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John Stoughton**

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**CONGREGATIONALISM
IN THE
COURT SUBURB.**

BY

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DEDICATION.

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THE FOLLOWING
HISTORICAL SKETCH,
PREPARED AT THEIR REQUEST,
Is Gratefully Inscribed
TO THE

INTRODUCTION.

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At the commencement of my History, I wish to convey some idea of what Kensington was at the close of the last century, when the original Nonconformist Church in that place was formed and established.

Kensington as a parish must be distinguished from Kensington as a village or suburb. The boundaries of the parish are still unaltered, yet what it contained ninety years ago was different, indeed, from what it contains now. It is startling to read in Lyson's "Environs," published in 1795, the following sentence:—"The parish of Kensington contains about 1,910 acres of land, about half of which is pasture meadow, about 360 acres are arable land for corn only, about 230 in market gardens, about 260 cultivated sometimes for corn and sometimes for garden crops, and 100 acres of nursery ground."

I often think, as I am reading history, what a contrast exists between its background of natural scenery, and the prospect now before our eyes on the spot to which the history refers. We should not know Kensington if we could see it as it was when Hornton Street Chapel was being built. Then all around was rural. Notting Hill and the whole way to Paddington—where was the parish boundary to the north—exhibited fields bordered by hedgerows. Holland Park, to the west, was a lordly demesne such as you see now "down in the shires," and the boundary of the parish in that direction, at what used to be called Compton Bridge, was marked by a turnpike gate not long ago removed; beyond it lay a bit of country landscape before you reached the junction of roads at Hammersmith Broadway. No great change had then taken place since Addison—who lived in Kensington—wrote to the Earl of Warwick, saying, "The business of this is to invite you to a concert of music, which I have found out in a neighbouring wood. It begins precisely at six in the evening, and consists of a blackbird, a thrush, a robin redbreast, and a bullfinch. There is a lark that, by way of overture, sings famously till she is almost out of hearing." "The whole is concluded by a nightingale." Such were the warblers that broke the silence of Kensington woods when no screech of the railway whistled in the wind, and no lumbering omnibuses thundered along the highway. Indeed, I well remember the nightingales in Holland Park, after the commencement of my ministry at Hornton Street. Earl's Court, even then, was separated from Holland Park gates by a country lane which began at Pembroke Square. But fifty years before, now ninety years ago, it was thereabouts all pleasant open country, dotted with homesteads, paddocks, gardens; whilst at eventide broad green meadows saw "the lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea." Brompton, included within the parish, extended to the borders of Chelsea, famous for cosy retreats occupied by merchants and literary men. Turning from south to east, there opened, under the shadow of the palace, those gardens which had become famous and much admired in Queen Anne's time; and after Hornton Street chapel was built, a minute of the Board of Green Cloth recorded that an annual pension of £18 was to be paid to a widow, named Gray, "in consideration of the loss of her husband, who was accidentally shot while the keepers were hunting foxes in Kensington Gardens." [9a]

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Lyson tells us that in 1795 there had been new buildings erected, principally in and near the hamlet of Brompton. "The present number of houses," he says, "is about 1,240, of which about 1,150 are inhabited, the remainder are for the most part unfinished." [9b]

So much for the parish. Now look at the Court suburb; so small in comparison with the parish, that it may be compared to a shrivelled kernel in a nutshell. There, in the centre, stood the old Parish Church, pronounced by Bishop Blomfield the ugliest in the country; and in Church Street, higher up, the Vicarage was encompassed by a goodly garden and small park, now covered by rows of houses. Quaint-looking tenements bordered Church Street a little way. Campden House and grounds retained a palatial appearance. A row of brick dwellings, taking us back to the days of the first Georges, still line Holland Street, and were then in their prime. Hornton Street looked out, in spring, upon blooming orchards. The road between Kensington Palace Gate and Holland House was, as it still is, the main thoroughfare; and I conclude that Phillimore Place, called by the Prince Regent "Dish-clout Row," from its tasteless slabs in front, was then in pristine pride. Kensington Square, though shorn of the glories it possessed under the first two Georges—when it boasted of forty coaches, and of lords and ladies occupying the buildings round it—still presented much quiet respectability; and old inhabitants, as they passed by the palace gates, could tell of having heard from their fathers and mothers how one morning there issued thence "Horse Guards with their trumpets, and a company of heralds with their tabards, to proclaim, after Queen Anne's death, George, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith."

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All round, the Court suburb was separated from neighbouring hamlets by a belt of orchards, gardens, and nursery grounds; and the road between Kensington Gardens and Knightsbridge remained notorious for its loneliness and perils. Opposite Hyde Park were a few aristocratic mansions, with spacious lawns, shrubberies, and gardens bounded by lofty walls; but the road

was often in very bad repair. In the middle of the century, Lord Hervey told his mother it was impassable, and that in Kensington he lived "in the same solitude as he should do if cast on a rock in the middle of the ocean." [11] Matters might have mended somewhat at the time the chapel was built, but a good old pew-opener, Mr. Mundy, told me how he remembered that people at Knightsbridge, bound for Kensington after dark, would wait till they made a number large enough to defend themselves against the footpads who infested the thoroughfare. The old half-way house and the turnpike gate, symbolical of ancient days, lingered so late as the middle of my own ministry.

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Along that road, and through Kensington suburbs, George III. used to drive down to Windsor in a lumbering coach with outriders and an escort. There sat on the box, in grand livery, "a body coachman," as he was called. His name was Saunders. To speak of that good man may seem to be travelling out of my record, but it will be seen that he played an important part in Kensington Church history. He was a favourite with His Majesty, and used to put tracts in the pocket of the coach for his master to read on the way to the Royal Borough. The latter liked them so well, that he encouraged the servant to keep the pocket furnished with such publications; and we can fancy the Queen's grandfather, in his cocked hat and neat wig, poring over the pages provided for his entertainment and benefit. The coachman was a Nonconformist, and when he was staying at Windsor gathered a few people together in a house which bore the unattractive name of "Hole in the Wall," where they held a religious service, and formed the nucleus of the Independent Church of which I was pastor for eleven years, part of it as colleague with the venerable Alexander Redford. It is a curious coincidence that this worthy coachman may be accounted founder of the two Churches in which I have laboured the whole of my pastoral life.

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He lived part of his time at Kensington, and wished to see a Nonconformist congregation there. He met with a few people in "a very humble dwelling," [12] for religious worship, and out of that grew the Dissenting Church in Hornton Street.

Kensington Parish Church, between 1762 and 1770, was favoured with the ministry of the celebrated Dr. Jortin, an author and preacher of extraordinary reputation; and he was succeeded by Dr. Waller, of whom I know nothing except that he was killed by the fall of a chimney during a great hurricane in November, 1795. Then came the Rev. Richard Omerod. "There was no man, perhaps, who more eminently possessed the faculty of conciliating all ranks and orders in a large and populous parish than Mr. Omerod. Nor was this effected by courtly demeanour or by flattering profession, but by that honest and amiable simplicity of life and heart, which both dignify and recommend the Christian minister. To a native purity of mind and unaffected sanctity of life, he added a calm, gentle, and unobtrusive manner, which never failed at once to disarm hostility and to command respect. In his discharge of the complicated duties of a parish priest he was eminent and exemplary. By the higher orders he was respected and admired, and by the lower orders he was venerated and loved; and possessing alike the confidence of both, he was the channel of communicating the bounty of the one to relieve the necessities of the other." [13a] He was vicar from 1795 to 1816.

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Dr. Waller was incumbent when the body coachman held his meetings at Kensington, and Mr. Omerod succeeded Dr. Waller soon after Hornton Street Chapel was built.

I wish we knew more of that coachman, who deserves to be held in honour by the congregation of the present day; since it appears that he not only brought together a nucleus for the Church, but contributed out of his limited means ten pounds for the erection of a chapel. [13b]

The earliest document preserved relative to the building I may here insert, as it indicates the different elements of Nonconformity blended in the enterprise. Some of the originators, most it would seem, were Presbyterians, but united with them were Independents and others.

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To the friends of Religious Liberty, Sincere Christianity, and of Benevolent dispositions, etc.:

We, the undersigned,—of whom some have been educated in the principles of the Established Church of Scotland, and others in that class of Dissenters in England whose principles, opinions, and faith is the most generally consonant to, and founded on, the Word of God as revealed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and on the essential doctrines of Christianity as professed by both the National Churches of England and Scotland;—being, therefore, Dissenters from the established mode of worship in this country, and being situated at a great distance from any place of worship agreeable to the dictates of our consciences, we, from pure motives of religion and piety alone, for conveniency to ourselves and families, and to others who may be like-minded with us in matters of religion, do propose, under the favour and blessing of a Divine Providence, to erect and build a (temple) for the worship of Almighty God in the parish of Kensington and county of Middlesex.

We profess our religious opinions to be, according to the rites, form of worship, as well as of the doctrines and discipline agreed upon in the Confession of Faith, by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster (so far as the circumstances of our situation will admit of); we wish to follow their soundness of faith, purity, and simplicity of worship, as far as we judge them founded on the Word of God, agreeable to the standard of faith contained in the Holy Scriptures, the alone unerring guide of faith and manners.

We therefore invite the serious Christian, the friends and lovers of Gospel truth, to join with us in this good undertaking to promote the glory of God, the interests of true religion, and the eternal happiness of ourselves and fellow-Christians; having nothing in view but to forward the attainment of these great objects, we leave the briers, and thorny fields of disputation, and false philosophy, of factions, politics, and jarring interests of ambitious men, "that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty," as commanded. 1 Timothy ii. 1, 2.

Connected with this document is another, shorter and more general, stating "that a suitable piece of ground, on a long lease," had been secured, on which was to be erected a building, "estimated at upwards of £900," which had been already begun, and was then "carrying on." The object of this paper was to secure contributions. The builders' estimate amounted to £927 15s. 6d. The structure was at once duly registered, "pursuant to the Act of Toleration in that case made and provided." A recommendation of the case is preserved, signed by several ministers, chiefly Presbyterians, stating that friends at Kensington, for themselves and neighbours—as there "was no proper regular place of worship for those who could not conform with the Established Church—had determined to unite their efforts towards supplying this defect."

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The dimensions of the edifice were sixty feet by forty inside; but the ground in length extended to one hundred and nine feet.

I. THE FIRST PASTORATE. *THE REV. JOHN LAKE.*

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No account is given of the chapel opening; but in October, 1794, an invitation appears, in the name of "the trustees and subscribers," addressed to the Rev. John Lake, M.A., ^[17] requesting him to take "the pastoral charge of the congregation," to which, in the following month, an answer was returned accepting the charge, and expressing a hope that the people would receive the Word preached with meekness and affection, with freedom from prejudice, and with the simplicity of little children. "Carefully guard," he says, "against whatever may engender strife and division. Endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Live in peace, and may the God of love and peace be with you." Mr. Lake, it is believed, was a Presbyterian clergyman, and on the 1st of March he preached two discourses suitable to the occasion, which was to unite "several constant and serious hearers at the new chapel" in "church communion," that they might enjoy "religious ordinances." The tone of the whole letter is devout and beautiful, and gives a favourable impression of the writer's character.

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"On Sunday, March 8th, a special meeting was held at the chapel in the afternoon, of as many as were desirous of joining as members and communicants at the Lord's Table, when Mr. Lake attended and entered into religious conversation with those present, to whom he also delivered a suitable exhortation. The service was begun and concluded with prayer, singing, etc."

"March 30th. The Rev. Mr. Lake, who had accepted the pastoral office some months ago, removed with his family to Kensington."

"On Thursday, April 9th (notice having been given from the pulpit the preceding Lord's Day), Mr. Lake was set apart and admitted to the pastoral office in this Church, in the following manner: The Rev. Mr. Moore began with prayer and reading some suitable portions of Scripture; then singing; Dr. Hunter prayed; singing; the Rev. Mr. Smith preached a suitable and excellent sermon from Ezekiel iii. 17-21; then singing, after which Mr. Rutledge concluded with prayer and benediction. Several other ministers, besides those who engaged, were present. The reverend ministers and some of the principal heads of families afterwards dined together. The service at chapel was conducted to the general satisfaction of all present."

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"On Friday, April 10th, in the evening, a sermon, preparatory to the administration of the Lord's Supper, was preached by the Rev. Mr. Love, from Exodus iii. 5. A meeting was afterwards held to consult about the choice of elders, when, after some deliberation, it was thought proper to postpone the choice to a future opportunity."

"On Sunday, April 12th, the members enjoyed the long wished for opportunity of joining as a Christian Church at the table of the Lord. The Lord's Supper was dispensed in the chapel for the first time by the Rev. Mr. Lake, in the following manner: After preaching a suitable discourse from 1 Corinthians xi. 26, and giving out a Psalm, he came from the pulpit to the communion table, where a linen cloth and the elements had been previously laid, the great pew, as well as three or four of the adjoining pews, were filled with communicants. After rehearsing the words of institution, with some useful remarks, Mr. Lake prayed what has been called the consecration prayer; then, with further address to the communicants, he distributed the elements of bread and wine. After which, during the singing of a hymn, he returned to the pulpit, gave an exhortation to those who had received, and concluded the whole with prayer, benediction, and a collection, as is usual on such occasions."

The record of that first communion is very interesting. I have seen the solemnization of the Holy Supper after different methods: at Rome, before the high altar of St. Peter's, amidst lights,

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flowers, and incense, with attendant cardinals, and all the pomp and splendour of a Roman court, and have there witnessed theatrical effects; in England, within the choir of a Protestant cathedral, I have beheld a bishop and his clergy administering the eucharist to kneeling worshippers, and have recognised in the scene much picturesque beauty. But I must say, that while reading the entry in the Kensington Church book, illuminated by my own memories of its communion Sundays during more than thirty years, I have before me a mode of administration, not only different from those just indicated, but in simplicity approaching, in my estimation, as near as possible to the Passover feast in the upper room at Jerusalem. It adds greatly to the interest of this unpretending record, to recall to mind contemporary events. The Church was formed, the minister was ordained, and the Lord's Supper was administered just at the period of "the Reign of Terror" in Paris and throughout France; and, I may add, a different reign of terror in London and Great Britain. The revolution storm had been breaking in wild fury over our continental neighbours. Blood had been poured out like water by a ferocious tribunal of madmen calling themselves patriots. In two months, out of seven thousand political prisoners, five hundred and twenty-seven had perished under the guillotine. Neither sex nor age, neither rank nor obscurity, neither wealth nor indigence had shielded the most innocent from vengeance. Exiles had swarmed over to England, and were hiding their poverty and shame in the country village, the English capital, and the Court suburb. Tales of change after change had reached our shores, and filled thousands of hearts with terror. English rulers of that day, terrified by what they heard, may be really said to have lost their heads, for they adopted such tyrannical measures for repressing sedition and treason, that Charles James Fox said in reference to the trials of Muir and Palmer in Scotland, that if the law enforced there should be brought into England, it would be high time for "him and his friends to settle their affairs and retire to some happier clime." It was just afterwards, and whilst order on the one side and freedom on the other were in jeopardy, that the humble fathers and founders of the Church at Kensington met to choose a pastor and to celebrate the Lord's Supper in their new fellowship. "God," says the forty-sixth Psalm, "is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.*" As political storms roared around, the Kensington company enjoyed that Divine consolation.

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The names of the first communicants are preserved, and in the course of the year 1795 eight others were added. In 1796 nine more, in 1797 five, and in 1798 three. One of the earliest members was a Mrs. Schmae whose husband was living when I went to reside in Kensington. He was a pious old man, full of faith, hope, and love; and when I visited him on his death bed, he told me he had been many years member of Dr. Steinkopf's Lutheran Church in the Savoy, and showed me a German Bible he valued, which was given to me by the family after his death.

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The principal persons in the management of affairs at the earliest period were Messrs. Forsyth, Broadwood, and Grey, all Scotch Presbyterians. Mr. Broadwood was the famous pianoforte maker. Mr. Grey was a proprietor of the "Brompton Park Nursery," spoken of as famous for plants of all sorts, "which supply most of the nobility and gentry and gentlemen in England." John Evelyn visited the nursery in 1694, with Mr. Waller, who "was in admiration at the store of plants, and how well the nursery was cultivated."

Amongst early secular incidents connected with the chapel, was an attempt made on the part of the parish to include the building in the poor-rate assessment. This was in 1795. But the trustees resisted the imposition; and on the case being considered by the magistrates at Hicks Hall, they decided that the place being supported by voluntary contributions, could not be justly liable to the parish rate. Similar attempts were made afterwards, with a similar result.

In 1798 the general monthly prayer meeting of the London Missionary Society was held at Hornton Street, and the Rev. Dr. Haweis, it is stated in the Church book, preached from the text, "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord." [23a] The entry deserves special remark. Dr. Haweis was rector of Aldwinkle, in Northamptonshire, and an intimate friend of the Countess of Huntingdon. At that period a few Evangelical clergymen were accustomed to preach in Nonconformist pulpits. The famous John Berridge, rector of Everton, was of the number; and Fletcher of Madeley frequently ministered the word of life to Methodist congregations. Dr. Haweis delivered the first annual sermon on behalf of the London Missionary Society in Spafields chapel; and on previous occasions preached in places of worship belonging to the Countess's connection. Whether it was owing to that circumstance, I do not know, but as early as 1767 an unpleasantness arose, which raised a question as to whether he ought to retain his rectory; and the Rev. Martin Madan, of the Lock Hospital—who, by the way, is buried at Kensington—advised him to retain it, a piece of advice which, we are told, subjected Mr. Madan "to much obloquy."

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[23b] Preaching by clergymen in dissenting chapels was deemed an irregularity, but some bishops winked at it. Whether or not the practice be legal became a topic of inquiry a few years ago, and counsel's opinion was taken on the subject. My friend Dr. Stanley at that period expressed a wish to occupy Kensington pulpit before I resigned the pastorate, and an arrangement for the purpose was deferred in consequence of a controversy on the general subject, which arose at the time. Counsel's opinion proved unfavourable, and the matter dropped. But I may mention that the Rev. Samuel Minton, whilst still a Church of England incumbent, preached for me one Sunday evening not long before counsel gave the opinion to which reference has been made.

