now telling lies.

The coroner pointed out that the inquiry had only to deal with the cause of death, and, as to other differences, which could not be dealt with there, they must settle them amongst themselves. The deceased, who was capable of judging for herself, declined, they were told, to have a medical attendant, though, as the doctor had pointed out, she ought to have had one.

The jury returned a verdict of "Death from natural causes.{"}"

LOWESTOFT POLICE COURT.

COURT HOUSE. Wednesday. – Before the Mayor (J. L. Clemence, Esq.), J. Peto, G. Edwards, E. K. Harvey, H. Seppings, and W. Youngman, Esqs.

Mr. Kent appeared to present a memorial from all the residents in the neighbourhood of Blue Anchor Plain, to complain of a nuisance arising from the presence of the Salvation Army, the Church Army, and the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who Sunday after Sunday occupied the place from two o'clock to 9 p.m. at intervals, and also on Saturday nights families were disturbed and quite a nuisance created. There was no possibility of there being quiet, and as they had other places for worship, he hoped the Bench would give orders to the police to suppress it. – The Mayor said he had several complaints made to him from inhabitants of that locality, and the Magistrates would inquire into the matter and see what could be done to abate the nuisance.

The Eastern Daily Press, Norwich, 25 Oct 1887, p. 3, Lowestoft

BAPTISM IN THE SEA. – On Sunday afternoon a baptismal service in connection with the [Plymouth brethren](#) was held on the North Beach, the service being conducted by one of the friends of the community who meet for worship in the room formerly occupied by the Mormons in Chapel Street. The subject of the rite was a young lady belonging to Lowestoft, who has attended the services of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) for about two months. There was a fair congregation considering the cold biting wind which was blowing at the time. After a hymn had been sung and prayer offered, the ceremony of dipping was performed by a Scotch friend, who volunteered for the duty. One of the bathing huts on the Beach was used for the purpose of a dressing-room. Through some error on the part of the young lady the immersion had to be performed a second time. The service was very impressive, but did not last long.

VIEWS OF THE EMERALD ISLE.

No. III.

THE PROTESTANTS OF IRELAND.

(By a Contributor.)

{...}

There are a few [Plymouth Brethren](#) in Ireland. One of their famous preachers was Mr. MacIntosh, and a Mr. Moore; the latter, however, was left a great legacy by a distiller of the same name who had lived a rather immoral life, and the fact of Mr. Moore accepting the legacy obtained by distilling whisky has mitigated considerably against his success as a preacher. Rev. Grattan Guinness was prominently identified with the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in Ireland more than a quarter of a century ago.

W. E. G.

(To be continued.)

We Hear.

[All contributions must contain the name and address of the writer, and must be accompanied with Two Stamps. If the communication is not inserted in two weeks, it must be understood that the matter is of no public interest, or too personal for our columns, and in no case will Stamps be returned.]

{...}

HALLATROW.

In these days of advancement we often find
[Plymouth Brethren](#) and young ladies are both of one mind,
So secret and cosey the evening they pass,
Pray do not condemn this innocent class.

INQUISITORIAL AMUSEMENTS.

(By an Occasional Correspondent.)

{...} I have no particular desire to take my readers into my confidence, and tell them whether I am a busy or a leisurely man. I plead guilty, however, to having snatched part of two days from my avocations in the city that I might enjoy myself

WALKING IN THE COUNTRY,

where the grass grows green. I have enjoyed the bright sunshine, the agreeable shade of spreading trees, and the many rural charms of leafy June; but of this I do not write. "Mankind is my great game." {...} When travelling by rail or steamer or walking along a country road, I am always looking out for

SOME INTERESTING PERSON

to talk to, and I am generally rewarded for my pains. To prove this I am about to give a few examples from my two days' peregrinations already mentioned. Without going into details, I may mention that one of my walks extended from Ferniegair to Blantyre, and that I came in contact with some interesting specimens of Scottish miners. The first that I met promised well. He was a middle-aged man, of medium height, with fair hair, a full beard, and a pleasing twinkle in his eyes, which should have betokened a humourist. He was dressed in what miners, I believe, call their "shifting"

clothes. He wore a soft hat of a not unclerical cut, and though his tweed suit had evidently seen some service, it was thoroughly respectable looking. I asked him some question about the district, and he replied that he was a comparative stranger, having recently come from Ayrshire. He, however, showed a disposition to talk, and I gave him every encouragement. I tried to lead him on to trade matters and politics; but he declared that he had little interest in such affairs. On my expressing my surprise he explained that he was what the other men called

A HYPOCRITE,

or, in other words, a Christian. This roused my curiosity, and I plied him with questions. He said that if the men resolved to contribute a certain sum to the Union to take an idle day, or even to go on strike, he went in with the majority. He took no interest in originating a policy, and while willingly yielding to the men, he was equally ready to give way to the masters. In politics, also, he believed it his duty to remain perfectly passive. As a Christian he was in the world, but

NOT OF THE WORLD,

and it was his duty to abstain from such worldly things as trades'-unionism and politics. He strongly condemned Socialism, because the Socialists were hostile to those in authority, and according to the Bible he was bound to pray for rulers, magistrates, and so on. If the ruling powers in this country had been wicked and oppressive, he admitted that it would have been natural and right that he should desire to be relieved from them. In such a case it would be his duty to pray that they might

BE "REMOVED,"

and if God saw fit to remove them He would provide the means of accomplishing such ends as He did in Old Testament times. Christians, who are God's peculiar people, were, however, to take no part in such removals, except by praying for them. I was rather surprised to find the old-fashioned doctrine of non-resistance expressed with such logical completeness. I could not deny that his kind of doctrine was the doctrine of the primitive Church, but I mentioned that it was not taught by any Church that I knew of at the present day. He replied that he was not connected with any Church. He belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He did not disguise the fact that he had a very low opinion of most of the Churches. The ministers, he said, went to parties and played cards all night, and otherwise enjoyed themselves, and then on Sunday condemned such "on-goings" in the pulpit. I here indicated that I did not consider myself to be

ALTOGETHER A HEATHEN,

and that I had, notwithstanding, a healthy appreciation of a well-contested rubber at whist, and of a glass of good beer. I further contended that ministers were under no obligation to condemn either the one or the other in the pulpit. My companion declared that he could neither play cards nor drink beer with a good conscience; but he had no right to condemn any other man who thought such practices consistent with a profession of Christianity. {...}

The Manchester Courier, 10 Jul 1888, p. 5

An outrage on [Plymouth Brethren](#) missionaries is stated to have occurred at Bracorgh, county Tyrone, a large marquee and its contents having been set on fire and destroyed.

The Tavistock Gazette, 13 Jul 1888, p. 6, Epitome of News

A large tent belonging to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) was maliciously set on fire, on Saturday evening, at a place called Brackey, about five miles from Carrickmore, county Tyrone, and was burned to the ground with all the furniture. The two principal members of the [Brethren](#) were absent at the time, preaching in Omagh.

Stroud Journal, 13 Jul 1888, p. 5, Sunday School Festivities in Stroud

ACRE STREET SCHOOL.

The children and teachers of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Sunday School met together in their school-room at three o'clock for a service of prayer and singing. At four o'clock the school marched in procession to a field in Bowbridge Lane, where various amusements were provided. At five o'clock, the scholars adjourned to the residence of Mr Ebenezer Apperly, and by that gentleman's kindness, were afterwards regaled with an excellent tea on the lawn. After tea, the field was again resorted to, and various pastimes indulged in till dark.

Stroud Journal, 20 Jul 1888, p. 8, Correspondence

AN EXPLANATION.

Dear sir, – In your report of the Acre Street Sunday School treat last week you designate the Christians with whom the school is connected as "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," {sic} kindly allow me through your columns to say that we are not "[Plymouth](#)" Brethren, nor does the term in any way apply to us; neither do we acknowledge the name of "[Brethren](#)" as a distinctive appellation {sic}, but only as it applies to every living soul who has received pardon, peace and eternal life, through faith in the once crucified, dead, and buried, but now risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ, the ever blessed son of the living and eternal God; to all such the words of Christ recorded in Matthew 23, 8v. apply "All

ye are brethren." We believe every true christian, (by whatsoever name he may be known) is a member of the "one body" of which Christ is the head, and from 1 Cor. 1, 10–13. We {sic} hold all sectarian names (even "[Brethren](#)" if used as the distinctive name of a sect or party) to be unscrip-
tural. I trust it is the sincere desire of our hearts to love "all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" and to regard them as one with us in the "hope of the gospel."

Yours faithfully,

Cainscross, July 16.

J. ALFRED PEARCE.

P.S. – In the official list of places registered for the solemnization of marriages we are called "Christians."

Stroud Journal, 27 Jul 1888, p. 5, Correspondence

AN EXPLANATION.

Sir, – As a constant reader of your journal I am interested in the contents of its columns, and I noticed the letter by Mr J. Alfred Pearce headed as above. It seemed kind of him to point out your error, and I knew you would correct it in any future report. On looking a second time to see what name you would have to designate them by I found a difficulty. "[Plymouth Brethren](#)" was in error, and even "[Brethren](#)" they do not acknowledge except as a general term to all Christians. In the postscript you are informed that in an official list they are called Christians, but he does not say you are to call them so; and supposing you do, then what Christians? The school is termed as the Acre-

street, but if you report them as the Acre-street Christians it is scarcely suitable, as there may be other Christians in Acre-street besides the body referred to. What a confusion of things! Why not adopt a suitable name, so that mistakes may be avoided? He suggests that all names, "if used to denote a sect or party, are unscriptural." Names need not denote anything, except as a means of knowing who are intended. There is nothing sectarian in a suitable name. Sectarianism is a spirit, not a name. Some people in trying to do away with sects have set going some half-dozen new sects. There are bodies calling themselves [Brethren](#) who have divided, and if meeting in the street will not notice each other. In scripture we have disciples, apostles, elders, evangelists, and in two cases christians, one of which appeared to be in derision. "All ye are brethren." But are we?

Yours truly,

A CONSTANT READER.

Notes and Queries.

EDITED BY "LEGAL LIMB."

TO OUR READERS. – "Notes and Queries" will appear in the *Gazette* on Thursdays and Saturdays. We are desirous of making this column both interesting and instructive, and we invite the co-operation of our readers to assist us in attaining this object. We shall be glad to receive notes and queries of general interest, and replies to queries, which, if suitable, will be published. All contributions intended for the editor of this department must be addressed to "Legal Limb," *Gazette* Office, Brighton. No MS. can be returned unless accompanied by a stamped envelope, and all articles will be treated as voluntary contributions. Answers to queries must state the number of query to which it refers. We trust that our readers will heartily support us in this undertaking.

{...}

QUESTIONS.

1. TO PLAY THE BEAR. – In reading an old history I found this expression. What is its origin?
2. THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#). – I have heard now and then of such people, but have never met any one who answered to the appellation. Can anyone give me particulars as to the founder, creed, &c.?

{...}

Notes and Queries.

EDITED BY "LEGAL LIMB."

{...}

ANSWERS.

2. – THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

The body of religionists known by the above description appears to have first emerged into observation at Plymouth about the year 1830, and the name "Plymouth" appears to be due to that circumstance. Many persons of zeal, earnestness, and perseverance were attracted to their tenets in the United Kingdom, and also in India and the United States of America. They also gained a footing in various countries on the Continent, where they acquired the name of "[Darbyites](#)" from the Rev. John Darby, originally a barrister, and afterwards an Anglican clergyman, who, on account of the opposition encountered, withdrew to Switzerland in 1838, and became in that country the apostle of the [Brethren](#). Other principal leaders, representing distinctive shades of opinion within themselves, were Mr Newton and Mr Müller, the well-known Bristol philanthropist. The persons to whom the appellation of "[Brethren](#)" is applied receive it only as descriptive of their individual state as Christians, and not as a religious sect; and it is not from any doctrinal peculiarity or definite ecclesiastical organization that they have any appearance of a distinct community, for they put forward no standards of faith, and publish no forms of worship and discipline.

The peculiarities of the Brethren are, therefore, rather to be inferred from their antipathies – from the critical objections they advance against the constitution and church government of other Christian bodies, which they appear to regard as either corrupt in practice or too partial and exclusive in their administration. The *sectarianism* of the Brethren is thus the repudiation of *sectarianism*; and their *profession* is to practise Christianity as that religion was inculcated by Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, on the *letter* of which book they rest the defences of their distinctive doctrines{,} their fundamental one being the “desire to stand together in heart and in action upon God’s ground for the union of his people”; and consequently any separation from all that, to their consciences, takes away this ground. They are opposed to what they consider the latitudinarianism of national or established churches, and to the extreme strictness of the dissenting bodies, where the condition of admission into their several communions is the pronouncement of the “Shibboleth of a party.” In simplicity of dress they once had the superficial resemblance to the Quakers, from whom they differ in recognising Baptism and the Lord’s Supper as permanent institutions; and they also differ from other Christian communities in rejecting ordination as a necessary preliminary to the administration of the latter sacrament. All the Lord’s people, in their estimation, are priests, the Christian people are the clergy, and the errors of existing ecclesiastical bodies are traced to the fact that they do not sufficiently magnify the influence and work of the Holy Spirit. To them, “the Monarchy of the Church,” if the phrase may be permitted, “is the Monarchy of the Holy Ghost.” Again, “it is not the pleasure of a preacher, nor any synod of preachers, nor congregations, nor sects, nor of the Church itself, much less any worldly power, which ordains a minister. It is the Spirit of God dividing to every man severally as he will.” The manifestation of suitable gifts and graces is all the authority required {f}or the ministry, and particularly for preaching. In the services, which are of a most simple character, frequent pauses are made for the motions or

promptings of the Holy Spirit. In all points which are reckoned essential, the doctrines of the [brethren](#) agree with the Churches of the Reformation. They generally anticipate a millenium with the personal reign of Christ on earth; but this view is not peculiar to them any more than the practice of adult baptism which they generally favour, nor is it pressed into a condition of membership.

Within recent years the [Brethren](#) have been much divided by dissensions, and, while repudiating sectarianism, they have in some instances developed a great many of its objectionable features. – (J.S.)

The following extract from Cutt's "Dictionary of the Church of England" gives some interesting particulars of this sect: – A sect whose foundations were laid in Dublin about 1830, by Mr A. N. Groves, a student of Trinity College. Before long a number of Mr Groves's friends formed themselves into societies on his principles at Plymouth and at Teignmouth. The society at Plymouth was joined by the Rev{.} B. W. Newton, a clergyman and Fellow of Exeter, whose position and character gave him a leading place among them. In 1832, the society at Dublin was joined by the Rev. J. N. Darby, a clergyman serving as a curate in the Irish Church, who shortly afterwards moved to Plymouth, and his accession proved to be an era in the history of the movement. Hitherto the members of these societies (like the early Methodists) had not formally separated themselves from the organised bodies to which they belonged; but now the existing religious bodies were denounced as hopelessly corrupt, and the saints were exhorted to come out of them and join this new church, which was to be a centre of visible unity for all Christians. But in a very short time the two chiefs of the movement disagreed. Mr Darby seceded, with his followers, and formally excommunicated all who did not adhere to him, and the [Brethren](#) were divided into two camps. The followers of Mr Newton adhered

to the existing platform, and were called “[Open Brethren](#),” the [Darbyites](#), or “[Exclusive Brethren](#),” grew into a numerous and well-organised body, which has spread into all the great towns of the United Kingdom, and into America, and is still zealously and successfully disseminating its principles.

Brighton Gazette, 17 Jan 1889, p. 5

Notes and Queries.

EDITED BY “LEGAL LIMB.”

{...}

ANSWERS.

2. – THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

An old lady was once in a similar state of doubt on this subject, and opened her mind to her parish clergyman. “Ah,” said the divine, “a [Plymouth Brother](#) is an odd fish.” “Indeed,” replied his parishioner, “is it anything like a Yarmouth bloater; I know what that is.” – (UBIQUE.)

UNORTHODOX COVENTRY.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

VI. – [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#): PREACHING THE WORD IN CHERRY STREET.

The close observer of religious developments in England notes with no little interest the fact that the Oxford Movement and the [Plymouth Brethren](#) arose in the same year, namely in 1827, both, it may be said, within the Church; but while the early Tractarians, or the greater part of them, remained wherein they had been nurtured, the [Brethren](#), necessarily with the views they held, left the Church. Both movements are ascribed to the same cause – the superficiality of spiritual life at the time, in the Church and in Dissent. Many earnest men yearned for deeper spiritual experience, and with the object of gaining it, John Henry Newman joined the Tractarian Movement, and Francis Wm. Newman, the [Brethren](#). The author of the “Apologia” found a home in the Church of Rome, and his brother soon parted company with the [Plymouthists](#). A third religious movement took its rise four or five years later – that known as Irvingism – and it is worth noting in this connection, because the adherents of all three faiths attached, and still attach, importance to the great central act of Christian worship. Neither Ritualists (the development of Tractarianism), nor the Catholic Apostolic Church, nor [Brethren](#) deem the Sunday morning worship complete without the participation of the faithful in the Supper of the Lord. Further, all the bodies, though starting from different stand-points, professed to desire a closer adherence to apostolic forms. These are facts which show that the three movements should be considered together by any one who seeks to understand the

improvement in the religious condition of England from 1830 down to (shall we say?) the present time.

The tenets of the [Plymouthists](#) are strictly Calvinistic: original sin and predestination, the efficacy of the Atonement, the merit of Christ's obedience, the power of His intercession, the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification, are prominent points. Millenarian views are also generally entertained. They hold, further, that an official ministry, anything like a clergy, whether on Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Congregational theories, is a denial of the spiritual priesthood of all believers and striving against the Holy Ghost; but the great sheet anchor of the sect is the broad division it makes of mankind into the saints of God and the world, and a constant endeavour to separate the one from the other. The new edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica mentions five official divisions or sects of [Plymouthists](#) – (1) the followers of the Rev. B. Wills Newton; (2) the [Neutrals](#), who incline to the Congregationalist idea that each assembly should judge for itself in matters of discipline, headed by Mr. Geo. Müller, of Bristol; (3) the [Darbyite Exclusives](#); (4) the [Exclusives](#) who follow Mr. Kelly; and (5) the followers of Mr. Cluff, an Irish clergyman, who adopted the views of Mr. Pearsall Smith. More than 30 years have now elapsed since Mr. Newton was virtually excommunicated by the [Darbyites](#); he held, or is alleged to have held, the peccability of Christ's nature, and he deemed it essential to order that a "one-man ministry" should exist. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!* as has been said before. Mr. Newton is now dead, and to the world at large the controversy which raged around him has long lost its interest; but to many of the [Plymouthists](#) it is still of importance, and divides them. It does more than divide, for the [Darbyites](#) refuse to acknowledge such Newtonites as exist, and even the [Müllerites](#).

[Plymouthism](#) took its rise in Coventry forty years since. Five persons, impressed with the truth of the movement which not very long before had earned considerable notice in Dublin and Plymouth principally, and which, curiously enough, has commended itself to large numbers of retired army officers, seceded from Cow-lane chapel. The high Calvinistic doctrine preached there at the time had probably prepared the way for [Brethrenism](#), but the Five also stepped forth with the liberalising demand that the holding of a particular set of opinions ought to bar no Christian from drawing nigh to the Lord's Table. They also, of course, held strong views as to an established ministry. The late Mr. S. Dolby built the room – the places of public worship are invariably called rooms – in Cherry-street. This is still the meeting spot; but to distinguish the body from those gathering in Hales-street and elsewhere, it is needful to call them the [Open Brethren](#), or [Müllerites](#), for they take the view of the Bristol philanthropist as to the dispute which long ago rent the sect. The morning gathering of [Brethren](#) of all sorts is called a meeting for worship and breaking of bread; the evening service is announced as “preaching the word.” The latter meeting, which I attended at Cherry-street, and found some fifty people present, is in character similar to what may be witnessed in many a chapel and mission room, consisting as it does of singing, prayer, reading, and an address. The service was throughout conducted (the word is, I hope, inoffensive) by a local gentleman. In commencing his discourse, I noticed he said, “Let us look at a few scriptures” – certainly an unusual expression. The address was couched in simple language, and was clearly addressed to an audience who were assumed to need what Calvinists and others call conversion. The hymnal used was “Hymns for Worship,” and the singing was unaccompanied by instrumental music; indeed I have heard of people getting rid of such “vanities” in their own homes when they have joined the sect. The notices given out included prayer meetings on three of the four succeeding evenings and “a fellowship tea party” between two of the devotional engagements. The majority of the congregation brought their

Bibles with them, *and used them*. Ordinarily, on Sundays, there is an early prayer meeting, worship, and preaching; prayer meetings on two week nights and on a third evening, “reading the scriptures, &c.” The public may care to have a Statement of the Cherry-street faith, as it is put forth by the congregation: – “The Christians assembling here, gather together in the name of the Lord Jesus, and simply as brethren in Christ, their bond of union being the possession of eternal life in the Son of God, the risen Christ; and their principle of communion, loving subjection to Him as the head of the Church. They desire to take the Lord Jesus Christ as their rule of life, and the entire Word of God as their rule of faith. They recognize the supreme Lordship of Christ over the Church which is His body, and they hold the presence, power, and guidance of the Holy Ghost in the Church as all-sufficient for ministry, worship, service, order, and discipline.”

What impresses me about the Statement is this, that it would be readily accepted by thousands of people who do not call themselves [Brethren](#), and who are not constrained to forsake the paths wherein they now walk. As a definition of faith the Statement is inadequate. It says nothing about the rejection of a set ministry, nor of the rejection of infant baptism; though all congregations of [Brethren](#) reject one or the other, and some both.

An account of a Sunday morning with the [Exclusive](#) section at Hales-street room is reserved for another article.

UNORTHODOX COVENTRY.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

VIII. – **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN**: BREAKING BREAD IN HALES STREET.

The **Darbyite**, or **Exclusive**, section of **Plymouthists**, derive their name from a Mr. J. N. Darby, one of the earliest, as he was one of the best-known, **Brethren**. He was first of all a barrister, moving in the highest circles of society, then became an English clergyman and did a notable work among the people of county Wicklow. Subsequently, he left the Church, and preached in several tongues on the Continent. When Mr. Newton (who, it appears, is still living) published his views to the world about the year 1847, Mr. Darby vigorously opposed what he deemed a dangerous error, and he and his adherents, who became known as **Darbyites**, separated from the fellowship of those who maintained or even refused to condemn it. Cherry-street meeting did not become **Exclusive**; the people there said, with Mr. Müller, that a congregation ought not to be called upon to judge those **Brethren** who thought with Mr. Newton; and there was no **Exclusive** congregation in the city until about a dozen years ago. That had its origin not in any secession from the meeting already established, but through some persons coming fresh to Coventry, though a few of the present members used to belong to Cherry-street. A room was opened in Hales-street, still the centre of the activities of this body.

The meeting for worship and breaking of bread is held on Sundays at 10.30 a.m. On the morning of my visit there was a company of some seventy persons, six-sevenths of them being women, seated on benches left of the gangway. These were exclusively [Plymouthists](#), for whom the morning gathering is, as will be seen, entirely intended. On the other side were a few adults and some children: these were people not in communion; and in some places the unconverted are separated from the saints by a cord being drawn across the room. At Cherry-street there is a small pulpit, but here not the vestige of a platform of any sort is to be seen. Its absence was, I suppose, to teach the absolute equality of Christians – a doctrine which a notable politician gave his adhesion to when he said, “In the Church and at the polling booth all men are equal.” At the far end of the room a table was spread with a white cloth, and bore a small loaf on an ordinary dinner plate, and a bottle partly filled with wine. The bread and the wine were, of course, necessary provision for the due administration of the Lord’s Supper, which [Brethren](#), distinguished in that respect among Protestant Dissenters, participate in weekly. I do not know if there was any preconcerted arrangement as to carrying on the worship, but the men who sat nearest the table prayed and read chapters from the Bible apparently quite spontaneously, or “as they were moved.” Hymns were given out in the same way, the book used being “A Few Hymns and some Spiritual Songs, selected 1856, for the Little Flock.” All the [Brethren](#) here, too, were well provided with Bibles, and a stranger without a copy of the Scriptures was soon put in possession of one. In due time came the special object of the morning assembly, the “breaking of bread.” This was done in very homely style, contrasting immensely, of course, with the gorgeous ritual of the Roman Mass, and even with the English Church service of celebration. One of the leaders stepped up to the table, broke the loaf into several pieces, offered prayer, and then partook of some bread. The plate was passed from hand to hand, and each member helped himself or herself to a portion, literally “breaking” it off the loaf. The vessel then containing

the wine (a glass jug) went round in the same manner, as the people sat in their seats. Neither one element or the other was offered to that portion of the congregation which was in the outer court of the sanctuary. Another hymn was sung, with everybody sitting, and the service may be said to have closed. It is at this time the names of intending and accepted brethren are read, and the announcement this morning was that “our dear Brother — desires fellowship at the Lord’s Table with us.” Further, help of “the dear saints” present was asked for some sick persons belonging to the body. Then all the meeting uprose, and several minutes were given over to general conversation before the members quitted the room.

On the week-day evening I went to the room to hear Mr. W. Kelly discourse on “The Church of God as it became in man’s hands, with our responsibility according to Scripture.” Mr. Kelly is a well-known leader among the [Exclusives](#); hence he spoke with authority as to the views of the section. The address was long and argumentative, but did not seem to me sufficiently clear to be “understood of the people,” unless it were assumed that all the congregation were steeped in biblical lore and in the doctrines of [Plymouthism](#). Briefly, Mr. Kelly’s position appeared to be this – the [Brethren](#) of Hales-street meet as the Church of God in this city; they add nothing to the statements of the Bible, and simply follow the apostolic precepts: but the English Church, Presbyterians, Baptists, &c., have all formed mere “denominations,” and made conditions of membership other than those of primitive Christianity. Herein was the break-up of the Church of God. Then he denounced the promiscuous gathering of saints with the world for worship, preachers preaching for fees (each according to his value), and collections from unchristian people for religious work. The other point of interest was when he said he was sorry that they themselves (meaning [Brethren](#)) had not escaped the break-up, “but woe to those whose fault it is that hinder and do not do all that can

be done to repair any mistake of that kind; and if there be anything in which we are (*sic*), the Lord reveal it." Some responses of "Hear, hear" followed, and it would be very interesting to hear the [Open Brethren](#) in reply. Mr. Kelly, knowing at least one weakness of [Plymouthism](#), concluded by giving some advice to his fellow-members as to dealing with a person of evil life in "the assembly." A Christian had no right to withdraw until the assembly had declined to judge, and, having judged, to exclude. This is the offence of the [Müllerites](#): they refuse to judge the heresies of Mr. Newton; *ergo*, the [Exclusives](#) cannot meet them around the one Table of the common Lord.

In the article on the [Open Brethren](#) five official divisions of the sects of [Plymouthists](#) were named, "but the fundamental principle of the [Exclusives](#), 'separation from evil God's principle of unity,' has led to many unimportant excommunications and separations"; and for a few months in the year 1881 there met a third section in Coventry. They had a room in King-street, were in fellowship with [Brethren](#) at Kenilworth, Leamington, and elsewhere, and received help from a Mr. Crowley, who just before had lived at Leamington. Mr. Crowley, I believe, accepted the baptism of infants, but I do not know how far his peculiar tenets have been received by [Brethren](#). To get information of this sort, and indeed as to many other matters affecting the sect as a whole, is very difficult, owing to the independent position each meeting holds, and the non-existence of any central authority acknowledged by all. Mr. Crowley, I remember, used to make large free distributions of literature through the post.

[Brethren](#) complain that they are greatly misunderstood and falsely judged. They should take more frequent opportunities of letting the world know what they are and what is their position. The question is asked by people outside, wherein do the two local sections materially differ? In doctrine they are one, in order and government are the same. Yet the Hales-street [Exclusives](#) excommunicate

the Cherry-street people, for they have defiled themselves by implied association with Mr. Newton, and would not admit them to fellowship except in the same way as they admit persons coming from elsewhere. They have no dealings with [Open Plymouthists](#), they apply with more intensity than any other of the two hundred and fifty “denominations” in England to-day the old Puritan doctrine which led to half the schisms, that the visible Church of Christ consists only of faithful men and women, and that every means must be taken to keep from the sheepfold those who do not properly belong to it. I endeavoured to gather from a member something as to how the separation of [Plymouthists](#) from the evil was made more complete on their part than on the part of other religious bodies. The reply was that the former took less active part in worldly affairs. For instance, [Brethren](#) feel at liberty as citizens of this world to vote at elections of national and local members, but not to actively mix up in the strife of general political work. I put the question whether they might not, by shrinking from association with the crowd outside, lose opportunities for the exercise of an influence making for righteousness. He replied that that might be the case, but then he fell back on the inner light given to the elect which would, in God’s good time, bring the kingdoms into The Way. The earliest adherents of [Plymouthism](#) were found in the English Church; in Coventry they were not, and such ‘verts as now sustain the local meetings come almost entirely from Dissent. I fancy a Sunday morning with the [Brethren](#) is among the strangest of experiences in Unorthodox Coventry, but the curious visitor will do well to keep his mind fixed on two things – the contention that “this is primitive Christianity, this is the Christianity of the Catacombs”; and that a fundamental principle is separation from even the appearance of evil.

UNORTHODOX COVENTRY: [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

Sir, – Since the publication of Article No. 8, entitled “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” many enquiries have been made respecting certain statements contained in that article, imputing uncleanness to the Cherry-street congregation. It is stated “The question is asked by people outside, wherein do the two local sections (viz., Cherry-street and Hales-street) materially differ. In doctrine they are one, in order and government are the same. Yet the Hales-street [Exclusives](#) excommunicate the Cherry-street people, for they have defiled themselves by implied association with Mr. Newton.” Kindly allow me an opportunity to contradict the latter part of such statement as utterly void of truth, so far as the Cherry-street gathering is concerned. As to the unscriptural doctrine imputed to Mr. Newton by his [Exclusive](#) judges, the Cherry-street people do not deny; but to say that the Cherry-street people have either accepted Mr. Newton’s views, or associated with him, is wrong. The care manifested by the Cherry-street people for purity of doctrine in their midst, has kept them free from the defiling error said to characterise Mr. Newton’s teaching. From the commencement of the Cherry-street gathering they have no knowledge of receiving into their fellowship either Mr. Newton or any one else holding similar doctrines to those imputed to Mr. Newton by the [Exclusives](#); therefore, the defilement alluded to could not possibly be contracted by the Cherry-street people in the way stated. Is it not because the Cherry-street people firmly refuse to wear the [Darbyite](#) yoke and take part with the [Exclusives](#) in the bitter and disgraceful strife in which they have been engaged for the past forty years, “dividing, judging, scattering, and excommunicating” their fellow believers on every hand, that renders the Cherry-street people so unclean in the judgment of their [Exclusive](#)

[Brethren](#)? Both history and experience in matters of discipline have taught those taking the oversight in the gathering at Cherry-street that their duty is to watch constantly against doubtful doctrines, and evil men too, who do not spare the flock, and if possible keep them both outside their fellowship. The Cherry-street people have so much in common with their fellow Christians generally that they refrain from any interference on their part with other assemblies. At the same time, they are equally willing to help their fellow-believers in any trial, difficulty, or sorrow that may overtake them, but they do not think it either wise or profitable to condemn every fellow Christian who does not willingly accept their views of truth.

The Saviour washed His disciples' feet, but is it not a painful sight to witness men professing to know so much of His truth, yet so destitute of His grace? It seems to afford the [Exclusives](#) pleasure, rather than sorrow. If at any time they happen to find out any defiled feet, instead of washing them, they expose them by holding them up to the world's gaze and calling attention to them. Such conduct is said to be a denial of the true spirit of the Master and quite destitute of Christian love one to another.

FREDK. ROSE.

Sunny-bank, Stoney Stanton-road.

A STRANGE EXCOMMUNICATION. – The body called by the general public “the [Plymouth Brethren](#),” but by themselves “the Assembly of God,” have recently expelled from their society a young girl for reasons not stated in the letter of excommunication, which is as follows: – “Dunbar, 97 High Street, January 23rd, 1889. – The Assembly of God in Dunbar have to inform you that you are no longer in fellowship with the Saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The honour of God and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit demands at the hands of the Assembly the exclusion of you from it. It is a solemn thing to be put outside the Assembly of God, and ought to be thought of as such by you. God has a habitation on earth, and you have been excluded from it; distance and reserve towards you, of the whole household which has put you outside as a wicked person, becomes each one who remains in it, who knows and honours that house and the God who dwells there. – In behalf of the Assembly. – GEO. SCOTT.”

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

They undoubtedly have among them many excellent men and women, and they also undoubtedly hold to a great deal of important truth, they have been singularly unfortunate, dividing up into little cliques and often quarrelling with each other in a most vehement manner, thus illustrating division rather than the unity for which our Divine Lord so ardently prayed. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in some respects at least they have helped very much to call attention to important neglected truths; and consequently, while they may have {sic} done harm in some directions, we should all be thankful for the good they have done in other respects. – *Christian Commonwealth*.

{The *Christian Commonwealth* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

A PLYMOUTH BROTHER AND HIS SERMON.

CURIOUS CASE AT HARTLEPOOL.

Yesterday at the Hartlepool County Court Jas. Gowland, printer, West Hartlepool, sued John Bryan, general dealer, Northgate, to recover 6s, balance of an account. Plaintiff proved that defendant ordered from him 1,000 copies of a sermon, entitled "A Few Thoughts on the Christian's Final Perseverance from Apostacy," by the late Henry Bryan, of Stockton-on-Tees. Plaintiff said the agreement was that the sermon should be put into eight pages, the 1,000 copies to cost 32s. After the matter was set up defendant made a few alterations, and increased the number of pages to twelve, for which he agreed to pay an extra 4s. When the account was sent in defendant paid 30s, and refused to pay the balance. – Mr Bastow, plaintiff's agent, said he collected the money from defendant, who when called, said he had lost the account. Witness referred to his book to ascertain the amount of the account, and it being dark at the time, he made a mistake, and told defendant the debt was 30s instead of 36s. Defendant then said he would pay if witness would give him a receipt, and write upon it, "In full settlement of account." He did so, and subsequently finding he had made a mistake he applied for the balance, but defendant refused to pay, reminding him that he had a fully settled bill. – In reply to the Judge, defendant admitted that he made the alterations referred to, and increased the number of pages, but denied that there were more than nine pages. Plaintiff met this by producing a copy of the pamphlet, which proved the correctness of his evidence. – His Honour gave judgment for plaintiff, with costs.

Not satisfied with the notoriety which the faith-healing business gave to Dunoon for a time, a new religious body has now taken a hold of the place, and started the ancient institution of baptism by the sea shore. Only last Thursday a female convert to the beliefs of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) was led down to the beach on the West Bay, where, having got into a bathing gown, she waded into the water and was ducked by one of the [brethren](#) amid praying and the singing of hymns. A large number of people, curious to see the extraordinary ceremony, thronged to the beach, and the multitude of women present probably numbered more than ever witnessed the baptism of Lydia, the seller of purple, by Paul in the river near Philippi on a certain Sabbath-Day ever so many years ago. Whether the Clyde is to become as famous in religious history as did the Jordan it is rather premature to say, but as Dunoon is periodically carried away by some new sensation, it is not at all unlikely that we may hear shortly that the Provost and Magistrates, with a great multitude of the ratepayers, were baptised with much pomp and dignity at the mouth of the Balgay Burn.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Contributions to this column are invited from our readers. So far as possible we shall endeavour to reply to questions asked, but we prefer the answer coming from an outside source.

All enquiries and answers must be accompanied by the name of the writer, but not necessarily for publication.

Communications must be marked on the outside – “Notes and Queries.”

{...}

QUERIES.

{...}

882. – [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

Can any reader give me a short account of the origin and creed of the religious body known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#)?

EVANGELICAL, Christchurch.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

{...}

ANSWERS.

{...}

882. – [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

The following facts may be of some use to “Evangelical”: – In 1829 a Mr. Groves was preparing for the ministry of the Irish Church, at Trinity College, Dublin. While there he met a few sincere Christians, and they banded themselves together for the purpose of prayer and reading the Bible. They adopted peculiar views, such as holding that believers were at liberty to break bread together, without an ordained ministry. In 1831 meetings of a like character were held at Plymouth, in which W. Newton, Dr. Tregallas {sic}, and others took part. In 1831 Mr. Müller and Mr. Craik held meetings at Bristol. They held that Christians from all religious bodies could meet together for worship without in any way being called a sect. In 1845 the first “split” {sic} took place. Mr. Darby, an Irish clergyman, and Mr. Newton, a Fellow of New College, Oxford, were leaders of the [Brethren](#). It was discovered that their views were opposed to one another on the subject of Christ’s second coming. Mr. Darby believed that Christ would secretly come *before* the manifestation of Antichrist. Mr. Newton, on the contrary, held it would be *after*. Mr. Newton afterwards issued a pamphlet on our

“Lord’s Humanity.” This was condemned as teaching error. He was cut off from the body, and afterwards formed a congregation at Bayswater.

The second “split” was in consequence of Mr. Darby denying fellowship to Mr. Müller and his supporters at Bristol because they would not condemn Mr. Newton. Other separations have since taken place, and so the views of the divisions are *somewhat* opposed to each other, but may be said to embrace the following: –

1. They believe that the Church must be composed only of holy members.
2. As each member is anointed with and taught by the Holy Ghost, it is unscriptural to have ordained ministers.
3. As it has been declared that “the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,” it is useless for an unconverted person to pray to God.
4. As real believers have the Holy Ghost dwelling within them, they do not pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit.
5. As they have been fully forgiven, there need be no confession of sin.
6. Christians are not now under the Moral Law, but under the resurrection life of Jesus Christ as their rule of life.

The above are a few of the more striking doctrines of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The body of the late Mr. Darby is buried in Bournemouth Cemetery.

“X,” Blandford.

The Globe, London, 22 Mar 1890, p. 6, Church Notes

A rather unusual instance of religious fraternisation is reported from India. The Bishop of Calcutta was on a visit to Agra, and there joined with Mr. George Müller, the British philanthropist, who is a [Plymouth Brother](#), in holding evangelistic services for English-speaking Hindoos.

The Pall Mall Gazette, London, 29 Mar 1890, p. 6

THE BISHOP AND THE [PLYMOUTH BROTHER](#).

The spirit of fraternity, which seems so difficult to compass at home, is often strikingly illustrated in the mission-field. The *Record* hears that the Bishop of Calcutta, during a recent visit to Agra, joined with Mr. George Müller, of Bristol, in holding some evangelistic services for English-speaking Hindoos. It is not often that the Anglican and the [Plymouth Brother](#) are found working hand-in-hand.

{The *Record* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY IN BRACKNELL. – We have received the following from a correspondent, and in publishing it wish it to be understood that we do not thereby endorse all that it expresses, as we are always desirous of according religious freedom to all sects: – “Although the inhabitants of Bracknell are well provided with Churches and various other places of worship there are some zealous persons who think there is still lack of religious instruction. For the size of the town and number of its population we should think Bracknell could rank with any place for the efficiency of its pastoral supervision. There are at the present time about six distinct denominations represented; the last on the list being the “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” who, under the direct patronage of Lady Keane and Lady Piggot, try to swell their ranks by personal canvassing, holding forth as an argument that the doctrines set forth by them are a sure way to redemption. There {sic} meetings are held on Sundays in a travelling theatre now standing in Bracknell, and on Saturday evenings an open-air meeting in the High-street. The motive no doubt is good, but at the same time persons with families do not care to have them disturbed about 9 p.m.{.} by singing more loud than musical, and of all places the High-street seems to be a dangerous place for collecting a crowd, especially on a Saturday evening, when the traffic is much heavier, and there are more people about than on other evenings. No doubt there is room for improvement among the Bracknellites (as in every other place), but I think little good will ensue from the exertions of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) while conducted on the same lines as at present. The way of trying to do good should not make them a nuisance to their neighbours.”

The Reading Observer, 21 Jun 1890, p. 8, Bracknell

RELIGIOUS INACTIVITY IN BRACKNELL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE READING OBSERVER."

SIR, – In this week's edition of the *Reading Observer* there is a paragraph under the heading of religious activity in Bracknell in which certain comments are made upon the conduct of some ladies for introducing the people called Brethren into Bracknell. It is quite true that there are now some five Nonconformist causes in this village, but some of them are very small, feeble folk, and in a languishing condition, not able to take any aggressive action, or exercising little (if any) religious influence among the people. Such being the case I can see no great harm in these ladies bringing the Brethren into the village, although, personally, I am not an admirer of the Brethren's tactics, as a rule. Yet almost anything (even the Salvation Army) rather than this existing luke-warmness, which seems to have fallen upon Nonconformity in Bracknell, whose chief aim appears to me to be more care for their own *isms* than for spreading the glorious gospel of Christ, or reclaiming men from a life of sin. Why then this "dog in the manger" policy? Personally, I would welcome any religious movement which will do the work, which we as Nonconformists seem unable to do, namely, bring the people to Christ.

Yours truly,

W. WALKER.

Bracknell, June 16th, 1890.

[It should be understood that by publishing the above we do not endorse the writer's reflections upon the Nonconformist bodies in Bracknell. – *Ed. R. O.*]

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE READING OBSERVER."

SIR, – In your last impression their {sic} appeared a letter from a correspondent in reference to the street preaching by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) (or Bible Christians). As one who has occasionally attended the meetings I should like to say a word, though I am in no way connected with the [Brethren](#). First, your correspondent says there are already six sects in the place. Well, no matter if there were a dozen, or if they were as numerous as the public houses, if spiritual good is being done, as there are inhabitants enough in the town to fill all places. The writer speaks contemptuously about preaching in the Theatre, but in our large towns and cities that is often done. Mr. Spurgeon for many years preached at the Surrey Gardens, and the Baptist and Methodist both preach in the open in this village. Your correspondent also complains that the singing is more loud than musical. In this he must certainly be making a false statement, as it is the almost unanimous opinion that the singing is very harmonious; and with such a well-trained choir, under the personal supervision of Lady Pigott (a lady most highly competent), there is nothing to complain of in that department. He also says that the singing and service at 9 at night is very objectionable to families and their children. In reply to that we would leave the public to judge which is worse, to hear Sankey's hymns being sung at nine, or at a later hour hearing the bawling and shouting of persons after they leave the drinking saloons, the barking of a score of dogs, etc, and the horrible screaming of the whistle pipe from the engine of the steam-roundabouts in the fair field.

There is one part of your correspondent's letter with which I am in full accord, and at issue with the [Brethren](#) – that is their personal canvassing. Through their so doing a prejudice and ill-feeling against them has been caused by the other Churches (my own denomination has been partly robbed).

In conclusion, I must add I think it unfair for any one to attempt to raise a stumbling block against the evangelistic work of these ladies, who (at great personal sacrifice) are doing a grand and glorious work in this neighbourhood.

Yours truly,

AN INHABITANT.

High-street, Bracknell, June 18th, 1890.

The Reading Observer, 30 Aug 1890, p. 2

CROWTHORNE.

EVANGELISTS. – This village received a visit on Monday evening in the persons of Lady Piggott and Lady Keane, of Bracknell. These ladies of title have entered upon a mission of making excursions to the neighbouring villages to endeavour to evangelise the people. They belong, we believe, to the sect called the "[Plymouth Brethren](#)." They are accompanied by a harmonium; their singing and playing are excellent, and proved very attractive, sufficient to draw large audiences.

Leicester Chronicle, 19 Jul 1890, p. 7

SALVATION ARMY "MANŒUVRES." – On Sunday evening a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) persuasion was "holding forth" in the Bull-ring. At the same time the Salvation Army, who had held three open-air meetings during the day, came singing along Field-street from their barracks, and marched straight into the Bull-ring and held a service. Naturally the [Plymouth Brother](#) was not proof against the "troops," so he quietly waited until the noisy demonstration was at an end, and then had his "say." It is a matter of regret, says a correspondent, that Sunday in Shepshed has become the most turbulent of the whole week.

The Trades Council people had another meeting on Sunday evening, and they were not a little surprised to find a contingent of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) occupying the ground they have previously taken their stand on. The [Brethren](#) have as much right to the sea brows as the Trades Council, or any other Council, but an impression was abroad on Sunday that their meeting had been arranged in opposition to the royalty meeting. A member was taxed with it, but he denied the charge; he admitted that they knew there was to be another meeting, but they did not know the exact spot, and they did not enquire. However, it was pleasing to know that the meeting was not in opposition to the royalty meeting, and as for the spot, there is plenty of room down there for a good many meetings.

CURIOUS RELIGIOUS SECTS.

It appears from the returns of the Registrar-General that the number of religious denominations in England and Wales is at this time 251. Some of the names are not very familiar in the general ear, as: "The Army of the King's Own," "The Loving Brethren," "The Congregation of the Son of the Covenant," "The Dependants," "The Glassites," "King Jesus's Army," and "The [Open Brethren](#)." Worshipers of Mahomet figure both under the titles of "Moslems" and of "Church of Islam." It appears from the list that "Believers in Johanna Southcott" still assemble for worship.

STONEHOUSE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

Sir, – Eight years ago a few Christian brethren came to preach the gospel in Stonehouse. A large crowd was gathered, and a few converted. Later on a meeting was constituted, the principal actor being a Mr Blackburn. The doctrines of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were warmly advocated by the above. A slight description might be given of what they are and how [Plymouth Brethren](#) preach, there being many very intelligent men amongst them: –

1st. To meet and break bread every Sabbath.

2nd. To receive any simple word any Brother might say for the Lord.

3rd. To have no man as their minister as a set thing, and giving no wages for preaching.

4th. To have a black bag into which each member puts his collection, none knowing what he gives.

5th. To put away all persons who are disorderly who may be amongst them, and keep out those who would come in.

6th. To settle nothing unless they be all in one mind, and to ignore no one in the assembly.

7th. To settle everything by the Bible, and allow no man to say that he upholds the church and its work.

8th. To have overseers who look after the weak ones, and tenderly care for them, and not be one-sided.

9th. Not to allow women to speak in the church, or guide its affairs.

10th. To keep down the appearance of pride in the assembly, no one preaching in black cloaks or white bands.

11th. To speak well of one another, and not rail with threats, lies, and cruel remarks.

I am sorry to say these principles are not always carried out.

SAVED BY GRACE.

Stonehouse.

The Hamilton Herald, 23 Jan 1891, p. 3, The Voice of the People

STONEHOUSE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

Sir, – I was much surprised at a letter appearing in your last issue anent the small band of Christians who meet regularly in the neat but unpretending-looking hall in Hill Road, Stonehouse. Judging from the epistle of “Saved by Grace,” a lame attempt has been made to give outsiders like myself a “peep behind the scenes.” In other words, some despicable fault-finder wishes to bring disgrace upon some of Christ’s people, at the expense of peace of conscience. Such moral courage might have been admired by me had the substance of the letter and the *nom-de-plume* which the letter bears not

shown the utter ignorance of the writer, and therefore, instead of admiration, he has my sincerest sympathy. I do not believe in the principles of the [Brethren](#), but I certainly cannot be silent when one tries to malign a body of Christians that have done, and are doing unmistakable good in the village. I wonder if "Saved by Grace" ever had a connection with a theatre before conversion (?), as the dignified and responsible position of "principal actor," having been denied him, is still retained in his memory. Mr A. G. Blackburn, who has so ably and energetically conducted the meetings of the [Brethren](#) for many years, is well known to all the villagers, both old and young. Although he does not recognise the tenets of our churches, it does not take from us – as villagers – the esteem and good wishes which all bear towards him in the good work he is carrying on. The "slight description" given by "Saved by Grace," in the form of eleven rules, clearly proves the superficial knowledge he has of the principles and doctrines of the [Brethren](#), and it is perhaps well he has qualified the meagre details of the Hall Christians by the word "slight." The fourth rule which is given runs thus: – "To have a black bag into which each member puts his collection, none knowing what he gives." I have no doubt the same black bag would be a god-send to persons such as "Saved by Grace." One would presume on reading the fourth rule, or principle, that the men were the only contributors to the black bag, even as they are the only members who are allowed to speak. [See rule 9th]. This, however, is not the case, as it is a well-known fact the women have the same facility for contributing to the support of the church; and they do it, I understand, willingly. "Saved by Grace" closes his letter by saying, "These principles are not always carried out," which convinces us that he either belongs to the [Brethren](#), or was one of their number, but out of party spleen, he tries to traduce those who befriended him in his early piety days. Since he has sought the medium of your valuable paper to air his grievances, particularly those relating to his religious vows and beliefs, he has given public proof that he, at least, has not kept the principles of the [Brethren](#). Every church has its petty

quarrels and petty strifes – even the Salvation Army is not void of such; but we do not rush into print when our elders or deacons consider it their duty to sit on judgment on one of our number. Many of us would be too glad to have the affair healed as quietly and Christianlike as possible. In conclusion, I would recommend “Saved by Grace,” if he wishes to bear this appellation in a true sense, to read, and put into practice, the 3rd, 30th, and 31st verses of the 4th chapter of Ephesians. – I am, &c.,

“NIHIL.”

Glasgow, January 20.

The Hamilton Herald, 30 Jan 1891, p. 7, The Voice of the People

STONEHOUSE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

Sir, – As the public are all so anxious to know why we left the [Brethren](#), I would like if you would publish these few causes, and if any more be wanted they can be had on application. (1,) Because there was a meeting held to ordain who was to carry on the gospel work – whom you may call a minister. The meeting commenced, and all passed their opinion on who was to be their minister. After all had passed their opinion on the business, one brother rose up and proposed a show of hands, which was very inconsistent with the Word of God; therefore, he was ordered to sit down, and not not {sic} to do the like again. (2,) Because one of us was called a railer {sic}, for simply telling a man about his debts, and that he was in a bad position through not getting them paid up.

(3,) Because we were called the trash of the meeting, not worthy of fellowship. (4,) Because one of the Brethren passed the cup by one of us without a cause. (5,) Because there is a brother in the meeting who was for fighting his brother, and threatens till this day that he will take him to the Court. (6,) Because there is a brother who carries on one man ministry, and yet speaks against it. – I am yours,

“NO REST FOR THE WICKED.”

Dear Sir, – I read with great interest “Nihil’s” letter which appeared in your valuable paper last week and were it not for the sole purpose of giving an explanation to the surrounding meetings as to the reason we have separated ourselves from the meeting in Hill Road, we would count it beneath us to give one moment’s consideration to a rebuke from “Nihil,” whose blundering method of giving it is only equalled by his complete ignorance in talking of a class of people and their transactions, the private details of which he knows nothing about, though he goes to the Latin dictionary for a sentence or two, hoping thereby to impress us with his educational ability. He says that some despicable fault-finder wishes to bring disgrace upon Christ’s people. Well, if it is bringing disgrace upon Christians, to quote eleven rules which they advocate publicly from the platform, it is high time that they should cast them overboard, and take principles, the hearing of which causes no affront to them. I wonder where “Nihil” learned his logic. I suppose logic is the art of learning, well, I would advise “Nihil,” along with his lessons on Latin, to get a few on logic, and then he might make his mark as a critic. His next remark of note is that the Hill Road Christians have done, and are doing, a great amount of good in the village. Well if it is doing good to the village to call Ministers of Christ the dregs of popery, the elders milestones that point the road they never go themselves; the

hearers and members, the crowd that is travelling the broad road that ends in death; the Kirk buildings temples of Baal; the Lanarkshire Christian Union a congregation of confusion – if this kind of comparison is doing good, they richly deserve “Nihil’s” admiration. We have heard it said that like draws to like, so we may clearly understand “Nihil’s” views, and if he is a member of a church and thinks in this way, we would advise him to ask fellowship next week with the Christians in the Hill Road, where he would get airing his views, but if his ideas of honesty are really good, we fear that he and some of the overseers will not agree. Perhaps “Nihil” is a grocer, or maybe he works as a clothier; if so, there is an opening for him. But when a square up is required by him from some of the deacons and overseers then I have no doubt the treatment he gets will cause him to change his mind in regard to some of them. “Nihil” says he cannot be silent when one tries to malign a company of men who are doing good. Mr “Nihil,” this remark made me smile; my memory at once brought up an instance wherein I heard a father curse and swear at his son for being so wicked as to curse and swear at somebody else. Dear “Nihil,” you should not malign anybody though they are maligners. Then “Nihil” wonders if “Saved by Grace” ever had connection with a theatre, as the dignified and responsible position of principal actor having been denied him is still retained in his memory. Dear “Nihil,” you are completely at sea; none of us ever asked to be principal actor but one, and that one was Mr Blackburn; and when denied this monopoly of the Lord’s work he calmly said that the doors would be closed. As far as ability was concerned he deserved it, but such a position for any brother to step into would be scorned in every meeting except the Hill-Road one, as the principles on which they are gathered out on are so strictly opposed to even the resemblance of such a thing – an error which he was checked for committing in Larkhall meeting many years ago. Then “Nihil” says that the slight description only shows the superficial knowledge he has. Dear Mr “Nihil,” allow me to say that every word in those eleven rules is true, and I have been 7½ years amongst them, and may also

say they are defended as the apple of their eye; so your sarcasm has wretchedly failed here. Then “Nihil” says that one in reading the fourth rule would think that men were the only contributors to the black bag. Dear Mr “Nihil,” I will give you an advice. Take this paper in your hand, and put twopence in your pocket, then walk out to the street, and stop the first little girl you meet, under eight years, and show her the fourth rule, which says that they have a black bag into which each member puts his collection; then ask her what that means, when she will tell you that it means everybody in the meeting; then ask what it means by paying his collection, when she will tell you that, in scripture language, the whole human family is spoken of as mankind, and that when Eve transgressed and fell – being the first transgressor – and Adam fell also; yet it was spoken of as the Fall of Man. To see in these instances is not defended. Dear “Nihil” {sic} after getting thus enlightened, pay your twopence, and be thankful for getting the worth of it; and here is an old proverb for you to think over, which says, “He that answereth before he heareth a matter is a fool.” We now give our reasons for leaving the meeting, for the benefit of brethren in the surrounding meetings. (1st,) – Because the meeting refused to forgive an old brother who made a misstatement about another brother, even when he was sorry for it; although he had to forgive some of them for saying that he should get his grey beard torn from his face and crammed down his throat, and, that he should get his teeth smashed down his throat, and many other remarks like these. We may say that Mr Blackburn forgave this brother, the rest refusing to forgive. (2nd,) Because brethren wanted us to be subject to them as overseers and deacons whose transactions in business could not receive testimony from neither a grocer, butcher, baker, nor yet a cloth merchant in the town. But we have no doubt their minister will be a faithful preacher to them, as he is a real gentleman, and hates meanness. In the meantime we return to the pastors of our youth, hoping the Lord will bless them when the troubles are gone. – I am, &c.

EXPERIENCE TEACHES KNOWLEDGE.

STONEHOUSE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

Sir, – With reference to the above subject being discussed through the columns of your paper at present, I would beg from you space for one single letter. In your issue of 30th January I notice a letter signed “No rest for the wicked,” which to me was really startling. The writer goes on to say “As the public are all so anxious to know why we left the [Brethren](#), I would like if you would publish these few causes, and if any more be wanted they can be had on application.” Now, sir, I would feel satisfied if N.R.F.T.W. can prove this statement, for I am in the belief that it is without foundation, and only shows how far he can exaggerate. Does N.R.F.T.W. think that by coming to the papers with personalities he will have the sympathy of the public? No. Allow me to tell him that he is losing ground when he adopts such methods. Does he believe that the public are in sympathy with him? Perhaps he has been led to believe this, when he has been so far deluded as to think that all the public are interested in what he does along with others. In looking over the letter referred to one begins to wonder who the parties are that are leaving the [Brethren](#). I have read of parties leaving a denomination because of some doctrinal point on which they could not agree, but in this case we have nothing of the kind, in fact one of N.R.F.T.W.’s friends confirms that he is in sympathy with the doctrine and rules of the [P.B.](#) What can we do with such men? Usually such men are not heeded. When one reads over the reasons “why N.R.F.T.W. left the [Brethren](#),” it is a hard thing for such a one to refrain from smiling; so childish are they that I do not think they are at all worthy of notice. As an outsider I will not venture on upholding the principles of the [P.B.](#), but certainly I admire the principle they have adopted regarding the letters that have been published by N.R.F.T.W. and “Experience

teaches knowledge." We sometimes use the words "Silence is golden," and may the [P.B.](#) of Hill Road find this to be the case, and outlive the molestations of N.R.F.T.W. & Co. Perhaps I would only aggravate him, but I trust not, and mean what I say. I would ask him, for the benefit of himself, and more especially for the cause we are all so anxious about, to withdraw from this paper controversy, and if he should I am sure he will gain a higher respect from his fellow-men, and will do more for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, for which I trust he is aiming. – I am, &c. ALPHA AND OMEGA.

Glasgow, 4-2-91.

SIR, – Pardon me for again encroaching on your paper, and accept my thanks, in anticipation of being allowed to reply to the letters which appeared in your last issue. Concerning the first, I reiterate what I said in my last letter, that the public press is an improper medium to air such religious grievances, which "No rest for the Wicked" complains of. The remedy can easily be found, and it is one which is taken by all sensible people, viz. – to leave the sect or church complained of and join one in which their growth in the Christian life will not be impaired or stunted. To me, the reasons assigned are, or ought to be, private, and they redound rather to the discredit of "No rest to the Wicked" and his associates, than to the [brethren](#) whom they have disagreed with. I fain would lay down my pen and be silent now, as a religious controversy benefits no one but the second letter signed, "Experience teaches Knowledge," which in future I will for brevity's sake designate "E.T.K.," requires the severest criticism and censure. Shade of departed Burns come and aid me! "O, wad some poo'er the giftie gae us, tae see oorsels as ithers see us." (This is Scotch; for poor "E.T.K.'s" special benefit.) If blunders have been committed by me in the remarks made in my last letter, I confess they must have arisen through misconception of the epistle of "Saved by Grace;" but my

ignorance is eclipsed completely by that of "E.T.K." His imaginative powers and misquotations are extraordinary. He apparently cannot distinguish a Latin sentence from one of pure English, and so has been impressed mightily with my educational ability, as he talks about some Latin sentences which occurred in my letter, but on referring to it again and he finds one, I will gladly pay the class fees for him in the Humanity Class of the university. Perhaps, Mr Editor, his copy of the *Herald* was rather different from the others. I forgive his want of knowledge in the laws and rules of syntax, which is so manifestly shown in his letter, but there is no excuse for inaccuracy of statements. The true spirit of "E.T.K." is evinced, when he has devoted five-sixths of his article in reply to mine, which he says is beneath their notice, and the remaining sixth "for the sole purpose of giving an explanation to the surrounding meetings as to the reason we have separated ourselves from the meeting in the Hill Road." In olden times the Knight Templars did not care to enter into combat with one of unequal strength, and I would have wished that "E.T.K.," was more worthy of a foeman's steel. As he would be aware before rushing into print that no member of the [Brethren](#) would demean himself to refute the statements he had made, he has considered the public would peacably accept the jargon of a seemingly garrulous man. He has been mistaken, however, as I do not possess the religious scruples of the [Brethren](#), and to the members of that band of Christians, as well as to all right thinking persons, I beg to be excused for again becoming a fool. The eleven rules, as given by a former writer in his slight description of the [Brethren](#), and the illogical remarks made by my well-meaning but superfluous adviser, will not certainly bring disgrace on those on whom it was intended to fall. I am shocked to find a man, professing to be a follower of Christ, throwing out insinuations of dishonesty against persons who were his former co-religionists. I care not what they have been before enlisting under the banner of Christ, as my Bible tells me, "whosoever will may come" – the harlot, the thief, the drunkard – all are welcome. Now, my dear unknown one, blind and

misguided for such a length of time, and I fear somewhat still, you have a little cause for rejoicing, since you see the error of your ways, and are able, with wider sympathies, to clasp in fellowship the hands of those whom you formerly considered “the dregs of popery,” “milestones that point the road they never go themselves.” I am much wider in my sympathy than you, as I can tolerate all faiths and beliefs if founded on the only principle which true religion knows – a belief in a personal Christ. I cannot, however, expect to go here and there for my religious instruction without hearing opinions which differ from mine, but the man who has the courage of his convictions and tells it out plainly and acts consistently, commands my respect and admiration. If Mr Blackburn does preach the doctrines which are stated by “E.T.K.” he forces no one to believe them, and if “E.T.K.” was impressed into a vague belief of these principles which he now condemns, I fail to see why the public should be pestered by such imbecility of decision, unless it be a case of the fox with the sour grapes. If a spirit of malignity was conveyed in my last letter, I apologise to “Saved by Grace:” but I fail to see it: evidently “E.T.K.” supposes everybody is tarred with the same stick as himself. The letter of “E.T.K.” is full of sage advice, and there is one – “You should not malign anybody, though they are maligners,” preceded by an anecdote about a father and son, which is an apt one.; {sic} the father represented by this same “E.T.K.,” and the son, the present writer. He surely has not forgotten the biblical story about the person who saw a mote in his brother’s eye, but remembered not the beam in his own. An outsider like myself, in reading the first letter, could come to no other conclusion than that the description of the [Brethren](#) was very slight. “E.T.K.” confirms the eleven rules by a confession that he held them as the apple of his eye for seven-and-a-half years. How “dull in the uptake” he must have been, to have taken all that time to understand them, and, when he did so, he is foolish enough to come to the public with a tirade against those whom he once regarded in the bonds of charity, expecting our sympathy, instead of which he merits our just contempt. “E.T.K.” has

a peculiar way of turning words round to suit himself, and bearing out others, which, to casual readers, would pass unheeded. His method of quotation resembles very much that adopted by the devil in the temptation of Christ, when that fallen angel quoted Psalm 91-11. He says, "Then "Nihil" says that one in reading the fourth rule, etc.," which is incorrect. What I did say was, "One would presume on reading the fourth rule, etc." However, as he seems not to distinguish the difference between an assumption and the statement of a fact, I will again forgive his grave inaccuracy, and thank him for corroborating my explanation of this same rule. Your proverb, like your former advices, is inappropriate, as I read your associate's letter, thought over it, and then answered. To explain your condition and ultimate future, if you persist in your unrighteous and uncharitable way, I refer you to the gospel of Matthew v. 22. We have had a long dissertation from E.T.K., {sic} who formerly belonged to the [Brethren](#), but has now gone back "to learn from the pastor of his youth." I am far mistaken, however, if any of our churches will be profited by him, unless he follows that faithful pastor's teaching. His spirit of raillery, which he possesses, is shown repeatedly in speaking of the members of the [Brethren](#), and, even if such statements were correct, which I misbelieve *in toto*, coming from a man such as E.T.K. appears to be, I would consider unchristian, and the person who has the effrontery to make them and yet call himself a Christian, Nihil at least has another name for him. Although I have not made such a profession in matters of religion as the late seceders from the [Brethren](#) have, yet I have not lost the sense of justice and toleration. The reasons given for leaving by both of last week's correspondents seem quite different, so that I judge from that their grievances are not mutual, and they are of such a nature that no right-thinking person will accept them as justifying the controversy. In closing his letter, E.T.K. pays a high compliment to Mr Blackburn, when he says – "We have no doubt their minister will be a faithful preacher to them, as he is a real gentleman, and hates meanness." Is this consistent with his previous remarks about this

gentleman? The public is not so blind as not to see the absurdity and inconsistency which permeate both letter and writer. Further he says, "In the meantime, we return to the pastors of our youth, hoping the Lord will bless them when the troubles are gone." What does he imply by this? Have they brought their troubles to our churches and our pastors, and wish the divine blessing to descend only when they have again taken their departure, which I trust will be soon, if this is his meaning? Or, perhaps, he means that the [Brethren](#), since they have been graciously relieved of their obnoxious presence, may be blessed and prospered in the good work which they are engaged in. If so, his wish is also mine. There is only one thing I wish to remind E.T.K. of, before bringing to a close all I have got to say now or in future. He has sacrificed his former beliefs in a moment of apparent heat, and, as a fool may give a good advice, I recall two proverbs which may be helpful to him when meditating on the past – "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the hearts." "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." – I am, &c.,

NIHIL.

Stonehouse, February 2.

[This correspondence is now closed. – ED.]

The highly respectable and exclusive body of Christians known as [Plymouth Brethren](#), have been scandalised by allegations that Mr Parnell was one of themselves. In reference to this, Mr W. Soltau writes from Paris to the “British Weekly”: – Referring to the note in this week’s issue of your ever welcome paper, concerning Mr Parnell’s supposed connection with the [Plymouth Brethren](#), I believe that the origin of the report probably is that he was, as a boy, at school with Mr Stancombe, of Yeovil (or Crewkerne), who belongs to that body of Christians. How long he was there I do not know; Mr Stancombe would doubtless furnish all details. Mr Parnell’s cousin, the late Lord Congleton, was, as is well known, a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) community.

{*The British Weekly* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

The Reading Observer, 7 Mar 1891, p. 8

BRACKNELL.

PROPOSED BAND. – Some of the leading members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) sect are trying to organize an instrumental band, which, we believe, is to be unsectarian. Weekly practices have commenced at “Our Hall,” and are conducted by Mr. McQuiston, the permanent preacher at the hall.

The Manchester Courier, 23 May 1891, p. 10

At a recent church parade of a Volunteer corps one of the members, who really wished to be exempted from attendance, was observed to be standing about while the Presbyterians took up their places here, the Methodists there, and so on. To him the sergeant – “What religion do you belong to?” and the man replied – “I am a [Plymouth brother](#).” “[Plymouth brother](#)!” said the sergeant; “there ain’t no such religion in the British Army. Fall in with the Roman Catholics!”

The Evening Telegraph, Dundee, 21 Jul 1891, p. 2

“YARMOUTH BLOATER” AND “PLYMOUTH BROTHER.”

The Bishop of Wakefield, speaking on Friday at a luncheon in connection with the reopening of Great Yarmouth Church – the fifth “reopening” in living memory – said that a woman in Yorkshire recently told a clergyman that her husband, having been dissatisfied with the Baptists and Congregationalists, had left both, and was now, she thought, a “Yarmouth Bloater.” What she really meant was that he had become a “Plymouth Brother,” {sic}

WEST NORWOOD.

BREAKING INTO NEW HALL. – At the London County Sessions Francis Charles Collis, 18, and Albert Edward Kirk, 16, pleaded guilty to breaking and entering a place of worship named New Hall, West Norwood, with intent to commit a felony. The premises belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and, having been securely fastened up on the 20th ult., were found to have been broken into on the 22nd, but, fortunately, the collecting boxes had been emptied overnight, and the thieves had all their trouble for nothing. When apprehended by Detective Pullen both lads admitted the offence. – Collis had been previously convicted and was sent to 18 months' imprisonment, while Kirk was sent to a reformatory.

A correspondent, who guarantees the truth of his story, relates an incident illustrative of the manners of the **Exclusive Brethren**: – A week or two ago, in a city in the west of England, an “**Exclusive brother**” entertained an “**Open brother**” to supper. The host brought his guest into a room where an ample repast was provided, and, just when he should have performed the duties of entertainment, informed the guest that he was welcome to what was on the table, but could not himself conscientiously sit at meat with him! And, to crown his exclusiveness, when his guest took his departure, the zealous brother, with hands folded behind him, bowed farewell to the one he had so generously entertained.

The early birds are well provided for at the Savoy Theatre, and the late ones, in their fine feathers, who push their way unceremoniously to their places in the middle of a scene, will add to their pleasure, as well as to that of other people (for whom they show so little consideration), by arriving in time to see the new operetta, "Captain Billy," which is now given in front of "The Nautch Girl." If they will drop into the Savoy at twenty minutes to eight they will hear something to their advantage, for "Captain Billy" is a diverting trifle, cleverly written as to the libretto and the music, and played with vivacity by all concerned, the orchestra included. There are no particularly catching airs perhaps in Mr. François Cellier's music; still, it is none of your thin Frenchified stuff, but good, sound wine, with body in it; and in the orchestration Mr. Cellier has shown that he knows how to avail himself of the fine orchestra at his disposition. The author of the libretto, imbued with the traditions of the house, has written a "book" in the familiar vein of Mr. W. S. Gilbert. The story itself, indeed, smacks of "Bab." It sets forth how a poor fellow becomes a pirate in sheer desperation, when his brother joins the [Plymouth Brethren](#). As another pretext as slight might easily have been found, I cannot help thinking that it is a pity Mr. Harry Greenbank has chosen deliberately to do violence to the feelings of that very particular sect. Religion, like politics, is no subject for treatment on the stage, and least of all for jocular treatment. Is not a member of that small community a man and a Brother? But let that pass. The pirate bold returns to his native Porthaven at the expiry of ten years, to find that the landlord of the Blue Dragon, who had furnished the capital with which Captain Billy (which rhymes with Chili) had started in business, had concealed from him the fact that the "brother had withdrawn from the allurements of the [Plymouth Brotherhood](#)" before he died, and therefore, by all the logic of comic opera, Captain Billy had been a pirate to no purpose.