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It is interesting to remember that Dr. Haweis was a warm friend to the London Missionary

Society, and that after having offered four hundred pounds for sending the Gospel to Tahiti, he said: "For many years I have planned, prayed, and sought for an opening for a mission among the heathen. My dear Lady Huntingdon has concurred with me in attempting it." [24a] And again: "My former experience has convinced me that only by a general union of all denominations could a broad basis be laid for a mission." [24b]

That at so early a period of this history such a service should be held was an augury for good. It showed that the insignificant band of Christians worshipping in Hornton Street cherished sympathies so large that they swept over the world, and offered prayers that the proclamation of the Gospel might reach the ends of the earth. From the beginning the Kensington Church associated itself with the history of missionary trials and missionary success. Disaster at the antipodes sent a thrill of pain, and success there created a pulsation of joy amongst the obscure worshippers. Hearts mourned over the capture of the *Duff*; and in after years over the massacre of Tongataboo, the imprisonment and death of Smith in Demerara, the murder of John Williams on the beach of Eromanga, and the persecutions of early converts by the Queen of Madagascar. From time to time the countenances of worshippers have brightened on the arrival of good tidings from the South Seas, from India, from China, from Caffreland, from the West Indies. And I mention this because I believe that much of the prosperity enjoyed by Kensington Congregationalists is owing to their early and ever since continued co-operation in missionary work. The keynote of their zeal and joy was struck at that meeting which it is so gratifying to remember.

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Mr. Lake's ministry at Kensington ceased in 1800 or 1801; and the only notice I have found of his subsequent history, is that he at length quitted "the Dissenting interest for a curacy in the Established Church, where he sustained a respectable and useful character to the day of his death." [25]

II. THE SECOND PASTORATE. *THE REV. JOHN CLAYTON.* 1801-1804.

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"THE congregation of Hornton Street Chapel, Kensington, being deprived of the ministerial labours of the Rev. John Lake, by his resignation, and remaining destitute of a stated overseer in the Lord till the month of May, 1801, united in a call soliciting Mr. John Clayton, assistant to the Rev. John Winter, of Newbury, Berks, to undertake the office of their pastor." [28] The invitation was in the name of "the trustees, church, and subscribers," and received about one hundred signatures. Mr. Clayton's reply is not given, but the records state that he paid a visit and preached two Sabbaths in the month of June; and on the second Sabbath of August, 1801, he entered upon his stated labours.

Mr. Clayton was educated partly at Homerton College, partly at Edinburgh University; and after the completion of his preparatory studies he spent a short time at Newbury, as assistant to the Rev. John Winter. He had only just come of age when he was invited to the Kensington pastorate. Having won for himself a good report from the people of the Berkshire town, as one who had done his work "with the ability of a theologian and the faithfulness of a minister of Christ," he was praised by the senior pastor, who wrote to the young man's father, saying, "I see that he has now a call to depart with a prospect of usefulness by preaching the Gospel in another place. I therefore readily commend him to the Lord, and the word of His grace, and shall rejoice to hear that all our hopes are realized among the people of Kensington."

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Mr. Clayton was ordained in Hornton Street Chapel the twenty-first of October, 1801. The Rev. W. Humphreys, of Hammersmith, delivered the introductory discourse, and the charge to the minister was given by his father, the Rev. John Clayton, pastor of the Church assembling in the ancient Weigh House, not far from the London Monument. This gentleman, dignified and courtly, had come under the influence of Lady Huntingdon, and to the time of his death remained attached to the doctrines dear to the countess. His dissent was of a moderate type, and he did not share in political views prevalent amongst his brethren; in that respect his son resembled him. He cultivated friendships with evangelical clergymen, especially Newton and Cecil. When I was about to enter college I received from him counsel and encouragement; and I remember well a discourse which he preached at Norwich fifty years ago, from the words, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." He had visited the place forty years before, and now came, he said, to see "*how they did*," and to make inquiries relative to their temporal as well as their spiritual welfare. "Have you made your wills?" asked the venerable patriarch, with his thickly powdered head.

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"The charge he delivered at Kensington to his son was a most faithful and solemn exposition of ministerial duties, enforced with amazing vigour and pungency of expression; indeed at times there was a trenchant fearlessness of utterance almost amounting to invective against timeserving, hesitating, cowardly preachers who kept back the truth or proclaimed smooth things to gratify graceless spirits." [29]

"I have not language [he said] of indignant severity sufficiently strong to express the contemptible cowardice, hypocrisy, and soul-murdering cruelty of those who adopt an indefinite phraseology in order (such is the plenitude of their prudence and moderation) that none may suspend their devotion, but that a heterogeneous mass of nominal Calvinists and real Arians and Socinians may be assembled (for united they cannot be) in one society. Frost unites sticks and stones, moss, leaves, and weeds; the sun separates them. Into the secret of that frosty liberality may you, my son, never enter, and to the assembly of its advocates never be thou united.

"Your testimony is to contain nothing but the truth. Sermons should not consist in declamation, but be calculated to convey solid instruction. You must teach, and not trifle away time in exhibiting fine thoughts or playing upon words. Let not your testimony be encumbered with what is foreign. Be like Paul, who could say, 'Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have obtained mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.'

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"Your testimony should be borne with zeal, in the heat of which do not lay aside Christian meekness towards opposers. At the same time, take care that you do not grow lukewarm and indifferent under the specious pretext of meekness. An unfaithful, accommodating pastor, perhaps, applauds himself for carrying it fair with all sorts of people, whereas this peaceable kind of preaching, in neither condemning heretics and worldly-minded persons, nor being condemned by them, is no other than a sign of his being himself in a state of condemnation and death. That person betrays the truth who ceases zealously to defend it, or to oppose its professed adversaries, either from fear of giving occasion of offence, or through a false love of peace. The shepherd should not only feed the flocks, but also *drive away* the grievous wolves."

When Mr. Clayton had spent a year and a half in the seclusion of what was then a rural hamlet, he met with an accident whilst riding on horseback, an exercise to which he was addicted throughout life. The accident suspended his work for a while, and during that period his brother George helped to supply his lack of service. There was considerable resemblance between the two brothers. Each had a commanding appearance and a sonorous voice. Both were accustomed to express themselves in measured, ornate sentences, the style of which was caught in a measure from their good father, who loved his sons, and discriminated between them by saying "John had the best stock of goods, but George had the best shop window." The attainments and mental abilities of the elder certainly were superior to those of the younger; yet perhaps the younger presented what he had to say in a manner more ingenious and with even more attractive diction than his brother John. They became, as they grew older, types of a class at the time large and influential, chiefly known by their intense and popular evangelical ministrations, their exemplary discharge of pastoral duties, their zealous support of catholic institutions for the spread of the Gospel, their gentlemanly demeanour in society, and their large intercourse with ministers and people of all denominations.

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Let me avail myself of the following reminiscences of Mr. Clayton's preaching by my beloved friend, the Rev. J. C. Harrison, who attended at the Poultry when Mr. Clayton was minister there. They will, with some slight modification, apply to his preaching at Kensington.

"He was an admirable preacher. In the course of the year you were sure to hear all the main doctrines of the Christian faith clearly explained, or if not formally expounded, thrown into a fuller light by some practical appeal of which he made them the foundation. When he took up a book of the New Testament, like the Acts of the Apostles, and founded on it a series of discussions, he would draw out the spirit of the narrative with great fidelity and effect, and would rise not unfrequently into real eloquence. He was amongst his flock hearing the tale of their sorrows or their joys, their mental conflicts or their bodily sufferings, and becoming thereby acquainted with all varieties of life and experience, all kinds of spiritual disease, all phases of Christian character: seeking meanwhile how to meet difficulties and soothe sorrow, and correct morbid feelings, and turn tears of sadness into smiles of joy, and thus he got together the materials for portraiture of spiritual character drawn to the life, and these he wrought into the texture of his Sunday sermon. It is difficult to imagine the help which such discourses afforded to all classes of true Christian hearers. He mixed with all sorts and conditions of men, lawyers, doctors, merchants, tradesmen, mechanics; and as he was a felicitous and ready converser, he not only threw out shrewd hints and sparkling sayings for their advantage, but gained from them a vast amount of information respecting their mode of life, their opinions and practices, their weak points and strong points, their gains and losses, their desperate anxieties and temptations, or their exhilarating successes; and with these facts from life, in his memory, he spoke in his sermons, 'not as one that beateth the air,' but as one who had been behind the scenes, and knew whereof he affirmed. His strokes were not delivered at random, but went straight to the mark. He could reprove, exhort, advise, comfort, as if he were himself involved every day in the whirl and wear of life. True his usual style of speech was rather Johnsonian, intermingled with forms of expression so entirely his own that you could only call them Claytonian; but those who knew him well, found that he talked very much as he preached, in rhetorically shaped sentences, with a singularly

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felicitous peculiarity of phrase coined in his own mind, and occasionally with a good-humoured subsidence into some pointed colloquialism which told all the more forcibly from its contrast with his ordinary mode. They felt, therefore, that what he said was thoroughly genuine, the utterance of a true man and not at all of a quack, or as he would have said, of an empiric. But whether experimental or practical, his sermons were richly and heartily evangelical, full of the very spirit of the Gospel. As some of his old-fashioned hearers used to say, 'You could always reckon on sixteen ounces to the pound.'"

Mr. Clayton was an exemplary pastor. After he removed to Camomile Street and the Poultry, he visited his people in a most methodical way, dividing London into districts, and going from house to house, week after week, to comfort sorrowing hearts, to share in domestic joys, to guide the perplexed, and to stimulate the lukewarm; this I know, and therefore it may be inferred that he looked well after the few sheep in the Kensington fields, feeding them by day, and watching over them by night. He used to talk of the large "ring fence" round his church in the city; the ring fence round his church in the suburb was small, and hence we may be sure that his pastoral duties were, during his pastorate at Hornton Street, thoroughly performed. A gentleman by birth and education, with large sympathies easily evoked, tears and smiles coming at a moment's bidding, apt at telling anecdotes, full of humour if not wit, he was a companion loved in a circle wider than his own congregation; his genial friendliness and neighbourly visits helped no doubt to promote the cause of Evangelical Nonconformity.

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A number of minutes occur in the record of affairs, relative to matters of a temporal kind, during Mr. Clayton's ministry; but there are no entries relative to the admission of members or other strictly religious proceedings. One subject in particular excited the pastor's solicitude, namely, that the chapel property should be put in trust, which accordingly was done; and in connection with this many discussions arose touching what was needful for discharging pecuniary liabilities. It is plain from what follows that Mr. Clayton was not satisfied with "the mixture of temporals with spirituals," as he called it; and on Christmas Day, 1804, he publicly assigned reasons for relinquishing the pastoral office. Various rumours were afloat, which he briefly contradicted as "untrue," and then told his friends that if they were asked "Why has Mr. Clayton left Kensington?" they were to reply, "That it was his earnest wish to be nearer the immediate circle of his ministerial connections and religious friends; that his desire was to be united to a Church whose members more fully coincided with him in sentiment on several subjects, more especially on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and particularly that he might find a place where he might not be habitually perplexed with secular arrangements, and where he might in some degree enjoy that tranquillity which he deemed so necessary in the present state of his health." "I have the pleasure," he added, "to inform you all, that last year this chapel was vested in the hands of nine trustees, who are engaged to see that no minister shall ever be settled here who does not preach the gospel agreeably to the tenets of the Assembly's Catechism."

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Mr. Biggs, the collector and secretary, also resigned his office, and Mr. Walker was appointed in his room.

On the 31st of October, 1805, it was resolved, "at a meeting held in the vestry," that Mr. Hamilton, of Brighton, should be invited to become pastor, and an invitation accordingly was drawn up, and signed by two deacons and between eighty and ninety other persons.

To the invitation Mr. Hamilton sent a negative reply, addressed to "the Church of Christ assembling for religious worship in Hornton Street, Kensington, and the subscribers to that interest."

Meetings afterwards occurred at intervals for the settlement of pecuniary affairs, until the month of January, 1807, when by the direction of "the managers, with the members and subscribers approving," the secretary, Mr. Walker, wrote to Mr. Leifchild, a student at Hoxton Academy, who had occupied Kensington pulpit with great acceptance, to become minister of the chapel. Mr. Leifchild replied that he could not leave the Academy before the next Christmas, nor accept any call before the next midsummer. In August of the same year a meeting was held at Mr. Broadwood's house, and it was resolved to secure Mr. Leifchild not less than £160 per annum, with an addition of whatever the chapel might bring in above that sum. On the 3rd of January, 1808, the members of the chapel resolved to invite Mr. Leifchild to the pastorate, and in March he accepted the invitation.

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III. THE THIRD PASTORATE. *THE REV. DR. LEIFCHILD.* 1808-1824.

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"BEFORE accepting the call to Kensington," he said, as we learn from the Memoir by his son, "while returning from a visit to that place, I heard at the house of a friend that Rowland Hill had announced me to preach at Surrey Chapel on the following Tuesday evening." He went and preached, and was surprised at the risibility of the audience, which was explained when he heard that Mr. Hill had crept up into the gallery behind the pulpit, and in his own comical way

expressed assent to one part and dissent from another part of the discourse. The veteran came into the vestry and asked the young man to become his curate at Wotton-under-Edge. The latter declined the overture, when the former replied, "That reminds me of young men setting up in business before they have served their apprenticeship." [37] Just before that evening service, the minister of Surrey Chapel had written to Mr. Wilson, Treasurer of Hoxton Academy, saying, "I hear much of a young man of the name of Leifchild. It was supposed that he was going to *settle* (a bad word for a young recruiting spiritual officer) at Kensington; but that there is a set of formal stupid Presbyterians there, who by no means suit his taste, and that he is consequently still waiting for the further directing hand of Providence, to know where he is to go." [38a] Mr. Hill was mistaken. John Leifchild did *settle* at Kensington, and was ordained there in June, 1808, when Dr. Simpson, his tutor, delivered the charge. Dr. Simpson, it may be remarked, was a man of singular spiritual power. Many can argue, illustrate, persuade, and impress, but he could *inspire*; and the accounts given of him in this respect by his students were enthusiastic. "I received a charge from his lips at my ordination over the Church at Kensington," says his admiring pupil, "which I can never forget. Much of the attention I afterwards met with in that official connection I ascribe to the affectionate manner in which he addressed me." [38b]

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The new pastor does not give a flattering account of the congregation which formed his maiden charge. "There was a great prejudice," he says, "in the town against Dissenters. Many of my hearers resided at a distance or held situations in London, and some of the managers of the chapel, who were Scotchmen, were not very spiritual. Of the deacons, some resided in London, and one was very old. He also was a Scotchman, but a very good man. He had been a gardener on a nobleman's estate, and now lived on a small income, respected for his piety and integrity. He was my best help, but died after a long and lingering illness." "During that period I never found him otherwise than pious, resigned, and cheerful. He always had a guinea to spare for any religious object of importance, although his income did not exceed £50 per annum. One of the managers was worth at least £20,000, and was as niggardly as Duncan was generous. 'Here, Duncan,' exclaimed this wealthy man, on the occasion of an important collection at the chapel, 'Here, Duncan, will you put this in the plate for me?' handing two half-crowns. 'I will, sir,' replied Duncan, '*with my own guinea.*' This was said with a good intent, but it hardly agreed with the Master's precept, 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.'"

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Within little more than a year after the new pastor's settlement, George the Third's jubilee was held,—an event which of course produced excitement in Kensington, for whilst the royal old gentleman was popular all over the country, beyond what the present generation is apt to believe, he stood particularly high in the affections of the Kensingtonians, who were familiar with his face and figure, as he dashed along in his coach and four, attended by his body guard, through the Court suburb. The cry of his approach, and the distant sight of the soldiers and outriders brought people to the front, lifting their hats as he passed by. With Dissenters he was especially popular, and the Hornton Street congregation loved him all the more because he liked Saunders, the coachman, and read his tracts. So in the loyal demonstrations of October, 1809, they came prominently forward, and established on the 25th of the month a school for "children of both sexes and of all religious denominations."

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Soon after the jubilee had been celebrated, the Nonconformist part of English Christendom was thrown into excitement by Lord Sidmouth's Bill for abridging the liberty of preaching, under pretence of rectifying an abuse. He complained that licences to preach were sought in order to evade parish duties and militia service, and urged that there should be put upon grants of licence certain restrictions which Dissenters did not approve. The deputies of the three denominations rose in determined opposition to this intermeddling with religious liberty, and petitions against it poured into the Houses of Parliament. The Kensington people joined other Nonconformists in resisting the mischievous scheme, and promised the London committee "the utmost assistance and cordial co-operation"; they also subscribed towards defraying expenses incurred by this "well meant and well timed" assertion of religious freedom. [40]

Amongst the families connected with the Church during Dr. Leifchild's pastorate, two in particular may be mentioned, noteworthy on their own account, and whom I can describe from personal knowledge.

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The Talfourds attended for some years. The mother was one of those saintly women who when once seen can never be forgotten. She belonged to the class of matrons immortalized by Solomon. "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her." "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." All this is eminently true of Mrs. Talfourd; and there she used to sit and listen to her pastor in one of the square green pews at Hornton Street, with her "children about her"; one of whom, when a matron and mother, was, during my own ministry, a comfort and a joy. The most distinguished of her sons—others became distinguished in other ways—was Mr. Justice Talfourd, who for some time not only adorned the judicial bench, but before doing so made a mark on literature and politics, by authorship and eloquence. The good old lady told me of his boyish days, of his school-life at Mill Hill; read to me one of his letters, in which he spoke of his school-fellows, especially "one Hamilton," who joined a party that met for worship privately, and was "very flowery in his prayers." This Hamilton was no other than the subsequently famous Nonconformist minister of Leeds. The young barrister wrote an article on pulpit oratory, in which he fully described the preacher to whom he listened on Sundays:—

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"Mr. Leifchild is one of those who feels 'the future in the instant.' He has almost as intense a consciousness of the world to come as he has of the visible objects around him. He speaks not only as believing, but as *seeing* that which is invisible.

"His manner of level speaking is slovenly, sometimes bordering on the familiar; but when he is aroused he pours forth a torrent of voice and energy, and sustains it without intermission to the end. His whole soul seems thrown into every word. He does not stop to explain his expressions, or give all his qualifications to his doctrines which he might think requisite in a confession of faith, but gives full vent to the predominant feeling, and allows no other to check its course, which in every kind of oratory is wise. He thus occasionally, it is true, rushes headlong against some tremendous stumbling-block, or approaches that fine division where the pious borders on the profane. But, on the whole, the greatest effect is produced by this abandonment to the honest impulse of the season."

"I remember," says Mr. Leifchild, "that my father told me, upon his return from the Serjeant's house in Russell Square, where he had been dining, that this then well-known orator of the law courts had relaxed and refreshed himself by referring to the old Kensington days, and the old chapel, and singularly enough, the old hymns of Dr. Watts, which he had once rather disdained. 'Do you remember,' said he to my father, 'how we used to sing that hymn—one of Watts's best—

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count my loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride"?

And do you remember how heartily we used to join in the last verse:

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so Divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."?"

Another family, less known to fame, was Mrs. Bergne, of Brompton Row, and her two sons. The eldest of them was John Bergne, for fifty years clerk in the Foreign Office, and during the latter part of the time superintendent of the French department,—an office which brought him into association with many foreign and home celebrities. A man of high culture, great conversational power and exuberant wit, he was nevertheless decidedly religious, and remained steadfast in his nonconformity to the end of life. He was a most attentive hearer, and wrote down many of his pastor's sermons, chiefly from memory. He carefully preserved two quarto volumes filled with a course of lectures on "The Acts," which I read when I was young, and they gave me a good idea of the preaching then heard at Hornton Street. A younger son, Samuel, entered the ministry during Dr. Vaughan's pastorate, and with him, as well as his brother John, I enjoyed a lifelong friendship most intimate, most endeared. He became well known as pastor of the Poultry Chapel, and as Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The family lived at Brompton, but year after year made their way morning and evening to Kensington Chapel; and with them I may couple the family of the Gainsfords, who resided in Piccadilly. Such circumstances show the distances which in those days people walked to the house of God. It is remarkable how many branches of old Nonconformist families included in our history have since risen to eminence. Here I may mention Dr. Bruce, the learned archæologist in Newcastle, who married Miss Gainsford; also their son, the present Recorder of Bradford.

Another family may also be mentioned, though not I believe members of the Church, as were most of those whom I have just recorded:—

"Amongst the attendants on his ministry (says Mr. John Leifchild, speaking of his father) were Lord and Lady Molesworth. They had derived benefit from his pulpit instruction, and became his attached friends. He often referred in particular to the mother, Lady Molesworth, a truly pious elderly lady, who had apartments in Kensington Palace. She had two strong reasons for her attachment to my father's ministry: one being the benefit which she herself had obtained from it; and the other being the influence which it had exercised on a favourite son—Lord Molesworth. Lord Molesworth, her younger son, had heard Mr. Leifchild at Hornton Street Chapel, and though very wild and thoughtless at that time, was so affected by what he heard as to alter his mode of life. Another, and the elder son, was then in India, where, being laid on a sick bed, he remembered the psalms which his father, Viscount Molesworth, had read and expounded when he was a child at home, showing their reference to the Messiah, and thus confirming the truth of Scripture. I believe he came home, and it was then that he also attended the ministry at Hornton Street Chapel. He now became devoted and useful; and having obtained an appointment in Ceylon, he repaired thither, and there continued his usefulness by distributing religious publications. His father dying, he succeeded to the title, and having acquired property in Ceylon, he determined to return home, assist at the chapel, and spend the remainder of his days with his aged mother. He notified to his mother the time of his embarkation, and she, calculating the length of the voyage, expected at a certain day to enfold her son in her embrace. She was disappointed, and the reason soon appeared in the reception of the melancholy

intelligence that the vessel in which he had trusted himself, his wife, and all his acquisitions, had gone down at sea, and every life had been lost. 'I feared,' says my father, 'on hearing the sad news, to call upon her; but on doing so I found her calm. And with erect and majestic figure, looking at me, she said: "Dear pastor, God sustains me. I utter not a murmuring word. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."'"

When I first went to Kensington, I was requested to visit an old member of the Church, a shoemaker by trade, who I learnt had been converted under the ministry of Dr. Leifchild. I went and found him bedridden. He was a remarkable man, with a handsome face, but a cripple. In very humble circumstances, and uneducated, except in things pertaining to the kingdom of God, he had a good deal of that natural politeness which appeared all the more striking from its humble surroundings. He won my affections; and I delighted to sit by the good man's bed when he would describe, in emphatic language and with strong emotion, his strange life-story. Good-tempered from a boy, ready for fun and frolic, and of a daring spirit, he plunged one day, if I remember right, into the thick of the traffic in the high road, and was so crushed under a cart wheel, that it was a wonder he survived the accident. He had mixed with dissolute company, and been accustomed, as he loitered about the end of an alley opposite the church, to insult those who passed by on the way to worship. His habits did not improve when he became a married man, and his notoriety for evil was a village scandal. But two of his children went to the Sunday school, and they persuaded their father to come to chapel. Dr. Leifchild preached from the words of St. Jude: "Preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," and spoke of the remarkable preservation of sinful people before they were called and converted. He happened to relate an anecdote of Mr. Cecil, who, previously to his becoming decidedly religious, narrowly escaped with his life, when thrown by his horse across the track of a wagon, which in passing only crushed his hat. The incident struck the listener. It resembled his own experience, and rivetted his attention. When the preacher followed up the illustration with a characteristic appeal, addressed to such as were still unconverted after signal providential deliverances, the cripple trembled from head to foot. Greatly impressed, he went to chapel again and again, till he found himself another man, "a new creature in Christ Jesus." He would weep as he told the story, and go on to speak of his subsequent spiritual joy. "I am a wonder unto many," he would say, and then sing:—

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"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

Before I knew him a chair was made, in which he was wheeled from place to place, and was conveyed to the chapel where God's grace touched his heart. He loved the memory of the minister who had led him to Christ; and that minister relates: "Whenever he heard that I was about to re-visit the town, which I had subsequently left for another sphere of labour, he caused his little carriage to be wheeled out to meet me. I saw his eyes glistening with emotion, and the tears rolling down his cheeks, as I approached him, and then he invariably exclaimed aloud, 'I am a wonder to many, sir; but God is my strong refuge.'" [47]

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This remarkable conversion came to be common talk, and reached the ears of the Vicar, the Rev. Thomas Kennell.

"Shortly afterwards (says Dr. Leifchild) the Vicar called upon me and entered into familiar conversation with me on the great truths of the Gospel, evidently as the result of the impression which the shoemaker's wonderful conversion had produced. Thenceforth his kindly feeling toward me never decreased, and this was the more to be remarked on account of his standing in the Episcopal Church, as respected his learning, oratorical power, and zeal for God according to his knowledge. He was comparatively young, but with a magnanimous mind he had early determined to appreciate truth and goodness wherever they were to be found, and to follow them whithersoever they might lead. Soon afterwards he fell into a decline, and one evening while we were holding a prayer-meeting, news was brought us of his dangerous illness. I immediately requested those who led our devotions to bear him on their minds before God, and afterwards desired that no mention might be made of this circumstance, as I did not wish to draw attention to ourselves. But a report of it reached his sick chamber, and shortly after, upon the occasion of his removal for the benefit of change of air, I received from him the following note:

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'April 29th.

'I cannot leave Kensington without expressing to you my grateful feelings for the truly kind and Christian manner in which, during a very critical period of my illness, you were pleased to direct the prayers of your congregation to the throne of grace for my recovery. It has made a deep impression upon my mind.

"Those prayers were mercifully heard, and, by the blessing of God, I trust that I am in a state of progressive amendment. Slow indeed have been my advances, insomuch that even now I am totally incapable of the ordinary exertions of life; but I trust that a good Providence, whose mercies have indeed been around my path and about my bed, will, in His good time, perform the perfect work of restoration."

Another remarkable fact must not be passed by:

“One sabbath morning (says the pastor) a singular lapse of memory befell me, which I had never before and have never since experienced. When I rose from sleep I could not recollect any portion of the discourse which I had prepared on the day before; and, what was most strange, I could not even remember the text of the prepared sermon. I was perplexed, and walked out before breakfast in Kensington Gardens. While there a particular text occurred to my mind; and my thoughts seemed to dwell on it so much that I resolved to preach from that without further attempting to recall what I had prepared, a thing which I had never ventured to do during all my ministry.

“From this text I preached, and it was ‘Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.’ I preached with great liberty, and in the course of the sermon I quoted the lines:

‘Beware of desperate steps! the darkest day—
Live till to-morrow—will have passed away.’

“I afterwards learned that a man in despair had that very morning gone to the Serpentine to drown himself in it. For this purpose he had filled his pockets with stones, hoping to sink at once. Some passengers, however disturbed him while on the brink, and he returned to Kensington, intending to drown himself in the dusk of the evening. On passing my chapel he saw a number of people crowding into it, and thought he would join them in order to pass away the time. His attention was rivetted to the sermon, which seemed to be in part composed for him; and when he heard me quote the lines alluded to, he resolved to abandon his suicidal purpose.”

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Another incident deserves relation:

“A bricklayer came one evening drunk, yet towards the close was impressed. The next Sunday he came again, and I noticed him as one of the two young men who had behaved rudely the Sabbath evening preceding; but he had been cut to the heart. ‘I,’ said he to himself, ‘am the man intended.’ He soon fell ill, when the good work deepened. He is now consistent.”

Dr. Leifchild left a list of thirty-two persons to whom he had been useful, and under each name a notice of particulars connected with it. [49]

There lived in one of the stately houses in Kensington Gore a gentleman, commanding in person and polished in manners, who was drawn towards the Dissenting pastor, though he had no affection for Dissenters. “He laughed at *them* and liked *him*. He was a staunch churchman, but came occasionally to the chapel, where, as also in other places, he might be distinguished by the flower always fastened in the buttonhole of his coat.”

At the table of this hospitable gentleman the Kensington pastor met Serjeant Goulburn, then a young man; Mr. Stephen, of anti-slavery renown and Wilberforce’s friend; Miss Edgeworth, the novelist; and the John Owen, early Secretary of the Bible Society. The cheerful host experienced a great reverse, lost a fortune on the Stock Exchange, but bore it with equanimity, saying, when he came home and was asked by his wife how he was, “Pretty well, my love, for a ruined man.” Dr. Leifchild, through the medium of rich neighbours, befriended him in his trouble, for which he was ever afterwards grateful; and in subsequent years I enjoyed the friendship of one of his daughters, who with her husband, a Governor of the Bank of England, attended Hornton Street Chapel when I was minister. Her sisters also, who attained rank and fortune, always felt kindly towards the place where their father worshipped; but I knew nothing at that time of the circumstances respecting him described in the “Life of Dr. Leifchild.”

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Mr. Leifchild met with curious characters in Kensington:

“The Honourable Mrs. S— lived next door to him. One morning she said to him, looking over the garden wall, ‘Leifchild, can I come in; I want to speak to you?’

“‘Certainly, Mrs. S—,’ was the reply, and they were soon together in my father’s parlour, when the following conversation took place, the lady commencing abruptly as follows:

“‘Leifchild, I want a spade.’

“‘A *spade*, madam!’ exclaimed her neighbour in astonishment.

“‘Yes, a spade!’ was the rejoinder.

“‘But, Mrs. S—, your garden is always in good order.’

“‘Nonsense! you know what I mean.’

“‘Well, I will send the servant round with a spade.’

“‘Nonsense! you know I do not mean that.’

“‘Excuse me, Mrs. S—, I really do not know what you mean.’

“Well, then, you frightened me yesterday by saying that very few were converted after fifty years of age, and I am now forty-nine. And then you spoke of the diligent husbandman, and said we must all set to work. Now, I mean to work, and that is why I want a spade.’

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“You shall have one, madam, and gladly too. We have abundance of work, and shall be most thankful for your help.” [51]

Prosperity attended the labours of Dr. Leifchild. The congregation greatly increased; galleries had to be erected and enlarged; and the income, once estimated at £160 a year, rose to more than double that amount. Many were admitted to communion, but in what way exactly does not appear, as the record of affairs respecting that period deals more in temporal than spiritual matters. No ecclesiastical contentions, properly so called, ruffled the stream; but there seem to have been frequent debates in the vestry about the state of the exchequer as regards paying for the gallery, and defraying other incidental expenses. Music created more serious strife. Mr. Broadwood, naturally enough, wished for an instrument to help the singing, and liberally offered to place an organ in the chapel, which Mr. Grey, a more true blue Presbyterian, did not approve. Correspondence arose and vestry meetings were held, in all of which Mr. Broadwood appears to have acted most kindly, but the conscientious scruples of his colleague could not be overcome. The latter left the chapel, and ultimately an organ was erected; but that did not end all trouble, for the organist incurred criticism; and whilst some good folks aimed at musical harmony, they were the occasion of considerable social discord. It is the old story; but no serious division occurred, and after a slight storm there came a pleasant calm.

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In our historical sketch it would be bad taste to pry into domestic secrets, but the married life of Dr. Leifchild was so mixed up with the interests of the congregation, that this part of our narrative would be incomplete if no notice was taken of Mrs. Leifchild. She was his second wife, whom he married during this his first pastorate, and the idea he entertained of this excellent lady appears in memoirs of her from his own pen, entitled, “The Minister’s Helpmeet.” She lightened his cares by undertaking, at his request, the management of pecuniary matters, in which, according to his son’s account, he does not appear to have been particularly skilful. “He abhorred all figures, but those of speech, and the latter were too unsubstantial for the support of a household. He would prefer any book to his bank book (a figure of speech, for in truth he never required one); and though not to be accused of extravagance, he certainly was chargeable with some thoughtlessness.” [52] “She was a shrewd, discerning woman, with a keen insight into character—a quality of priceless value in a minister’s wife. She was generally correct in her opinions of people, and her boldly pronounced forecasts of merits and demerits in the circle of her acquaintance made a deep impression on her family, whatever might be thought of them outside if revealed, which one would hope they were not always.” Her share in conducting the psalmody, visiting the congregation, and promoting religious and charitable objects was a topic of talk for years after she left the neighbourhood; and the mutual affection of the genial couple supplied materials for pleasant reminiscences in the minds of many an old friend. Dr. Morison, of Brompton, used to relate how he walked home from Kensington one old year’s night or new year’s morning, as the moon shone brightly over the frosty road, and hearing in the distance musical voices, he found, as he came nearer, that two people were singing,—

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“Come, let us anew
Our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still till the Master appear.”

What was Dr. Morison’s surprise to find at last that the words proceeded from the lips of the Kensington pastor and his wife. As she was beloved of him, so he was beloved of her. I have heard her in later days extol, in no measured terms, the excellences of his preaching, and also tell how she liked to accompany him to village services, and visit cottages in the neighbourhood, beating up recruits for the rustic congregation. Once, after a sermon in a little country chapel, I saw her go into the vestry and lovingly kiss the old prophet, exclaiming with genuine fervour, “God bless you, John.” Such affection and admiration in an ancient lady seem to me truly beautiful, and I trust no reader will think the incident too trivial to be noticed here.

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Some difference of judgment between the pastor and managers respecting the mode of meeting incidental expenses led to a conference, when Dr. Leifchild hinted at the possibility of his removing. He did not approve of the management scheme, and the managers immediately retired. Their letter of resignation was accepted at a Church meeting in December, 1821. It was in August, 1824, that he received an invitation from Bristol, and his acceptance of it he thus intimated to his people:—

“Mr. Leifchild addressed the meeting, and stated that, from a variety of circumstances, he had seen it his duty to accept of an invitation to the pastoral office of Bridge Street, Bristol. He assured the meeting that this step arose from no uncomfatableness in his present situation inducing a wish to depart; from no decay in the interest here; no want of attendance; no diminution in the affections of the people; nor from any pecuniary motives, as the salary proposed at Bristol was the same which he received here, £350 per annum, and that he had no prospect of its increase there which he had not here. But his chief motives were the state of his health, which he hoped might be improved by a residence at a greater distance from the metropolis; the prospect of more

extensive usefulness at that city; and above all, many indications to his mind that such was the will of Providence. He concluded by requesting any one who was not satisfied, and wished for further information, to put any question to him to that effect, as he had nothing to conceal. No question having been put, the meeting was dissolved with prayer." [54]

Mrs. Leifchild might well be proud of her husband; and here, in conclusion, let me repeat what I have said elsewhere: his sermons were constructed upon the principle of reaching a climax in the peroration. All prepared for that, and he used to lay down this maxim for pulpit oratory: "Begin low, proceed slow; rise higher, catch fire; be self-possessed when most impressed." Though he produced wonderful effects at public meetings, the pulpit was his throne, where he ruled his audience with a kind of imperial sway. His skill in the introduction of religious topics into common conversation was very remarkable, and he abounded in anecdotes illustrative of scripture truth and spiritual experience. On his death bed he fancied himself entering within the everlasting doors, and exclaimed, "Why, don't you hear it, those beautiful harps? You can't all go in with me. I must go first; but keep close behind me, and open the gates wide, wide, wide for all." On his tombstone are inscribed these words of his own: "I will creep as well as I can to Thy gates. I will die at Thy door. Yea, I will be found dead on the threshold of Thy mercy, with the ring of that door in my hand." [55]

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IV. THE FOURTH PASTORATE. THE REV. ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D. 1825-1843.

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DR. LEIFCHILD relinquished the pastorate in August, 1824. Dr. Vaughan received a "call" signed by about eighty members, and this he accepted in February, 1825. His acceptance is dated from Worcester. "It is not," he says, "without being truly thankful for the many blessings which have accompanied my religious connection in this city that I yield to the influence of circumstances, which in my own view and that of the more judicious of my friends, fully warrant the step which I now take in freely stating my acceptance of your call. I do, however, wish you, my dear friends, to be fully aware that I have not dared to proceed thus far without confiding greatly in your deeper sympathies, and more fervent prayers in my behalf. The doctrines I have preached in your hearing will never I trust lose their prominence in my ministry. To my own heart they yield its best, its only stay, and to apply them as a balm of never-failing efficacy to your spirits is what I now propose as the one object of my life while continued as your pastor."

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Dr. Vaughan was not educated at any of our colleges, but studied under the Reverend William Thorp, of Bristol,—a man, the breadth of whose intellect might be said to be symbolized by the extraordinary portliness of his figure. As there was much nobility in his nature, he might, in that respect, be likened to a monarch of the forest,—with this additional and curious resemblance, that whereas a lion rejoices in having two cubs at a time, so the leonine Bristol pastor never had but two pupils under his care, and they came both at once—Robert Vaughan and John Jukes. The latter presided over John Bunyan's Church at Bedford; and I have heard him and his friend at Kensington crack obvious jokes on their relationship to each other, and to their remarkable instructor. After entering on the ministry, Dr. Vaughan spent six years at Worcester in hard study, preparing himself for what he afterwards became. There he took an honourable position, but it could scarcely at first be augured that he would rise to be what he ultimately was.