The new play which Mr. Frankfort Moore has based (as I was the first to intimate) on Longfellow's poem, "The Courtship of Miles Standish," is due at the Opéra Comique early in the coming year. As I hinted, Miss Fortescue will play the heroine Priscilla, and Edward Compton will represent the young man whom Priscilla asks to speak for himself. Mr. J. S. Blythe is engaged for the character of Captain Standish, who believes, you know, in howitzers flashing conviction right into the breast of the heathen. There seems to be some difficulty about naming the play. It is officially stated that it is at present called "Priscilla," but that the title may be either "The Puritan Maiden," "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," or "Plymouth Pilgrims." The first two titles are the prettiest of the four, but then if it is called "Priscilla" it can hardly go to America, where one of the versions there extant bears that name. And as for "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," well, that suggests going to meeting rather than going to the play.

“WE have lost the greatest preacher of the day.” So said the occupant of the pulpit of St. Paul’s Cathedral on Sunday; and from every church and chapel in the land almost a similar lament has gone forth over the death of Mr. Spurgeon, who this week has been laid to his last rest in the pretty hillside cemetery at Norwood. It is pleasing to find that everybody has had a good word for the remarkable minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, especially those whom he has at any time attacked. In his time he attacked all sorts and conditions of men. {...} He heaped flaming scorn and indignation on the tracts of the [Plymouth Brethren](#); but of late they have considered that he was so near them in spirit that he ought to have been one of them in reality. And in death, Churchman and Catholic, and every manner of sincere religionist, join in regret for the great honest-hearted preacher gone.

A NORTH DEVON BURIAL SCANDAL.

Some considerable unpleasantness (says a contemporary) has been occasioned to the friends of the late Miss Langdon, of Braunton, near Barnstaple, by the refusal of the Rev. E. C. Lamb, Rector of the adjoining parish of Heanton Punchardon, to allow the body to be buried in the churchyard of that parish. It appears that although the deceased was, legally speaking, a non-parishioner, she was a native of Heanton, and all her friends are connected with the parish. Her father and mother are buried in the family vault or grave in the churchyard. It was in this grave that the deceased before her death expressed a desire to be buried. She was a member of the sect of [Plymouth Brethren](#), but her friends never anticipated that either for that or any other reason would burial be refused. The burials Act gives the Rector or the Churchwardens the right to refuse burial of any non-parishoner {sic}, the reason obviously being that the ground might be required for parshioners {sic}. But in this case no new ground was required, and the body would have have {sic} been buried in a grave which no one else could claim{.} It had been decided that the funeral should take place on Thursday last, and in order to escape from the difficulty set up a sister of the deceased residing at Parnstable {sic} (the mother of Mr. J.H. Langdon) suggested that the deceased should be buried in a grave belonging to her (Mrs. Langdon) in the Barnstaple Cemetery, where there was room for two more bodies. Arrangements were made accordingly, and on Thursday the funeral took place there, the ceremony being performed by Mr. Sanders ([Plymouth Brethren](#) Minister.)

SELECTIONS FROM THIS WEEK'S *PUNCH*.

{...}

"MIXED." – Mrs Ram's uncle (on the maternal side) has recently joined the religious sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). This has greatly distressed the good lady. "If it had been anything else," she says, "a Moravian missionary or a Christian Brother-in-law, I wouldn't have minded. But to think that an uncle of mine should have become a Yarmouth Bloater is a little hard on a poor woman no longer in her idolescence."

{cf. M[arion] H[arry] Spielmann, *The History of "Punch"*, London (Cassell) 1895, p. 236: "A subject upon which *Punch* has for some years been persistently twitted is the personality of 'Mrs. Ramsbotham' – Thackeray's Mrs. Julia Dorothea Ramsbottom of 'The Snob' (No. 7, May, 1829) – a homely sort of Mrs. Malaprop, whose constant misquotations and misapplication of words of somewhat similar sound to those she intends to use give constant amusement to one section of *Punch's* readers, and irritation quite as constant to the other."}

DISGRACEFUL SCENE AT A COMMUNION SERVICE.

At the Croydon Borough Police Court on Wednesday, before the Mayor (Alderman F. T. Edridge) in the chair, Alderman D. B. Miller, Alderman Coldwells, and Councillor J. Pelton, *John Moulson Cox* was summoned by Charles Bonnett for riotous conduct at a certain place of worship, known as the Iron Room, Strathmore-road, Croydon, which is in the occupation of a sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Mr. S. G. Edridge prosecuted.

The Mayor (to defendant) – What do you say?

Defendant – I say I am not guilty.

Mr. Edridge, in opening the case, said that the defendant had been for some considerable number of years a member of the congregation at the place of worship in question. Defendant had preferred a charge against another member of the congregation, which was inquired into in the interests of both parties. The decision arrived at was adverse to the defendant, however, the defendant accepted that decision.

Defendant – No.

Mr. Edridge – We shall prove it. Continuing, Mr. Edridge said that the defendant apologised, the matter was condoned, and he was allowed to remain a member of the congregation. Defendant then resigned his position; and he (Mr. Edridge) had his written resignation of membership, which was

accepted by the congregation. At the communion defendant not only forced his way among the members, but on Sunday week grabbed at and laid hold of the bread, crumpled it up in his hand, and scattered it about on the floor, at the same time using terms and phrases which would scandalise anybody. Not only that, but he got hold of the cup of wine and turned it upside down, spilling the contents upon the floor. Mr. Edridge, continuing, said he was stating what he believed to be true, and all the congregation asked, through their officer, was that the magistrates would bind defendant over to keep the peace and keep away from the premises. Failing that, from the annoyance given Sunday by Sunday, the fraternity must of necessity disband, and that entirely through their being subjected to such conduct on the part of the defendant.

Charles Bonnett said he was one of the trustees connected with the Iron Room, Strathmore-road, which was occupied by the [Plymouth Brethren](#). It was a registered place of worship. The defendant was a member of the congregation for some years. For some reason or other he put in his resignation (produced) as a member of that body. That resignation was accepted, and he ceased to be a member from the 1st March, 1891.

Defendant said he wanted the letter of resignation read, so that they should know the reason why he resigned.

Mr. Seale – You wrote it.

Defendant – Yes.

Mr. Seale – And was it a resignation?

Defendant – No, sir; it was a withdrawal.

Witness said that defendant ceased to be a member after, and had to sit among the strangers.

Defendant – I am a child of God; I am one of God's children, and among the members I mean to sit.

[It should be explained that certain seats are set aside for the accommodation of strangers, the front seats being occupied by the members of the church only. The strangers do not partake of the communion, which is celebrated every Sunday.]

Witness, continuing, said that on Sunday, the 13th, they held a service, and as part of that service there was a celebration of the holy communion.

The Mayor interposed, and said the Bench felt very strongly on the matter. They would like to know whether any arrangement could be made between the two parties, defendant for his part undertaking not to interfere any further.

Defendant – Let me speak.

The Mayor – I want you to understand that in the interests of everybody this question should not be gone into in this court.

Continuing, the Mayor said it appeared that defendant had not got on very well with the congregation. It was not right that he should thrust himself upon them in such a disgraceful manner. If he admitted the act, why should he not give the Bench and Mr. Bonnett his promise that he would behave better in the future – or, failing that, be bound over to keep the peace?

Mr. Edridge – And keep away.

Defendant – I will not keep away.

The Mayor – The question is, what do you propose to do?

Defendant – I will apologise to the members, but to Mr. Bonnett – never. I'll promise to keep away; but, rather than be bound over, I will let the law take its course!

The Mayor – If you will apologise to the assembly for your act of last Sunday week, and promise for the future to be of good behaviour, I think there will not be any further trouble.

Mr. Edridge – I think the best way to deal with it is that the case should be adjourned for a month, and if all goes well the case –

Defendant – Hear, hear. I'll agree to that.

The Mayor – If you will apologise and undertake not to interfere in the future, the Bench will adjourn the case for a month.

Defendant said he would agree to that, but would say that he had been dealt with most ungraciously.

Ultimately the case was adjourned for a month, defendant promising not to interfere with the congregation.

Defendant – I prayed to the Lord this morning that he would direct you (the magistrates). My God told me this morning he would forgive me, and he has put it into your hearts to forgive me also. I can rejoice; indeed I can.

Mr. Edridge – So can I.

The Mayor – So can we. (Laughter.)

Defendant left the court shouting “Praise the Lord.”

The Illustrated Police News, London, 2 Apr 1892, p. 4

STRANGE PROCEEDINGS AT A CHAPEL.

At the Croydon Police-court, John Boulster Cox was summoned by Charles Bonnett for riotous conduct at the Iron Chapel, Strathmore-road, Croydon. Mr. Edridge, solicitor, said the defendant had for many years been a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) fraternity, who held services in this chapel. Some time since he brought a charge against another member, and it was investigated by the church authorities, who decided against the defendant. He then sent in his resignation, which was accepted. On Sunday morning he thrust himself upon those engaged in the act of taking Communion, caught hold of the bread, crumpled it up, and scattered it. He then turned the wine cup upside down and spilt the contents. All the congregation now asked was that the man should be bound over to keep the peace and to stay away from the chapel. Mr. Charles Bonnett, a trustee of the chapel, said defendant had attended several times since his resignation and sat among the strangers. The Defendant: I have sat with the members. I am a child of God, and as such among the members I mean to sit. In reply to a suggestion by the chairman as to an arrangement, the defendant said he would apologise to the congregation, but not to Mr. Bonnett. He objected to being bound over, but

would promise to keep away. The case was adjourned for a month, to see if defendant kept his promise. As the defendant left the court he exclaimed, in an excited manner, "My God told me this morning he would forgive me, and he has put it into your hearts to forgive me also. Praise the Lord."

Edinburgh Evening News, 7 Apr 1892, p. 3

ALLEGED BIGAMY BY A [PLYMOUTH BROTHER](#).

The Coatbridge Police to-day arrested a man named Thomas Blackley, residing at 40 Hutchison Street, Coatbridge, on information from Glasgow on a charge of bigamy, by having it is alleged on 11th December last before Mr Don Hamilton, registrar of the Hutcheson district, Glasgow, married Margaret Craig, residing at 40 Hutchison Street, Coatbridge, while his wife, Mary Ann Brown or Blackley, 70 High Street, Irvine, was still alive. The accused is alleged to have deserted his wife. Some time ago he came to Coatbridge, and made himself conspicuous in evangelistic work. He joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#) sect, and under his care the body increased. He became acquainted with Margaret Craig, represented himself to be an unmarried man, and, it is alleged, induced her to go through a form of marriage before the sheriff at Glasgow. On Saturday last the woman who claims to be his wife appeared in Coatbridge in a destitute condition, and the result of her visit has been accused's arrest.

Aberdeen Evening Express, 8 Apr 1892, p. 2

EVANGELIST CHARGED WITH BIGAMY.

Yesterday the Coatbridge police arrested a man named Thomas Blackley, 40 Hutchison Street, Coatbridge, on a charge of bigamy, by having, on the 11th December last, before Mr Don Hamilton,

registrar of the Hutchesontown district, Glasgow, married Margaret Craig, residing at 40 Hutchison Street, Coatbridge, while his wife, Mary Ann Brown or Blackley, 70 Hill Street, Irvine, was still alive. The accused is alleged to have deserted his wife some time ago. He came to Coatbridge, and made himself conspicuous in evangelistic work. He joined the sect of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and, under his care, the body increased. Every part of the town was regularly visited. He got acquainted with Margaret Craig, and represented himself to be an unmarried man, and induced her to go through an irregular form of marriage before the Sheriff at Glasgow. On Saturday last his first wife appeared in Coatbridge in a most destitute condition, and, finding that her husband was cohabiting with another woman, informed the police. The case was reported in Glasgow, and a warrant was issued for his apprehension. At the Coatbridge Police Court yesterday, Blackley was remitted to the Glasgow authorities by Baillie Lindsay, and in the course of the day was removed in charge of detectives.

Aberdeen Evening Express, 19 Apr 1892, p. 2

BIGAMY CASE IN GLASGOW. – Thomas Blackley (46), residing in Hutcheson Street, Coatbridge, and said to be a street preacher, pleaded guilty at Glasgow yesterday, before Sheriff Murray, of having, in January, 1890, bigamously married in Glasgow a widow named Johnston, residing in Coatbridge, his lawful wife, Mary Ann Brown or Blackley, being alive. It was stated on his behalf that the woman Brown, to whom he was married when he was eighteen, had gone away several times, and finally left him about five years ago. Before he married Mrs Johnston he had heard that Brown was dead. The Sheriff passed sentence of thirty days' imprisonment.

The Huddersfield Daily Chronicle, 22 Apr 1892, p. 4

EXTRACTS FROM THE COMIC PAPERS.

FROM "PUNCH."

{...}

SANCTA SIMPLICITAS. – Orthodox Old Maid: But, Rebecca, is your place of worship consecrated?
Domestic (lately received into the [Plymouth Brotherhood](#)): Oh, no, miss; it's galvanised iron.

Irish Society, Dublin, 4 Jun 1892, p. 532 [BNA 8]

The religious census of the County Down presents some curious oddities. Some nineteen persons return themselves as Freethinkers, one as a Deist, one "Not Saved." There are also [Christian Open Brethren](#) one, and [Exclusive Brethren](#) one. The amalgamation of the two latter bodies would be a step towards the reunion of Christendom.

PLYMOUTH BRETHERN AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

SIR, – I would like to address myself to my fellow Christians, especially to those who are known by the name of “The Berthren {sic}.” They have some scruples about voting which, I think, need not trouble them. They say they have no scripture for doing so, and that a Christian should take no part in politics. Well, if we are only to do what we have scripture for doing, I fear we must get away out of this world. We cannot find scripture for everything we do, but we can find broad principles in the scriptures, such as what is known as the “Golden Rule,” Matt. 7-12 – “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;” and another in Gal., 6-10 – “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Are not Irish Christians appealing to us on this side to protect them from those who would not tolerate them, for toleration is a thing foreign to Romanism. I can speak from experience. Hand over Ireland to the Romish Hierarchy, and farewell to all open-air preaching; they will not tolerate it. How, then, can anybody who wishes the eternal welfare of Irishmen hand over Ireland to those who will not permit the preaching of the gospel. This is surely not doing whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, nor to the household of faith either, for they will assuredly suffer persecution. It is just possible that should these Christians abstain from voting they may by so doing allow the men who are resolved to hand over Ireland to its enemies to succeed in getting into Parliament. Before God let them ponder the question, “Shall I abstain from voting, and so let in men to persecute my fellow Christians in Ireland.” Surely they will not act so towards their brethren. They are not asked to vote for men exactly, but for principles. What have their fellows in

Ireland done that they deserve to be deserted to their enemies. They can value the liberties which they now enjoy. Let them remember at what a price they were bought, even the blood of our forefathers. Let them preserve those liberties to their fellows in Ireland, aye, and for themselves here, for Rome is not fighting for Ireland alone, but for Britain also. – I am, &c.,

A CHRISTIAN.

Glasgow Evening News [BNA *Glasgow Evening Post*], 30 Jun 1892, p. 3, The Voice of the People

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

SIR, – I would like to venture a reply to the letter signed “A Christian” in to-night’s “News.” By his remarks he seems to think that all Christians ought to exercise their vote. Well, this matter troubled me for a considerable time, but I now think that the true follower of the Lord Jesus ought to stand aloof. Why? To be consistent one must read and ponder the speeches of the man he is going to vote for, and ponder well the bill he is going to support. Has a Christian who is looking for the Lord’s return time for that? Old Dr Bonar said once, “We may well puff at politics when we are looking for the Lord to-day.” In Paul’s second letter to Timothy, 2nd chapter, and 3rd verse, he says – “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” There is nothing in all the apostolic teaching that I am aware of that gives us any grounds for taking up our attention with those things. If trouble comes upon the children of God, He will make a way of

escape. Things will wax worse before the appearing of our Lord and Saviour. "Let not your heart be troubled," He told His disciples before He went away, "I will come again." – I am, &c.,

June 28.

ANOTHER CHRISTIAN.

Glasgow Evening News [BNA *Glasgow Evening Post*], 1 Jul 1892, p. 3, The Voice of the People

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

SIR, – "Another Christian" in this evening's "News" is somewhat unfortunate in relying upon Paul's pretended "second letter to Timothy" as his excuse for not exercising the privileges and duties of a citizen by voting. Paul is considered to have suffered martyrdom in or about the seventh decade of the first century A.D., but the Rev. Dr. Bradley, in his recent work, "The Books of the Bible Dated," says that the two Epistles to Timothy were not by Paul, as they were "written probably about 127 A.D." Going back to the Master, however, we find Jesus reported as saying: – "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." Now, by declining to vote, "Another Christian" acts against the command of Him whom he pretends to follow, while his excuse at bottom is based upon laziness, selfishness, and ignorance. The "soldier" that lies in bed dreaming about an imaginary post-mortem heaven when he ought to be fighting to help to make a sublunary one is only a coward, a sneak, and no real Christian or follower of Jesus. – I am, &c.,

A FIGHTING CHRISTIAN.

June 30th.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

SIR,— I am aware how futile would be the attempt to convince “A Christian” of the necessity for registering his vote at this election, apart from reference to the Scriptures. “A Christian” may do other things which are not commanded in the Bible, and so may also his co-religionists – things which take time and absorb the attention; but unless a clear command can be produced from the New Testament authorising Christians to take part in elections, he for one will not vote. I find no fault, but there are silk manufacturers among the Brethren. What has the manufacture of silk to do with “the Lord’s return?” There are tobacconists among the Brethren. What has the manufacture of tobacco to do with “the Lord’s return?” If everything is sinful which has no reference to the Lord’s return, there must be a lot of sinners among the Brethren, as well as among so-called sects and parties. How is it that Brethren can do as men have done almost from time immemorial, and yet they cannot vote on the polling day? They hold property, and they pay taxes for the security of property, but they won’t help other Christians by their vote to maintain their civil and religious liberty in Ireland. Will my neglect of Christian brethren in Ireland prepare me for the Lord’s return? “A Christian” says he would require to read the speeches of M.P.’s to know how his vote should go. It is evident he has been reading the “Evening News.” I am glad it is so, and hope he did not feel a single check of conscience in purchasing and perusing your valuable paper. If with his present views he ventured a halfpenny, and devoted a little time to the reading of a wise and timely appeal by another Christian in your columns, I hope he went a little further, and devoured all the news of the coming election, and that in the future he may see in such news an eye-opener and the death-knell

of the vain excuse. I would say to the [Brethren](#), as Mordecai said to Queen Esther when pleading for her interference {sic} on behalf of the Jews – “Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the King’s house more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed, and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther iv., 13–14). – I am, &c.,

A. M. A. GRAHAM.

1 Pollok Street, 1st July, 1892.

Glasgow Evening News [BNA *Glasgow Evening Post*], 5 Jul 1892, p. 3, The Voice of the People

[PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#) AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

SIR, – That those known as [Plymouth Brethren](#) are not indifferent to the present crisis in our nation’s history is obvious from the following extracts, taken from the two journals specially devoted to their services: – The high privilege and subsequent responsibility of Christians to pray for kings and all in authority, and by implication to pray concerning all kinds of Government is an abiding one, however, little felt or appreciated; but there are times when, for this as for other things, there is a special call, and surely the present is such a time. Christians are called upon to give themselves to special prayer, both in private and in public, that God may so restrain and order that what is for the good of the kingdom at large may be brought to pass. Another article runs: – We see no middle course between seeking to influence the world power by vote, and seeking as Rome has

ever done to control the powers of the world in her own interests. Again, we are told many things in the vast empire of Great Britain, as well as its relationship with other countries, are involved in the line of policy the Government may pursue. The consideration of this and of how the work of servants of Christ throughout the world may be affected by the action of those in power, may well stir us to give us to earnest and continual prayer to God with reference to the coming elections. Such vast interests being at stake, I conclude it would be wrong to refrain from voting, for not to do good when we have it in our power is practically to do evil. (James iv., 17.) – I am, &c., R. K. C.

Glasgow, July 2, 1892.

SIR, – I have read the correspondence in your columns headed “[Plymouth Brethren](#) and the General Election,” and, while grateful for nearly all that has been said on the matter, I think that a few additional thoughts may be useful. It may readily be conceded that in the Scriptures there are not any direct instructions given to Christians as to their voting at elections, or as to taking a practical part in politics. It would have been very wonderful if there had been. We have to consider the fact that despotic governments were “the order of the day” when the Epistles were written, and that popular elections are themselves one of the direct results of Christian teachings and of Christian practice. Consequently, all that we can expect from the apostolic teachings is the laying down of general principles and the giving of general advice. One of these exhortations is – “Provide things honest in the sight of all men” (Romans, xii. and 17). How does this affect the elections? The answer is – Parliaments are institutions for making laws; those who make the laws are appointed by the people. Hence, the qualified elector who refuses to provide honest law-makers leaves the country, so far as he is concerned, to fall into the hands of unprincipled men. Another apostolic exhortation

is – “That supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men – for Kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” I think there need not be any difficulty in finding out where a refractory Christian elector is in view of such an exhortation as this. The apostle James lays down the principle that if a man says to the needy, “Depart in peace, be ye warmed and clad,” and yet himself does not supply the necessary things, that that man’s religion is vain. So, also, by parity of reasoning, it may be said that if the [brethren](#), according to direct apostolic instructions, pray for Kings and men in authority, and yet refuse to give them the materials for framing stable Governments and for carrying out beneficent rule, then such religion is hypocritical in the extreme. Oh, no. It will not do! Resident Christians have their duties to perform whether these are congenial to them or otherwise. Neither will it do, as “Another Christian” has done, to apply Christian teachings to resident citizens, which are only applicable to such as Paul and Timothy – men who had not any fixed place of abode, but who were commissioned to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Practically, it seems to me that if the [brethren](#) at this time, in view of the pathetic Ulster appeal, do not record their vote, and that in the Unionist interest, they will be very much like the priest and the Levite in the story of the good Samaritan – not attending to present practical duty, but selfishly passing by on the other side. As “Another Christian” makes a good deal of the subject of the coming of the Lord, all I have to say to that is that the best preparation for the coming of the Lord is to be faithful to present requirements. – I am, &c.,

July 4, 1892.

P. F.

“THE BRETHREN” IN DUNBOE: A CASTLEROCK DIALOGUE.

Jane – Are you coming, James, this evening to Mr. Moore’s meeting? Mr. Trench is to be here.

James – Indeed, I am not.

Jane – Why? Sure, you were with us before?

James – Yes, I was; but I was taken under false pretences. I thought I was just going to a prayer-meeting. It was to a prayer-meeting I was invited by Mr. A.; but I now find that all this was a mere disguise – that the object was to start in this deceitful way a little society of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). If it had been a prayer-meeting to promote the spirituality of those who would attend it, it would have been quite a different matter. But it is clearly something else these [Brethren](#) have in view.

Jane – How do you make that out?

James – Why, they professed to want the good people of the parish simply to join them in a prayer-meeting; but when they got a number about them, then they started a regular Sabbath-evening service at the very hour of the Rev. Mr. Armstrong’s service, and so I say it appears to me that they began this movement of theirs in deceit and duplicity, and are now carrying it in opposition and defiance.

Jane – I think, James, you are too hard on these good men. Don’t you know that they profess to be Christians of a much higher type than any others?

James – Yes, so I hear. But do you know, Jane, that the Apostle Paul denounced people who arrogated to themselves, to the exclusion of others, the name of “Christian?”

Jane – No. Where does Paul do that?

James – In 1st Corinthians 1, 12.

Jane – I never noticed that before.

James – I can believe that. For I’m quite sure if the people in this parish knew the false doctrines taught by the Brethren they would not open their door to one of them.

Jane – False doctrine! Do they hold false doctrine?

James – To be sure they do. Did you never read what Mr. Spurgeon wrote and said about them, nor Dr. Carson, of Coleraine, nor Dr. Croskery, of Derry?

Jane – No, I never did.

James – And without knowing what these people hold and teach you run after them as if you had never heard, and did not till they appeared, know the first principles of the Gospel.

Jane – Why you alarm me, James. What do these Brethren hold?

James – It would take me till night to tell you how they have perverted the doctrines of the Gospel. Why in last Friday’s *Rock*, which a friend has given me, there is a letter about them that I have just in my pocket, which I’ll read to you. This is it – “Sir, – Mr. J. L. Fenton is in error when he says that the Brethren pray for the pardon of sin. They have – so they say – no sins to ask pardon for, for the

simple reason that while they have sin *in* them they have none *on* them; because Christ who had sin on Him had none in Him. Again they do not pray for God's Holy Spirit, because they say that this Spirit never went away, so that they have no occasion {sic} to ask for that which they already possess. Next comes the vital question of keeping holy the Sabbath. What answer do they give to this? They tell you that every day is the Lord's Day. ... I knew Mr. John Darby. I know Mr. Macintosh, Mr. Saddler, of Tipperary, and others. I lived with one of these leaders for years, and could say much more. But your space is too precious for me to add anything further at present. – A. GOST. London, Nov. 7th, 1892.”

Jane – Why, this is horrible. I did not think they held such false doctrines.

James – I am sure of that. But it should show you how careful you ought to be not to come or try to bring others under the influence of men whose doctrines and whose teaching are so utterly opposed to the plainest teachings of the Word of God.

Jane – Well, I was quite taken by their earnestness and their enthusiasm, and then Mrs. — and Miss — and — were so delighted with them, and said they never knew the Gospel till they heard these men; and then look at the crowd they gather and think that they have converted — and — and —. Was it any wonder that I was quite taken with them?

James – Indeed it was, Jane. For you might have remembered what our Lord said of the self-righteous Pharisees, and scribes, and hypocrites – that they compassed sea and land to make *one* proselyte (they must have been very zealous and enthusiastic men), and when he is made ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves; and then with regard to what Mrs. — and Miss —, &c{.}, say, why, these people publicly professed to be Christians these many years, and if they

were not it only shows, according to their own confession, that they have been deceivers and hypocrites all the time, so their opinion is not worth much. And in reference to the fact that so many run after them, I'm amazed you would attach any importance to that. Why, Parnell's funeral attracted 100,000 people. John Burns, the Socialist, can get a crowd as large as that, they say, any Sabbath in Hyde Park. The apostle Paul did not always attract a crowd, except to stone him; and the Great and Blessed Master was jostled once out of the city, and at last crucified by the crowd. And for their conversions, I think it is rather soon to speak of them. I did not know that man had the power to convert a soul. I always thought, and do still, that this is the work of the Divine Spirit. And this I know, that it is not everyone that saith, Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. By their fruits we shall know them. Meantime, Jane, I wish to say to you that I don't mean to go near these men any more. If they only teach what our own ministers teach we don't need them, for they fully set forth the Gospel; and if they teach any other doctrines we don't want them, for he that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God, and the apostle John bids us not to receive him into our house nor bid him God-speed.

Jane – I'm greatly perplexed, but I think what you say is true.

{This article is partly illegible in the British Newspaper Archive. An attempt has been made to reconstruct the missing words from the context; gaps in quotations have been filled by consulting the sources.}

THE BRETHREN IN DUNBOE – ANOTHER CASTLEROCK DIALOGUE.

Jane – So{,} James, you wont {sic} come any more to Mr. Moore's meetings?

James – {N}o. I have been looking into the history and doings of these Plymouthite Brethren since our l{ast} conversation, and I am more than ever con{vince}d that sober-minded Christians should have n{othing} to do with them.

Jan{e – But} don't you know that there are some good {?people} following Mr. Moore in this parish, who {?are n}ever absent from his meetings?

Ja{mes –} That may be, for as Dr. Carson says in his {?book on} “the Plymouth Heresies” – “It is unfo{rtunate}ly true that simple-minded Christians have {in man}y instances given in their adhesion to the s{ect.} They have been deceived by the plausible sanc{timonio}usness of the Plymouth leaders.” So this {illegible} the case now. But am I not correct in sa{?ying th}at some of those who have brought the{s{e} Plymo}uthite people to this parish have gone the {illegible}f all the three Protestant Churches in it, a{illegible} seem to be afflicted with that disease, called {?“itch}ing ears,” which gave the Apostle Paul such {illegible} in his day?

Ja{ne – Are} you not too severe, James, in your remarks?

James – Too severe! Am I not speaking the simple truth? Sure what I am saying is known to everybody. I never care to hold much fellowship with people who are ever learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth.

Jane – But what is your great objection to the [Plymouthites](#)?

James – Well, I find that those who have had much experience of them speak very strongly against them. Mr. H. Grattan Guinness – who, I believe, married one of them – says “The wear and tear of reality has put their ideal of a church to the test, and it has fairly gone to pieces.” He also says – “The ministry of the [Brethren](#) is, to say the least of it, worthless, often nonsensical and erroneous.”

Jane – But surely that does not apply to Mr. Moore?

James – I am not so sure. A friend of mine in Castlerock asked him the other day was it so that the [Brethren](#) did not approve of the Lord’s Prayer?

Jane – What did he say?

James – Well, first of all, as I was told, he said with great show of superior knowledge and discrimination, he said what was called the Lord’s Prayer was not the Lord’s Prayer at all, but the disciples’ prayer, as if this was some new [Plymouthite](#) discovery; and then he said part of it was not a prayer for sinners to use at all, for they couldn’t say “Our Father” to God. But my friend immediately reminded him that our Lord taught the disciples – among whom was Judas – to say it.

Jane – What reply did he make to that?

James – His reply was awful, if I have been rightly informed.

Jane – What was it?

James – Oh, that Christ did not then know that Judas was to be the traitor; that he in fact was a mere man on earth, and did not know at that time the character of Judas, as if we were not told in John 6-64, “For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not and who should betray Him.”

Jane – This is indeed awful.

James – So I think{.} I am sure if many of those who run to Mr. Moore’s meetings were aware that he held such views, and that he was so ignorant of the teachings of Scripture as to the two natures, and one person of Christ, they would have given him a wide berth in the parish of Dunboe. For, if believers are not to use one part of the prayer, and not to ask for forgiveness, as the [Plymouthites](#) teach, and if sinners are not to use another part of it, as Mr. Moore told my friend, the conclusion is inevitable, that our Lord, who taught his disciples (some of whom were true believers and some were not), to use it, committed a great mistake.

Jane – This is indeed horrible.

James – There is no doubt about it, and, therefore, you and your friends should be a little more careful before you encourage by your presence teachers of whose doctrines and opinions you know so very little.

Jane – I do believe you are right.

James – Yes, I am sure I am. Besides, the system is pernicious in its workings. Miss Whately, daughter to the late Archbishop, who has devoted her life to mission work in Egypt, says of them – “I never knew a family that [Plymouthism](#) entered that it did not wreck its happiness.” And Dr. Jessop, the veteran missionary in Syria from the American church, writing from Beyrout, says the mission there has been greatly harrassed by the [Brethren](#), though their influence has much declined, mainly through their own divisions. And he adds – “The churches ought to pray for Divine protection against the [Plymouthite](#) delusion.”

Jane – Is it not strange how little the public generally know of their errors?

James – This is to be accounted for by the fact, as Dr. Carson says, that “the [Darbyites](#) have managed to cloak their opinions by using language in a Jesuitical sense; their system is always put forth in completely Jesuitical form.”

Jane – I think I will keep by the old doctrines and the old paths in the future.

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle.)

SIR, – In last week’s issue of your popular paper your readers had the pleasure of perusing a rather amusing dialogue regarding the [Brethren](#)’s meetings at Castlerock. Amusing did I say? No; rather the opposite, it was both serious and instructive. Serious to think that the past and present efforts of the godly and sainted ministers ordained by the King of Kings to preach Christ and Him crucified have met with such coldness on the part of the Castlerock community; and that all the glad tidings that have been proclaimed from time to time seemingly have been proclaimed in vain. Any stranger

would imagine that these people had been heathens previous to the Brethren's visit, seeing that by an explanation of a chapter or two by them, according to their ideas, should make such a stir amongst a few puerile people in that neighbourhood, and that they had not, or never had, the benefits of a Christian religion. In fact, one would really imagine that Castlerock was situated on the coast of some South Sea Island, where the missionaries had been hard at work converting them from heathenism to Christianity. Can it be possible, Mr. Editor, that in this nineteenth century, and in the North of Ireland, where we have so much profession of religion, that it is only a mere profession? Are our ministers only losing their time with us? It may be the Castlerock people are an exception. What did they do before these men had the good fortune (?) to come amongst them? Were they living in total darkness as to the plan of salvation? I compare these conversions to the "foolish man who built his house on the sand, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof." The people are led away by men who are not qualified to construe the Word of God, having no theological training. One of the greatest of Scotch divines, who was one of God's chosen instruments to the real conversion of souls in his own country, said, both in private conversation and from the pulpit, that no man should take the responsibility of preaching and expounding God's Holy Word unless he had been educated and ordained for that purpose. And, now, what about the personal character of these itinerant preachers? We know nothing about them till they are amongst us. We know naught of their antecedence. They are perfect strangers to us. They have no license to preach the Gospel from any Presbytery or responsible body to check them if they happen to go astray. But really, sir, as far as I am informed, the less known about them the better. From a little information I picked up the other day – and possibly I might find out more if I felt inclined – a certain occurrence happened a few months ago with one of these leading lights of the Brethren, which, if made public, I would be afraid this

house built on the sand would not stand still the squall would burst upon it, but would go down with the depression which generally precedes a storm.

“Give me a man of God ordained to preach,
A house of prayer within convenient reach;
Give these, Oh Lord! the blessings that we ask,
And easy, then, will be the Christian’s task.”

– Yours &c.,

TRAVELLER SIONWARD.

The Coleraine Chronicle, 31 Dec 1892, p. 5

“THE BRETHREN.”

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle.)

SIR, – At this season of the year many will be writing about the familiar old topic of Bethlehem, manger, and cradle. Thousands of pens will again be wielded in the praise of the Royal Babe. Wise men from North, South, East, and West will offer their homage, and gifts of frankincense {sic}, and myrrh to the World’s Redeemer. Countless columns will be printed about that glorious message of “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will among men.” And while numberless voices join to sing the celestial anthem, be mine the humbler task of giving my Castlerock neighbours a little information as to the ignorance and usurpation of these preachers, termed “[Plymouth](#)

Brethren,” sojourning amongst them at present. One evening, a few years ago, a friend of mine was induced to go to one of their meetings, where he had the pleasure (?) of hearing two of them speak. The latter speaker of the two was not satisfied with our English translations, as, in his remarks he stated that one of the words in his text was wrongly translated. He, therefore, spontaneously changed this word, which, of course, altered the meaning of the quotation entirely. Afterwards, in the course of conversation, my friend acquainted me of this, and he and I resolved, there and then, to interview the party in question, and elicit his views on the matter. When, lo, to our amazement, we found he had not even the rudiments of an English education, far less a classical. I do not wish to be understood that all these “Brethern” {sic} are void of an English education, but I desire to be as distinctly understood that ninety-nine {sic} per cent. of them who take upon themselves the responsibility to preach the Gospel are entirely ignorant of the languages from which our English Bible is translated. How, then, under these circumstances, can they have the effrontery to stand up before a nineteenth century congregation with the Word of God in their hands and say this or that word is wrongly translated? I candidly believe it is ignorance on their parts that makes them put on this vain show of superior knowledge. For their future welfare, I would sincerely advise them to read carefully and ponder over Rev. xxii., 19 – “If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.” Christ’s command to His disciples was – “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” What we gather from this command, and elsewhere from His Word, is that His work was to be their sole occupation.

He did not say to them, start some lucrative business, and in your spare moments you might have a meeting occasionally for the promulgation of My Word. No, no, business correspondence in the one hand, and the Bible in the other, will not satisfy this Divine decree. From observations by any man of ordinary intelligence we can see how futile it is for these “Brethern” trying to please God, and satisfy their worldly desires at the same time. They no sooner adopt this two-sided life but they get into trouble, and by the judgment of the powers that be, they are generally in the wrong, and sometimes placed in a position not very creditable to them as a body. As to our ministers who have held, and still hold, on steadfastly to this decree, they stand forth century crowned monarchs immortal, imperishable, and unsurpable.

The possessions handed down to us by these men are no insignificant factors in the production and maintenance of that moral and religious character which permeates the millions who tread the earth this day. When we think of them, as of the departed dead, we instinctively cry out –

“Oh, for the touch of a gentle hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still,”

forgetting that they are with us still, moulding our character, and shaping the religious continuation of our age, and ages yet to come. – Yours, &c.,

“SEMPER PARATUS.”

December 22nd, 1892.

The Coleraine Chronicle, 21 Jan 1893, p. 8

THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN** AT
CASTLEROCK.

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle.)

SIR, – The articles which lately appeared in the *Chronicle* under the above heading, so far as I have read them, have been productive of a rather unpleasant impression.

The name of the unlearned preacher, with the verse and word under comment, should have been given by “Semper Paratus.” Failing in this, his charge must fall to the ground, and his letter will pass as mere abuse, which in any court is looked upon as bad evidence, and generally a sign of a weak case.

Any one having heard Mr. Moore preach for the last eight or ten years, will have found it hard to believe the extreme accusations of ignorance, &c., brought against him by “James” in his dialogue. Scripture requires such charges to be proven before two or three witnesses (I Timothy, v., 19); but, as “James” acknowledged that to him they were only hearsay, his case appears a very weak one. The writers of these articles know that it is right to be men of independent minds, and that judgment cannot be passed in any court unless the crime against the accused be proven; and having regard to the many false charges brought against religious people in every age, it is necessary to be particularly {sic} careful in passing judgment against them. So, unless better evidence be forthcoming, the charge of hearsay against the **Brethren** cannot well be sustained. Whether it be wrong for them to

preach the Gospel, not being licensed, is not for me to say; because it is written in Daniel, xii., 3 – “They that be wise (margin, or teachers) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” How can it be wrong to preach the Gospel when such encouragement is given? Does it not sound strange to be told that it is wrong to turn men from darkness to light! It is also written in Corinthians, xiv., 31 – “For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.” Thus every one was allowed to speak in the Primitive Church, whether learned or unlearned, rich or poor. True, certain were not allowed, but we are clearly told who they were in I Corinthians, xiv., 34 – “Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.” All, then, seem to have had liberty to speak in the church at Corinth except women. It seems surely somewhat in these days to be told that it is wrong for men to speak in the church unless licensed, when, according to the Epistle to the Corinthians, they had liberty to speak without it. The clearness of these passages is all we could desire, for without doubt or hesitation, it is plainly stated in simple language who may speak, and who may keep silence. Although not amongst the [Brethren](#), I have been curious to search for myself, and have concluded that Scripture is not against a man preaching the Gospel, though not licensed. Those attempting an explanation of the above passages in Daniel and Corinthians are not by me required to remember the advice given to the [Brethren](#) by “Semper Paratus,” from Rev., xxii., 19. Each one can please himself. To be unfair with either side is not my wish, and to acknowledge the influence for good that ministers have had in society I am ever ready, as also are the [Brethren](#). – I am, &c.,

FAIR PLAY.

9th January, 1893.

THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN** CONTROVERSY.

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle.)

DEAR SIR, – Allow me for another time to ask a place in the columns of your popular paper. My object in doing so is not so much to defend myself, which we are all perhaps too apt to do, but to state simply, by way of advice, to “Fair Play,” when using a text of Scripture, to give it fully at all times, and the context, when required, for explanation. Before proceeding further, I must say I do not think he has been very careful in his study of the Scriptures, otherwise he would have given your readers something very different from what he did in his letter. Surely, “James,” in his dialogue, should have no trouble in procuring witnesses to sustain his charge of ignorance. But before we could ask him to do so, “Fair Play” would require to prove that Mr. Moore is an elder or bishop. According to the first text he draws our attention to, viz.: – 1st Timothy v., 19 – “Against an *elder* of the Church receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.” Elders require to be ordained. In Titus i., 5, 6, 7, we read – “And ordain elders in every church, as I had appointed thee. If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly. For a *bishop* must be blameless as the steward of God.” Ordination, as we read in the Old and New Testaments, was conferred by the *laying on of hands*. Numbers xxvii., 18, 19, 22, 23 – “And the Lord said unto Moses, take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and *lay thine hands upon him*, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, and give him a charge in their sight. And Moses did as the Lord commanded him, and he took Joshua and set him

before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, and he *laid his hands upon him*, and gave him a charge as the Lord commanded, by the hand of Moses.” Deut. xxxiv., 9 – “And Joshua was full of the Spirit of wisdom, for Moses had *laid his hands upon him*.” Also in the New Testament we read in Acts vi., 6 – “Whom they set before the Apostles, and when they had prayed, they *laid their hands upon them*.” Acts xiii., 3 – “And when they had fasted and prayed, and *laid their hands on them*, they sent them away.” Seeing, therefore, these are God’s ways of ordaining his servants, both for the prophetic and teaching offices, “Fair Play” is, in duty bound, to prove that Mr. Moore has been ordained for such service, according to Scripture, before he can successfully attempt to prevent “James,” in his dialogue, from making an accusation unless before two or three witnesses.

His second text – Daniel xii., 3 – refers to the general resurrection; and there can be no doubt but that God’s ordained servants at that time “shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars forever and ever.” Again, in his third text, 1 Cor. xiv., 29, 31 – “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the others judge. For ye may all prophesy, one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.” What the Apostle means here is, that they (the prophets) were to speak one at a time to avoid confusion and disorders in the Church, and in such a manner as there might be edification. I fail to see from this text how “Fair Play” can infer that the unlearned were to speak in the Church because Peter in his Second Epistle, 3, 16, writes, – “As also in all his Epistles (Paul’s) speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are *unlearned and unstable* wrest as they do also the other Scriptures to their own destruction.” – 1 Cor., xii., 28. We find that prophets were next in rank to Apostles in the Church at Corinth. Therefore, Paul being their superior in the Church, was, no doubt, explaining to the prophets their duties on this particular occasion. It would be a grave mistake for any one to say that it is wrong to preach the Gospel, and to

turn men from darkness to light. But to any careful reader the Scriptures all through from beginning to end are very plain who are to preach and how they are to be qualified for that sacred office. It would, indeed, be a dark world if the expounding of God's Holy Word were to be left in the hands of unlearned men. This, indeed, would be the blind leading the blind, and both would fall into the ditch. We are told that in the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be lovers of their own selves, boasters, traitors, high minded, etc., having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such we are to turn away, for, of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lists, ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifest to all men. If "Fair Play" would enquire into the personal character of some of the "[Brethren](#)," I think the foregoing description of the times to come, as prophesied by the Apostle Paul, would lead him as well as to think we are living in these perilous times. In all sincerity, I again take this opportunity of warning my Castlerock neighbours as to the ignorance of these itinerant {sic} preachers sojourning amongst them.

Thanking you, Mr. Editor, for granting me space a second time, – Yours,

"SEMPER PARATUS."

January 24th, 1893.

THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN** IN DUNBOE AND CASTLEROCK.
ANOTHER DIALOGUE.

Jane – Well, James, you did come to the meeting of the **Brethren** after all?

James – Yes; I went out of curiosity to hear what they had to say.

Jane – And how did you like what you heard?

James – I did not like it at all. I felt that a temptation to tell lies was strongly put before many who were present.

Jane – How was that?

James – Sure you heard it and saw it yourself; and how — and — were urged to say they were converted when you knew, and they knew, that they were not converted at all.

Jane – I did not very much like that myself.

James – I am sure of that; you knew better than to think that faith in Christ is a mere assent of the understanding. You knew better – for you have not yet forgotten the teaching of the Shorter Catechism – that saving faith is the receiving and resting on Christ alone for salvation; that it does not consist in a mere profession of belief, such as Simon Magus made, though it soon appeared that he was in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity.

Jane – I admit that much of the teaching of the Brethren is new to me, altogether different from what I had heard.

James – Just so. And, therefore, don't you think Christian people should know something about the doctrine and life and appointment of those who come before them or among them to speak about the concerns of eternity and the great salvation?

Jane – Oh! I think that is fair enough.

James – Well, what do you know of the Plymouthite preachers who have appeared in the parish? What do you or the people generally know of their doctrine? Who appointed them to the office of the ministry? Who called them? Who ordained them? What do they believe?

Jane – Oh! they don't believe in a man-made ministry. They profess to be called directly of God.

James – Do you not know that the Apostle Paul himself, who had a divine commission, was also a man-made minister? For before he and Barnabas were sent out on their great evangelistic work the Holy Ghost said to the Church – “Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” And so the prophets and teachers fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, and then sent them away (Acts xiii., 2, 3). So that it might be said of Paul and Barnabus {sic} they were man-made ministers.

Jane – I had not thought of that before.

James – I can believe that. Multitudes that have Bibles don't read them; and so they are carried about by every wind of doctrine and the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive. You

might have seen a capital letter in the *Chronicle* on the necessity of ordination by a writer who signed himself “Semper Paratus.” I don’t know the writer; but his words were true and weighty and unanswerable.

Jane – But surely you will admit that the [Brethren](#) are very good people?

James – I dare say there are good people among them. But did you read what Dr. Parker said about them in the City Temple in London on last Sabbath Day, in referring to their swindling Mr. Henry Morley of £140,000 in the name of religion and of our adorable Redeemer, whose Kingdom they professed to be so anxious to extend?

Jane – No, what did he say?

James – He said that – “Apart altogether from any particular case, I must condemn [Plymouth Brethrenism](#) on every ground. It is pharasaic {sic} and devilish in its vanity. I pray Almighty God to root out of the land that kind of sectarianism, which is an outrage upon the infinite love of the all-loving Christ.”

Jane – That is awfully severe. Why did Dr. Parker speak so strongly against them?

James – It was in reference to the [Plymouthite](#) preachers in London – the two Loughnans and their brother-in-law.

Jane – What had they done?

James – They had drawn into their net Henry Morley, a son of the late devoted Samuel Morley, contrary to their solemn engagement with his father. They took him to live with them, and when his

father died they never stopped till they had got nearly the whole of the young man's fortune into their hands, amounting to £175,000, all, as they said, for the Lord's work, though they invested a great part of it in property for themselves.

Jane – Is this true? Was it proven in court?

James – Aye, it was that; and the Judge ordered £60,000 to be paid back to Mr. Morley's brothers at once – for the poor fellow was so miserable in being left penniless – swindled, as he said, by these preachers, that he had committed suicide, and the other £90,000, the Judge said, must be hunted up too.

Jane – It is an awful story.

James – It is nice to hear these people – they belonged to the [Close Brethren](#) – saying that they wouldn't break bread nor pray with other Christians, but swindling as they did a poor, weak-minded, delicate, young man like H. Morley.

Jane – But [Plymouthite](#) preachers must live and get money like other people.

James – Quite true. But why don't they get it in an honest and honourable way? Why do they profess to take no pay, though the Apostle Paul said, referring to the ministry, that the labourer is worthy of his hire? Why do they take money in a left-handed way – behind backs, as it were, as if they were so very spiritaul {sic} that they did not need salary or wages?

Jane – I suppose they think it does not look mercenary.

The Coleraine Chronicle, 18 Feb 1893, p. 5

THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN** CONTROVERSY.

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle.)

SIR, – In the “Dialogue” between James and Jane, which appeared in your columns last week, the writer correctly represents the necessity of external ordination to a valid ministry.

It is to be regretted, however, that this sound and Scriptural principle did not always obtain in the Church, for if it had there would not now be such doubt cast upon the validity of any portion of our ministry. It is a fact that in the “First Book of Discipline,” drawn up by John Knox and his colleagues for the Kirk of Scotland, this authoritative sign of the ministerial office was declared to be needless, and was thereby discontinued: – “Other ceremonie than the public approbation of the people, and the declaration of the chiefe minister, that the person there presented is appointed to serve the Church, we cannot approve. For albeit the Apostles used imposition of hands, yet seeing the miracle is ceased, the using of the ceremonie we judge not necessarie.”

This “Book” was revised after nearly 30 years; indeed, and the abolished “ceremonie” was introduced, but yet the spiritual idea of succession was entirely absent from it.

So true is it that “those who live in glass houses should not throw stones.” – Yours truly,

Feb. 15th, 1893.

VIGILANS.

MR. EDITOR, – It is too much to trouble you again, when I think of the value of your space, but I believe you will consider it your duty to allow any of your readers who have been abused a liberty of defence.

Readers, if you have thought me in any way unfair, most sincerely be assured it was not my intention. “Semper Paratus” tries to free James from his accusations by directing me to proof of Mr. Moore’s eldership. The question before us is a charge of ignorance and heresy against Mr. Moore, and it matters not to us what this gentleman’s calling is, the charge must be proven before we can pass judgment against him. Deut. xix., 15; 2 Corinth. xiii., 1. I must thank you very much, “Semper Paratus,” for saying – “It would be a grave mistake for any one to say that it is wrong to preach the Gospel, and turn men from darkness to light.” I do not feel, then, that there is any necessity to defend the position of the Brethren; but if it be said that they are wrong in preaching the Gospel, I ask Scripture proof.

Daniel xii., 3. A reference is made in this verse to a duty in life as well as to the Resurrection. “Ordained servants” are not named, but simply, “they that be wise, and they that turn many to righteousness.” Will any who fulfil these duties not receive the reward?

1 Corinth. xiv., 1 – “Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.” Verse 3 – “He that *prophesieth* speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” To *prophesy*, then, means to speak a word of exhortation and comfort in the church to our brethren, as well as to foretell future events. Verse 29 – “Let the prophets speak two or three and let the others judge.”

Now, if Paul, in verse 3, says he *prophesieth*, who speaketh to the edification and comfort of the church? Is it not, then, in accordance with his style of speech to call those who prophesy or speak in

the church *prophets*; and, if so, the word prophets in verse 29 does not *particularize any order of men*, but is only the term here used by Paul to denote those in the act of speaking. Therefore, when he says in verse 31 “That all may prophesy,” he does not mean any particular or special body of men in the church, but the *whole church*. Verses 23 and 24, corroborate this meaning, for there the *whole church* is represented to us by Paul as being “gathered together,” and “all speaking with tongues, and *all prophesying*.” No mention is made in these passages of *prophets*, or any other body of men, but simply and fully the *whole church*. Read also verse 26 – “How is it then, brethren, when ye come together, *every one* of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation?{”} Surely it would have been folly for *every one* to have had a psalm, or doctrine, or interpretation, if not allowed to speak. This very fact that they are stated as having such is a weight of evidence in favour of *every one* having had liberty to speak or tell their own psalm or doctrine, &c. Then after Paul had given all liberty to speak, he finishes up with this exception – that women are to keep silence in the church. This is in verse 34, and Mr. “Semper Paratus” is silent on this passage. This verse (34) is to me conclusive proof that all had liberty to speak but women, for if it had been incumbent on all to have kept silence, Paul would have told them so, but he has not hinted at the like. Women, deacons, elders, and all have now to keep silence (in the church).

Let not one heed me. Every one who can read should search out the whole question for themselves. As to the importance of the matter each is left to form their own opinion. I would not have interfered had it not been for the abuse given the [Brethren](#). Against ministers I say nothing, but there are many experienced Christian men from whom we would enjoy a word of exhortation as much as from any, but they are not permitted. So, then, let me out of my latitude; for I must whine, and howl, and hum – Sure they’ve chained the Lord’s people to silence; were as dogs that are tied to a tomb.

I thank you, Mr. Editor, for considering my letters worthy of a place on your pages, – and remain,
&c., FAIR PLAY.

The Exclusive Financiers.

THE unique combination of high and unctuous piety, with a remarkable talent for finance, which distinguished the defendants in the action of *Morley v. Loughnan*, has drawn universal attention to the case. The annals of cant do not contain a more accomplished performer than the reverend gentleman who, while flourishing an elegant selection of Biblical texts, accepted from an invalid, worn out by epilepsy and distracted by religious mania, a fortune of £140,000. It is hard to tell what is the most disgusting feature of a transaction that is without a single redeeming incident except Mr Justice Wright's judgment yesterday. When Mr Henry Hope Morley, a son of Mr Samuel Morley, and brother of Mr Samuel Hope Morley and the Right Hon. Arnold Morley, the plaintiffs in the action, died in February, 1891, the latter, who were his trustees, naturally made inquiries as to how he had disposed of his money. It was discovered that £50,000 recently paid to the deceased had disappeared, and the defendant, Mr W. H. Loughnan, with whom Mr Morley had lived, was asked if he knew how this large sum had been used. Mr Loughnan is an ex-clergyman of the Church of England, who found that his exacting spirituality was not satisfied by that body, and joined the sect called [Plymouth Brethren](#), or rather a peculiar department of them known as the [Exclusive](#) Order. When this worthy was asked by the family solicitor, Mr Phelps, if he could throw any light upon the destination of the £50,000, he pleaded that his conscience forbade him to answer. Subsequently, having in his pious formula "put the matter before the Lord," he asserted that he had received Divine permission to confess that the money had been given to his unworthy self by Mr Henry Morley, in order to avoid the death duty which would have to be paid on a will. Placed as they were

in a responsible capacity, the plaintiffs could hardly remain satisfied with this ingenuous explanation, and they soon arrived at the conclusion, which was emphatically endorsed by Mr Justice Wright, that under the cloak of religion W. H. Loughnan had established a strong illegal influence {one word illegible, probably "upon"} their brother with a view to securing his property. It was ascertained that not only the £50,000 in question but the whole of the £140,000 withdrawn by deceased from his father's business had passed into the hands of W. H. Loughnan. The introduction of this [Exclusive Plymouth Brother](#) to Mr Henry Morley occurred in 1881, when Mr Loughnan was engaged as his travelling companion at a liberal salary. The influence which the defendant established at this period was never lost, and proved to be an almost inexhaustible source of income. In 1883 Mr Morley went to reside with Mr Loughnan, and was easily converted to the beliefs of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He withdrew more and more from his own family notwithstanding their friendly overtures and soon was at the tender mercy of Mr Loughnan and his needy pack of relations. These penniless folk speedily began to draw their hundreds a year. Mr Loughnan himself gave £12,000 for a house, and drove a carriage. Every halfpenny of this money came from Mr Morley. It is needless to say that a man of the world with the most rudimentary notions of honour would have refused the gifts of a donor in Mr Morley's state of health. Here was this miserable man, whose will had been shattered by epileptic seizures, whose memory was disappearing, whose brain was clouded by religious mania, and by the almost unprecedented consumption of a depressing drug – surely, this was a case for protection against his own folly. But the [Exclusive](#) child of grace thought otherwise. He prevented a marriage engagement which might have rescued Mr Morley from his hands; he suggested to him business transactions; and ultimately got him entirely under his influence. Though in the witness box he protested that he was no business man, as if his thoughts were too lofty for earthly things, with low cunning he endeavoured to destroy all evidence in the banking accounts of

the direction in which Mr Morley's money went. If we only accept what Mr Justice Wright regarded as true evidence, then by the side of W. H. Loughnan Stiggins was a noble and disinterested saint. Fortunately, he has been compelled to disgorge his ill-gotten gains, and he has in addition the mortification of reflecting that his conduct must inevitably bring odium upon the sect to which he belongs, and particularly upon that tenet of voluntary contributions which seems to have led him to play a vampire's part towards Mr Henry Morley.

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

BY A MAN THAT WAS.

OF all the sects in the world, that of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) is the most sectarian. Founded about a generation ago by a Mr. J. N. Darby, formerly in Anglican orders, the avowed, and doubtless sincere, intention of its first adherents was to revive the simplicity of the Apostolic Church. All the traditions of organized Christianity were set aside, and its ritual condemned as the unguided invention of man. The Bible alone was in future to be the true Christian's guide; consequently the religious observances of "the [Brethren](#)," as they call themselves – discarding the name of Plymouth, where the sect first grew up – were based on the somewhat scanty materials gleaned from the Acts of the Apostle. The true Christian was no longer to be hampered by paid ministers, instrumental music, and a regular church service and church organisation: they were not mentioned in the Bible, and therefore they were not "of God." "The [Brethren](#)" founded their system on two principles – the strictest tenets of Evangelicalism and the weekly celebration of the Communion. No one could be admitted into the flock so long as there was any question about his "Salvation;" once inside it, there was an obligation upon him to attend Communion – "the Lord's Supper," or "Breaking of Bread" it is called among the [Plymouth Brethren](#), any other name being looked upon as merely human – every week. In accordance with these principles the morning service on Sundays is set aside for the celebration of the Sacrament, the evening for evangelical preaching. These meetings are held in "the Room," which is the only recognized designation of their places of worship. Here are all the elements of

narrow sectarianism ready to hand. No one may take the Sacrament who is not in the brotherhood; no one is admitted to the brotherhood who is not saved. In the Sunday morning meetings "the Room" is divided into two parts: between them is a board with the inscription, *"In the morning the seats beyond this board are set apart for those breaking bread."* Within this enclosure sit "the Saints," as they are called, to mark them off from the outside public (generally the younger members of the Brethren's families), who sit on the far side. The Saints are grouped round the communion table, the celebration of which forms the central part of the morning's worship. There is no set order of service; any brother may "give out a hymn" (sung in unison without music – a very painful performance), offer a prayer, read and expound a chapter, just as the spirit moves him. Any brother, too, may conduct the communion, which is done by offering a separate prayer before the administration of each kind. This "go-as-you-please" arrangement occasionally leads to some confusion; two Brothers may rise at once and each be unwilling to give way; sometimes there is a doubt whether the meeting is over or not.

It never seems to have struck the Brethren that they were forging fetters far more galling than those of any Church. They have never seen that the rigid use of terms like "the Lord's Supper" or "The Lord's Table," "Breaking Bread," "the Gospel," "the Room," "the Saints," "the World" (that is, all but Brethren), "Hymns for the Little Flock" (the official hymn-book) marks the crystallization of a formalism as complete as that of the Church of Rome itself. But they did find that it was impossible to guard the exclusive character of the sect without some sort of organization. Therefore a sort of Caucus used to meet, and presumably does still, every Saturday night. It considers claims for admission to the sect; the conversion of the applicant has to be certified by a certain number of Brethren. If the application is allowed, a notice to that effect is read out next Sunday in all the

London meetings. It takes this form: "Proposed to fellowship at the Lord's Table, John Smith, of 2, Westbrook-road, Hackney; commended by Brethren Brown, Jones, and Robinson." When a member of one gathering wishes to worship at another he usually arms himself with a letter of recommendation from a well-known Brother; in some cases the recommendation is not held satisfactory, and the bearer is not allowed to take part in the Communion. The Central Caucus also considers cases of expulsion from the sect; these are based both on moral and doctrinal grounds – very often on non-attendance at meetings. The formula for this is – "Richard Thompson and Mary, his wife, having left the Lord's Table and refusing all admonition, are no longer in fellowship." This, too, is read aloud in meeting in the most lugubrious tones that can be summoned at the moment; the technical term for it is "putting away."

It is difficult to be orthodox in such a sect, and it is not surprising that, small as it is, it has often split up. To begin with, it parted into "Close" and "Open" Brethren; a few years ago the Close Brethren split up into at least three different branches. If a member of one branch meets one of another in the street, though he was his bosom friend before the schism, he usually cuts him dead. A paid ministry has also come up in a disguised form. Mr. Loughnan was apparently one of these gentlemen. They are men supposed to be peculiarly gifted as evangelists and expositors, and are maintained by the contributions of the wealthier among the faithful. Usually they travel about the country, staying about a month in each place in the house of the richest Brother in the neighbourhood. As a rule, they are the most insufferable and unprofitable windbags in the whole sect. To them is due much of the theological rancour that has ruined the system – for the doctrines of the Plymouth Brethren have now ceased to be a religious power in England. They start the controversies that wreck old friendships and cherished faiths, and destroy the energies of the Brethren for any beneficent work. They

are not uncharitable to their own members, but do next to nothing for the outside world. "We know that the world will never get any better," said one of their preachers lately; "and it is not our interest as Christians to make it better."

The Pall Mall Gazette, London, 3 Feb 1893, p. 6

THE [PLYMOUTH BROTHERHOOD](#).

To the EDITOR *of the* PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR, – With reference to the article by a former "[Plymouth Brother](#)," allow me to say that it would be as just to describe the life in a Carmelite convent as representing the religious observances of ordinary Catholics.

The "[Open Brethren](#)" to whom he refers are under no obligations to attend a weekly communion, and differ in no way from evangelical Christians in their ordinary preaching. The one striking difference between them and all other sects is the use they make of the so-called laity in the services on Sunday. The Free Church of Scotland, the Baptists, Methodists, and other Dissenting bodies allow certain laymen to preach in their pulpits, and it is only this privilege extended to all gifted laymen that the "[Brethren](#)" claim. Having lived among them for twenty years I know something of their pretensions and requirements. They do not claim to be free from the liability to fall into sin – common to all Christians – and as there was a Judas in the early church, we need not wonder that a

Mr. Loughnan can exist among the “[Plymouth Brethren](#).” It seems stupid to attack a body of people on the ground of the failure of an individual. – I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

February 2.

A [PLYMOUTH SISTER](#).

The Pall Mall Gazette, London, 25 Feb 1893, p. 7

THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR, – In your late article on “The [Brethren](#)” there are some omissions of a serious nature which intimate that the character of the movement has been misunderstood. If rightly apprehended some of the objections you have named would disappear, while others, not so prominent, would not obtain the goodwill of the public at large. You speak of them as a sect, describing them as “[Open Brethren](#)” and “[Close Brethren](#),” all to be deprecated and shunned. Your correspondent has been misinformed as to Mr. John Darby being the originator. When in Ireland a few persons, studying the Scriptures, began to be impressed with the fact of the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ to gather His people into the House of His Father in the heavens, they found comfort in intercourse with others who had the same bright hope. Desiring to impress the importance of this expectation, some of them came to Plymouth to promulgate the tidings, without any ulterior object. Hence the local epithet. Far from forming a sect or evincing attachment to any place or party on earth, the idea is foreign to any such intention or expectation. If our Lord tells his Disciples to watch and wait for him,

can it be right that those who love Him should settle themselves down as earthly communities with no project beyond the grave? The hopes held out to all who trust in the Lord Jesus rise higher, more elevated than earth, are more expansive, embracing all the heavenly family, by whatever designation, to whatever nation or country they belong here below. Happily there are now very many individuals thus actuated, gathered in companies, unto their Lord. Whether many or few, two or three, if assembling in His name alone they are assured of His presence. Weak as water in ourselves, liable to be puzzled and tripped up by every specious pretence, yet kept by the power of God from the allurements of Satan, the world, and the flesh. Very comforting to perceive from the numerous conventions in different places that Christian people value each other's society, though unable as yet to break the fetters by which, through superstition and ignorance, they have become bound.

Waveridge Lawn, Malvern, February 22.

ROBERT NELSON.

Another reason for being glad I am not a Plymouth man – there is, happily, no chance now of my being taken for a [Plymouth Brother](#) – a class of folk just at present far more prominent than the Yarmouth Bloaters, with which good old Mrs. Partington confounded them. But, to do the [P.B.](#)'s justice, I believe they object most strongly to the topographical prefix – they are *the Brethren*, not [Plymouth Brethren](#) at all, if you call them by their own name, or else they are the “saints.” Pretty saints, some of them anyhow, in the usual sense of the word, though etymologically, the more sainted they can be made the better – that is, the more completely they can be *separated* from all ordinary decent folk.

Dr. Parker went to the root of the matter at once, and touched the heart of the nation when he said, commenting on the righteous issue of the Morley case, that [Plymouth Brethrenism](#) was “Pharisaic and devilish.” Strong words, but not a bit too strong, as any one who has any intimate acquaintance with the thing must know. The Morley case is only typical. Mammon and self are the chief gods of their idolatry. They keep aloof from politics, they take no interest in public affairs, they despise all that is worldly except – *hard cash*. They seem to have taken the counsel to “make to themselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness” in the most literal and thorough-going sense. As to their being *brethren*, the whole history of the sect is one of quarrellings and divisions, and censurings and comminations. The world has never condemned them half as heartily as they have damned and do damn each other. As to Mr. Morley, I hold that he was terrorised into his grave, and that penal servitude ought to be added to restitution to meet the full justice of the case.

Morley v. Loughman {sic} was the talk of everybody while the trial was in progress and for twenty-four hours after its close. Considering the facts which came to light during the case, no one can wonder at this; nor can anyone fairly quarrel with the result of the proceedings. But in some quarters there has been a very noticeable disposition to ridicule or condemn the 'Brethren' as a whole in consequence of the misdoings of Mr. Loughman. This is grossly unfair. Every flock has its black sheep; was not the Rev. Dr. Clutterbuck a priest in the Church of England? There is no more necessary connection between Plymouth Brethrenism and undue influence over weak-minded plutocrats than there is between Anglicanism and forgery. The recent trial, however, tends to remind us of the curious history of this somewhat peculiar sect. Some of us may have forgotten the fact that they owe their name to the circumstance that they first appeared in Plymouth. This was in 1830, and the original 'Brother' was a Mr. J. N. Darby. At first their progress was slow. In 1850 they possessed only thirty-two places of worship in England and Wales. Since then, the increase has been much more marked, though trustworthy statistics, so far as we know, are not obtainable. Moreover, from the very first the Brethren have been harassed with schism.

Mr. Darby himself before his death separated from the original body, and again and again this process of splitting has been reported. Perhaps this is not surprising in view of the strictness – or narrowness – of the tenets held and taught. A contributor to the *Pall Mall Gazette* throws some light upon both the doctrines and organisation of the body, though it must be confessed that he writes in a very unsympathetic strain. He tells us that the original intention of the Brethren was to revive the simplicity of the Apostolic Church; the Bible alone was in future to be the true Christian's guide. Paid

ministers, instrumental music, regular church services and church organisation were all to be cast aside. 'No one could be admitted into the flock so long as there was any question about his "salvation"; once inside it, there was an obligation upon him to attend the "Lord's Supper," or Breaking of Bread, every week. ... There is no set order of service – any brother may give out a hymn, offer a prayer, read and expound a chapter, just as the spirit moves him. Any brother, too, may conduct the communion.' The Brethren, it seems, are 'the Saints,' and those of us who are not of the brethren are 'the World.' Well, well, the Plymouth Brother has as much right to his own views as the Anglican or the Salvationist. But though it is unfair to brand him or his faith with any portion of the stigma which attaches to Mr. Loughman, we can scarcely be surprised that tenets and practices such as these convey to 'the world' the impression of bigotry rather than of benevolent zeal or broadminded love for suffering and toiling humanity.

MURDER BY AN ENGLISHMAN.

A tragic affair occurred at Barcelona on Saturday. An Englishman, named Samuel Willie, entered the office of Messrs. Bofill Brothers, a prominent firm of coal merchants, and, drawing a revolver, fired two shots at Señor Jose Bofill, killing him instantly. The murderer then pointed his weapon at Señor Bofill's brother, and fired a third shot, wounding him severely, after which he rushed into the street, threatening everyone he met. Finally he turned the revolver upon himself and pulled the trigger, but the weapon missed fire. The assassin was then seized and handed over to the police. Willie was an Evangelical clergyman, a member of the society of [Plymouth Brethren](#), and had afterwards been acting as a colliery representative. He is only 27 years of age, and is a native of Yeovil. He is a widower with two children. His brother, Mr. George Willie, is in the employ of a Cardiff firm, and he left for Barcelona on receipt of the melancholy intelligence. Telegrams received from his sister, with whom he was living at Barcelona, point conclusively to his having recently become quite unaccountable for his actions.

The Pall Mall Gazette, London, 27 Mar 1893, p. 7

Mr. W. H. Loughnan, the principal defendant in the Morley-Loughnan case, in which judgment was given for the plaintiffs, as will be remembered, in January last, has been excommunicated by the “Close” section of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) – his name having been “read out” in all the “meetings” yesterday as no longer “in fellowship.”

Cornish and Devon Post, Launceston, 1 Apr 1893, p. 4

HIGHWAY AND BYEWAY.

[BY THE MOUNTED POSTBOY.]

[SENT OR COLLECTED.]