He was intensely devoted to reading, especially in the historical department of literature, and of this he gave some presage as a boy when, at the age of twelve, he carried home triumphantly Raleigh's "History of the World," on the purchase of which he had invested a birthday gift. He largely overcame early defects in education; and by dint of extraordinary diligence, acquired large stores of historical learning. His tastes did not lie in the same direction as Dr. Leifchild's, and he never became the popular preacher which his predecessor was; though on the platform, in depth of thought, range of argument, and sometimes brilliancy of illustration, he surpassed him. Every man in his own order. The one excelled in appeals to the head, the other in appeals to the heart. Each did a vast deal of good in the Great Master's service.

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The recognition, or "ordination," as it is called, of the new pastor took place on the 5th of May, 1825. The Reverend Joseph Hughes, of Battersea, the Nonconformist Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and a friend of Leifchild—who wrote interesting memoirs of his life—opened the service with Scripture reading and prayers. Dr. Winter, of New Court, one of the leading city ministers, "stated the nature of a Gospel Church"; Dr. Waugh offered the ordination prayer, for which his wonderful "gift in prayer" eminently fitted him; Dr. Fletcher, of Stepney, "an eloquent man," delivered the charge; and George Clayton preached to the people.

Kensington was considerably changed when the new pastor reached it. The suburb was much more populous than of yore. Streets and squares, terraces and crescents were rising and stretching here and there; but the town, as it was now called, remained compact. Beyond the turnpike road, then bordered by only single lines of houses, there spread out north and south a wide border country of market gardens and orchards; and my predecessor told me of his dreary

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walks in winter, from his residence on Notting Hill to Hornton Street Chapel. No good pavement, no gas-lighted lamps, existed then; and the wayfarer was left to pick his path as best he could on pitch dark evenings, across Campden Hill, helped only by a glimmering lantern carried in his hand.

Unfortunately the Kensington records supply scanty information respecting the Vaughan period,—the years between November, 1825, and November, 1832, being passed over without one single line; whilst before and after, secular concerns are the chief subjects of entry. Now the appointment of new managers, then the retirement of a secretary, next the letting of pews; and, as a variation, the erection of a tablet in the chapel to the memory of a departed hearer. These are the topics which occur on the pages of the old parchment-bound volume.

The "History of Kensington" supplies a list of the institutions existing in connection with Hornton Street just before the close of Dr. Leifchild's ministry, and these continued in working order under Dr. Vaughan.

"A Benevolent Society, for visiting, instructing, and relieving the sick poor of all descriptions, at their own habitations, and which is at present chiefly conducted by ladies belonging to the congregation. A Tract Society, for the dispersion of religious tracts by the subscribers, to whom they are furnished at reduced prices. A Blanket Society, for the gratuitous distribution of blankets to the poor during the severity of the winter season. The Infants' Friendly Society,—a female institution, which provides clothing and nourishment for poor women and their children during their confinement. An Auxiliary Missionary Society, to assist in the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, and which, by means of contributions of one penny per week (and upwards), raises the sum of nearly one hundred pounds per annum. Besides these, collections are made at the chapel for the Hoxton Academy; and every severe winter, on a smaller scale, to assist in relieving the poor of the parish." [61]

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The Auxiliary Missionary Society greatly increased its contributions under the new pastorate, and before Dr. Vaughan left they were, I believe, more than doubled. I remember attending a missionary meeting in Hornton Street, soon after I entered the ministry in 1832, when a large attendance in the chapel, a well-filled platform, and energetic speeches by the pastor in the chair and by others, bore ample witness to the missionary spirit which was reigning in the place. One family in particular, at a later period, was distinguished by zeal for the conversion of the heathen, and did perhaps more than any other to fan the flame of missionary benevolence. I allude to the Newtons, who—with their father, a deacon in the Church, and their mother, who was indeed "a mother in Israel"—held a foremost place, not only in this respect, but in other works of faith and labours of love. Being warmly attached to Dr. Vaughan, they all, parents and children, held up his hands and cheered his heart. One of Mr. Newton's daughters, in my time, was married to the Rev. J. H. Budden, a valuable missionary at Mirzapore; and it was during Dr. Vaughan's administration that this excellent man, then I think a member of the Church, had devoted himself to the London Missionary Society, of which, down to the present day, he has remained a distinguished agent. The young lady he married, and her sisters, were indefatigable as collectors for Foreign Missions; and I have often thought what a blessing it is for a congregation to have such helpers; not only because they themselves feed streams of holy Christian charity, but because by example and social influence they stimulate the usefulness of others. A sister of Mr. Budden's, also connected with Kensington, became the wife of Mr. Birt, a missionary who laboured assiduously and successfully in South Africa; and it was a sad calamity for the Mission, and her family at home, when, in early life, she was killed by an accident, whilst travelling with her husband in a bullock wagon over an African wild.

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The Tract Society mentioned in the list just now cited developed into a new form. The Christian Instruction Society came into existence, and was energetically taken up by Dr. Vaughan and his friends; meetings used to be regularly held, when the visitors attended to report their labours, and to receive small sums out of funds collected for relieving poor people in the neighbourhood.

The Sunday School also received large attention and support from the Newton family. I believe that all the members were in the schools, either as teachers or scholars; the mother being a model teacher, whose praise in the congregation, amongst some of the old members, has echoed down to this very day. Kensington furnishes many illustrations of that inspired saying, "The memory of the just is blessed."

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The Sunday School anniversary, at the end of March, was a high day. Just as the spring buds began to burst in the hedgerows which lined the opposite side of the road, crowds of youngsters, full of springtide hope and joy, were seen crowding within the doors to take part in the yearly festival. The boys occupied the gallery on one side, the girls filled the other. The little maidens on these occasions wore white caps, of which they were rather proud, but as they were often criticised, the practice of putting them on was entirely dropped about the year 1845. The singing of special hymns by childish voices was a constant accompaniment, and to many a great attraction.

Whilst these forms of usefulness went on in immediate connection with the Church, outside of it stood two institutes of a thoroughly catholic description—the British School and the Bible Society.

At the back of the old chapel were buildings occupied by the British School, where a large

number of boys and girls were educated upon unsectarian principles. Church people and Dissenters united in their support, but the latter were foremost. Elementary education at that period was largely promoted by the voluntary efforts of the British and the National School Societies; the first of these rallying round the ranks of Dissent, the second being a pillar of strength in the Established Church. The minister and deacons at Hornton Street took special interest in the Kensington British School.

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The British and Foreign Bible Society had a large auxiliary for many years, comprehending a district which reached over both Westminster and the Court suburb. The annual meetings originally were held in the Haymarket, sometimes under the presidency of Royal Dukes, when, during the period of Dr. Leifchild's ministry, he would be sure to be present, and make telling speeches in his own characteristic style. In the latter period of his pastorate, I believe, the district narrowed; certainly in Dr. Vaughan's time the auxiliary had formed itself into distinct branches, and the Kensington one was wont to hold its own meetings. The King's Arms, by the palace gates had an assembly room in which the friends of the Bible Society used to meet in Dr. Vaughan's days, and there he did not fail by his sonorous eloquence impressively to commend the circulation of the Holy Scriptures throughout the world, as equally a Christian duty and a Christian privilege. On the platform, especially in later years, on denominational and patriotic questions, he often surpassed himself. The light from under his knitted brow, his compressed lips, his lordly bearing, his significant attitude and graceful gestures—something dramatic appeared in his oratory on such occasions—revealed much out of the ordinary way, and raised in listeners high expectations, which were rarely disappointed.

Dr. Vaughan spent more time at home than in visiting his people, not always to the satisfaction of the latter; but his profiting appeared unto all men, and his more intelligent hearers appreciated the results of his diligent study. He gradually rose into fame as an author, and his "Life of Wickliffe" won for him a high reputation. Other historical works, which it is needless to specify, made him still more widely known, and literary men honoured the Kensington pastor as an ornament to their profession. His authorship led to his London University professorship. History was his *forte*, and as Professor of Modern History in the new academical institute, he did good service. All these laurels served to attract thoughtful and cultivated people to Hornton Street. Inferior in numbers to many, the congregation, perhaps, in reference to the educated class, was inferior to none. Some of the aristocracy might now and then, during the latter part of his ministry, and afterwards, be seen within the humble walls. The Duchess of Sutherland and Lady Mary Fox were, I know, great admirers of the Doctor; and the former of these ladies—so queen-like in her appearance and manners—was once, I am told, present at a prayer meeting in the little Kensington schoolroom. The pastor was thankful to have opportunities of usefulness amongst people of rank, but he had no idea of flattering the great and seeking their patronage. I am quite sure from what I knew of him, and from conversation on the subject, he valued an occasional attendance of distinguished persons, much talked of at the time, only on account of the good he hoped to do them, not at all on account of any assistance they rendered, or any *éclat* they conferred. Though of humble extraction, he was one of Nature's nobility, without assumption or servility, he could bear himself well amongst the noblest of the land.

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One word ought to be said about his son—a member of the Church, and whom I think I now see sitting in the table pew, with his intellectual face, and long raven locks, looking up with loving eyes to his parent and pastor. The Doctor was proud of his son, and well he might be. But thankfulness for such a treasure went beyond all pride. The youth won the praises of such men as Sir James Stephen and Charles Kingsley, and had he been spared he would have proved a great blessing to the Church of God. But his "sun went down whilst it was yet day," and this bereavement proved the greatest trial and sorrow of the father's life. The son resembled the father, not much in his mental habits, but very much in his pulpit appearance and manners. I remember an old deacon saying, after he had heard "Alfy," as his father called him, preach for me after I came to Kensington, "He's a chip of the old block."

It was in the year 1843 that Dr. Vaughan received an invitation to become Principal of Lancashire Independent College. Immediately afterwards a special meeting of the Church was held, and it is thus reported in the records:—

"The letter of the Rev. Dr. Raffles, chairman of the committee, containing the invitation, was read, and reference was made by Dr. Vaughan to circumstances which seemed to make his continuance in Kensington desirable and important, and to others which went to give a strong claim to the call from Manchester. It was intimated in conclusion, that the meeting had been called, not for the purpose of giving expression, at that time, to any opinion on either side of the subject, but simply for the purpose of making the Church and communicants aware of the various considerations which it would be necessary carefully to weigh, in order to the formation of a wise and Christian judgment on the subject."

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It is natural that the Kensington people should be reluctant to part with such a pastor as they possessed; but, with a noble unselfishness worthy of imitation, they thought as much of the welfare of the Church at large as of their own. An extract from the letter they sent to him deserves insertion:—

"It would be to our honour, and it would afford us pleasure, to enumerate, as we could, other considerations connected with your character and attainments affecting the religious interests in this place, which might naturally induce us to urge you to continue

among us; but we feel bound in this communication to deal faithfully as those who fear God, the God of Truth, and we must therefore acknowledge, dear sir, that while we are deeply pained at the possibility of your leaving us, we are conscious that you possess moral and intellectual qualities which eminently fit you to occupy the very important post selected for you by your brethren in the ministry; and as we value His blessing who alone can bless, we dare not, if we could, interpose to prevent your acceptance of that distinguished and honourable offer, if it shall appear to you to be the will of God that you should accept it."

Soon after Dr. Vaughan had sent in his resignation, he wrote to me inviting an interview for the purpose of ascertaining whether there might be a likelihood of my leaving Windsor, where I had been happily "settled" for eleven years. I was taken by surprise, though I had before received intimations from brethren that it might be my duty to undertake a sphere of wider service than I then occupied. I could give no reply to Dr. Vaughan at the moment, but told him I must at once consult my Windsor friends. This may seem strange, but we had so much mutual affection and confidence, that I could trust to their disinterestedness, whilst they trusted to my attachment. The result was, after much anxious conference, and the advice of two eminent brethren who happened to be on a visit to Windsor, [68] that I consented to preach at Kensington, with a view to the pastorate. I had no desire to leave Windsor. Far from it. I longed to remain, if it were the will of God, and in that spirit prayed for direction. After preaching a few times, I received a cordial and unanimous invitation to Kensington, and the Windsor Church agreed to my acceptance of it with expressions of unabated affection, saying they knew I must leave them, and that if I went away to so short a distance, there seemed more chance of their seeing me often afterwards. The spirit manifested by the Society left and the Society joined was so beautiful, that I record the fact as expressive of my own gratitude, and as an example worthy of imitation. Before Dr. Vaughan went into Lancashire, steps had been taken with a view to this result, and within two months it was accomplished. Some may think this a hasty settlement; at all events it lasted for thirty-two years, with growing affection on both sides.

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The following letter of acceptance was written on the 27th of July, 1843:—

"MY DEAR BRETHREN,—

"I do not think it desirable to delay any longer than is absolutely necessary a decided reply to the unanimous and affectionate invitation which you have sent me, to accept the pastoral office. It appears to me to be the path of duty to remove from my present charge to the Church at Kensington. Had I not been gradually prepared for this step, I do not think I could have found it in my heart thus to sever the tie which has pleasantly bound me for more than eleven years to my present people; but the way has been opened by degrees, and the hand of Providence has, I conceive, now placed me in a position, with regard to you, from which it would not be proper to retreat.

"Confiding in the sincerity of that approval and affection which you are pleased to express, and above all, looking up to the Fountain of all good, for His aid and blessing, I venture to advance, and accept your united call.

"The spirit of supplication which has marked your proceedings, in reference to this matter, gives me the strongest ground to hope that in this instance the voice of the Church is the voice of God. I am deeply sensible of the great responsibility I incur in accepting so important a charge, especially as the successor of one whose eminence in the Christian world might well provoke, in relation to myself, humiliating comparisons. But I rest on Him who can successfully employ the humblest instrumentality in His service. Let me hope that the spirit of prayer I have already referred to may continue, and that you will earnestly seek an enlarged effusion of Divine influence on my anticipated labours. The consciousness of many infirmities and imperfections compel me, at the very commencement of our new relationship, to implore that you will ever manifest toward me that candour and forbearance which I feel that I shall especially need."

Before I pass on to the new pastorate, it should be stated, in reference to Dr. Vaughan's ministry at Kensington, that for some little time before his removal to Lancashire, the Rev. N. Jennings, M.A., F.R.A.S., became associated with him as assistant minister, and in that capacity he rendered important service, especially in conducting Bible classes,—his instructions were highly appreciated by the youthful members of the congregation.

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V. THE FIFTH PASTORATE. ***THE REV. JOHN STOUGHTON, D.D.*** **1843-1875.**

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THE new pastor felt his removal from Windsor very deeply; and on the first Sunday of his regular ministry in Kensington he was anything but himself—certainly by no means at home. He thought next day the people must have repented of their choice. Matters, however, mended afterwards,

though a good while passed before he could accommodate himself to altered circumstances; but the kindness he everywhere met with gave him increasing encouragement.

A recognition service was held on October 31st, 1843, when his old friend and neighbour, Dr. Morison, delivered an introductory discourse; the late minister, Dr. Vaughan, gave the charge; and his predecessor, Dr. Leifchild, addressed the congregation. It was a pleasant circumstance that three successive pastors of the same Church shared in the solemn service; and but for uncontrollable hindrances, the predecessor of them all, Mr. Clayton, would have been present to assist. Dr. Vaughan's charge was most impressive; and the allusion he made to himself and his successor, as thenceforth associated like fellow-workmen in the same edifice, was very striking from the manner in which it was put; and the listener was led to hope that if diligent, devout, and earnest, he would meet his friend in the world of light, when all results of faithful labour will be finally revealed.

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On reviewing the appearance of the neighbourhood, compared with what it was years before, changes were visible. Kensington had enlarged, the population had increased; still there were rural spaces between the Court suburb and the neighbouring localities; and people from Paddington, from Brompton, and from Knightsbridge took long country walks to their chosen place of worship. Hence pastoral visitation required much time and some toil; and many were the wanderings in unknown neighbourhoods, taken by the new minister in order to secure an acquaintance with his hearers.

The congregation had become large in the latter part of Dr. Vaughan's time; and old families who had loved him did not transfer, but rather extended their attachment to the object of their recent choice. Without mentioning names, which would be invidious, there was *here* an old gentleman who looked well after his pastor's interests; *there* an old lady with a large school, who did all she could to bring her pupils under the spiritual influence of the preacher they heard from week to week; and *elsewhere* a family group outstretching helpful hands for all sorts of good works. The kindness, candour, and forbearance of all were wonderful; and if a few were not reconciled at first to the change which had happened, and naturally sighed at the loss they had sustained, they never evinced alienation, but gradually came to listen lovingly to the pulpit occupant, whom the Great Master, they believed, had sent amongst them. Many new attendants gradually sought sittings on the old spot; some of them long since entered a better world and a better Church, and others still remain, who kindly greet the retired shepherd whenever, happily for himself, he comes in their way.

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It may be mentioned that Kensington, on many accounts, has long been a favourite place of residence for artists and literary men, and a few of these became some occasional, others regular hearers. Two Royal Academicians, and one of the editors of *Punch*, will be remembered by some who read these pages; and an eminent sculptor still remains faithful to his early ecclesiastical attachment. In later days the present President of the Institution of Civil Engineers ^[73] removed from the north to Kensington, and fully won the confidence and affection of his pastor; others, whom it would be boastful to mention, and some still spared for great usefulness, lightened the load of his cares and increased the sum of his enjoyments.

One most interesting fact should not be passed over. Kensington was remarkable for ladies' boarding schools, and a number of the pupils attended Hornton Street chapel. Thus the pastor gathered round him a circle in which he took a very lively interest. Friendships were then formed which have since been the joy of his life; and in the evening of his days it is his privilege to regard several of them still with a fatherly affection, to which they faithfully respond.

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Curious characters at different periods, it may be added would come into the vestry to have a little chat; a gentleman during the Crimean War gravely proposed to the preacher of peace a clever scheme for blowing up Sebastopol; and at another time one of clerical appearance repeated, with extraordinary rapidity, long passages out of the Greek Testament.

Immediately after the commencement of the new pastorate, important questions arose as to the administration of ecclesiastical affairs—indeed, as to the proper constitution of the Church. The narrative in this volume has shown that the congregation at Hornton Street was originally gathered by Presbyterians; and that though no definite form of polity was adopted, the method of proceedings followed somewhat the Presbyterian model. The institution of *elders* was proposed, but not carried out; *managers*, whose office seems to have resembled somewhat that of elders, were at once appointed. For a long time they distinctly and frequently appear in the records of the Society. Moreover, at first mention is made of "communicants," "members," and "subscribers", but the word "Church" occurs only now and then, until the appellation became established in Dr. Leifchild's time. "Deacons," too, are mentioned, but not in a way to indicate what were their distinct duties, and in what manner they were chosen. "Managers" continued to administer affairs all the way through; and such persons held office down to the termination of Dr. Vaughan's ministry. The practice, when he left, was strictly congregational; but still the existence of "managers," in distinction from deacons, lingered on,—the managers having chiefly to do with the collection of subscriptions and the support of the minister. When the new pastorate opened, it was thought time to put an end to what, on Congregational principles, is an anomaly, and to reduce the administrative power to the scriptural form of bishop and deacons. Hence the office of manager was abolished, and an election of new deacons followed. Those who had been called "managers" were now elected to the diaconate, and new men were added to the number. Altogether they now amounted to seven; their names being Messrs. Newton, James, Hine, Walker, Thurston, Tomlin, and Watson. To give additional importance to this new step in

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the Church's history, it was thought desirable to have special services connected with it; therefore, first the pastor, at a special Church meeting, explained the nature of the office, as given in the New Testament, and next Dr. Tidman, at a week evening lecture, delivered an appropriate address to the newly-chosen officers. The Church now, in form as well as spirit, received a decidedly Congregational impress; and so it has continued ever since. From time to time new diaconal elections were held, as vacancies occurred; the ballot being adopted, though the names of suitable persons could be mentioned beforehand, the pastor and those already in office being allowed, not indeed to *dictate*, but to *suggest* such as seemed most qualified for the office. The last-mentioned deacon on the list just given—Mr. Robert Watson, of Hammersmith—ought to be specially noticed, for he wrought a practical change in the conduct of Church business little appreciated at the time. Being a most conscientious, methodical, and business-like man, as well as a devout and earnest Christian, he, as secretary of the official staff, conducted everything in the most orderly manner. I have heard him say that Church business occupied the chief time of one of his clerks. The change he introduced into the minutes of proceedings is very striking. Whereas before, entries were vague and irregular, and no clue is afforded to determine when and how members were admitted; after Mr. Watson took office, Church meetings are reported from month to month, with the greatest regularity; and it can be seen at once who were received into communion, and what of a spiritual or secular kind transpired. He and his brethren revised the list of members every year, striking off with inexorable decision the names of such as had ceased to attend the Lord's Supper. In March, 1848, it was made a standing rule, "That any member being absent from the Lord's Table for six consecutive months without sufficient cause assigned, shall, after notice to the party and mention to the Church, be considered to have withdrawn from the communion of this Church." It may be added, that a distinction was made between members in full communion—having a right to vote in the choice of "bishop and deacons," and on other ecclesiastical questions—and persons only occasional communicants, not adopting Nonconformist opinions, though from spiritual sympathy wishing to unite with the Church at the Lord's Table. Occasional communion often led the way to complete fellowship; the communicant, however, had to be elected at a Church meeting to a full share in ecclesiastical rights and privileges.

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It may be mentioned further that young people, before they reached an age which would justify their giving a vote respecting Church affairs, were allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper, their subsequent full admission to fellowship depending upon their election in the usual manner. That "manner" was in accordance with the usual practice in Congregational Churches half a century ago. A candidate first had an interview with the pastor; then he or she was proposed to the Church; one of the deacons *generally*, but not *always*, had conversation with the individual; and at the next Church meeting, after a report of eligibility, the election followed by a show of hands. [77]

That all particulars relating to the constitution of the Church may be disposed of at once, it remains to be remarked, that when a new trust deed of Church premises had to be made, instead of the Assembly's Catechism being recognised as a standard of belief, a short general statement of evangelical doctrines was employed.

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The year 1845 completed the first half century of the Church's existence, and it was deemed fit that the jubilee should be celebrated by a special service. Accordingly, "a commemorative discourse" was delivered on the 13th of April by the pastor, and it appeared in print at the request of the congregation. Two passages may be introduced:—

"With devout gratitude it should be remembered that the past half century has been marked with peace. While some Churches have been torn with intestine strife, or wrecked by schisms, or reduced to a mere shadow by heartless formality, the communion of the faithful in this place has been a practical illustration of the Psalmist's words, 'Behold! how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;' while at the same time they have exemplified the principle that progress is the law of spiritual existence in societies as well as in individuals. It has not been the peacefulness of death, but the peacefulness of life which has reigned over this spot; not the calmness of the stagnant pool, but the smooth and gentle flow of living waters; not the stillness of the rocky desert, where all is desolate and bare and cold, but the silence of the garden and the grove, where vitality gushes through many a channel, and proves its presence and power by abundance of foliage, flowers, and fruit.

"Every Church should be a kind of missionary station for its whole vicinity, a centre of exertion and influence telling on the surrounding sphere; a lighthouse built on a rock, lifting aloft the lamps of truth, warning, and invitation; or, rather, a floating light moving in the person of its members through the adjacent district, to illuminate the benighted, to guide the wanderer, and to save the soul from moral shipwreck. Happily, the obligation to exemplify an active Christianity is now acknowledged by our Churches in general; and an apparatus adapted to the evangelization of the bordering territory is held to be essential to their completeness. We feel the obligation ourselves, and, by the Divine blessing, we have much of the religious machinery of the day at work upon this spot. But still, does it not admit of question whether, as the advocates of a system which boasts of its untrammelled freedom of action, and its vigorous voluntary power; as those who believe that our cause, to use the words of Dr. Doddridge, is 'the cause of evangelical piety'; as those, especially, who profess to be under everlasting and infinite obligation to Him from whom we have received our light and salvation;—I repeat, does

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it not admit of question, whether we are doing all that might be fairly expected of us, for the diffusion of the truths we so much value throughout the neighbourhood where we are located; whether our energies are put forth to the full for the extension of the cause in a place which numbers its 27,000 inhabitants, nearly four times the number of the population fifty years ago, when this chapel was built; whether we have provided all the means of Christian education we might and ought, especially for those of our neighbours who are lying around in vast masses, covered with the gloom of spiritual ignorance, and paralysed, to an awful degree, by moral insensibility? While there is much, very much, already done, which should encourage our hearts and fill us with gratitude, is there not much, very much, yet to be accomplished, to which Providence seems most urgently to bid us put an earnest, steady, persevering hand."

Important consequences resulted from these hints. In May it was resolved, "That a special meeting of the Church should be convened, and that members should be informed that the deacons have considered it desirable that certain alterations should be made in order to provide increased accommodation." Such a meeting was held, and it determined that the chapel should be enlarged by throwing the vestry and small schoolroom behind the pulpit wall, with the organ gallery, into the body of the building, so that a considerable number of additional sittings might be provided for the enlarged congregation. Such an alteration was effected, and the chapel was re-opened in October by Dr. Vaughan.

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In connection with the chapel enlargement, additional accommodation was provided at the back of the premises for the British and Sunday schools. These alterations created an impetus, happily felt by people and pastor. Various kinds of work went on, two of which may be mentioned: first, the delivery of a course of lectures in the new schoolroom on "Christian Evidences," which attracted large audiences from week to week; and next, the institution of a Bible class, including the whole of the week evening congregation, when expositions of Scripture were given by the pastor, followed by a list of questions. These questions were taken home, and the week after written replies were brought. In many instances the replies were of a very superior order, and the reading of the papers excited a very deep interest. The exercise proved a success, and the schoolroom was often crowded on these occasions.

The chapel, enlarged in 1845, became in 1847 too small to accommodate sufficiently the increased number of attendants, and to meet the spiritual wants of the neighbourhood. A select meeting in Hornton Street vestry speedily followed, to consider what, under the circumstances, ought to be attempted, and the result was a resolution to erect a new chapel at Bayswater, to which a portion of the Kensington congregation living in the Bayswater neighbourhood might remove. [81] This measure was advocated by the pastor as the right way of promoting the interest of Evangelical Congregationalism. To wait till bickerings arose, and diversions occurred in consequence, was truly mischievous. To "swarm" like bees, a goodly number removing to a new hive, that was a wise method, which God would be sure to bless. Mr. Walker, who lived at Bayswater, was anxious for a chapel there, and before the little party in the vestry separated, much more than £1,000 was promised. Soon the amount reached the sum of £1,700. A committee was formed for the fulfilment of the enterprise.

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The year 1848 is memorable in the history of Europe. It will be remembered that just then the Continent shook with political convulsions from end to end; and in the month of April the inhabitants of London felt intense anxiety, owing to the Chartist demonstration on Kennington Common. The Sunday before that incident a considerable number of Hornton Street hearers consisted of gentlemen just sworn in as special constables; and the grave and earnest manner of all present was increased by the Rev. William Walford, who preached on the occasion, and referred to his own recollections of what took place in England when, from week to week, it heard of the Paris Reign of Terror. God, he said, had brought this country through a more terrible excitement than, and would still be a protector of those who trusted in Him. Thus amidst political storms the foundation of Horbury Chapel was laid, even as Hornton Street, more than half a century before, had been built when England felt the throes of the French Revolution.

The corner-stone of Horbury Chapel was laid by Sir Culling Eardley, August 30th, 1848. The new building was completed and opened in September, 1849. The Sunday before a sermon was preached at Kensington from the words, "*We be brethren*," and the spirit of those words was embodied in all the proceedings which ensued.

About one hundred seat-holders left Hornton Street for Horbury; and about forty members, including two very influential deacons, Messrs. Newton and Walker, resigned, and migrated to the new settlement. They requested, in a letter dated October 29th, 1849, their dismissal in the following appropriate terms:—

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"We, the undersigned members of the above communion, purposing to separate ourselves from it, in order to form a Church at Horbury Chapel, Notting Hill, of the same faith and order, affectionately request that the necessary dismissal may be granted to us for the purpose.

"While recognising the tie which for various periods has outwardly bound us together in Church fellowship,—we desire ever to continue attached to each other in the bonds of the Gospel, and would gratefully acknowledge the goodness of our heavenly Father in having so long vouchsafed to the Church at Hornton Street His presence and blessing—in supplying it with a succession of faithful pastors, in honouring the

preaching of His Word by them, in creating a spirit of activity and desire for usefulness on the part of so many of our fellow-members, and in permitting love and union to prevail in our midst. We pray that these blessings may long be continued to you, and be realized by us in our new connection; that there may be speedily sent to us a pastor, a man after God's own heart, who shall preach the Gospel fully and freely, deacons who shall purchase to themselves a good degree, and that we and our fellow-members, individually, as well as in our associated character, may be distinguished alike for our humility and piety, and for our activity and devotedness to the cause of Christ."

It is interesting here to remember that, whilst the chapel was being built, the idea arose that the new and the old congregations might remain united under a common pastorate of two or three ministers, they interchanging pulpits with each other from week to week, the communicants in the two places at the same time forming together one organic Church. This would have been very gratifying to the Hornton Street pastor, and would have coincided with his views of primitive municipal Churches; but practical difficulties arose, and the scheme was abandoned. In lieu of it, however, the communicants at Kensington and Notting Hill resolved annually to partake of the Lord's Supper together, a practice which has since been continued with hallowed and pleasant results.

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If 1848 was a year of storms, 1851, when the first English Exhibition was opened, will ever be remembered as a year of peace. It seemed as though the millennium had dawned. "No more wars now," thought many a sanguine spirit, soon to be undeceived in this respect; but the tranquillity and good-will amongst the hundreds of thousands who thronged to the Crystal Palace are undeniable, and the effect of it on the Kensington Independent congregation was manifest in crowded attendances and in animated services, for which the artistic wealth and the manifold associations of the great gathering furnished the pastor with manifold illustrations.

The rising tide of the Church at Kensington did not ebb when the Exhibition was over; and owing to this, in the year 1854, the friends found it necessary to consider whether they ought not to build a new and much larger place of worship for themselves and their neighbours. Promised subscriptions speedily opened the way to the execution of this enterprise; and in June, 1854, the pastor laid the first stone of the chapel in Allen Street. The chapel was opened in May, 1855, when the Rev. Thomas Binney preached in the morning, and the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel in the evening. On the following Sunday the opening services were continued, Dr. John Harris preaching in the morning, and the pastor in the evening. The Rev. William Brock closed the series on the following Tuesday evening.

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The entire cost, including purchase of the land, was £8,748 9s. 6*d.*, and the whole was paid for on the last Sunday in January, 1860, when public collections reached the amount of £365 10s. 2*d.*,—being seven shillings more than was required.

In the autumn of 1856 the Church lost one of its most active deacons. Mr. Padgett (brother-in-law of the pastor), who had been formerly a deacon at Trevor Chapel, Brompton, died suddenly whilst travelling in Switzerland, and it became the pastor's painful duty to preach the funeral sermon, just after his own return from a continental tour. The text selected was Amos v. 8: "Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and, maketh the day dark with night."

A season of great anxiety occurred in the month of January, 1857, when the pastor received an invitation from New College to become Principal of that institution, upon the death of the lamented Dr. Harris. The intimate connection between the pastor and that college—he having taken an active part in the foundation of it, and having declined one of the professorships offered at that time—made him particularly anxious to ascertain the path of duty at this crisis. He informed the deacons of what had occurred, and sought their advice. He wished to decide, not according to any preconceived plan, but as it might appear on a comparison of claims, arising from the college on the one hand, and the Church on the other. The deacons returned the following answer:—

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"Having this evening met to consider the important communication which you submitted to us last Tuesday, in reference to the invitation given to you to succeed the late Dr. Harris as Principal of New College, we have prayerfully, and with thoughtful earnestness, endeavoured to view the matter in all its bearings, and we thank you for the confidence implied in the fact of your having referred the matter to us.

"Although as deacons of the Church under your charge its interests naturally present themselves prominently before us, we have sought to avoid any selfish or contracted feelings in reference to that Church, and have desired to take an enlarged view of the interests of the Church of Christ as a whole. Our first attention has been given to the suggestion made by you as to the practicability of your retaining a limited connection with Kensington Chapel as minister while undertaking the principalship; and our feeling is that it could not be done with comfort to yourself or advantage to the Church.

"In considering the matter generally, the following points have occurred to us as deserving of serious attention:—

"1. The special claims of Kensington as a sphere of labour for an intelligent Christian minister.

"2. Your peculiar qualifications for representing the interests of Nonconformity in the neighbourhood.

"3. The peaceful and prosperous state of the Church under your charge.

"4. The claims of a confiding and affectionate people who, within the last two years, have manifested their attachment by erecting our present place of worship at a cost of several thousand pounds, of which a large amount still remains due.

"5. Your success as a preacher, and your increasing acceptableness to your own people.

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"6. The more limited opportunity which would be afforded to you at New College of exercising your talents as a preacher.

"7. The difficulty which the Church anticipates in securing an appropriate successor.

"8. The fact that it would not be more difficult (if as much so) to supply the vacant office than your vacant pulpit.

"Other considerations, which we need not enumerate, have occurred to our minds. The foregoing we venture to submit to your attention. They have led us to the conclusion that, however honourable the invitation may be to you, and however it may be pressed upon your notice, and however usefully you might be employed in it, it does not appear to us to be your duty to relinquish your present position and sphere, where you have been so much blessed, in order to undertake the office in question."

This letter decided the point. Attractive as was the post at New College, the claims of the Church at Kensington, especially so soon after the building of the new chapel, appeared more urgent: and it may be added that the deacons, especially Mr. Watson, turned the incident to account by proposing that £1,000 should be raised as a thank-offering for the continuance of the existing pastorate, the sum to be employed in liquidation of the chapel debt. This amount contributed to its entire extinction.

Encouraging years of labour followed, and in 1860 additions to the Church reached their highest point up to that time,—a proof of the Divine blessing on what had been done and determined; and it was regarded as a cause for special gratitude and thanksgiving.

The new chapel was thoroughly repaired and embellished in 1863, at a cost of about £600. Of this amount the sum of £400 was subscribed beforehand, and the rest was obtained by collections on the last Sunday of January, 1864.

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In the spring of 1865 the Church, long aware of their pastor's wish to visit the Holy Land, most generously came forward to gratify him in this respect, and opened a subscription which amounted, almost immediately, to the sum of £400, which was placed at his disposal to defray the expenses of the journey. A public meeting followed, when the money, enclosed within a tastefully devised oriental-like purse, mounted in gold, was presented, with an intimation that, during the absence of about four months, the friends would undertake to pay supplies. Before his departure he delivered two sermons on the first Sunday in February, and on the 7th of the month started with Dr. Allon, Dr. Spence, the Rev. John Bright, of Dorking, and Mr. Stanley Kemp Welch, on the much talked of trip. [88] It proved successful and gratifying, except that a serious illness befel Dr. Spence during his journey, and that the Kensington pastor returned as yellow as an old Indian, much to the dismay of his flock when they lovingly welcomed him back to the pulpit. The temporary attack of jaundice, however, proved not at all injurious, as after his recovery from it his health was if anything better than before. Certainly the journey gave him an interest in Palestine, and in the Scriptures relating to it, greater than ever, and furnished ample materials for lectures to the congregation.

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The year after his return from the Holy Land he expressed a wish, not only for his own sake, but the better to meet spiritual wants in the Church and the surrounding district, that an assistant should be provided; and this matter came before the Church in February, 1866, when the following resolution was passed: "That this meeting desires to express its cordial concurrence in the deacons' proposal for the appointment of an assistant to the minister, to be selected by him, and to be sustained, as an experiment for one year, by a special fund." In pursuance of this resolution the Rev. Alden Davies became assistant minister, and proved so useful in visitation, superintendence of classes, and preaching on Sunday afternoons, and other occasions, that his services were prolonged for three years, greatly to the comfort of his senior colleague, and the satisfaction of his numerous friends.

Two important incidents occurred in 1868. The first was the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the pastor's ministry at Kensington, when a large public meeting was held in the month of October. The Rev. Thomas Binney took the chair, and was surrounded by a numerous company of London ministers. Numerous congratulatory speeches were delivered, but that which alone needs particular notice was the statement read by Mr. Sheppard, one of the deacons of the Church who for many years had rendered most valuable and important services. He stated that in 1843 there were 251 members, and that since 1843, 1,200 members had been added, the number on the Church roll at the time the meeting was held being about 500; so, he said, "the Church has been doubled in number since our pastor commenced his ministry amongst us." This report appeared all the more gratifying when it was remembered that in 1849 forty

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members had been dismissed to the new Church at Horbury. He also read a long list of sums, amounting altogether to £32,821, contributed by the congregation during twenty-five years, independently of the amount raised for the support of the ministry, and for incidental expenses in carrying on worship. Of the sum just mentioned, nearly £1,300 had been devoted to chapel and school building purposes; nearly £9,000 to missionary operations; £5,630 to the advancement of education; and £5,480 to relieving the poor. The other incident of this year 1868 was the laying of the first stone of the new schools in Allen Street.