{...}

☞ “THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SAINTS” AND THE LATE LOUGHNAN CASE.

I have been favored {sic} with the following copy of the decision of the “Saints” on the recent Loughnan case, and which, we understand, is being circulated in writing privately amongst the [Brethren](#).

1. At assembly meetings of the saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, at Nutford Hall, Edgware Road, London, W., on the 8th and 10th of March, 1893, to consider the conduct of our brother, W. H. Loughnan (who is at present residing in this locality) it was felt, after a careful consideration of the sorrowful facts which have been brought before us, that, in receiving such large sums of money from the years 1886 to 1891, from our late brother Henry Morley, W. H. Loughnan was guilty of sin against God, unrighteousness towards his brother, and covetousness (in the sense of making a gain of his brother), 1 Co., 5, 11. 2 Co. 12, 17, 18. 2 Co. 7, 2. New S. J.N.D.

2. The money in question was entrusted by God to Hy. Morley, as a steward, and, as the object of giving is clearly stated in scripture to be to minister to need and not to make rich (as 2, 44, 45. 4, 34, 35, 20, 33, 35. Ro. 12, 13. Ep. 4, 28. 1 Ti. 6, 17, 19,) we therefore judge that W. H. Loughnan sinned against God and wronged his brother by receiving more than was righteously due to him to enable him to provide a suitable home for Hy. Morley, and, by so doing, he made a gain of his brother, however freely the money may have been given to him.

3. Moreover, having reference to the morbid condition which characterized Hy. Morley, owing to physical and spiritual depression, we judge that W. H. Loughnan ought to have been especially careful in all his pecuniary transactions with Hy. Morley, so that no opportunity might be given to them that are without to say that he derived undue temporal advantage from Hy. Morley's wealth.

4. We do not mean to imply that W. H. Loughnan took anything which Hy. Morley did not freely and unconditionally give to him, or to deny that W. H. Loughnan gave away in charity a large portion of the wealth which God had entrusted to Hy. Morley. But the fact remains that W. H. Loughnan made

a gain of Hy. Morley and largely benefited himself, his family, and his immediate relations by means of Hy Morleys {sic} gifts.

5. We deeply regret the dishonor {sic} that has been brought on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by our brother W. H. Loughnan, and the blame he has cast on the ministry in which he was engaged, 2 Co 6, 3, also the occasion given to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

6. With deep sorrow we propose to the Assembly in London, that he be put away from amongst us, 1 Co. 5, 13.

A Lively Scene in Convoy.

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) and the Presbyterians

A novel and startling episode took place while the remains of a little girl named Baxter were about to be consigned to their last resting place in Convoy graveyard on Monday, 22nd inst. The Presbyterian inhabitants were thrown into a state of excitement bordering on frenzy when it became known that their venerable and beloved minister, the Rev. R. Beattie, was grossly insulted, while conducting the funeral service, by a number of [Plymouth Brethren](#). The little girl, Miss Baxter, having gone over to this sect, was converted, and in due time received the cleansing waters of Baptism. Unfortunately she caught a cold which she never recovered from; hence the disturbance at her burial.

As Miss Baxter had formerly been a hearer of Mr Beattie, Presbyterian minister, Convoy, he proceeded to conduct the funeral service, and had scarcely finished when Mr Lawery, followed by a number of his neophytes, appeared on the scene, and insisted on conducting it according to the rites of his religion. This Mr Beattie objected to, angry words ensued, and there was every appearance of painful trouble, but fortunately at this point Mr Bartly, minister, Carnone, who happened to be in town, and hearing of the turn things had taken, came to the rescue of Mr Beattie. He threatened to prosecute Mr. Lawery and his party for infringing on the rights of the Presbyterians. This seemed to have the desired effect, as Mr Lawery and his hearers retired from the scene.

THE "GOSPEL HALL" AND THE MAYOR'S TREAT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CARLISLE JOURNAL.

Sir, – In looking over the list of Sunday Schools contained in Friday's *Journal* that purpose participating in the Mayor's hospitality on Thursday first, the following entry is made: – "Gospel Hall ([Plymouth Brethren](#), entrance Market Place)." Now, this is not worded as the school was entered. The words "[Plymouth Brethren](#)" have been added by some person or persons either in wilfulness or in ignorance for reasons best known to themselves and without any authority whatever, and I, as one who meet with the above assembly, resent and repudiate any claim to this or any other nickname that will not bear the investigation of Acts, chapter 2, verses 41 to 44. – Your insertion of this will oblige yours truly,

JAMES MATTHEWS.

27, Ashley Street.

A BROTHER DISTURBED.

An edifying spectacle was witnessed on Peckham Rye on Sunday night. A portly individual attired in a frock-coat, with a gold eyeglass prominently displayed, took up a position, and depositing his tall hat on a brown-paper parcel, began to hold an open-air service. He was quickly surrounded by a crowd, when a young gentleman began to interrupt, and in reply to the preacher's query as to what he meant by it, retorted, "You miserable fraud, why don't you pay the money you owe?" The Preacher: Do I owe you any money? – No, but you borrowed 30s. from my father; and before a man should come here Sunday after Sunday making professions of Christianity he should pay his debts. The Preacher (indignantly): Gentlemen, I appeal to you. I am a nephew of Lord Nelson, who has fought for his country, and this young man's father has sent him here to persecute me, when I am doing the work of the Lord. – You're a liar! One of the Crowd: Do you acknowledge owing the money? The Preacher: Yes; but it is eight years ago, and as I'm an unfortunate man it is the duty of a fellow-Christian to forgive a debt under the circumstances. I would pay if I could. A Voice: Then why don't you pawn that coat? The accuser then went on to say that the preacher had been expelled from the [Exclusives](#) and "tossed out" of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and would not be allowed in Exeter Hall. He had not come there with any intention of exposing him, but casually walking across the Rye, and seeing him preaching there, had considered it his duty to ask him the question as he had done. The Boanerges, who from his dialect evidently hailed from the Sister Isle, had by this time been goaded into a furious passion, and consoled himself by shouting at the top of his stentorian voice, "You son of a viper!" By this time the people had had enough of the ministrations.

AN EXTRAORDINARY SENTENCE ON A RACING MAN.

At Kendal Police-court, before ex-Mayor Wilson and John Rhodes, prominent members of the Quaker and [Plymouth Brethren](#) sects, a man named Killingly respectably dressed, was sentenced to fourteen days' imprisonment with hard labour for begging. He went to Chief Detective Bitchen and said he did not want to go to a low lodging-house, and asked for the loan of fourpence to make up a shilling for a bed. Chief Constable Talbot telegraphed to Cambridge, where the man said he came from, and received an answer from the police to the effect that nothing was known against prisoner except that he was a "racing man." In the court, but after the public had cleared out, the conduct of the magistrates was vigorously denounced by prominent members of the Kendal Town Council.

The Merthyr Times, 29 Sep 1893, p. 3

DENOMINATIONAL PECULIARITIES.

To the Editor.

SIR, – It may not be generally known that to each denomination of Christians there are peculiar incidents which have marked their history, arising often from accidental circumstances beyond human control. Among the Methodists of England there are a host of divisions, whilst the [Plymouth Brethren](#) are fairly divided into what are called the “[Tight Plyms](#)” and “[Loose Plyms](#)” – no intercourse among them between their Samaria and Jerusalem. {...}

A “WIDE” BAPTIST.

Merthyr, Sept. 21st, 1893.

MR. GLADSTONE AND PROF. NEWMAN.

We (*British Weekly*) are favoured by a correspondent with the following letters, which have never before been published. Our contributor remarks: – The following illustrates the indomitable energy of Mr Gladstone; his interest in religious subjects and in recalling reminiscences of his Oxford days; together with his well-known ability, in the midst of distracting political obligations, to turn aside to the consideration of other subjects. The inquiry was addressed to him at Hawarden Castle, which he left the next day for London, where his reply – though bearing the Castle impress – was posted. There was a meeting the same day of the Home Rule Committee of the Cabinet, and the day following was held the last full Cabinet meeting before the Christmas holidays. A few days afterwards Mr Gladstone left for Biarritz, where the second letter was dated.

Hawarden Castle, Chester.
Dec. 15th, 1892.

DEAR SIR, – I fear I cannot aid you in your main purpose. I heard of Mr F. Newman when I was an undergraduate (1828–31), a man of talent, especially of mathematical talent, unable to take holy orders, as he dissented from the Prayer-book. As to the time of his being in or out of Oxford, I cannot speak. He was not in my day a *figure* for the University at large. Of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) I had no original knowledge whatever, nor have I any, but I observed their power as a moral attractive force, in juxtaposition with the Established Church of Ireland. Of the tongues (Irving's) I learnt something,

but this subject hardly came within the precinct of the University. – I remain, dear sir, your very faithful and obedient,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

I had a great esteem for Mr F. Newman, but of late years he has, I think, avoided all communication with me.

The second was written by Mr Gladstone's private secretary, Mr H. Shand, and dated: –

Grand Hotel, Biarritz,
26th Dec., 1892.

SIR, – In reply to the several questions contained in your letter of the 23rd inst., Mr Gladstone desires me to say that he has no recollection of having met either Mr [John Nelson Darby](#), Sir [Chas. Brenton](#), or Capt. [Geo. Wigram](#). With regard to Mr F. Newman, he was certainly a man of considerable talent, but Mr Gladstone could not undertake to draw a comparison between him and his brother the Cardinal. As far as Mr Gladstone can remember, the best books dealing with the period to which you refer are: 1. Dean Church's; 2. The Apologia; 3. Records of Isaac Williams. – Your obedient servant, –

H. SHAND.

Some Curious Religious Sects.

The religious census of New South Wales, the results of which have just been published, contains a curious item. Among the one and a quarter million inhabitants of the province there are 190 different creeds and sects. No less than fifty-nine religions have only one supporter apiece, a solitary individual who expects to go to heaven all alone, while all the rest of the nation falls with a thud into perdition.

A striking feature here is that in only six instances is the lonesome apostle a woman, and the six women who hold up six deserted creeds all by themselves appear to be mostly Scotch. Taking them all round, the religionists of New South Wales are a humorous gathering.

There are four "Calithumpians" among them and one sad and friendless person who puts himself down as an "Admirer of Nature," one "Pessimist," and three who record themselves as "Unprejudiced."

There is one – only one – "Believer in Facts," and one "Brotherhood of Man" individual with nobody in all the rest of the list to be a brother to him, also one "Moralist," one "No Christian," and a single "Seeker"; one "Philosopher," one "Bellamyite," and – sad, unfriended, melancholy, slow, at the tail-end of the list – a dejected "Fatalist."

Also there is one "[Open Brethren](#)," which is a cheerful thing in a land where most of the brethren seem to be shut fast; and along with these fancy and comic believers there are a lot of sectarians

who put themselves down as “Ecclesiastes vi.” only, “Ephesians ii., 8,” “Gathered unto me,” “Nur-
tured in the Admonition of the Lord,” “Hardshell Baptist,” “Do Good,” “Saints,” and one tough
individual who defines himself as “Experience.” – *Pearson’s Weekly*.

{Pearson’s Weekly is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

BARNET.

REVERSING THE ORDER OF THINGS. – It has long been quite the fashion to send white men to teach the benighted heathen, but on Sunday last the order of things was reversed, and Mr. Dickerson an emancipated black slave came down to Barnet to coach up the local heathen in their duties to the Deity and to their fellow men – black ones in particular{.} At the Town Hall in the afternoon, and at Salisbury-road with the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in the evening, this gentleman of colour told something of the Gospel, and a good deal about himself and his experiences. He told a harrowing tale of the sufferings of his slave mother, borne in the patience born of dependence on the divine will, and altogether proved himself as good a platform orator as the “Converted navvies,” “Converted boxers,” and others who look upon Barnet as being so urgently and so frequently in need of their services. Some of his stories were tall, but in the main he appeared to be earnest and thorough, and he found attentive audiences. Perhaps those who might otherwise have been more critically inclined, remembered the words of good George Elliott and “judged not the preacher.”

**ROBBING A PLACE OF WORSHIP.
ARREST OF TWO EASTBOURNE YOUTHS.**

COMMITTAL YESTERDAY.

At the Police Court yesterday, before G. H. Lawrence, Esq. (in the chair), and the Mayor, CHARLES VINCENT CHERRY, 16, and SYDNEY FITZSIMMONS CHERRY, 14, sons of Mr. C. E. Cherry, of Brockville, Seaside, were charged with feloniously breaking and entering a place of divine worship (the Marine Hall, Seaside) and stealing 2/6 and some French coins, the moneys of Mr. John Steinle (hotel manager) and others. The Hall is a place of worship for the [Plymouth brethren](#).

Mr. Steinle said – I am one of the trustees of Marine Hall. For some time past we have found that moneys have been abstracted from two boxes (produced) which have been kept at the Hall. The most important box is the one in which the children put their pennies for mission work. It is kept in a locked cupboard in a room adjoining the Hall. It is brought out on Sundays after lessons and the children give what they can. The other box is kept in the same place. The teachers each put three-pence in it when they stay to tea. Last Sunday I saw both boxes. We sought to find who took the money, and the caretaker put in to one of the boxes two French coins. There were marks on the coins. I saw defendants at the Police Station yesterday, at about 1 p.m. Instructions have been given for the last three weeks or month for the police to watch.

George Walter Butler, a youth, said – I am 18 years of age, and am assistant caretaker at the Marine Hall. On Sunday, at about 5 p.m., I put into the tea box the two marked silver coins produced. One of the ladies in the office at the Queen's Hotel obtained them from Mr. Steinle. After the evening meeting I saw a shilling and a sixpence put in by Detective Hayward. I put both boxes in the cupboard and locked it. The children's mission-box contained money; it has been forced since Sunday night.

Alfred William Weaver, a young man, said – I live at 4, Jubilee Terrace, and am an assistant at the railway bookstall. Yesterday afternoon one of the defendants handed a coin to a lad at the stall. I refused to take it because it was a French coin. Both defendants were there. The boy handed the coin back, and defendant who had tendered it in payment for a penny paper, went away. I think they bought a penny paper.

Detective Stephen Hayward said – On Sunday night I turned the tea box out and found a shilling and a sixpence, which I marked. Two French coins (marked) and two half-pennies (unmarked) were in the box. I opened the Mission Box and found a sixpence and 1/2 in coppers. I marked the sixpence and sealed the box up again. Both boxes were put in the cupboard. I concealed myself in the room till 10.30 p.m. The key of the cupboard was put on a shelf between some books. Yesterday morning I went to the Marine Hall. The cupboard was locked and the key was in the place where I had left it. When I unlocked the cupboard I found the money gone. Two half-pennies had been left in the tea box. From the Mission box a marked sixpence and sixpenny worth of coppers had been taken. I put the boxes back and went outside and kept the building under observation. About 10.30 a.m. I saw defendants leave their father's house, which is next door to the Marine Hall. I followed them up Seaside and Terminus-road to the railway-station. I saw them go to the bookstall. Charles Cherry

bought a paper and handed a coin to the boy, who gave it to the last witness. Weaver passed it back again. Sydney Cherry took a coin out of his pocket and paid for the paper. I spoke to Weaver, and from what he told me, I arrested both defendants. I took them to the Town Hall where they were searched. I found the two French coins in Charles Cherry's pockets. I asked him how he accounted for the ten cent piece. He said he found it {a}t Meads. He had also 3½d. in coppers, and a copy o{f} *Illustrated Bits*. No money was found on Sydney{.} Defendants' father put a question. Charles then said, "Syd went in and I watched." His f{at}her asked how long has this been doing?" Charles replied, "Several times; I don't know how many times." Afterwards, in company w{i}th Chief Constable Plumb, I went to the side door of the Marine Hall. We found a wall about 5ft{.} high dividing the hall premises from Mr. Cher{r}'s yard. We ascertained that Mr. Cherry's fro{n}t door key fitted the side door of the Hall. T{h}ere was no appearance of the door having been {f}orced. I have been keeping observation on th{e} building for three weeks.

The Bench c{o}mmitted prisoners for trial at the Assizes.

Mr. Steinl{e} wished the case to be dealt with summarily{,} but the Chairman said this could not be done.

Mr. C. E. Cherry (father of defendants) applied for ba{il}.

T{h}e Bench said they would accept Mr. Cherry in £5{0}, and another surety in £50. Mr. R. B. Wake{h}am was accepted as surety.

Western Mail, Cardiff, 19 Nov 1894, p. 4

A [Plymouth brother](#) appeared before the Llanelly Board of Guardians to support the application of a widow for relief. "Is she a sister of yours?" asked the chairman. "Yes," replied the brother, and, then, paraphrasing St. Paul's reply to "most noble Festus," he added, "Yes, sir, a sister in the faith, and would to God that thou also and all thy household were so as well." The chairman's eyes went on opening for fifteen seconds.

The newly-published life of John Addington Symonds contains in the autobiographical chapters some curious references to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) of Bristol. Mr. Symonds was a native of Clifton and spent his boyhood in the city. His grandmother, Mrs. Sykes, was a handsome old lady, with “a great air of blood and breeding.” She had become a [Plymouth Sister](#), and in the later forties and early fifties her grandson used often to visit her. “Her house in Cornwallis Crescent, or the Lower Crescent, had nothing in it to rejoice the eye, except flowers, to which she was devoted. All objects of taste and luxury, all that delights the sense, had been carefully weeded out of the grim, bare dwelling. And what company my grandmother kept! It was a motley crew of preachers and missionaries, tradesmen and cripples – the women dressed in rusty bombazine and drab gingham, the men attired in greasy black suits, with dingy white neckties – all gifted with a sanctimonious snuffle, all blessed by nature with shining foreheads and clammy hands, all avid for buttered toast and muffin, and all fawning on the well-connected gentlewoman, whose wealth, though moderate, possessed considerable attractions and was freely drawn upon.

“Heavy teas, like those described by Dickens, were of frequent occurrence, after which the Chad-band of the evening discoursed at a considerable length. Then followed prayers, in the course of which a particularly repulsive pharmaceutical chemist from Broadmead uplifted his nasal voice in petition to the Almighty, which too often, alas, degenerated into glorifications of the [Plymouth sect](#) at Bristol and objurations {sic} on the perversity of other religious bodies. My grandmother came in for her full share of fulsome flattery, under the attributes of Deborah and Dorcas. My father was

compared to Naaman, who refused to bathe in Jordan – Jordan being Bethesda, or the meeting-place of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

“Sometimes I was taken to Bethesda, a doleful place, which brought no healing to my soul, but seemed to me a pool of stagnant pietism and turbid middle-class Philistinism. This chapel did not, however, afflict me so grievously as the Blind Asylum, and I think that I was even then capable of appreciating the ardent faith and powerful intellect of George Müller, who preached there, and who founded the celebrated Orphanage at Horfield, near Bristol.

“My grandmother naturally made a strong point of family prayers. She delighted in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the minatory chapters of the prophets, and the Apocalypse. In a deep sonorous voice, starting with a groan and ending with a quaver, she used to chant forth those lugubrious verses which began or ended with ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ I remember hearing nothing of the Gospel, or the love of Christ for the whole human race, either in her readings from Scripture or in the extempore prayers which followed. She concentrated her attention on the message to the chosen people, with a tacit assumption that all who lived outside the [Plymouth](#) fold were children of wrath.”

The great split between the [Close](#) and [Open Brethren](#) took place in 1848, remarks the *British Weekly*, and the fact that Mrs. Sykes became a member of George Müller’s chapel shows that she joined the [Open Brethren](#).

Glasgow Evening News [BNA *Glasgow Evening Post*], 25 Jan 1895, p. 1

THE LORGNETTE.

Here's a story, quite new, from the Vale of Leven. Two boys broke a school window in Church Street, Alexandria, the other day, and were taken up by the police. "What does your father do?" asked the sergeant, addressing one of them. "He's a pattern maker," was the reply. "And yours?" he asked the second. And the boy, after a moment's hesitation, said, "He's a [Plymouth Brethren](#)."

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Sir, – There are two matters to which with your permission I would call the attention of your readers; the one, the position and religious standing of those who worship at Dent Hall, Workington; {...}

Regarding the former it has been stated, and it is still thought by some persons, that we who meet to worship at Dent Hall are a division of, or are in some way connected with, those religious bodies which had their origin at Plymouth, and are sometimes given the name “[Plymouth Brethren](#).” This is not so. We are not one of the bodies of these brethren. While some of the principles held are the same, we have not, nor have we ever had, any connection with them. Those who meet to “break bread” at Dent Hall on the first day of the week form one of the “Churches of Christ,” and are “Christians,” or “Disciples of Christ.” The great principle held by them is that of guidance by the Word of God alone; and their earnest endeavour is to seek a restoration of the pure and simple Christianity of apostolic times as recorded in the New Testament. Further information regarding the “Christians” and the “Churches of Christ,” their teachings, practices, and principles will be gladly given by myself to all who desire this.

{...}

CHAS. BAILEY.

3, Chapel Street, Workington.

Dear Sir, – In your last Saturday's issue were many letters of great interest to Christians and philanthropists, viz., those on the "Maintenance of the church," "Drink and Poverty," "Churches of Christ," &c. It is to the latter I wish to refer with your permission. {...}

Truth is one, but men's views of conceptions of truth are many. The Jews say, "God is in the middle," and the more extreme a man is the farther he often is from Him who is the truth. To be literalists is one extreme, to be spiritualists is the other; the safest and truest position is to have enough of each; to be about the middle – a central position – a happy medium. The Pharisees and Sadducees in our Saviour's day no doubt represented the extreme positions of the Jews, who no doubt started with good intentions, but ended in complete denial of the truth they sought to believe and live. I fear the "Christian Brethren," "The Churches of Christ," "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," "[Darbyites](#)," &c., &c., are in danger of "Out-Phariseeing the Pharisees."

This people calling themselves "Churches of Christ" is but one division of a small sect of "Brethren of Christ," which is about the smallest sect in Christendom, and about the most quarrelsome and divided of all sects – being split up into numerous sections with not too much of that Christian love which covers a multitude of sins. This little community – notwithstanding its persistent attempts at proselytising members of other Christian communities and disturbing their peace – profess to be holier than they of other branches of the Church of Christ, and will not have any "dealings with the Samaritans." They will not permit another Christian brother to sit down at the "Lord's table" with them, nor will they sit down at the Lord's table in the Lord's House if that table and that house is not

a “Church of Christ” such as they govern. They call themselves “Brethren of Christ,” and they treat millions who are brethren of Christ in sincerity and truth as if they were the brethren of Satan or of the world – they ignore them, forbid them the privilege of sitting down at the Lord’s table as a brother – as sons of the same Heavenly Father – redeemed by the same Lord – and invited to the same table. These “brethren,” judging by their actions, are the most unbrotherly Christians I have ever met. They are as bigoted and exclusive as the Pharisees – whether they know it or not. Without intending it, they are very uncharitable – their motives may be good, but their methods are bad.

This school started about 1827 in Dublin, where an ex-Romanist, Edward Cronin, gathered some sympathisers, and a prominent figure was the Rev J. N. Darby. At Oxford Darby met with B. W. Newton, at whose request Plymouth was visited. Their first meeting place was called Providence Chapel, and they were named “Brethren,” “Providence people,” “Brethren from Plymouth,” “Plymouth Brethren{,}” “Darbyites.” The title to communion at Plymouth, as in Dublin, may be gathered from Darby’s correspondence with the Rev J. Kelly in 1839. He there writes of “real Christians,” that “we should undoubtedly feel it wrong to shut them out whatever their peculiarity of doctrine; we receive all that are on the foundation, and reject and put away all error by the word of God, and by the help of His ever-present spirit. I should think it a great sin to leave a church of God because corruption were found in it.” Kelly says that “separation is imperative.” In 1845 the Brethren split up, Newton being charged by Darby with moral dishonesty, and a separate assembly was started on December 28th, 1845. The seceders obtained the name of “Exclusives,” and “freely received into communion Christians, as well as members of the Established Church as Nonconformists, subject to objection raised either of ungodly life or radical error.”

The [brethren](#) have resolved themselves into the following sections: – I. The so-called [Exclusives](#) in three branches (a) [Darbyites](#), (b) [Kellyites](#), (c) [Cluffites](#). II. Bethesda, neutral, [open brethren](#) – independent in discipline and leanings to Baptist views. III. Newtonians, leanings to Reformation doctrine. They maintain that the Church has fallen. “Christians wholly apostatized in the apostolic age. Every present ecclesiastical organisation is abnormal; all Christendom obnoxious to judgment.”

Mr Charles Bailey, I presume, is a member of the “[Exclusives](#),” but of which section I have not been able to determine. Perhaps he will give us an outline of his doctrines. I am seeking, and I believe he is seeking, with a free and good conscience to serve Christ and learn the truth concerning His Church and kingdom. But I hold that no church has a monopoly of the truth, nor has any church the right to say they alone are in the right and all else are in the wrong. Mainly, the [brethren](#) hold the Catholic doctrines concerning the Godhead, the person of Christ, and the atonement. In these there is then no distinction between the Catholic Churches and the [brethren](#), therefore there is no need of a special sect. As to the state of grace, they teach, however, that the believer is eternally accepted and delivered from the wrath to come. The cleansing of sin by Christ’s blood once for all accomplished; but that cleansing by water (the Word) is continuous. They hold to baptism, but as to mode and time they differ. Darby believed in infant baptism and sprinkling, being a Pædo-baptist. The Lord’s Supper they celebrate weekly by breaking of bread, and every member is compelled to be present on Sunday morning to partake unless illness or absence prevent. They rightly hold the Church to be distinct from the Kingdom of Christ. They deny, I believe, all title to “minister,” all payment of teachers of the Word. If this is so, may I ask how Mr Bailey and others are maintained? They believe in premillennial advent, and say “National Church is too broad, and Nonconformist too narrow.” What are they but Nonconformists, I wonder? Before dealing with Mr Charles Bailey’s

letter critically, I would like him to state more fully the doctrine he holds and the church government practised by his sect. The [brethren](#), as a whole, have been in the midst of unparalleled confusion, and perhaps Mr Bailey will by his answer serve in some measure to recover the [brethren](#) from the bath of slime and mud which has been so plenteously administered to them in our country within the past few years, and help to preserve it, on the other hand, from the bath of vapour and mist which seems designed for it on other sides. I know some good "[brethren](#)," and I know some fair-minded ones; but on the other hand I have met some very bigoted and ignorant ones. The majority have been of the latter class, and perhaps I have only been able to get a one-sided view.

{...}

Feb. 25th, 1895.

LERNA HYLAS.

The West Cumberland Times, Cockermouth, 16 Mar 1895, p. 6, Letters to the Editor

CHURCHES OF CHRIST.

Sir, – “Be swift to hear and slow to speak” says James, (James i, 19). An old adage says also “Be sure you know ere you speak.” “Lerna Hylas” has quite forgotten these. More than half the letter of last week was entirely beside the questions at issue. Churches of Christ have no connection, nor ever have had any connection with those bodies often known as “[Plymouth Brethren](#).” We are not one of the divisions of these religious people. In a previous letter (Feb. 9th) I distinctly stated this. The names “Darby,” “Newton,” “[Exclusives](#),” &c., have no meaning for us. These and all other unscrip-

tural names we reject. Years before 1827, the date of the commencement of “[Plymouth Brethrenism](#),” many earnest members of sectarian bodies, convinced of the scripturalness and desirability of the union of believers, took their stand upon the true basis of union, the simple teaching of the word of truth, and formed Churches of Christ, in various parts of the United Kingdom and America. To-day, Churches of Christ, entirely distinct from the [Brethren](#) above referred to, seeking a complete restoration of New Testament Christianity, exist in many parts of Great Britain, America, Australia, and New Zealand.

{...}

CHAS. BAILEY.

The West Cumberland Times, Cockermouth, 23 Mar 1895, p. 6, Letters to the Editor

CHURCHES OF CHRIST.

{...}

In his last letter replying to mine, Mr Bailey does not show that politeness which treats others just as you love to be treated yourself – a benevolence in trifles. He infers that I was speaking “without knowledge” when I wrote to you. I have known “Churches of Christ” in three or four counties, and have conversed and discussed with them, attended their meetings, stayed in their homes, and have met some worthy as well as some very unworthy members. Last week but one I was referring

mostly to Churches of Christ, God's Buildings, Scotch Baptists, in those places where I wrote "brethren." Brethren is scriptural; the others are not. But split up and various as are their views, I was anxious to know where Mr Bailey was in his views. It is a wise thing to admit ignorance when you wish to learn something. "A man is never astonished or ashamed that he does not know what another does, but he is surprised at the gross ignorance of the other in not knowing what he does;" or, as Jeremy Taylor said, "To be proud of learning is the greatest ignorance."

{...}

I maintain still that the Churches of Christ are a sect of a sect of "[Brethren](#)," and that Mr Bailey's school are "[Exclusives](#)"; that they are literalists; that they are intolerant and disturbers of the peace of other denominations; that they profess to greater holiness than other people; that they assume a knowledge of the scriptures which they deny to others; they break bread every week when there is no command other than "as oft as ye eat," the only time when bread was broken on the first day of the week was a time of unleavened bread or festival, and this was at night, as was its institution.

– Yours, &c.,

LERNA HYLAS.

The West Cumberland Times, Cockermouth, 13 Apr 1895, p. 6, Letters to the Editor

CHURCHES OF CHRIST.

Sir, – With your permission I will offer a brief reply to the last letters of “Lerna Hylas” and Mr Williamson. Despite what the former persists wrongly in stating, Churches of Christ have not, nor ever have had, any connection whatever with “[Plymouth Brethren](#).” Churches of Christ are simply Churches to-day teaching and observing what the Churches in New Testament times did.

{...}

CHAS. BAILEY.

{The “Churches of Christ” referred to were apparently part of the Restoration or Stone-Campbell Movement.}

CHERRHILL.

THE BURIALS ACT. – The first Nonconformist funeral which has taken place in this village under the above Act, occurred on Saturday, when an old man named Isaac Ealey was reverently laid to rest by a minister of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), of which community he was a member. A considerable amount of excitement and feeling was shown on the occasion by the great crowd of mourners, which was intensified by the action of the rector, who refused to allow the deceased to be buried with his wife, but ordered the grave to be dug in the remotest corner of the churchyard behind the church. A most unseemly altercation also was raised at the grave by the sexton. There is no dissenting place of worship whatever in this village, or burial ground separate from the churchyard, the inhabitants invariably having been christened, married, and buried within the pale of of {sic} the church, but with the advent of the present rector, the old Evangelical services were abolished, and a more ornate ritual introduced, to the utter repugnance of a great majority of the worshippers, many of whom have left the church and joined the various dissenting bodies in other parishes, the deceased being amongst the number.

BOY BURGLARS AT EALING.

On Monday, before the Brentford Magistrates, Samuel Kew, aged 13; Arthur Wedlock, 12; John Faulkener, eight; and Frederick Cousins, eight, respectably dressed boys, all giving addresses at Ealing, were charged with breaking into and entering the Gospel Hall of the "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," The Grove, Ealing, and stealing therefrom a bottle of wine. – The prisoners, who wept bitterly during the proceedings, were so small that their faces could not be seen above the dock, and they were placed in a row in front of the Bench. – The evidence showed that on the day in question the Gospel Hall was found to have been entered, and a quantity of port wine which was left in a cupboard at the rear of the premises was missing. One bottle had been abstracted, and several others had been opened and the contents partly consumed. A money-box had been forced open and other damage done. A decanter had been filled with wine. To gain access to the hall they had to scale a wall 8ft. high and then force the latch of the door. – Detective Felton, who arrested the prisoners, said they were well-known to the police. They were all truants, and two of them had been before the Court for cutting up some valuable harness a few weeks ago. The same two broke into the house, Sunny Side, Richmond, recently, and stole what they thought to be a packet of sweets from the sitting-room. The contents of the packet turned out to be pills, however, and the prisoners received their reward (laughter). With the exception of Wedlock, they were all very bad boys. Amongst other pranks they had stolen a pair of pigeons valued at £18, and attempted to sell them for 9d.; and had turned on a reservoir water-tap, which resulted in damage being done to the extent of £20. – In answer to the Chairman, the accused made incriminating statements concerning one another; but

all confessed to breaking into the hall. The youngest prisoners, Cousins and Faulkener, said that the wine made them drunk, and that their companions prompted them to do what they had done. – The Bench ordered the prisoners to receive six strokes each with the birch, and Kew, Faulkener, and Cousins to be sent to a reformatory school until they were 16 years old.

Edinburgh Evening News, 22 May 1895, p. 2

EXTRAORDINARY RELIGIOUS DISPUTE AMONG MINERS.

A difficulty has arisen among the Harthill and Benhar miners in a curious way. About 5 per cent. of the miners in the district belong to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and believe it sinful to join any kind of society with men of a different religious belief. They refuse to join the Miners' Federation. As a result the miners of No. 17 pit, Benhar Company, refused to work, and have been on strike for the last two days. Yesterday a deputation saw the manager at Eastfield. He stated that he had no concern with whether the men were unionists or not, and the strikers resolved to remain idle and get all the men in the other pits of the same company to take similar action to press this sect to comply with the rule of the district.

The Hamilton Herald, 24 May 1895, p. 3

There is a curious dispute on in a colliery at Harthill. A number of miners will not join the Federation because they are [Plymouth Brethren](#), and one of the tenets of their creed is that they cannot join any association, the members of which do not hold the religious belief of themselves. Obviously the only way out of the difficulty is for the whole of the miners to become [Plymouth Brethren](#).

Mid Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald, Penrith, 14 Jul 1895,
p. 5, Letters to the Editor

THE “BRETHREN” AND POLITICS.

SIR, – I am in fellowship with a small gathering of Christians who are sometimes called “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” though it is a title not adopted by ourselves. Some teachers among us hold that it is not right for a Christian to have anything to do with politics, and therefore they refrain from voting in Parliamentary elections. On the last occasion of an election, I followed that course myself, but after carefully seeking guidance from the word of God I see that I was wrong. I now see that the Christian’s place and duty is to do battle with all that he believes to be wrong, and that to stand on one side and see preventable sin and oppression is a slight upon that Saviour who came into the world to redeem it, and *to do good* in any and every way. I feel deeply that it is verily sinful to stand aloof. We are in the world, we share in the gifts of God in common with others, we have to pay the same taxes and submit to the same laws, and I see it to be God’s will to perform every duty of a citizen in His fear. We are citizens of earth, as well as of heaven. As well might David have shrunk from slaying Goliath, as a Christian refuse to do battle against the enemies of the Lord. I have always felt that those who called themselves Tories are the representrtives {sic} of all that is selfish and sinful in our land, and I would therefore urge my brethren to arise from their apathy, and by giving their vote (which is simply registering their profound and conscientious convictions), for the men who are ranged in the Liberal camp, do battle against the enemies of the Lord. I would therefore call upon them to “Come out to the help of the Lord – to the help of the Lord against the mighty.”

CONFESSOR.

STREET-PREACHING AT HOWTH CHARGES OF ASSAULT.

The Defendants Before the Magistrates To-Day.

To-day, in the Courthouse, Howth, before Mr Burke, R M; and Professor Mahaffy, Edward Howard, Thomas M'Kenna, James Moore, William Gillis, and John Hartford were summoned by the Queen, at the suit of District-inspector Stewart, R I C, for having, on the 29th of June last, while a number of [Plymouth Brethren](#) were preaching in the open air at the East Pier, Howth, assaulted the police who were protecting the preachers.

District-inspector Stewart prosecuted, and Mr P O'C White Barr (instructed by Mr J J O'Meara), appeared for the several defendants.

The first case tried was that of Edward Howard, of Howth, who, it was stated, had blown a horn in the face of the police.

Constable Galvin stated that the defendant blew the horn and flourished it in his face, but did not strike him.

Sergeant Ward stated that the crowd wanted to get at the preachers. He saw Constable Galvin being assaulted.

Examined by Mr White – He believed the blowing of the horn was for the purpose of drowning the voice of the preachers. Witness considered the blowing of the horn in the constable's ear an assault.

Constable O'Neill stated that he was on duty at the green on the day in question. The defendant was blowing a horn in the direction of the preachers, and was trying to get in close to the preachers. When Constable Galvin tried to prevent him the defendant flourished the horn in his face in a threatening manner.

Cross-examined by Mr White – No person was hurt on the occasion. Howard was blowing the horn near Constable Galvin, who put out his hand and pushed him away. The defendant did not strike Constable Galvin and did not raise the horn or do anything until he was pushed away.

To Inspector Stewart – The man was trying to get through to assault the preachers.

Mr White – How do you know that he wanted to assault the preachers?

Witness – He was trying to get through.

Professor Mahaffy – Is there one of these fog-horns in court?

Inspector Stewart – No, your worship. I'm sure you would not like to hear it (laughter).

This closed the evidence for the prosecution, and for the defence.

Richard Ennis stated that on the evening in question Howard did not do anything until Galvin pushed him away. There were several others blowing horns. Howard did not strike or try to strike Galvin. Witness did not see him attempt to strike Galvin or do anything but blow the horn.

To Professor Mahaffy – Witness was blowing a horn himself.

Examined by Inspector Stewart – Witness did not see Howard blowing the horn into Constable Galvin's ear. He was blowing past at the crowd.

Who supplied you with the horns? Well, I had several.

Professor Mahaffy – Whose property are they? They belong to the fishermen.

This concluded the evidence, and

Mr White, for the defence, submitted that there was no assault, and nothing to prevent the police from doing their duty. These people were preaching what was offensive to the people. In the same way if a Catholic priest went up to Belfast to one of the hotbeds of religious feeling there to preach he would have to expect something disagreeable.

Mr Burke – That argument would be applicable if you were defending them for an attack upon the preachers; but that does not justify an assault on the police, who were merely doing their duty.

Mr White submitted that the assault, if any, was a merely technical one, and there had been a technical assault on each side. But he respectfully submitted that there was no such assault as a court like that should deal with. The mere blowing of a horn, he submitted, was not an assault.

Professor Mahaffy – Suppose I followed you for an hour and blew a horn into your ear, would that be an assault.

Mr White said the assault must be such a one as would hinder the constable in the execution of his duty. Blowing a horn into a man's ear was not legally an assault, and unless it would prevent the constable doing his duty they could not deal with it as a serious assault. There was a trivial assault clause under which the matter might be dealt with; and under that section they had, he submitted, a perfect right to dismiss this case if they considered it a mere trifling assault. He submitted first that they should find there had been no assault, and, {sic} secondly, if they did find it a mere trifling assault they ought to dismiss it under this Act.

Mr Burke – Well I think we'd like to hear more of the other cases before we come to a decision. What is the next case?

Inspector Stewart then called the case of John Harford, in which the summons had been issued for a like offence committed on the same occasion.

Constable Gavin gave evidence as to this defendant blowing a horn in his face, as had been done by the last defendant. For a considerable time after the proceedings were over, witness could hardly hear a word. The defendant raised the horn in a threatening attitude as if to strike him.

Cross-examined by Mr White – There were about thirteen constables present and out of these two or three complained of assaults. Witness did not push the defendant at all. He simply raised his hand and told the defendant to keep back. Witness was not struck at all. He believed the defendant had drink, for he was excited. Witness was not excited himself.

Sergeant Ward identified the defendant as being one of the leaders of the crowd with horns. The horns were blown in the faces of the police because the defendants could not get near the preach-

ers. When the police kept the people back they resisted them. The defendant was a good deal excited and very red.

Cross-examined by Mr White – There were only thirteen police present, and they could not draw a cordon completely round the preachers. The police tried to keep the crowd from breaking in round the preachers. There were about 500 people in the crowd.

Mr White – Well, now, was there anything in the world to prevent them getting on to the preachers if they wished to do it? Well, they did not all take part.

But could anything have prevented them getting in and assaulting the preachers if they had wished to do so? No.

And I believe there was no disturbance between the police and the people before these preachers came? No.

Mr Burke – Well, now, this case is practically the same as the first. We had better go on with the other.

The next case was that of Patrick Caulfield, who was charged with assaulting the police on the way to the railway station on the same occasion.

Constable O'Neill stated that the prisoner on the way to the railway station stooped down and tried to catch him by the legs, while he was trying to protect the people and keep order.

Cross-examined by Mr White – Witness knew the prisoner personally for about six months. He was a fisherman. Witness really saw him there that day. He did not say that he wanted to go into the railway station.

Sergeant Ward said he had a number of men to protect the railway steps, and the defendant wanted to force his way in.

Cross-examined by Mr White – The defendant took a leading part in the matter.

Mr White said he was instructed that this man, who had been out all the night before fishing, was in his bed until nine at night, and that the constables had mistaken his identity.

Mrs Catherine Handaway said she was housekeeper for the defendant and his two brothers. On the 28th of June (Friday night) the defendant was out all night. At four o'clock on Saturday he went to bed, and did not rise till after nine o'clock.

John George Caulfield, brother of the defendant, gave corroborative evidence.

Thomas M'Kenna's case was then taken up. He was charged with having knocked down Sergeant Ward on the railway station steps.

The Sergeant stated that there was a crowd there, and the defendant knocked against him and he (witness) fell. Several persons trampled over witness.

Examined by Mr White – There was a crowd behind witness and evidently there must have been a force behind him. He was a respectable man and of a peaceable disposition. Witness never knew of any offence committed by him. He would not say that M'Kenna did the thing deliberately.

John Harford, examined by Mr White for the defence, said there was a large crowd at the railway station. There was a crowd behind M'Kenna which pushed him down, and witness fell over him. M'Kenna could not help it, as he could not resist the crowd.

This concluded the evidence in the case.

Wm Gillis, a lad of about 15 years of age, was also charged with assaulting Sergeant Ward by blowing a horn at him, and catching him round the body.

Cross-examined by Mr White – It was not for the purpose of assaulting witness, but for the purpose of getting back a horn which witness took from him, and defendant caught him round the body (laughter).

Constable Galvin gave corroborative evidence.

This concluded the case.

James Moore was also charged with assaulting Sergeant Ward on the same occasion, and in much the same manner.

Like evidence was given, and

Mr White said the whole cases seemed of a very trivial character. There was no real serious intention of assault, nor was there anything but a mere technical assault. He asked their worships to find in the first place that it was really not an assault in law, but if they did so find, he asked them to consider it a mere trivial assault. In M'Kenna's case there had been no assault at all, as M'Kenna was pushed by the crowd.

District Inspector Stewart said he would be perfectly satisfied if their worships would, however leniently, teach these people the error they had committed in interfering with the police.

After consultation,

Professor Mahaffy said – In the cases of Edward Howard, John Harford, William Gillis, and James Moore, who are all of good character, we have to convict, but we are ordering them to be discharged on entering into £5 security each, and two sureties of £2 10s, to come up for judgment when called on, and to keep the peace and be of good behaviour. We thought it well to be lenient in these cases because there are no previous convictions. You will now be discharged when you get your security. In the case of M’Kenna, which is a more serious case, we fine him 10s 6d and 2s costs, he having been in the front of the crowd. In the case of Caulfield we fine him £2 and 2s costs, or, in default, to be imprisoned for a month.

Caulfield (warmly) – I’ll go to jail before I pay one penny.

Professor Mahaffy – Take him into custody.

One of the audience – There is not a man in court but can swear he was in bed.

In Caulfield’s case notice of appeal was given, and the City Marshal gave the necessary security.

The other defendants were discharged. Caulfield’s case will be heard before the Recorder.

Yesterday at Howth several fishermen were summoned by the Crown at the suit of Mr. Stewart, D.I., for having "assaulted" the police constables who were protecting a number of "[Plymouth Brethren](#)." The assault committed by Edward Howard consisted of blowing a horn in the face of the police. Evidence was given that the defendant sounded the horn to drown the preaching, but did not strike anyone. No one was hurt. Evidence having been given in other cases, the magistrates discharged Edward Howard, John Harford, William Gillis, and James Moore on their giving security in £5 and getting two sureties in £2 10s each that they would come up for judgment when called upon and be of good behaviour in the meantime. M'Kenna was fined 10s and 2s costs, and Caulfield was fined £2 and 2s costs, with the alternative of a month's imprisonment. Caulfield said he would go to gaol before he would pay a penny of the fine. Notice of appeal was given in Caulfield's case. The City Marshal gave security for several of the defendants.

[OCCASIONAL NOTES TO THE EDITOR.]

{...}

I am rather surprised at the hardihood of any cyclist in attempting to ride his iron steed down the steep descent of Waller-lane, and especially such a staid and prudent person as Mr. Pickard, the respected local pastor of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). I am told that he has accomplished the dangerous feat scores of times. But he did it once too often on Monday evening. This, however, was not through the machine running away with him, but through a child, as in attempting to pass by it he swerved into the water channel and fell over. He was considerably bruised and grazed, and was obliged to obtain the medical attentions of Dr Williams. My opinion is that a cyclist, no matter how experienced he is, should not attempt the descent on his machine, for it is placing too much reliance on his brake. He is not only endangering his own limbs, but also those of pedestrians, who might not catch timely sight of a run-a-way machine.

{...}

FIDES ET JUSTITIA.

However prevalent narrow-minded bigotry and sectarian bitterness may be among Christians at home, one might at least expect that those who go out to convert the benighted heathen would cast aside such deplorable differences and prejudices. "Alas for the rarity of Christian charity!" In a recent issue of the "North China Daily News," there is an account of an exhibition of religious intolerance over the burial of the dead precisely like the scandals that have become familiar to us here. Mr. James Charters, the Inspector of Police at Kiu-Kiang, died suddenly. At the time there were only two missionaries in the town, one a member of the China Inland Mission, and the other Mr. Price, who is described as a [Plymouth Brother](#). Illness prevented the former from attending the funeral, and the British Consul therefore appealed to Mr. Price to officiate, assuring him that, as he probably would not care to read the service of the Church of England, any form he might adopt would be acceptable. Mr. Price refused. He could not, he said, read any service over Mr. Charters' remains, as, not having known him, he was unaware {sic} if he had been a man of Christian character. What a pretty object-lesson in Christian {sic} brotherly love to set before the heathen Chinese {sic}!

A TRIP TO IRELAND.

PAPER I.

Being wearied and lonely in Douglas we were advised to visit the Emerald Isle. We had no great desire and certainly very little spirit, but we thought the change would do no harm, and probably our mind would be diverted from present cares to things new and strange. {...}

We were not long in Dublin before we felt we were in a Roman Catholic city. Whilst driving along the first evening on the road to Kingston the car stopped near a promenade on which were assembled a small crowd around a dozen or more street preachers and singers. We descended and took our stand near to the preachers who turned out to be [Plymouth Brethren](#). Being, however, in the fullest sympathy with the speaker and his subject, we stood and listened till the close of his address. All the time he was hooted and rudely interrupted by the crowd. Not even a cyclist could pass without hurling some opprobrious epithet. Had it not been for the police who stood by us, an unseemly riot would have ensued. But the police, evidently Catholics, grimly smiling, kept the well-dressed audience in check. At the close of this first address we handed the speaker our card, remounted a passing car, and returned to the city.

Next day about noon we were looking for a restaurant, in which to obtain lunch, when a gentleman with a kind smile introduced himself as one of the last night's preachers. We were very pleased to meet him and he took us to his own favourite restaurant to which he was on his way. We lunched

together and he gave us much information about his brethren and the spiritual condition of Dublin. We learned that [Brethrenism](#) was relatively strong in Dublin. It represented some of the most influential Christians of the city. The late Denham Smith was a fair specimen of the class. They hailed chiefly from the Church of Ireland. There were a few converted Catholics, and they were very bright, perhaps the best in their Assembly. Indeed the speaker we had heard was one of them. We were told the names of the leading members, but having no notes we forget them. Our friend belonged to the Church of Ireland, and after his conversion {sic} he was driven by his clergyman and his relations into the ranks of [Plymouthism](#). He did not think, however, that he would continue in the connection if he were out of Dublin. He had been for sometime in Glasgow, and he worshipped in the Free Churches, chiefly in the Church under the late Dr Bonar. He found the [Brethren](#) in Glasgow a very different class from those in Dublin. They were of the lower ranks in life, ignorant, narrow, and bitter in spirit. In Dublin they were many of them men of education and of good social position, with a warm generous heart to all who truly loved the Lord. They were willing to co-operate with all earnest workers, and they were at that time the only strong street preaching society in the city. They held meetings on the Kingston Road, where we saw them, and also in the Phoenix Park, where we met them a few nights after. In both places they encountered bitter opposition and were under the special protection of the police.

{...}

J. F.

– From the *Fraserburgh Free Church Monthly*.

{The *Fraserburgh Free Church Monthly* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

Y Genedl Gymreig, Caernarfon, 28 Jan 1896, p. 4

WANTED. – An intelligent *North Welsh* maid. Must be amongst [Open Brethren](#), and able to teach Welsh. Must have a strong, clear voice for helping in Gospel work. No dressmaking. Advertiser purposes visiting Wales yearly. – Address, Lady Pigot, Hillside, Bracknell, Berks.

The Inverness Courier, 17 Mar 1896, p. 6, Home News

SECESSION FROM THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHERN](#). – A deep feeling has been caused in Catholic circles by the secession of Lady O'Hagan, her son, and daughters from the Catholic Church, and their entry into the communion of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Lady O'Hagan belongs to the Townley family – one of the oldest Catholic families in England. In the chapel at the family residence “the Lamp of the Sanctuary” was lighted, according to tradition, at the introduction of Christianity into England, and it has been kept burning ever since up till recently. On Lady O'Hagan's secession from the Catholic Church the burning of the lamp became a superstitious observance, and it has been allowed to go out. This, it is said, is the first occasion that any member of the Townley family has left the Catholic Church. Their record in that respect was even more absolutely clear than the Howards, for at least one Duke of Norfolk was a Protestant. It can easily, therefore, be guessed what an effect the step taken by Lady O'Hagan has produced in the Catholic world.

The Irish Times, Dublin, 7 Apr 1896, p. 5

LADY O'HAGAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE IRISH TIMES.

SIR, – Owing to the many recent reports in circulation, not only in the Press, but through the general public, regarding the alleged secession of Lady O'Hagan and her family from the Catholic religion, I

thought it right to send her some newspaper cuttings on the subject, and on Saturday last received from her an absolute contradiction of them. She says “there is no truth in the report she has seceded from the Catholic religion,” and “as for the [Plymouth Brethren](#), which the paragraph said she had joined, she does not even know their religious doctrine,” that “the lamp in the oratory at Towneley she was said to have extinguished is still burning as it always did,” and that “the convent she was said to have withdrawn her support from, she still contributes many hundreds a year towards its support.”

I hope this will be sufficient to put an end to these reports, and would be obliged by your inserting a contradiction in your next issue to this effect. – Yours, &c., T.

Drogheda, 6th April, 1896.

The Irish Times, Dublin, 16 Apr 1896, p. 7

We are requested to state that the words quoted from a letter asserted to have been written by Lady O’Hagan, to the effect that “There is no truth in the report that she has seceded from the Catholic religion,” which quotation appeared in a letter signed T., and dated Drogheda, and which letter appeared in our columns on the 7th inst., were never written or spoken by her to anyone. We are also authorized to state that Lady O’Hagan has seceded from the Roman Catholic Church, and, with her family, has joined the Unitarian body.

Evening Telegraph, Dublin, 16 Apr 1896, p. 4

Lady O'Hagan

London, Thursday.

The circumstantial denial of the secession of Lady O'Hagan from the Catholic Church is now itself denied on the authority of that lady herself. She has written to the *Westminster* stating that she has "with her family" joined the Unitarian Body – not the [Plymouth Brethren](#), as was originally asserted. As a matter of fact this regrettable action on the part of the widow of the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland, himself the most devoted of Catholics, has been known in Catholic circles in London for the past twelve months. It is understood, however, that young Lord O'Hagan has not joined his mother in leaving the Church. Lady O'Hagan herself comes of a family whose proud boast it has been that none of its members through the darkest days of persecution had ever left the Church, of which they are among the oldest members in this country.

The Social Review, Dublin, 25 Apr 1896, p. 770 [BNA 8], From London Town

Another case of much ado about nothing has been in connection with Lady O'Hagan's secession, or reported secession, from the Roman Catholic Church. Whether her ladyship has seceded I know not – the matter is not one which can concern anyone but herself much – what I object to is the manner in which it has become an affair of national importance. First the lady had gone over to the [Plym-](#)

outh Brethren, then she hadn't, had never even heard of such a religious body, then the posters had it in all sorts of great type "Lady O'Hagan's Change of Faith; a contradiction contradicted." The whole business, by whoever managed, and whatever may be the correct facts, shows a great want of good taste and reticence.

The Northern Daily Mail, Hartlepool, 16 May 1896, p. 1

A Yarmouth Bloater.

A parson went the other day to see an old woman, who told him that she had just had a visit from a gentleman who had read and prayed with her.

“Well,” said the vicar, who knew the visitor to be a [Plymouth Brother](#), “it was very kind of him, but he’s not a Churchman. Do you know what he is?”

“No, sir, I don’t exactly; *but it was something like a Yarmouth bloater.*”

No doubt we are all erring mortals. – *Vanity Fair*.

{*Vanity Fair* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

IN DIVERS FIELDS.
A STORY OF ULSTER COLLEGE AND CLERICAL LIFE.

BY RUTH HART.

CHAPTER VII. – LIFE IN GREYORE.

{...}

When first the [Plymouth Brethren](#) appeared in Greyore Joe Moore saw nothing in them to condemn, and although he did not himself attend their meetings, he offered no objection to the members of his family doing so. Loud were the praises which his daughters rang in his ears of the preachers and their meetings, and probably he, too, would have become an admirer of the groaning style of worship had not the course of events interfered. For one fine, moonlight night his eldest daughter, Mary, disappeared, and next morning it was found that the chief preacher of the watery body was missing also. Some days later a letter was received from the erring maid, telling (what everyone had suspected before) that she had gone away to be the wife of the holy man under whose teaching she had found salvation; that the Church of the [Plymouthists](#) made no provision for matrimony, but although no ceremony had been gone through, yet in the eyes of God, and in the eyes of the people amongst whom they resided, she was a legally wedded wife. She was quite sure that she would never regret the steps she had taken, and the only cause she had for regret was that she had ever been a communicant of the Presbyterian Church. The letter ended with an exhortation to each

member of the family to be baptised anew, and for ever leave off wallowing in the mire. Her father consigned the epistle to the heart of his peat fire, and turning to the assembled family, sternly forbade her name to be mentioned in his hearing, and from that day she became as one dead to them.

{...}

A CAMBUSLANG SLANDER CASE.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AT VARIANCE.

A settlement was arrived at on Monday in the action down for trial before a jury in the Court of Session by Elijah Porte, underground pit fireman, Buchanan Square, Cambuslang, against Robert Robertson, boot and shoemaker, Main Street, Cambuslang, for £250 for alleged slander. The pursuer and defender were until recently both members of the congregation of [Plymouth Brethren](#), whose place of meeting is at Bushyhill Hall, Cambuslang. The pursuer stated that at the commencement of the forenoon service on Sunday, 20th September, 1896, which was for the purpose of public worship and the celebration of the Holy Communion, the defender stood up, and, in the hearing of the congregation, falsely, maliciously, and without probable cause intimated that the [Brethren](#) should not break bread that morning because there was evil in their midst, and they could not go on with it; that Elijah Porte was guilty of lying and deceiving with intent to deceive. The charge was absolutely without foundation. The slander, it was said, was not uttered from any motive of duty, but from malice and ill-will on the defender's part, and because he was exasperated by his failure to substantiate a charge of lying against the pursuer. The defender averred that a charge affecting the pursuer was at the date of the meeting undisposed of: that as the matter was still under investigation he endeavoured to induce the pursuer to refrain from taking the Communion; that the pursuer refused to listen to that suggestion; and that in these circumstances it was he {sic} defender's right and duty, in accordance with the laws and practice of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), to withdraw from the

meeting, and before doing so to state to the members of the congregation his reasons for taking that step. He explained to the congregation that, in view of the charge that had been made against the pursuer, he (the defender) did not see how the congregation could go on breaking bread. The defender pleaded privilege. Mr Comrie Thomson, for the pursuer, read the joint minute, which set forth that the action had been settled extra-judicially on terms satisfactory to both parties.

Forres Elgin & Nairn Gazette, Forres, 16 Jun 1897, p. 2, Our London Correspondent

Much has been written with regard to the absurdity of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) voters at Petersfield, who prayed for the triumph of the Liberal party, but whose consciences did not permit them to go to the poll because they regarded it as sinful to take part in the public life of the country. It is not probable that there are enough members of this queer sect in Petersfield to have affected the result of the election, though they are very numerous in some of the small towns of the South of England. From the point of view of party organisation, it is very sad that these people should not have given the Liberal candidate anything more immediately effective than their prayers. But, after all, it would be a good thing for the sanity of democratic government if “cranks” of all kinds and persuasions would equally abstain from politics.

It has not been remarked, but nevertheless is true, that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) lost one of their founders by the death of Francis W. Newman. The actual formation of the sect was due to two men whose names are unknown to this generation – Anthony Norris Groves, of Exeter, and a Dublin barrister named Bellett. But the principles of the body were brought into prominence by the practical adherence of two well-known names – Edward Irving and Francis William Newman. The most influential minds have not been the most powerful or the most intellectual ones, and so it was with the movement in question. Groves, who was a dentist, and Darby, who was an Irish curate, made and left their impressions on a society which owes nothing to the master minds of Newman and Irving. Groves led the way in absolute abandonment of all his worldly goods – and he had made a large fortune – and, accompanied by the Hon. J. V. Parnell, a cousin of the famous Irish leader, and by F. W. Newman, he went out to Asia Minor to preach to the Turks. A Mohammedan carpenter at Aleppo performed the same office for him as the famous Zulu performed for Bishop Colenso. Newman tried to convert the carpenter, and the carpenter converted him. The rest of Newman's career has been anti-Christian rather than otherwise, but the work he did was ineffaceable, when by the prestige of his name he dragged the unknown body of the [Plymouth brethren](#) into light.

AN OFFICER'S "RELIGION." – A young subaltern, Lieutenant A, arrived from England to join his regiment at Rangoon, and on the following Sunday at church parade he was conspicuous by his absence. The adjutant was promptly down upon him, and the youthful hero replied that he did not belong to the Church of England. The adjutant remarked that he had not paraded with the Roman Catholics either. "I am not a Roman Catholic," was the reply. "Then what on earth are you?" inquired the adjutant. "I have no religion at all," was the young gentleman's answer. The adjutant proceeded to report to the colonel, who said: "Oh, this will never do. This is merely a dodge to lie in bed on Sunday mornings. Sit down and write." The adjutant took pen and paper and the colonel dictated as follows: "Lieutenant A will provide himself with a religion, and will send a return of it to the orderly-room by 8 a.m. to-morrow." Lieutenant A duly furnished the return, announcing himself to be a [Plymouth Brother](#).

CHARGE AGAINST AN EVANGELIST. – Towards the end of last week the village was thrown into a state of wild excitement owing to the arrest of a preacher upon a charge of committing a breach of the peace. It appears that an evangelist, named Mr. Ross, belonging to Glasgow, had been engaged by the local body of [Plymouth Brethren](#) to conduct missionary work in the village. Some difference, however, had arisen between them, and on Monday evening of last week at the Cross he is alleged to have made a personal attack in his address upon the leaders of the religious body referred to. Mr. Ross returned to the village on the following Wednesday evening, when he was arrested by the police for a breach of the peace committed on the previous Monday evening. He was confined over night, and on Thursday morning he was brought up before Messrs. Henry Macdowall, J. P., and Joseph Johnstone, J. P., who postponed the case till this forenoon (Saturday), and the preacher was liberated. Last Sabbath evening Mr. Ross addressed a crowded meeting in the Central Hall. His remarks were confined to a vindication of his conduct, and to a criticism of the actions of his opponents. The meeting ended in uproar, which was not creditable for a Sabbath evening.

“DIPPERS” IN COUNTY MONAGHAN.

A correspondent of the “Freeman’s Journal” writes – A strange scene was enacted last Sunday evening near the village of Drum, Co. Monaghan, where the [Plymouth Brethren](#) or Dippers, who have a good many followers in the district, held one of their ceremonies, which consists in immersing the newly-made converts in the dark and chilling waters of some rapidly flowing river. Generally the converts consists {sic} of young men and young women, but on this occasion the convert to ‘Dipperism” was an old man well advanced towards his eighties. He was plunged thrice into the deep and rapid waters of the Dinamore, but it was nearly proving the last dip for both dipper and dipped, as both narrowly escaped being drowned and were with great trouble rescued.

{The original report in the *Freeman’s Journal* is partly illegible in the British Newspaper Archive.}

JEDBURGH ASSESSMENT APPEALS.

The Police Commissioners of the burgh of Jedburgh held a Court on Tuesday for the purpose of hearing appeals against the assessment imposed within the burgh under the Police Acts. The members of the Corporation present were – Bailie Miller, who presided; Dean of Guild {sic} Balfour, Councillor Collins, Councillor Main, and Councillor Halliburton. Mr Stedman, Town Clerk, was also present.

EXCLUSIVELY APPROPRIATED TO PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Walter Harkness, cabinetmaker, appealed against an assessment of £1 5s 6d on the New Hall in Ninian Bell's Close, on the ground that it was a place exclusively used for public worship. Mr Sturrock, solicitor, spoke in support of the appeal. He quoted the Act of Parliament with reference to the point, showing that churches, chapels, meeting houses, and all edifices exclusively appropriated to public worship were not assessable, and they might notwithstanding be used for Sunday schools and other such purposes. His information was that the building in question was exclusively used by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) for religious purposes. The Clerk, referring to the valuation roll, found that [The Brethren](#) were entered as tenants. The Clerk said there was no doubt that if the place was exclusively used for religious purposes it was exempt from taxation. The Dean of Guild said there would be no alternative. The Court accordingly gave exemption.

{...}

CHANCERY DIVISION.

(Before the Master of the Rolls.)

Pedin v Finlay – In this case the plaintiff, as one of the executors of the will of the late Alexander Brown, who resided near Hollywood, county Down, sought the opinion of the court as to a bequest of £100 to the “Christian Brothers” in trust of Isaac Finlay, Newtownards, and J C Graham, Belfast. These gentlemen sought the money for the [Plymouth Brethren](#), of which sect the testator had been a member, and contended that it was a valid charitable bequest to be applied in furtherance of the religious views of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). There was no dispute as to this sect being meant by the words “Christian Brothers.” The plaintiff and the relatives of the testator, who would benefit in the event of the gift being held void, contended that it was void for uncertainty.

The Master of the Rolls having reviewed a number of authorities bearing on the question, decided that it was a valid charitable bequest, and allowed all the parties their costs.

Mr Watts appeared on behalf of the executors.

Mr Chambers was for Messrs Finlay and Graham.

Mr W H Brown represented the next-of-kin of the testator.

A CURIOUS STRIKE.

A somewhat singular strike has taken place at Workington, where a large number of men have come out because a man working in the same department refused to join the union. He is a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and as all the world knows people of that persuasion will not take port {sic} in political affairs, nor indeed in any public matters. The manager has, however, taken the affair into his own hands, and has locked out the whole of the 1,500 men engaged in this particular branch of work.

The Rugby Advertiser, 7 May 1898, p. 6, Compendium

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) in a London suburb held a bazaar the other day to raise funds for their church. The invitation to the function included this line: "I will purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin."

STREET PREACHING IN SOUTHPORT.

At the Southport Borough Police Court, this morning, Peden Rimmer, son of a well-known Southport tradesman, and a prominent member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in the town, was summoned for causing an obstruction at the corner of Tulketh-street and Chapel-street by holding a religious service there. Police-constable Gibson proved the case, and said that the defendant was there from 8.30 to 9.10 on the night of Sunday, the 1st inst., singing, preaching, and praying. There was a crowd of between fifty and sixty persons, covering two-thirds of the roadway and two-thirds of the footpath, and several people had to take a roundabout course to get past. Francis Joseph Smith, chemist, said that the street preaching and caroling (singing) was a great nuisance to him, and his customers complained about it, his shop being open on the Sunday night from eight to nine o'clock in common with the shops of other chemists of the town. The defendant said that they were opposite Webb's shop, a little higher up the street, and further that he had previously obtained the permission of the chief constable. – Chief Constable Elliott stated that he could only give permission so long as no obstruction was created. – The Chairman (Alderman Nicholson) said that they were bound to preserve order in the town. – The defendant said that he wished to preserve order. If there was a German band or the town's band playing it was not considered an obstruction; but if it was preaching it was. It had been the custom to preach the Gospel in the streets for 4,000 years, and he would like to know what was obstruction and what was not. – The Chairman said that they were only present to administer the law, but on this occasion the case would be dismissed.

The Rev. Canon Ivens, vicar of Sowerby Bridge, is well known to many of our readers; his last visit to Todmorden was on the occasion of the Cross Stone bazaar at the Town Hall.

Few people are perhaps aware that Canon Ivens once appeared in *Punch*. When he was at Birmingham, he persuaded a woman who had not attended any place of worship to come to church. She began to come so regularly that he was surprised to find her absent one Good Friday. He called to see her next day, and to his surprise learnt that she had been to a tea party given by the [Plymouth Brethren](#). "What, a tea party on Good Friday! – and you mixing up with the [Plymouth Brethren](#); don't you know that their doctrine is altogether opposed to that of the Church?" "Oh, their doctrine may be wrong," she replied, "but their cake with sultana raisins is excellent."

{See also the article of 11 Sep 1879 in the present selection.}

A SINGULAR CUMBERLAND STRIKE.

What might have resulted in a serious labour dispute commenced at the Moss Bay Steel Works, Workington, on Monday. One of the mill engine-men has repeatedly refused to join one of the men's unions because of his religious scruples. He is a member of the sect known as [Plymouth Brethren](#), and he says he cannot conscientiously join a trade union. When appealed to he has offered to pay a subscription to the union, but would not have his name on the books as a member. The manager was appealed to, but he refused to interfere. He said the man was a good workman, and he would not discharge him because of his religious opinions. On Saturday week the workmen in the same department as the man in question left their work, whereupon the managers decided to close the remaining mills, and 1,500 men became idle. The blast-furnace department was not interfered with, but notice was given that, unless the mill men returned to work, the furnaces would be damped down and the whole of the works thrown idle. The action of the men is generally condemned in the town, and public opinion is entirely with the managers.

On Wednesday the strike was amicably settled, and the men returned to their {sic} work on Thursday. Johnston is allowed to retain his post, but the question will be considered and determined upon at future meetings of the delegates and lodges.

WORKHOUSE "WORK."

To the man in the street it is not apparent why the Brabazon Society should refuse to allow workhouse inmates to receive money for needlework done on the prompting of the society. The occupation is given mostly to the infirm, and there seems to be a delightful notion in the minds of Duchesses and others that the women will use thimble and thread for the love of it; and that in this way they will be led to cultivate a desirable virtue. We all know that Cato, when he was an old man, began to learn the Greek letters, and that Joseph Darby, one of the originators of [Plymouth Brethrenism](#), tackled German when he was eighty, and that with success; but these things are mere second childhood's play compared with the growth of habits of industry among people who are naturally lazy. {...}

A good story is told in the *Woman at Home* concerning Miss Anna Williams, the famous singer. Shortly after she retired Miss Williams was making a railway journey. "It is surprising that Anna Williams should retire so early," observed a lady in the compartment to her travelling companion, "but I understand she has joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and no longer takes any interest in the musical life." "You are quite wrong there," replied the other lady; "she has retired on her marriage. I know her husband quite well." "As I happen to be Anna Williams," said a voice from the end of the compartment, "will you allow me to assure you that I have not joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and I am not married." Collapse of the two ladies.

{The *Woman at Home* is not available in the [British Newspaper Archive](#).}

The Worcestershire Chronicle, Worcester, 1 Jul 1899, p. 5, Linton

AN ANTI-VACCINATIONIST FINED. – At Ross Petty Sessions, on Friday, [Joseph Henry Burridge](#), evangelist, Linton, was summoned for not having his child, born on the 20th August last, vaccinated. Defendant said that he had intended to get an exemption, but his calling kept him away in London and Glasgow during the time that the application should have been made. The Clerk: The person who has charge of the child can make the application. The mother could have done so. Defendant: Mrs. Burridge was too poorly to leave home, and the only person who could have applied would have been the nurse. The Clerk: She could not apply. The Chairman: May I ask whether you intend to have the child vaccinated? Defendant: No, sir. The Chairman: The Bench are unable to accept your excuse, and, including the expenses, you will have to pay £1.