It had for a long time been felt desirable that enlarged accommodation should be provided for the Sunday and Day Schools. The buildings in Hornton Street had become too small and altogether inconvenient. The Metropolitan Railway Company in 1868 wanted to purchase the premises for their own purposes, and this opportune circumstance enabled the friends to accomplish their long-cherished desire. Part of the ground in Allen Street purchased for the site of the chapel remained unoccupied. A plan for erecting almshouses on it had been suggested, but it failed though favoured by several friends. It was now available for schools, and consequently became appropriated for that purpose.

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It was at first intended that the laying of the first stone should form part of the celebration just described, but circumstances compelled a postponement of the ceremony; it was, however, performed by the pastor soon afterwards.

When the twenty-eighth year of the existing pastorate arrived, the pastor, having reached the sixty-fourth year of his age, expressed to the Church an idea which he had cherished through his whole ministerial life. The first few years after his ordination he spent as a junior co-pastor, and his desire was, should he reach old age, that the last few years should be spent in service as a senior co-pastor. He thought at his age it was time to contemplate such an arrangement. This, with various considerations supporting his opinion, he submitted to his people, entreating them to remember the subject in private prayer. In the month of April, 1871, the Church resolved "that the time had arrived when provision should be made for supplementing the minister's services by the appointment of a co-pastor." The Rev. Chas. S. Slater, of Nottingham, having preached at Kensington with much acceptance, the Church, in the month of March, 1872, sent him a cordial and unanimous invitation to become co-pastor; but he stated that he felt obliged to decline it, whilst acknowledging the receipt of it in highly becoming terms. The obligation arose from the circumstance that his people at Nottingham were engaged in the building of schools, an enterprise to the completion of which he stood pledged, and therefore he could not leave in the midst of the undertaking. Disappointed in this attempt, and discouraged by further inquiries, the pastor informed the Church that "as difficulties in securing a co-pastor were found to be so great, it had been thought desirable for the present to seek the services of an assistant minister, and that the pastor would in the meantime avail himself of student's help on Sunday evenings."

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The plan of occasional help on Sunday evenings did not prove a success. The evening congregation declined, and the need of more pastoral work being done became increasingly visible. Hence in October, 1872, at a special meeting of the Church, the pastor expressed the feeling he had, that under existing circumstances it would be most advantageous for the spiritual interests of the people that the ground should be cleared for an efficient successor, who could undertake the whole duty, and so render the plan of assistanceship needless. This communication, received in the kindest manner, evoked the expression of a desire for a continuance of the existing pastorate as long as possible. Numerous consultations and interchanges of opinion followed, all carried on in a most harmonious manner; the sequel was, the pastor yielded to affectionate solicitations, and for the present deferred his resignation.

In the month of December, 1872, an extraordinary service took place. It was occasioned by the death of Sir Donald F. Macleod, C.B., K.C., S.A., who had for some time attended divine worship in Allen Street and communed with the Church at the Lord's Table. He died from a mysterious accident at the Kensington High Street railway station, and this circumstance, together with his distinguished character and rank, attracted a crowded congregation when his funeral sermon was preached. A large number of officers and civilians connected with India, including Lord Lawrence, were present, and the greatest respect was shown to his memory. The discourse was published by request, and as this sketch of Kensington Church history is intended to include notices of eminent members of the congregation, the following extracts are not inappropriate:—

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"Having honourably and successfully occupied different posts of important service in India, he, in the year 1865, attained to the high position of Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjaub. . . . Sir Donald had a rare gift for putting himself into kindly fellowship with those he ruled, whether rich or poor, entering into their feelings and cultivating their regards, and by degrees he acquired a widespread influence in what might be called the country of his adoption, and all loved him as a friend and father; and it has been said, if the natives in the Punjaub had had to choose a prince, it would have been Sir Donald; a still more striking remark, given in the notice of his life by a leading journal, was recently made by a native gentleman, to the effect that 'If all Christians were like Sir Donald Macleod, there would be no Mahomedans or Hindoos.' . . . His calmness and self-possession during the fearful crisis of 1857 made him a safe counsellor when others were unnerved; besides which, on another occasion, during a terrible outbreak of cholera, he exerted himself in the care of sufferers, and in the burial of the dead, whilst others, panic-stricken, rushed away.

"He had an extraordinary power of making friends, and few have had so large a circle

of friendship. 'Wherever he went,' remarks a relative, 'his presence was like sunshine, and the sunshine was the reflection of another presence, even of Him of whom it is said, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy." . . . His bright, cheerful appearance, commanding figure, and pleasant utterances won all hearts, especially those of the young, who were attracted by the magic of sympathy, a rare gift, which he did not fail rightly to employ.'

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"Into Thine hand I commit my spirit; Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth," were amongst the last words he uttered, and they were selected as the text for his funeral sermon.

In the winter of 1872 the pastor felt it necessary to change his residence, when the ladies of the congregation raised a purse, which, with the addition of £100 from one friend, amounted to between £300 and £400. This bountiful gift, conveyed privately by one of the contributors, touched his heart as may be supposed, and made him feel how great was his people's generosity, and how gracefully they exercised it. The avoidance of publicity, and the delicate mode of conveying the present, increased greatly his sense of obligation, and attached him to so noble-minded a people more strongly than ever. Their interest in the future he resolved more than ever to consider.

The autumn of that year he visited America, being invited, with the Rev. Joshua C. Harrison, "the friend of his life," to attend the Evangelical Conference at New York. This was most refreshing, and in renewed health and spirits he returned, in November, to his beloved people; the chapel during his absence having been restored, painted, and decorated anew.

Harmony and love continued, but the want of additional assistance still pressed on all sides. The services of the Rev. S. Matthews, now pastor at Southampton, were secured for one year, and he co-operated with the senior minister very pleasantly; other help was also obtained, but at length the inevitable hour arrived. The Church received the following communication from their pastor in November, 1874:—

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"MY BELOVED FLOCK,—

"It is now two years since I made an important communication touching our relationship to one another. I then stated, that upon a review of our affairs it struck me that there were subjects for mutual congratulation and for devout gratitude, particularly in the cheering aspect of the morning congregation and in your generous responses to benevolent appeals; but, at the same time, that there were other things of a different character which weighed upon my mind, such as the state of attendance on Sunday and week evenings, the need of more pastoral activity, to which growing years, personal habits, and increasing claims outside the Church tended to disqualify me, increasingly in proportion to the lapse of time. What was needed I pointed out as consisting of an infusion of fresh and youthful blood, with a more comprehensive, steady, and systematic control of our Institutions: wants only to be supplied by a new, vigorous, faithful, and exemplary minister.

"I then ventured to touch upon difficulties, ascertained through experience, in the way of obtaining either an assistant or a co-pastor who would secure the confidence, sympathy, and support of the Church at large. Nor did I omit to notice a question long pressing on my mind, as to whether it was worth your while to incur increased pecuniary obligations for the sake of retaining services which, in the course of nature, could not be continued for many years longer.

"My judgment, I said, pointed in the direction of retirement, and I urged upon you the consideration that, on the whole, it might be easier, wiser, and better, at once, or very soon, to seek a new pastor altogether, than to aim at mere assistance or even a full co-pastorate. I also suggested that, perhaps, with my confirmed habits and tastes, I might serve the Divine Master more usefully in some other way, than by continuing to hold the office of a settled pastor.

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"I intimated distinctly what a sore trial it was to me to make such a communication; with what deep sorrow I should separate from a people whom I had watched and loved for so many years, not, I hope, without some considerable success; and that I was prompted in what I said, not by desires for personal gratification, or by love of ease, or a preference for literary pursuits, but *simply and entirely* by a sense of duty and a *supreme desire*, to promote the welfare of the Church at Kensington.

"My communication was very kindly considered by the deacons and yourselves, and at length I received a resolution affectionately entreating me to retain the pastorate without any stipulation as to time, and generously offering to provide an assistant. I complied with your request, so far as to say that without pledging myself to a permanent retention of office, I would accept your liberal offer to provide assistance, and would for the present continue my labours amongst you. A little more than a year afterwards, on my return from America, you invited for the term of twelve months my friend and brother, the Rev. S. G. Matthews, who has co-operated with me in the most harmonious and affectionate manner.

"His term of service will presently expire, and now that two years have elapsed since I

made my communication—a period which you will remember I then specified—the whole subject returns on my mind with increasing force. Before I left home for the holidays, I stated as much to the deacons; and what I then thought and felt has been deepened by the effect of my recent great domestic sorrow, with respect to which many of you have expressed the tenderest sympathy.

“The more I reflect on the matter, the more I am confirmed in my former judgment—that, looking at my time of life, and at growing infirmities, which though they may not affect my pulpit labours, do affect my pastoral influence, and moreover, looking at pecuniary and other questions,—an entire change in the pastoral administration of affairs at Kensington seems desirable for the Church and congregation.

“Most reluctantly, with much pain, and at the cost of considerable self-sacrifice in more than one way, I reach the conclusion that our long and happy relationship must come to an end. Therefore I beg now to place my resignation in your hands, and to propose, with the view of relieving you from prolonged suspense and uncertainty, that it should take effect at Lady-day next, when I shall make way for a successor who will, I trust, under God’s blessing, perpetuate and advance the work which it has been my honour to carry on more than thirty-one years.

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“I do not think I shall be charged with vanity if I add that I am persuaded this communication will give pain. Attachment has been so often expressed, the affection of many has been so strongly and practically shown, that it would be unreasonable and ungrateful to suspect I did not still enjoy your confidence and love. I am assured of both, and my hope is that though my pastoral relationship will cease, our mutual friendship will continue, and that in future days I may have opportunities of continued intercourse and occasional service.

“The Church at Kensington will have a large and warm place in my heart as long as that heart beats in this world; and my prayer is, that in the world to come we may all enjoy life and fellowship everlasting.”

An anxious discussion followed the reading of this letter at a Church meeting, held on the 12th of November, when the members recorded “the deep regret with which they had received from their beloved pastor the communication now presented by the deacons”; also their full appreciation of “the motives and reasons which had led him to his decision”; the “unabated attachment” which they still cherished towards him; and their gratitude to God “for the peace which had prevailed in the Church,” and the “many mercies vouchsafed” both to pastor and people.

A committee was formed to consider what further steps should be taken, and the meeting came “with the utmost regret and reluctance to the conclusion that the only course now open was to accept the resignation of their beloved and honoured pastor.” When the committee gave in their report, some members lovingly made further efforts to retain their old minister, but others equally loving saw that such efforts would be unavailing. At length all beautifully united in saying, “The will of the Lord be done.”

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It was then resolved “that this meeting considers advantage should be taken of the opportunity afforded by the resignation of Dr. Stoughton, for the members of the Church and congregation . . . as well as for attached friends generally, to express their esteem for Dr. Stoughton, and appreciation of his character and valuable services in the cause of evangelical truth, by a substantial presentation to him.”

When the resignation had been sent in and accepted, a sermon was preached reviewing the past, explaining the present, and anticipating the future:—

“It is over forty years ago [said the preacher] that there lived in the town of Windsor a venerable man of God, who in early life had enjoyed only scanty educational advantages, but who, with strong common sense and industrious application to the study of Scripture and other reading, fitted himself, under God’s blessing, for the work of the ministry, and well fulfilled his course. He lived as he preached. He was a moral and spiritual power amongst his neighbours. From the king on the throne to the humblest inhabitant he was held in respect. George III. would speak to some of his servants, who attended the ministry of this excellent person, in terms of gracious approval. When years advanced and infirmities increased, he set his heart upon having a colleague, and after the congregation had listened to several students from Highbury College, they fixed on a stripling, who won the heart and warmly reciprocated the affection of the aged prophet. As a son with a father, the young man served in the gospel for about seven happy years, rejoicing in the honour paid to the elder, in whose hoary hairs he gladly recognised a crown of glory, because the wearer walked in the ways of righteousness. Many of you will recognise at once who was that aged saint, and I need hardly tell any here who was that inexperienced but attached young man. After I came here it was long a cherished dream, that if I should live to be an old man, I might enter once more upon a co-pastorate. The sunny memories I had and have of that relationship fostered corresponding hopes, and seven years ago I began to pray for and desire some one who might be associated with me in the ministry, and grow into your affection and confidence, and at length succeed me within these walls. Many and

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many a time have I pondered the text of this morning, and imagined how I might preach from it when the wished-for coming man should be appointed. I used to think of what would be fitting on such an occasion. 'He must increase, and I must decrease,' I said over and over again to myself, and not without fear that poor human nature might, under the circumstances, prove troublesome and rebellious. I endeavoured to prepare for the hoped-for crisis by meditations such as I have expressed in your hearing to-day.

"But now I preach from the words without knowing who it is that the Master destines to occupy in future years the pulpit of this place. Who shall hereafter 'increase' I cannot tell. I only know who must 'decrease.'

"I did not renounce the idea of a co-pastorate until I was convinced from experience and observation that such a co-pastorate as I desired was impracticable. I remember often saying that I thought it must be an old man's fault if he could not find, and work with, a fitting colleague. Alas, the finding has proved an impossibility, though I still incline to my old opinion of the working of the arrangement, when an appropriate colleague can be found. I am still persuaded that both for young ministers and for old ones the colligate plan is very desirable. Age tempers youth. Youth animates age. The senior with refined experience, the junior with the flush and fervour of opening life, conjoined in pastoral work, must surely to all appear a beautiful ideal. I was not brought to say, 'What I shall *choose* I wot not,' but I have been compelled to forego the exercise of *choice* in the matter, and to fall back on simple convictions of duty. Perhaps there is something amiss in the working of our system in relation to colligate ministries. Neither assistantships nor co-pastorates are in favour now-a-days, though in earlier Nonconformist societies they were. One minister is expected and desired to do everything, and, in a sense not intended by Ignatius, his motto finds a practical currency amongst us—widely as we may be separated from him in notions of episcopal government—'nothing without the bishop.'"

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On the 4th of April, 1875, Dr. Stoughton preached his farewell sermon as pastor at Kensington. The text was 1 Thessalonians ii. 19, 20: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy." The sermon concluded with these words:—

"Perhaps the strongest of all ministerial power is sympathy in sorrow. It has been my lot to visit many in affliction, to sit by many sick beds, to witness the desolation of many a hearth, to grasp the widow's hand, to kiss the orphan's cheek. If I have ever shed one drop of healing balm over a wounded heart, or cast one ray of light over a darkened dwelling, I thank God for it, as the fulfilment of a ministry in which angels might have been glad to share; and sure I am that the remembrance of it, and the prospect of spending eternity together with the sons and daughters of sorrow in that world where tears are wiped from off all faces, will form no small part of my joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming.

"And now, in the words of Edward Irving, let me say, 'Brethren, I thank you in fine for the patience with which you have heard me on this and all other occasions. I have nothing to boast of, as St. Paul had when he parted with the Ephesian elders. I can speak of your kindness and of the Almighty's grace, but of my own performances I cannot speak. Imperfections beset me round, which it is not my part to confess, save to the God of mercy. All these imperfections I crave you to forget. Fain would I continue to have a place in your esteem and love, as you have in mine; and besides this I have no favour to ask. Your kind remembrance and prayer, that is all.

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"And now, God grant that while the roof-tree of this temple stands, and these walls resist the hand of all-consuming time, there may be no voice uttered from this pulpit but the voice of the Gospel of peace; that all who come up to worship here may be accepted of the Lord; and that we who have met so oft together, and joined the voice of our prayer and the notes of our praise together, may yet lift the voice of our prayer from beneath the altar of the living God, and minister our praise around His holy throne. Amen.'

"To each one I say, 'the Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.'"

On the following Thursday evening a crowded meeting took place in Kensington Chapel, Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P., in the chair. Amongst those present were Sir Thomas Chambers, M.P.; Mr. Henry Richard, M.P.; Sir Charles Reed; Dean Stanley; Canon Freemantle; the Rev. J. P. Gell, Vicar of St. John's, Notting Hill; the Rev. S. Minton; Dr. Morley Punshon; Dr. Angus; Dr. Allon; Principal Newth; the Rev. J. C. Harrison; the Rev. Baldwin Brown; and many other honoured brethren.

After addresses by the Rev. J. C. Harrison, the Rev. Samuel Bergne (intimate personal friends of the retiring minister), the Dean of Westminster, Sir Charles Reed, and the Rev. J. P. Gell, Incumbent of St. John's,—Mr. Robert Freeman, an active and honoured deacon of the Church for many years, read an address in felicitous and graceful as well as truly Christian language, and then placed in the retiring pastor's hands a purse containing £3,000. The whole assembly rose,

“As I leave you to-night, I think of Gregory Nazianzan, when he took leave, one by one, of various familiar objects in his beloved church at Constantinople. I could speak to *that pulpit* from which I have often addressed you, and that communion table round which we have gathered in remembrance of the risen Saviour. I could pensively bid them, one by one, farewell, though I fully hope often to visit you again. I cannot forget Sunday mornings, when I have seen loving smiles and looks responding to my utterances, and I trust felt the presence of the Master so as to get very near to heaven. I shall carry these memories with me into the world of light and love.

“One word as to my position in reference to my theological and ecclesiastical opinions. There are different phases of Christian truth: the moral brought out by the Apostle James, the doctrinal by the Apostle Paul, the experimental by the Apostle Peter. One apostle above others blended these peculiarities in himself, harmonizing them all, like prismatic rays in ‘candid light,’ to use Bishop Warburton’s expression—the ‘candid,’ pure, perfect light of Divine love. I have striven to make him my model, to neglect no side of evangelical truth, but to go all round it; and if my poor teaching under such guidance has done any good, let God have all the praise. As to my ecclesiastical position, I have never shrunk from expressing my opinion with regard to the Establishment principle. I am a thorough and earnest Nonconformist. There are many reasons why I could not conform; and I will now only mention this, that I could not surrender my liberty to preach the gospel in the pulpits of other communions, and to invite brethren of other communions to preach in mine. I have not seen it my vocation to join in certain movements of the day under the guidance of those whose practical application of Nonconformist principles in some respects differs from my own. I am not finding fault with them, and I hope they will not find fault with me. Let us agree to differ. One great object of my life has been rather to improve our own denomination, than to criticise and censure others; and also to cultivate loving relationship with other Churches, and it is my peculiar joy that my life aim in this respect has been generously recognised and reciprocated.”

Speeches were then delivered by Dr. Punshon, Sir Thomas Chambers, Dr. Angus, Mr. Richard (Dr. Stoughton’s fellow-student), the Rev. Guinness Rogers, and Mr. Henry Wright,—a friend who had become deacon of the Church during Dr. Stoughton’s ministry, and had been especially active in connection with the testimonial. Some playful allusions were made in the course of the evening. One was by the Dean, who said it was a custom amongst the monks at Westminster to call a brother who had been amongst them thirty years by the gentle name of *playfellow*, and never to do anything disagreeable in his presence. And such, he would say, was the tranquil period which their friend had reached, yet not so as to quench hope of his still using voice and pen for the good of others. Another was by Mr. Richard, who referred to a debate in college days, between him and Dr. Stoughton, on the question, “Who was the greater man, Oliver Cromwell or Napoleon Bonaparte?” Dr. Stoughton took Cromwell, and he, Mr. Richard, now the great political apostle of peace, then preferred Napoleon. He supposed his friend remained true to his idol, he himself had changed his standard of idolism. The Hon. and Rev. Canon Freemantle pronounced the benediction.

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The address, elegantly illuminated and cased in morocco and silver, was afterwards transmitted to Ealing, and the names of contributors were read with much interest and gratitude. Amongst them were those of rich and poor members of the communion, and of distinguished persons outside the Kensington Church, including noblemen and dignitaries of the Establishment. Mention ought to be made of Archdeacon Sinclair, Vicar of the parish. He entered on that office about the time that Dr. Stoughton came to Kensington. The Vicar then called on him, to give a cordial welcome, and they remained on terms of friendship down to the farewell meeting. The congregation some time before sent a contribution towards building the new parish church, of about £100, through their pastor’s hands to the Vicar, who expressed the greatest delight in accepting such a pledge of Christian catholicity. After the farewell meeting, he wrote saying that he hoped soon to call upon his old friend in his new abode. But he died within a few weeks of the meeting, and the first time Dr. Stoughton occupied the pulpit at Allen Street Chapel after his retirement, was to preach a funeral sermon for his beloved and honoured neighbour.

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VI. THE SIXTH PASTORATE. ***THE REV. ALEXANDER RALEIGH, D.D.*** **1875-1880.**

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No sooner had the vacancy occurred than the Church’s attention was directed to the Rev. G. S. Barrett, of Norwich, who had eminent qualifications for the Kensington pastorate. He was invited to preach before the end of April, and immediately after he had done so, steps were taken for calling the Church together. On the 13th of May a meeting followed, when it was resolved to invite Mr. Barrett to succeed Dr. Stoughton. The invitation was conveyed in the form of unanimous and cordial resolutions, to which Mr. Barrett replied before the end of the month,

saying that if he felt it would be right to leave Norwich, Kensington would be an attractive sphere; but that after much consideration and prayer it appeared to him a duty to remain where he was.

The door being closed in that quarter, the deacons and the committee appointed to assist them turned their thoughts to the Rev. Dr. Raleigh, whom they were given to understand "might not be unwilling to remove from his present pastorate at Canonbury to that of Kensington." The idea of securing so eminent a man animated all who became acquainted with it; and previously to laying this matter before the Church, the deacons and committee communicated with Dr. Raleigh. Delicacy and caution marked the communications on both sides, and the result was, that on hearing a report of the circumstances, the Church in August cordially invited Dr. Raleigh to accept the pastorate. Again the invitation was conveyed in the form of resolutions, and before the end of the month Dr. Raleigh returned his answer:—

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"The resolutions which were passed unanimously at your meeting of the 5th of August, were presented to me on the following morning by your deacons, who also gave me in the frankest manner every explanation I could desire.

"Those resolutions constitute a call to take the pastoral oversight of you in the Lord. I have had this your desire and invitation very much in my thought since I received the intimation of them. I have had consultation with good men, whose judgment in the case is dispassionate and impartial, and I need not say that I have been asking God to 'send forth His light and truth' to make my way of duty plain. Nevertheless, I cannot say that the path of duty has been very easily found. The circumstances have been peculiar. The claims of the two congregations to whom it has for years been my privilege to minister have proved to be unexpectedly strong, and the mutual trial of affection in the thought of parting has been sometimes almost more than I could resist. Yet steadily, if slowly, the guiding light of God's good providence has seemed to lead westwards. The reasons which made it possible for me to entertain the proposal from the time when it was mentioned to me have continued, as I knew they would do, and now, without specifying them particularly, it is my duty to announce to you the result to which they have led me; which is this, that I cordially accept your cordial call, and will endeavour in Divine strength to discharge, to the best of my ability, the duties of the sacred office to which I am thus called. May He who has watched over your interests as a Christian Church for many years, supplying you in successive pastorates with rich ministerial gift and grace, and who has also blessed my humble ministry thus far, make us blessings to each other, and in our associated capacity, to many around us.

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"I cordially appreciate the mention of the name of Dr. Stoughton, lately your pastor, and long my friend. I do not lay claim to his many and high accomplishments as a scholar and a theologian; but I believe I agree with him pretty closely in doctrinal sentiment, in holding firmly 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' and in cherishing a generous and charitable temper towards all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and I must now make it my endeavour to emulate his practical care and zeal on your behalf in all faithfulness, diligence, watchfulness, and prayer.

"If I were only beginning the Christian ministry, I might think it necessary and appropriate to say something of the motives with which I undertake it, and of the spirit in which it ought to be conducted. But having been now for many years in the heat of the great strife, I must allow those years of toil now past to speak for me concerning what will be ('if the Lord will') the aims and labours of the future. May the blessing which has never been withheld from my humble ministry, attend it still, and through your prayers and co-operation be even more abundant than heretofore. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."

A public recognition of the new pastor took place in Allen Street in the month of November, when Dr. Stoughton presided, and Dr. Allon, Dr. Punshon, Dr. Edmond, the Revs. J. C. Harrison, H. Simon, and W. Roberts, took part in the service.

Dr. Stoughton congratulated the Church on having such a pastor as they met to recognise, and the new pastor on having such a Church as was now assembled. He could testify that Dr. Raleigh would find at Kensington a united and peaceful Church, a people bound together by mutual affection, trained to work and accustomed to work, people who would never give their pastor any occasion for uneasiness, who would always respond to his appeal and co-operate with him in his work.

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Mr. H. Wright laid a full statement before the congregation of circumstances which led to the proceedings of that evening, after which the chairman said, when the President of the Wesleyan Conference made way for his successor, he did so by handing over the seals of office. He had nothing of that sort to offer now, but if Dr. Raleigh would accept his predecessor's hand, there it was, not empty, but with a heart in it. Dr. Raleigh delivered an appropriate address. Dr. Punshon, Mr. Harrison, Dr. Edmond, and Mr. Simon followed, expressing their affection for the new pastor and his flock.

An election of new deacons had repeatedly occurred under the former pastorate; and in the first year of the new administration vacancies had to be filled up by ballot. The choice of the members fell on Messrs. Cozens-Hardy, Plater, Spicer, Fordham, White, and Watson,—the last

being son of the late senior deacon, whose death just before Dr. Stoughton's retirement was a heavy loss, deeply lamented by his old friend and by the Church at large. Messrs. Fordham, Cozens-Hardy, and George White declined the office, from inability to give time for its duties. The rest accepted the Church's request. True to the sympathy and love so often expressed, the friends at Kensington were mindful of the retired minister when he lost his beloved wife, and the following entry occurs in the Church Book:—

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"On Sunday morning, 23rd November, 1879, a solemn memorial service was conducted by the pastor, Rev. A. Raleigh, D.D., suggested by the death of Mrs. Stoughton, on the 11th of November, at Ealing.

"The sermon was based on the passage (2 Cor. v. 9): 'Willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord,' Dr. Stoughton and his family being among the worshippers. The Church wish, moreover, to record their deep sympathy with Dr. Stoughton, in his sad bereavement, and cherish the memory of Mrs. Stoughton as one who, during her husband's long pastorate of thirty-two years at Kensington Chapel, co-operated with him in all his work for the heavenly Master, and endeared herself to many as a bright example to the flock."

I shall be pardoned for the insertion of a single paragraph from the beautiful sermon delivered by Dr. Raleigh on that affecting occasion. It is no less true than beautiful:—

"Fitted by education and culture for any place in social life, it might have been thought by some that she would be among the foremost always in visible activities and good works. She was indeed always active, and was always engaged in doing good; but always as much as possible in silent and unseen ways. She was not one who could say, in view of the many things that might be done by one in her position, of a more or less public kind, 'therefore being always confident.' Rather she loved and sought the shade; if a sweet and calm and all-helpful domestic life may be called the shade, to a lady of deep piety and high culture. She strove to make home good and happy, and succeeded; every child following father and mother in Divine ways, and into the Church of God; and then she strove to extend the blessedness to as many other homes as possible. I know not that we could have a much nobler ideal and pattern of a woman's life. I have it on the best authority, that of a ministerial friend who was like a brother in the house, that many and many a poor minister's home in the country was made warmer and brighter, and more what home ought to be, by her generous persistence of care for them, and by the gentle importunity of her letters to others on their behalf. Her power of letter-writing was unique; all who were privileged to receive these letters, on any subject, but especially on Divine and spiritual subjects, felt the charm, and valued the more the friendship of one who could write so for God and for men. Her last years were weighted with deepening affliction; yet were they calm and peaceful years to the last. For months she waited on the border land, looking heavenwards, thinking often no doubt of the loved ones who had gone before, and who, as I have been told by one who well knows, often seemed very near to her. The few who saw her felt that they had been nearer heaven by only looking on her face and listening to the few words she might say. These words were words of thankfulness for all past mercies, of humble but firm faith in the Saviour, and of calm, confident hope as to the future.

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"These words were found afterwards in her own handwriting:

'Father, take my hand; quickly and straight
Lead to heaven's gate Thy child.'

'Quickly and straight,' even as she desired, the gate was opened; and the Father's child went in, went home."

With regard to Dr. Raleigh's ministry at Kensington, I cannot do better than quote the following words of his beloved wife:—

"There is little to record of the years at Kensington. Like those of his first ministry at Rotherham, they flowed evenly and sweetly; but many hearts hold them as a sacred memory, and to himself they were years of much happiness. He was able to work with vigour, and his people came around him with growing affection. To none was his ministry more dear than to those engaged in direct Christian work. He clasped hands with them as fellow-workers; the fervour of his zeal kindled theirs, and as he spoke of the great harvest to come, earthly honours seemed to grow poor compared with the honour of bearing and sowing the precious seed of God. 'By kindness, by love unfeigned,' he won his way to the affections of his people. And he gave them as he had promised, 'good work,' work which cost him laborious days, and to which he brought all the treasures of his long experience. His sermons were less ornate, perhaps, than those of an earlier time, but they were more definite in aim, more unencumbered in utterance, as if knowing that his time was short, he had laid 'aside every weight,' that the simple truth might have free course. His teaching began to be regarded with quick appreciation, and some of his hearers, men in busy life, acknowledged that 'the whole week was different and better because of the thoughts with which it was begun.'

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"These Sundays at Kensington,' writes one of his people, 'were times of refreshment

from the presence of the Lord. The sound of his fervid utterances of heavenly truth seem still to linger on the ear. We bless God that He sent him to us, and for all the messages of love He enabled him to declare, and for the glimpses of heaven he seemed to open to our sight.'

"Throughout his teaching and in his own heart, the mystic attraction of heaven was always strong. But especially was this a very pronounced feature of his latest ministry. He hardly preached a sermon in which he did not lift up his eyes to the 'everlasting hills.'

"It is a blessed thing that sin has never effaced the deep home-longings of human hearts, and no words were more welcome than those in which he told of that world, 'where prayer is answered, and toil is recompensed, and love claims her own.' Or of 'the open pathway, stretching upward and afar, for home-going saints and holy angels.' Or of 'the banquet' where, 'in its earthly beginning we may wet our bread with tears as we eat it, but whence we shall go to the higher and better, God has in reserve, as we pass along to meet all the good of every age, and to see Him in His glory at the banquet, and in the fellowship of heaven.'

"He had himself got to the heavenward side of life. He was as busy as he had ever been, entering fully into the work, thinking and planning about it, as if he were still young, and life all before him, and his interest in public and passing events continued unquenched. Yet, and this is no fancy, a deep peace seemed to have come down upon him, with silent expectancy in it, as if he stood at the meeting-place of the two worlds and took both into his field of vision. The depressions of former years were gone, and but that our 'eyes were holden' by a merciful blindness, we might have known that the Master's coming was at hand."

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The population in South Kensington by this time had enormously increased. The relics of rural life repeatedly noticed in this volume disappeared, and the crowded neighbourhood called for spiritual provision. At a social meeting in January, 1879, a resolution was passed expressive of gratitude for the goodness of God, and of a conviction that the time had come for making a vigorous effort to extend to one of the newly-peopled districts in the neighbourhood some of the privileges which the Church had so long enjoyed; and a year afterwards, at a similar meeting, joy was expressed that a good site had been found in West Kensington, together with a determination to erect on it a chapel worthy of the neighbourhood.

It is sad to record what follows. Dr. Raleigh removed to Kensington at the close of the year 1875, early in 1880 he was laid aside. On the 10th of March he sent to his "Flock and Friends" this touching letter:—

"I must try to write a line to tell you what a great grief it is to me that I am still prevented from meeting you 'face to face.' Pain and weariness have been my portion during these last weeks. But God has upheld me by His great goodness, and enabled me to cast all my care upon Him, and to commit all my ways to Him. Indeed, I may say I have but one serious care, the care that arises in my heart when I think of you and of your interests in the Gospel, which I can at present do little or nothing to promote. I know you are being well instructed by other servants of the Master, and that the Chief Shepherd Himself never ceases to have you in His care. Nor can I doubt that this unexpected and undesired illness of your pastor is among the 'all things' which may work together for your good. With prayer and patience on your part and on mine it will certainly be so, and our God will supply all our need according to His glorious riches by Christ Jesus."

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"I am assured by the deacons, both for themselves and for you, that I may go on in the use of the best means for recovery with a quiet mind, and in the confidence that you will willingly and prayerfully wait for my restoration to strength, and for what—if God graciously gives it—will certainly be to me, even more than to you, a happy return to my work. Of course all waiting of this kind must have reasonable limits; but I think you may be assured that I am not likely to forget them. I thank God that I have so much reason to wish, I hope before very long, to be able to put my hand again to a work which, in some ways at least, has prospered so well. That this our mutual desire may be accomplished, I cast myself with confidence on your sympathy; and still more earnestly I make appeal to you for your prayers, that I may be kept in unflinching trust, and that I may be restored to you the sooner."

"And for you, dear brethren, with all my heart I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. The Shepherd of Israel have you in His care."

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

Dr. Raleigh's last hours are thus described by his wife in her beautiful memoirs of him:—

"Throughout the night of 17th April he was very restless, and said, 'I have not been able for two days to think any religious thoughts, but I know that I am His.' When the morning came (Sunday) his countenance wore the changed look we learn to know too well, and he spoke of his departure as at hand, as indeed he felt it was. His wife,

wishing as usual to send a message to be read to his people, asked him what it should be. He hesitated, saying, 'I do not want to alarm them, and it looks as if I were of such importance if I send a message.' He consented, however, and dictated a few words. Many things were talked over, and last words spoken during the day. The wrench of parting was still hard to him, and the spring sunshine seemed too glad for dying eyes. 'Everything is as bright as if I were well,' he said; but looked an earnest assent when reminded that in this lay the hidden promise of a better spring-time. Some food being brought him, of which he tried in vain to partake, he put it gently aside, saying, 'The Bread of Life is near.' Again: 'I should like to go to-day; it is *my* day.' His whispered words to his children; his expressed thoughts and cares about their future; his last looks of love and welcome, are laid up in the sacred silence of the heart 'till the day dawn.'

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"As the evening drew on he became restless with the restlessness so common at the approach of death. The weary spirit, finding home no longer in the dissolving body, was struggling to break the chain and enter into the life of liberty. The eyes, always so responsive to the light, grew dim, unconsciousness fell gradually over him, and before we knew it he was away beyond reach of loving word or touch of ours; but we believe he was not beyond the reach of higher ministries. As the long night passed, and the slow dawn found him still waiting at the gate, perhaps there came to his spirit the first whispers of heavenly fellowship. Perhaps 'Jesus Himself drew near and went with him.' Shortly after noon on Monday, 19th of April, 1880, he entered calmly into rest."

It was the first time that Death had laid his hand on any of the Kensington pastors until after their removal from the neighbourhood, and the new visitation was keenly felt. This was testified in many ways, especially by the public funeral on the 24th of April, 1880. A service was held in the chapel, attended by a large concourse of ministerial and other friends. The Rev. J. G. Rogers delivered a funeral oration, dwelling upon the character of his deceased friend and fellow-student. The procession afterwards wound its solemn way to Abney Park. "When the *cortège* approached, all were hushed to silence and many an eye was wet with tears. The line of spectators stretched from the Church Street entrance gates, past the open grave, and overlapping but not surrounding it. Hardly a sound was heard but the grating of the footsteps of the bearers of the coffin and the procession on the gravel. Preceded by the Rev. Henry Allon, D.D.; the Rev. J. Guinness Rogers; the Rev. Mr. Glyn, Vicar of Kensington; and the Rev. W. M. Statham; and followed by all Dr. Raleigh's children (except the eldest) and other members of his family, and various friends and delegates, the coffin, literally covered and re-covered with flowers, was borne to the tomb. Then Dr. Allon conducted the solemn service, in which the Rev. Mr. Glyn took part; after which all who desired had an opportunity of taking a last look at the grave, and many deposited there their offering of flowers—their symbol of affection. Presently the earth would be covered in, and all would be over."

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Funeral sermons were preached at Kensington Chapel on the following Sunday by Dr. Allon and Mr. Rogers.

To resume the mode of expression adopted in the earlier portion of this volume, and only dropped in describing the pastorate preceding that of Dr. Raleigh, I shall ever deeply regret that, through absence from England, I was unable to take any part in these solemnities. I was not aware of his serious illness until the fact was communicated to me in Rome, and scarcely had I received the sad intimation when the news of his death arrived; and I was shocked to find that the dear Kensington Church was again destitute, and that I had lost an honoured friend.