KILWINNING.

WHAT SEGTONIANS ARE SAYING.

THAT the new police supervision is a decided success. Defaulters beware.

That our local bowling tourneyists are all home now.

{...}

That the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have a fine choir and discourse some splendid singing in the open-air on Sunday evenings.

That they confine themselves to the east-end of the town. Why not go west?

Buchan Observer, Peterhead, 10 Apr 1900, p. 4, Buchan News

OLDMELDRUM – THEFT. – At the Police Court on Friday – Bailies Robertson and Shand on the bench – James Clark Moir, labourer, Oldmeldrum, 16 years of age, was charged with having stolen, on 28th March, from the library room of the Public Hall, a box, the property of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), containing 13s in silver and copper. He pleaded guilty, and was fined 20s, with the alternative of fourteen days in jail.

The Midland Daily Telegraph [BNA Coventry Evening Telegraph], 6 Oct 1900, p. 2, Election Incidents

Is there something weirdly wicked in voting for a political candidate? Said a [Plymouth Brother](#), on being canvassed for Colonel Gretton: "Oh, no! We never vote. We leave that to the children of the devil."

FREE CHURCH COUNCIL, KIRKBY STEPHEN.

{...}

A public meeting was held in the Oddfellows' Hall on Thursday evening on the subject of the evangelistic mission to be held in Kirkby Stephen next February, in common with other cities, towns, and villages in the United Kingdom. The Rev. C. G. Jones, President of the Council, took the chair, and was supported on the platform by the Revs. J. Gawthrop, R. Walton, G. Ledbury, J. B. Anderson, and Messrs. J. Dickinson, I. Ruddick, and I. Bainbridge.

The Chairman said this was an age of synods, symposiums, conferences, but among them all, he had heard of none more valuable or more fraught with good to the people of this country than the evangelical mission of Free Churches, of which that local Council formed a branch. (Hear hear.) He would spend a few moments in defining their position and declaring what they need. First of all, they did not intend to make a new denomination. He remembered fifty years ago a question was asked of a meeting in London, "Who are the [Plymouth Brethren](#)?" Some one replied, "The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are a body of more or less worthy Christian men who commence with the laudable ambition to do away with all denominations and they finish by establishing two or three additional ones, and they the most exclusive of all." Whether that was true of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) or not it was not his province to say, but the Free Churches at all events did not intend to make another denomination. They welcomed all denominations, and did so to make them better. The denominations did not become less specialised if they joined the Free Church movement, but the Methodist

became a better Methodist and the Baptist a better one. They inhaled a freer atmosphere and (enlarged) their vision. (Cheers.) {...}

A NEW HOME FOR [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#) IN THE BOROUGH.

A SKETCH.

With little flourish of trumpets, the “open” section of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have transferred their local meeting place from York House, High Street, to new and more commodious premises in Coleman Street, with the euphonious appellation of the Gospel Hall. The building has been erected by Mr. W. Iles, one of the chief and most respected workers in the section, at his own cost, and consists of a large stone-faced hall, built generally in red brick, well lighted and seated, and with accommodation for, possibly, 300. At the rear there is a baptistry, vestry, kitchen, scullery, and offices.

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are a Christian community collated in 1830, when a Rev. J. N. Darby, previously a clergyman in the Episcopalian Church of Ireland, induced many of the inhabitants of Plymouth to associate themselves with him for the promulgation of his opinions.

The theological views of the [Brethren](#) differ very considerably from those held by Evangelical Protestants. They make the baptism of infants an open question, and celebrate the Lord’s Supper weekly – on each Sabbath morning. Their distinctive doctrines are ecclesiastical and they also hold that all official ministry, or anything like the clergy – whether Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or other sects – is in denial of the Spiritual priesthood of all believers and sets aside the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and, perhaps, one of the reasons of the comparatively small number of [Brethren](#) may be found in their idea that their mission is not to the heathen, but to the “awakened” in the churches.

Mr. Darby visited Switzerland in 1838 and found many believers, but his return to England forewent many divisions among the [Brethren](#). A Mr. Newton was accused in 1848 of departing from the testimony of the [Brethren](#) by reintroducing the spirit of Clericalism and a minority supported him. Another division led to the formation of the [Neutral Brethren](#), upon alleged discoveries of heretical teaching by Newton. The [Exclusive Brethren](#) suffered further divisions as well as, in 1885, the original or [Darbite](#) {sic} Section. There are now six more sections of the [Brethren](#) and of these the [Open Brethren](#) is one, a small body of [Strict Brethren](#) also meeting in Alexandra Street; being a second section of the original body.

One of the chief distinctions between the [Open Brethren](#) and [Exclusive Brethren](#) appears to be in the non-eligibility of other than fellowship members to be admitted to the "Breaking of Bread," which opens the Sabbath services of the [Exclusive Brethren](#), but to which the [Open Brethren](#) invite all believers of whatsoever creed or doctrine. The services are, with this exception, mainly common to both sections. At the Breaking of Bread, which commences the morning service as well as the prayer and praise meeting in the evening, there is no conductor. All are brethren and the proceedings are started voluntarily by one of the brethren and continued by others present as they feel inclined. At the gospel service there is an address by a brother, and on Sunday evening this was by Mr. Hindley Jones, a visitor from Leytonstone. There is no choir, and the harmonium in the room is not always used. Baptism is by "immersion," of adults or converts and for the rest, the [Brethren](#) are simple; being believers, who aim at good works, though the scope of these is limited to their actual membership or regular attendants at the public services. They are modest enough, in the words of a prominent member not to desire publicity, – not even in the "Southend Telegraph."

METROPOLITAN OLLA PODRIDA.

(We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinion of our Correspondent.

{...}

Members of the sect of [Plymouth Brethren](#) are much offended because their denomination is referred to in a disparaging manner in the play of "Kitty Grey," which is now being performed at the Apollo Theatre. It is pointed out with some force that no theatrical manager would venture to permit abuse of the Roman Catholic religion upon the stage. In the first place, the Lord Chamberlain would not allow it; and in the second place, if he did, the theatre would soon have its windows smashed by irate Irishmen. Even the Sultan of Turkey is protected from stage abuse. Why should not the same protection be afforded to law-abiding religionists? It may perhaps be urged that the principles of [Plymouth Brethren](#) do not permit them to frequent the theatre, so that they are not likely to be affronted to their faces. But neither does the Sultan of Turkey attend London theatres. The question raised is one of some difficulty. Ever since the Restoration, Puritanism and Dissent have been amongst the stock-in-trade of English comedy, the raw material, so to speak, of which villians {sic} are made. The playwright cannot be asked to dispense with the religious hypocrite. But perhaps he might avoid "condescending upon particulars" and labelling his villian as a member of some particular denomination, especially if it be a small one, such as that of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The Leominster News, 27 Dec 1901, p. 7, Woman's Realm

GOSSIP.

The late Dowager Lady Anglesey was a link between two very dissimilar worlds. Half her life had been spent, as the wife of a racing celebrity, in the very gayest of all sporting societies. For the second half she was a devoted adherent of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Her gardener, being like her ladyship one of "the [Brethren](#)," always ministered to the house-party on Sundays.

{The Lady in question was Sophia Paget née Eversfield, b. 24 Jun 1819, d. 7 Dec 1901 at Tunbridge Wells. She had been married to Henry William George Paget, 3rd Marquess of Anglesey (1821–1880).}

Newry Reporter, 2 Jan 1902, p. 3, Annalong Notes

On Tuesday night last the windows of the church owned by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were smashed.

THE SUPREMACY OF PETER.

SERMON BY THE REV. PAUL LYNCH, B.A.

“Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church.” – *Matthew xvi. 18.*

The Rev. Father Lynch, B.A., preached the following sermon, at the Roman Catholic Church, on Sunday last: –

MY DEAR BRETHREN – My subject to-night is the “Supremacy of S. Peter.” At a time like the present when some of the root doctrines of the Catholic Church are being called in question in this town, it may be of use to those of you who are members of that Church to have your memories refreshed with a statement of the proofs and grounds of those doctrines. And should there be any present – and I think there probably are – who are not members of the Catholic Church their time will not be lost in listening to the other side.

{...}

The late Catholic Bishop of Clifton, William Brownlow, has written how he came first to submit to the allegiance of Peter’s successor the Pope. Whilst still an Anglican he and a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) persuasion began to thrash out the form of Government Christ gave His Church. And they determined to read the New Testament through, alternately at each other’s house. They began to read the Acts of the Apostles, and when they came to the 15th verse of the 1st chapter, “In

those days Peter rising up in the midst of the brethren, said, etc.," the [Plymouth Brother](#) paused and said to the other, "You see the spirit of Popery showed itself in the Church at a very early period." The remark led Brownlow to go farther back into the records, and he found Popery was in the Church in the lifetime of Christ Himself, being planted in it by His own Divine Hand. And Brownlow became a Catholic, and the [Plymouth Brother](#) was the unconcious {sic} cause of the Catholic Church gaining a learned Bishop.

{...}

The Bromyard News, 24 Jul 1902, p. 8

Fluellen has evidently descendants in Wales. One of them was asked by a magistrate what was his “religious persuasion.” “Collier, sir,” he replied with as much promptitude as the street bookseller who was asked if he was a [Plymouth brother](#). He was not, he said, but he was second cousin to a man at Southampton.

{Fluellen is a comic character from Wales in Shakespeare’s play *Henry V*.}

RELIGIOUS SECTS IN THE COUNTY AND CITY OF CORK.

INTERESTING RETURN.

The following is a return taken from the Census Blue Book containing a list of religious denominations in the City and County of Cork, exclusive of persons belonging to the Catholic Church and the Disestablished Church of England: –

		County of Cork.		City of Cork.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.
Brethren	...	42	60	20	20
{...}					
Christians	...	13	22	15	32
{...}					
Plymouth Brethren	...	4	8	11	8
Protestants	...	6	6	—	—
{...}					
Protestants – Unattached	...	5	5	2	—
{...}					
Christian Brethren	...	6	2	—	—

Followers of Jesus	...	4	2	—	—
{...}					
Undenominational Christians	...	3	2	—	—
{...}					
Protestants not attached to any particular denomination	...	2	2	—	—
{...}					
Protestants – Undenominational	...	1	1	—	—
{...}					
Christian – Unsectarian	...	1	—	—	—
{...}					
Unsectarian	...	1	—	—	—
Unspecified	...	86	—	—	—
{...}					
No Denomination	...	2	—	2	—
Unknown	...	455	3	11	—
Information Refused	...	8	3	16	5
Open Brethren	...	—	—	5	5
{...}					
Exclusive Brethren	...	—	—	—	1
{...}					

Independent Protestant – not belonging to any Denomination	...	—	—	1	—
Protestant – No Denomination	...	—	—	1	—
Protestant – No particular Denomination	...	—	—	1	—
Protestant – Unsectarian	...	—	—	1	—
{...}					

Ibid., p. 4

THE return of religious sects in the County and City of Cork, taken from the Census Blue Book, which we print in another column, may be said to possess the charm of variety. The return shows about 60 sects of Protestants, exclusive and independent of the Disestablished {sic} Church, who are as a class recognised by the title “Protestant.” The varieties of protest in every form are so diversified, and the “unattached,” “independent,” “open,” and “free” brands of belief so puzzling, that the “little list” of Ko Ko of the people “who never would be missed,” is placed in the shade. Though the forms of belief are varied, yet the number belonging to each is insignificant. For instance, the [Christian Brethren](#) muster six males and two females. We possess one Christian Scientist; there are two Spiritualists; the Dutch Church has one for a congregation, and the [exclusive Brethren](#) is composed of one solitary brother, who, strangely enough, happens to be a female. A perusal of this odd conglomeration of creeds is instructive, inasmuch as it shows the schisms and sections of the Protestant community

and its vagaries in the search for light. It also helps in forming an estimate of the value of the claims of communities who, in many instances, consist solely of one individual.

{Ko Ko: character in Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera *The Mikado*. In Act I, Ko Ko sings the following song: "As some day it may happen that a victim must be found, / I've got a little list – I've got a little list / Of society offenders who might well be underground, / And who never would be missed – who never would be missed! [...]"}

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

Resembling the Quakers in their repudiation of the Sacraments, the ministry, and ecclesiastical organisation – but in no other respect – come the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who prefer to be known simply as Christians or [Brethren](#). They originated at Plymouth, about the year 1830, when a number of extreme Evangelicals in the Church of England started independent meetings under the leadership of a clergyman named Darby. Divisions soon took place and have been happening ever since, the [Brethren](#) being nore {sic} notable for their readiness to divide over trifling questions of doctrine and Biblical exegesis than for anything else. There are meetings of [Brethren](#) in most towns, but these Societies – which are usually very small – are of the most exclusive type, and have no real connection with one another. They have no ministers, but they meet weekly to “break bread,” and as a general rule they believe in baptism by immersion. They rarely adopt a friendly attitude towards Christians of other denominations, and no statistics of their numerical strength are available. – “The London Magazine.”

{The London Magazine is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

The Royal Magazine tells a weird story of a squire who had a strong impulse to ride to a Court where, unknown to him, a prisoner was being tried for murder, and where, in the nick of time, the squire proved the *alibi*. The author states that the incident happened many, many years ago. But it was told as true, and information is invited as to the whereabouts of the adventure. As a matter of fact, we believe that what happened was thus. An aged leader of the sect called the [Plymouth Brethren](#) one day met a man late at night in the square of a small town. They said good evening, and, by accident, the divine happened to note the time at a neighbouring clock, which, we believe, he pointed out to the other man. Both men went their way, neither knowing the name of the other, or remembering the incident except among the usual recollections of a lifetime. Years later the [Plymouth Brother](#) “happened” to find himself in a Court of Law. Sentence was about to be passed upon the prisoner who had been brought in guilty of murder. Asked whether he had any remarks to make, he replied that there was only one man who could clear him, and whose name he did not know, though he would recognise him if he saw him. His eyes fell upon his acquaintance – and he pointed him out. The [Plymouth Brother](#) rose, and was able to prove that on the night of the murder he and the condemned man had passed the time at a distance from the scene of the crime, which proved innocence up to the hilt.

{*The Royal Magazine* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

**BOY IN THE SEVERN.
PREACHER TO THE RESCUE.**

Lay preachers are fond of illustrations, but seldom are they furnished with such means of giving force to their utterances by dramatic example as was afforded a speaker in the city on Sunday evening. The [Brethren](#) wrongly called, we are informed, the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were conducting an open-air service in Hylton Road, near the river bridge, when a cry of “Boy in the Severn” arose. Immediately there was a rush for the waterside, and one of the [Brethren](#), Arthur Thomasson, of Spring Gardens, who had already taken part in the preaching, threw off his cap and coat, jumped in the water, seized the boy as he was disappearing for the last time, and brought him to the side, amid rounds of applause from the little congregation. The boy was Henry Cottrell (9), of Dolday, and he was apparently playing on the steps near the water when he fell in. A boat was put off from the opposite side when the cry was raised. It is doubtful whether the lad would have been rescued had it not been for Thomasson’s plucky jump, for the boat could scarcely have reached him before he sank, but the boatman rendered what help he could in lifting the rescuer and the child on to the quay. With the boy safely landed, the preacher saw his opportunity, and made use of the incident in his address to enforce a point, while the modest rescuer slipped away to get out of the complimentary remarks – and his sodden clothes. The writer – who called on the mother of the boy on Monday morning, and was mistaken for the rescuer – feels that the gallant fellow, in the absence of more substantial reward, should be assured that the woman is deeply grateful and regretted she had had no opportunity of personally expressing her thanks.

A COW IN A CHAPEL.

NOISY ENTRY THROUGH THE ROOF.

WONDERFUL AFFAIR AT WEST COKER.

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) Chapel at West Coker, locally known as the “Iron Room,” is built under a sloping hillside.

One day this week a cow belonging to Mr. Robert Parsons was quietly grazing on the slope, when it missed its footing and fell 20 feet, pitching on the chapel roof.

The animal did not stop here, but crashed through the roof leaving only a little hair and skin to mark its passage.

When Mr. Parsons got the key and opened the door of the chapel, the cow quietly walked out as if nothing had happened.

Our correspondent does not say how Blossom spent her time inside.

The Eastern Daily Press, Norwich, 29 Sep 1903, p. 8, King's Lynn

BAPTISMS AT LYNN BATHS.

The public baths belonging to the Corporation at King's Lynn were put to novel and interesting use on Sunday afternoon, when four converts to that religious denomination known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were baptised according to the rites of that sect. The baptism of the four persons – three females and one male – was attended by an impressive service, about thirty persons being present. Hitherto the baptism of converts has been conducted at Fakenham, but on this occasion the number of converts made the members of the community decide that the service should take place in their own town.

STREET PREACHING IN CORK.

Further scenes were witnessed in Cork on Sunday in connection with the appearance of street preachers on the Grand Parade. At 1.30 three Salvation Army members appeared near the National Monument on the Parade, but their service passed off without incident. At 2.15, however, when the [Plymouth brethren](#) appeared, they were received with jeers by a large crowd, and when they attempted to sing a hymn two ballad singers from the coal quay stepped in front of the preachers and began a short music hall ditty. The crowd showed a disposition to rush the preachers from their position, and over 50 police at once appeared on the scene from a side street, where they had lain in waiting, under County-Inspector Rodgers and two district inspectors. The police surrounded the preachers, and insisted on marching them along the Parade to their rooms. Nothing occurred on the way. About an hour subsequently an individual on a car was mistaken for a preacher and was surrounded by a crowd, who dragged him off the car. The man was also struck on the head with a stone and badly cut over the right eye. He had no connection with the preachers, and was a Jew, who arrived in the city that morning.

THE **PLYMOUTH BRETHREN**. – On Sunday last Mr. J. Culver addressed the Croydon Religious Discussion Society, on “Why I joined the **Plymouth Brethren**.” The Chiarmen {sic} (Mr. Thomas Farrow) observed that Mr. Culver bore a deservedly esteemed name in Christian circles in Croydon and his only regret was that as large an audience was not attracted that day as would be attracted the following Sunday to hear about Catholics, Protestants and the Smithfield fires. Mr. Culver, after relating the circumstances which led him to join the **Bethren** {sic}, acknowledged the Bible as God’s Word and the sole authority in matters of Christian faith and doctrine. The church was to be a unity and should only take Christ’s name. The ministry of one man was wrong. Congregations lived like parasites on their minister, ever learning yet never knowing. Prominence was given in the Bible to the Lord’s Supper, as the one object for which we were to assemble together in remembrance of the greatest fact in the world’s history. We were to show forth our Lord’s death till He came. This was the greatest thing being of far more importance than showing activity in the Lord’s service, like the Wesleyans, Salvationists, etc. Obedience was better than sacrifice. Baptism in Scripture only referred to believers. Mr. Culver said his action involved leaving his old friends and joining a so-called narrow sect. He decided to follow his conscience. He left the Wesleyans and joined the **Brethren**. He admitted there were faults among the **Brethren** because the human element existed there as elsewhere, but that did not affect their fundamental basis which was founded on God’s Word. A very interesting discussion followed.

THE TALK IN TOWN.

IS: –

{...}

That of late several local divines in the course of their sermons to the younger members of their congregation have referred to the unwholesomeness of cheap literature. On Sunday evening, however, matters were “pushed a little further on” and it was gratifying to hear the condemnation which the subject received from a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at an open gathering. Mr McKay, who was the speaker on this occasion handled the matter in a most capable manner, and the arguments produced in favour of his statements must have convinced his hearers of the serious part which the reading of trashy books and light periodicals is playing in the life of the youth of the country. However, there is, apart from this matter altogether, something which is doing much more to wreck and destroy the vitality of the youth of the nation, and it must be disheartening to many to see the increase in the number of “young cigarette fiends,” which is making itself apparent in town. Hardly are some of these miserable creatures able to strut about than they are to be seen puffing at some vile and evil-smelling weed, the consumption of which cannot but have a tendency to habits of the most degenerating description.

REMARKABLE SCENE AT BURNHAM.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN & OPEN-AIR BAPTISM.

RARELY has a more quaintly solemn religious ceremony been witnessed in this district than that which took place on Burnham Sands on Thursday last, when some twenty female members of a sect styling themselves "The Brethren" were baptised by immersion in the open sea. Whether the public ceremonial is to be regarded as an outcome of the pervading spirit of revivalism cannot be said, but certain it is that the spectacle was of an altogether novel description so far as Burnham is concerned, with the result that although there was little or no preliminary intimation of the function, a fairly considerable number of residents and visitors, to say nothing of "camera fiends," assembled to witness the proceedings. Let it at once be said, however, that nothing of a ribald character disturbed the ceremony. Curiosity there undoubtedly was, as well as much private criticism of such startling methods being introduced into a religious ceremonial, but at the same time the public maintained an attitude which at all events was outwardly respectful. The candidates – comprising several elderly women attired in black, and a few young girls wearing white – first walked in the midst of a procession to a spot on the Beach, whereon a few small bathing tents had been erected, and here a couple of revival hymns were sung. The candidates for "baptism" then entered the bathing tents preparatory to undergoing the ordeal of immersion in the rapidly advancing tide, and some twenty-five minutes later emerged – the elders wearing black and the juniors white – in costumes which had evidently been selected with a view to minimizing personal loss consequent on

saturation by sea water. Shortly before the ceremony was initiated an element of something narrowly approaching comedy occurred{.} The tents wherein the neophytes had discarded their original apparel had been pitched within the tide line with the result that they were quickly invaded by the water, and the clothes had to be rescued and removed to safer quarters in somewhat summary fashion. The officiating minister, attired in waterproof boots and nether garments eventually waded out into the tide, and to him each candidate waded, assisted by the friendly hand of a "brother." With one hand placed at the candidate's back, and the other grasping her shoulder, the lady was then laid gently backward under the tide, from the surface of which she emerged in a moment gasping for breath, to duly return to the beach and make way for her successor, hymns being meanwhile heartily sung on the beach. The majority of the newly-baptised, it is understood, hailed from the surrounding district.

BRIDPORT.

EXTRAORDINARY SCENE AT WEST BAY. – PUBLIC IMMERSION OF SIX PERSONS. – Upon the seashore at West Bay on Thursday afternoon was enacted as strange a scene as could be imagined, six grown-up people being publicly immersed in the rolling billows off the West beach, by which means they gained admittance into the select circle of rigid predestinarians known as the “[Open Brethren](#),” who have just recently pitched their tent in Bridport. There was not the slightest secrecy about the ceremony, and the fact that it was held right in the heart of the half-holiday {sic} and oppo{s}ite the esplanade at West Bay, where some hundreds of people usually promenade on such an afternoon, pointed to a desire on the part of those responsible for the proceedings that there should be the fullest publicity possible. In other words, it was a good advertisement for the “[Brethren](#).” It may be incidentally mentioned that there is another section of the [Brethren](#) in the town, between whom and the “[Open Brethren](#)” there is open variance. The ceremony on Thursday afternoon bordered very closely upon the fantastical. With rain threatening every minute and the foam-tipped billows rolling in heavily upon the beach – every now and then driving the people still farther back upon the shore – some dozen adherents of the peculiar faith of the sect took up their stand on the edge of the waves, and became quickly hemmed in by a jostling crowd numbering some hundreds, who had come to scoff, but, unlike the scoffers in Goldsmith’s “Deserted Villiage {sic},” did not, we fear, remain to pray. Prayer, hymns, and harangues followed each other in rapid succession – now one and then another of the [Brethren](#) (and they were present from Liverpool, Chard, Dorchester, and other places) would be constrained to speak. In the background stood the West bay bathing tents, and out

of these there presently issued six figures, two men, one old woman of 70, and three other women, all lightly clad, who walked through the crowd along wooden planks to the water's edge. The sight excited more indignation than admiration, and what little solemnity there was about the ceremony disappeared when the shivering old woman of 70 tottered to the water's edge. She was led into the waves by two brethren, and after an unconscionable time of waiting, during which a thrill of indignation ran through the crowd, was duly immersed, and the sight was not an edifying one. The other five followed and the crowd groaned audibly. One young girl of 19 fainted away when the water came over her, and we wish we could say that she was mercifully carried out, but it was not the case, for the poor girl was literally dragged out of the water by the two "[Brethren](#)" in a state of semi-collapse. The girl herself was hardly conscious of the fact of being immersed, for just as she lost consciousness she was put under the water. It was altogether a deplorable spectacle and 99 per cent. of the crowd of people witnessing it did not hesitate to show their strong disapproval of the proceedings. At the parish church on Sunday evening the Rector (Rev. H. R. W. Farrer) devoted the closing sentences of his sermon to a vigorous justification of the Church of England form of baptism, and gave a powerful answer to a remark which fell from the lips of one of the "[Brethren](#)" at West Bay that sprinkling in a church or chapel was not baptism. He said it was not a question of the amount of water used, or whether they received their baptism at the font, in a river, in a tank, or in the open sea. It was the covenant with God that they entered into, and it was by his character alone that man would be judged. – *Dorset County Chronicle*.

{The 1905 volume of the *Dorset County Chronicle* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

THE CHURCHES AND CHAPELS OF TORQUAY

PEW AND PULPIT SKETCHES.

By "CRITICUS."

No. 6. – Amongst the **Plymouth Brethren**.

The **Plymouth Brethren** are not at all proud, and yet they do frequently worship in upper rooms, where they are above everybody else – as witness their Bannercross Steps meeting room in Torquay{.} This peculiarity led me into a slight dilemma the first time I ever paid a visit to the "**Brethren**," though that is some time ago now. Having seen an announcement in another town, that a special address would be delivered at the **Plymouth Brethren** Meeting-room, 82½, Division Street, I went, though I did not quite like the idea of a church or chapel meeting room being at number eighty-two and a half – it sounds so *half-hearted*. When I got to the place one Sunday evening, I went up some stone steps, and having ascended as many steps as seemed sufficient, observing two or three doors, I opened one and entered the room. There were about a score of persons present, most of them being seated at a long table at the upper end of the room{.} I went forward and seated myself comfortably at the table. My arrival seemed to make a considerable commotion, and the good people present began smiling upon me very graciously, but still in a peculiar and mysterious manner. Now I do not like to smile much on a Sunday, but as the people were all smiling upon me I determined that I would not be outdone in civility, and so smiled back upon them in return. This

only made them smile all the more, but no one spoke a word or uttered a sound. Two or three, however, got up, and raising their fingers above their heads, pointed repeatedly and significantly at the ceiling. I looked up at the ceiling, but could see nothing the matter with it. It was all right, and there were no signs of it falling; so I said to myself "*Fiat justitia ruat cælum.*" Still everyone was silent, and not a word was spoken. At this juncture I looked down upon the table, and saw a number of books, lettered "*Deaf and Dumb Institution.*" Being very quick of apprehension (like a policeman), I saw through it in a moment. I had got into the "Deaf and Dumb Institution" instead of into the [Brethren](#) Meeting Room, and the people who were pointing up to the ceiling were saying in their own way – "Friend, go up higher." I went up another flight of steps, and found myself at last in the right place.

Now, I did not make a similar blunder when last Sunday week, I paid a critical visit to the Torquay "[Brethren.](#)" They have one or two upper room meeting places in the town, but it seemed best not to worship at one of these branch rooms, but to go direct to the foundation head – the large and substantial meeting house, erected in 1852 in Warren Road. The building is plain externally, and from the road you ascend five or six stone steps before gaining access to the lobby, which runs the entire length of the front of the building, and is a very convenient arrangement. Turning through a door out of the lobby at my left-hand side, I found myself at once amongst the [Brethren](#). The interior is plain and homely. The walls and ceiling are without any ornamentation of any kind, the room, nearly square in shape, being supplied with open benches. There are three long windows down each side filled, not with stained cathedral glass, but with ordinary panes, through which is a view of slanting roofs and chimney pots, together with a cluster of trees, for Warren Road is a quiet and respectable locality. There is a gallery at one end, and here a school is conducted each Lord's Day

morning and afternoon. It being a beautiful morning, and the sun proportionately inquisitive and persistent, I was glad that the window blinds were drawn down as, the teaching of certain genial moralists' notwithstanding, it is sometimes possible to have too much sunshine. The benches at the upper end of the room were grouped in the form of a square, in the centre of which stood a table, which upon the occasion of my visit was covered with a snowy white tablecloth, upon which rested a plate containing a small loaf, and two bright vessels containing wine. There were no reserved seats, no scarlet-backed pews, or other similar positions of honour – all the Brethren appear to stand (and sit) upon one common level. This is an arrangement I am not just now disposed to find fault with; it prevents pride, envy, or jealousy. Some people may remember that the Duke of Wellington once knelt in quiet prayer within a country English church, when a villager entered, and not knowing the rank of the Duke knelt by his side. The sexton was about to ask the man to retire, when the Iron Duke interposed, remarking "Let the good man remain where he is, please, *we are all equal here.*" It would be well if this choice sentiment was never forgotten – if in spiritual worship distinctions and barriers were removed, and all recognised as equal.

The morning service commences at eleven o'clock, and a little before that time there would probably be from 50 to 60 present, but in a few minutes more the number was considerably increased, and when the first hymn was announced, there could not be less than 150. The majority of the worshippers, upon entry, knelt down before taking their seats, and quite a large number carried Bibles in their hands – one in particular, a gentleman I recognised as having frequently conducted Evangelistic missions, carried a wallet which would contain, no doubt, a reference and wide margin copy of the Scriptures. The class of people present seemed mostly to belong to the better order of society, with a sprinkling of the more thoughtful amongst everyday workers, and young people of

more than usual reverent spirit and attitude. Near the door, after one has passed perhaps three or four rows of seats, were two boards affixed, bearing the words: "Those who break bread are requested to sit above this seat," so that all the space beyond that point was sacred to the true believers. There seemed to be no cut and dried order of service, and presently, without any undue haste, a good brother at the upper end gave out hymn 21:

Brethren, let us join to bless
Christ, the Lord, our Righteousness.

Seeing "Criticus" in a back seat unprovided with a book, one of the friends courteously came and handed him one. Opening it, I found it entitled "Hymns and Sacred Songs." The various compositions are evangelical in tone, and free from any very striking peculiarities. There are a number of Wesley's hymns, some of which have been slightly altered, though I cannot say improved; nor, indeed, would Wesley himself, were he living. But the "improvements" are not made to alter or mutilate the doctrinal sentiments, as far as could be gathered from a cursory examination of the volume. The singing of the hymn was just such as one would hear in a village Wesleyan chapel, the tune, moreover, being of the old-fashioned sort common amongst the earlier Methodists. The words were sung with much pathos, rather slowly, and with a subdued cadence, there being no instrumental accompaniment to this or to any of the hymns. Three or four minutes perfect silence followed, then a brother slowly arose and, with a New Testament in hand, spoke a few words as to the blessedness and privilege of believers, one or two passages being quoted, around which the very brief address was centred. After a pause, another hymn was announced by a brother, who then sat down, and the worshippers all remained seated whilst this was sung. Another long pause succeeded, several of the congregation sitting with closed eyes, as if in rapt and solemn worship. There was at least five

minutes complete silence; then several of the men nearest the table stood up, three or four others knelt down, and the rest of the people lowered their heads, while a brother offered up a plain and thoroughly Scriptural prayer, as he stood erect with hands clasped. A period of silence again succeeded, after which a venerable looking gentleman seated under one of the windows half way down the room, arose and read several portions of Scripture and threw in occasional comments of his own to make plain the meaning. Nearly all had Bibles, and closely followed the reader, and after he had sat down, they still kept their open Bibles on their knees. Then came silent meditation once more, even the females mostly sitting with closed eyes; the stillness at length being broken by a gentleman at the top end rising to read several brief portions of Scripture, taking them from different parts of the New Testament, those present readily turning to each chapter cited as if quite accustomed to "Search the

{image}

"PLYMOUTH BRETHREN" MEETING PLACE, WARREN ROAD.

Scriptures." This speaker was somewhat ministerial in appearance, wearing a small black tie. He was intellectual-looking, very benign and benevolent in manner, but of quick, decisive, and earnest action and attitude. While now and then the open Bible lay upon the palm of one hand, there was an occasional lifting of the other hand, or the pointing of the finger to give force and emphasis to his exposition. He was very clear and distinct, nor was there the slightest trace of formality as he handled the Word and made original comments thereon. He was very faithful and pointed, and in speaking at some length on the peace of God, he asked: "Have you all that peace – have you all that sense of acceptance with God?" It was practically an address and a Bible Reading in one, the brother named occupying the most time, and taking up rather over fifteen minutes, though he was closely

followed all the time. We again sat meditatively, and then a brother just in front of “Criticus” rose and announced a hymn, and as this was sung, some of the congregation sat, but most of them rose. There appeared no one in particular whose stated duty it was to give out the hymns and conduct the devotions, anyone who liked being apparently at liberty to select a hymn as he felt moved so to do. Then the brother at the top end of the room who had announced the opening hymn, approaching close to the table, offered up a very brief prayer. That done, he took up the small loaf and broke it with his hands into two pieces, which he handed upon separate plates to the couple of brothers who sat nearest to him; each, after taking a small piece of the inner soft part of the loaf, handed the plate to the next, and so on, each passing the bread in turn to his or her neighbour. This was only done on the benches down to the boards already mentioned, the occupants of the back benches, consisting chiefly of young persons, with six or seven upgrown people, probably strangers like “Criticus” having no opportunity of “breaking the bread.” There are two sections of the [Brethren](#) – one called the “close” communion, represented by those who worship in the local meeting rooms on Albert Steps and Bannercross Steps; and the other, represented by the Warren Road and Torre Hill meeting houses, being of the “open” communion, and amongst the latter, believers connected with other churches are welcomed, it being commonly announced in respect to such, at the commencement of a service such as I am now describing, that “Brother So and So desires to break bread with us,” when he may sit down with the rest. But more than twenty years ago, when I attended a [Plymouth Brethren](#) gathering of the “close” order, in another time, one of the hymns contained the words: –

.... Their table richly spread,
Where strangers cannot find a place,

Where saints alone are fed.

These lines express a perfect truth at the meeting rooms of the “close” communion of “Brethren,” where an invisible wall of partition separates saints from sinners. After partaking of the bread, the brethren and sisters closed their eyes, or covered their faces, and another brief interval of stillness followed. The last brother again prayed, after which he uncovered the sacramental cup and handed it to the one next to him, who, after drinking, passed it to the next, the vessel being handed from one to the other as the bread had been. This part of the ceremony did not occupy much time, the good brother who had just prayed drinking the last of all, after which he replaced the cup on the table. The offertory was then taken, but I noticed that the collectors did not go beyond the barriers already alluded to, as the “Brethren” do not solicit contributions from outsiders for their own spiritual work. There was another hymn, and after more reading of Scripture verses, then hymn No. 130 was announced, and the last two verses, all rising, were sung, the words being: –

Too soon we rise, the symbols disappear;
The feast, though not the love, is past and gone,
The bread and wine remove, but Thou art here –
Nearer than ever – still our shield and sun.
Feast after feast thus comes and passes by;
Yet passing, points to the glad feast above;
Giving sweet foretastes of the festal joy,
The Lamb’s great bridal feast of bliss and love{.}

Then the service ended with prayer, and the congregation quietly dispersed. I heard the brethren making inquiries about absent members of families, and occasionally I could detect a gentle reproof in the inquiry. "Brother" and "Friend" sometimes emphasised into "Christian Brother" and "Christian Friend," were the forms of expression used in addressing each other. Occasionally, as in the case of other Christians, the arch-enemy of mankind permitted thoughts of trade to intrude. As I passed one brother I heard him say that "business had been bad lately," and that "So and so was not doing very satisfactorily." "Ah!" I thought, with a sigh, "alas for our poor humanity, Churchmen, Dissenters and Brethren – Jews and Gentiles – they are all alike in one thing. Sunday cannot be kept for Sunday thoughts," and so thinking. {sic?} "Criticus" became conscious that musing on other people's infirmities was not in itself the highest of Sunday employments.

I understand that at the evening service there are exhortation and speaking. In their manner of worship the Brethren resemble the Society of Friends more than any other body I have seen. The people are not very numerous, but they appear to be generally of fair social position and standing. There was no excess of extravagance; everything was orderly and decorous. I was particularly struck with the friendly interest they took in one another. Had they all been separated for years, and brought together again by a miracle, they could not have been more kindly or demonstrative in their hand-shaking and inquiry.

Although the body are known amongst outsiders as "Plymouth Brethren," they themselves regard the term as a misnomer, and emphatically repudiate it. They assume no name but that of "Christian" or "Brethren." They have no written creed, but are guided entirely by the Bible as they understand it to be interpreted by the Spirit. They believe that the ministry, as laid down in the New Testament, and as it relates to the Church, is service of the saints to God, and to one another, and that all the

redeemed children of God are in a condition to be God's ministers. They hold that ordination to the ministerial office is not Scriptural, conveys no power, imparts no authority, and confers no gift; moreover, that it is not requisite that "an ordained minister" should be present amongst believers at the breaking of bread in the Lord's Supper. They claim the priesthood of all believers, basing this upon I. Peter ii. 5: – "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." They insist that the service on the morning of the Lord's Day (for they do not use the word Sabbath), as I have here described it, is strictly in keeping with the practice of the early Christian Church, as set forth in Acts xx., 7: "Upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread." They have their warrant for the mode of taking up the offerings, and not appealing to outsiders for financial help, in I Cor., xvi., 1–2: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." No Brother, according to the strict letter of their belief, may act as a magistrate, and the body also repudiate the exercise of any political right or privilege, so that it will be no good for Mr. Layland-Barratt or Mr. Lopes, and other aspirants for parliamentary honours in the Torquay Division to pay court to the [Brethren](#) at Warren Road or Torre Hill Meeting Houses.

The [Brethren](#) may be said to have sprung into existence in 1829. In that year a number of men became dissatisfied with the existing state of things in the Church; all the ecclesiastical organisations were, as they thought, barriers in the way of that unity prayed for by Christ that He and His followers "might be one." At that time a Mr. A. N. Groves, of Exeter, was at the Dublin University preparing for "orders" in the Establishment, and he and a few others met continually for prayer and reading the Scriptures. One day, Mr. Bellett, a barrister at the Irish bar, said to a lady "Groves has

just been telling me that it appears to him from Scripture that believers meeting together as disciples of Christ were free to break bread together, as their Lord had admonished them, and that in as far as the Apostles could be a guide, every Lord's day should be set apart for this remembrance of the Lord's death and obeying His parting command." This suggestion of Mr. Groves was immediately carried out by himself and his friends in Dublin. This was the beginning of what have been called Separatists, or "[Plymouth Brethren](#)" – the term "Plymouth" being no doubt applied because Plymouth was one of their earliest and strongest places, although, as before stated, the only correct title is "[Brethren](#)" or "Christians." In some towns their ranks have been recruited by clergymen and ministers who have renounced their livings and churches. This was done some years ago by a Baptist minister at Teignmouth.

Locally, the [Brethren](#) owe a great deal to a clergyman who, in Demarara, after a close study of the teachings of the New Testament writings, came out with most of his flock. Returning home to England, Mr. Leonard Strong eventually settled in Torquay, and found a few brethren meeting in an upper room, like the disciples of old, in Temperance Street. He joined them, and was made a great blessing. Mr. Strong was a man of great culture, well read and intellectual, and had a rare personality, exerting an almost magnetic influence upon the better classes especially, people of title and of means being greatly attracted by him. The room in Temperance Street becoming crowded, Mr. Leonard Strong, whose portrait we have the opportunity of giving here, was instrumental in the erection of the commodious meeting place in Warren Road, which was opened in the year 1852. That was also soon crowded, and many persons in good positions were associated with the communion of the "[Brethren](#)." These were their palmy days in Torquay, and Mr. Leonard Strong, who died on October 17th, 1874, at the advanced age of 76, is still held in loving remembrance in the town.

Mr. Parr, the Braddens, is the only member now living who worshipped in the upper room referred to when Mr. Strong joined them, and he has closely followed the doings of the “Brethren,” both at Warren Road and at Torre Hill Meeting House, during all these years, still hale and active, and himself taking a leading part at the present time in the latter branch.

{image}

THE LATE MR. LEONARD STRONG.

For, let me add, the respective meeting houses at Warren Road and Torre Hill are practically one. At the former place there is each Wednesday evening a Bible reading and address, on Tuesday evening there being a similar gathering at the Torre Hill room, which is a very substantial looking building directly opposite the Bible Christian Zion Chapel, members of each place finding a home at both of these weeknight services. The meeting rooms at Bannercross steps and on the Albert steps form another branch, the outcome of a division amongst the leaders some years ago. But did not Paul and Barnabas differ, and the dispute led to their separating, each taking a different way and working out independent plans? So one may pause, and pass on, when remembering that there have not always been complete accord and harmony of method amongst the “Brethren.”

The Essex County Chronicle [BNA Chelmsford Chronicle],
Chelmsford, 1 Sep 1905, p. 6, Letters to the Editor

THE DISSIDENCES OF DISSENT.

{...} At the present time, Nonconformists are in such seas of internal strife and dissension that they absolutely represent the house referred to in scripture as “divided against itself.” The various divisions of Baptists cause great confusion. There are those of the Calvinistic, Strict, Free, Particular, Open, and General orders. Methodists are divided into at least six sections, while probably the [Plymouth Brethren](#) represent the very height of discord. I believe that in Chelmsford alone there are at least a round half-dozen different varieties of this order – the [Open](#), the [Ravenites](#), [Darbyites](#), [Kellyites](#), &c., and, taking the whole country generally, almost enough “ites” to fill half a column. How can the cause of Christianity make any substantial progress when the man in the street can justifiably point the finger of scorn, and say, “How these Christians love one another?” {...}

THEO. E. D. CORNWELL.

53 Bell Vue-road, Ipswich.

Rowdyism at a Gospel Meeting.

A series of gospel meetings, conducted by two preachers connected with the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at Balleney, have been continued for the last nine weeks, and except on a very inclement evening the attendance was large. The attendance reached its climax on last Sabbath evening, when a large number were unable to gain admission, and during the service those outside were the cause of much annoyance to the speakers. A constant chatter on current events was kept up by a few, while the remainder indulged in obscene language. Every word uttered was audible inside the tent. Before dismissing the meeting one of the preachers announced an after-meeting. A considerable number remained, and began to sing a hymn, but while so engaged the tent was subjected to a fusilade of sods, which were procured from adjoining ditches, and were saturated with water. The after-meeting was brief, and as those who attended it appeared at the exit of the tent they were met by a shower of muddy sods. Remonstrance was of no avail, and one of the preachers and several of the hearers received severe blows about the face. Some allege that stones were thrown, but I believe that is untrue. The police were duly informed of the occurrence, and I understand a number of the offenders have been identified.

LINLITHGOW COUNTY ASSESSMENT APPEAL COURT.

A meeting of the Finance Committee of the Linlithgow County Council, for the hearing and disposing of appeals against the current year's assessment was held in the County Hall on Monday. Colonel Hope presided, and there were also present Messrs H. M. Cadell, Peter Thomson, R. Hastie, Robert Allan, D. Robertson, Renwick Cowan, A. L. Drysdale, M. Steel, David Allison, and A. H. Crichton.

{...}

BROXBURN [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

The body known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in Broxburn appealed against the assessing of their hall, in respect that it is used exclusively for religious purposes.

The Clerk said he had made some inquiry regarding this appeal, and had ascertained that they had a tank inside the place containing a quantity of water.

The Water Superintendent said he made inquiry about the number of baptisms, and found that there had been just about one annually for the last few years.

The Chairman said if they use the water they ought to pay for it.

Mr Crichton suggested that they might put it this way, that they were not entitled to supply unless for domestic purposes.

Mr Hastie said if they had only one baptism annually, they could not use much water.

Mr Cadell – How would it do to ask them to make a contribution in lieu of rate in respect of the water used?

The Water Superintendent said he was sure it was not used for other than religious purposes. They were very exclusive.

The Chairman said they had no desire to assess if the place was used for religious purposes only, but if they used water that was different.

The Water Superintendent said he understood that the ordinance of baptism was a test for admission to this body. They certainly used the water.

Mr Crichton thought they should certainly pay something for the water used.

Mr Cowan asked how they did with other churches using water?

The Chairman said they usually paid by meter.

It was decided to sustain the appeal, but to ask appellants to pay for the water used by them.

The disposal of several other minor appeals concluded the business of the Court.

STARK NAKED IN THE SNOW

RELIGIOUS MANIAC'S ADVENTURES

At an early hour yesterday morning a man named Murdoch was found lying stark naked in one of the principal streets of Limavady, Co. Derry. The ground was covered with snow, and the unfortunate man was suffering somewhat from his exposure to the intense cold. He was removed to the hotel where he was stopping during his stay in the town.

Later on, when dressed and recovered, he again set out, and on getting outside the town he again lay down in the snow, face downwards, and had to be removed. At present he is under observation by the constabulary, at the request of his relative in Belfast, who were telegraphed for.

It has transpired that he is a prominent member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and appears to be suffering from religious mania.

JUDGE DISGUSTED.

SCRIPTURE QUOTING LITIGANTS.

When Alfred Love, Nantyfyllon, Maesteg, was sued at the Bridgend County-court by William Veryard, a railway signalman, of Cardiff, for £20 7s. 6d., money lent, the plaintiff, it was said, “gathered” in 1902 with the [Plymouth Brethren](#), a religious sect, of which the defendant was a member. Love was building two houses, and needed money to complete them. The plaintiff advanced him £20, and received the following letter:

My Dear Brother in Christ, – I have just received your welcome cheque for £20. Dear brother, you know we will not be long before, by God’s help, we shall be able to repay you, and blessings from the Lord will rest upon you for this. The Lord’s blessing maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow.

On Christmas Eve the plaintiff sent Love a printed form preliminary to county-court proceedings. Judge Gwilym Williams: That was your Christmas message to your dear brother in Christ?

The defendant replied:

Referring to your ungodly threats of going to law with me, I am sorry that you should go to such measures. Who shall lift his hand against the Lord’s anointed and the innocent?

“Then he goes on to quote Scripture,” added Mr. Williams, counsel for plaintiff.

His Honour: Don't read it to me. This kind of thing disgusts me more than anything else in the world.

Mr. Williams: He refers plaintiff to the twenty-seventh verse in the fourth chapter of the Ephesians.

His Honour: Oh, refer me to a law book.

Mr Williams: The verse has reference to "shunning the devil."

"Do you think," said his honour, raising his eyebrows, "that he was referring to me?" The court roared with laughter.

The plaintiff in the witness-box started quoting Scripture.

His Honour (impatiently): Don't. I hate you bringing these religious phrases into business. I must tell you that people who use these phrases most are generally the most dishonest. They say, you know, that the devil himself can quote Scripture.

Judgment was given for the plaintiff.

The Ross Gazette, Ross-on-Wye, 15 Mar 1906, p. 3, Notes from the Metropolis

Whether the Fabian Society has done any serious work in the world is matter for debate. It has certainly advertised several ambitious young men, and boomed them into fame or notoriety; but whether it has really spread Socialism among the working classes, or any classes, is a question which different Socialist leaders would answer in different ways. It must be remembered that there are many sects and schools of Socialism, and that, like the sects of [Plymouth Brethrenism](#), they each excommunicate and anathematise all the others. But one thing is admitted even by the Fabians themselves, and that is that Fabianism has produced no impression upon the middle classes.

“READ OUT.”

Strange Story of [Plymouth Brethren](#).

At Clerkenwell Police-court, yesterday, John Cossen, of 12, Denmark-road, Barnsbury, and Mr. Cox, of 22, St. Paul's-road, Canonbury, were summoned for assaulting James Hider, at 70, Barnsbury-road.

In opening the case counsel stated that he was sorry to say that the case arose out of a religious sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Complainant had been violently ejected, it was alleged, from the edifice. He had protested against some action on the part of the community. He had been accused of railing.

The Magistrate tried to settle the matter between the parties without bringing the matter further into open Court. These efforts, however, were unavailing.

The complainant went on to give his evidence. He had been an elder –

Mr. d'Eyncourt – Better get right on to the charge of assault. Don't bring in other affairs.

Complainant then said that he had been prevented from entering, by the defendants, a Sunday morning service. One of the defendants had taken him round the waist and “slung” him out. He claimed to be a member – and no trespasser.

Counsel for the defence, in the course of examination, elicited that there had been a meeting called of the brethren on account of complainant's conduct. But he described the meeting as a “farce.”

Counsel – Were you “read out?”

Complainant – A paper was read to me at a meeting, saying that I could take no more “fellowship” with the brethren.

Complainant denied that he had caused any disturbance.

Mr. d'Eyncourt said that the only point was whether complainant had really been “read out” or not. Had he any right on the premises?

Complainant maintained that he had only been excluded from “fellowship,” and had a perfect right to sit behind.

The complainant’s son, Ernest, was called, and commenced to make a speech.

Counsel – For Heaven’s sake don’t make a speech!

He said that he would have gone to his father’s assistance if he had not been held himself.

The defendant Cox said that about 12 months ago there was trouble. It was usual for the elders to meet monthly to arrange matters. On the 18th of April they considered the conduct of the complainant and came to the conclusion that he could take no further part, and a notice was read to him. Complainant came again to a religious meeting and made certain allegations which were extremely out of place.

Mr. d'Eyncourt said that he had only to deal with the alleged assault and not with the causes. If the complainant had been “read out” then he thought the case was clear. The case would be dismissed.

BARNET BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES.

A meeting of this Board was held at the Workhouse on Thursday. {...}

A QUESTION OF RELIGIOUS FAITH.

Mr Lucas said the lady Guardians, with the matron, to whom it was referred, had considered the question of a girls' attendant. There were 14 or 15 applicants for the post, and they selected Miss Ruth Cavenagh, whose appointment the House committee recommended. The salary agreed upon was £25 a year, with an annual increment for two years of £2 10s, and the attendant was to live in the House. Mr Lucas added that letters were received from ladies speaking highly of Miss Cavenagh, and he read one of this character from Miss Julia Tudor. – It was asked if it was a fact that Miss Cavenagh refused to take the children to church on Sunday mornings. – A reply was given in the affirmative, but it was pointed out that she was fully prepared to carry out the duties as defined, which did not require that she should take the children to church on Sunday mornings. – One Guardian wanted to know what was Miss Cavenagh's religious faith. – Mr Lucas: A Protestant. – Mr Gibbs: She belongs to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). – A voice: And therefore would not go to church. – Mrs Macfarlane said it was hoped this question of religion would not have been raised, because it was thought an unseemly discussion might follow, and that was most undesirable. Miss Cavenagh was in every way fitted to have the care of children, and as the duties did not require that she should

take the children to church on Sundays, the question of her particular religious faith was out of place, and ought not to have been raised. – Some Guardians complained that there appeared to be a desire to conceal something, and that the matter was not being dealt with openly. – Mr Lucas repudiated anything of the sort. He said the House committee's recommendation came from the lady Guardians, who surely were better able than men to come to a decision in the matter. – The Chairman said the discussion had opened up a very serious question. They should have some guarantee that the person whose appointment was recommended did not teach her particular prejudices to the children. The Board had a duty to the parents of the children, and to the children themselves. They knew – and he said it with all possible respect – that “these good people” were the narrowest of the narrow, and he thought the Board should have some sort of guarantee that their prejudices were not taught to the children. – Mr Jukes complained that the discussion was foreign to the subject before the Board, and totally out of order. – The Chairman, however, allowed it to proceed. – The Master said there was a prescribed form of prayer for the children in the House. – Mr Baughen said they had the guarantee the Chairman wanted in the letter of Miss Tudor, who was a strict Churchwoman. – Mr Lucas said he thought every Workhouse should be free from sect. – Replying to the Rev. H. M. French, the Master said it was desirable the children should be accompanied to church by a responsible person. – {...} Mr Gibbs said that as the majority of the children went to the Church of England they ought to have an attendant who belonged to the same Church to look after them. – Mrs Fison said that Canon Barrett looked well after the instruction of the children belonging to the Church of England, in religious matters. – The Rev. W. Clarke moved as an amendment that the matter should be referred back to the committee for reconsideration. – Mr Belsey seconded. – Mr Jukes said it would have been fairer to all persons concerned if the matter discussed had been brought forward and debated before the duties of the attendant were agreed upon. He

could not understand the chairman permitting the discussion that had taken place, for he read through the list of duties himself at the outset, and no one denied that Miss Cavenagh had undertaken to carry them out faithfully if appointed. In the face of that, the discussion was neither fair nor honest. – Mrs Fison said the lady Guardians and the matron were thoroughly satisfied as to the suitability of Miss Cavenagh to look after the children. – The Chairman said the reason he allowed the discussion was because there was a strong feeling, which he was bound to say he shared, that there was something behind the whole thing, and he did not think that a wholesome thing to allow on the Board. It only promoted suspicion, and he thought it was much better, if there was that feeling, to have the matter out so that they might know exactly where they were. That was the reason why he permitted the discussion, which, to him, had been very distasteful. – The amendment was put, and defeated by 12 votes to 8. – The recommendation of the committee for the appointment of Miss Cavenagh was then put, and carried by 13 votes to 5. Some of the Guardians abstained from voting.

{...}

Ibid.

We learn from a discussion at the Barnet Board of Guardians that the religious beliefs of anybody outside a particular Church are to be described as “prejudices.” Thus, we should speak of the “religious beliefs” of a High Anglican, but of the “prejudices” of a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). It looks as though we are still a long way from Christianity.

Lanarkshire [BNA Hamilton Herald and Lanarkshire Weekly News],
26 Sep 1906, p. 4, Local News

BAPTISMAL SERVICE. – On Sabbath afternoon a special baptismal service was held at the Avon Bridge by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) who worship in the Brandon Tower Hall, when eight young converts were immersed. The service was favoured with the most genial weather, the sun beating down its warming rays upon the clear stream, which must have made the ceremony more congenial to the participants. These public immersions always attract a large crowd of interested spectators, and on Sabbath there must have been one thousand people assembled, who ranged themselves right across the bridge, and on both sides of the river. At the water edge a short preliminary service was conducted by Mr J. M'Gill. After praise and prayer, the speaker read a number of passages of Scripture bearing upon the ordinance, and gave a short expository address. Descending into the stream, he, with the words, "In virtue of your professed faith in Jesus Christ, I baptise you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost," immersed each of the young men. The proceedings throughout were witnessed with the greatest solemnity by all present.

THE REV. MR. LITTLE AND THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

(To the Editor of "The Newry Reporter.")

Sir, – Kindly allow me space in your valuable paper to defend an accusation made against people termed the [Plymouth Brethren](#) by Mr. Richard Little, minister of the Methodist Church, on last Sunday. He says the [Plymouth Brethren](#) vehemently asserts that all church organisations are man-made and misleading, if not positively mischievous. Now, since Mr. Little sees no error in all sectarianism, we would be obliged to him to back up his theory from the Word of God. But we call his attention to a few Scriptures dealing with the church which he was lecturing about: – 1st Corinthians iii. 4; 1st Corinthians i. 10. There Paul beseeches the Church of God at Corinth to all speak the same thing. Now, this is not so with the sects; they all speak less or more different. I also fail to find any man in the Old or New Testaments with Reverend to his name. There is only one entitled to be addressed as such (Psalms cxi. 9), and that is God. Yet the country is stalked with these reverends and right reverends. May the Lord deliver His people from these wrong reverends. Hear how the Lord spoke to Ezekiel. Ezekiel xvi. 1–2 reads: – “Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abomination.” No reverend here. Hear another voice Revelation i. 9: – “I John.” He had no salary in the Isle of Patmos. 1st Peter v. 2–3: – Our friend says salvation does not come by baptism; and he is quite right. Ephesians ii. 8–9: – Yet he has no objection in sprinkling some infant child. I can find no Scripture to sanction this system of baby sprinkling. I can find no Scripture in the New Testament to sanction clerical garb or round-fronted collars (Matthew vii. 16, 20, 21). By their fruits we

shall know them, not by tall hats or fine clothing. Moreover, there is no scope for idlers in the Word of God. Paul the Apostle was a tentmaker. Hear what he says in 2nd Thessalonians iii. 6–15. Space prohibits me saying too much, but I would call the attention of my readers to 2nd Timothy iii. 16–17; 2nd Peter i. 20–21. We have not been to college, but we are born again (John iii. 7). We are not of this world (John xvii. 16), therefore we do not expect much sympathy. We preach Christ crucified as the sinners only hope of salvation (1st Peter ii. 24; Acts x. 43; Acts iv. 12). It seems the Press is a sort of battlefield of late for Scriptural controversy. Mr. Crook got knocked out with his bloodless doctrine. Hebrews ix. 22 puts him in his place: – “Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.” But the blood has been shed on Calvary, so John iii. 16 invites all for pardon, but Christians are called upon to defend the truth with due respects to all concerned, not forgetting Galatians i. 10, which reads thus: – “For do I now persuade men or God, or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased I should not be the servant of Christ.” – Yours faithfully,

R. REILLY.

70 Stream Street, Newry.

The Cambrian News, Aberystwyth, 21 Dec 1906, p. 5, Editorial Notes

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE made a speech at Westbourne Chapel, London, on Monday. In the course of it he told the following anecdotes amid great laughter: – {...} He said that Sir WILFRID LAWSON told of an old woman who could understand every sect excepting two. She said: “I cannot understand what is the creed of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) and the Yarmouth bloaters.”

The Hereford Journal, 2 Mar 1907, p. 8, Local News

At the Hereford City Police Court on Wednesday, before the Mayor (Mr. G. J. Caldwell), the Deputy-Mayor (Mr. E. C. Gurney), and Alderman H. Rogers, John Jones, railway pointsman, of 39, Moor Street, Hereford, was charged with improper conduct in the Castle Green that morning. Evidence having been given, the prisoner emphatically denied the offence. He was remanded until Monday in order that enquiries might be made, bail in the sum of £5 being allowed.

The Hereford Journal, 9 Mar 1907, p. 5

A SERIOUS CHARGE.

MAGISTRATES DISMISS THE CASTLE GREEN CASE.

At the Hereford City Police Court on Monday, before the Mayor (Mr. G. J. Caldwell), the Deputy-Mayor (Mr. E. C. Gurney), Alderman T. Turner, Mr. J. F. Symonds, and Mr. S. H. Prosser, John Jones, signalman, 39, Moor Street, was charged with improper conduct in the Castle Green on the morning of February 27th. Mr. J. H. Jacob defended.

The Chief Constable asked for an expression of opinion from the Bench, with regard to a letter which had been addressed to the Mayor relative to defendant's character. He took objection to this method of approaching the magistrates. If anyone wanted to speak as to character, he thought they

should attend and do so in open court, the same as he understood other gentlemen were prepared to do that morning.

The Mayor said he quite agreed with the Chief Constable. It was very wrong for anyone to write to the magistrates or try to influence them in any way with regard to any case. He had several times been stopped by people, and he had told them they must attend the court if they wanted to speak for anyone, and the case would be decided on the evidence on oath.

P.C. Daffurn and P.C. Hoskins stated that they watched the defendant from a house in Mill Street.

Mr. Jacob, for the defence, argued that the witnesses had been mistaken in what they said had happened. Jones bore a high, exemplary character. He had been 30 years in the employ of the Great Western Railway, and his hobby was the study of religious subjects and writing essays upon them. As a matter of fact, defendant had been a local preacher for the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

Dr. Lane deposed that defendant, who until last Saturday was quite unknown to him, was suffering from a fistula.

Jones gave evidence on oath, and denied the allegations of the witnesses for the prosecution. His working hours were from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m., and he had been in the habit of taking a walk afterwards for fresh air in the Castle Green.

Evidence as to defendant's character was given by Mr. Shorthouse, of the Great Western Railway Company, the Rev. J. Meredith, Baptist minister, Mr. Cooke, of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and defendant's sister-in-law.

The Bench dismissed the case.

LATTER DAY SAINTS

And a Rochdale Swimming Bath.

A discussion took place at the meeting of the Rochdale Town Council on Thursday, on a resolution by the Baths Committee to grant permission to the Latter Day Saints to use the swimming bath, after the closing hour, for baptismal ceremonies.

Councillor Sharp asked if the public would be admitted to the ceremonies, but Alderman Topper vouchsafed no reply. He, however, stated that the committee had some religious tolerance.

In moving that the minute be referred back, Councillor Sharp said it was a new departure. The Latter Day Saints believed in plurality of wives and husbands, and it made him wonder whether the committee wanted an opportunity for going in for the same thing. (Cries of "Oh! oh!") Proceeding, he said that he should object to any Church using the baths for baptismal ceremonies. The principle was bad in the extreme, and he objected to "such a damned and devilish business as the Latter Day Saints are." (Cries of "Shame.")

Alderman Topper, replying, said the [Plymouth Brethren](#) had baptised four persons in the swimming bath within the past few years.

The amendment was not seconded, and the minutes were approved.

CURIOSITIES OF THE CALENDAR.

THE MONTH OF APRIL.

{...}

29th. – THE “**PLYMOUTH BRETHREN**.”

That singular religious sect, the “**Plymouth Brethren**,” was mainly founded by one John Nelson Darby, who died on April 29th, 1882. Darby, who was well connected, was born in London on November 18th, 1800, and educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated B.A. in 1819, and was called to the Bar in 1825. But he soon abandoned his connection with the law, was ordained and served a curacy in Wicklow. It was then that his religious eccentricities first manifested themselves. Doubts as to the scriptural nature of the Established Church caused him to resign, and falling in with a person named Groves, who was founding a sect which was called “The **Brethren**,” Darby accepted its tenets, which were based on the rejection of all ecclesiastical forms and denominational distinctions. In 1828 he issued his first pamphlet, “The Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ,” which disturbed many minds in the Protestant churches, and swelled the ranks of “The **Brethren**.” Darby promulgated the views of the sect, and in the course of his travels visited Paris, Cambridge, and Oxford. At the last-named place he met Benjamin Wills Newton, at whose request he went to Plymouth, where a meeting place was opened, and thenceforth the adherents of the movement were known as “**Plymouth Brethren**.” Then followed internicine {sic}

disputes, which resulted in Darby taking himself off to Switzerland and France, where he had trouble with the Jesuits. Returning to Plymouth he quarrelled with Newton, set up a separate assembly, and divisions occurred in London, Bristol, and other places. A new sect known as [Darbyism](#) was started, and here again disruption took place, for the members divided themselves into two classes, “the [Darbyites](#),” or [exclusives](#), and the [Bethesda](#), or [open brethren](#). Thereafter Darby was engaged in constant controversy, and many of his staunchest supporters deserted him in 1860. Then he wandered in Canada, Germany, the United States, New Zealand, and the West Indies, but his power had departed, and he died practically unknown.

{...}

The Luton Reporter, 24 May 1907, p. 7

THIS week Luton has been a Mecca for the sect of Christians known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Services, at which Gospel addresses have been given, were held in the Town Hall and Corn Exchange both on Sunday and Monday. Representatives have gathered from far and near.

The Longford Journal, 29 Jun 1907, p. 8, Strange & Wonderful

SERVICE IN AN INN.

Every Sunday in the Hampshire village of Twyford a religious service is held in the bar parlour of a public house called the Phoenix Inn. The service is conducted by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) of the village. A good number of people regularly attend. This is the only instance known of a religious service being held in an inn.

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS.

SATURDAY: Before Colonel U. Parry Okeden, Mr. G. W. Daniell, Mr. H. J. W. Coulson, the Rev. Frank Salmon, and Mr. B. Forder.

{...}

DISTURBING A SCHOOL TREAT. – Thomas Alfred Thorpe, of Blandford, was summoned for an assault on Percy John Orchard at Charlton. Mr. Raymond defended, and defendant pleaded not guilty. Complainant stated on June 12th he was watching a cricket match at Charlton with other boys when they were ordered out of the field and stood outside the gate. Defendant came to them, caught hold of him by the throat, and threw him into the road. He was lame before and this made him worse, and he had to remain in bed for a fortnight. Cross-examined: There was a Sunday school treat going on in the field in connection with the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He did not bang the wooden sides of a tent when leaving the field. He caught hold of the gate, and said he should not go away until he liked. He got up from the road and went across the other side, where he threw a stone at the defendant. He went to the field in the evening with his father, and then said if he used bad language he could not remember it. He had been in trouble at that place several weeks before. George Courage, of Charlton, said complainant was in the road clear of the footpath when defendant pushed him down. George Chinnock, of Blandford, who was driving by at the time, said he saw defendant take complainant by the arm and throw him into the road. George Orchard also gave evidence. Defendant said he was Superintendent of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Sunday School and the field was lent them for

the school treat. Whilst the teachers were having tea they were frightened by someone banging the sides of the tent, and he saw some boys run from the tent to the gate. He told them if they could not behave they must go outside, upon which some of them used filthy language, but with the exception of the complainant they all went outside. Complainant used a bad word and clung to the gate, saying he would not go. Witness took him by the collar of his coat and freed him from the gate, but complainant returned, and in freeing him a second time complainant fell down in the road, but he was not knocked or pushed. Complainant threw a stone at him, striking him on the leg. It was slippery at the gate, and the road was about 4ft. below the field. He believed complainant caught his foot in the kerbing and fell. Captain Lindsay Morice, of Bristol, stated he had to speak to the complainant and other lads for interfering with the smaller children and ordered them to leave. He corroborated the evidence of the defendant, and said no unnecessary {sic} force was used to eject the complainant. The Bench stopped the case and dismissed the charge.

A NORWOOD POSTMAN AND HIS WIFE.

A BIGAMOUS MARRIAGE.

REMARKABLE PROCEEDINGS.

At the South-Western Police Court on Tuesday, John James Piper, a postman, living at 45, Whiteley-road, Upper Norwood, answered to a summons by his wife, Edith Laura Piper, of 59, Woodland-road, she alleging he had deserted her nine years ago.

Mr. Leycester, prosecuting, said the wife was a lady well-known in Dover, her father being a member of the constabulary there. After her marriage, she lived with her husband at St. Leonard's, and subsequently they took up their residence at Upper Norwood, where the defendant was cruel to her, and finally told her to sell up and go, as he had made all arrangements to leave her. He went away, and the wife, after staying a day, left to join her friends at Dover, since which time she had been earning her living by nursing. The defendant had not contributed a penny to her support, but on one occasion paid a visit to the house of her friends and made a scene. Counsel added that the defendant had gone through a form of marriage with another woman, and this fact may have accounted for a good deal.

The wife, a ladylike-looking woman, said she often had a blow from her husband, who once held her down by the throat. He had hit her in the breast, necessitating an operation on two occasions. She feared a third. He used to send her out to work.

Mr. Curtis Bennett: What did he do? – He was practically lazy. He told me he had found a purchaser for my organ, and advised me to leave quietly, as I would have nothing at his death. At the time he was preaching and holding prayer meetings. (Laughter.)

Mr. Leycester: What community does he belong to? – Witness: To the [Exclusive Brethren](#). (Laughter).

A marriage certificate was here produced showing that the defendant married a second time at the registry office, South Lambeth, on March 30th last. The wife added that her husband had since been expelled from the religious sect known as the [Exclusive Brethren](#).

Mr. Harker (defending): If you had desired, you could have found your husband's whereabouts? – Yes, I could, I suppose, if I had wished.

Mr. Harker: And for nine years you made no effort? – For eight years; I never asked him to come back. Witness went on to say that her husband would have had no difficulty in finding her. She advertised her calling as a nurse. The defendant never suggested he should take her back, or apologised for his cruelty.

The clerk to a firm of solicitors whom the wife had consulted said a letter was written to the defendant, who replied with a personal visit. He was, said witness, extremely impudent, and stated that any more letters from the firm would be placed in the waste-paper basket.

The defendant, giving evidence, denied deserting his wife. He was commissioned by the [Exclusive Brethren](#) to go to Uxbridge to distribute literature. His wife refused to accompany him, and when he returned he found the house empty. He wrote to her friends suggesting that his wife should forget

the past and return to him. He was compelled to resign his position with the [brethren](#). Not having seen her for seven years he assumed she was dead, and married again, after explaining the whole of the facts to the registrar and making a written affidavit.

In cross-examination, witness said he tried to find out about his wife by going to Somerset House and making inquiries at Dover. He inquired of a man in the streets of Dover if he knew his wife was alive.

Mr. Curtis Bennett: Is that making inquiry?

Mr. Leycester: Could you give the name of anyone of whom you made inquiry at Dover? – No.

Mr. Leycester: Did you make inquiry of anyone? – Yes; hundreds.

Mr. Leycester: Tell me one. – My father.

Mr. Leycester: What does he know? – Nothing. (Laughter.) I gave her every opportunity to return.

Mr. Leicester: She says you did not. It will be for the magistrate to judge who is telling the truth. You have not contributed anything towards her support? – No.

Mr. Leycester: And you refuse to do so now? – Yes.

Mr. Leycester: You call yourself a religious man? – The way is clear between God and me, and I'll leave the rest.

Mr. Leycester: Have you ever struck her? – No; I've taken hold of her to prevent her hitting me.

Mr. Leycester: You say her story is a fabrication, and that you were kind to her? – Yes; if I haven't I would have been by this time in a felon's grave instead of in God's grace. – He admitted, in answer to other questions, making no inquiry of either his wife's father or brother as to whether she was alive or not.

Mr. Leycester: There would be no difficulty in finding them? – I don't know.

Mr. Curtis Bennett: Did you go to the police station? – No; while I was away at Uxbridge she had my wages.

Mr. Leycester: And why on earth should she have disappeared if you were so kind to her? – I've no idea.

Mr. Leycester: You have been wondering for nine years why she left you? – Eh?

Mr. Leycester: You have been wondering all the time? – She left me.

Mr. Curtis Bennett, in giving his decision, said if the defendant did not want to find his wife he could not have gone about it in a better way. Here was a religious man who made an affidavit that he could not find his wife, seeking to trace her by asking a man in the street, and not troubling to inquire of the brother or father, so as to marry again. A more monstrous proceeding it was difficult to imagine. He did not believe a word the man had said, for he appeared to speak the truth only by accident. If he (the magistrate) ever saw a liar he saw one then, for the defendant was the biggest liar that ever trod the earth. He granted the wife a judicial separation, with alimony to the extent of 12s. 6d. weekly, and required the defendant to pay in addition £3 3s. costs.

A startling development happened. The husband was arrested in the corridor of the court by Inspector Belderson and charged with bigamy. His answer to the complaint was that he had not seen his wife for seven years, and the registrar was willing to marry him. The prisoner was brought before the court on Wednesday, when evidence in support of the charge was given. – The first wife's brother, George J. Bath, living at South-road, Dover, gave evidence regarding the first marriage, which was solemnized at the Congregational Church, Hastings, on December 6th, 1893.

The second wife, a smartly-dressed woman, giving the name of May Busby, residing at 76, Central-hill, Upper Norwood, said she married the defendant on March 30th, he describing himself as a widower, and making an affidavit that he had not seen his first wife for seven years.

Mr. Curtis Bennett: You know the only way he had tried to find her was to ask a man in the streets of Dover? – Witness: I did not hear him say that.

Mr. Curtis Bennett: He said so yesterday. He did not trouble to inquire of the father, who is, I understand, still living at Dover. He met a man casually in the street and then came to London and made the affidavit that he had been unable to trace his wife. I'm very sorry for you.

The prisoner was committed for trial, the magistrate offering to accept two sureties of £25 each, and his own recognisances for his appearance.

**CHARGE OF BIGAMY
AGAINST A NORWOOD POSTMAN.**

ACQUITTAL TO-DAY.

At the New Bailey Sessions to-day (Friday) John James Piper, a postman, living at 45, Whiteley-road, Upper Norwood, was charged with contracting a bigamous marriage with May Busby, residing at 76, Central-hill, Upper Norwood.

The second wife, a smartly dressed woman, said she married the defendant on March 30th, he describing himself as a widower, and making an affidavit that he had not seen his first wife for seven years.

It will be remembered that at the Police Court the first wife's brother, George J. Bath, living at South-road, Dover, gave evidence regarding the first marriage, which was solemnized at the Congregational Church, Hastings, on December 6th, 1893.

A marriage certificate was produced showing that the defendant married a second time at the registry office, South Lambeth, on March 30th last. Mrs. Piper added that her husband had since been expelled from the religious sect known as the [Exclusive Brethren](#).

Acting upon the suggestion of the Recorder the jury returned a verdict of Not Guilty, and Piper was discharged.

A BROTHER OF THE [EXCLUSIVE BRETHREN](#).

At the South-Western Police Court on Friday, John James Piper, a postman from Upper Norwood, living at 45, Whiteley-road, at one time a member of a religious body named the [Exclusive Brethren](#), answered to a summons at the instance of his wife, Edith Laura Piper, she seeking to obtain payment of money due to her under an order of the Court. – Piper, who, it will be remembered, was stigmatised in open Court by Mr. Curtis Bennett, the magistrate, as being the biggest liar that he had ever met, was on that occasion charged with bigamy, he having married a woman when his own wife was living. His plea was that he, not having seen his wife for seven years – although, so he represented, he had endeavoured to ascertain whether she was living or dead, but without effect – thought he could marry another. The result of the charge was his committal for trial, but he was subsequently acquitted, the prosecution offering no evidence. – Counsel on his behalf now asked permission to have that part of the case dealing with the alleged desertion by the defendant reopened, on the ground that the decision of Mr. Curtis Bennett was not justified by the facts. – Mr. Garrett, to whom the application was made, refused to interfere in the judgment of his colleague, and said application would have to be made to the Magistrate who granted the wife the order for alimony. – Counsel said that would be done. – Then came the question of the payment of the arrears due under the order, and counsel suggested that that matter should be adjourned pending the application to Mr. Curtis Bennett. – The wife, a woman of delicate health, said she was without any means whatever. She was, moreover, unable to work. She had undergone two operations in consequence of her husband's brutality, and she feared she would have to undergo another. – Defendant

pleaded that he had no money to give his wife, but it was pointed out that he had been able to instruct counsel. – The wife said her husband obtained money by the sale of religious books. – Mr. Garrett said he would grant an adjournment on payment by the defendant of a sovereign to his wife. – The defendant represented that he could not even pay this. – Mr. Garrett: Well, if it is not paid I will make an order for committal. – This threat from the Bench had the desired effect, for the money was forthcoming, and the summons stood adjourned *sine die*.

The Kent & Sussex Courier, Tunbridge Wells, 6 Sep 1907, p. 5, Correspondence

A VISIT TO WADHURST.

To the Editor.

{...}

The [Open Brethren](#) meet at Wood Green. The term “open” does not mean that they get out much into the open-air, like the Salvation Army, and seek to gather in the lost, but that they are much more open and free than other sections of the [Brethren](#).

{...}

LUKE PEARCE.

13, Calverley Park Crescent,
Tunbridge Wells.
Sept. 3rd, 1907.

{...}

The Barnet Press, 16 Nov 1907, p. 6

SALISBURY ROOMS BROKEN INTO.

Missionary Boxes Rifled.

Salisbury Rooms, in Salisbury-road, Barnet, the meeting place of the [Open Brethren](#), were broken into on Saturday night, and some half-a-dozen missionary boxes, which contained the contributions of the scholars of the Sunday School, robbed of their contents, all but a solitary half-penny. The caretaker was the last person to visit the building. He was there in the afternoon about 4 o'clock, and when he left everything was safe and intact. He paid another visit about 8 o'clock, and then discovered that the building had been entered. At the back is a door with glass panels. One of the panels was broken, the bolt inside was drawn, and the door open. A careful examination of the premises was made, and the discovery followed that the missionary boxes, which were collected together in a class room, had been tampered with, and their contents, believed to have amounted to about a pound in coppers, appropriated.

Aberdeen Daily Journal, 20 Jan 1908, p. 2

BYEWAYS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ABERDEEN.

AMONG THE [PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#).

BY "ECCLESIASTICUS."

It is a common saying, and a true one, that one half of the world does not know how the other half lives. It might be said with equal truth that one half of the religious community does not know how the other half worships. The walls of partition between the Churches may be thinner and less opaque than in former days, although there is doubtless still considerable misconception on the part of many regarding the mode of worship amongst those outside their own particular fold. While this applies to some extent even to those great Churches and denominations which are working alongside each other, it is specially true of the relation of those Churches towards the smaller sects. How much does the average member of any of the Churches in the city know of the other and smaller bodies of Christians, each of which also claims to be a church in itself? There are not a few such sects in our midst, but to the average church-goer it may safely be assumed that they are a name – and nothing more.

On a recent Sunday I betook myself to an assembly of those who are commonly called the [Plymouth Brethren](#), but who insist, I understand, on being known simply as [Brethren](#). There are [Open Brethren](#) and [Close Brethren](#); the company with whom I worshipped belongs to the former category, and it is, I believe, the largest numerically in the city. Its meeting-place is, and has been for many years,

in the hall No. 6 St Paul Street. Arriving there at the hour of the forenoon meeting, I found at the door, like Presbyterian elders at any kirk door, some of the leading men of the body, and men, moreover, whose names are familiar in the business life of the city; for the [Brethren](#), be it understood, include within their ranks not a few of those who have come to their own in the ordinary affairs of the world. My identity was soon discovered, for almost before I knew what was happening, I heard some remark about "Ecclesiasticus." Yet although I was recognised, and the object of my visit was quickly surmised, I was most cordially welcomed, for, in addition to a verbal assurance to that effect, I received a warm handshake from each of the [Brethren](#) at the door in turn. In how many of our churches would a strange visitor receive as kindly a welcome.

Inside the hall I found much to claim my attention and interest. The meeting-place is a large, square apartment. Being up one flight of stairs, the [Brethren](#) can claim to meet, like the disciples of old, in an "upper room." The furnishings are of the barest description. Here there are no finely cushioned pews, no elaborate provision for physical comfort. Everything is plain, and even austere, in appearance. A narrow, raised platform, with a rostrum in the centre, runs along one side of the hall, and even these bear no embellishment of any kind. There is, indeed, nothing to indicate that the hall is a place of worship, but a plentiful supply of texts may be seen upon the walls. The aids to devotion which some worshippers find in stained glass windows and stately architecture and harmonious surroundings evidently do not appeal to the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The forenoon meeting every Sunday is devoted to what is termed the "breaking of bread," or what would be known in the phraseology of the Churches as the observance of the Communion. Strangers and children are accommodated in side seats near the door; the Brethren who are to partake of the ordinance occupy the body of the hall. There was a large gathering; from 150 to 200 people being

seated within the inner circle. There were men and women of all ages – some grave and reverend seniors, others in the mid-time of life, and (which is a notable feature) a considerable sprinkling of eager and ardent youth. The platform is used, I understand, when the meeting is for Scripture exposition, or for the preaching of the Gospel, but at the forenoon meeting it is entirely unoccupied. Everyone sat on the same level, the leaders or “overseers” merely finding places on some of the front benches. I was astonished to find a hymn-book in use, as I had imagined that the Brethren, with their rigid adherence to what is purely Scriptural, would have tabooed anything in the form of “human hymns.” Of course, there was no instrumental music of any kind, and there was no choir, yet it was surprising to find that not a single Psalm was used in the praise. I am speaking, of course, of the service as I saw it on the occasion of my visit. Psalms may be used at other times, but on the Sunday, to which I refer, they were conspicuous by their absence, and a stranger could not do otherwise than mark the omission. In this respect the Brethren are either a stage behind or a stage in advance – according to the point of view – of other conservative bodies, such as the “Auld Lights” or the “Wee Frees.” Perhaps it has been thought that the difficulty has been overcome – or shall I say that a compromise has been made – by the selection of specially acceptable hymns. The collection in use is entitled “The Believers’ Hymn-Book,” and it is said to contain “Scriptural hymns for use at all assemblies of the Lord’s people.” On glancing over its pages, I found quite a number of hymns familiar by long and constant use to the religious public of all creeds, so that in actual practice the Brethren are sing- {sic} almost the same spiritual songs as their Christian brethren outside their own borders. I must not omit to remark that they do sing. Although, as I have said, there was no instrumental music and no choir, there was very hearty singing on the part of the whole company, and the volume of sound would have surprised a musical critic, although its harmony might not have appealed to his cultured ear.

Evidently there was no pre-arranged order of service. After the opening hymn, one of the Brethren engaged in prayer. Then another member of the company in another part of the hall announced another hymn, which was followed by prayers from other three individuals. This continued for a considerable time. Sometimes there was a pause for a while, until one began to think of a Quaker meeting; then the prayers and hymns would follow one after another in quick succession. Everyone seemed to act according to his own sweet will, announcing a hymn or engaging in prayer according as he felt the impulse within him. After nearly an hour of this varied form of service, one of the senior Brethren read and expounded several Scripture passages bearing on the institution of the Lord's Supper, and, after a prayer of thanksgiving, he then proceeded to "dispense the elements." The Brethren believe in the literal breaking of bread. Taking the bread which was provided for the ordinance, he broke it in four pieces, placed these, not on silver salvers, but on ordinary bread plates, and handed them to the company, each member of which also literally took part in the "breaking of bread" by breaking the small portion for himself from the large piece, which was passed round from seat to seat. Then followed another prayer of thanksgiving from another member of the company, and the wine was served in silver cups after the manner of any Presbyterian Church.

An offering was taken from those who had communicated – the boxes were not passed to the strangers in the side seats – and, after the singing of a hymn, one of the Brethren read and commented on some passages of Scripture; his remarks really amounting to what would be termed a post-Communion address. Thereafter, another member of the company intimated the death of one belonging to them for many years and made a sympathetic reference to the event. He followed this up by giving a number of intimations regarding the various meetings both for the Sunday and

throughout the week, concluding with the announcement that at this stage “the strangers in the side seats might kindly leave while the Brethren remained for a little in conference.”

Of the subsequent meetings during the Sunday, I may say that in the afternoon there is held a “Believers’ Meeting” for teaching and expounding the Scriptures, when the hall is frequently filled in every part with a company of 400 to 500 persons; from 4 to 5 o’clock there is a Sunday School with several hundreds of scholars; while the evening is devoted to aggressive work by the preaching of the Gospel. Nearly every night of the week there are meetings of a similar nature, and the self-sacrificing devotion and zeal with which the work is carried on can only be regarded as worthy of all praise.

One or two general impressions may be briefly noted. To those accustomed to church services even of the least ornate style the meetings of the Brethren would seem strangely lacking in order and decorum, not, of course, in the sense that they are in any respect disorderly, but simply that they do not follow any regular programme. Whether this may lead to greater spontaneity in the worship and to a more general willingness on the part of the rank and file to take their share in the services would be a controversial matter into the merits of which I do not enter. Any visitor would be struck, however, with the manner in which men who have never been through the theological halls can expound and interpret Scripture. This may be admitted without accepting fully their interpretations. Evidently there is produced a race of earnest and intelligent Bible students, and this may be said to apply not to the leaders only, but also to the average members of this distinctive and vigorous religious community in our midst.

£30,000 “BRIBE” REFUSED.

KIRKHAM FATHER AND HIS SON’S RELIGIOUS FAITH.

The late Mr. Laban Baxendale, of The Hill, Westby, Kirkham, left a bequest of £20,000 to his son Henry on the condition that within ten years he “returned to the religious faith in which he was brought up.”

Mr. Henry Baxendale writes to the “Daily Mail” as follows on the subject: –

Sir, – I am to get, it appears, £20,000 and all accumulations and likewise my share of the residuary estate – in all probably some £30,000 – if within ten years I return to the “religious faith in which I was brought up,” which practically represents, as I am in a position clearly to show, a huge money bribe for me to forsake the Christian faith once for all delivered to the saints and become known as a “[Plymouth Brother](#).”

For if the “religious faith in which I was brought up” is the faith of the Bible, as I was trained to believe it was, then I claim that I have not departed from that faith, but have unfeignedly and heartily returned to it, and I challenge the trustee to prove the contrary. And if they cannot it becomes very obvious that they and all concerned in the office of this monetary bid are implicated in the grave guilt of asking me to betray the faith of the Son of God and of His apostles, martyrs, and prophets, for the sum of 30,000 pieces of gold.

For myself, I would prefer to remain a poor disciple of the old Bible Brotherhood and a member of that company of whom it was so significantly said by the Founder of Christianity, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another." I would prefer rather to remain attached to the discipleship and this company with nothing than I would become a rich respecting "[Plymouth Brother](#)," with the woes of Jesus sounding in my ears, "Woe unto you rich &c." and "How hardly shall the rich enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

I may add that by this bequest it has been very strikingly shown how wide is the gulf that now divides even the straitest sect of modern Evangelicalism – viz., "[Plymouth Brethrenism](#)" – from the precepts and practice of the primitive faith, and it will be some consolation to me in the great sorrow that I feel as to my father's "strange proviso," if I can be instrumental in leading a few back to the old footsteps of the flock and of the faith.

HY. BAXENDALE,

South-street Farm, Westerham Hill, Kent.

COMPROMISE PROBABLE.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND THE LEGACY OF £30,000.

There is a prospect that the financial problem of Mr Henry Baxendale – who refuses to accept £30,000 under his father's will because of a condition that he shall forsake the Bible Brotherhood and become a [Plymouth Brother](#) – may be solved amicably. Mr. J. D. Andrews, a leading representative of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), has declared that the proviso is against the spirit of that community, many members of which would be glad to see it upset.

“If that is the case,” said Mr. Clark, head of the Bible Brotherhood, to a “Daily News” representative, “we are quite willing that representatives of both parties – the Bible Brotherhood and the [Plymouth Brethren](#) – should meet together: “Firstly, to consider whether it is not possible to remove the gross stigma now resting on the [Plymouth Brethren](#) by reason of the attempt – as confessed by one of its leading representatives – to suborn faith and violate conscience by a huge money bribe or any worldly injustice. Secondary, to consider the gross injustice done Mr. Henry Baxendale of implying that he is associated with an un-Biblical faith and practice or no faith at all. Thirdly, to consider, consequently, how representatives of both parties can arrive at an understanding as to what is that faith of the Bible, apart from any financial pressure or any appearance of bribery or corruption.

“I have discussed the matter at some length with Mr. Baxendale,” said Mr. Clark, “and we are fully agreed as to the desirability of this conference if it can be arranged.”

SON'S SACRIFICE.

Refused £30,000 for Conscience Sake.

WILL'S STRANGE PROVISION.

Mr. Henry Baxendale, a young Kentish farmer, of Westerham, who some months ago rejected a legacy of £30,000 under his father's will because a condition of acceptance was that he should renounce membership of the Old Paths Bible Brotherhood and join the [Plymouth Brethren](#), to which his father belonged, is now to receive a part of the money under a compromise with the trustees without sacrificing any of the principles of the Bible Brotherhood.

Explaining the compromise, yesterday, Mr. Baxendale, who is a member of a well-known Lancashire family, merged the first person pronoun in the "we" of the Brotherhood.

"We were given to understand," he said, "that we could obtain all the money if we contested the will, but we stated that we would not go to law, and would cheerfully sacrifice all rather than fight the case. But negotiations have been in progress and are now practically complete by which we shall receive a proportion of the sum without sacrificing our principles one iota.

"We think it best that the exact figure which is to be given over to us should not be known because" – Mr. Baxendale used for once the singular pronoun – "I do not want to advertise myself as a martyr, and it might reflect on the other side. The money will be paid in in {sic} instalments spread over

three years. It will be used for our propaganda, the expenses of our new magazine 'This Way,' and other books which we publish, and in relieving distress and unemployment.

"The remainder of the legacy will revert to the trustees after ten years, the time fixed by my father's will."

Liverpool Echo, 3 May 1918, p. 2

£30,000 Conscience Money.

The death has occurred in California of a man who sacrificed £30,000 for conscience sake. The man was Mr. Henry Baxendale, son of Mr. Laban Baxendale, the founder of the well-known Manchester firm of Baxendale and Co. Ten years ago Mr. Henry Baxendale was left by his father a bequest of £30,000 on condition that he left the "Bible Brotherhood" and returned to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), the faith in which he was reared. He was given two years in which to recant, but to the last he scorned what he termed "a bribe." Over his grave the following inscription has been placed: –

Henry Baxendale, formerly of Manchester, England. He gladly gave up his fortune and friends when called for Jesus' sake, and remained faithful to the Apostolic practice and principle of the sect everywhere spoken against.

Cheltenham Chronicle, 4 May 1918, p. 2

Mr. Henry Baxendale, a young Kentish farmer, who was offered £30,000 ten years ago on condition that he left the “Bible Brotherhood” and returned to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), has died in Tropic, California, without claiming the money, which now reverts to trustees for distribution among his relatives.

MOTHER OF FIFTEEN DIVORCED.

A remarkable divorce case was heard by Mr. Justice Bargrave Deane on Saturday, the respondent being a woman who had had fifteen children (nine of whom are still living), and the co-respondent a cripple, who hobbles with a couple of sticks – a married man with eight children.

The suit was brought by Mr. J. H. Higgins, a Channel pilot, of Cardiff, who alleged that his wife had misconducted herself with Mr. John Minor, an elderly Cardiff tailor. The two men had been friends since boyhood, and were members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) sect. The co-respondent occupied a seat at the solicitors' table, cross-examined the witnesses at some length, and addressed the Court with rugged eloquence.

The marriage took place in 1883, and the couple lived happily until the wife took to drink, and the husband obtained a separation on the ground that she was an habitual drunkard.

The wife went to live with one of her daughters, and evidence was given that the co-respondent paid her frequent visits, and they were often alone together. A witness said that on one New Years' Eve Mr. Minor sang a song about a girl being lonely, and Mrs. Higgins got up and danced a jig.

The co-respondent questioned this witness closely, and she admitted having talks with him about Scripture and as to what was really the Seventh Day, and that he brought a pamphlet, "The Present Truth."

Mrs. Higgins, in denying the charge, exclaimed, "I am an innocent woman. I did not do anything wrong in my young days, especially with a cripple like that" (pointing to the co-respondent). Asked if she had kissed the co-respondent, Mrs. Higgins replied, "No sir, I would not kiss him for £50." (Laughter.) She denied that improper songs were sung at the New Year's party; they sang hymns.

Mr. Minor, in his evidence, referred to the petitioner, and said, "We were like brothers, and even now I have no ill-feeling against him, although he has made this fearful charge against me."

The judge decided that the petitioner had proved his case and granted him a decree nisi, with costs and the custody of six of the children who were under age.

Barking, East Ham, & Ilford Advertiser, Barking, 13 Jun 1908, p. 1

BAPTIZED IN THE SEA AT FRINTON.

A large crowd gathered on the cliffs and beach at Frinton on Sunday to witness the public baptism of some of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who meet at the Public Hall, Old-road. The ceremony took place from the bathing machines, and was preceded by a service. Two women and five men were baptised, each being led into the water up to the waist by two of the [Brethren](#).

The Longford Journal, 12 Sep 1908, p. 8

BAPTISED IN SWIMMING BATH.

A novel baptistry has been adopted by the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at Nottingham. A young woman and her sweetheart, who is about to emigrate to Australia, were anxious to be baptised together, and as the sect has no baptistry of its own, permission was obtained to use the public swimming bath at Leen-side School.

About 60 people witnessed the ceremony. As Brother Odell immersed the couple the congregation grouped round the swimming bath sang the hymn "Who will be the next?" The baptised couple joined in the final hymn "Hallelujah."

The Shrewsbury Chronicle, 13 Nov 1908, p. 10, That Reminds Me

The story of Oxford calls to mind another related by the Provost of Oriel of a canvasser at a Dublin election. An unhappy fate brought the canvasser to the door of a [Plymouth brother](#). “I never vote,” said that melancholy individual. “I never participate in politics. I do not consider that here I have any continuing city.” “That may be,” answered the canvasser, “but might you not vote as a lodger?”

WHERE WESTON WORSHIPS

No. 16. – THE GOSPEL HALL and Mr. DOUGLAS RUSSELL.

{image of Douglas Russell}

It would require an imagination of elastic to describe the Gospel Hall, Waterloo-street, as in the slightest degree pretentious. In fact you might pass it every day and not notice it. There has not been the faintest attempt to endow it with the slightest architectural beauty. All that is visible to the man in the street is one plain wall and two red lamps bearing the words "Gospel Hall." There is nothing inviting about the building. That indefinable air of repose which seems to cling about some Churches is not to be felt in the vicinity of the Gospel Hall. Some places of worship possess stateliness, but not the Gospel Hall. Some of the older Nonconformist churches, even though ugly, have a suggestion of noble ruggedness about them as though the spirit of the dead men who worshipped within those walls had entered into

THE STONES AND BRICKS,

but there is no such suggestion about the Gospel Hall. The exterior is just a bare blank wall, and evidently the [Open Brethren](#) set no store upon outward appearances.

The interior strikes you in quite a different way. There is nothing beautiful about it except that it is homely, but that is where the difference lies. A stranger can enter and take a seat and feel as though

he has been attending there regularly for years. The preacher is not confined to the narrow limits of the orthodox pulpit, but enjoys the greater freedom of a spacious platform raised about a couple of feet above the floor. The expounding of the Gospel takes up the major portion of the service, as might be expected in a building entitled the Gospel Hall. The sermon was of 40 minutes' duration, and reminded one in this respect of the sermon of 20 years ago. There seems to be an antipathy to long sermons now-a-days, and there are very few ministers in Weston who would care to test the patience of their congregations for three-quarters of an hour. But the [Open Brethren](#) seemed used to it, and there were no signs of impatience or weariness such as the scraping of feet, coughing, or moving positions. They sat at attention, drinking in the message, earnestness writ large on every countenance. I have rarely seen a more attentive congregation.

It appeared they had to mourn the loss of a young Christian fellow – formerly connected with the assembly, and whose parents still belong to it. He passed away in London last week, after a brief illness, and was laid to rest in Weston Cemetery on Saturday. But sorrow was not allowed to be the

DOMINANT NOTE,

for they knew that for their young brother to be “absent from the body” was to be “at home with the Lord,” as the speaker expressed it.

The preacher, Mr. Douglas Russell, has, I am informed, been connected with the Hall for 20 years or more, and that most of his life has been spent in the work of preaching the Gospel. He's a Scotchman, and although he has been in many parts of the world he has clung to his Northern accent. He has crossed the Atlantic ten times and preached in Canada, the States, Australia, and other lands. It was whilst on his first visit to Canada, in 1868, that he gave himself up to the work. An open-air

sermon in Galt, Ontario, led to a ten weeks' stay, and he has been preaching ever since wherever he has found an open door.

It required no little courage to take up such work in Canada forty years ago. The great West was indeed the Wild West in those days. The Scotch were there, of course, and it was principally amongst his own countrymen that Mr. Russell laboured in Canada.

The main impression Mr. Russell gives you is that of sturdiness. His voice is deep and strong and resonant, and that fact, together with his broad shoulders, doubtless contributes to the impression. As a preacher

HE IS EFFECTIVE,

and belongs to the old school. He preaches the Gospel, all the Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel. He expounds the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible.

On Sunday evening he spoke of Redemption, Sonship, and Home. He brought his congregation face to face with the realities of death and judgment. There was only one escape, "redemption by the precious blood of Christ." He appealed to them as individuals to ask themselves whether they were redeemed. Then after Redemption came Sonship, and ultimately Home. It was an earnest appeal; a fine appeal made by an earnest man.

A. STRANGER.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS DISSENTERS.

Intervention by a Rural Dean.

Warminster Clergyman not allowed to give an Address in a Wesleyan Chapel.

The action of the Rural Dean, the Rev. C. Holt Wilson, of Dilton Marsh, in requesting the Rev. H. L. Dixon, a licensed clergyman of Warminster, not to give an address at the Wesleyan Church, has been freely commented on in the town. Last week bills were distributed as usual by the secretary of the Men's Brotherhood stating that the Rev. H. L. Dixon would give the address on Sunday afternoon. When the time arrived, however, Mr. Dixon intimated that he was unable to give the address in the Wesleyan Church, but agreed to do so in the schoolroom, and arrangements were made accordingly. There was a large attendance, about seventy being present, and the Rev. C. Pengelly (Wesleyan minister) presided. Mr. Dixon's address was very appropriate, and it was based on the text, "Sirs, ye are brethren." He emphasised the importance of clinging to the things that united Christians and not those things which separated them. The four points which he took were: – (1) That they held the name of Christians in common; (2) that all Christians had the same belief in the Trinity; (3) that every Christian denomination except the [Plymouth Brethren](#) accepted the two sacraments which Christ ordained; (4) that they expected to inhabit a common Heaven, not one of separate compartments, but one Heaven to contain all Christians. On the four counts he (Mr. Dixon) thought they ought to extend the meaning of the word "Brethren" to the whole of Christendom. The earnestness of the address made a deep impression, and at the close a solo was nicely rendered by Miss Butcher. The Brotherhood band was in attendance and led the singing of the hymns.

The Rev. H. L. Dixon holds no living in the district, but he frequently officiates at various Church of England places of worship. Hence the intervention of the rural dean, who, of course, acts as the Bishop of Salisbury's steward in the Warminster portion of the diocese. The action is interesting in view of a similar case which is pending in another part of the country, although in this instance Mr. Dixon was to give the address at the Wesleyan Church to a gathering of a non-sectarian character. Only recently he gave an address on a Sunday at the Obelisk Hall to members of the Adult School, and there was no restriction, so that it would appear it was the giving of an address in the Wesleyan Church that the Rural Dean objected to. A representative of the *Wiltshire Times* called on Mr. Dixon on Tuesday but he was averse to giving any details or entering into any controversy on the subject.

The Wiltshire Times, Trowbridge, 17 Apr 1909, p. 11, Letters to the Editor

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND THE SACRAMENTS.

Sir: In looking at your last week's issue, I notice under the head of Warminster a report of an address given by the Rev H.J. Dixon, in which he is reported to have said that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) do not observe the two Sacraments instituted by Christ: of course he means Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

I presume I understand to whom he alludes by the term [Plymouth Brethren](#), although they do not so designate themselves – holding as I believe any prefix contrary to St. Paul's teaching (1st Corinthians, chapter 1).

I hold no brief for the Brethren, neither am I meeting with them, but I know a good deal about them and am in a position to speak. I therefore assert that this statement is utterly false and a gross injustice to them. As to the Lord's Supper this they observe every first day of the week in the breaking of bread; this surely is sufficiently apostolic. As to Baptism some hold infant and the rest believers, but not baptismal regeneration – as applied to infants. Where the real truth lies between these two has been matter for much controversy {sic} amongst many Christians for many centuries. Where Mr. Dixon gets his information I do not know, nor who the people are he speaks of as Plymouth Brethren; they must be queer folk, and he has been thoroughly gulled.

It appears to me a very sad thing that any one calling himself an ordained minister of the – so-called – Anglican Church should make such rash and unjustifiable statements at a public meeting, and thus hold up to contempt an inoffensive body of believers. Is this the charity that thinketh no evil?

One cannot but feel thankful that his sphere for the propagation of false statements is limited by his ecclesiastical connection, but he seems inclined to kick over the traces, and will hold as much as suits him of his Anglican dignity, and repudiate what is irksome. I don't think in so doing he is setting a good and wholesome example of submission to authorities. If the limitations are irksome to him let him do as (say) John Wesley did, cut the painter and claim the whole world as his parish – but if he does this I hope he will be more accurate in what he states.

ADELPHOS.

Trowbridge.

SHEFFIELD'S SUNDAY

THE BRETHREN.

A primitive Sheffield Church.

(“Sheffield Telegraph” Special.)

The Fitzwilliam Street Hall is the home of a tiny body of Christians of whom it is difficult to find the precise and proper appellation. To the general public they are known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), but it is a description that the true believer resents.

“It is a limited term,” objected one of the workers of the church to a “Sheffield Telegraph” representative last night, “though I confess that I can hardly find the right phrase. Perhaps the [Brethren](#) is the best. We are an entirely unsectarian body, and all true, sincere Christians accepting Christ as the one Saviour are welcomed to our Lord’s Supper. We preach the Gospel in its old-fashioned simplicity.”

To enter upon a theological disquisition on the tenets of the [Brethren](#) is a task that may most prudently be left to the [Brethren](#) themselves. The Fitzwilliam Street community may differ in some respects from other communities of the [Brethren](#) in the city and elsewhere, but it must be said that they are by no means the exclusive sect that one pre-supposed. The sincere, orthodox members of most of the Christian denominations would be qualified to take part in their Lord’s Supper – which

may be called their rite of brotherhood, for, strangely nebulous in constitution, they have no church membership. A Unitarian, of course, would be excluded, and would doubtless exclude himself.

Of the history of the little Church, one must remain in comparative ignorance, for the workers are the most modest of men, and possess a fine reticence about themselves that is rarely encountered.

"We are nobody," one was told, "it is the work that matters." It is enough to say, then, that the church began in the way of most movements, with two or three gathered together, and has grown by gradual process until now there is usually a congregation of a hundred in the bare, unadorned upper room of the Hall on Sunday evenings. There is also a thriving Sunday school, with seventy or eighty children, as well as prayer meetings and Bible study meetings. One of the amazing features of the church is that no collections are taken at the services that may be attended by the outsider. Only those accepted as communicants are privileged to pay for the upkeep of the place, although, as there is no paid ministry, the expenses are not heavy.

The service is as plain and simple as the building. Not even a harmonium accompanies the congregational singing, which, if not very musical to the ear, is at any rate hearty and fervent. Nowhere could be seen a congregation more earnest and serious, indeed almost grimly so. The sermon, an able discourse by Mr. C. Horner, of Nottingham, an old Crimean veteran, was certainly calculated to give them furiously to think. The lake of fire is real; there is the authority of Christ for it; and if you reject the one way of salvation you will find your place in it eternally. The people who will only believe in a "namby pamby Christ" will find that unbelief will not alter truth. Good works will not avail, "for if a man fails in one iota he is guilty of the whole lot."

Yet although they own this stern, unbending creed that condemns the vast mass of mankind, the Brethren are a sweet-natured, kindly folk who do good by stealth and deeply yearn over the souls that will not flee the wrath to come.

The Globe, London, 7 Jun 1909, p. 4

MISSING COMMUNION VESSELS.

At Enfield Police-court to-day Walter Unwin (28), a labourer, was charged with being concerned with another man, not in custody, with sacrilegiously breaking and entering Shirley Hall, a place of worship used by the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and stealing two plate Communion cups and a bottle of wine.

Inspector Twigg, who met prisoner walking with another man at Ponder's End on Saturday night noticed that prisoner's coat seemed somewhat bulky. He stopped him and drew one of the stolen cups from under his coat. Thereupon prisoner said: "You may as well take the other one" at the same time dropping the second cup on the footway. His companion, who ran away and was not caught by a detective who gave chase, was said by prisoner to have drunk the wine.

Unwin was remanded.

The Daily Telegraph, London, 29 Jun 1909, p. 4

Charged at Enfield, yesterday, with breaking into the place of worship used by the [Plymouth Brethren](#), at Enfield, and stealing two Communion cups and a bottle of wine, Walter Unwin, 28, labourer, no fixed abode, was committed for trial at the Central Criminal Court.

TALKS FOR A QUIET HOUR
STORIES ABOUT THOMAS CARLYLE.

By REV. F. A. RUSSELL,
Of King's Weigh House Church.

{...} There is a book dealing with Carlyle by the late Professor Masson. It recites the experiences of a journalist during the forties in the last century. Then Carlyle was famous; Masson was quite unknown. {...} Masson gives some evidence of Carlyle's sardonic mood and of his humour. When he was in London he wanted to write in the "Westminster Review" about Cromwell. But the editor of the great review wanted to write an article on that subject himself – which he did. Afterwards he heard Carlyle lecturing on Cromwell in the "Heroes and Hero-Worship" course, and waited upon him in the ante-room and said: "Mr Carlyle, I am so glad your ideas and mine upon Cromwell agree." The answer of the Sage was: "I didna ken ye had ony ideas aboot Cromwell!"

Pictures of his Soul.

Yet this much-snubbed person had the entree to Carlyle's house, and used to discuss all sorts of things in his drawing-room. One afternoon the subject was the [Plymouth Brethren](#). The editor asked Mrs Carlyle whether they believed in Jesus Christ. The Sage was busy writing in the corner of the drawing-room. Mrs Carlyle, raising her voice, said: "Carlyle, do the [Plymouth Brethren](#) believe in

Jesus Christ?" Carlyle answered: "Oh, like winkin'." These stories are pictures of his soul, and there are others.

{...}

{For the phrase "like winkin'", see Eric Partridge, *The Routledge Dictionary of Historical Slang*, abridged by Jacqueline Simpson, London (Routledge) ⁶2006, p. 5935: "Very quickly or suddenly [...]. Hence, vigorously". – The editor in question was John Robertson (see David Masson: *Memories of London in the 'Forties*, arranged for publication and annotated by his daughter Flora Masson, Edinburgh/London [Blackwood] 1908, p. 4ff; the above anecdote appears on p. 41f. of this volume).}

Stroud News, 16 Jul 1909, p. 2

Legal Notes.

(BY A LAWYER.)

In “Whitaker’s Almanack” for the present year statistics are given of the religious creeds of “persons detained in his Majesty’s Prisons on March 28th, 1906.” {...} Out of 21,580 prisoners, only one “[Plymouth Brother](#)” is to be found. What wailing and gnashing of teeth there must have been among the [Brethren](#) over this one lost sheep! {...}

Even at the Bible meeting on Tuesday night some amusing tales were recorded. Mr. Luce said an old man could not read the Bible, so he got his wife to read it to him. In telling a friend she was in the habit of dong {sic} this, the good wife added, "And I often put in a bit of my own for his good guidance." She tried even to improve the Book. And if I dared I could tell a better story than this respecting something that happened at this Bible meeting, but I must refrain. To fully explain the joke would open up too sacredly private a matter.

Mr. Fielding told of the driver or a four-in-hand who was in the habit of taking parties to Bible gatherings. The leading horse, the coachman said, was a Churchman, "a capital 'oss, but you must put him first or he will not draw a bit." The next was a Presbyterian, "very apt to kick over the traces." One of the hinder horses was a Methodist, "a regular roarer." The fourth horse was a [Plymouth Brother](#), "but he will not eat his oats in the same stable as the other 'osses, and we have had to have a new stable built all to himself." "But the 'osses are all going the same road," philosophically added the Jehu.

Hampshire Telegraph, Portsmouth, 9 Apr 1910, p. 3, Hampshire Quarter Sessions

A WATERLOOVILLE FRAUD.

A lithographer named James Douglas, 52, represented himself to be one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) to Mrs. Emma Whiting at Waterlooville on February 17th. He said it was hard that one of the Lord's children should have to walk to Carlisle. Mrs. Whiting, believing his story, gave him 3s. 4d. Subsequently a charge of false pretences was brought against him. – Prisoner now pleaded guilty to this charge. He had a previous conviction for a similar offence, and a sentence of eight months' hard labour was now passed. – Mr. Temple Cooke prosecuted.

The Irish News, Belfast, 18 Apr 1910, p. 7, Day by Day

The canvasser had called to solicit the elector's vote. The elector and his wife belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) sect. "My husband's not at home. I can tell you this," she continued, "that we are going to make it a matter for prayer, but I can assure you he won't vote for your man."

CITY AND COUNTY TOPICS.

A visit from Miss Hutchison is always delightful, and in the character of Mrs. Bonington, wife of Canon Bonington, Rector of Oldwich, in the new play "Don," she keeps her audience in the best of humours as usual. "Don" is an interesting character study, very far from the conventional figures of drama. Stephen Bonington, who takes after his charming mother in many ways, but has entirely escaped her ladylike little prejudices and her conventionalities, is a good young man and a poet, but in a sinful world, much too simple and confiding. Still, he is bound to come out all right, particularly as he has had the good sense to fall in love with the beautiful Ann Sinclair, beautiful both in face and soul. It is for Elisabeth Thompsett that the spectator suffers, and her life with the oppressively righteous Albert Thompsett. It is extraordinary how unpleasant some people make religion, but from a rather limited experience, the most absolutely unchristian form of Christianity seems to me to be that of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). It is especially adapted to the type of character which enjoys bullying people into the way they should go, or the way the fanatic thinks they should go. I happen to know a case very similar to that of the Thompsetts, only in a different walk of life. In this case the husband is an officer holding an important position in the Army, and his wife is a pretty, clever, sprightly woman. He met her at a wedding, and like Thompsett with Elizabeth, fell in love with her on the spot and would let her have no peace until she married him. The moment she was his wife, everything by which he had seemed attracted became abominable in his eyes, and he set about reforming her. Being in a position to say her soul was her own, which is always an advantage, she refused to be reformed, left the reformer and joined the Church of Rome. On the other hand, I must

say that I have also known another [Plymouth Brother](#), also an Army man, who seemed very nice, but when I knew him he was very old, and his son, also a "[Plym](#)," as Mrs. Bonington flippantly alludes to the sect, was living apart from his wife. I knew the wife, and she was irreproachable, so I put it down to the religion; but, after all, it is not so much the religion as the way it is taken.

{...}

C. C.

THE BIBLE AND SOCIALISTS. – An ugly rumour is current throughout the town which reflects on the good name of the Socialists. An amateur preacher of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), or some such order, is alleged to have said on Sunday that the Socialists had a recent game of football with a Bible. This sounded strange to intelligent people, who know that the grandest of the arguments for Socialism are to be found in the Old and New Testament. On inquiry, it turns out that a professed religious body, who recently removed from the hall now occupied by the I.L.P., forgot, or neglected, to take their Bibles with them – not a proof of great respect for the Book of Books. The literature secretary, it is said, according to instructions from the I.L.P., asked the “unca guid” to come and remove the Bibles, which were lying “kicking about the hall.” The phraseology of the secretary was unfortunate, but the advantage taken of it appears a trifle ungenerous.

{I.L.P. = Independent Labour Party; “unca guid” = Scots for “very good”, here: “self-righteously moral or pious” (*Scottish National Dictionary*, s.v. [guid III.1.](#)), “the rigidly righteous, priggish, sanctimoniously austere persons, in allusion to [Robert] Burns’s *Address to the Unco Guid*” (ibid. s.v. [unco II.1.](#)).}

Bedford & County Record, 29 Nov 1910, p. 2, Across the Table

“We are all busy electioneering,” writes a Parliamentary candidate, “and it is a comfort that such hard work has its lighter side of humour. Take canvassing {...} At another house the elector insisted on showing me his geological specimens for half an hour, and then said he was a [Plymouth Brother](#) and did not vote at elections on principle! {...}”

NOTES BY THE WAY.

“Do I know Tomlinson?” repeated a gentleman to a question put by a spinster friend. “Rather! He’s an awfully nice chap. But I don’t think he cares about the ladies.” “But why not?” “Oh, he’s a confirmed bachelor, don’t you know?” “What a shame that they should confirm people that way. But I don’t believe it can be true because he’s a [Plymouth Brother](#) and the Bishop doesn’t confirm [Plymouth Brethren](#), does he?” I don’t know. I’ve never been one myself.

“ISRAELITES” AT BANGOR.

Conflict of the Sects at the Popular Watering-place.

Something very closely resembling a riot, and which might without exaggeration be called a “ruction,” was caused in Bangor last night by the arrival of three weird looking individuals with long hair and loud voices, who took up a position at the foot of the Main Street, near the Esplanade. Having proclaimed themselves “Israelites,” they proceeded to preach in a resonant and, in fact, aggressive style some doctrines which may, or may not, have been “Israelitish,” but which evidently did not accord with the convictions or feelings of a number of enthusiastic individuals belonging to the “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” who came on the scene and protested in accents as vehement as those employed by the representatives of the new sect. The long-haired gentlemen retorted with considerable effect upon their assailants from the ranks of the “[Brethren](#),” but when the latter were reinforced by a number of Presbyterian and Methodist “evangelists,” the odds were decidedly against the self-styled Israelites, who were compelled to beat a retreat on bicycles after an exceedingly violent series of altercations with their opponents, some of whom were moved by the allied spirits of controversy and piety to threaten a resort to physical force. The trio with the plentiful locks were pushed about: and their retirement from the scene probably saved them from tasting some of the delights of martyrdom. Acting on the principle that he who preaches and rides away shall live to preach another day, the visitors mounted bicycles and disappeared with commendable celerity in the direction of Belfast.

It is a pity that a prosperous and popular seaside resort should be the scene of these silly and impious disturbances.

WESLEY GUILD. – On Monday evening the meeting was under the auspices of the Christian Service Section. Mr S. Sugg (vice-president) presided over a good attendance of members in the Men's Class Room. The meeting opened devotionally, after which Mr A. S. Macmillan dealt at considerable length with the subject of "The Bond of Union in the Christian Churches," taking the way in which the different churches were all linked up together in their use of hymns, saying almost every denomination used the same hymns. He also dealt with the circumstances under which some of the most prominent hymns were originally written. {...} The second most popular hymn, "Abide with me," was written under most trying conditions by the Rev Henry Francis Lyte, M.A., when he was a curate at Lower Brixham, Devon. His was the only church at first in this place, but soon another sect started, called the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He soon saw his congregation dwindling away one by one, and eventually he only had a small congregation. At last he was compelled to give up, and practically heart-broken he sat down and wrote this hymn. Soon after this he died, and it was supposed it was through losing his congregation; he could not get over it. The speaker also dealt with several other hymns and their authors. {...}

The Preston Herald, 27 Mar 1912, p. 8

PLYMOTTH {sic} BROTHER'S SLANDER.

UNCONVERTED MAN'S LEGAL RIGHT.

At Birmingham Assizes, William Ffloulkes {sic}, an insurance superintendent, of Small Heath, sued Thomas Green, superintendent of the Birmingham district of the London and Manchester Industrial Assurance Company, for alleged slander, the statement complained of being that two clerical errors in plaintiff's accounts were nothing but a "lot of roguery and trickery."

Cross-examined by Mr. Cave, defendant admitted there were two slander actions pending against him.

Did you ask one of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who was collecting for the plaintiff, not to assist a worldling against one of the "chosen"? – Not in those words.

You tried to prevent him getting funds on the ground that you are one of the "chosen"? – I never tried to prevent him at all. I do belong to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and I said to the member that I considered it was a great breach of etiquette for him to take sides with Ffoulkes. I think it is a wrong thing for one Christian to assist an unconverted man to the detriment of another Christian. (Laughter.)

His Lordship: An unconverted man has his legal right.

The jury found for the plaintiff, and assessed damages at £75.

Sad Motor Fatality.

VICTIM THE HON. MRS. MANDEVILLE.

FUNERAL AT CHARLTON.

A distressing motor fatality took place on Friday, April 26th, at Hartley, Wintney, near Winchfield, Hampshire, the victim of which was the Hon. Mrs. Sarah Cecilia Mandeville, the wife of Mr. Henry A. Mandeville (formerly a lieutenant in the Royal Navy), of 32 Woolwich Common. Mrs. Mandeville was the only child of the second Baron Congleton (John Vesey Parnell). She was 43 years of age.

The deceased lady, who was a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), was engaged in evangelistic work at Hartley Wintney, and was distributing tracts from door to door and paying calls in connection with the mission which was being conducted in the neighbourhood, when her death occurred.

The car which was the cause of the unfortunate lady's death belonged to a Colonel Davis, who was proceeding, together with his wife, to their son's wedding. He was driving the car himself.

Mrs. Mandeville was walking along the pavement as the car approached, and as it was about to overtake her, she suddenly stepped into the road. She stepped immediately in front of the car, and Col. Davis found it impossible to avoid her. She was knocked down and killed instantly, her head striking the ground very heavily.

An inquest was held next day, at which the jury found a verdict of "Accidental Death," and on Monday the body was conveyed to Woolwich.

The funeral took place on the following Thursday at Charlton Cemetery. Two services were conducted, one in the cemetery chapel and one at the graveside, a course necessitated by the large attendance {sic}. Mr. Mandeville himself officiated, and the mourners included members of her family, Lady Congleton, the Hon. Mrs. Wells, the Hon. Mrs. Edgerton, Captain E. Springfield, Mr. Geoffrey Springfield, and Mr. Hughes (family solicitor). "Nor Gold nor Silver," one of the deceased lady's favourite hymns, which she sung at a mission service on the night preceding her death, was sung at the graveside and in the chapel. Dr. Dudley Torrens (nephew) was unable to be present.

The Midland Daily Telegraph [BNA *Coventry Evening Telegraph*], Coventry, 23 Jul 1912, p. 3

OVER 100 WINDOWS SMASHED.

NON-UNION MEN'S HOUSES ATTACKED.

At the village of Dreghorn, Ayrshire, where union miners have come out from the pit owing to the employment of a few non-unionists a gang of men on Monday night paraded the streets and attacked the houses of the non-union men. Over a hundred windows were smashed and damage was done to the hall of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), of which the non-union men are members. Their conduct became so outrageous that police reinforcements had to be summoned from Irvine before order was restored.

“A PEST TO SOCIETY.”

Coventry Magistrate and a German Prisoner.

A SINGULAR STORY.

At Coventry, to-day, Michael Lax, no occupation, of no fixed abode, and of German nationality, was charged with obtaining, by false pretences, 19s. 10½d., the money of Alexander William Smythe, Bishop Street, on June 21.

The Chief Constable stated that the prisoner called at the shop of the prosecutor on the evening of June 21st, stating that he had come from Germany and that his name was Dr. Schneider. He said he was a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and mentioned the names of several members of that congregation in the city, and also that he had been sent to Mr. Smythe by Mr. Courts, of Earlsdon. The prisoner added that he had been to America, and before starting had the sum of £33. He spent £28 on his passage, but was refused permission to land in the States. He returned to England and had £3 left. He represented that he required another 16s. to pay for his passage back to Germany so that he could join his wife and family. The prosecutor lent him £1 and the accused gave a receipt, promising to repay the money in eight days. On July 26th, the accused called at the house of Dr. Webb Fowler. The doctor was out at the time, and Lax was referred to Mr. Twyman, a member of the Society of Friends, to whom he represented that he was a member of the Peace Society. Mr. Twyman believed the prisoner's story, and yas {sic} about to help him when he remembered that

there was a meeting of the Finance Committee of the Peace Society that night. He took the prisoner to the residence of Dr. Webb Fowler, where the meeting was held. He was there identified by Mr. Smyth, jun., as the man who obtained the money from his father. Lax was questioned, and stated that he wanted to obtain money to take him to Folkestone. They believed the man to be an impostor, and he was given into custody.

Evidence was given bearing out this statement.

Mr. Courts, of Warwick Street, Earlsdon, denied that he sent the prisoner to Mr. Smyth.

Mr. T. A. Twyman said the prisoner's conversation merely interested him. Lax stated that he had been sent out of Germany and Russia because of his peace views. He said he could speak eleven languages, and wanted to converse in Greek with witness.

Detective McLean stated that he was present at Dr. Webb Fowler's house when the prisoner was questioned. The prisoner at first denied that he had been in Coventry previously, but later on the receipt being produced, admitted he had the money.

To Detective-Inspector Bassett, who made the arrest, the accused said: M^e {sic} didn't steal it; he lent it me to get back to Germany. I was going to send it back. Me have friends in St. Petersburg; me have wife and two children in Germany. She will have nothing to do with me. ... German police are very strict; will not have me there. English gentleman very good. Give me money."

In reply to the charge the prisoner asked for an explanation of the word guilty, and then said: "I have did it."

After questioning the prisoner in French, the Chief Constable said he (the accused) pleaded guilty.

The prisoner said he was born in Finland. He could speak eleven languages, including Greek and French. He admitted borrowing this money and added, "Me told them lies. You understand. I didn't tell them the truth and the Lord put me here for that." After obtaining the money from Mr Smyth he said he went to Germany for two and a half weeks and then came back to England and did the same thing.

The Chairman (Dr. Lynes), described the prisoner as a very dangerous character, who seemed to get his living by imposing on kindly and philanthropic people by means of false pretences. He was one of these pests to Society and must be put in seclusion for as long a period as possible. The sentence was three months hard labour and the Chairman said the magistrates would recommend to the Home Secretary that the prisoner be deported to his own native Germany or elsewhere.

In connexion with the tragic death and burial of a conspicuous East Londoner {Clement Mackrow, Manager of the Shipbuilding Department of the Thames Ironworks}, we have been asked for some particulars of the religious sect to which he belonged. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) are a community of Christians who received the name in 1830, when the Reverend J. N. Darby induced many of the inhabitants of Plymouth to associate themselves with him for the promulgation of his opinions – which, however, had been entertained previously among some small communities in Ireland and elsewhere. Mr. Darby was a curate in Wicklow from 1825 to 1827, and then left the Anglican communion. It happens that several conspicuous East Londoners have been [Plymouth Brethren](#), and hence it may be explained that the theological views of this Community differ considerably from those held by Evangelical Protestants. They make the baptism of infants an open question, and celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly. They hold that all official ministry, whether on Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Congregationalist theories, is a denial of the spiritual priesthood of all believers, and sets aside the Holy Spirit's guidance. Darby's idea was that Established Churches are "as foreign to the Spirit of Christianity as the Papacy is." In short, [Plymouthism](#) is an illustration of the desire of certain Christians to pass over the garnered experience of the Centuries, and, by going straight to the Bible, to make a fresh start without any other authority, precedent, or guidance. But, small though it is, the community is divided into at least six sections; and there have been many excommunications and separations even among these. It is understood that the early enthusiasm has waned.

{On Clement Mackrow, cf. [Grace's Guide to British Industrial History](#).}

SENTIMENTALITY KNOCKING ABOUT.

A DISTRICT-INSPECTOR'S OPINION ON "FALSE SENTIMENTALITY," AND WHAT BOYS "GET INTO THEIR HEADS." – WHAT WOULD MR. MOLONY DO?

The only new feature about Saturday's proceedings in the police court at Bray in reference to the escapade of the three lads who entered a room at the east end of the Assembly Rooms, was the expression of District-inspector Molony's views regarding "the false sentimentality knocking about at the present day," and what "the boys get into their heads" in consequence.

On the table stood the three naughty lads, William Moorhouse, Gerald Hogan, and Thomas Hall. In front of them sat the magistrates, over whom Captain L. Riall presided, and at the rear stood their parents. On their left-hand sat their solicitor (Mr. J. J. L. Murphy), the district-inspector above mentioned, and Head-constable Clyne, while on their left was seated Mr. Patrick Dempsey, the school attendance officer, and four members of the Fourth Estate.

The Clerk opened the proceedings by reading the charge, which was that "between 8 p.m. on the 12th October, 1912, and 8 o'clock on the morning of the 13th October, 1912, you (defendants) did break and enter the meeting house of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), situate at the east end of the Assembly Rooms."

Then Mr. Molony sprang to his feet with a terrible “if.” “The offence is a serious one,” he said, “and if the boys had been older they would have been charged with sacrilege, and been liable to be sent into penal servitude.”

The depositions, which have already appeared in these columns, were then read over.

Mr. Edward Giles, caretaker of the meeting house of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), deposed to locking up the premises on the 12th inst., and finding them broken into and entered on the following morning. Hymn books, leaflets, etc., were torn up, and a clock damaged.

Mr. Molony – Have you any idea of the value of the property damaged? – No, but it is not very much. It was only a Moody and Sankey hymn book.

What will it cost to mend the clock? – I don’t know.

Who is responsible for the property? – I am for the outside.

And who is responsible for the property inside? – It is under my care, of course.

Well, I want to arrive at the value of the damage. – 15s. will pay for the whole of the damage.

The deposition of Sergeant Foley dealt with the arrest, and the following statement made by Hogan: – “I went to the Assembly Rooms at about 7 o’clock, with William Moorhouse, of Sheridan’s lane, and Tommy Hall. When we got there we saw a window partly open alongside Mr. Giles’ house. I said to them ‘Come and try to get into the pictures.’ We then went to the window which was partly open, forced the catch to let us in easy. I went in first, then Moorhouse, and then Hall. I told them {sic} to walk easy or they would be heard. We then went into another room where some books were on the

table. Moorhouse said 'We will tear them up to make confetti with them.' Moorhouse saw a clock on the wall, and said, 'Come on until we get the clock.' We then lifted over a table, and Moorhouse got up on it and took the pendulum out of the clock, and took one of the hands out of it and threw it over the wall into Galtrim. We got out through another window. We then met the Rev. Mr. Lefroy on the Quinsboro' road, and asked him for money for the pictures. He told us to go to his house, which we did, and he gave us ninepence."

Mr. Giles said the [Plymouth Brethren](#) did not wish to press the case, as they were sure the boys did not mean to commit sacrilege.

The District-inspector said he quite appreciated the motives of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), but in his opinion there was too much false sentimentality knocking about at the present day, with the result that boys got it into their heads that they could commit any offence, and then get off with a caution or lecture from the magistrates.

The magistrates asked the parents of the boys if they were willing to make good the damage done to the meeting house.

The parents said they were, and the case was then adjourned for four weeks to see same was done{.} The magistrates said they would give their final decision at the expiration of that time.

Ibid., p. 7, Bray Notes

The three lads who broke into the [Plymouth Brethren's](#) Meeting House were a mischievous lot. Of course their idea of breaking into the place was not to rob, but to obtain free admission into the picture show, and therefore they were not actuated with any very serious intent. But when they got in they committed acts which cannot be justified, and their final success in obtaining 9d. from the Rev. Mr. Lefroy was perhaps a fitting climax to the comedy.

The Wicklow News-Letter, 23 Nov 1912, p. 7, Bray Notes

The three youngsters, William Moorehead, Gerald Hogan, and Thomas Hall, who a short time ago endeavoured to get free admission to the pictures by breaking into the [Plymouth Brethren's](#) meeting house, and damaging some of the things they found there, were dismissed at the Children's Court on Saturday. The lads' parents, it was stated, had paid for the damage done to the property.

“BRETHREN” MARRIED

SINGULAR CEREMONY AT SOUTHSEA.

A marriage ceremony, such as has rarely, if ever before, been seen in Portsmouth was performed at Immanuel Baptist Church, Victoria-road N., on Wednesday, when Miss Clara Louisa Harris, eldest daughter of Mr. John Harris, of Cottage-grove, Southsea, was married to Mr. Samuel Harrison, of Brixton. Both the bride and bridegroom are members of the sect known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and they were married in strict accordance with the form and custom of the [Brethren](#) by one of the elders, Mr. T. Moore, of Bournemouth, in the presence of a numerous concourse of relatives and friends.

The ceremony may be described as a modification of the form of marriage appertaining to the Church of England, with certain original departures. For instance, at the outset the bride and bridegroom were each required to declare that there was no impediment to the wedding.

One striking feature of the service was the omission of the word “obey” from the undertaking on the part of the bride. At a later stage, however, she was exhorted, by means of the reading of the 5th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, to submit herself unto her own husband, “for the husband is the head of the wife.”

Other singular incidents were the announcement of the hymns in a true Nonconformist fashion by a member of the congregation, the fact that the hymns were sung without any accompaniment and

the spontaneous way in which another member would lead the congregation in repeating the last verse of a hymn or suspend the singing of a hymn while he recited the two last verses and then enjoined the assembly to resume singing with the last verse only.

The bride, who was given away by her father, was attended by four bridesmaids – the Misses D. Harris (sister), G. and B. Harrison (sisters of the bridegroom), and P. Baxter. The brother of the bridegroom, Mr. W. Harrison, acted as best man.

THE WANDERER AT CHURCH.

No. 19. – The Foresters' Hall.

I am sorry to say that I can find no point of view from which to treat the [Plymouth Brethren](#) quite sympathetically. It may be severe, but it seems to me that it would not have been any great loss if they had never been invented. They were invented, by the way, as late as 1830, and the founder of the sect did not die till 1882 – yesterday, so to speak.

I will admit that they struck me as very sober Godfearing people, and any religious form of doctrine that converts evil-livers into sober Godfearing citizens deserves appreciation and sympathy.

But it struck me also that no [Plymouth Brother](#) or Sister – and as usual, of course, I saw more sisters than brothers – could possibly have been an evil-liver in the ordinary sense, if [Plymouth Brethrenism](#) was unknown. I feel quite sure that they would have been Strict Baptists or something even better.

Whether they succeed or not, the Salvation Army set themselves out to draw irreligious sinners into the fold. The [Plymouth Brethren](#) draw into their fold the fastidiously religious people who are not content with the exact doctrine or ritual of any existing chapel, although they cannot decide among themselves what the exact doctrine or ritual should be.

SCHISMS AND SECTS.

In my encyclopædia – and the astute reader will already have realized that for once I have departed from my usual practice and have been reading up my subject – it mentions that the English branch of the faith, founded considerably less than a century ago, has experienced several schisms and is already divided into six sects. My encyclopædia is two or three years old, so there may be more sects now. And it seems that the Ramsgate [brethren](#) follow out the traditions of their peculiar persuasion, for they require four separate places of worship in the town to satisfy their requirements, although one of them, I believe, would actually hold their four congregations. Nor can it be suggested that the four different buildings are required for the convenience of worshippers in different quarters of the town, since they are all within ten minutes' walk of each other, and two, Guildford Hall, and Foresters' Hall are within a stonethrow.

No, I am afraid the only explanation is that they have got the only correct form of [Plymouth Brethrenism](#) at the South-Eastern Hall, and the only correct form at King-Street, and the only correct form at Guildford Hall, and gtil {sic} another only correct form of the faith in the downstairs room of the Foresters' Hall, and that a Foresters' Hall brother who went down to the King-street meeting-house would be offended by impurities of doctrine or ritual.

If I am quite mistaken about this, if all four bodies are entirely one at heart, and only worship in different buildings for convenience, I am sorry, and am quite prepared to apologize, but it would still seem to me a pity for the little congregation of the Foresters' Hall to put up with the inconvenience of a public dancing-place through fear of crowding Guildford Hall.

On the Sunday when I made up my mind to visit the [Plymouth Brethren](#) I found the nearness of two of their meeting-houses an advantage.

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

When at eleven o'clock I reached Guildford Hall and saw on the notice board that at 11 there was merely "Breaking of Bread" whilst the "Gospel Service" took place at 6.30, I did not know whether the [Plymouth Brethren](#) would care to see me. The "Breaking of Bread" suggested to my mind a semi-private meeting for the elect only, into which my intrusion would be unwelcome, and I walked round to the Foresters' Hall. When I found there that a service of some sort was being held although the notice board announced simply and solely a "Gospel Service" in the evening to which visitors were heartily welcomed, I was confirmed in my idea that the [Plymouth Brethren](#) did not want visitors in the morning, and regretfully went home to wait for the evening service.

It may have been cowardice on my part, and if so it was fittingly punished, so far as the Guildford Hall was concerned. For when I got there at 6.30 the place was closed and in darkness. I do not know what had happened to prevent them keeping the promise of the notice board, but there was no service.

The notice-board, by the way, is headed large: "The Lord Willing," so I cannot blame the P. B. if on this particular evening when I proposed to join in their evening service the Lord was not willing that it should be held.

HALL OF MANY ACTIVITIES.

But the nearness of Foresters' Hall was convenient, and round the corner I found the Lord was willing for the evening service to to {sic} take place as announced.

I should have preferred to describe the Guildford Hall, because it is a building set apart entirely for the worship of the sect. Foresters' Hall appears to be a building that I could hire myself if I invented a new religion and wanted to expound it, or if I wanted to start a dancing class (and I have not any inclination at present to do either). It is the church of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) – or of a sect of the P. B. – on Sunday only. For the rest of the week it is a place for dancing classes and the rehearsals of amateur theatrical and dramatic companies and other mundane activities, including the regular meetings of the Foresters and a Temperance Society. I had to prepare myself in entering to ignore such influences in the place as were unconnected with the religious body holding its services there; as for instance the piano carefully covered up in green baize with a placard above it announcing the rates at which it can be hired by the day or the hour, and the locker containing insignia of the I. O. G. T.

In the centre of the large room an island of chairs faced an extremely cheerful fire, and on the chairs sat about a dozen people very solemnly and silently. The number of worshippers rose in the end to twenty, after the service had begun. For even among this handful of extremely pious people to whom has been revealed the precise dull, sordid and ornamentless form in which the Almighty wishes to be worshipped, there is the usual percentage of those who cannot observe the first rule of ordinary politeness by getting to church in time. In every church I have noticed and wondered at it. They attend one service, or two, in the seven days: they have the whole week to think about it, and

yet when the time comes they cannot get there until the service has begun and their arrival disturbs the rest of the congregation. It seems to me discourteous to them, if not to the Almighty.

THE UNPUNCTUAL WORSHIPPER.

I do not know why I should take the occasion of my visit to the Foresters' Hall to allude to this failing, unless it is that in a congregation of twenty, all apparently regular attendants, one might have expected to find the unpunctual worshipper for once lacking.

But to proceed with my own experiences. Nobody welcomed me in, and nobody directed me to a seat. It was quite unnecessary, of course, when there were so many seats to choose from, and it was so apparent that one might sit where one liked. I should think that if the Foresters' Hall congregation did elect one of their members to welcome in visitors, he would find time dragging heavily on his hands.

However, every chair was provided with a bible and a copy of "Good Tidings" hymns (red limp back, 3d.) and as soon as I had dropped modestly into my chair at the back, a nice little boy – the most active member of the congregation, and I am glad to say, the only child present – brought me a hassock. For although there were chairs for a hundred, the supply of hassocks was most carefully proportioned to the actual needs of the gathering, and they were dotted about sparingly. Hence the activities of the Plymouth child. When a newcomer selected a seat not provided with a hassock, the little boy pounced upon an unappropriated one and carried it to him. He was kept quite busy in the first few minutes after the service had begun.

A SAD LEADER.

And the service did not begin till five-and-twenty to seven. I had been sitting in very solemn silence for five minutes, when one of the gentlemen in the chairs, whose black hair I had been admiring because of a very nice wave in it, rose sadly, and walking to the table facing us, revealed himself as the officiating brother – a more elderly man than I had imagined from a back view.

I do not speak of him as the officiating minister because my friend, the encyclopædia, mentions the chief points against which the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have revolted are infant baptism, and an official ministry. And when at the close of the service I tried to extract a little information from one of the elect and asked him the name of the “minister,” he stared at me blankly and then, when I explained, said: “Oh! you mean the brother who spoke.”

The Brother-who-Spoke cleared his throat and offered up a short prayer. Then he cleared his throat and said that we would sing hymn 87, and, having cleared his throat, he read the hymn – it had five verses – all through, down to the last line of the fifth verse.

I have given my views about the ministerial reading of the hymn in a previous article. At St. Paul's Church, they do all that is required. They announce the number of the hymn on the wall and when the time for the hymn comes, the choir simply begin to sing it. At other churches the minister announces the number, whether it is notified on the wall or not. At others he reads through the first verse. But at Foresters' Hall, the Brother-who-Spoke read through it all.

EACH DOING HIS SHARE.

It seemed all the more waste of labour on his part because having read it all through he had to proceed to sing it all through. In default of a choir, or of so much as a harmonium, to assist in the lyrical part of the service, the B. W. S had to lead us in song, and after clearing his throat, he did it remarkably well. I could never have reached such a high note myself.

After the first line or so of solo, the congregation joined in, and we got through it very nicely. When I happen to hit on the right note I have a very nice singing voice, and there was one line in each of the verses that just suited my baritone. After the second verse, the congregation let me do the third line all by myself. And so, each doing his bit, we got through quite famously.

After the hymn, we had the reading, and there was a great fluttering of leaves. All the members of the congregation being provided with bibles they felt it incumbent upon them to follow the passage that was being read, and the fluttering leaves continued so long that the official reader paused.

"I do not know whether I gave it out correctly," he said, and announced once more where the passage was to be found.

A VIOLENT FLUTTERING.

Upon which the fluttering became violent for a moment and then ceased for him to continue.

For myself, I never follow the reading of the lesson in print. It seems to me to discount the reader's labour and suggest a certain distrust of his ability. This seemed to make the Plymouth child uneasy to see me the only member of the congregation without an open Bible before him, and after consid-

eration I suppose he came to the conclusion that I was not following the reader with my Bible because I could not find the place. For he found the place for me and handed it to me nicely. After which, of course, I had to make some show of following the reader in the Book.

After the reading, the Brother-Who-Spoke looked at the clock and said sadly: "We may as well sing another hymn," and, having announced it, he read a hymn all the way through again and then proceeded to sing it with some assistance from the congregation.

But with all his efforts to get through the time – and when you read a hymn all the way through before you begin to sing it, it can only mean that you are making a desperate effort to fill up time – we got to the time of the address with considerably more than half-an-hour to fill if one was to make the whole business last an hour.

The B-W-S. managed to get through it, but it was a terrible effort. Once he had almost come to a dead stand, but he remembered that he had just been referring to a passage in St. John's Gospel, and he said: "We will turn back to the passage and read it," and as he read he found new threads to set him going again.

A WINDING DISCOURSE.

There was no structure in the address; there was no beginning, middle and end. It just went on winding round and round a few old truths, or rather a few old phrases, and at the end was just where it had begun.

It is the sort of sermon that may be good for one's soul, but it bores my intellect stiff.

I cannot pretend that I was unsympathetic. It would be a misuse of the word. In a Roman Catholic Church or a Jewish Synagogue, I say to myself: "There may be much more in this than I can understand."

But I understood the elderly gentleman with youthful-looking hair at Foresters' Hall perfectly. My mind was inside his, and every time he looked at the clock I said: "Can we make it last the hour?" My mind struggled with his to find any tag in what he was saying on which to tack a hymn or a platitude. When he cleared his throat, I said: "Well, that has filled up half-a-minute." I believe that I entered into his feelings entirely, and I found no justification at all for our mutual waste of time. I felt that we should both of us have been much better employed if we had gone to a decent place of worship, taken part in a decent service, and listened to an intelligent sermon.

The Wanderer.

[Next week: St. Lawrence Wesleyans.]

Worthing Gazette, 19 Apr 1916, p. 2, Sussex by the Sea. A Weekly Survey

Not content with securing exemption from combatant service, a Hailsham baker appeared before the Appeal Tribunal for East Sussex to explain that he belonged to the [Open Brethren](#); but, on being asked if this was a sect which had any relation to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), the applicant replied that he had “Never been to Plymouth.”

PICTURESQUE RELIGIOUS CEREMONY.

A striking scene was presented on Sunday afternoon last in the River Stour, at the bathing place, when five adult persons were immersed. They are connected with the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who meet at the old Post Office. Their method of baptism is similar to that of the Baptists, viz., by total immersion; only they prefer, instead of a covered baptistery, the open air and a running stream. A goodly company had gathered to witness this interesting ceremony. The administration of the rite was conducted by Mr. Reddell. The first to enter the cold-running stream, somewhat turbid owing to recent floods, were two men, who were afterwards followed by three young ladies. All the candidates had a thorough "ducking," being completely laid under the water. They appeared none the worse for their experience, rather the look of joy on their faces appeared to indicate that they had gained some rich inward content through following the example of their Lord, who was similarly immersed in the Jordan. Open-air baptisms were wont to be more frequently celebrated in Sudbury in the past. Middle-aged inhabitants can recall similar events, when Baptists from New St. gathered on the Croft and candidates were immersed by the Croft bridge. This revival of an old-time practice is very interesting, and to those privileged to witness it, is ever a memorable and picturesque ceremony.

It is a good many years, we believe, since such a ceremony was witnessed at the Croft bridge. In the 'seventies these immersions were frequent, but there was a good deal of horseplay on the part of the lads of the neighbourhood, who threw mud at the candidates, necessitating a second immersion.

The Bicester Herald, 19 May 1916, p. 2

“You have given me a lot of texts, and now I’ll give you one,” said Mr. Maclean, M.P., chairman of the House of Commons Appeal Tribunal, to a young [Plymouth Brother](#). “Look up Numbers 32, verse 6, and you will find these words: ‘Shall your brethren go to the war and shall ye sit here?’”

Belfast Evening Telegraph, 3 Jun 1916, p. 2

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

A [Plymouth Brother](#) says in regard to a statement to the effect that a large number of conscientious objectors are [Plymouth Brethren](#) –

“I know many instances when at the beginning of the war many [Plymouth Brethren](#) gave their sons to serve their King and country’s interest bearing arms in what is felt to be a righteous and necessary cause on behalf of their country and humanity.

“[Plymouth Brethren](#) do not enter in normal life into military service, because war for its own sake is contrary to every Christian principle but in the present abnormal and dangerous situation the more intelligent and reputable among them believe their country’s danger a sufficient warrant for taking their common share in its defence and the endeavour to defeat its enemies.”

THE LOCAL TRIBUNAL. – There were thirteen applications before the Haywards Heath Local Tribunal on Friday evening. Mr. H. M. KNIGHT presided, other members present being Mr. Ivatt, Mr. Bent, Mr. H. Plummer, Mr. Deadman, Mr. Mouncher and Mr. Reeves, with Mr. George Plummer (Clerk) and Mr. J. Sargant (Deputy Military Representative). Beside the last-mentioned official there sat Major-General Ruck, C.B. {...} A clerk in the employ of a London firm of stockjobbers applied for exemption on conscientious grounds. He objected, he said, to any form of service connected with the military system. He belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Mr. DEADMAN: It's a pity the Kaiser don't belong to your body! (Laughter). The application was postponed until 14th July, to enable Applicant to come to some arrangement with the Committee for Work of National Importance. {...}

Berks & Oxon Advertiser, Wallingford, 30 Jun 1916, p. 7

MAN WHO NEVER READS OF WAR.

A [Plymouth Brother](#), who appeared at the Essex Appeal Tribunal, made the extraordinary statement that he had not read anything about the war.

“Do you mean to say that your country’s affairs do not interest you?” asked Mr. C. Hope, K.C.

“Not its warfare,” was the reply.

Do you know what is happening to England? – Only by hearsay.

Do you know England is in danger of invasion? – I have heard so.

Do you believe it? – I don’t attach much importance to rumours.

What would be England’s position if everybody accepted your view? – God would protect.

He was ordered to do work of national importance.

OXFORDSHIRE APPEAL TRIBUNAL.

A sitting of the County Appeal Tribunal was held at the County Hall, Oxford, on Saturday. There were present Alderman Dr. Hall (in the chair), Mr. A. D. Godley, Sir Walter Gray and Mr. W. M. Gray (Oxford), the Hon. H.A. Denison (Henley), and Mr. E. Samuelson (Banbury); also the clerk (Mr. James Lungley), the representative of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. J.D. Hatt), and the military representative (Capt. W. M. Bailey).

{...}

EVANGELIST OR MINISTER?

David Ward (28), Gospel car, Curbridge, Bampton, describing himself as an Evangelist preaching the Gospel, appealed against the decision of the Witney Rural Tribunal. He claimed as a minister of the Gospel to be exempt from compulsory service. He had been a minister four years. He was also a conscientious objector. He would be willing to undertake work as a chaplain, scripture reader, or Evangelist among the troops. He belonged to the [Brethren](#). Letters in support of appellant's convictions were put in from, amongst others, Sir George Pigot, Cranbourne Hall, Windsor Forest. The Witney Tribunal did not consider appellant was entitled to be classed as a minister of the Gospel, or that he was entitled to more than exemption from combatant service.

In answer to the Clerk, appellant said he had not been ordained.

The Chairman: Do you belong to any demonination {sic}? The point is, are you a minister or are you not? If you are, you are exempted; if you are not, you are not.

Appellant: I belong to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who support me as an organised body. A letter had been addressed to the Prime Minister as to the status of pastors and ministers, and the reply was that they were exempted from service under the Act. He had been engaged for four years in Evangelistic work and travelled about. This work took up the whole of his time. In the winter time he conducted missions in the [Plymouth Brethren](#) halls. Sir George Pigot was treasurer and secretary of the [Brethren](#), and remitted every month. He and his wife lived in the Gospel carriage in the summer time. He did not have to pay rates, and had not troubled about rates. Other Evangelists had been exempted that he knew.

The Chairman: We do not exempt you as an Evangelist, because that does not come in the Act. We exempt you as a minister of a denomination.

Capt. Bailey suggested that the appeal should be dismissed, if appellant was exempted as a minister.

The Chairman said as far as they were concerned the appeal was allowed on the ground that he is a minister of the Gospel.

Capt. Bailey: You won't consider the conscientious grounds at all?

The Chairman: No.

The Clerk: You grant conditional exemption?

The Chairman: Yes, so long as he continues in his present occupation.

Norwood News, 23 Feb 1917, p. 6

“PLYMOUTH BROTHER” NOT A “MINISTER.”

The Liverpool Deputy Stipendiary Magistrate decided that Edward Lawson, a member of the **Plymouth Brethren**, was not a “regular minister” within the meaning of the Military Service Act, and fined him 40s. and handed him over to the military on a charge of being an absentee.

A good story is told concerning Major Godfrey Collins, the member who moved the resolution in the Commons for the appointment of a committee to review national expenditure.

The family firm which bears his name prints a great many editions of the Bible. When he was contesting Greenock one of his canvassers called on an elector, who was a [Plymouth Brother](#). "No," answered the [Plymouth Brother](#), "I know nothing about candidates and politics, I stand for Jesus."

Then a happy thought struck the canvasser. "Have you a Bible in the house?" he asked. "Yes, of course," said the man. He went and fetched it; the canvasser opened it at the title page and pointed out that it was "Printed by Collins."

"Our candidate is the man that prints the Bibles," he said. "Is that so," said the [Plymouth Brother](#), greatly impressed. "Then I will vote for him."

AN INTERESTING MINISTERIAL QUESTION AT PENRITH. PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND THEIR PRINCIPLES.

MR. GEORGE WINTER'S SUCCESS AGAINST A MILITARY SERVICE ORDER.

From half past eleven till nearly five o'clock on Tuesday the Penrith magistrates were engaged in hearing an interesting case. The magistrates on the Bench were Messrs. Riley (chairman), Rimington, Hudleston, Robinson, and Bolton.

George Winter, Carleton Terrace, Penrith, was summoned by Captain T. H. Lambert, National Service representative, Carlisle, for failing to appear at the time and place fixed by a notice issued to him, he being a man belonging to the Army Reserve. Major Brown (who is a solicitor) appeared for Captain Lambert; Mr. E. W. Lightfoot, Carlisle, represented defendant, and pleaded not guilty.

Major Brown said defendant, who was a member of the Army Reserve, was called up on January, 19th, 1918, to report for service on February 1st. He did not respond to the calling-up notice.

{...}

Defendant went into the box, and said he was a regular minister of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), or the [Brethren](#). He was 36 years of age, and unmarried. He devoted his whole time to his ministry. He began in 1904 to train for missionary work abroad, and continued to the present time with breaks

– he had not been in any secular calling. He was now recognised by the Brethren as a regular minister, according to their principles and practice. He was received into fellowship of the Church or Assembly at the Gospel Hall in 1901, and had continued in fellowship with them up to the present, except that he had been abroad a short time when he was not actually with them. There were now 45 communicants at the Gospel Hall. The morning meeting consisted of the breaking of bread, and those who attended were called communicants. At the evening meetings a fair average would be about 70 to 100; formerly it was rather more. He was a brother who exercised oversight or eldership in the Society. That meant a certain amount of control – discipline in case of necessity. If a member did something unworthy he would be subject to control. There were in the Penrith Society five elders who exercised control. The elders looked after all matters in connection with the church.

Mr. Rimington: Like our churchwardens?

Defendant: Very similar, but I think their duties might be more. The Brethren, he said, were equal in the exercise of oversight, but certain elders were recognised by their gifts from God for various forms of ministry. He was so recognised by the other elders. He carried out certain functions as manifesting the gifts that God had bestowed upon him. He was also a member of a joint oversight meeting for Cumberland and Westmorland, which met usually twice a year to discuss the welfare of the various churches. There were twelve major assemblies in Cumberland and five in Westmorland, and some had smaller assemblies largely dependent on them for ministry. The Brethren did not ordain ministers, but after proving their gifts and capacity for the work they were given opportunities for service; they were recognised as being gifted by God for the ministry. He had been so recognised for many years, and ministered as one of the regular ministers, or ministering Brethren

as they were more usually called. He took part in breaking bread and pouring out the wine, and handing out those emblems to the members. He frequently preached the Gospel at the evening meetings, not only in Penrith, but at other places. He also taught at meetings convened for that purpose. He produced a list of his preaching engagements for last year; some of them were baptismal. He regularly visited the members, particularly those who were sick or dying, and he had also distributed gifts from the church to those in needy circumstances. He prepared candidates for, and assisted at their baptism. He was eligible to officiate at marriages, though he had never done so; he also assisted at funerals. He had never had a secular occupation since he first began as a minister. In August, 1904, he had a call to become a missionary abroad, and was commended by the Penrith Assembly to the Brethren having oversight of missionary work at Bath. He went into training at various places for missionary purposes, but owing to a breakdown in health he was advised to give up his pursuit of foreign missionary work. He did not receive any regular remuneration, but got some money occasionally to meet his expenses in connection with travelling. Ministers among Brethren did not expect payment if the church was a poor one; nor did they expect gifts unless the members were in a position to contribute. He was subject to discipline; if he preached unsound doctrine, or walked unworthily, he would be called before the elders of the local church, and debarred from ministering in that and other churches.

In reply to Major Brown, Witness said he devoted a considerable time to Bible study; he also had pastoral visitation and meetings. His work averaged say three to four hours per day, including Bible study. He considered he belonged to a wider body than the Penrith congregation. There was no formal appointment to the ministry, but there was formal recognition. His being asked to minister amounted to recognition. At the morning meeting there was no formal invitation to him, but at the

evening service there was an invitation. At the breaking of bread, generally Mr. W. J. Parker officiated when he (Mr. Winter) was away; in fact, in that respect, Mr. Parker was in the same position as himself. In the absence of Mr. Parker and himself, Mr. Norman would officiate. If there was only one elder present he would officiate. In the absence of all the elders he did not think it would be competent for the congregation {sic} to call upon one of their number to officiate at the breaking of bread. If there was no one present who was entitled to officiate he thought there would not be a breaking of bread at the service. One could "have the gift" without being an elder, but usually a man who manifested the gift was an elder. There might be only one in an assembly who had the "gift" of performing marriage. A person might be qualified to officiate at the breaking of bread, but not necessarily to officiate at a marriage. He was recognised as a minister in Gospel preaching prior to 1904. Any member of the community who showed the necessary qualifications might become a minister by the mere fact of being invited by the community to perform the duties of a minister; he had to have the necessary gift – the grace – and the time to devote to the office and for preparation. He had never performed baptismal service, but had assisted; he was, however, qualified to perform the service. He had conducted burial services, though he had usually had another elder helping. The community only recognised as ministers those who had a call from God. They had no ordination service. That was the main distinction between the [Brethren](#) and other Christian bodies. [Brethren](#) held and practiced that an individual on manifestation of a faith in Christ might, according to the Holy Scriptures, be baptized by immersion in the name of the Trinity. That excluded infant baptism, to which they were opposed. They had no Liturgy. There was no general body in control of the whole community of [Brethren](#); the local churches controlled themselves. Each local assembly was an independent unit, but there was an inter-communion between all churches of the [Brethren](#) in this country and abroad, and this was manifested in that when a member from any one church

wished to go to another church he would be provided with a letter of commendation from the elders of the local church, and on production of such letter the member would be received at the other church to which the letter was addressed; and that also applied that if a member or minister – not necessarily both the same – were holding false doctrine, or not living becomingly, he would be debarred from fellowship at the other churches.

Mr. Rimington: Who decides the question of false doctrine? – The oversight of the local assembly. He added that there was a central oversight in London at which he had been present. He added, further, in reply to Mr. Rimington, that in the case of a clashing of opinion the local assembly would decide. The question of doctrine, he said, was so well defined in the Scriptures that they had never had any difficulty on the point.

Mr. Rimington: You are very fortunate.

In further answer to Major Brown, Witness said he had been specially trained for the work, and was known as a ministering brother. It was permissible for a ministering brother to have a lay occupation, and in fact, many of them had.

Replying to Mr. Lightfoot, Witness said there were distinctive differences between the [Brethren](#) and other denominations. A whole assembly might be excommunicated, and would become isolated.

John William Laing, contractor, Carlisle, said he had been associated with the [Brethren](#) for 25 years, and for the last ten years he had been one of the elders exercising oversight at the Gospel Hall, Scotch Street, where there were 150 communicants. Their community existed as a protest against denominationalism, but at the same time they were recognised as a denomination.

Mr. Rimington: By all but yourselves? – Yes.

Witness added there were about 1,200 properly constituted assemblies in Great Britain, with about 50,000 communicants. They believed in the independence of the meetings as far as it could be carried on, but in the matter of missionary funds, discipline and general policy, there had to be united meetings. There were letters of commendation between one community and another. Witness put in a blank form of such letter. They had 750 missionaries in foreign lands. Witness also put in other books and documents illustrative of the forms of service used. In 1917 the community contributed £35,000 to “echoes of service” abroad; that was in addition to sums sent privately. He recognised Mr. Winter as a regular minister of the denomination. Witness then put in a letter from the Carlisle community stating that Mr. Winter was recognised as a regular minister. If a man taught false doctrine he would cease to be a minister, and for anything serious he would be excommunicated. There was no human ordination; nothing Mr. Winter could do could make him more of a minister than he was.

James Patton Wigston, retired missionary, Finchley Road, London, said he had been associated with the [Brethren](#) 46 years. He was in agreement with the evidence of the two last witnesses.

Ernest Johnstone, saddler, Brunswick Square, gave evidence in support of defendant’s contention that he was a regular minister. He also rendered considerable assistance to other assemblies, especially those in the country districts. There was a great need to have a regular minister; they would feel his loss very much.

Mr. Lightfoot then addressed the Bench at length in support of his contention that Mr. Winter was exempt from military service. There were two points – 1 Was the [Brethren](#) a religious denomina-

tion?, and 2, If so, was Mr. Winter a regular minister of that denomination? The Brethren had existed in name from 1830. There was inter-communion between Penrith and other assemblies throughout the world. They had communicants and a missionary organisation. It seemed inconceivable that there could be the smallest doubt that this was a denomination, though there were no ordained ministers. Ordination was the commonest form of selection, so that in that matter alone the Brethren differed from the other churches in their organisation. Mr. Winter's list of duties and qualifications covered practically every act that a minister could perform. Mr. Lightfoot then quoted a number of authorities on the definition of the word minister. The Brethren did not recognise the ordination of a minister, but a minister was de facto a minister because he ministered. It was the only method of selection in that community. The word regular meant constant, and did not presuppose any particular selection. They said, inferentially, that ordination by human agency could no more make a man a minister than it could make him an artist or a musician. They recognised God only in the appointment or recognition of ministers.

Major Brown said he took it that the denomination of which Mr. Winter was the minister, if he was a minister at all, was the Gospel Hall at Penrith. It had been said that the local assembly was independent of any assembly or collection of assemblies. The Courts had refused to define "What is a regular minister?" because it all depended on the circumstances of each particular case. After quoting authorities, Major Brown said on Mr. Winter's own admission he devoted three or four hours per day to ministerial work and preparation by Bible study. Was it right to say that a man who devoted only that small amount of time to the work should be called a regular minister of a religious denomination. It was admitted that in connection with the Brethren there was no monopo-

ly of ministry, and a minister might arise daily. Having regard to all the circumstances he submitted that the Court ought to find that Mr. Winter was liable for service in the army.

The magistrates retired, and after an absence of 25 minutes, the Chairman said they had decided to dismiss the case.

The West Sussex Gazette, Arundel, 29 Aug 1918, p. 7, Tribunal Topics

A Midhurst Evangelist, aged 33, who admitted he was not a minister of any recognised denomination, but belonged to the “[Open Brethren](#),” said he considered his work was of national importance, as “the Gospel was the only cure for the present evils.” His case was adjourned to enable him to get what the Tribunal would consider work of national importance.

STORY OF COVENTRY LOVERS.

SERIOUS CHARGE AGAINST A CLERK.

At the Coventry City Police Court, on Tuesday, a remarkable story was unfolded in the course of a case in which a young man, Sydney Harold Clee (21), clerk, 52, Broadway, was charged. It was alleged against him that on or about October 24 he took Gwendolen Una Allibone, being then under the age of 16 years, out of the possession and against the will of Henry Allibone, her father.

Outlining the case for the prosecution, Mr. J. W. B. Allen said that fortunately it was a type of case that at the present was extremely rare in this country. Prisoner made the acquaintance of this young girl, now aged 15 years, some two or three years ago. He met her at the Warwick Lane Sunday School, where they both attended, and it was alleged that he obtained a complete influence over her under the cloak of religion. There were a number of letters, all in the same strain, written by the prisoner, apparently under the influence of intense religious strain coupled with intense earthly love. It seemed to him, and would doubtless strike the magistrates also, that these letters would show cant coupled with sickly sentiment such as was likely to appeal to a young, inexperienced girl of tender years who was just passing from childhood to early womanhood. There was no doubt whatever that the girl had become entirely under the prisoner's influence, and was amenable {sic} to any suggestion he might make and did make to her.

DISAPPEARED FROM HOME.

Leading up to the present charge, continued Mr. Allen, some two years ago the girl's parents discovered that the child, then 13 years of age, was meeting accused, and they objected to the acquaintance. It was also discovered that she was under the man's influence, and obeyed him where she would not obey them. The father of the girl saw the prisoner and his daughter, and they promised that the acquaintance should cease. That promise was not carried out because the prisoner and the girl began their meetings again more frequently than before. About a fortnight before October 24, the date mentioned in the charge, the girl disappeared from her home. She was away from Thursday till Saturday morning, when she was brought home by the police. She passed the Thursday and Friday nights in the company of the prisoner in one of the Coventry parks. There was no suggestion that the girl had been treated harshly or anything but kindly at home. She had extremely kind parents, perhaps more kind than firm.

Between that time and October 24 the prisoner appeared to have met the girl outside the works, where she was engaged, continued Mr. Allen. He then informed her that he was called up for military service. Mr. Allen remarked that prisoner was one of the class known as conscientious objectors. He said he was called up for November 1, and expressed his intention of leaving Coventry to get work elsewhere. He suggested to the girl that she should go with him, or, rather, according to the girl's story, he said he was going away and he wanted to know whether she wished to go with him or not. He left it to her whether she should go with him, and said, "Come if you can." In the letters he had referred to there were hundreds of crosses, and the girl would tell the Bench that they were, in fact, lovers. The girl met him at Coventry Station on the Thursday night (October 24), and they travelled by train to Birmingham, and proceeded to Bromsgrove, where they slept in a field

that night, which was a cold and bitter one. From there they appeared to have walked to Droitwich, and proceeded to Bewdley. There they stayed in an apartment house, where he said the girl was his sister, who travelled about with him. The registration form he signed was signed in a false name, and with a false address. Having stayed there the night they went to New Radnor on the Saturday, and stayed there till the Monday.

SLEEPING IN FIELDS.

During the whole of a fortnight that the girl was away with him – sixteen days actually – she only slept under a roof or in a house on the one night he had mentioned at Bewdley, Mr. Allen proceeded. On the whole of the other nights they slept in fields or under such cover as they could find in fields. The girl after a time got tired, and said she wanted to go home. The prisoner obtained work at Hereford, and told her she should go home when he had money at the week-end. By that time the girl was really afraid to go home, and she decided to stay with accused. He promised to get her lodgings at Ross in Herefordshire. At any rate he did not do so, and on Saturday, Nov. 9th, they went from Hereford to Ross. The parents having communicated with the police, they were there seen at the station, and prisoner was arrested and the girl was brought home. Owing to the privation she had endured and the want of nourishment and warmth she was now ill, and had to be very carefully treated. Mr. Allen, in asking that the Bench should commit prisoner for trial, said it was only fair to the prisoner to say that the girl had preserved her purity.

THE EVIDENCE.

The prosecutor proceeded to call witnesses to bear out Mr. Allen's statement. Mr. Henry Allibone, 25, Mowbray Street, the father of the girl, said that prisoner was a teacher at the Sunday School, and

his daughter was of a religious turn of mind. The girl Gwendolen also went into the witness-box, and said that at first she and prisoner used to meet once a week, then twice weekly, and later practically every day.

Mr. Allen produced a letter, which the girl said the young man sent her, and read the following phrases from it: "My dear, darling sweetheart," "Your ever dear and precious love," "In His Name." The girl said that they talked much about religion. Prisoner left Warwick Lane Chapel and joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at the Swanswell Meeting House. Referring to the two nights, from October 10 to 12 which she spent in Spencer Park, she said she was afraid to go hame {sic}, and Clee tried to persuade her to go home, suggesting that he should take her, and explain matters to her father, but she said "No." With regard to thei rdeparture {sic} from Coventry, prisoner told her he was going away, and did not want to leave her, and if she thought it best to go with him she could do so. At the apartment house at Bewdley they occupied separate rooms.

Detective-sergeant Jones spoke to receiving prisoner from the Ross police. When the warrant was read to him he said, "They think I have done something wrong to her, but, thank God, she is a pure girl."

Accused did not wish to make any statement, and was committed to take his trial at the next Assizes. He did not apply for bail, Mr. Allen mentioning that he was an absentee under the Military Service Act, and if released was liable to arrest by the military police.

WARWICK ASSIZES.

{...}

COVENTRY ABDUCTION CASE.

The Assizes closed on Wednesday, the only case for trial on that day being that of Sidney Harold Clee (21), clerk, who was charged with having at Coventry, on or about the 24th October last, taken an unmarried girl named Gwendoline Una Allibone, aged 13, out of the possession of her father, Henry Allibone.

Opening the case for the prosecution, Dr. Sadler stated that the girl attended the Warwick Lane Sunday School, Coventry, where prisoner was a teacher for three years. Two years ago the father of the girl discovered that she was meeting prisoner out of school on various occasions and at various places, and he got a promise from prisoner that the acquaintance should cease. Apparently it was not broken. Prisoner found he had to leave the school, and he went to another school, the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Counsel proceeded to describe how the girl and the prisoner went away in October, and how they travelled to different places, sleeping out at nights. Ultimately the man was arrested at Ross.

Henry Allibone, 25, Mowbray Street, Coventry, the father, spoke as to prisoner promising to break off his acquaintance with the girl, also as to her absence from home on the 10th and 12th October, and leaving Coventry on October 24th. She went away entirely without witness's consent.

The girl went into the witness box, and in reply to Dr. Sadler told the story of her acquaintance with the prisoner. On the 10th October, she said, she stayed out all night with the prisoner. She had been out with him that evening, and it was so late she did not like to go home, and stayed in Spencer Park. On the morning of the 10th prisoner gave her a letter.

This was read, and was full of references to love and Jesus.

Witness saw him again on the 21st October, when he said he was called up for the Army for November 1st, but he thought he would go away to avoid it, and she could go with him if she liked. He said he was going on the Thursday, the 24th, and she went to Coventry station, intending to go with him; she had a little handbag with a few sundries. Witness said she got her own ticket, and they went on the train to Birmingham. She had 6s. or 7s. They took another train and went on to Bromsgrove, prisoner taking the ticket. They arrived at night, and both slept out in a field. They walked from Bromsgrove to Bewdley on the 25th and stayed for the night at Miss Priestley's, occupying separate rooms. They stayed until Saturday morning, and went to New Radnor, where they stayed that day, and at night and on Monday morning they slept in the fields. They went to Hereford, where they stayed a week, sleeping out till Saturday, the 9th November. Then they went to Ross by train. Prisoner got work in Hereford. When they got out of the train at Ross prisoner was arrested.

In reply to prisoner, witness said she did not remember prisoner telling her of the interview with her father. He mentioned about the Army a good many times.

Miss Julia Priestley, Bridge View, Bewdley, said on the 25th July the prisoner and the girl stayed at her mother's house, prisoner signing a form as "Sidney Clis."

Detective-Sergeant Jones, of Coventry, gave evidence of the arrest at Ross, and said in answer to the charge prisoner said, "They think I have done something to her. Thank God, she is a pure girl." Prisoner was taken to Coventry, and witness found in his possession a letter which he said he had intended giving the girl. In this he asked the girl "to keep brave and true, and remember the promise I made to you nearly four years ago. I will never leave you, and shall always be true to you, even if it is ten years before I see you again, and if I never see you again, I shall be the same."

This concluded the case for the prosecution.

The girl was recalled at the request of prisoner, and said she was willing to go with him.

Prisoner did not go into the box, but read a written statement in which he said he was not guilty of the charge of abduction. On Monday, October 21, 1918, he met the girl, and they had some little conversation, and during that conversation the girl mentioned her home and how very glad she would be to go away. They talked over what he was going to do, he said, as at that time he was out of work. He mentioned he was going away to obtain work, if possible, on a farm. He said when he was going, and the girl said she wished she was coming with him. His reply was, "If you wish to come with me you can, but remember I do not ask you to, nor do I wish to use any influence whatever." On Thursday, the 24th October, he went to Coventry Station, where he met the girl, who was full of the intention to go with him. Whilst waiting for the train he said, "Now do not come with me if you don't want; think of what you are doing, as I shall have to rough it, I expect." The girl wanted to go with him. They travelled as stated by the girl. He meant to obtain work and get lodgings for the girl, but found it impossible to get rooms for her. Several times he asked her to let him send her home, but she said she did not wish to go. Prisoner also stated he had been in prison

for four months waiting trial. He said they occupied separate bedrooms, and he never interfered with the girl.

The Judge, summing up, put the points of law at issue, and pointed out that this man who was full of talk about religion, and the love of Jesus Christ, and love of God, broke his solemn promise to the girl's father to give up acquaintance. He summed up the evidence of sleeping in the parks, and the man leaving the girl there at one o'clock in the morning. Also, he quoted a passage from the first of the letters mentioned, in which prisoner said: "I am always longing to take you right into my arms and take you with me, when you are so near and loving to me at night, and Jesus comes so near, then I have the greatest battle to let you go. You don't know, dearie, what I am going through sometimes." His lordship said he understood this man had got exemption as a conscientious objector, and it seemed to him that title generally meant a person without a conscience.

The jury, without retiring, returned a verdict of "Guilty."

His lordship said this case was nearly as bad as a case could be imagined under that Section of the Statute. He had no doubt it was by prisoner's profession of religious views that he in the first instance acquired influence over this child when she was 13 years of age, and he abused his position as a Sunday School teacher to acquire influence over her. To expect himself or the jury to believe the girl was now a pure girl showed either prisoner's contempt for their common sense, or an inability to understand the ways of the world. No doubt he took the child away to gratify his wicked passion, and the greatest aggravation of the case was that he did it under the cloak of religion. He took into consideration that prisoner had been in prison for four months. The limit of punishment he was

authorised to impose under Statute was two years' hard labour. He sentenced prisoner to 18 months with hard labour.

Turning to the jury, his lordship said: That, gentlemen, is a specimen of the conscientious objector.

Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 6 Mar 1920, p. 7

RELIGION CAUSES STRIKE.

[Plymouth Brethren](#) and Lock-Out in Ireland.

A cessation of work from an unusual cause occurred at a Milford (co. Armagh) linen factory. A number of [Plymouth Brethren](#), working in the factory, refused to join the trade union, and thereupon the other employees refused to work with them. The firm retaliated by locking out the trade unionists.

Strong efforts were made by the union organisers to induce the recalcitrants to pay the subscription to the union, but they refused to surrender their religious principles. Finding that the firm, in view of the shortage of raw material, were quite prepared to continue indefinitely with a short staff, the trade unionists, who were only receiving a few shillings a week strike pay, went back to work this week without reservation.

Daily Herald, London, 2 Aug 1920, p. 2

BAPTISM IN THE SEA

Sabbath Immersion Off the North-East Coast

From Our Own Correspondent

BLYTH, Sunday. – This morning an interesting religious ceremony took place at Blyth, when four brethren and one sister of [Plymouth Brethren](#) persuasion were baptised by total immersion in the sea in Blyth Bay.

This rite is based on passages in the Bible as follows: –

Colossians, chap. 2, v. 12: “Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.”

Romans, chap. 7, v. 4. – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

Daily Herald, London, 31 Dec 1920, p. 6

TEACHER OBJECTOR

Plymouth Brother Declines to Join Trade Union

From Our Own Correspondent

ERITH, Thursday. – The Erith U.D.C. voted last night in favour of the recommendation of the Education Committee to dismiss the teacher who had a conscientious objection to joining a trade union.

The chairman said he had spent a whole afternoon in looking up records in the British Museum, and he was convinced that, as a member of the **Plymouth Brethren**, the man's objection was a genuine one.

Councillor Higgins said he supported the Committee's recommendation "on principle." The Standing Order of the Council should be enforced. Trade unions were the only weapons which would crack the heads of serpents which were sucking the workers' blood.

The Council also decided to give the man a first-class testimonial, he having served the Council admirably for 12 years.

Wine and Wit.

At the gathering of Yorkshire wine merchants in Leeds several of the speakers proved themselves to be connoisseurs of good stories as well as of good vintages. Mr. Frederick Perham, of Leeds, told of a London wine merchant, with whom he was associated in his youth, who was also a [Plymouth Brother](#), and who, after disposing of a satisfactory number of pipes of wine, would take from his pocket a Bible and expound the sacred book to his customers with all the gravity of his sect. {...}

Birmingham Gazette, 26 Oct 1921, p. 2

GUNMAKER'S £95,977.

PART OF INCOME WILLED TO CHARITIES.

Mr. William Wellington Greener, of the Cedars, Erdington, retired gunmaker, and author of several works on firearms and shooting, left £95,977.

During the life of any of his children he directed that one-twentieth of the income of his residuary estate should be divided between Muller's Orphanage, Bristol, the managers of the Echoes of Service, Bath, the Birmingham General Hospital, the Birmingham Eye Hospital, and the Erdington Gospel Hall (or, if this be discontinued, such hall carrying on similar Sunday school work in the [Plymouth Brethren](#) denomination){.}

The Writing in the Sky

A new terror was added to the twentieth century yesterday when a daily newspaper employed an airman to write its name in the sky with a trail of smoke. It was a very effective, if a very ephemeral advertisement. If the fashion grows, it may become impossible to raise one's eyes to heaven without being exhorted to use So-and-So's soap, or to consume So-and-So's sauce. And I, for one, shall take to travelling on the Tube.

A Wells Prophecy

Which reminds me of a remark once made by H. G. Wells, when walking with a party of friends in the country one night and discussing religion. "What should we think," he said, "if suddenly there were to appear in the sky, written in letters of gold, the legend: 'The [Plymouth Brethren](#) Are Right'" It seemed a fantastic notion then. But the day may come – unless Parliament gets busy.

PUBLIC BAPTISM IN A SWIMMING BATH.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND THE OLD FOLKS.

The Great Tent, Lister-drive, Green-lane, where for six weeks past a campaign has been running under the auspices of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), assisted by all denominations, is extending an invitation to the old folks of Liverpool. A free tea is to be provided, and motors are to call for those unable to walk.

Mr. Elliott, evangelist, holds meetings, preaching the old gospel, every night in the tent, which holds 2,000 persons, and hymns are sung.

It is understood that the converts of the tent are to be baptised in public at the Lister-drive Baths on the last Saturday of this month, subject to the permission of the Baths Committee, which is being sought.

It is expected that the converts, now more than a hundred, will number about two hundred.

Gadflights

PUTTING “WEAKER VESSELS” RIGHT
WHEN BRETHREN WERE IN ONE MIND
A HALL AND A HOMILY

By “GADFLY”

Punch, Brethren, punch with care
The sinful solar plexus of the revolutionaire.
– As Mark might have put it.

Way down in South Wales (in Abertillery, I understand) there is a small hall, leased by that happy band of pilgrims, the Plymouth Brethren. Also there is a Women’s Labour Party, there being no law agin it.

Now this particular platoon of the monstrous regiment was desirous of holding some indoor meetings. To that end they made application to the Plymouth Brethren (or the “Brethren,” as they are content to be known) for the hire of the said hall. Did they get it? They did not, Henry.

“The merely spiritual brotherhood, for which we are indebted to Christianity,” as Heine put it, seems to have operated at full revs. “The time has come,” write the religious brethren, in reply to the

political sistren, “to answer your application.” Judged by ordinary standards, the time had come some time before and the answer was well overdue; but some horses are notoriously slow in getting off.

“I may say,” remarks our pious Abertilleryman, “that the Bretheren (sic) in Conference decided in one mind that according to the word of God, which is Truth, that no good thing would come by approving your application.” Not even a case of two minds with but a single thought, apparently.

Says the scribe, “I have to inform you that they cannot re-let” (“they” being the Bretheren), “as your work is in opposition to the mind and will of God.” Not having any stable information on this point, I am not prepared to dispute it; but it must have come as news to the Labour women of Abertillery and environs.

The writer of this interesting epistle seems to have realised that some sort of explanation was called for. He gives it. “The Reason,” says he, “is this: In the beginning of the generation” (Which generation, papa? Oh, eat yer dam bun!) “in the beginning of the generation Man was deceived by Woman.” Obviously any old generation.

“This very thing,” continues this worthy brother, “brought sin into the World.” Which is saying a Plymouthful. After a passing reference to “the likes of you” he goes on to tell the local women supporters of the Labour Party that “your work ends in Death.” Which is scarcely grateful and comforting, but I suppose he knows what he is writing about.

“Your Motto,” he goes on, on the principle that whom the [Plymouth Brother](#) loveth he chasteneth, presumably, “is that the Weaker vessels shall Rule. Whereas God delights in the Woman of a meek and quiet spirit and His opinion is that she is of great price.”

A nasty one, that, and well calculated to put those proud and unquiet spirits in their place as weaker vessels, is it not? At least, it is to be hoped so, though when these deceivers of Man get really going, it is doubtful whether the whole of the pious Brotherhood is equal to pulling 'em up on a short rein.

Fortunately they seem to think no small beer of themselves, do the enlightened disciples of the Reverend Mr. Darby. “We are the children of God,” says the writer of this particular epistle to the Proletarians. That ought to give these misguided females something to think about. On the other hand, Henry, you know what women are. And Labour women are a darn sight worse, if it comes to that. It is a depressing thought that, despite this choking-off by one of the Elect, these weaker vessels will go on “bringing sin into the World” and common sense into South Wales.

FUNERAL SCENE.

Protestant Rector and [Plymouth Brethren](#).

DISPUTE IN CHURCH.

Remains Taken Away and Interred Elsewhere.

A strange story is associated with the refusal of the Rev. R. Warrington, Protestant Episcopal Rector of Aghavea, Brookeborough, Co. Fermanagh, to allow [Plymouth Brethren](#) to conduct a funeral service over the remains of one of his parishioners, Mrs. McCoy.

Mr. Jas. McCoy, a farmer, of Drumadagarve, Aghavea, the husband of the dead woman, is a member of the Church of Ireland, as was his wife, who was visited during her illness by Mr. Warrington.

On Tuesday, the day following Mrs. McCoy's death, some of her friends called at the church and procured a new plot of ground at the rate chargeable to parishioners and having made arrangements for the funeral for the next day, handed a letter to the sexton, which they asked him to deliver to the Rector.

The note, which was written in the name of Mr. James McCoy, stated: "As I have a friend that would like to conduct the service at my wife's funeral, I shall not have to trouble you. Thanking you for your kindness."

THE HUSBAND'S DESIRE.

Mr. Warrington subsequently learned that the husband denied any knowledge of the letter, and that his wish was that he, Mr. Warrington, should conduct the service.

A few hours before the funeral, says the "Belfast Telegraph," a couple of [Plymouth Brethren](#) preachers called at the rectory and informed Mr. Warrington that they were going to conduct the burial service.

The rector pointed out the regulations governing burials and refused his consent to their form of service being used.

They, however, declared they would hold their service and officiate at the graveside under any condition, and then went off.

On the arrival of the funeral party at the church they were met by Mr. Warrington in his robes, and with Prayer Book in hand, ready to proceed with the service for the dead, when Mr. J. W. M'Coy, a son of the dead woman and a well-known merchant, cattle dealer and motor owner, carrying on business at Newtownbutler, with whom were a couple of [Plymouth Brethren](#) preachers, refused to allow Mr. Warrington to go on, the [Brethren](#) insisting on their right to officiate.

TWO POLICEMEN.

Mr. Warrington, who was accompanied by a churchwarden, with two police standing by, emphatically declined to give way to the [Brethren](#), or to admit their right to officiate.

Notwithstanding the appeal of Mr. McCoy, senr., and his son James, that the rector be allowed to conduct the service the other son and the [Plymouth Brethren](#) remained obdurate, and the remains were taken away again from the church as they had been brought, without even the graveyard gates being unlocked.

The interment afterwards took place in the public cemetery at Coolerannel, near Maguiresbridge.

Rev. R. Warrington told the “Belfast Telegraph’s” Brookeborough correspondent on Friday that when he got the note signed in the husband’s name he was somewhat surprised, but thought Mr. M’Coy was engaging another minister to discharge the duties.

He wrote to the husband sympathising with him in his bereavement, and pointing out the regulations governing burials in the graveyard, saying a clergyman of any other Church would not, in the ordinary course, require his (Mr. Warrington’s) consent before he could be allowed to officiate.

MUST BE ORDAINED.

Later in the day Mr. Warrington learned that the husband knew nothing of the letter and was desirous that he should officiate at the service. Next morning, the day of the funeral, a couple of [Plymouth Brethren](#) motored to the Rectory, and they informed him they were going to officiate at the burial service.

Mr. Warrington pointed out to them that the graveyard, being vested in the Representative Church Body, only an ordained clergyman could be allowed to officiate, and that he had authority to refuse his consent to their conducting a service in the churchyard.

The Brethren (he says) declared they would officiate at the service anyhow, and Mr. Warrington suggested to them just to try it if they liked.

The Brethren then left, and Mr. Warrington informed the two churchwardens, Dr. Todd and Mr. John Bloomfield, jun., of what had occurred. Mr. Bloomfield notified the police at Brookeborough, two of whom were present at the church on the arrival of the funeral party. The police were instructed to arrest on a charge of brawling on church property any person other than himself who attempted to hold a service.

The funeral party arrived and the matter ended as stated above.

{The 1924 volume of the *Belfast Telegraph* is not available in the British Newspaper Archive.}

“THE DEVIL’S MONEY”

REV. HUGH WALLACE AND THE BRETHREN.

The Rev. Hugh C. Wallace is giving addresses from time to time on the characteristics of other denominations.

On Sunday evening his subject was “The Brethren,” usually known as the Plymouth Brethren. There was a large attendance.

The preacher is sympathetic towards those denominations of which he speaks, bringing out more the points for which they stand than criticism of them. The Brethren, however, were not spared on Sunday evening.

It was made clear that it was as incorrect to speak of the Brethren as Plymouth Brethren as it was to speak of the Society of Friends as Quakers.

The Brethren came into existence in Dublin in 1825, and five years later became located at Plymouth. The Brethren claimed to be the exponents of New Testament Christianity. Most denominations, said Mr. Wallace, claimed that too.

The Brethren always quoted the devil; if one did not agree with them it was because the devil had got hold of such a person. The Brethren did not claim to be a denomination at all; they claimed to be the Lord’s people.

NARROW.

The Brethren appealed to the dogmatic man, ex-clergymen, ex-officers, half-pay officers – it was the idea of authority – but the Brethren got few recruits from Nonconformists. The Brethren said they belonged to no denomination; they were simply the Lord's people.

Mr. Wallace was very severe on the Brethren for their narrowness towards others not of their fold, and who they regarded as outside the fold.

He described in detail morning and evening worship by the Brethren. The Brethren took no collection from those present at their services for the outside world. If they would ask the Brethren why this was, they would be told quite candidly that the Brethren would not take the Devil's money to carry on God's work.

The Brethren claimed to be out of the world, and took no part at all in its affairs. They took no part in elections. They were to {sic} spiritually-minded to take part in the mundane work of temperance or purity.

Strange People I Have Met

THE BANK FORGERS

By James Cameron.

ONE of the greatest of all the Scotch bank forgeries is that known as the Greatrex-Grimshaw case, committed on the Union Bank just a dozen years before the collapse of the Glasgow City Bank. The headquarters of the Union Bank are in Glasgow. I knew the two men intimately who tracked to New York and captured Greatrex. They were the late Chief Constable M'Call, of Glasgow, and Mr Andrew Neilson, an official of the Bank. It was Mr Neilson who told me the story, and the part which he played as detective with Chief Constable M'Call in effecting the arrest of Greatrex in November, 1866. {...}

Before giving Mr Neilson's story of the arrest of Greatrex in America and his subsequent trial, I shall briefly outline the salient facts of the case. To begin with, John Henry Greatrex in 1866 carried on a photographer's business in Hope Street. {...} Mrs Greatrex's brother was a Mr Whitefield, who in his time was the life and soul of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) movement in Scotland. {...}

"I have seldom," said Mr Neilson, "heard a more accomplished elocutionist than Greatrex, and few men could rivet the attention of an audience as he could. He was a great preacher, too, and many a time on a Sunday evening I have heard him address a large crowd from the steps leading to his photographic establishment in Hope Street. Like his brother-in-law, Mr Whitefield, Greatrex was a

staunch believer in the religious tenets of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). It may," said Mr Neilson, breaking away from his description of Greatrex, "be out of place to say so, but I have often {sic} thought that the doctrine of this sect has a tendency to soothing the conscience of men of the type represented by this clever man. The essence of [Plymouth Brethrenism](#) is that all a man has to do is to believe, and salvation inevitably follows. Such a Gospel to the criminal is full of hope, because no matter how deeply he may be steeped in vice, all that he has got to do is to believe." At anyrate, Mr Neilson went on, Greatrex preached [Plymouthism](#) with an eloquence which has never been equalled by any of its exponents since these days. Greatrex had a long flowing black beard, and his personal magnetism was simply marvellous.

{...}

{See also the articles of 12 Oct 1866 to 27 Dec 1866 in the present selection.}

The Illustrated Police News, London, 25 Mar 1926, p. 3

WOMAN'S RELIGION AND SUICIDE.

That she was a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and that he had had to ask members of the sect not to call at the house because the visits had a depressing effect on her, was stated by Mr. Harry William Hook, a Civil Servant, at the Southgate inquest on his wife, Mrs. Eva Hook, forty-eight, of Oakfield-road, Southgate, whom he found drowned in her bath with her arms and legs entangled in ropes.

The jury returned a verdict of "Suicide while of unsound mind."

MUSIC OF THE MOMENT.

{...}

By **LEIGH HENRY**.

{...}

Frank Banality.

It seems necessary for post-romantic music, in its revolt against nineteenth-century sentimentality, to find some symbols to placate its conscience in revolt. Literature did this with Ibsen, whom George Samson wittily referred to recently as the **Plymouth Brother** of European modernity trailing his dreary whiskers over the Continent. Less didactic and dry, with no such tangible axe to grind as Ibsen, Franck is threatened with becoming a similar symbol in music. {...}

{The individuals referred to are Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906), Norwegian dramatist; Sir George Alexander (1858–1918), English stage actor and theatre manager, born George Alexander Gibb Samson; and César Franck (1822–1890), Belgian-French composer.}

DISMISSED FROM CHURCH AS A RAILER.

[Plymouth Brethren](#) Elders' Defence.

ALLEGED LIBEL.

Bibles outnumbered law books in Mr. Justice McCardie's Court at Birmingham Assizes yesterday. Judge, counsel and solicitors were frequently engaged in reading some particular text, and once, after making an unsuccessful effort to get the parties to come to an agreement, the Judge said that Pope's line: "To err is human, to forgive Divine," was equal in spirit to anything in the Testament. The action was one for alleged libel among members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) sect, the plaintiff, George Arthur Edmund Parkes, of 112, Brookhill-road, Washwood Heath, being the workman who at a recent works meeting in Birmingham challenged the Bishop of Birmingham's views on evolution. The defendants were H. S. Wood, of Hermon, Kineton Green-road, Olton; F. W. Finnie, of Bon Accord, Kineton Green-road, Olton; E. Wilday, 60, Stockfield-road, South Yardley; F. Aldridge, 69, Preston-road, South Yardley; J. W. Sleigh, 49, Floyer-road, Small Heath; F. Biles, 118, St. Benedict's-road, Small Heath, and W. A. Davies, 93, Wood-lane, Harborne.

The alleged libel complained of was contained in the following letter addressed "To the Christians meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus." It stated: "It is with the deepest sorrow that we have to inform you that our brother, Mr. George Parkes, formerly in fellowship at South Yardley, and latterly at Harborne, has had to be dealt with in accordance with the instructions given to the Church in

I. Cor., v., 9–13, and put away from the fellowship of the Lord’s people.” That was signed by the defendants “on behalf of the Christians meeting” at Harborne and Yardley.

Plaintiff’s Contention.

The plaintiff contended that the defendants meant, and were understood to mean, that he was a man of immoral character, who led an evil life, who was unfit to associate with Christian people, and was unfit to be a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Church.

The defence was a denial that the letter could bear any defamatory meaning, and alternatively it was pleaded that the occasion was a privileged one. It was also pleaded that the passage in Scripture referred to was mentioned only as indicating the method by which an offending Church member should be dealt with, and that the elders, judging the plaintiff to be a railer, were under a moral duty to put him away.

When the plaintiff giving evidence, said there had not been anything in his life to justify a suggestion of immorality, Mr. Campion, the counsel for the defendants, said they had never made any imputations of that nature.

Answering the judge the plaintiff said that one of his reasons for bringing the action was to stop the “victimisation” which was going on throughout the whole of the 25 assemblies of [Plymouth Brethren](#) in Birmingham. He complained that he had been prevented from fulfilling a preaching engagement at two minutes’ notice.

After Mr. Campion had reiterated that the defendants never imputed immorality to the plaintiff the judge said theirs was a letter which might very easily be misunderstood.

What the Elders Meant

Mr. Campion added that the elders of the church merely meant to describe the plaintiff as a “railer” and they also considered that he had committed sin in bringing the case before a worldly court.

The Judge: Then you are sinning with defending it. Theologically you ought to withdraw from the case (laughter).

Mr. Campion: I fear so, my lord.

Plaintiff contended he had a perfect right to bring the action because the English courts were above the corruption tainting the courts referred to in the Scriptures.

After reading one passage of Scripture the judge remarked, “The word unjust must refer to me. Perhaps you had better take this case before my brother, Mr. Justice Wright.”

Parkes, in cross-examination, said he believed in the example of the Apostle Paul. I believe in a man standing his ground if he is right.

Mr. Campion: Was it right for you, a young man of 25, to call the ruling elders of your church a bunch of cowards.

The plaintiff: Yes, as they would not give me a fair trial.

When asked if railing was not a great sin among the [Plymouth Brethren](#) the plaintiff said he had never disturbed the harmony of the communion.

The hearing was adjourned till to-day.

CHURCH ELDERS' BAN.

Birmingham Dispute Settled.

JURY APPLAUD JUDGE.

When Mr. Justice McCardie, at the withdrawal of the action for alleged libel between members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) denomination, reminded them in the Birmingham Assize Court yesterday that forgiveness lies at the heart of Christianity and that kindness is still the great secret of life, his remarks were greeted by "Hear hears" from the jury. The action was brought by George Arthur Edmund Parkes, of 112, Brookhill-road, Washwood Heath, who had been excommunicated by the elders of the church. It arose out of a circular addressed by the defendants quoting a scriptural text which Parkes contended meant an imputation upon his moral character.

The defence was a denial that the passage could bear any defamatory meaning, and it was also pleaded that the text was only mentioned as indicating the method by which an offending church member should be dealt with.

The defendants were H.S. Wood, of Hermon, Kinton Green-road, Olton; F.W. Finnie, of Bon Accord, Kinton Green-road, Olton; E. Wilday, 60, Stockfield-road, South Yardley; F. Aldridge, 69, Preston-road, South Yardley; J. W. Sleight, 49, Floyer-road, Small Heath; F. Biles, 118, St. Benedict's-road, Small Heath; and W.A. Davies, 93, Wood-lane, Harborne.

When the Judge took his seat yesterday Mr. Campion K.C., who led for the defence, intimated that the parties had arrived at what he hoped would be considered a satisfactory settlement.

Ambiguous Letter.

It was quite clear, he added, after the judge's comments of the day before that the form of excommunication used by the defendants in such wide terms left it open for people, who might not know all the facts, to say that there had been an accusation of a more serious offence of immorality.

Nothing was further, said counsel, from the minds of the elders than to suggest the slightest immorality against Parkes.

As Christian leaders they were prepared to say they made an error in publishing a statement which was open to that construction, and to express their sincere regret.

On behalf of the plaintiff, Mr. Williams said that Parkes was satisfied that his character had been cleared.

BARBER'S BIBLE SCRUPLES. – For conscientious reasons, based on the teaching of the Bible, J. Lipton, a barber in Campbeltown, Argyllshire, has decided to refrain from all ladies' hairdressing in future. His decision was announced in the following notice: – "J. Lipton begs to inform his friends and patrons that, for conscientious reasons based on the teaching of Holy Scripture, he has decided to discontinue all ladies' hairdressing forthwith. This announcement is made to save, as far as possible, those concerned any inconvenience that may be caused thereby." Lipton, it is stated, is a naturalised Russian Jew, and a member of the religious community known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). He went from England to Campbeltown several years ago, and for a time assisted a local adherent of the sect in a motor business. When a barber's business came into the market he took it.

Penrith Observer, 20 Dec 1927, p. 6

NO CHRISTMAS.

Christmas is not celebrated by all sects of the Christian Church in this country. The [Plymouth Brethren](#), for example, claim that there is no Biblical ordinance or early Christian tradition of the feast, and consequently they see no reason to commemorate it in their places of worship.

PENCILLINGS OF THE WEEK.

By The Man on the Wing.

{...}

A party of Linlithgow people visited Bo'ness on Tuesday evening to hear Mr John Buchan, M.P., the member for the Scottish Universities, give an address in the Town Hall.

{...}

Mr John Buchan's meeting at Bo'ness and his delightful address has been the sole topic in Unionist circles.

Out of the ordinary run, the address was noteworthy for closely reasoned argument, insight into political and economic problems, and the upholding in a dignified manner of the British Constitution and what it stands for. In short, as Mr Kidd pointed out, the audience were transported from the ordinary industrial realm to a higher plane of British politics. And it was a great treat.

Mr Buchan, it was noticed, suffered from a slight hoarseness, contracted as a result of so much platform work during a strenuous Scottish tour, in the course of which the famous Scot has dealt with a variety of distinct subjects – educational, imperial, and political.

Bo'ness Unionists – or rather Mr Kidd – made a wise choice when they induced the Scottish University member to speak to them on current politics.

Mr Buchan had only a few notes for reference – heads of subjects. For the rest, he gathered up his points and enlarged on them extempore, and spoke for fully an hour and a quarter in cultured tones. He broke into the Doric to tell a Scots story or two to illustrate his point, and one of the most amusing gave {sic} concerned the visit of a charabanc party of [Plymouth Brethren](#) to Dryburgh Abbey from Hawick. Before leaving the party signed the visitors' book, and added as a footnote, "Miserable sinners saved by the mercy of God."

When the book was being scanned, the Abbey Trustees saw that some one had been tampering with it, and they sent for the custodier, Auld Watty Laidlaw, who was asked for an explanation. "Och," said Watty, "some [Pleemouth Brethren](#) came in a charabang, and not content wi' writing their names, wrote – 'Miserable sinners saved by the grace o' God.' I jeest scraped oot a' that and put in 'Hawick.'" We Unionists, said Mr Buchan, driving home his point, must always be scraping out nonsense.

{...}

CHRISTMAS.

{...} People require some escape from the realm of the humdrum, and want largeness, liberty, and joy. They want an opportunity to shout and dance and sing without hurting anyone else. They want a season when everyone can let off steam. The old recipe of rivetting down the safety valve has been tried and found wanting. So Christmas comes as a time which prevents humanity from bursting its boiler, which gives it a decent outlet untainted by sin or disgrace. As a notable Belfast essayist says: "To-day even a [Plymouth Brother](#) may wreath his brow with mistletoe, and a Presbyterian may wish you a merry Christmas without the sky or the Shorter Catechism falling." {...}

The Church And The Nation

A CONFLICT OF LAWS ...

BY THE REV. S. M. BERRY, D.D.

{...}

It seems obvious that the Church as a spiritual society ought to have the right to make its own rules for the guidance of its own ministers and members, and outsiders have no ground of complaint if those rules do not happen to accord with their own opinions.

They may criticise them as being narrow, but no injustice is done, because they need not belong to the society whose laws they dislike.

This principle is clear enough in the case of smaller sections of the Church. For example, I may think [Plymouth Brethren](#) rather narrow in excluding from their Communion service any but their own members, but I have no right to complain of the exclusion as unfair. In so far as it is the rule of a voluntary society I have nothing to protest against.

I am left with the splendid liberty of not belonging to it. I merely note that there are Christians who take that view of things, and I can answer their exclusiveness by expressing my own unwillingness to be included.

{...}

GOSPEL HALL LOCKED.

PLACES OF WORSHIP ACT INVOKED.

UNUSUAL CASE AT WINDSOR.

An unusual case came before the Windsor magistrates yesterday, when William Hugh Dempster, was summoned for that on 17 February he preached at a meeting of persons for religious worship at the Gospel Hall of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at Windsor “with the door locked, bolted or barred, or otherwise fastened so as to prevent John Henry Harris, from entering during the time of the meeting.”

The proceedings were taken under section 11 of the Places of Worship Act, 1812.

Before the case opened the Mayor of Windsor (Lt.-Col. Stephen Wright) who presided, asked the parties to consider the matter.

“A case of this kind,” he said, “if dealt with in a court of law is of no advantage to any religious body, and of no interest to the public”.

Unable to Agree.

He asked whether there was not a possibility of coming to an amicable settlement in which the bench were quite ready to help them.

Dr. G. H. Cook (defending) and Mr. S. G. Champion (for complainant) conferred together with the parties in another room for nearly an hour, and on their return Mr. Champion said it was regretted that they were unable to find any basis whereby the summons could be withdrawn.

When questioned by the Justices' clerk, Mr. Champion said he was not in a position to prove to the court that the defendant was actually teaching or preaching at the Gospel Hall when the door was locked. Mr. Dempster was an elder of the Gospel Hall.

Mr. Champion agreed that the building had windows, and he said there was no suggestion in this case that the meeting was not being properly conducted.

Dismissed – with Costs.

The clerk suggested that it would have been possible to look through the windows, and find out who was preaching. The difficulty complainant was in was that he had to prove his case, and the court could not assume evidence.

Mr. Champion said if complainant had climbed up to the window he would have infringed another section, but the clerk answered that he would have been able to give evidence in this case.

The magistrates dismissed the summons on payment of four shillings costs and Mr. Dempster did not press for his costs.

LOCKED OUT OF GOSPEL HALL.

EXCOMMUNICATED MAN'S SUMMONS FAILS.

"BRETHREN" AT VARIANCE.

A Windsor police-constable, William H. Dempster, was summoned yesterday by John H. Harris, of Fifield, near Maidenhead, for violent behaviour in a place of religious worship known as the Gospel Hall, Windsor.

Mr. Harris said he was a member of the sect known as the **Plymouth Brethren**. On Sunday morning, 17 March, he went to the hall and found the door locked. He went to the police station, and was accompanied back to the hall by Detective-sergt. Sharpe. He then tried the main door and it yielded.

"Excommunicated."

He stepped inside and defendant jumped up, swung the door, and slammed it against him. Mr. Harris added that he was pushed with great violence. He did nothing that morning to provoke Mr. Dempster, and did nothing that he was aware of that was ill-becoming to a worshipper.

Cross-examined he did not agree that he had been excommunicated, and he did not say he had come to assert his right to enter and break bread.

Letters written by complainant in which he called Mr. Dempster “Chief Bully,” “Chucker-out” and “Turnkey,” were then produced by the solicitor for the defence.

Detective-sergt. Sharpe said that he saw Mr. Harris pushed out of the hall backwards on the pathway and the door was locked almost immediately.

Case Dismissed.

Dempster opened the door, and said he did not intend to allow Mr. Harris to enter as he could not give an undertaking to remain at the back of the church, and not to break bread.

For the defence, it was submitted that Dempster was merely acting as doorkeeper, and was not unlawfully guilty of violent behaviour. Mr. Dempster was one of the oldest of the assembly, who contended that Harris had been excommunicated. They had strained every nerve to avoid bringing a case of this kind into court.

The case was dismissed.

The Daily Echo [BNA Northampton Chronicle and Echo], Northampton,
9 Nov 1929, p. 2, Gossip of the Day

A DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT.

In his book, "These Fifty Years," published yesterday, the late General Bramwell Booth tells the following amusing story of the announcement of the death of Samuel Morley, an early benefactor of the {Salvation} Army: –

The leader of a certain meeting of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) said in his opening prayer: "Lord, Thou wilt have seen in the evening papers that thy dear servant Samuel Morley has been taken from us. ..."

CENTENARY OF THE “BRETHREN”

A SECT FOUNDED IN PLYMOUTH

The religious community known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) will this year observe their centenary.

It is not, however, intended to mark the centenary in any special manner in the city itself.

The [Brethren](#) received their distinctive name in 1830, when Rev. J. N. Darby induced many Plymouth people to associate themselves with him in the promulgation of his own religious tenets.

Small Christian communities had existed before 1830 in Ireland and elsewhere, calling themselves “[Brethren](#)” and holding similar views, but the accession to the ranks of Darby so increased their numbers and influence that he is usually considered the founder of [Plymouthism](#).

Darby was a curate in Wicklow in 1825–27, when he felt constrained to leave the Anglican Communion. Going to Dublin, he became associated with several devout people, who met statedly for public worship, and called themselves “[Brethren](#).”

In 1830, at Plymouth, Darby won over many people to his way of thinking, among them James L. Harris, a Plymouth clergyman, and the well-known Biblical scholar, Samuel Prideaux Tregelles. The [Brethren](#) started a periodical, “The Christian Witness,” continued from 1849 as “The Present Testimony,” with Harris as editor and Darby as the most important contributor. During the next eight years the sect made rapid progress, forming communities in many of the principal towns in England.

ON THE CONTINENT.

Darby's opinions found their way to France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, but French Switzerland has always remained the stronghold of [Plymouthism](#) on the Continent. The revolution in the Vaud Canton, brought about by Jesuit intrigue in 1845, brought persecution to the [Brethren](#) there, and Darby's life was in great jeopardy.

He returned to England, and his reappearance was followed by divisions among the [Brethren](#) at home. These divisions began at Plymouth.

Benjamin Wills Newton, head of the Plymouth community, who had been a Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, was accused of reintroducing the spirit of clericalism. Unable to detach the congregation from the teacher, Darby began a rival assembly.

The majority of the [Brethren](#) out of Plymouth supported Darby, but a minority remained with Newton. The separation became wider in 1847 on the discovery of supposed heretical teaching by Newton.

THE SEPARATION.

In 1848 another division took place. The Bethesda congregation at Bristol, where George Muller was the most influential member, received into communion several of Newton's followers, and justified their action.

Out of this came the separation into "[Neutral Brethren](#)," led by Muller, and "[Exclusive Brethren](#)" or "[Darbyites](#)," who refused to hold communion with the followers of Newton or Muller.

Further divisions followed among the “Exclusives,” the most important coming to a crisis in 1881, when William Kelly and Darby became the recognized leaders of two sects who separated on a point of discipline.

This was followed in 1885 by the disruption of the strict [Darbyite](#) section, two communions being formed out of it upon points of doctrine.

Darby died at Bournemouth in April, 1882.

The Western Morning News, Plymouth, 2 Jul 1930, p. 6

[PLYMOUTH BRETHREN](#) CENTENARY

HOW SOCIETY'S NAME WAS EVOLVED

One of the most interesting centenaries of the year is that of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), a name given to a body of Christians which, since 1830, has extended itself not only throughout the British Dominions, but also in many European countries and the United States of America.

In its inception the movement represented a protest alike against the worldliness and formalism of the State Churches and the orthodoxies and coldness of the Nonconformist bodies. Launched at a time when the effects of the great evangelical revival were beginning to wane, it captured the imaginations of a considerable number of educated people, especially Anglo-Indian officers, settled in Plymouth, where its earliest activities were focussed, and so forced itself upon public attention.

Several names are associated with the events which marked the first tentative steps towards the establishment of [Brethrenism](#). Edward Cronin, a doctor, is credited with being one of the earliest exponents of the tenets constituting the fundamentals of the sect. As early as 1827 he was busy expounding his beliefs.

Simultaneously, John Nelson Darby, who had forsaken the law for a clerical career and had gained a great reputation for the saintliness of his life as a curate in County Wicklow, arriving at practically identical conclusions, severed his associations with the Established Church and attached himself to a number of devout people who called themselves [Brethren](#) and met regularly for worship in Dublin.

ORIGIN OF TITLE.

Still another impulse moving in the same direction came in the shape of a letter from Norris Groves, a missionary to Syria and India, to John Gifford Bellett, so fertile in suggestion of a new faith as to lead its recipient to communicate with Francis Hutchinson and John V. Parnell (afterwards Lord Congleton). As a result, a meeting was called in Hutchinson's house in Dublin, at which Cronin attended.

There, virtually under the inspiration of Groves's letter, [Plymouth Brethrenism](#), as it soon came to be known, was conceived. There was, it should be explained, originally no thought of general separation from the other Churches. That development came later as the result of principles and practices adopted{,} and the increase in power and numbers of the supporters of the movement.

It was left to Darby to carry the idea to Plymouth. In July, 1830, he had visited Oxford, where he met, amongst others, B. W. Newton and G. V. Wigram, both of whom came under his influence. Shortly afterwards he founded a Meeting at Plymouth, under Newton, a man of deep speculative mind, well qualified for leadership. Darby's remarkable eloquence won many adherents to the cause, one of his most notable converts being the well-known Biblical scholar Samuel Prideaux Tregelles.

It was from this meeting at Plymouth that the familiar title, "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," was derived.

For eight years progress was continuous and rapid. Communities were established in many of the principal towns of England, and it is a remarkable fact that during this period it was largely the better classes that were attracted. Lords and their ladies figured conspicuously in the membership, and one group of enthusiasts met frequently for six years to study prophecy at Lady Powercourt's {sic} mansion in County Wicklow.

PROPAGANDIST WORK.

A feature was made of propagandist work. Through the medium of a magazine, "The Christian Witness," edited by J. L. Harris, who had seceded from the Church, such stalwarts as Darby, Bellett, Newton, and Tregelles championed the doctrines of [Brethrenism](#) with force and vigour, while a steady stream of tracts was poured from a specially-organized tract depot.

Lay preaching was encouraged, and in addition to a campaign of open-air meetings at home evangelistic missions were inaugurated abroad.

Groves visited Bagdad and India, where many Anglo-Indians became disciples of the new faith. Darby himself toured Switzerland, France, and Germany. In Switzerland no less than 70 companies of Brethren were set up. When the revolution broke out in the Canton, Vaud, in 1845, at the instigation of the Jesuits, opinion against the Brethren was greatly inflamed and Darby's life was endangered. But he managed to escape, and there was no diminution of his zeal. In Germany he translated both the Old and the New Testaments into the vernacular, and for the benefit of his followers he wrote several pamphlets and theological works.

DIFFERENCES CREEP IN.

But differences began to creep into the community, producing heated controversies and sharp divisions. The troubles began at Plymouth, where Newton introduced what Tregelles called "a modified Presbyterianism," self-elected, and confining the services of prayer, praise, teaching, and rule to himself and those immediately identified with him. The position was further aggravated by his sermons and tracts concerning the human nature of Christ.

Darby flatly accused him of departing from the testimony of the Brethren and reintroducing the spirit of clericalism. The majority of the Brethren at Plymouth supported Darby, but a minority clung to Newton. Eventually, after the desertion of several of his former friends, Newton made a confession and withdrew his tracts, but the confession was considered inadequate, the breach became wider, and Darby and Newton separated.

“THE LETTER OF THE TEN.”

Darby had established a rival assembly at Plymouth, and the Meeting at Ebrington-street was broken up.

Out of the same dispute sprang another division among the congregation at Bethesda, Bristol, the repercussions of which were felt in every Meeting of the sect from one end of the country to the other. Muller and Craik, two of the chief leaders at Bristol, refused to allow the congregation there to judge Newton's tracts until they had adopted a paper called “The Letter of the Ten,” bearing the signatures of themselves and eight other leaders.

Apart from the fact that it definitely committed the congregation to a neutral attitude, this paper raised certain points of controversy respecting ecclesiastical matters. Darby, Wigram, Dorman, and other prominent Brethren protested vigorously, only to be met with a storm of criticism and reproof. Darby was stigmatized as a schismatic, and scant consideration was shown to his supporters. Attempts were made to adjust the differences, and seven meetings were held for this purpose {sic}, but although some of Newton's adherents withdrew from fellowship in order to relieve the Church from its dilemma, “The Letter of the Ten” imposed an insurmountable barrier to agreement.

The outcome was seen in a separation, two distinct bodies being formed. The neutral Brethren followed the leadership of Muller, while the exclusive Brethren, attaching themselves to Darby, from whom they derived the name “Darbyites,” repudiated all associated with what they persisted in regarding as a dangerous error.

LATER CRISES.

Muller, who continued to serve as co-pastor at Bethesda, Bristol, devoted the remainder of his life to evangelical and philanthropical work.

Darby, meanwhile, was called upon to face other severe crises among his own followers. The most serious came in 1881, when there was another great division on a point of discipline, one section again remaining loyal to Darby and another attaching itself to William Kelly. Four years later there was a smaller disruption respecting questions of doctrine, and after Darby's death in 1882 various groups at different times detached themselves from the main body.

The movement spread, as mentioned, to the United States, where the number of communicants soon exceeded 10,000. Nearly everywhere the evangelistic efforts of the [Brethren](#) were crowned with a large measure of success. In addition to 800 Meetings in the United Kingdom, there were, in the heyday of the movement, 100 Meetings in Canada, 100 in the United States, 200 in Germany, 150 in France, 80 in Switzerland, and 40 in Holland, not to mention others in New Zealand, Australia, and elsewhere.

Generally speaking, the tenets of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) are Calvinistic, and they hold premillenarian views. Their most marked characteristic, however, is their complete rejection of ecclesiastical organization, and of every distinctive appellation except that of Christians.

T. B. F.

“MONOCLED JACK’S” STORIES.

Converted Ex-Convict PREACHES AT A CHURCH AT HEADLEY.

Members of the congregation and visitors to the church of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at the Iron Room at Standford Hill, had the unusual experience on Sunday and Monday evening of listening to a converted ex-convict, in the person of Mr. H. A. Whiston, who gave a graphic description of his 30 years’ experience in crime, for which he served 29 years in various prisons in America and this country, and his subsequent conversion to God from a life of sin.

In the course of his addresses, the speaker said many men and women were in prison to-day because crime was in a sense hereditary, through their having been brought up in criminal surroundings. That was not so, however, in his case, because his father was a Baptist minister, while his mother and the rest of the family were God-fearing and upright. He described how his first crime was committed in America, when he was sentenced at the age of ten years to six months’ imprisonment for stealing a horse. He sometimes thought he was a man without a country, for on receiving a term of imprisonment in this country, he was also recommended for deportation. America, however, did not want him back, and, later during the time he was serving a five years’ sentence at Dartmoor, his father, mother, brother and sister all died of broken hearts as a result of his wrongdoing. He was the first man to be operated on for appendicitis in a prison, the day following a similar

operation upon King Edward, and concerning which he still retained a letter he received from Queen Alexandra in reference to the event. The speaker went on to relate how to evade arrest he had jumped from a train, travelling at 50 miles an hour, and also over a bridge into very deep water.

A Humorous Side.

Incidents were related which had a humorous side; for instance, the stealing of a cow from a farmyard, which the ex-convict disposed of to the farmer who owned it, as he was leading it towards a neighbouring market with the object of disposing of it, and the camouflaging of a motor-car, which he stole, and re-sold to the owner. He was familiarly known as "Monocled Jack," owing to the fact that he wore a monocle and was dressed in the height of fashion. At a church lantern meeting, he joined in with the collectors, who, in the darkness, could not distinguish him and, following the collection, they met at the back of the church, where the rest of the collectors emptied their contents into his collection, and he slipped quietly away with about £27. Nothing, he said, pleased him more than the excitement of dashing through the streets in a motor-car eluding the flying squad.

At best, crime was an awful thing, and through it all he found it did not pay to serve the devil. Many coups carried out by the ex-prisoner, were related, including a cat burglary haul of £3,000 worth of jewellery, and the stealing of a Rolls-Royce car, while he was also arrested on suspicion of being concerned in murder.

The Change.

It was after his release from Portsmouth Prison in 1926 that the change in his life occurred. As he was on his way to visit a "fence," or receiver of stolen goods, he decided to halt at a certain place he

had to pass, and break into a Co-operative stores after dark. To while away the time he went to a circus which was pitched in a field, and crept underneath the canvas. It eventually turned out that instead of a circus, a revival meeting was being held in the tent, at the close of which, and through the instrumentality of the evangelist, his conversion followed, proving that even in his long career of crime, "He breaks the power of cancelled sin." Many times since that day, over four years ago, he had been sorely tempted, but God had given him the victory, and had used him for His glory, and for the conversion to Him of many sinners.

Specimens of the "cat" as used in English and American prisons, a model of a triangle to which prisoners are bound when about to undergo flogging, and other prison specimens were shown.

MISSIONARY IN DIVORCE CASE.

Prayed Throughout Night for Forgiveness.

Forty-one decrees nisi were granted by Mr. Justice Rowlatt at Birmingham Assizes, yesterday.

A distressing story was told by Mrs. Caroline Herbert, of the Ridgway, Enfield, who was granted a decree nisi against her husband, a missionary of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), stationed in China, because of his misconduct with a woman named Lilian Grant at various addresses in China.

Mrs. Herbert said that while she was in China her husband left her ostensibly to go to Shanghai on business, but when he returned he admitted his misconduct with Mrs. Grant.

On his knees he prayed all night for forgiveness, which was granted, but within a few weeks he again treated her badly, and in 1925 she left him and returned to England.

She had since received letters asking her to return, but had refused.

News of the Churches

By "A Lay Brother."

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

It is a hundred years ago since the company of Christians known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) was formed. One of the chief founders was John Nelson Darby, a Londoner, who had been called to the Irish bar, but gave up law for the Church. For a time he was curate at Wicklow, but he afterwards helped to found a company of Christians calling themselves the [Brethren](#), and after Darby had settled himself in Providence Chapel, Plymouth, they were known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#). From Plymouth the movement spread over Britain, into France, and Germany, to the United States and Canada, and to other countries.

The distinctive principles of the [Brethren](#) are that all the various human forms and systems are destitute of Scriptural authority and are practically restrictive of the operations of the Spirit; that Christians (a marked distinction being made between believers and unbelievers) should meet on the first day of the week to break bread, that baptism should be by immersion and for Christians only. That there should be no class of men ordained to the ministry and specially set apart over congregations. The [Brethren](#) recognise no separate orders of clergy or laity – all are looked upon as equal in position.

There are two main divisions of the Brethren – the Open Brethren and the Close Brethren, and these keep entirely apart from each other.

In Perth there is a large number of the Open Brethren, whose usual place of meeting is the Gospel Hall in Princes Street and whose members give valuable help in many forms of religious service throughout the city.

SOME PROMINENT BRETHREN.

Aggressive evangelism is one of the main characteristics of the Brethren and they are very active in foreign mission work. Fred Stanley Arnot was sent out by them from Glasgow in 1881 as a pioneer missionary to Central Africa, and another famous missionary from Scotland was Dan Crawford, the author of "Thinking Black." In philanthropic work at home the Brethren can claim George Muller, the founder of the famous orphanage at Bristol. In his little classic, "Father and Son," Sir Edmund Gosse gives a graphic picture of the Brethren, among whom his father had been a prominent figure and into whose ranks he himself had been received by immersion at a very early age.

FINED AT HILLSBOROUGH.

OBJECTION TO VACCINATION.

Mr. George M'Elroy, R.M. (presiding) welcomed to the Bench Mr. Wm. Orr, J.P., after his recent severe illness.

{...}

A fine of 20s and 20s costs was imposed on James Smith, Aughnatrisk, for failing to have his two children, Samuel and James, aged 11 and 5 years respectively, vaccinated. Defendant said that he and his wife both belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and had a deep-rooted conscientious objection to vaccination. He believed that vaccination would have an injurious effect on the children.

The Chairman, in announcing the penalty stated, said that it had been decided by scientific men that vaccination was a great benefit; it had prevented thousands of people dying from smallpox. There was nothing in the Scripture against it.

Defendant – I am not the only vaccination defaulter.

The Chairman – We think you are wrong. All the doctors and scientific men are against you. If you promise –

Defendant – If I had intended to get them vaccinated I would have had it done before now.

{...}

NOTES AND NOTIONS.

{...}

FISHERMEN AND THE OATH.

Two Fraserburgh fishermen who gave evidence in a trawling case at Aberdeen last week declined to take the oath, stating that they were [Plymouth Brethren](#). The thought occurs to one, what kind of a world would it be if we were all [Plymouth Brethren](#)? The sect is a comparatively new one, dating from 1830, but it has spread all over Britain into France and Germany, and crossed into the United States and to the British Colonies. It commended itself to all those who disliked formalism in worship. Practically any brother may preach and pray, but those “not gifted with utterance” are quickly discouraged from officiating.

THE SIMPLE LIFE.

Well, now, what kind of a world would it be if we all were of this persuasion? A silent revolution would be the result. There would be no trained and paid ministry, and what is held to be the noblest of the professions would cease to exist. The doors of the stately cathedrals and the beautiful churches throughout the land would be closed. “The Trade” would disappear, as there would be no demand for the product of distilleries, breweries and public houses. Most kinds of games and entertainments would die a natural death. The cinema! Oh, no! The army, navy and other forces of

the Crown would be disbanded, to comply with the tenets of this Peace at any price organisation. Town Councils and even Government itself would become a thing of the past as the [Plymouth Brethren](#) resolutely refuse to exercise the rights of citizenship at local and Parliamentary elections. [Plymouthism](#) seems to be an attempt, under very changed world conditions, to get back to the simple religion of the Fishermen of Galilee.

A CONFERENCE OF BRETHREN.

The annual conference of the Brethren in Perth and district will be held in the Wilson Church Hall, Scott Street, on Saturday, 2nd April, from 3 to 7.30 p.m., when the following speakers are expected to take part: – Messrs James Cordiner, Aberdeen; John Hawthorn, Glasgow; Edwin Heath, Dundee; and James Ritchie, Aberdeen. Redemption songs will be used. All are cordially invited.

“CHIEF MEN AMONG THE BRETHREN.”

Thirty years ago a well-known writer in referring to the Plymouth Brethren spoke of them as a diminishing host, and hazarded the opinion that it was doubtful whether they could survive far into the twentieth century. Yet to-day, despite all the divisions and secessions by which their ranks have been rent, the Brethren are still a strong body both in this country and throughout the world.

PORTADOWN MEN FINED.

BROKE UP RELIGIOUS MEETING.

At Portadown Town Court yesterday, before Mr. D. F. Bell and other magistrates, two young men, Bernard Jelly, Curran Street, and Francis Grimley, Obins Street, were charged with riotous behaviour on Sunday, May 22.

Constable Irvine said that at 5-30 on the evening in question some members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were holding an open-air service in Craigwell Avenue. The two defendants came up with other men and threatened the men who were holding the meeting and called them filthy names. Grimley went half way up the avenue with the result that the men had to stop the service and go home. Jelly gave a wrong name and address. The defendants were the ringleaders.

Mr. D. Rock, J.P., said we would send the defendants to jail for a month or two.

Mr. A. Sewell, Town Clerk, who prosecuted, asked the court to take a serious view of the matter. This was the first time that a religious meeting had been interfered with, and unless the court took a serious view of the case this conduct might be continued.

Head-Constable Gosnell said there were continuous complaints about this conduct, and the police wanted the magistrates to assist them in putting a stop to it.

The court fined each of the defendants 40s and costs.

INTERRUPTING STREET SERVICE.

Heavy Penalty on Portadown Youths.

At Portadown Town Court on Monday before Messrs. D. F. Bell (presiding), D. Roche, M.B.E., and R. Anderson, two youths named Bernard Kelly, Curran St., and Francis Grimley, 73 Obin St., were charged with riotous behaviour on 22nd May.

Constable J. C. D. Irvine said on this Sunday evening some members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were holding an open-air meeting at Craigwell Avenue when defendants and others threatened and abused them, using very bad language. Kelly gave the name of John Magee, River Lane, but he was able to trace him the following day. Defendants were the two ringleaders.

Kelly said he thought that was hardly correct. Grimley, he said, was not there at all.

Grimley also denied being there.

The Constable said he (witness) lived quite close to Craigwell Avenue, and had them under observation for 15 minutes.

Mr. Anderson – Had they drink taken? – No.

Mr. H. Sewell, Town Clerk, said this was the first time within a great many years that a religious meeting had been interfered with, and he asked the Court to inflict the maximum fine of 40s and ensure that this sort of {sic} thing was not continued.

In reply to the Chairman, the Constable said he was alone at the time and the interrupters ran everywhere. Grimley was the worst of the whole lot.

Head-Constable Gosnell said there were constant complaints about this kind of conduct and they wanted the assistance of the magistrates {sic} to stamp it out.

Consable {sic} Irvine said if he had not been there there would have been trouble. On a Sunday evening it was an absolute disgrace.

The Chairman, in announcing a fine of 40s and costs each, said the magistrates were determined to stop this conduct.

APPROACHING END OF THE AGE.

THE RAPTURE – AND TWO MINUTES AFTER.

INTERESTING DERRY ADDRESS.

Every seat in the Y.M.C.A. Hall was occupied last night, when Capt. Wallis, Dublin, concluded his series of addresses under the auspices of the Londonderry Christian Workers' Union on "The Approaching End of the Age."

Captain Wallis took as his subject "The Rapture – And Two Minutes After." The Rapture, as he termed it, was the time when the people of God would be caught away, and many living, perhaps, would never see death. Two minutes after Christ's coming again there would be on this earth a condition of terrible suffering, tribulation, and diabolical disorder.

"Two minutes after the Rapture," he said, "the earth will be surprised, shocked, and stunned at the uncanny disappearance of a number of people. They will be snatched away."

He could imagine people asking him if he believed there would be a sudden disappearance of people living in the world. "I certainly do," was his emphatic answer. "I believe that when Christ comes for His people not one innocent child will be left behind."

"One shall be taken and the other left," the Scripture says. Who will be left behind when Christ comes? We who are alive and remain, together with the dead in Christ, is the answer, and we may

rest perfectly assured of this fact that only true Christians who have within them the Resurrection life will be taken away.

“Three kinds of people will be left behind – the Jews, the great heathen world, and Christ’s neglectors – all of whom will have had an opportunity of hearing the Gospel, and either accepting or rejecting it.”

Two minutes after the Rapture the speaker pictured crowds of people meeting together and talking on one subject – the great event and those who had been taken away.

“Certain people will have disappeared,” he said, “and those who have never made any profession of following Christ will be left behind, and quite a number of ‘decent people’ will be left behind, too – religious people and Church members. But salvation is not religion. Quite a number of Protestants will be left behind also. Surely they will be caught up when the Lord comes? Not necessarily. Protestantism is not salvation.” “Protestantism, apart from the Holy Ghost, is as dead as King Henry the Eighth,” he declared. “Your Protestantism is not enough. The fact that you have been brought up in all the illumination of Protestantism only adds to your own responsibility. There is a great danger of being better Protestants than Christians. The important question will not be – ‘Was I a Protestant or was I a Roman Catholic?’ There will be Roman Catholics who will be gloriously caught up to meet the Lord in the air. In that day I would rather stand in the shoes of some Roman Catholic than some of our Protestants with all their Bible teaching. I would rather be a saved ignorant Roman Catholic than an unsaved enlightened Protestant.

“Religion is not Christianity. Religion is man’s quest for God, and Christianity is God’s quest for man. Religion without God, reformation without regeneration, and the sad discovery will be made two minutes after the Rapture that the way of salvation is not of works lest any man should boast.”

In conclusion, Captain Wallis made a fervent appeal to all to turn from the things of the world and seek the things of Christ.

In the course of the meeting Mr. R. D. Gordon, on behalf of the audience and the C.W.U., thanked Captain Wallis for his splendid series of addresses.

The Londonderry Sentinel, 25 Nov 1933, p. 10

“The Rapture and Two Minutes Afterwards.”

REPLY TO CAPTAIN WALLIS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SENTINEL.

Sir – I notice in a recent issue of your paper that Captain Wallis has been entertaining a Derry audience on a rather fantastic and airy subject – “The Rapture.” I would just like to remind the Derry people – if, indeed, they require reminding – that this theory of “The Rapture” is just the old [Plymouth Brethren](#) heresy – a heresy which has been exposed time and again. It need hardly be said that the theory has no foundation in Scripture, but exists only in the imagination of such men as

Captain Wallis and others who find a ready soil in the minds of a certain class of people in these days of “meteoric showers” and the convulsion of nations.

It was just against such sensationalism that Christ warned His people – “Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.”

Surely it is a very narrow and selfish religion, and quite contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity, to believe that a few saints will be “caught up,” and that this world, in all its political, social, and domestic relationship, is to be left to perish in ruin and despair, or to go on for an uncertain time in its mad career of tribulation. That conception of things, to say the least of it, is dishonouring to Christ, His great redeeming work, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Time and again we have been told by the “false prophets” when Christ would come, and as a result men have been a thousand times disappointed. That, of course, does not prove Christ’s “Second Coming” a delusion. Christ will undoubtedly come, but He will come not to give a few people a “Rapture” but to judge the world at the last day.

But Jesus says that “this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come.”

This has not happened yet, for there are millions of the world’s inhabitants who have never heard the Gospel preached. And when the end would come Jesus tells us He did not know Himself (Mark xiii., 32). And if so it is useless for us to inquire; but that it would take place eventually He never doubted, and thus His warning – “Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth

come.” It may be that the human race is only in its infancy, and that it is only learning to take its first tottering step. Or it may be that the present world troubles – and there have been world-wide troubles before – are only the birth-pangs of a better national and social state of things.

“Now we see not yet all things put under Him. But we see Jesus ... crowned with glory and honour.” And “He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet.” – Yours, &c.,

“MARANATHA.”

The Londonderry Sentinel, 2 Dec 1933, p. 9

“THE RAPTURE.”

CAPTAIN WALLIS REPLIES TO “MARANATHA.”

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SENTINEL.

Sir – I am most interested to read the attempt of “Maranatha” to emancipate the people of Derry from the dangers of “the old [Plymouth Brethren](#) heresy” of “The Rapture”! Your correspondent’s comments on this vital and sacred subject are to every Bible student who “rightly divides the Word of Truth” a pathetic display of ignorance concerning the clear pronouncements of the Holy Spirit as to the Divine purpose in this present age of grace and of dispensational truth generally.

In referring to “the Gospel of the Kingdom” being preached to all nations before “the end” comes he is manifestly confusing things that differ. Assuredly this world-wide witness of the Kingdom Gospel

and much else has yet to take place before the Lord comes in “power and great glory” to take up His millennial reign on earth. This, however, in no way refutes the further truth, declared with equal precision by the Holy Spirit, of an important preliminary event by which true believers will be “caught up to meet the Lord” prior to the outpouring of Divine wrath on a Godless universe. That is a climax which is imminent. The theory of world improvement and the advent of a “better national and social state of things” emerging out of the present world-wide troubles before Christ comes is both unscriptural and typically modernistic.

In stating that the translation of believers is a “theory that has no foundation in Scripture,” may I ask “Maranatha” why, in his largely-inappropriate series of quotations, he so conspicuously avoids such references as I. Cor. xv., 51–52, and I. Thess. iv., 15–18? On the same hypothesis are we to infer that these declarations are the mere “imagination” of St. Paul and may be placed in the category of “fantastic and airy,” “heresy,” “sensationalism,” “narrow and selfish,” “dishonouring to Christ,” &c.? These are serious allegations for a professing servant of Christ and constitute a sad commentary on an ominous sign of the end-time significantly alluded to in II. Peter iii., 3–4.

Let the people of Derry “search the Scriptures” for themselves and not take heed to the vapoury speculation of human opinion or to the suggestion that this solemn truth is merely “entertaining.”

“Maranatha’s” argument would scarcely impress any Christian who knows his Bible, and still less since he chooses the somewhat timorous refuge of anonymity. – Yours, &c.,

REGINALD WALLIS.

Dublin, 29th November, 1933.

“The Secret Rapture.”

“MARANATHA” ANSWERS CAPTAIN WALLIS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SENTINEL.

Sir – With your kind permission I would, in answer to Captain Wallis, make a few more comments on his pet theory of the “Secret Rapture,” even at the risk of giving another “pathetic display of ignorance,” and in the meantime I would thank him for his “charitable” estimation of my mental powers. It brings to mind the Apostle’s advice in Romans xii., 3.

Captain Wallis charges me with confusing things that differ; but, as a matter of fact, he confuses things that do not differ, seeing many advents where there is only one Advent – namely, Christ’s coming at the “end” of the world. That is the only “Second Advent” revealed to us in Scripture. He also complains that I avoided I. Corinthians, xv., 51–52, and I. Thessalonians, iv., 16, in giving “largely-inappropriate” quotations.

All quotations would, I fancy, be “inappropriate” to Captain Wallis where he could not read into them his preconceived ideas. However, to make a confession, my reason for not quoting these passages was, in the Apostolic expression, “that I might spare him.” For if there are any passages of Scripture which might seem to support this theory of the “Secret Rapture” these are the very last one should think of quoting. I know that they are the “lock, stock, and barrel” of all who are thus minded, but for this purpose they are as a broken reed whereon to lean upon.

The world, according to Captain Wallis, is to know nothing of the sudden removal of the “saints” when they are caught up. But these two passages clearly tell us that Christ is to come with “a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.” “A shout”, “a voice,” “a trump” – a strange secrecy. Surely such an interpretation of this simple and beautiful passage presents us with such difficulties to our faith as to drive every true searcher after truth into revolt against it as a wresting of the Scriptures after the manner of those referred to in II. Peter, iii., 16.

Again, we are told that to look and hope and work for a better national and social state of things is “both unscriptural and typically modernistic.”

Evidently Captain Wallis looks out on the world through the dark spectacles of the pessimist. It is a doomed world, according to him. It only remains for him and his like to gather a few “elect” in from the doomed Churches before the “climax,” which is “imminent,” comes. And all Churches and creeds are the same to him. The Roman Catholic has just as good a hope of being saved as the Protestant – in fact, a better hope. They must all come into his sect or sects and pronounce his “shibboleth” if they are to be “saved.”

So there you have the outlook and the “Gospel,” “which is not a Gospel,” of this old heresy unearthed from the dust of ages, which Captain Wallis has been proclaiming to the benighted Protestants of the North. Poor Protestantism! Poor world! Poor Godless universe!

How gladly we turn from this “Gospel” to that proclaimed by the angel and the angelic host: – “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.” That is the true and glorious vision presented to us by the angel

of God for Him “Whom the heavens must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” – Yours, &c.,

“MARANATHA.”

Daily Herald, London, 8 Jan 1935, p. 9

FREEZING DAYS FORECAST

ICE COATS MANY ROADS

{...}

While spectators shivered, three converts to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) *were baptised in a cove opening on to the sea* near Burghead, Morayshire, yesterday.

CHANCERY DIVISION

(Before the Hon. Mr. Justice Megaw.)

BUSHMILLS FARMER'S WILL

Money Bequeathed to the “[Plymouth Brethren](#)”

The interpretation of a will was raised on an originating summons on behalf of William John Irvine, of Prolusk, Straid, Bushmills, and Edmund Johnston, of Eastermede, Ballymoney, executors of the will of James Brown, farmer, of Prolusk. The defendants were William Edwy Vine, minister of the Gospel, and William Rhodes Lewis, solicitor, Widcombe Crescent, Bath, who claimed the residue of the estate on behalf of the religious body known as the “[Plymouth Brethren](#),” Esther M’Grevy, 11, Maybeck Road, Mount Albert, Auckland, New Zealand, the sole next-of kin; and the Attorney-General for Northern Ireland.

The main question for determination was whether, upon the true construction of the will, the bequest of the residue of the estate to the “Society of [Plymouth Brethren](#),” to be used by them for the benefit of the foreign mission in connection with the society, was a valid charitable bequest, or whether it failed for uncertainty or for any other reason. If the defendants were not entitled to receive the bequest to whom should payment be made?

Mr. S. C. Porter, K.C., with whom was Mr. A. J. Belford (instructed by Messrs. Thomas Taggart & Son), for the plaintiffs, said that James Brown died on 4th January, 1934, and that his will was dated 1st December, 1929. After making provision for certain debts and funeral expenses, the deceased bequeathed the residue of his estate to the secretary of the “Plymouth Brethren,” to be used in connection with the society’s foreign missions. He had had {sic} been a member of the society commonly called the “Plymouth Brethren.” The money, amounting to £1,401 odd, was in the bank.

DIED WITHOUT ISSUE

Referring to plaintiff’s affidavit, counsel said that James Brown had been a widower, and died without issue, the sole next-of-kin being a cousin, Esther M’Grevy, who resided in New Zealand. There was no religious body known as the “Society of Plymouth Brethren,” nor were there any trustees of such a society. The “Plymouth Brethren” were an undefined body, meeting together for religious services and worship. The defendants, Vine and Lewis, stated that they were joint editors and trustees of a missionary periodical of the brethren, called “Echoes of Service,” and claimed, as such, to be entitled to receive the gift. There were no trustees or board of management of the periodical.

Mr. Beattie, K.C., with whom was Mr. M’William (instructed by Messrs. Crawford and Lockhart) for the defendants, Vine and Lewis, said that a Mr. Simpson, of Bushmills, had known the deceased, who gave £50 towards the building of a hall at Bushmills.

Mr. Johnson (instructed by Messrs. George M'Ildowie & Sons) for the next-of-kin, contended that if there was no "Society of [Plymouth Brethren](#)" but merely a large undefined body of people, there could have been no gift. The gift therefore failed, and the money should go to the next-of-kin.

Mr. G. Dougherty (instructed by Mr. Hume Babington) for the Attorney-General, submitted that the gift was a valid charitable one.

His Lordship held that a valid charitable bequest had been made to defendants, Vine and Lewis, and directed that the money should be paid to them. He was glad to say that the authorities had enabled him to come to a decision which would carry out the intention of the testator himself.

The Yorkshire Post, Leeds, 1 Mar 1935, p. 3

A BEQUEST TO THE “LORD’S SERVANTS”

Yorkshire Woman’s Gift Goes to Next of Kin

In the Chancery Division yesterday Mr. Justice Farwell decided that a bequest by the late Mrs. Susannah Benn to the “Lord’s servants” was invalid.

Mrs. Benn, who died in May, 1933, was a member of a Fellowship of Evangelical Christians known as [Exclusive Brethren](#), and in her will she directed that her trustee and executor, Mr. J. H. Trevvett, of Norton Woodside, Harrogate, should, at his discretion, divide the residue of her estate among “the Lord’s servants in fellowship with us.”

The matter came before the Court on a summons taken out by Mr. Joe Benn, of Burley-in-Wharfedale, one of the next of kin, who asked the Court to decide whether the gift was valid or void for uncertainty.

Mr. Justice Farwell said that though certain members of the body of persons referred to were given the courtesy title of Lord’s servants there was no definite class of persons who could claim that title.

The law allowed a testator to leave money to be divided among members of a class, but it did not allow the executor to decide what persons should form the class. Therefore he was compelled with regret to decide that the gift was void and must be divided amongst the next of kin.

Daily Herald, London, 14 Aug 1935, p. 12

I Heard YESTERDAY

by Hannen SWAFFER

{...}

Strange Alliance

THE projected Italian conquest of Abyssinia and the threat of a new Imperialism in Africa find support, in England, in strange quarters.

For instance, the [Plymouth Brethren](#), of all the people in the world, seem for once to agree with Lord Rothermere, whose newspapers have said, "Good luck, Italy!"

Two readers send me a copy of the August number of "The Witness," which is described as "A monthly journal of Biblical literature," whose motto is "All the Word of God for all the people of God," and which is edited by Henry Pickering in the interests of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

"Texts" Excuse War

IN the "Watchtower," a feature which deals with current news, Pickering, after explaining in a paragraph the Italo-Abyssinian situation, says, "Apart altogether from Governments and politics (which are outside our province) taking the long view, may there not be a way whereby the RULER

OF THE UNIVERSE (for there is yet a Ruler, Psa. 59. 13; Dan. 4. 7; Prov. 8. 16; Psa. 22. 28), is allowing Ethiopia to be taken from her stagnation into renewed life?

“A nation since the 1st Century, she is still semi-barbarian, has only one small railway, few roads, little commerce, few schools, a bastard Christianity as its religion{,} a medieval form of government, and anything but progress as her motto.

“If Italy takes charge, roads will soon appear, railways will penetrate the country, order and control will be established, areas will be cultivated, the country developed, and a new Abyssinia appear, to the surprise of the natives.”

The “Allowed Principle”

THEN, after stating how, through the ages, the control of the weak by the strong and the barbarian by the civilised seems to be the “allowed principle” of development, this [Plymouth Brother](#) asks: –

“Would the Gospel have been preached as it has been, especially in the past, liberty and freedom on every hand as now known, and such like but for the progressive people turning chaos into order, waste into fertility, barbarism into civilisation, and progress everywhere? We hold that Christian principles, Christian teaching, and Christian people, nay, Christ’s Influence in all its ramifications, has been the main factor in the metamorphosis of these lands and peoples.

“Whatever may be the outcome of this present dispute in North Africa, we trust it will make for the increase of missionaries, the circulation of the Scriptures, the preaching of the Gospel, the enlight-

enment of the backward peoples, the real 'good of all,' and – THE GLORY OF OUR GOD. So may Christians pray *today*."

Wanted – A New Mission

IT seems strange that there are people still alive who seem satisfied that, if the number of missionaries is increased, all is well with the world. If Imperialism is the "allowed principle," so is gangsterdom.

It seems to me that we want to start a mission to missionaries, at least to those who agree with Henry Pickering. These missionaries should be taught that war is wrong, that the acquiring by a strong nation of a country owned by a weak one is nothing but common theft, that Imperialism is contrary to the teaching of Jesus, whatever Christians may think of it.

According to Pickering, the Gospel has been preached by progressive people who have turned barbarism into civilisation.

"Civilisation by bombs, gas and tanks," comments one of the readers who sends me "The Witness," "is a doubtful benefit, even if it does blaze the trail for [Plymouth Brethren](#)."

Bombs and Bibles

ALL over the front page of Pickering's journal, Bibles are advertised, one with a "carrier handle" for women, another, a "text Bible" that will go in a "Gent's vest pocket."

I suggest that copies of these might be dropped by the Christian Italians with the bombs, when they wipe out the Abyssinian villages.

Then, any stray survivor who has escaped the “civilising forces” of the explosive which has killed his family, may search the Scriptures.

It may console him to know that the wholesale murder was prophesied by some Israelite who, were he alive today, would be ignored by the prophecy-experts who now exult every time that, reading some outburst of poetic ecstasy, they turn a poet into a tipster.

They used to say, “The trader follows the missionary.” Now, the phrase should be, “The missionary follows poison gas.”

Daily Herald, London, 19 Aug 1935, p. 10

***This Morning's* POSTBAG**

{...}

Repudiated

ALLOW one with lifelong associations with those sometimes called "[Plymouth Brethren](#)" to assure your readers that the monthly periodical, from which Mr. Swaffer quotes a qualified approval of Italy's aggression on Abyssinia, by no means represents the views of my Christian brethren.

They would emphatically repudiate the Editor's incursion into world politics.

THEODORE ROBERTS.

Rutland Park, N.W.

[Several [Plymouth Brethren](#) have written dissociating themselves from the views expressed by Henry Pickering in "*The Witness*." – Editor.]

Daily Herald, London, 18 Sep 1935, p. 15

I Heard Yesterday

by Hannen Swaffer

{...}

Prophetic Bunk

MEANWHILE, people pour on me weird screeds about the fulfilment of Biblical prophecies.

A Huddersfield man, whom I will not advertise, writes of the [Plymouth Brother](#) who said, in “The Witness,” “Whatever may be the outcome of this dispute in North Africa, we trust it will make for the increase of missionaries, the circulation of the Scriptures, the preaching of the Gospel and the glory of our God,” that there are several kinds of [Plymouth Brethren](#) and that it is an appalling testimony to “the ignorance and treason” of this particular one that “he has failed to discern in the blasphemous utterances of Mussolini that Beast who shall indeed, as Roman Emperor, dominate the world.”

EDGWARE.

PSEUDO-DIRECTOR'S FRAUDS.

Window Cleaner's Story of His Meteoric Rise to Eminence in Business.

"LIVED IN A WORLD OF MAKE-BELIEVE."

A remarkable story of a man's imaginary rise from window cleaner to director of an electrical company was told at Hendon Police Court on Monday, when Henry Moore, aged 56 {58?}, of St. Margaret's-road, Anwell Estate, Ware, was sent to prison on three charges of false pretences.

He was charged with obtaining £80 from William John Bull, at 37, Holmstall-avenue, Burnt Oak; obtaining £50 from Harry Rose, of Crawford-road, Hatfield; and obtaining £5 from Leonard James Creaves, of Bransgrove-road, Edgware.

Mr. Griffith Jones, prosecuting, said these three charges did not constitute the whole of the offences defendant had committed. In fact he had obtained a total sum of £560 from five people and he had in addition made the same pretences to five other persons, although at the time of his arrest he had not actually asked them for money.

Mr. Jones said Moore had lived in Edgware for about six years and at the beginning of 1934 he was a window cleaner. Early in that year he told his wife he had been employed by the Hendon Electric Supply Co. as a meter inspector. He not only told his wife, but told friends and fellow members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

“From that time onwards,” said Mr. Jones, “he appears to have lived in a kind of make-believe world. He quickly rose in the Hendon Electric Company, according to his story. Then he said the Hendon Electric had been taken over by the General Electric Co. and he was taken over by that concern. According to his own showing he quickly rose to distinction and in January, 1935 he said he had become a director of the General Electric Co. and was secretary to the Board of Directors.

“He suggested to several members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) that he, in his influential position, would be able to obtain posts for them and he had various meetings {sic} at his house, where six or seven of these friends gathered. He gave them most minute details of what was necessary of them. He told them to study electricity and at two meetings Mr. Bull and Mr. Andrews actually gave lectures upon the subjects they had been reading up.

“Before they could be taken on, however, deposits were needed and it was in that way that the money was obtained. These people were only too willing, seeing the sudden rise of their window cleaner friend, to put down their £50 or £100 in the hope of following in his footsteps.

“His story was embellished with the most extravagant details. At one time he said he was the daily companion of Lord Hurst, chairman of the Company, and he told Mr. Bull he would get him appointed a director when Lord Hurst resigned.

“Indeed, a few weeks later, defendant told Mr. Bull he had been elected and told him to draw up his own agreement, discussing the details which should be put into that agreement.

“During this time, apparently, defendant occupied himself travelling around England in the pretence of visiting various people concerning huge contracts which he said he was negotiating. Mr. Andrews, from whom he already, I understand, obtained £50, had a son and defendant said he could secure the son employment. In fact, he took the son on as his chauffeur and in a car (sometimes Mr. Andrews’ car) this boy spent months driving defendant all round England and Scotland. The driver was paid wages, which apparently came out of the deposits paid by other victims.”

Mr. Jones said the false pretences were practically the same in each case. Mainly the money was obtained as a deposit, but in one case defendant secured a loan on the strength of his supposed position.

In addition to the three charges he wished the court to take into consideration another case concerning £185 obtained from Mr. Andrews.

Det.-Sergt. Miller said Moore was the son of a Presbyterian minister and attended a school at Sudbury, Suffolk. He started life in the Civil Service Stores at Victoria, but had to leave owing to ill health. Then he became a grocer’s apprentice and next an insurance representative. In each case he was given a good character.

He started business on his own account as a window cleaner in Edgware.

Of the total amount he obtained, only £35 had been recovered and this was repaid by the defendant under pressure to Mr. Andrews, who became suspicious.

Moore was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and fined £50, or a further three months in default, on the first charge; six months, to run consecutively, on the second charge; and six months on the third charge, to run concurrently with the second sentence – a total sentence of twelve months and £50, or three months in default.

The prosecution were awarded £5 5s. costs.

Belfast Telegraph, 10 Mar 1936, p. 13

IRISH MISSION HALL OUTRAGE.

IRON RAILINGS TORN DOWN.

WERE EMBEDDED IN STONework.

The iron railings outside the Gospel Hall, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim, a place of worship used by the [Plymouth Brethren](#), were torn down during the night.

Considerable strength must have been used to effect the dismantlement, as the main supports were torn from sockets embedded in stone work.

This hall is in the centre of Carrick-on-Shannon, beside the Post Office.

RELIGIOUS PREMISES DISPUTE

WIDNES CORPORATION CLAIM AGAINST TRUSTEES

At Widnes Police Court, to-day, eighteen defendants, who constitute the trustees of the Holt Gospel Hall, were summoned by Widnes Corporation, who claimed £156 for road-making charges.

Mr. Basil Nield, for the Corporation, said the sum claimed was a portion of the cost of making Mount-street, upon which the mission premises abutted. Defendants, through their solicitors, said they were exempted from sharing in the cost of road-making because their premises were used for religious purposes.

There was no such exemption in their case, however. The powers of the Corporation were conferred by Section 150 of the Public Health Act, 1875, which directed that where a local authority find a new street required to be made notices should be sent to frontagers to make the road. If any default was made the local authority could make the road and charge for it.

Since 1934 correspondence had passed between the Town-clerk and the trustees. The Act of 1875 clearly stated that exemption could only be claimed by incumbents and ministers and did not mention trustees.

The trustees had further insisted that their hall was used for secular purposes and they were therefore not liable.

EVERY TRUSTEE A MINISTER

Mr. H.I. Nelson, for the trustees, said an attempt had been made to perpetrate an injustice. He made no suggestion against the local authority. Parliament never intended places of religion should be subject to road charges, and in a later Act the word “trustees” was incorporated. Every one of these trustees was a minister of the Church and entitled to take religious services, burials, and marriages, and therefore they came under the exemption clause.

It belonged to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who had churches all over the country. None of these in any other part of the country had been similarly charged.

The chairman (Mr. A. E. Calvert) said that there were many points to be considered. They would reserve judgment and give it at a later date.

Liverpool Echo, 26 Oct 1937, p. 9

TRUSTEES NOT LIABLE

WIDNES CORPORATION CLAIM FAILS

The chairman of the Widnes bench (Mr. A. E. Calvert), to-day, gave a considered decision in a case in which 17 defendants, who constituted the trustees of the Hope Gospel Hall, Widnes, were recently summoned at the instance of the Widnes Corporation in a claim for £156 for road-making charges.

The chairman said plaintiffs claimed that having executed certain road-making work, the trustees were liable for the expenses.

Defendants contended that the notices served had not been in accordance with Section 150 of the Public Health Act of 1875, and that according to Section 151 the Gospel Hall was a place of public worship, exempt from rates for the relief of the poor, and as owners or occupiers of such a place of worship they were not liable.

The conclusion of the magistrates was that defendants were the owners and occupiers of the premises situated in Peelhouse-lane, Widnes, and were exempt from rates.

The hall was a place appropriated to public religious worship, and that each and all of the defendants were ministers within the meaning of Section 151 of the Act. It was held, therefore, that plaintiffs' claim failed.

Mr. H. Nelson (Liverpool), for defendants, applied for costs, and was allowed 12 guineas. It was agreed to state a case if necessary.

Liverpool Echo, 2 Dec 1937, p. 5

Exempt From Road Charges

Widnes Appeal Against Decision

A decision of the Widnes magistrates exempting the Holt Gospel Hall, Mount-street, from street-making costs was appealed against by Widnes Corporation at Liverpool County Quarter Sessions to-day.

The Corporation claimed £156 5s 5d from the trustees of the hall in respect of street-making charges, but the magistrates decided in favour of the respondents.

Mr. H. P. Glover, K.C., presided over the bench at to-day's appeal, and Mr. Basil Nield appeared for Widnes Corporation. Mr. H. I. Nelson represented the 17 trustees of the hall.

Mr. Nield said that the Holt Gospel Hall was used for religious purposes by the sect called the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The position was that the Corporation gave notice to the frontagers in Mount-street to make up the road. The frontagers were in default, and as a result the Corporation executed the work, and then sought to recover the road-making costs from the frontagers.

TRUSTEES' CLAIM

The judgment against which they appealed was given on October 26.

The answer to the Corporation claim was a claim for exemption from the charges under the Act – the Public Health Act, 1875.

In effect, the trustees claimed to be “minister” or “incumbent” of “a place appropriated to public worship.”

The real point in the appeal, continued Mr. Nield, was whether the trustees were able to bring themselves within exemption under the Act. It was admitted that as trustees they were the “owner occupiers” of the property. Widnes Corporation had not adopted the Private Street Works Act, 1892, so they relied upon the Public Health Act, 1875.

Mr. Nield contended that if the Corporation proved that the premises were not exempt from the payment of rates for the relief of the poor, it did not matter whether the trustees were “incumbents” or not. The hall, he submitted, was not certified for public worship until February 26, 1937 – five months after completion of the work and considerably after the service of notice to the frontages.

(Proceeding)

BRETHREN MINISTERS

FURTHER EVIDENCE IN THE WIDNES APPEAL.

(Continued from Page 5)

Mr. Nelson submitted that the evidence did not establish that there had been service of the notice in accordance with the Act. Only one trustee had received notice, whereas there were sixteen other trustees who should have been served with it.

John Clapham, of Pit-lane, Widnes, senior minister and trustee of the Holt Gospel Hall, said that all men who had been baptised and admitted to fellowship of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) became ministers. They were entitled to preach and conduct marriage ceremonies, funerals and baptisms.

The “Sisters” – women members – were not entitled to perform the functions of a minister.

During the war, he went on, members of the sect received exemption from military service on the ground that they were ministers of religion.

He did not claim exemption for himself, although he could have done so, for at that time he was working in a munitions factory.

There were about 60 members of the sect, and the trustees had never before been asked to pay general rates. The only rate they paid was the water rate.

NO STIPEND AS MINISTER

Asked what his occupation was, Mr. Clapham replied: "I am a minister of religion, but I work as an engineer to pay my expenses. I get no stipend as a minister."

Mr. Nield. – I suggest that you have called yourself a minister of religion only since these proceedings started?

Witness. – No. For instance, when men come to the hall to have notes signed for presentation at the Labour Exchange, I have signed them as a minister of religion.

Mr. Chapman {sic} explained that although he worked in a munition works during the war, he was not working on munitions {sic} but on locomotives.

(Proceeding.)

Liverpool Echo, 3 Dec 1937, p. 6

RELIGION AND RATES

Judgment was reserved until January 11, at Liverpool County Quarter Sessions, in the appeal by Widnes Corporation against a decision of the justices of that town exempting the Holt Gospel Hall, Mount-street, Widnes, from the payment of street-making costs.

The Functions Of Ministers

Novel Point In Widnes Appeal

The appeal of Widnes Corporation against a decision by the magistrates of that town exempting the Holt Gospel Hall, Mount Street, Widnes, from the payment of street-making costs, was allowed at the Liverpool County Quarter Sessions, to-day.

On October 26 last, the Widnes justices gave judgment in favour of the trustees of the hall in connection with a Corporation claim for £156 5s 5d for road-making charges.

When the appeal was heard last December questions were raised regarding the functions of ministers of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) – the religious body which occupies the Holt Gospel Hall.

Mr. Basil Nield, for the appellants, said that the answer to the Corporation claim was a claim for exemption from the charges under the Public Health Act, 1875.

“INCUMBENT” SUBMISSION

In effect, the trustees of the hall claimed to be “minister” or “incumbent” of a place appropriated to public worship. He contended that if the Corporation proved that the premises were not exempt from the payment of rates for the relief of the poor, it did not matter whether the trustees were “incumbents” or not.

Giving the reserved judgment of the bench, to-day, Mr. H. P. Glover, K.C., the chairman, said that they held that the premises did not fall within the exemption conferred by the Public Health Act concerning the date upon which liability attached to the owners – the date of completion of the road-making work on September 10, 1936.

“We entertain considerable doubt,” he continued, “whether it could properly be said that the term ‘minster,’ {sic} as used in the Public Health Act, 1875, was ever intended to embrace a ministry so wide and so numerous as that of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).”

Mr. Glover added that he did not think it was a case in which costs should be awarded.

“MUCH BIGGER SCOUNDREL AT BACK”

COURT TOLD OF MAN’S DOWNFALL

DRIVEN TO THEFT BY BLACKMAILER

“THERE is a much bigger scoundrel at the back of it all,” declared Mr. Arthur Hall-Wright, defending a 28-year-old Glasgow man who was fined £10 at Birmingham Police Court yesterday of stealing articles valued at £16 from a public-house.

William Richard Wynd, stated to have been living at Grindleford-road, Perry Beeches, Great Barr, pleaded guilty to stealing two silver cups, a cigarette case, cigarettes and money from the bar of the Beeches licensed house.

Det.-inspector Dillon said that the goods were stolen from a glass case in the bar of the public-house, and were valued at £16.

The cups were sold for £3 5s., and when questioned at the C.I.D. office Wynd admitted stealing the articles.

He said that “something came over him” after he had been drinking all day. He had got into the public-house by climbing over a wall and through a window.

It was revealed that Wynd had been previously convicted for embezzlement and was sentenced to six weeks in the second division.

MAN SPOKE TO HIM

Mr. Arthur Hall-Wright (defending) asked the officer if, subject to investigation, he thought there was someone else concerned in the matter.

Witness: I do.

“There is a much bigger scoundrel at the back of it all,” declared Mr. Hall-Wright, addressing the Bench.

He added that although Wynd had pleaded guilty, there was another man who had incited him to commit the offence and who had been blackmailing him for some time.

“The story goes back a long time,” said Mr. Hall-Wright. “At the age of 21 Wynd left his home in Glasgow, where he had been brought up strictly within the [Plymouth Brethren](#) circle.

“One Sunday evening he visited the Bull Ring and was standing by a group where the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were holding a service when a man spoke to him.

“It was from that moment that his downfall began.

“The scheme of embezzlement for which Wynd had served a term of imprisonment originated with this man.

DEMANDED MONEY

“After coming out of prison Wynd returned to Glasgow and got a job. He worked hard and seemed to have got free of his trouble in Birmingham, but somehow the man who had led him into crime got to learn that his parents and relations were unaware of his conviction. He wrote to Wynd, ordering him to return to Birmingham.

“Wynd arrived in Birmingham and was met by the man who demanded money, threatening to send a newspaper cutting of Wynd’s conviction to his parents. The man said he wanted the money to start a certain business which would have been illegal.

“He offered to pay Wynd £10 a week salary. Wynd borrowed £150 from his mother but never received any salary and when the money was gone, the man made another demand for money.

“Wynd got desperate, started backing horses, and it culminated in his taking to drink and breaking into a public-house.

A LAST CHANCE

“Wynd’s parents and relatives,” said Mr. Hall-Wright, “now know of his prison record and although they say they cannot forgive him they will try to forget and take him back in the hope that he may be helped to live down his past life.”

The chairman (Mr. J. Westerton) observed that it was a remarkable story they had listened to.

There was no evidence to support it and they were not obliged to believe all that had been said, but, knowing Mr. Hall-Wright, they felt sure that he would not have put the story forward unless it was well-founded.

They were going to give Wynd a last chance to redeem himself, and he would be fined instead of going to prison.

Wynd's mother, who was in court, paid the fine, made restitution, and walked out arm-in-arm with her son.

Daily Mirror, London, 15 Aug 1938, p. 2

SHOW QUEEN ABDICATES BY ORDER OF CHAPEL

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

PORTHCAWL (Glam.), Sunday.

ESME Whalley, twenty-four, brown-haired Queen-elect of Porthcawl carnival, wept yesterday as she announced her abdication because people at the chapel said her character might be tarnished by meeting men of the world.

Esme, scorner of make-up, is a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#). Principals, dreading the temptations she might meet as Queen, ordered her to resign.

Another Queen will wear her lovely early Victorian gown, and mount her throne to be crowned next Wednesday.

Esme told me to-day:

"It is a cruel disappointment, but I could not risk trouble at the chapel. My friends entered me for the contest.

"The carnival is to raise funds to provide an ambulance for Porthcawl. My whole heart was in the scheme.

“But the older members said that as queen I would be in contact with the world. They said that was not for me.

“The whole town is indignant. Even the chapel people are upset.

“Could Not Defy the Elders”

“Some of the mothers’ meeting members – I am their secretary – have threatened to leave the Fellowship. But I could not defy the elders. You see, my heart is in the chapel.”

Esme’s father said: “Although I am a member of the **Brethren** I am broadminded, and I do not see what harm there is in my daughter sitting on a lorry and looking nice when it is in a good cause.

“It is not like a Lady Godiva show.”

Venerable, bespectacled G. Willie, leader of the chapel, told me: “We **Brethren** are strangers and pilgrims on earth. We live for the next world and not for this.

“I do not think a Christian should join in carnivals; they cause temptations. Esme is a nice, good girl with a lovely character.

“I do not want it tarnished by coming in contact with men of the world.

“Don’t think that I am narrow-minded. I like to see people enjoying themselves, but our task is to set an example.”

And Mr. Willie put on his bowler hat, took his umbrella and set off for the chapel.

NEVER BEEN TO CINEMA –

Nor Danced, Nor Listened To Radio!

A young Taunton member of the exclusive [Plymouth Brethren](#), who has –

*Never been to a cinema, theatre, or dance,
Does not listen to the wireless,
Is a member of no sports, games, or football club, and
Was exempted from compulsory O.T.C. at Blundells School,*

was conditionally exempted from military service at Bristol to-day.

The condition was that he should continue his present employment in the Health Department of Somerset County Council.

Charles F. Lindsay Liesching, of Taunton, told the tribunal he had been a birthright member of the [exclusive brethren](#), and added, “I fully agree with what I have been brought up in since I have been of age to understand.”

Liesching said that on conscientious grounds, he had never joined an association of the world, and was not a member of the N.A.L.G.O. (the staff union), nor had he joined a health insurance society.

Brethren are Not an Anti-war Sect

One of the lesser-known religious sects on Tyneside – The Brethren (or Plymouth Brethren, as they are commonly called) – spent Good Friday in conference discussing the Bible and its message for the world, in war as in peace.

Prominent Brethren came from London, Glasgow, and elsewhere to address the annual “Tyneside Christian Conference” at the principal Newcastle meeting-place of the sect – Bethany Hall, in Park Road.

Asked the Brethren’s attitude towards the war, one of the Newcastle members – there are no ordained preachers and not even lay leaders in the official sense – emphasised that it was not an anti-war sect.

“We leave the question of military service to the Brethren’s individual conscience,” he explained. “Many of our young men are in the Forces.

“Others, after considering the question in relation to the Scriptures, have felt that they could not join the Forces, but their sincerity seems to have been recognised by the local conscientious objectors’ tribunal.”

MISSIONARIES UNPAID

The Brethren are unusual in having not only no recognised leaders, locally or nationally, but no national headquarters.

“Numerous Brethren have gone out to the mission fields, but we do not send them out; neither do we provide them with stipends,” the “Journal and North Mail” was informed.

“For their maintenance they depend on faith, which, they find, never fails them.”

One of these unpaid missionaries is speaking at the conference, which lasts over Easter. He is Mr. A. McDonald Redwood, home from India.

KIRKBY STEPHEN BAPTISM

An Unusual Ceremony

An interesting ceremony took place on Friday in the Baptist Chapel, Kirkby Stephen, an adult person staying in the town being baptised by the [Christian Brethren](#) of the Gospel Hall, Mellbreaks. It is twelve years since a similar ceremony took place.

The service was conducted by Mr. Bolton, South Yorkshire; Mr. Laurison, Redcar, temporarily residing at Kirkby Stephen, and Mr. Rochester, Gateshead, at present on holiday in Kirkby Stephen.

After an address by by {sic} Mr. Laurison, explaining the doctrine of baptism as interpreted by "The [Brethren](#)," usually known as "[Plymouth Brethren](#)," the lady to be baptised was conducted to a tank of water situated in the floor of the chapel, which she entered. Mr. Rochester recited, "On your own confession of faith in Christ as your Saviour {sic}, I now baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." Total immersion then took place, after which the lady was escorted to the vestry, and the service concluded with the singing of another hymn.

To those persons not quite familiar with the doctrines and teachings of The [Brethren](#), perhaps the following brief explanation may be interesting: Baptism is looked upon as being essential; not to salvation, but to obedience of the Scriptures. It is plainly taught in the Word of God and particular emphasis is laid on the word of Christ in Matthew 28-19, and Mark 16-16, when He gave His preaching commission to the Disciples. Baptism is a symbol of death, a testimony that the individual

has died to the old life and now endeavours to live a new Christian life. None are baptised but those who believe in the Gospel, therefore infant baptism is not practised.

SON CHALLENGES WILL.

EIRE ARMY OFFICER IN CARNMONEY SUIT.

An Eire Army officer and only son of the testatrix challenged the last will of his 80-year-old mother in a probate suit which came before the Lord Chief Justice in the Ulster King's Bench Division to-day.

The defendant, Cecil P. V. Tanner, of Ravenhill, Churchtown, County Dublin, had entered a caveat against the will of Mrs. Tamar Mary Tanner, who resided at "Ardath," Church Road, Carnmoney, County Antrim. William R. Johnston, Rosetta Parade, Belfast, in his capacity as sole executor, sought to establish the will.

The estate was valued at from £1,200 to £1,300, and the residue was estimated at approximately £1,000.

Mr. E. Warnock, K.C., M.P., and Mr. W. F. Patton (instructed by Mr. T. Hewitt) were for the plaintiff; Mr. B. J. Fox, K.C., and Mr. James M'Sparran (instructed by Mr. James F. Fitzpatrick) being for the defendant.

Mr. Warnock mentioned that the will was executed on April 3, 1938, and testatrix died on January 31, 1941. Mrs. Tanner, a former National School teacher, had been in receipt of a pension of about £15 a month. Her husband had predeceased her.

Counsel explained that the will, which had been prepared by Mr. Hewitt, was challenged on the usual statutory grounds. Under the terms of the will the defendant was to receive £200. Mrs. Tanner was a woman of very strong religious views, and was a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), whose centre of public worship was the Victoria Memorial Hall, May Street, Belfast. Her son, the defendant, had greatly offended her by marrying a Roman Catholic. The will, after making a provision for a sister, directed the trustees to apply the residue “for such charitable or religious purposes as they may think fit, and that they may devote either the principal or income to any or all matters connected with the assembly of Christians meeting at Victoria Memorial Hall, Belfast, or to the renovation or repair or alterations of the said hall.”

A number of witnesses, including the plaintiff, Wm. R. Johnston, gave evidence as to the testamentary capacity of the testatrix.

OBJECTED TO MARRIAGE.

In cross-examination by Mr. Fox, Mr. Johnston agreed that the defendant had served as an officer in the last war, but he was not aware that the defendant had volunteered for the present war. Mrs. Tanner had told witness “she was greatly aggrieved at her son marrying into Rome.”

Mr. Fox said notwithstanding his client’s marriage to a person of another religion he still remained on friendly terms with his people. It came like a bolt from the blue to find that this son, who had been on the best of terms with his mother, had been practically cut out of the will.

Defendant, in evidence, said he had retained his faith on marriage and his wife had died about 16 months ago.

At this stage Mr. Fox consulted his client, and then told his Lordship that he felt he was not in a position to support any of their defences. He submitted there was a clear case for investigation.

Admitting the will to probate, the Lord Chief Justice said opposition to it was unjustified.

His Lordship awarded the plaintiff his costs against the defendant, limited to £40, the balance of the plaintiff's costs to be paid out of the estate.

Good Morning. The Daily Paper of the Submarine Branch, 1 Jul 1944, p. 2

J S Newcombe's

Short odd – But true

{...}

[Plymouth Brethren](#) are not at great variance with other Protestant bodies, for they recognise no order of ministers, and receive into communion all who acknowledge Christ.

The West Sussex Gazette, Arundel, 1 Nov 1945, p. 7

INDOOR DOMESTIC SERVANTS

{...}

COMFORTABLE HOME in six-roomed house, Lewes, offered by active widower (80) to LADY or LADIES (preferably of [Plymouth Brethren](#)), who would manage house as own without cash remuneration. – Write Box 337, Gazette, Arundel.

Liverpool Echo, 27 Jun 1946, p. 4

Graceful!

Augustus Francis Chaffey was described by counsel in the Divorce Court, to-day, as "a very religious man, who said prayers before and after his dinner every evening, as well as five graces during the meal, and held a Bible in one hand when he struck his wife."

Mrs. Catherine Beatrice Chaffey, of Winsham Grove, Clapham Common, was granted a separation for cruelty. Her husband denied the charge. Both are [Plymouth Brethren](#).

Daily Herald, London, 28 Jun 1946, p. 3

She Yawned At Prayers: He Made A Note
Husband had daily inquest on wife's 'misdeeds'
"IT WILL RUIN ME"

"HERALD" REPORTER

WEARING a neat blue suit and carrying a briefcase, Mr. Augustus Francis Chaffey, 43-year-old salesman, walked out of the Divorce Court legally separated from a wife who had accused him of cruelty.

"This case is likely to ruin me in my business," he told me. "But I am not bitter about it.

"I believe that I was acting in every way according to my religion."

Mr. and Mrs. Chaffey both belong to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) community. They were married in April, 1943.

Mrs. Chaffey alleged that her husband, who was said to be very religious, once hit her on the face with one hand while he held a Bible in the other.

One day he made her turn out all cupboards and drawers in their Clapham home, and then he struck her.

“Nose, Yawn ...”

Every evening, she said, her husband held a conference, at which he produced a list of all she had done throughout the day.

“At those ‘chats,’ as the husband called them, many things were discussed,” said the judge, granting Mrs. Chaffey a judicial separation.

“Lists of the things to be discussed were compiled by the husband, and one item, which threw considerable light on his attitude, was ‘Catherine, nose, yawn, speech.’

“The husband said that this referred to the fact that his wife yawned during prayers, and spoke sharply to him at breakfast, and that, as she had the habit of blowing her nose a lot, he was afraid that she might injure herself by blowing it too violently.

“Another entry was, ‘Catherine, breakfast, happy,’ and it related to an incident with which the husband dealt at the evening chat.

“Inferior Being”

“The husband was, in my view, overbearing in his manner and was regarding his wife as a person inferior to himself and one who had to mould herself and her ways to his liking.”

Mr. Chaffey denied that he struck or pushed his wife, or that he was unkind to her. It was untrue that he hit her when he had a Bible in his hand, he said.

Mr. Melford Stevenson, K.C., for Mrs. Chaffey, said that as her petition was filed in April, 1945, less than three years after the marriage, she could not ask for divorce.

{image}

MRS. CHAFFEY

“BRETHREN” DECLINE TO JOIN TRADE UNION

ONE of three members of the Willesden (London) Borough Council staff, who had expected to receive to-morrow a month’s notice under a decision that all employees must belong to a trade union, was given it to-day.

The three men, who have declined to join the National Association of Local Government Officers, are members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

They are Mr. Donald Egbert Smith (32), senior costing assistant in the Treasurer’s Department, his brother, Mr. Eric Smith (30), senior filing clerk in the Electricity Department, and Mr. Reginald Hutchings (32), who is also in the Electricity Department. Mr. Donald Smith, who had his notice to-day, said that he did not propose to take any action.

NON-COMBATANT SERVICE

“Mr. Hutchings and I served, as we offered to do, in a non-combatant corps and my brother was granted total exemption,” he said, referring to their call-up in 1940. “Then, as now, we were acting solely in accordance with our conscience.”

He said that the text Corinthians 1, 6: “Dare any of you having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust” was the authority for their beliefs.

Workmen at Lots Road power station, Fulham, London, are objecting to the employment of another of the [Brethren](#), Mr. W. Clark, who is a non-unionist, but he is reported to have said he will withdraw before strike action is taken.

Daily Herald, London, 29 Nov 1946, p. 2

Notebook

by Chanticleer

ON Ludgate-hill, in the City of London, you will find the propaganda centre of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), two of whose members have refused to join trade unions on conscientious grounds. It is the bookshop and printing firm of Pickering and Inglis.

This is the nearest thing to a headquarters possessed by a religious movement (started in Dublin more than a century ago), which has no leaders, no central control, no paid preachers, though full-time evangelists get gifts.

There, from counters covered with illuminated texts and religious books, one can purchase the monthly magazine, "Witness," circulation 35,000, which is virtually the voice of the [Brethren](#). This was the magazine, incidentally, which in 1935 approved Mussolini's assault on Abyssinia.

There also one can buy another magazine, "Echoes of Service," dealing with the missionary work of the Movement. November's issue shows that, in September, the Brethren contributed nearly £3,000 for missions; £43 for relief for liberated countries.

Smoke Evil

The only rule of the sect is to live scrupulously by the words of the Bible, which each Brother interprets according to his own conscience.

There is no rule against trade unionism; many Brethren are in unions. The two objectors, I was told yesterday, are probably interpreting II Corinthians, 6, 14 "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

"There is no injunction in the Bible not to join unions," said one of the directors of Pickering and Inglis to me, "But then, although there is no Scriptural command not to smoke, no Christian smokes." Which may astonish quite a lot of C. of E. parsons.

The Brethren (they don't acknowledge the "nickname" of Plymouth), so interpret the Scriptures that they never drink, go to cinemas, dance, or anything like that.

{...}

W.J. Brown, M.P., and the Closed Shop
The Nurses Would Have None of It

“Do what I tell you or I will make it impossible for you to live.”

Is not this spirit the same as that against which we have been fighting a long and costly war, asks the writer.

WHEN an assault is being made on the liberty of the British it usually takes that slow-moving race some little time to wake up to the fact.

Sometimes it happens, too, that the women are quicker to wake up to it than the men.

It has taken a year or so to awaken us to what is implied in the Closed Shop. And among the first to wake up have been the women.

I refer to Miss Brown, of Fulham, and the hospital nurses of Willesden.

Miss Brown is a member of that small but very earnest sect known as [Plymouth Brethren](#). She is – or was – a cook employed at a children’s hospital in Fulham.

She was a good cook as cooks go. And as good cooks go, she has gone. But not for the usual reasons.

She has been dismissed because, confronted with the alternative of joining a union or being sacked, she refused to join the union. No member of the Brown family, I may say, would hesitate to accept a challenge like that! And in Miss Brown's case her religious convictions left her no alternative, anyway.

The [Plymouth Brethren](#) believe that God is concerned with each one of them individually. They believe that their job in life is to do His will. They believe that God cares for them and will look after them. They believe that it is wrong for them to join such bodies as trade unions.

Now the first three of these four points constitute sound and impeccable Christian doctrine.

The fourth is debatable. But a man or woman is entitled to have, and to act on, an honest view of the matter.

It was no less a Christian than Martin Luther who wrote: "Neither Pope, nor bishop, nor any man has a right to dictate even a syllable to the Christian without his own consent. Any other course is pure tyranny."

So think I. So thinks every man who respects the honest convictions of others, whether he agrees with them or not. But so does not think the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

"Neither the General Council nor the Congress can admit the claim that a workman ought to be free to join a union or not as he pleases." So runs the Brighton "White Paper." And because they say this, and because the Fulham Council act on it, Miss Brown has to choose between surrendering the religious convictions of a lifetime, and being thrown out on the streets.

Now what strength, I wonder, does any trade union believe it will attract to itself by compelling the adherence of such women as Miss Brown?

What sort of mind is it that can deliberately inflict upon such women as Miss Brown the choice between such alternatives?



IS not its spirit the same, in kind if not in degree, as that against which we have been fighting a long and costly war? – the spirit which says “Do what I tell you, or I will make it impossible for you to live!” And what is there in common between this spirit and the spirit which built the trade union movement of Britain?

The hospital nurses at Willesden are not, so far as I know, [Plymouth Brethren](#) or [Plymouth Sisters](#). But they appear to be thoroughly British. For they flatly rejected a similar ultimatum. They would not join. Nor would they go – without being pushed, anyway.

Their firm stand has secured the first success in what I predict will be a widespread opposition among the workers to the Closed Shop. And this is the way of it.

To Mr. Aneurin Bevan, Minister of Health, the problem of getting enough nurses for the hospitals is one big headache.

Nursing isn't popular with young girls to-day. The reason? Bad pay? Yes. But still more, Florence Nightingale. For that brave and worthy woman, as the price of getting the brass-hatted War Office

woodenheads of her day to have women nurses at all, had to constitute her nursing force on quasi-military lines.

Her shade walks the wards and the corridors of the hospital still, and the rigid and unimaginative discipline of the nursing service makes recruits in sufficient numbers very hard to get. So Aneurin cannot have tyrannical local authorities making the situation worse by this kind of bovine stupidity.

As the result of some “arranging” behind the scenes it has been decided that membership of the Royal College of Nursing (of which the girls are members) will suffice. This body, it is said is a negotiating body. And that makes it all right.

Nobody will be more surprised than the Royal College of Nursing to learn this – for that college never has been a negotiating body, is not a negotiating body, and does not want to be a negotiating body. But the fiction will serve, in the eyes of an indiscriminating public, to cover the retreat of the council in the face of the determined opposition of these lassies at Willesden!



BUT is this kind of tragedy and this kind of farce to be duplicated all over Britain?

Do not the unions know, from the stubborn and very proper resistance their members have put up in the past to tyranny from the employers, that this kind of thing will evoke an immense reaction?

There are multitudes of good, sound trade unionists who have only to be told that they have got to be trade unionists for them to cease membership – just to show that they will not be told what they are to do.

There are multitudes of non-unionists who can be attracted to the unions, but who will set their face like a flint against this sort of pressure. And does not the Socialist Party see that this kind of thing will be used to justify the charge of “incipient totalitarianism” which was used against them at the last election?

Or is this part of a conscious and deliberate movement towards the destruction of liberty?

Are we to have industry nationalised by the political wing of Labour, while the workmen are conscripted into the unions by industrial wing of Labour? And are the two wings then to keep the workers in the nationalised industries “in order” by throwing dissentients out of the unions, and thus, under the Closed Shop, out of their jobs?

I do not answer these questions. But I warn both wings of the Labour movement that thousands of workmen are beginning to ask them. And that, as the days go by, they will increasingly demand an answer.

Western Mail, Cardiff, 19 May 1948, p. 2, Wales Day by Day

WHEN the German prisoners of war left Llanmartin camp, in Monmouthshire, some months ago an inscribed scroll signed by an officer was handed to a Newport resident. It read – “In the name of the German officers, prisoners of war at Camp 184 Llanmartin, in the name of the Caerleon visitors, I have great pleasure to express our heartfelt thanks to the [Plymouth Brethren](#), especially to the Francis family, for their noble-minded help and hospitality. The great friendship enacted with loving kindness and true charity gave us a beautiful place beside our Christian friends in England. May our unity continue beyond any time and borders and may our friendship formed in the name of Jesus Christ last forever. (Signed) Horst Fichtuer.” {sic} – The grammar {*one word illegible, probably “is”*} faulty but the sentiments are {*one word illegible, perhaps “very” or “most”*} sound.

SCOTTISH MINERS STRIKING

4,000 stop work in Lanark mines

683 threaten withdrawal in Midlothian

Yesterday 4,000 miners in ten Lanarkshire collieries ceased work over a wage claim. 680 miners in a Midlothian colliery stopped work because three employees, who are [Plymouth Brethren](#), refused to join the Miners' Union.

Work ceased at the Lanarkshire collieries yesterday through the spread of an unofficial strike among the on-cost workers.

Officials estimated that 4,000 tons of coal will be lost daily until the 800 striking on-cost men and the underground general labourers return.

The strikers, whose demands include a minimum weekly wage of £7 15s for the lower paid workers, are reported to be demanding a fourteen days' notice of strike by Scotland's 25,000 miners be given.

UNION CALL FOR RETURN

Officials of the Scottish Area of N.U.M. called on the strikers yesterday to return to work immediately.

The Scottish President said the Scottish Delegate Conference supported the demand, and the National Executive had been instructed to act.

The question affected the entire coalfield, and negotiations could only be conducted at a national level.

Officials wanted the strikers to return to allow negotiations to continue.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN AND UNION

UNION OFFICIALS SERVE WITHDRAWAL NOTICES

At Birghlee colliery, Midlothian, 683 miners will stop work on Tuesday unless three employees, who are [Plymouth Brethren](#), join the N.U.M. before then.

They have repeatedly resisted efforts to get them into the Union, and a ballot resulted in 348 being in favour of stopping work and 203 against.

Union officials gave the manager seven days' notice of the withdrawal of labour on behalf of the men employed there.

{N. U. M. = National Union of Mineworkers}

The Londonderry Sentinel, 22 Sep 1949, p. 5

5,129 SCOTTISH MINERS ON STRIKE

8,000 TONS OF COAL LOST

The strike of workers in the Scottish coalfields spread yesterday to involve sixteen pits.

The Scottish Division of the National Coal Board stated yesterday that 5,129 were idle and that more than 8,000 tons of coal would be lost.

At Burgley Colliery, Loanhead, 680 miners stopped work yesterday because three men members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) had refused to join the N.U.M.

Evening Telegraph, Dundee, 22 Sep 1949, p. 7

THREE MEN TO LEAVE PIT

The three miners at Burghlee Colliery, Midlothian, who on religious grounds refused to join the National Union of Mineworkers, undertook to-day to leave the pit.

It is expected the 660 miners on strike because of them will resume on Monday.

The three miners are members of the [Plymouth Brethern](#) {sic}.

Mr Thomas Bennett told a reporter to-day that he and his two colleagues were still adamant in their determination not to join the union, and to end the dispute they had all handed in seven days' notice of termination of their contract.

Belfast Telegraph, 10 Aug 1950, p. 7

TROUBLE AT ROVER WORKS

Over Vehicle Builder

Between 600 and 700 workers at Solihull (near Birmingham) works of the Rover Motor Co. went on strike to-day after a dispute about the continued employment of a vehicle builder who, after joining the [Plymouth Brethren](#), resigned from the National Union of Vehicle Builders.

The Coventry Evening Telegraph, 11 Aug 1950, p. 6

A MAN'S FAITH

THE [Plymouth Brethren](#) are an austere sect of devout people who live according to strict principles. A worker in the employ of the Rover Motor Company recently joined them, and decided that membership of a particular trade union was not consistent with his religious views.

People whose religious convictions are so strong as to cause them to renounce anything are rare enough to-day. They deserve respect. Their positive attitude shames the flabby acquiescence or plain indifference of most of us.

This man might be right or wrong in thinking that membership of a trade union was inconsistent with his faith. The point is that he acted according to his conscience, which, we like to tell ourselves, is the right of any man in a free country.

There is an element of lunacy in the behaviour of 700 men coming out on strike over an issue like this. The man with a conscience has evidently offended the gods of those who led his workmates to withhold their labour. But we prefer his manly attitude to the sheep-like conduct of men who let themselves be led around because, apparently, they have no overriding convictions about either faith or works.

The Shields Evening News [BNA Shields Daily News], North Shields, 11 Aug 1950, p. 2

PERSONAL RIGHTS

ONE of the worst forms of unofficial strikes has begun at a Birmingham works – a strike over a man's personal faith. The man having joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#) sincerely holds the belief that it is wrong to continue his membership of a trade union and resigned.

It is natural that his action should cause resentment. Loyal members of an association do not like resignations, withdrawals of support, desertions and acts smacking of apostasy, and one cannot expect trade unionists to be indifferent to loss of members. Their strength as bargainers depend on their numbers. As workers they like to speak with one voice.

Concede, if you like, that unity, unanimity and solidarity are virtues. But you must also recognise others and higher ones. What has happened in the Birmingham assembly shop is a clash between a trade union virtue and an individual one.

The strikers concentrating on the interests of their union, overlook the fact that a man should be true to himself, that he owes a loyalty to his own sincere personal belief, and that a man is more important as a man than as a trade unionist.

“Forget your individuality,” the strikers seem to say, “modify your religious belief and retain your membership of the union.” They may not express their attitude in such words, but they express it in their action to bring pressure on the bosses to discharge the man.

Let us hope that the strikers will realise that they are in effect invading a man’s soul, that they seek like the Russian political bosses to dictate what a man should think or believe. If the strikers are right and if other trade unionists are of the same opinion a brother and his family can be deprived of a living in this country.

Let them admit that as they have the right of association others have the right of dissent and dissociation.

Liverpool Echo, 22 Aug 1950, p. 4, Points from Letters

FREEDOM FOR FAITH

I want to refer to the case of Mr. James McElroy, who works for the Rover Car Company, near Birmingham.

I understand he has become a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and is now prevented by his conscience from remaining a member of a trades union, which caused 1,100 to strike. The strikers have lost more than he has, namely the respect of decent-minded people everywhere – THANK YOU.

Daily Mirror, London, 30 Jan 1951, p. 7

I'M A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN HE SAYS

A YOUNG Renfrew apprentice quantity surveyor told a Conscientious Objectors' tribunal at Glasgow yesterday that he was "dead to this world."

John T. Davidson, of Oxford-road, Renfrew, said he took no part in anything temporal, and had no interest in gambling, smoking, drinking, theatres, cinemas, dance halls and football.

Asked what he did in his spare time, he said he occasionally went walking, but even then conversation was always concerned with the Gospel.

He read only religious books and occasional newspapers.

His parents were also members of the sect known as the [Open Brethren](#). He added that he was assured his citizenship was in Heaven.

"This world holds nothing for me. I am only passing through," he maintained. He did not have a sweetheart, and was not interested "in that sort of thing."

Davidson was given exemption providing he took on non-combatant duties.

Tyrone Man Awarded Custody of Children

Charles Campbell Patterson (51), owner of an 80-acre farm at Rathfraggan, Fintona, was granted a conditional order of habeas corpus in the Ulster High Court on Friday week, requiring his 39-year-old wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Patterson, to produce four children of their marriage – two boys and two girls – stated to be at present living with her in her sister's home at Mullaghmeena, Omagh.

The Court was told that the applicant had prevented his wife from taking away a fifth child.

Mr. C. B. Shaw (instructed by Mr. A. F. Colhoun, Omagh), for the applicant, read an affidavit in which he stated that he was married on April 9, 1941, at the Registrar's Office, Omagh. He was then a Presbyterian and his wife a Roman Catholic. Later he became a Roman Catholic and attended the Roman Catholic Church with his wife for a number of years. He was now a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The marriage at first was reasonably happy, but after about a year his wife started to leave him for considerable periods without cause or warning. She had deserted him on an average of two or three times a year up till the beginning of July, 1948. In that month she went to her mother's house at Aughnamoyle, taking the children with her and selling his geese, fowl, ducks and turkeys before leaving.

The affidavit referred to an occasion in July, 1949, when, the applicant alleged, his wife insisted on one of the children going to the Roman Catholic Church. There was an argument and his wife threatened to beat the boy and attempted to strike applicant himself.

On November 17, 1949, she again left taking the children with her and all the bedclothes in the house, as well as some fowl and a quantity of potatoes and turf. She later informed his solicitor that she was not prepared to go back to live with applicant unless he signed an undertaking that the children be brought up Roman Catholics and that he would pay her a fixed sum weekly. Applicant did not do so.

His wife subsequently returned, but about March, 1950, she took away two of the children without his knowledge or consent and left them in the custody of her mother. He believed that her reason for that was to prevent the children attending the [Plymouth Brethren](#) Church, in which faith he intended them to be brought up.

When he went to Aughnamoyle to take the children home again his wife's mother refused to hand them over and shouted abuse and threw stones at him. At that time his wife and the remainder of the children were still residing with him. When he taxed her about having removed the two children, she defied him, saying that what she did with the children was none of his business.

On April 1, 1950, his wife again left him to reside with her mother, taking the remainder of the children with her, together with the bedclothes, curtains, and other household goods. She told him on a later occasion that the whole trouble was due to religious differences between them, and that she would always remain a Roman Catholic. He stated that he had joined the [Brethren](#) and intended to remain a Protestant. They lived together for a time after that, but on April 5, 1951, his wife again left him and had not since returned.

Doctor's plea to tribunal fails

A 23-year-old Perthshire hospital doctor was told by a Conscientious Objectors' Tribunal in Glasgow yesterday that his statement in support of his plea for deferment of National Service was phrased in excessive language.

The tribunal refused the plea of Dr Robert Gardiner, staff physician at Bridge of Earn Hospital, to be entered on the roll of conscientious objectors.

Commenting on the statement written by Dr Gardiner, Professor G. A. Montgomery, Q.C., chairman, said, "If it had not been through information from the Ministry of Labour we would not have known from this statement that you were a doctor."

Dr Gardiner told the tribunal that he had been a member of the [Exclusive Brethren](#) for eight years. He agreed that he had been granted five years' deferment in September 1946, while he took his degrees, but that he had not then asked to be registered as a conscientious objector because he had not the courage to do so.

"MELODRAMATIC"

After asking Dr Gardiner several questions about the statement, Dr Boyd, a member of the tribunal told him – "This statement is not the statement of an educated man. It is very melodramatic indeed,

and full of extravagant phrases. We expect a much higher standard from you than we do from other people because you have a university degree.”

Dr Boyd quoted part of a sentence from the statement – “possibly hurling them into a lost eternity” – and remarked that he was at a loss to understand it.

When Dr Gardiner replied that he thought his statement was in simple language, Professor Montgomery broke in to comment – “It is not simple. It is exaggerated and complicated.”

Asked what he would do if his application were refused, Dr Gardiner said that he would abide by the decision of the tribunal and serve in the capacity given him because his conscience would be clear.

The only objection he had to serving in the Royal Army Medical Corps was the possibility of his having to take up arms in an emergency.

BUCKS WOMAN DIES IN VESTRY AFTER BAPTISM

“HEART BADLY DISEASED”, SAYS PATHOLOGIST

A 69-YEARS-OLD Wavendon woman collapsed and died after she had been totally immersed in water when being baptised as a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) at Hanslope the Coroner for North Bucks, Mr. E. T. Ray, was told.

He was holding an inquest at Newport Pagnell Police Station on Mrs. Lilian Elsie Sulman, of The Nook, Wavendon.

Hugh Sulman, of 3, Hardwick-road, Woburn Sands, said his mother had a bad heart and about three years ago she attended Aylesbury Hospital, where they told her to take life quietly.

Her doctor had advised her not to be baptised.

Mrs. Gladys Short, of 8, Council-houses, Lower-end, Wavendon, domestic help for Mrs. Sulman, said she knew Mrs. Sulman was going to be baptised, but Mrs. Sulman had asked her not to say anythin{g,} not even to her son.

She and Mrs. Sulman went together to Hanslope. Mrs. Sulman semed {sic} quite all right until during the service she asked for a tablet.

Three other people were baptised and then Mrs. Sulman. They asked her to sit in the water. At that moment witness said she saw a change come over Mrs. Sulman, who went up the steps out of the water and leant on witness's arm. Witness helped her to the vestry, where she slumped down.

Mrs. Sulman's head was immersed under the water, but only for a second. She had changed in the vestry into some underwear and a mackintosh and bathing-cap.

ONLY IN THE WATER ABOUT TWO MINUTES

Describing the baptism, an Elder of the Brethren, Arthur George Kingston of 33, Castlethorpe-road, Hanslope, said hot water was put in the baptistry. Just before the service began, some cold water was put in so that the water was not too warm.

Mrs. Sulman was the last of five to be baptised. She seemed to behave quite normally and was clearer than the others in her responses.

She was only in the water up to two minutes. When asked by Mr. Ray why the Brethren insisted upon baptism in this way, Mr. Kingston said that it was a command in the Testament.

Mr. Ray: Has it occurred to you that it would be better to have a certificate from a doctor? – Yes, but they are only baptised at their own wish; we never press them.

Dr. R. M. Heggie, director of pathology at Northampton General Hospital, said death was caused by heart failure due to the hardening of the arteries and was accelerated by immersion. The heart was very badly diseased.

There was only the minimum amount of blood getting through. Any amount of exertion would take a tremendous toll on the resistance of Mrs. Sulman.

No doctor would have given a certificate to say that she was fit to undergo baptism.

THE REASON

Mr. Ray said, "I am sure that her son would not have approved of her undergoing this baptism, and that was the reason she asked her help not to tell anyone.

"It is part of the belief that people should be baptised in this way, and I fully accept that. I fully accept they do not baptise anyone unless they are satisfied they are sincere and fit persons.

"What I cannot understand is why no medical certificate is sought to be obtained before immersion of a person of this sort.

"You might say that Mrs. Sulman would be alive if it had not been for what happened on Saturday{,} and you are probably right. She might well have been alive now, and I am satisfied from the medical evidence that her death was accelerated by that service.

TIME OF BAPTISM

"Mrs. Sulman left her home and then on a bad night she travelled by van and coach to Hanslope and there changed her clothes and it was 8.10 p.m. before her turn came.

"If a small degree of thought had been given she might well have been baptised earlier{,}

“She descended into the water, and I am satisfied that the water was as it should be, and we were told it was not too chilly, but I do not see how it could have been very warm. I find that her death was partly due to her immersion in this ceremony.

“Her death was due to misadventure. I would only add a strong suggestion – I have no power unfortunately to do more – that before anyone of advanced age is baptised, a medical certificate should be sought as to fitness.

Kirkintilloch Man at English Court Martial

“REFUSED TO OBEY LAWFUL ORDER”

When James Thompson Ferguson arrived at Park Hall Camp, Oswestry, on April 28, he had already written to the C.O. stating that he would not join the army. And when he was ordered to proceed to the Quartermaster's Store to draw his kit and put it on he refused to do so.

At a court martial at the camp on Thursday, Ferguson, aged 19, of Kirkintilloch, declined to plead on a charge of refusing to obey a lawful order. In accordance with court procedure a plea of “Not guilty” was entered.

Prosecuting, Major G. W. J. M. Stewart called Major P. L. B. Thornhill, who said he ordered Ferguson to accompany him to the Quartermaster's Stores, draw his kit and put it on. Ferguson refused. The order was repeated but Ferguson again refused and after explaining to him that orders in the Army had to be obeyed Ferguson was placed under close arrest.

In the witness box Ferguson declined to give evidence on oath. It was against the principles of his religion, he said, to swear oaths, but he would give evidence on affirmation.

The court was adjourned for ten minutes and on resuming Ferguson was allowed to affirm.

“A Conscientious Objector”

He was, he said, a conscientious objector, which he became in July, 1946. Conscientious objection to military service was practised and taught by the church with which he was associated, and he had stated his case in front of two tribunals, but his case was not accepted. This did not alter his views and on reporting to the unit on April 28, he refused to sign forms as “Gunner Ferguson.” He admitted that he did not carry out Major Thornhill’s order. This was because he did not reckon himself to be a soldier. “Although I highly esteem those honourable people who serve their queen and country in this way,” he stated, “I cannot as one guided by the word of God be a member of Her Majesty’s armed forces in a clear conscience. I herewith trust that you see my mind clearly in this matter and give me an opportunity of stating my case again before another tribunal.”

Replying to questions by his defending officer, Ferguson said he had used money he brought with him and had had no army pay. Before reporting to Oswestry he had written to the commanding officer telling of his beliefs. The church was an offshoot of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

Also giving evidence on affirmation, called as a witness to Ferguson’s character, Clifford Charles Beadsworth, of Ralston Avenue, Glasgow, an accountant, said he was also one of the pastors of the Church of God in Glasgow and the circuit of which the church in Kirkintilloch forms part. He had known Ferguson for two years and his family longer than that. Ferguson was of good character and an active church worker among young people. From many conversations with him witness knew that he held his views very strongly and witness believed this to be the cause of Ferguson’s present action.

Three Months' Imprisonment

In his final address Capt. J. N. W. Moss, defending, said it was clear why Ferguson acted as he did. He therefore asked the court that Ferguson be discharged; if not, that he should be sentenced to 96 days' detention, entitling him to another hearing by tribunal.

Ferguson was found guilty and sentenced to *three* months' imprisonment. Finding and sentence are subject to confirmation.

TO A VICTORIAN DUCHESS

My Dear Duchess: Social and Political Letters to the Duchess of Manchester, 1858–1869. Edited by A. L. Kennedy. (Murray. 21s.)

By SIR PHILIP MAGNUS

{...}

Lord Clarendon {...} was an inimitable gossip on paper. He describes how he gave offence in the House of Lords to an eccentric fellow-peer, who was a [Plymouth Brother](#), by calling him a Yarmouth Bloater; and he is particularly interesting on the subject of Napoleon III's ill-fated intervention in Mexico. {...}

{Lord Clarendon was George William Frederick Villiers, 4th Earl of Clarendon (1800–1870); the Duchess of Manchester was Louise Auguste Friederike von Alten (1832–1911), wife of William Drogo Montagu, 7th Duke of Manchester (1823–1890).}

The Northern Whig, Belfast, 23 Jan 1957, p. 4

B. T.-H. men go back – talks to-day

“RELIGIOUS OBJECTION” STRIKE

BECAUSE a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) refused to join the Amalgamated Engineering Union, about 800 workers, skilled and semi-skilled machine operators and tool makers, staged a 24-hour strike at the British Thomson-Houston factory at Larne.

At a meeting addressed by officials of the Engineering Union and the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union in Larne Town Hall yesterday it was unanimously decided to resume work this morning. The meeting decided against resuming night shift duties last night to lend weight to their case.

A conference with the unions' representatives and the management will take place this afternoon, and the men will be informed of the outcome at a meeting to take place at the factory gates to-night.

The manager of the factory, Mr. D. R. S. Turner, said yesterday that the A.E.U., of which most of the men are members, had no dispute with the management.

He added that, while they preferred employees to belong to a union, they upheld the workers' freedom of choice in the matter.

Ten members of the Electrical Trade Union came out in sympathy yesterday afternoon.

Strike over non-union worker

1,000 B. T.-H. MEN OUT AT LARNE

THE refusal of a trainee welder at the British Thomson-Houston factory at Larne to join a trade union caused 1,000 workers, the majority of whom are members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union{,} to go out on strike again after they had returned to work for one day.

The man's refusal is on conscientious grounds, as he is a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The men staged a 24-hour strike on Tuesday last and returned to work on Wednesday morning, pending the result of a conference between representatives of three trade unions, the A.E.U., the A.T.G.W.U. and the E.T.U., and the management. But after a discussion lasting more than three hours, they failed to reach agreement.

LOCAL DECISION

The decision to strike was taken by the local district committee of the A.E.U.

Mr. D.R.S. Turner, manager of the factory, said yesterday that the sole reason for the strike was the refusal of the company to concede to trade union officials' request that a non-union worker be discharged. He considered the man had not in any way violated the company's conditions of employment, which did not compel employees to belong to a society or union.

Mr. Turner said that, while he preferred employees to belong to a union, he upheld the individuals' freedom of choice in the matter.

At a factory gate meeting at noon yesterday the men formed a strike committee of 14 shop stewards and decided to picket the factory entrance.

The Northern Whig, Belfast, 26 Jan 1957, p. 1

Larne strike spreads to contract firms

THE strike at the British Thomson-Houston factory at Larne spread yesterday to workers employed by contracting firms working on the site. About 100 steel erectors employed by Harland and Wolff, Ltd., Belfast, and 12 engineers employed by Babcock and Wilcox, the heating installation firm, withdrew their labour in the afternoon.

Mr. Tom M'Connell, the spokesman for the strikers, said yesterday that they wished to make it clear that, although Alexander Muir, whose refusal to join a union on conscientious grounds because he was a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), sparked off the dispute, the unions had no quarrel with that body.

The strikers realized that many members of the [Brethren](#) were good trade unionists, but Mr. Muir's attitude was difficult to understand.

PERSONAL OPINION

A leading member of the [Brethren](#), commenting on the statement, said that Mr. Muir's action was purely an expression of his own personal opinion and was in no way the opinion of the Larne [Brethren](#).

"In fact," he added, "in all my years with the [Brethren](#), I have never heard the question of trade unionism raised. There is nothing in our constitution to prevent a man belonging to a trade union."

It is expected that consideration will be given to a recommendation from the Larne district committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions to the Ulster district committee that no members of a union affiliated to the Confederation will be allowed to work in any way at the B. T.-H. factory.

An executive meeting of the Confederation will be held on Monday to consider the dispute.

Financial support has been received from the Belfast district committee.

{...}

Birmingham Libel Action Withdrawn

After Mr. Justice Finnemore had suggested that it would be in everyone's interest if a libel action at Birmingham Assizes could be settled out of court, counsel in the case agreed, after seven hours of negotiation between the parties, for the action to be withdrawn.

The action was brought by Mr. George Arthur Edmund Parkes and his wife, Mrs. Elsie Parkes, of 112, Brookhill Road, Washwood Heath, against the elders of two places of worship attended by members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) – the Camp Hill Gospel Hall and the Green Lane Gospel Hall, Small Heath.

They claimed damages alleging they had been libelled in letters sent to other members and to Mrs. Parkes herself, following her marriage to Mr. Parkes in December, 1948. The action was withdrawn, each side paying its own costs.

Judge's Pleasure

Mr. Justice Finnemore expressed his pleasure at the settlement and said he felt sure that had the case been ventilated in public it would have done much harm to the religious cause all the parties so sincerely believed in.

Mr. G. R. Swanwick, Q.C., for the plaintiffs, said they had agreed to the settlement in the cause of peace.

Mr. G. G. Baker, Q.C., for the elders, said they felt they had a perfect answer to the action and that it should never have been brought.

Boys made bid to burn Gospel Hall – Fined

“THIS is a shocking business,” remarked Mr. J. Ritchie Wilson, R.M., at Keady Juvenile Court yesterday when four boys, two aged 11, one aged 13 and one aged nine admitted causing malicious damage to a [Plymouth Brethren](#) Gospel Hall at Drumacavan, near Keady.

Head Constable Keightley, who prosecuted, said that two boards had been removed from the back of the wooden hall, spent matches were found on the grass and there was a smell of oil. Ten panes of glass had been broken.

Statements made by the defendants revealed that one of them had gone to the hut with the intention of burning it. One boy had matches and another had oil. Two boards were removed and grass pulled and set at the hole. Oil was poured over the grass and set alight. The boys took fright and stamped the flames out. One of them went into the building and scattered Bibles and Hymn Books about.

The Head Constable said the [Plymouth Brethren](#) were not asking compensation for the damage.

Asked by the R.M. why he had gone to the hall and damaged it, the eldest defendant replied: “It just came into my head.” The youngest boy replied: “I did not think it was any harm.”

The R.M. fined each of the boys 40s. and bound them over for one year.

Belfast Telegraph, 16 May 1958, p. 4

WE BELIEVE ...

The Brethren – a ‘back to the Bible’ movement

THOMAS ELWOOD

tells of the convictions and history of a sect which began in Dublin 130 years ago

THE SECTION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH called Brethren had its origin in Dublin about 130 years ago, and within the next 25 years had founded local churches, or Assemblies throughout the British Isles and in many parts of the continent of Europe. Its beginnings were simple indeed and might be described generally as a “back to the Bible” movement.

A group of churchmen and scholars who were in the habit of meeting for informal Bible study in Lady Powerscourt’s drawing-room were impressed by the simplicity of the New Testament narratives concerning the early Church, and became imbued with the desire to restore that simplicity.

They realised, of course, that in the intervening centuries considerable development had taken place in the Church, especially in its ritual and also in its organisation and government, much of it apparently good and desirable. To their way of thinking, however, all this detracted from the simplicity and purity of Apostolic worship.

In brief, they believed that the New Testament contained all that the Church needed for its guidance, and they determined to reproduce, as far as possible, the pattern of early Church life which they found there.

This implied, of course, a repudiation of all kinds of organisation and a rejection of forms of worship – however sanctioned by custom and tradition – unless in their view these were to be found in the New Testament.

It may be said at this point that this broadly is still the position taken by [Brethren](#), and is perhaps where the difference is most marked between them and many other Christian bodies; for, whereas most Christian churches have found it convenient or even necessary to formulate their beliefs and practices in a written constitution or confession of faith, [Brethren](#) have consistently refused to do this, preferring to rely on the sacred text alone, and “What saith the Scriptures?” is with them the touchstone by which everything must be tested.

In applying the simple pattern of the New Testament Church to modern conditions, [Brethren](#) not only regarded the divisions that separate the Church catholic into so many denominations as unnecessary, but in the early days of the movement they refused even to recognise any such divisions!

Holding with intense conviction that every converted person is a member of the Church of Christ, they welcomed all such to their communion quite irrespective of any other religious connection.

With them the “oneness of the people of God” became a kind of watchword. In all this there was, no doubt, a reaction against the extreme sectarianism which, as is well known, prevailed in the early part of the 19th century, and which the later great revival of 1859 did much to break down.

With the passage of time, however, this truth has unfortunately become somewhat obscured, and different practices now obtain among [Brethren](#), some still maintaining the original order of an “open” communion, and some excluding all except their own members.

[Brethren](#) differ from most other Christian bodies in that they have no ordained ministers, and the pastoral and other work connected with each Assembly is undertaken by its members.

They recognise, of course, that some are better fitted than others for certain duties, but on the whole believe in an open ministry; that is, that in meetings for worship or for ministry from the Scriptures there should be liberty for each brother present to speak, to lead in prayer, or to ask for a hymn to be sung, according as he feels led to do so by the Holy Spirit.

The Lord’s Supper is observed weekly, this being the principal meeting and the one around which the life of each Assembly revolves. Indeed, it could be said that it is this observance of the Lord’s Supper that constitutes an Assembly, for [Brethren](#) believe that it is competent for any number of Christians, whether few or many, to meet together for this purpose and by so doing to form an Assembly.

Gospel Halls

As to the doctrinal questions that agitate the Christian community in these days, **Brethren** are fundamentalists, a term which is sufficiently well understood, and indicates their opposition to what is sometimes called modern liberal theology.

In addition, they are actively evangelical, believing firmly that the Church's mission is to preach the Gospel, and this attitude is reflected in the fact that their meeting places are usually called "Gospel Halls."

Indeed, it was in this connection that the nickname "**Plymouth Brethren**" was coined (a name which, by the way, is repudiated by the body), for, when the movement spread to England, the **Brethren** in Plymouth were more than usually active, going far afield to preach in towns and villages, and soon the name "**Plymouth Brethren**" came to be applied to the body generally.

This zeal for the propagation of the Gospel soon found expression in missionary effort, and the earliest **Brethren** missionaries went to Bagdad in 1828.

At the present time there are about 1,200 men and women in the field, working in practically every country open to the foreign missionary.

Here, however, the **Brethren** dislike of organisation is seen, for no central body or committee controls this large missionary force. Each worker goes forth on his own responsibility, believing he is called of God to this particular service.

He neither receives nor is promised any allowance or salary, but expects only that the Lord whose call he has obeyed will see to his financial support by gifts from one source or another.

In the matter of Church government, the spiritual and temporal affairs of each Assembly are looked after by elders, referred to collectively as “the Oversight.” It is, however, inherent in the Brethren conception of New Testament principles that each company or Assembly should be entirely free to manage its own affairs.

There is, therefore, no federation or formal union of Assemblies, though a common acceptance of basic truth and uniformity in Church order and worship foster a unity of spirit and bind the whole community together in a fellowship that is recognised all over the world.

Reference has already been made to the evangelistic activities of Brethren, and, due mainly to this, Brethren communities are to be found in most countries, many being in Central Europe, and even behind the Iron Curtain. In Ulster they number about 18,000, meeting in some 130 Assemblies.

Next Friday – The Reformed Presbyterian Church, by Professor John McIlmoyle.

‘SHUT OUT OF GOSPEL HALL’

Couple Accuse [Plymouth Brethren](#) Under 1812 Act

A man who joined the [Plymouth Brethren](#) in 1913 summoned four members of the sect’s Gospel Hall in Miles Street, Camp Hill, at Birmingham Stipendiary Magistrate’s Court yesterday, alleging that they prevented him and his wife from entering the hall to attend a Sunday morning service.

Mr. George Arthur Edmond Parkes, aged 65, of Brookhill Road, Ward End, Birmingham, brought the summons under the Places of Religious Worship Act, 1812, alleging that on April 1 last between 10.45 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. the four men summoned were persons teaching or preaching at a meeting of persons for religious worship at the hall, the door of which was then locked, bolted, or barred or otherwise fastened, to prevent him and his wife, Elsie Mary Parkes, from entering during the meeting.

The four defendants, who pleaded not guilty, were Sidney W. Oliver, of St. Benedicts Road, Small Heath; Thomas McGann, of Somerville Road Small Heath; Archibald Hill, of Charles Road, Small Heath; and William Christopher Bourne, of Banks Road, Small Heath.

The Stipendiary Magistrate, Mr. J.F. Milward, adjourned the hearing to June 8 against Hill, McGann and Oliver, to consider whether they were “teaching or preaching” under the terms of the Act.

‘Not Preaching’

Mr. John York, defending, submitted that there was no evidence that they were doing so, as calling for a hymn and uttering a prayer were not teaching or preaching in the ordinary natural sense.

In reply to this point, Mr. D.H. Stembridge, counsel for Mr. Parkes, said that if a man recited a prayer he was either teaching or preaching. Teaching was an omnibus expression in worship. People gained something from the recitation of a prayer. A teacher imparted the Word to the congregation, and the congregation received that Word. If “preaching” alone had been used in the section of the Act, that would deal with the sermon. “Teaching” covered the other parts of the service.

The Stipendiary observed that there was a long history behind the Act, and Mr. York said: “The evil which this Act is designed to prevent is the dissemination of false doctrine behind closed doors.”

Opening the case, Mr. Stembridge said that local members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) met at the Gospel Hall in Miles Street, where they held morning and evening services on Sundays. There was no minister in the accepted sense but the church was governed by elders.

The form of service was that any member could take an active part in the service by reciting prayers, reading from the Scriptures, and preaching from the Scriptures. During the service there were various meditations and a form of Communion.

Re-married

Trouble between Mr. Parkes and other members of the church seemed to stem primarily from 1948, after he had obtained a divorce the previous year on the grounds of desertion, and married a Miss Hughes, a practising member of the church, on December 4, 1948.

“It became quite clear to both of them that other members of the church expressed open disapproval of this marriage in many ways.” Certain High Court proceedings were commenced but were not proceeded with. It was quite apparent to Mr. and Mrs. Parkes that other members of the church wished to exclude them from their church.

“Since 1958 Mr. and Mrs. Parkes have been unable to attend service owing to locking or barring of the doors,” Mr. Stembridge said. “Mr. Parkes said that he had never had a fair trial with regard to his marriage. There was correspondence between solicitors on both sides, but no conclusion has come about and right up to this day Mr. and Mrs. Parkes have been refused admission to the services on a Sunday.”

On April 1 Mr. and Mrs. Parkes went to the Gospel Hall. There was a gatekeeper on duty at the iron gate, and they were prevented from gaining admission. A private enquiry agent saw that they were denied access, but the agent and his wife were allowed in to attend the service.

In evidence, Mr. Parkes said that after his marriage to Miss Hughes in 1948 a general attitude had been shown by a circular being sent round to 25 different assemblies of the church, accusing him and his wife “more or less” of living in sin.

Denied Access

The High Court action which was not proceeded with followed in 1957, and after that he and his wife saw that they would have to go to the hall and face the trouble at its source. For the last three years and five months he had not been able to get in, except on three occasions when he slipped past the “sentry.”

Cross examined by Mr. York, he agreed that during 1957, following the High Court action, he had gone to the hall exhibiting placards bearing Biblical texts, such as “The ruler must be just,” and “A lying tongue is an abomination to the Lord.” He had done this until December, 1958. It was unusual for Brethren to display texts in their meeting places, but usual outside.

Mr. Parkes claimed that he had been “persecuted” since 1927 when he was the plaintiff in an action concerning the sect.

The case was then adjourned.

‘Barred from Church’ Case Ends: Decision on July 6

The Birmingham Stipendiary magistrate, Mr. J. F. Milward, yesterday adjourned until July 6 his decision in the case of the member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) who summoned four members of the sect’s Gospel Hall, Camp Hill, Birmingham, alleging that they prevented him and his wife from entering the hall to attend a Sunday service on April 1 this year.

The action was brought by Mr. George Arthur Edmond Parkes, aged 65, of Brookhill Road, Ward End, Birmingham, under the Places of Religious Worship Act, 1812.

He alleged that on April 1 four men whom he summoned were persons who were “teaching or preaching” at a religious meeting at the hall in Miles Street, Camp Hill, the door of which was barred to Mr. and Mrs. Parkes.

The defendants, all from Small Heath, Birmingham, pleaded not guilty. They were: Sidney Oliver, of St. Benedicts Road; Thomas McGann, of Somerville Road; Archibald Hill, of Charles Road, and William Christopher Bourne, of Banks Road.

At an earlier hearing which had been adjourned until yesterday, it had been stated that there had been trouble between Mr. Parkes and other members of the sect which seemed to stem primarily from 1948 when Mr. Parkes had obtained a divorce on the grounds of desertion and had married a Miss Hughes, who was a practising member of the Miles Street hall.

Mr. D. H. Stembridge, counsel for Mr. Parkes, said that it became clear that other members of the church expressed open disapproval of the marriage and it was apparent they wished to exclude the Parkes from their church. Since 1958, he said, the Parkes had been unable to attend service owing to locked or barred doors.

Mr. Bourne, aged 56, a grocery manager, a member of the church for 40 years and an elder at Camp Hill, said that on April 1 he had preached for 25 minutes. He had been aware that Mr. Parkes had been excluded from the church because it had been agreed among the [Brethren](#) that his conduct had been causing a disturbance.

Wore Texts

Asked how Mr. Parkes had caused a disturbance, he said: "He was wearing texts which we thought gave offence to certain people in the meeting, among the elders in the assembly."

Mr. John York, for the defendants: "Did he ever approach you and say he was ready to stop this wearing of texts?" – "I asked him to. He did not respond to that invitation.

Mr. Bourne said that following a High Court action in 1957, he had asked Mr. Parkes to take off the texts, but he had worn them the following Sunday morning. He said: "We have tried to show charity for him. We had a prayer for him last night."

Following a question from the Stipendiary, Mr. Bourne said: "If he would give us an undertaking that he would desist, the hall is open for him to come in."

Mr. Bourne, when questioned about the various texts that Mr. Parkes had worn, said that one he wore outside the church was: "They hate him that standeth at the gate."

'Objectionable'

Asked for whom the texts were intended, he said: "They were intended to draw attention to the fact that he was being kept outside the hall. Other things that happened were objectionable to us. He would gather little children together and speak to them on the problem of marriage and divorce."

Mr. Bourne agreed that since 1958 no one else had been excluded from the hall.

When asked by Mr. Stembridge: "Is it right you seek to exclude him because of his marriage to Mrs. Parkes?" Mr. Bourne replied: "No, certainly not. It was never in our minds at all."

Bible Rendering

Mr. Sidney Oliver said when questioned by Mr. Stembridge about the Parkes' marriage that the [Brethern](#) {sic} accepted the rendering in the Bible, St. Matthew 19.

Mr. Stembridge: "Are you saying you excluded Mrs. Parkes because she was living in sin?" – "I put forward the view held in Holy Scripture. I stand on the word of God. On that account she was put out."

“You have taken the law into your own hands by shutting out Mr. and Mrs. Parkes?” – “Yes. Although I was never acquainted with the Act of 1812, that if a person was causing a disturbance in the meeting, you had a right to keep them out.”

The Birmingham Post, County Edition, 9 Jun 1962, p. 10

CHURCH PLACARDS ‘DISTURBED SOLEMN SERVICES’ CLAIM

A 65-year-old member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) who had been barred from a Gospel Hall for over four years stood outside the hall carrying a placard which read “They hateth him that standeth at the gate,” the Birmingham Stipendiary, Mr. J. F. Milward, was told yesterday.

Mr. William Bourne, a church elder, said it was “a very suitable text,” for an attendant at the Gospel Hall, Camp Hill, had instructions to keep Mr. Parkes and his 60-year-old wife Elise {sic} from entering the building.

Mr. and Mrs. Parkes, of 112, Brookhill Road, Ward End, summonsed Mr. Bourne, of 117, Banks Road, and three other members of the church; Sidney Oliver, of 118, St. Benedicts Road; Thomas McGann, of 327, Somerville Road, and Archibald Hill, of 71, Charles Road, all of Hall Green, for barring their entry to the church.

This was counter to the 150-year-old Places of Religious Worship Act, Mr. Parkes claimed.

Decision Reserved

The four, all members of the Brethren, pleaded not guilty. Mr. Milward reserved his decision until July 6.

Senior elder, Mr. Oliver, a warehouseman, said that Mr. Parkes had been excluded from the church since 1958. For eighteen months before that he had sat in the most prominent place in the church with texts hung round his neck.

He was, Mr. Oliver claimed, “interfering with worship. We thought he might intrude in the partaking of the symbols, breaking bread and taking wine.”

In answer to a question from Mr. D. Stenbridge, for the Parkes, he said that Mrs. Parkes was “put out of the fellowship” because she had married Mr. Parkes, a divorced man.

Sometimes, Mr. Oliver claimed, when allowed in the church, Mr. Parkes would leave early, “stamping out noisily to try and cause a disturbance.”

‘Prayed for Him’

Mr. Bourne, a grocery manager, said that Mr. Parkes’s placards disturbed “solemn and precious” services. “We have sought to teach him charity. We prayed for Mr. Parkes at our meeting last night,” Mr. Bourne said.

Asked by Mr. Milward if they intended to bar Mr. Parkes for the rest of his life, Mr. Bourne said: “If he will give us an undertaking to desist from these things, the hall is open for him to come in.”

BRETHREN FOUND GUILTY OF BARRING CHURCH

'Narrow, Bitter Dispute'

Differences between members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#) which led to a court case were described by the Birmingham Stipendiary, Mr. J. F. Milward, yesterday as having been pursued with "narrowness, bitterness and lack of tolerance, tact and consideration for the feelings of others."

Holding that four of the members had been guilty of a breach of the Places of Religious Worship Act, 1812, in fastening doors of their church against a fellow-worshipper and his wife, the magistrate said he hoped that the future, would bring unity among the parties.

He granted each of the defendants an absolute discharge saying: "In the hope that both sides will make some effort to see the other's point of view I do not propose to impose any punishment upon these gentlemen."

Mr. George Arthur Edmond Parkes, aged 65, of Brookhill Road, Ward End, Birmingham, had brought a prosecution alleging that on April 1 this year the four defendants were teaching or preaching at the Gospel Hall, Camp Hill, during a religious service, the door to which was then locked, bolted or barred, or otherwise fastened, to prevent him and his wife, Mrs. Elsie Parkes, aged 60, from entering during the service.

Costs Refused

The defendants, all from Small Heath, Birmingham, who each pleaded not guilty, were Thomas McGann, of Somerville Road; Archibald Hill, of Charles Road; Christopher Bourne, of Bankes Road; and Sidney Oliver, of St. Benedicts Road.

On behalf of Mr. Parkes, Mr. D. H. Stembridge applied for costs, saying that his client had incurred a considerable sum of money in prosecuting the matter.

The Magistrate refused, remarking: "Mr. Parkes has to a very large extent brought this matter upon himself. I don't want him to feel he has won – I hope no one will feel they have won. I don't think Mr. Parkes can congratulate himself, or that he has much merit. I only hope they will all manage to come to an understanding and live in unity.

Before giving his judgment, the magistrate said he had received two communications. One was from Oliver, one of the defendants, and although the letter should not have been written it had been sent in good faith. He added: "A lady who did not give her name telephoned my home when, fortunately, I was not there and insisted on talking about the case. That should not have been done."

Mat Against Door

The magistrate said he had decided that the defendants were "preaching or teaching" at the service. The outer gate to the hall had been guarded before 11 a.m. on the Sunday morning and had a bar across. It was guarded until 11.10 a.m. when the sentry opened the gate and the Parkes were able to enter the courtyard.

The inner door to the {sic} hall was not open and Mr. Costello, an enquiry agent who had gone to the service, had said that inside there was a mat against the door and a doorkeeper sat inside with his feet against the mat.

The magistrate was quite satisfied that the door was locked, bolted, barred or otherwise fastened to prevent persons entering. The defence had said that the doors were fastened only against Mr. and Mrs. Parkes and that exclusion was justified in the case of the husband by a reasonable fear that he was going to cause a disturbance.

It was said that Mrs. Parkes was not allowed to enter because she was Mr. Parkes's wife, supporting his attitude and was not in fellowship because of her marriage to Mr. Parkes who had divorced his first wife.

Other Remedies

Before being barred from the hall in 1958 Mr. Parkes had made a habit of going to services with texts hung around his shoulders. Although the [Brethren](#) wore texts in the streets it was wrong of Mr. Parkes to wear them in the hall when it was against the rules.

This posed the question: "Does it justify the defendants in holding this service with the doors fastened; a direct contravention of the statute?" In his view it did not. If Mr. Parkes during the three years of his exclusion had not "purged his wrongdoings" there were still other remedies open to the defendants, such as a request for help from the police.

“To hold a meeting with fastened doors is not only contrary to general principles of Christian worship: it is directly contrary to the Act.”

After the hearing the four defendants declined to make any comment.

The Birmingham Post, Midland South Edition, 9 Jul 1962, p. 5 [BNA 15]

COUPLE ‘IGNORED’ AT SERVICE

Mr. George Parkes and his wife, Mrs. Elsie Parkes, members of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), who prosecuted four members of the sect who meet at the Gospel Hall, Miles Street, Camp Hill, Birmingham, went to morning service at the hall yesterday but were ignored by the 40 other members of the congregation.

Only 48 hours earlier the Birmingham stipendiary magistrate, Mr. J. F. Milward, had spoken of the difficulties between Mr. Parkes and other members of the sect as being pursued with “narrowness, bitterness and lack of tolerance.”

Mr. Parkes, aged 65, and his wife, aged 60, of Brookhill Road, Ward End, Birmingham, had claimed that the doors of the hall had been barred against them earlier this year. The Stipendiary found that the four members who had been summoned under the Places of Religious Worship Act, 1812, were guilty. He gave them an absolute discharge saying: “In the hope that both sides will make some effort to see the other’s point of view, I do not propose to impose any punishment.”

The Communion

Mr. and Mrs Parkes entered the hall yesterday five minutes before the service began. They sat alone and when Holy Communion was taken they were not given bread and wine.

The [Plymouth Bretheren](#) {sic} celebrated Communion by passing a platter of broken bread around the congregation followed by the chalice of wine.

The platter and chalice passed to the end of the row in front of Mr. and Mrs. Parkes and then a man sitting in the row behind them, went forward to take the bread and wine, so that it was not passed to them. The same thing happened when the collection was taken.

Mr. and Mrs. Parkes left the hall at the end of the service without being spoken to by fellow worshippers. Outside the hall, Mr. Parkes said: "They will not break my spirit by acting like this. Both my wife and I intend to continue coming to meetings here."

Mr. Sidney Oliver, of St. Benedicts Road, Small Heath, Birmingham, one of the four who had been {sic} summoned to court, said at the end of the service that he did not wish to make any comment.

The text printed in the literature being issued at the hall yesterday was from St. John 10, 9: "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved ..."

Brethren elders 'expelled us without trial'

A 67-year-old man who refuses to accept that he has been expelled from the membership of an [Open Brethren](#) Gospel Hall sued 15 elders of the hall at Birmingham Assizes yesterday.

Mr. George Arthur Edmond Parkes, of Brookhill Road, Ward End, presented his own case against Frank Edwin Bayliss, of Caldwell Road, Birmingham; William Christopher Bourne, Bankes Road, Birmingham; Howard Henry Clifford, Henshaw Road, Birmingham; Samuel Herbert Coleman, Redthorne Grove, Birmingham; Harold John France, Oldknow Road, Birmingham; Archibald Hill, Charles Road, Birmingham; Arthur Charles Lane, Bordesley Green East, Birmingham; Thomas McGann, Somerville Road, Birmingham; Sidney William Oliver, St. Benedict's Road, Birmingham; Stephen William Pike, Rock Road, Olton; Albert Edward Roberts, Berkley Road East, Birmingham; William Sly, Bankes Road, Birmingham; Joseph William Smart, Bordesley Green East, Birmingham; Charles Henry Young and Peter Young, Aubrey Road, Birmingham.

Mrs. Elsie May Parkes, has issued a similar writ against the same 15 elders of Camp Hill Gospel Hall, Mile Street, Birmingham.

They seek a ruling setting aside as null and void their expulsion from the [Plymouth Brethren](#) and claim that they were "tried" in their absence.

They also seek damages and an injunction restraining the defendants from interfering with their membership rights of the sect and from representing them as “living in sin.”

Quoting frequently from the Bible – which he called the sect’s only rule book – Mr. Parkes said that the sect had been formed in about 1830 and that there were now eight “varieties” of [Plymouth Brethren](#).

The original sect was now called the [Open Brethren](#), Mr. Parkes said, but was trying to become known as the [Christian Brethren](#). It had nothing to do with the sect known as the [Exclusive Brethren](#).

Remarried

Mr. Parkes said that he had divorced his previous wife for desertion and had married his present wife in 1948. From that date the elders of Green Lane Gospel Hall – of which he was a member and which amalgamated with Camp Hill Gospel Hall in about 1951 – claimed to have expelled him, but he did not admit their right to expel him without trial, or a chance to present his case to them.

He said “the Bible distinctly teaches that I have the right to marry again,” and quoted I Corinthians, chapter 7, verse 15.

At various times he had been locked out of the Camp Hill Gospel Hall, but since a court action last year he had been admitted. However, neither he nor his wife had been allowed to take Communion on Sunday mornings.

Asked by Mr. Justice Faulks what he wanted as damages, Mr. Parkes replied that in 40 years he had spent £800 on litigation against various members of the sect, but he was not primarily interested in damages. What he wanted from the elders was the right to a fair trial.

In reply to the Judge, Mr. John York, for the defendants, said they admitted the marriage was lawful according to the State.

The hearing was adjourned until to-day.

The Birmingham Post, Midland South Edition, 17 Jul 1963, p. 5 [BNA 15]

ACTION AGAINST ELDERS FAILS

Complainant 'sincere but misguided'

During his summing-up at the end of a two-day hearing of claims by a former member against 15 elders of the [Open Brethren](#) Gospel Hall, Camp Hill, Birmingham, Mr. Justice Faulks yesterday quoted the Latin poet Lucretius: "What dreadful things are done in the name of dogma."

{image}

Mr. Parkes

He rejected a claim by Mr. George Arthur Edmond Parkes, of Brookhill Road, Ward End, for a court ruling setting aside as null and void the wrongful expulsion of himself and his wife from the sect, known as the [Plymouth Brethren](#), and for an injunction restraining the elders from interfering with their membership rights.

He agreed that their marriage in 1948 was legal, saying that if anybody thought otherwise, it was a matter for conscience. A claim for damages was rejected.

Mr. John York, defending, said that there would be no application for costs unless Mr. Parkes took the matter to appeal.

The judge said that to his mind it was an extremely sad case.

Mr. Parkes, a perfectly sincere person, married his wife, a woman who was held in great esteem by her fellow-members as a Sunday school teacher and text carrier. The fact that he had divorced his first wife for desertion, however, offended the consciences of the [Brethren](#) elders.

Spiritual rights

Mr. Parkes claimed that he had not had a fair trial from the elders, the Judge said, but he thought that even if he had been given a hearing the result would have been the same.

In the matter of damages the claim was for spiritual and not material harm, and the court did not exist to deal with spiritual rights, so the claim must fail.

The Judge concluded: “Mr. Parkes is a truly sincere man but is unfortunately misguided about his rights in this matter.”

Giving evidence for the defence, Mr. William Sly, an elder of the sect, said that he bore Mr. Parkes no malice, but during the last few years he had made himself an absolute nuisance at the hall.

He had caused many heartaches, calling the police to the hall and banging on the door during meetings.

Teddy boys had gone to meetings, and fireworks had been thrown. He had refused to shake hands with Mr. Parkes and would still refuse, in view of his attitude.

‘Stale dispute’

During cross-examination of Mr. Parkes by Mr. John York, for the defendants, the judge interrupted to say: “A judge is not supposed to descend to matters of religious {sic} disputation.

“Much of this evidence has nothing to do with legal matters. It is a matter of how much money these gentlemen on both sides are prepared to spend before I lose my patience.

{image}
Mrs. Parkes

“In a court of temporal jurisdiction we are not trying to decide what Our Lord meant or what St. Paul meant. This is an arid and stale dispute, and I have to decide what the legal rights are.”

In evidence, Mrs. Parkes said that she and her husband had attended chapel services at Walmley and Harborne, but when they arrived the congregations walked out. They had been left on their own and had conducted a Communion service themselves.

Mr. Thomas McGann, an elder, of Somerville Road, Small Heath, said that they were taking their stand on the scriptures, and in all sincerity he could not shake hands with Mr. Parkes and drop their differences.

At this point the judge asked Mr. Parkes: "Why can't you all agree to disagree? That is what the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope do. Why don't you join the Church of England? They would accept you."

Mr. Parkes said that he did not hold the Church of England view. The judge replied: "If you hold a special view you would do better to start a sect of your own."

Estate was left for 'Lord's work'

LETTERS of administration of a woman's will in which she left her estate to the [Open Brethren](#), were granted to the Attorney-General in the High Court to-day.

The estate of Mrs. Jane McDowell, of Homeleigh, Ballymaconaghy, Newtownbreda, who died in 1961, amounted to more than £1,000 and a farm worth £4,000.

Mr. R. W. B. McConnell, appearing for the Attorney-General, read an affidavit of Mr. Henry A. Maginess, solicitor to the Attorney-General, stating he had been informed there was no organised body of persons in Ulster who represented the [Open Brethren](#).

Mrs. McDowell had stipulated that the residue of her estate should go to "The Lord's Work and Service in connection with the body of Christians in Northern Ireland known as the [Open Brethren](#)."

She also stipulated that the farm should not be sold to her relatives or to the relatives of her late husband.

The executors of the will, Charles Wells, Willesden Park, Belfast, and James Thompson, Knockbracken, Newtownbreda, had declined to act in the administration of the estate.

A caveat against the will has been lodged by a son, Mr. Thomas Lawson McDowell, of Ballymaconaghy.

'SAINT' SMASHED WIFE'S TV

Cruelty by a religious husband

A HUSBAND who joined the **Exclusive Brethren**, a religious sect which has members known as "saints," imposed strict rules on his family, a judge said yesterday.

He forbade television and radio because of "evil effects" they might have on the children – and eventually destroyed the sets.

The judge, Mr. Commissioner Latey, said in the Divorce Court that the husband, Mr. Eric Hammond, also –

LIKENED his wife Audrey to Jezebel because she used make-up;

TORE UP newspapers, magazines and the children's comics;

OBJECTED to the children going to dancing classes; and

STOPPED them from attending the cinema or theatre.

Rebuked

One Christmas he would not let his family hear the Queen's speech, so his wife went to the bathroom and heard it on a portable radio, the judge added.

When Mrs. Hammond cut the hair of one of her three daughters, the husband rebuked her – quoting a Scriptural saying that a woman's hair was her crowning glory.

“Mr. Hammond quoted in court verses from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, Chapter XI, which in my view has no bearing on cutting a little girl's hair,” commented the judge.

Bigoted

He went on: “If a man adopts a bigoted and almost fanatical attitude in the home as this husband did, not in keeping with the times in which we live, he has only himself to blame.”

The judge said that the “dictatorial” behaviour of Mr. Hammond, 48, of Lancaster-road, St. Albans, Herts, amounted to cruelty.

And on those grounds he granted a decree nisi to Mrs. Hammond, also 48, of Beechwood-avenue, St. Albans.

Daily Mirror, London, 31 Oct 1963, p. 8, Viewpoint

Santa

YOU implied in an article that the children of parents who belong to the [Plymouth Brethren](#) religious sect do not have a Santa Claus.

As a young member of the Brethren I am again looking forward to Santa this year. – **J. C., Sutton Coldfield, Warwicks.**

WIFE IS MADE TO APOLOGISE UNDER A TABLE

CIVIL servant Norman Copping was angry when his wife dropped an electric battery.

So, a judge said yesterday, Mr. Copping made his wife Dorothea – pregnant at the time – crouch under a table and repeat this apology seven times.

“My dearest and most wonderful Norman, please forgive me for my inconceivable thoughtlessness, stupidity and thoroughly irresponsible carelessness in allowing that battery to fall from my hands.”

Mr. Copping – member of a [Plymouth Brethren](#) sect, and a clerk in the Health Ministry’s statistics division – took the view that he was entitled to be “senior partner” in the marriage, Mr. Justice Wingham said in the London Divorce Court.

Refused

The judge went on: “No husband has the right to attempt to impose his own personality on his wife, to dominate her, and to require from her the sort of obedience that it is not unreasonable for a parent to expect from a small child.”

At one time, the judge said, the couple’s [Plymouth Brethren](#) branch arranged for Mr. Copping to see a psychiatrist.

“But,” he added, “it turned out that the psychiatrist was a lady. The husband refused to go. And he never got the help he needed.”

In 1960, Mrs. Copping, daughter of a German factory owner, returned to Germany after a row.

Mr. Copping sent her a postcard, advising her to commit suicide, said the judge.

The Judge ruled that Mr. Copping, 37, of Southwood-avenue, Highgate, London, had been cruel.

Mrs. Copping, 42, of Derschlag, near Cologne, was granted a decree nisi{.}

{image}

***Mrs. Copping yesterday. ... She had to crouch under a table
and apologise seven times to her husband.***

Belfast Telegraph, 5 Nov 1966, p. 4, Letters

‘Reverend’ is ridiculous

IN the course of a visit to the Holy Land I had the privilege of meeting a Patriarch of the Eastern Church. I was aware that such dignitaries are addressed as “Beatitude”; but although he was a perfectly charming man, with nothing sacerdotally remote about him, I must confess that to see a walking Beatitude struck me as not only archaic and quaint but more than a little comic.

I have since read that some bishops of the Anglican Communion have recently indicated a desire to drop that relic of feudalism which requires that they be addressed as “my lord.” With Harold Wilson apparently preparing to knock some of the more anachronistic absurdities of the British honours system for six it is good to see that some of the dignitaries of the Church are prepared to crawl into the twentieth century.

But what about coming down the scale to the common or garden “Reverends”? Come to think of it “Reverend” is every bit as ridiculous as “Beatitude.” I find that some young people today are accustomed to address me as “Rev,” which makes me feel like something that happens inside an internal combustion engine.

Let’s face it: the [Plymouth Brethren](#) have been right about this all along.

(Anti-Rev.) R. W. LITTLEWOOD,

4 Tullybrannigan Road,
Newcastle.

Woman is left a gospel hall

Birmingham Post Warley Staff

A BIRMINGHAM woman has been left a gospel hall at Smethwick by her father – on the condition that it be used solely as a place of worship.

The hall was mentioned in the will of Mr. Josiah Edmond Taylor, of Raglan Road, Smethwick, who died last June.

He left the Sandwell Gospel Hall in Smethwick to his daughter, Mrs. Grace Evans, of Wentworth Road, Harborne, on the condition that it be let at £1 a week for so long as required by the [Open Plymouth Brethren](#).

He said in his will that the hall should not be used for concerts, bazaars or other social functions but solely as a place of worship.

The [Open Brethren](#) are a breakaway group from the [Exclusive Brethren](#) and hold more liberal views. They broke away from the [Exclusive Brethren](#) about three years ago.

Mr. Taylor left £40,062 gross, £37,334 net. In his will he also left property in Brasshouse Lane, Smethwick, to his daughter, expressing the hope that she would continue to let it to the caretaker of the Gospel Hall.

IN SEARCH OF GOD AND THE DEVIL

Against the background of rising crime figures, pot, pills and illegitimacy, war in Vietnam, the Bomb, church disunity and lack of direction, IAN NIMMO and ALAN MACKENZIE have gone out in search of God and the devil, or their symbols of good and bad. We would also be interested to see their images through the eyes of our readers.

God goes into hiding

NOW here is the village of Gardenstown on the Sabbath, clinging to its crumbling rock escarpment with the same tenacity as it clings to its religion. Grey clouds are scudding over the cliff tops, and the small craft in the tiny harbour bob furiously, straining at their moorings.

Tall, sombre church-like cliffs, with the thunder of God – or is it the roar of hell? – at their base as giant seas pound and lash them unceasingly, is the constant reminder of the frailty of man, the power and strength of Nature or God.

But “God is love” is the legend in white paint on the side of a shed down on the pier, another useful reminder of fact, because in such surroundings it might easily be forgotten.

This is a Brethren stronghold, where Satan walks abroad with a sniff of sulphur, where the fiery pit yawns wide, and the road across its depths is tortuous and razor-edged; the far side of glory reached only by the few who follow the narrow path decreed by Big Jim Taylor, the “Archangel” of the Close Brethren.

We have come to Gardenstown with open mind, to worship God with them and perhaps to learn.

God may be love, as the sign says, but they show little of it to us, for they won’t let us in.

There is no argument, no discussion, no enlightenment. Only suspicion and mistrust. Even the children look the other way.

“You would not understand,” says one of them, and the Meeting door is shut firmly in our faces.

We do not understand.

Good folk

But let there be no mistake, for there have been many hard things said about them. The Brethren are good folk, honest and upright, seeking perhaps in their own way, the same truths and directions that we all search for. Like all minority groups under the gaze of the public eye, they are ultra-suspicious, ultra-passionate about their beliefs, constantly whipping themselves into greater efforts to attain their conception of Godliness.

It is their methods of pleasing God that are difficult to understand.

“God is love,” reads the sign, yet we visit a house on the outskirts of Peterhead where God would seem almost to be hate.

This is the home of a girl who once belonged to the [Close Brethren](#). She left her family to marry an Aberdeen joiner. She now has two children and is probably happier than at any other time in her life. Yet this pleasant and attractive girl admits to being taken to the point of suicide before she split with her parents and the [Brethren](#).

She has no bitterness against the [Brethren](#), only sadness and hopelessness.

“You won’t find anyone kinder or more generous than my parents,” she says. “Although there was never much gaiety about the house, we were happy enough and close to each other.

“I suppose things might have continued like that, but I met Ronnie when I was working in Aberdeen, and after two years we decided to get married.

“I dreaded telling my parents. In fact, I put it off for another year. We had to meet in secret, and I found myself forced into telling half truths about where I had been. It would have been so different if Ronnie had been one of us, but I knew that if I did not give him up, I would have to give up my parents and the Meeting. I knew my parents would be heartbroken.

“It was a terrible decision. I was torn almost out of my mind but at last I told them and I think it was even worse than I had expected. There were never any real rows, only a kind of horrified silence. They tried to persuade me, of course. They prayed for me every morning and evening.

“I was the one they feared for. I felt like Satan himself causing them so much anguish. I was on the point of giving in.

“Then they sent to Glasgow for my brother Tom to come home and make me see sense. My brother is an assistant chemist, and a member of the [Open Brethren](#). It was just at this time that the Archangel issued his edicts about not eating with unbelievers. Tom arrived at tea-time and my parents refused to sit down at the same table with him. That was enough for me. I left next morning.

Archangel

“My parents never come to see me. I’ve been back to see them several times, but I’m not allowed to stay the night. It’s really a heart-break.

“I’m now a member of the Church of Scotland. Religion should surely provide a little comfort and love. I think when it reaches the point of breaking up the family, something has gone far wrong.”

Perhaps the devil has found a toehold in Godliness for he never tempts us so cunningly as when he does it with our own good actions.

Evening Chronicle, Newcastle [BNA *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*],
23 Jan 1981, p. 14 [BNA 16], Just Jim

LIVING in the country often means long walks tod {sic} do the things you want to do. But because of the strong community spirit that exists in our villages lifts are offered and accepted much more freely than in the towns.

So when a woman walking into Bellingham was offered a lift by three men in a car she thought nothing about possible danger and readily accepted.

Soon she was chatting away. She told the men where she was going, adding: "And I suppose you three young lads are going to the pub for a drink, then?"

"No," one of them replied. "We are [Plymouth Brethren](#)."

It's all very different in the country, isn't it?

Bray People, 23 Feb 1990, p. 24, News from the Districts. Vevay

THE BRETHREN

During the 1930s {sic} the [Brethren](#), a Christian Religion had its origin with Trinity College students in Dublin. They met in Aungier Street and some became involved with the well-known [Plymouth Brethren](#). The person associated with its founding was J.N. Darby. There are thousands of members worldwide, about one thousand in Ireland, and over two hundred meet in Bray in their premises on Florence Road and Elgin road. Male members take turns to officiate at ceremonies and no clerical gear is worn. On Sundays they celebrate communion also called the Lord's Table or Supper, Sunday School and Gospel meetings. One member, Godfrey Plunkett feels that there is a slow but definite religious revival with more people spending more time contemplating and studying Holy Scripture.

A lesson in Tudor style comfort

THE birthplace of a 19th century religious movement, the Old Schoolhouse, Calary, Kilmacanogue, Co. Wicklow, is now a large Tudor-style family home for auction on June 27.

As the name suggests, the property is a converted late 18th century school, originally built by the Powerscourt family, which also served as a church in its early days.

In this role, the building was used by the Rev. John Nelson Darby, who founded the [Darbyites](#) movement and later the [Plymouth Brethren](#), in protest at State interference in religion at the time.

Now a spacious Tudor-style family home on one acre of gardens, the house has been totally modernised, and enjoys sweeping views of the surrounding mountains and valleys, including the Sugar Loaf summit.

Interior features include a wine cellar, dining room, wood-beamed living room with stone fireplace, and three bedrooms, one of which boasts its own balcony and dressing room.

With the proposed new Bray by-pass pushing up prices in the area, this freehold property is expected to achieve around £150,000. Viewing is tomorrow 3–5 p.m., and 6–7.30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, according to agents Hamilton Osborne King (760251).

{2 images: exterior view, Sugar Loaf backdrop}

This school around the corner's not the same

THE Old Schoolhouse at Callary {sic} in Co. Wicklow is a highly unusual and historical property which should attract a great deal of attention.

Constructed in the late 18th Century as a schoolhouse for the Callary Parish, it was used for many years as a venue for weekly religious services.

The parish's most famous minister was without doubt the Reverend John Nelson Darby who personally founded two splinter groups within the Protestant Churches. The [Darbyites](#) broke from established church on the issue of separating the church and state – they later moved to Merrion Hall in Dublin which is now the Davenport Hotel.

Darby later moved to England where he helped to establish the [Plymouth Brethren](#).

Today the Old Schoolhouse is a private residence of unusual character set amid developed gardens with gravel walks, lawns, two large ponds and well screened by a timber boundary.

The interiors are finished in a traditional style with original exposed oak beams, polished timber floors and whitewashed walls. However, modern needs are well catered for with gas fired central heating, security lighting and a burglar alarm.

Accommodation comprises an impressive entrance hall with stairs to the upper floor, a diningroom with French doors to the conservatory, a lounge with traditional open fireplace and a breakfast-room with country style kitchen.

There are three bedrooms with a dressingroom off the master chamber and a utility wing includes a variation of storage rooms.

Agent Jackson Stops McCabe (2868275) expect offers in the region of £150,000 on behalf of a couple who are moving to another home in the area.

{3 images: exterior view, dining room, conservatory}

Sunday Life, Belfast, 10 Mar 1996, pp. 2-3

AGONY OF THE OUTCAST

EXCLUSIVE REPORT

BY JOHN CASSIDY

Bankrupt believer quits church over 'gagging' order

A RETIRED fisherman has quit a religious sect in Ulster after it banned him, he claims, from speaking at its services because he was bankrupt.

Jim Moore said the actions of the [Closed Plymouth Brethren](#) left him so shocked that he suffered two heart attacks within 24 hours of being 'silenced' by the elders.

But last night one of the elders accused Mr Moore of being "abusive" to them, an accusation the former [Brethren](#) member later denied.

The 63-year-old Portavogie man said: "My heart is now damaged because of what happened to me. This has ruined my life."

And he has vowed never to set foot inside another [Brethren](#) hall as long as he lives.

Last week he spoke out on a saga that has left him bitter and hurt.

Two months ago Mr Moore was bankrupted by the Inland Revenue with debts of around £80,000.

A public notice on his bankruptcy appeared in the local press on Friday, January 15.

Bankrupt

The former Merchant Navy chief officer claimed that on Saturday, February 3, the elders held a meeting to discuss his punishment for being bankrupt.

The six elders who sat in judgment were: Herbert Thompson, William Donnan, John Young, Sammy Montgomery, Johnny Ambrose and Davy Ambrose.

One of the elders, 82-year-old Johnny Ambrose, is the uncle of Mr Moore's wife Cissy, while Davy Ambrose is her cousin.

"On the Sunday morning, the service was held as normal, but when it was over, they told me they wanted to speak to me.

"They waited until the hall had been cleared and then they held a meeting.

"I thought my insolvency was not going to be mentioned."

Debt

He claimed that at the meeting Mr Young told him: "You are in debt and no Christian should be in debt."

Mr Donnan is alleged to have said: "This bankruptcy is a shame."

And Mr Moore claimed that Mr Young told him: "We are not going to allow you to give out a hymn or speak for three years."

Said Mr Moore: "I was going to to {sic} be silenced at services until my bankruptcy lapsed – in three years time.

"I just thought to myself: 'That is 37 years service to the brethren up in a vapour'.

"It was not as if I was a {p. 3} womaniser or a homosexual. These men were punishing me because the arithmetic beat me.

"I wasn't even given a chance to explain the situation. They already had their minds made up."

Mr Moore, who retired in 1994 because he suffered from angina, returned home after the meeting.

"I had a heart attack and was rushed to the Ulster Hospital at around 5.30 pm."

His wife said: "On Monday he had a more severe heart attack.

"According to the consultant, his heart has now been moderately damaged."

Mr Moore now faces major open-heart surgery.

"Before this happened, I was going to go through three triple bypass operations. Now I have been told by the consultant that I will have five."

His experience at the hands of the his {sic} elders has left him very bitter.

"Even if they came and apologised and said I was no longer silenced, I would not go back. Not now, not ever.

"I have tried repeatedly to arrange a meeting and explain what happened with the bankruptcy, but they didn't want to know.

"I don't care anymore. I will never set foot inside another [brethren](#) hall, or any other church for that matter.

"I am Christian man but what these elders did to me was not a Christian deed.

"And what they can't tell me is where it says in scriptures that if a man is bankrupted or made insolvent, he should be silenced," added Mr Moore.

Bitter wife has cut links with [Brethren](#)

CISSY Moore has been a [Brethren](#) since her birth, 62 years ago.

She feels disgusted at the way her husband has been treated at the hands of people she regarded as "friends".

"It has made me very bitter. I have given my life to the [Brethren](#) and lead a very strict Christian life.

"But Jim didn't deserve this punishment. It is even worse knowing that two of those elders who agreed to silencing him were my cousin and my uncle.

"There is nothing now that could be done to make me go back to the [Brethren](#) gospel hall. Like Jim, I am finished with it. I am sickened at what happened."

When her husband left hospital, he was told by a consultant to take it easy.

“He is not to get excited. His therapy is to paint fishing boats, and do jigsaws.

“Jim has been told he can’t drive for eight weeks. The whole episode has had a terrible effect on him.”

‘Back to basics’ Christianity

PLYMOUTH Brethren has around 12,500 members in Northern Ireland, split between the ‘open’, ‘closed’ and ‘exclusive’ sects.

The founders of the Brethren movement were a group of young men linked with Dublin’s Trinity College in the 1820s.

Their ideal was a common Christianity.

The nickname Plymouth Brethren came from the city of Plymouth where there was a group of 1,200 members.

The movement later split into two factions, one which admitted only ‘proven Christians’ (the ‘exclusive’ Brethren), and one which remained ‘open’, welcoming any ‘convinced Christians’.

It later split again, and the ‘closed’ Brethren was established – a half-way house between the ‘open’ and ‘exclusive’.

The **closed Brethren** have a very strict dress code for women.

They are not allowed to cut their hair, are banned from wearing make-up, are forbidden to wear earrings, and must have their head covered at all times in the Gospel Hall.

The sect has a strict social ethic which demands a rigorous separation from the wider society.

There are no ordained clergy, and no order of service. Instead, **Brethren** (but not women) may speak when the Spirit leads them.

No comment from closed sect

THE six elders of Portavogie's 'closed' Brethren sect are well known to Jim Moore.

He has lived and worked with them for 30 years in the small Co Down fishing village.

And one of the elders, Sammy Montgomery, was even employed by Mr Moore to work on his fishing trawler for more than 13 years.

Last week most of the elders remained tight-lipped about the action taken against Mr Moore.

When contacted at his home by Sunday Life, Mr Montgomery said: "I can't comment. I can't tell you anything. There was nothing said to injure anyone."

Mr Johnny Ambrose said: "I don't want to have any conversation," and hung up the phone.

Mr Young said: "No comments. No comments". He too hung up.

And Mr Thompson said: “I just can’t enter into that with you. He would not allow us to speak to him. I am not going to tell you what happened.”

Asked where in the Bible it says that a church should silence a member for being bankrupt or insolvent, Mr Thompson said: “It says: ‘Owe no man anything’.

“He was very abusive to us. He even called us ‘hooks’. I will leave it at that”.

But Mr Moore strongly denied this allegation. “I never, ever called them hooks.

“What I did say was that they were not worthy to hold office. I said they were small men wanting power without the responsibility.”

{3 images: Jim and Cissy Moore, Jim Moore, Gospel Hall}