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VII. THE SEVENTH PASTORATE. *THE REV. COLMER B. SYMES.* 1880—

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THE interregnum between Mr. Clayton's removal and Dr. Leifchild's arrival extended beyond two years and a half; but breaks in the after history of the pastorate were remarkably short. Two months only elapsed between Dr. Leifchild's retirement and the commencement of Dr. Vaughan's labours. Dr. Vaughan terminated his Kensington ministry in May, I accepted a call from the Church in July; Dr. Raleigh's removal to Kensington was about six months after his predecessor left; Dr. Raleigh died in April, his successor was elected at the beginning of November. The comparative brevity of these intervals, when placed beside the history of many other Congregational Churches, is remarkable, and inspires special thankfulness in a community in this respect so highly favoured. At no period has there been divided feeling amongst the members with regard to a new minister. Rival candidates are unknown at Kensington, and proceedings relative to filling up vacancies have ever been conducted in a spirit of entire harmony and love.

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The Rev. Colmer B. Symes, of Exeter, having been strongly recommended as likely to meet the needs of the Church, a meeting was held on the 4th of November, 1880, to decide whether he should be invited as Dr. Raleigh's successor. The course adopted was the same as on the last

occasion. The Church passed a resolution, unanimous and cordial, that Mr. Symes should be requested to accept the pastorship; then the deacons were to convey that resolution, and to urge "the acceptance of the important office to which he had been elected." The deacons visited Mr. Symes at Exeter, and discharged fully the duty intrusted to them by their fellow members.

The gratifying result appears in Mr. Symes' reply on the 13th of November, 1880:—

"DEAR CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,—

"In replying to your kind invitation to assume the pastorate among you, I have at the outset to thank you for the undeserved honour which you have done me, and to recognise the increased value of your invitation through the thoughtful delicacy of your deacons, who came to Exeter that they might present it personally to me.

"It is needless to dwell on the anxiety which your action has caused, or upon the painful sense of responsibility under which I have approached the decision of my own course. You will fully understand that the step which you have asked me to take involves the very gravest results, both to you and to my beloved congregation at Exeter. Such a step is a crisis in a man's life; and the consideration of it penetrates one through and through with the conviction, 'It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.' To say then that I have thought much and prayed earnestly over this question, is only to assure you that I have done what, under such circumstances, any Christian man of honest purpose *must* do.

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"As the result of such thought and prayer, of a simple surrender of my movements to the guidance of a higher wisdom than my own, and of earnest effort to interpret that guidance, I now accept your invitation to the pastorate as cordially as you have given it; and while utterly unconscious of any fitness, mentally or spiritually, to achieve a true success, I am confident that God has called me to work at Kensington, and for that work 'my sufficiency is of God.'

"When your deacons showed me that, although I had felt obliged to present passive resistance to your previous kind advances, God had led you to an unanimous decision, I felt that my duty was written in letters of light, and I could have given an immediate reply. That reply has been delayed a week, partly to correct or confirm what might have been a hasty judgment, and partly that I might rise to the level of that Apostolic charge, in which we pastors are urged to take the oversight of the flock of God, 'not *by constraint*, but willingly.' A week ago I was conscious of Divine coercion, the compulsion of duty. I did not like to pass before you as a captive dragged in triumph behind the chariot of a Divine regal purpose. I would rather come before you as the willing herald to announce the presence of the King amongst you, and to describe to you the joys of His royal rule.

"You will not, I am sure, be pained at this allusion to past unwillingness. I should be unworthy of the love I hope to win from you, if I could callously cut those living nerves of loving friendship which, during the past four years, have thrilled again and again at the touch of as tender a sympathy as a pastor could wish to enjoy. I am asked to leave an earnest, warm-hearted, united, and useful congregation, who have laid me under the deepest indebtedness by their sensitiveness to my ministry, by their love in my deep sorrow, by their unbroken harmony, and by their zealous fellowship with me in all service to Christ. I have never received one harsh word or one cold look from them; and I should be less than human if I could part with such people painlessly. Still I do feel very distinctly that the unanimity of your judgment in offering to me the splendid opportunities of service to Christ, which your neighbourhood presents—confirmed as that judgment has been by impartial advisers on all hands, to whom both you and I have appealed for counsel—may be accepted as the tones of a Divine call; and with *gladness* and *thankfulness* for the honour of service to Christ among you, I accept the pastorate.

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"When first asked to preach to you in my holidays, I quite understood the full significance of the visit; but as your request had come to me when at leisure, and had come so unsought, I felt that I dared not refuse to take the step which God seemed to indicate; and therefore I preached to you in August. Since then I have felt that I must maintain a very passive attitude; and, at every subsequent stage, I have earnestly prayed that God would allow your action to express His will to me. I pledged myself to Him that I would say or do nothing myself, and that I would accept your perseverance or your discontinuance as the revelation of His will for my life. I am therefore bound in simple truthfulness to act on your decision, and to feel at rest on the score of Divine guidance.

"It is, however, a great comfort to me that the judgment of all whom I have consulted outside my own congregation concur in your decision and in the response which I have given. May God so generously help me in my ministry, and in His great condescension use me to impart unto you such spiritual gifts that you and I shall rejoice together in the union which we now form; and to Him from whom alone all the grace must come will we give all the praise.

"As to the future, the less I say the better. It is, perhaps, wise that a man should *do* as much as he can, and *talk* as little as may be of what he intends to do. I might paint you

a picture of what I mean my ministry to be; but you would see at once that the picture was painted with the trembling brush of a human purpose, and that it was scarcely worth your while to examine it. I would rather leave the light of God to photograph the actual ministry as it shall be worked out from day to day; and may the picture satisfy your spiritual perceptions, and, above all, be acceptable to God.

“While, however, it is wise to be silent about all my expectations of service among you, I will tell you what is clear to me, and is invested with no uncertainty. I am coming to preach to you the love and the power of a living Christ, who has expiated the guilt of our sins by His wondrous death; who mediates for us to-day before the throne; who now ministers to us through the Spirit with wisest teachings and gentlest comforts and holiest inspirations; that living Christ who is the Alpha and the Omega of all that is noblest and truest in human life, and who will help us to fulfil our purer purposes until He presents us guiltless and without fault before His Father’s throne. This will be the burden of my ministry; and may that Spirit of God, without whom the most truthful, earnest, and sincere ministry will be powerless, enable you and dispose you to receive this Gospel from me as the Word of God.

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“I am, dear Christian brethren,

“Yours in Christ Jesus,
“COLMER B. SYMES.”

A recognition service was held at Kensington Chapel, when I was again invited to preside; and amongst the ministers and friends present were the Rev. Dr. Allon, the Rev. Dr. Hannay, the Revs. J. C. Harrison, Newman Hall, C. E. B. Reed, J. H. Russell, A. Mearns, W. Roberts, Messrs. H. Wright, W. Holborn, and R. Freeman.

It had rarely, if ever, fallen to the lot of a minister after his retirement from a Church to preside on two occasions at the introduction of a new minister. I little thought that I should have to discharge such duty as devolved on me that evening. It seemed, I said, but the other day since they assembled to welcome Dr. Raleigh, and though so long a term of service as had been allowed to his predecessor could not have been expected, it might have been hoped that the former would have survived the latter. “I feel how great your loss has been, and deeply do I sympathize with you in this respect; and I am anxious to say so now, because on account of my being in Italy at the time of Dr. Raleigh’s interment, I had not an opportunity of then tendering in public my sincere condolence. But whilst I mourn over what you have lost, I would rejoice on account of what you gain this evening. I have not yet had the pleasure of an intimate acquaintance with Mr. Symes. I believe I never met him but once, and then he made, during a short space, a much more favourable impression on my mind than I have sometimes received from far longer interviews with other brethren. My heart is filled with gratitude to God for having sent you such a man in the room of him who could not continue by reason of death.”

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On this occasion, much additional interest was imparted by the presence of an Exeter deacon, who came to testify the love of the Exeter Church for the pastor who had left them. “God,” he said, “has blessed him very much. We have about three hundred and fifty members, and during Mr. Symes’ short pastorate of five or six years, about two hundred have joined our Church.” “The young especially have rallied round him; and we could point to many institutions showing where his usefulness has been so marked.” “His removal has been a county loss, and will be felt at chapel openings and harvest homes.”

The new pastor followed, saying, amongst other things:—

“I come to preach Christ to this congregation—the living Christ, who by His sacrifice has expiated our guilt upon the cross, and is able to free us from the guilt and from the power of sin; the Christ who is living and acting to-day as our Mediator, and is securing for us all spiritual blessings; the Christ who is the Lord of our life, whose will and leadership we, His people, are bound by the most solemn commands to obey; the Christ whose friendship is the joy of life, whose teaching settles all the creeds, and who in some mysterious sense includes within Himself all His believing people in His renewed life, and vitalizes all as the vine can vitalize its branches. In preaching such a Christ as this, there need be no narrowness in the ministry: it will be my own fault if there is. Christ touches human life at all points. To preach Christ fully is to raise the most profound intellectual problems, for Christ has localized the thoughts of men in every race. To preach Him fully, is to assert His claims, and to press those claims upon every sphere of human life, the personal and the political, the domestic and the congregational, the mercantile and the mirthful, the social and the sacred. Christ touches human life on all sides, and it is mine to preach Christ fully, and not to furnish a narrow ministry. I come then, dear brethren, to preach to you the Christ whose love is more than life to me; who has soothed me when, with broken heart, I have felt life unbearable; who has sustained me in ministerial work and trial extending over many years; who has stood by me in every effort which I have made, and who has most generously succoured me in my weakness and raised me when I have fallen.”

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Confessions of faith on such an occasion are not so common now as once they were; but this admirable summary of truth was volunteered and delivered in a spirit which left nothing more to be desired; and what may not be hoped from a ministry commenced with such evangelical views

and such hallowed resolutions?

In the second year of Mr. Symes' ministry the foundation stone of the West Kensington Congregational Chapel was laid. On the 2nd of November, 1882, a large number of friends assembled to witness the ceremony performed by the venerable and catholic-spirited Earl of Shaftesbury. Mr. Wright gave a statement of the circumstances which had led to the gratifying event of the day. He said that,—

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"In January, 1880, at a meeting held at the house of Mr. Edward Spicer, and attended by the late Dr. Raleigh, the deacons of the Church, and other ministers and laymen, it was resolved that a site should be secured for the erection of a Congregational Church, and a fund was started to which Dr. Raleigh subscribed £50, and six other gentlemen present £250 each; £250 was also promised by an absent deacon. After protracted inquiries and negotiations the present site was purchased. The London Congregational Union had voted £1,600 towards its cost, and the London Chapel Building Society £1,000 towards the erection of the church. The progress of the work was arrested by the lamented decease of Dr. Raleigh, but when the Rev. C. B. Symes entered on his ministry he gave new impetus to it, and liberally subscribed £250 toward the fund. The building to be erected was from the design of Mr. J. Cubitt, and the work had received the approval of many friends not connected with the district, two of whom had subscribed £500 each, and another noble citizen of London £200. The gifts by individuals ranged from £1,000 to five farthings from a little boy not quite eight years old! In that work they were trying to solve the problem how to penetrate the population with the spirit of true religion, and the building would be dedicated to the service and worship of Almighty God and His blessed Son, with the prayer that the Lord Jesus Christ might be the master of the house, the King of the people, and the Shepherd of the flock which might be gathered there. It would be a Free Church, independent of all external support and control; the worship would be free and spiritual, and the ordinances would be sustained by the free-will offerings of God's people. It was not undertaken in hostility to any existing church in the neighbourhood, and there was nothing to hinder its promoters saying, 'Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.'"

In the evening of the same day a meeting was held at the Vestry Hall, Kensington, when Mr. John Kemp Welch presided, and Messrs. James Spicer, J.P., H. Wright, J.P., Dr. Hannay, the Rev. C. B. Symes, Mr. J. H. Fordham, Mr. Robert Freeman, Mr. William Holborn, and Messrs. H. and E. Spicer supported the chairman. The sum of £14,190 was required, and before the close of the meeting no less than £12,084 was subscribed or promised. The following appeared in the report:

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"Dr. Stoughton said he would like to tell those present a little of what had been done in days gone by, when a considerable movement began in 1849, resulting in the erection of five new chapels in the space of ten years. They were not all connected with Allen Street Church, but they all sprang out of the operation of the voluntary principle, and the Kensington people had something to do with all of them. It began with the erection of Horbury Chapel, Notting Hill; and was followed by Kensington Chapel; Oakland's Chapel, Shepherd's Bush; Edith Grove, Brompton; and Cravenhill chapels. Those chapels could not have cost less than thirty or forty thousand pounds, and the liabilities were all undertaken during those ten years. If they added another ten years for paying off those debts, they would see that £30,000 or £40,000 was expended in chapel building work during that period. The fathers were not quite asleep, and the sons had very grateful recollections of what they did in days that were past. He referred to it as an example for them to emulate, and to go on during the next ten or twenty years as their predecessors did. If they laid out £30,000 or £40,000 outside their church, it would be a noble thing. The debt on Allen Street was paid off five years after it was opened, and he was then very anxious to see a new chapel spring up in South or West Kensington, where there was much vacant land which he knew would in time be covered with houses. A variety of circumstances, however, prevented his realising that desire; but now that streets and squares had been built, and the name changed from North End to West Kensington, they had done nobly and wisely in setting to work to build the contemplated edifice. He heartily congratulated them upon their present position, and on the relationship existing between pastor and people. Mr. Symes was doing work which had not previously been done, and was laying hold of young people brought into the neighbourhood; the speaker looked most hopefully upon these circumstances and trusted that the Church in Allen Street would go on as prosperously as ever."

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Here I must bring my narrative to a close. The ninety years' history now recorded exhibits the continuity, the development, the increase, the augmented resources, and the advancing power of the Kensington Congregational Church. Religious progress has followed, though not with equal steps, progress in other respects, visible throughout the Court suburb, and its vicinity. The *duplication* of the ecclesiastical body, if so the movement at Horbury about thirty years ago may be termed, is now, thanks to our Heavenly Father, being repeated; but gratitude to Him for this renewed inspiration of zeal is mingled with regret that the effort has been so long delayed. May it now be carried forward with ardour, in the spirit of faith, love, and prayer, and may other similar operations follow in years to come,—the activity and self-sacrifice of Kensington

Christians keeping pace with the wants of the neighbourhood! The results at Notting Hill ought to be combined with those at Kensington, in order to estimate the value of what was done more than thirty years ago. The congregations, the members, the contributions since, should be reckoned together in a sum total; and a proportionate increase continued through coming days will secure an aggregate most blessed to contemplate, illustrating the true law of progress in Congregationalism. It will be God's building, God's husbandry, a working together with Him and under Him: ministers and people being one with the Church's Lord. What purity of communion, what brotherly love, what self-sacrificing zeal, what achievements of benevolence, what noble family lives, what numerous conversions to Christ may be anticipated in consequence of aims and endeavours such as are now suggested! If the Church be a Divine garden, growth, fruitfulness, beauty ought to be expected. Rich abundance will crown a field which the Lord hath blessed. The most prosperous Churches in Christendom only exhibit what may be called, in the highest sense, a *natural* result of His superintendence and blessing. What spiritual wonders may be looked for, what earnest, humble work should be attempted, what encouragement under heavy responsibility, what comfort amidst trials and disappointments will assuredly come in the garden of our toils, our hopes, our joys,—“supposing Him to be the Gardener!” [127]

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FOOTNOTES

[9a] “Historical Recollections of Hyde Park,” by Thomas Smith, p. 39.

[9b] “Environs of London,” iii. p. 196.

[11] Hervey's “Memoirs,” ii. p. 189.

[12] Faulkner's “History of Kensington,” p. 317.

[13a] Faulkner's “History of Kensington,” p. 170.

[13b] Mr. Leifchild, in the “Life” of his father, says that Saunders contributed *thirty pounds annually*. No mention of this appears in the records of the Church.

[17] In Faulkner's “History of Kensington,” p. 318, it is said that “the first minister who officiated at Hornton Street Chapel was the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Edinburgh, who was not, however, ordained over the congregation.” No notice is taken of this in the original records of the Church, which are imperfect.

[23a] Isaiah li. 9.

[23b] Nichols' “Anecdotes,” ix. p. 681.

[24a] “History of the London Missionary Society,” by W. Ellis, i. p. 8.

[24b] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[25] Faulkner's “History of Kensington,” p. 318.

[28] Church Book. 27

[29] “The Clayton Family,” by Dr. Aveling, p. 180.

[37] “Memoir of John Leifchild, D.D.,” by his son, p. 41.

[38a] “Memoir,” p. 40.

[38b] “Remarkable Facts,” by Dr. Leifchild, p. 271.

[40] Church Book.

[47] Leifchild's “Remarkable Facts,” p. 124.

[49] “Memoir,” p. 47.

[51] “Memoir,” p. 85.

[52] “Memoir,” p. 80.

[54] “Church Book.”

[55] He died in 1862, aged 83. He did not receive the diploma of D.D. until after he left Kensington.

[61] Faulkner's “History of Kensington,” p. 319.

[68] They were no other than the Rev. John Clayton and Dr. Redford, son of my senior colleague.

[73] James Brunlees, Esq., F.R.S.E.

[77] These details, though they may now seem superfluous, may in years to come be found important and useful.

[81] After references to several discussions on the subject, the Church record at Horbury states:—"It was not, however, until 1847 that any combined effort to carry out the object was made; but on the 20th of October in that year, five friends connected with the Church at Hornton Street (*i.e.* the Rev. John Stoughton, the pastor, Messrs. Walker, Robert Watson, and Robinson, three of the deacons, and Mr. Shephard, also a member of the Church) met, and forming themselves into a committee, resolved, 'That it was desirable an Independent Chapel should be built in the neighbourhood of Notting Hill.' Two of their number were deputed to look out for ground; and, after much difficulty and delay in selecting a suitable site for the building, the present very eligible piece of ground was secured at a price of £630, on lease for eighty-eight years, at a peppercorn rent." The freehold was subsequently purchased. "The name of Horbury Chapel was given to the building as a mark of respect to the treasurer, Mr. Walker, who, by his liberality and exertions, so largely contributed to the success of the undertaking, the village of Horbury, in Yorkshire, being his birthplace." The small committee formed in October, 1847, was soon enlarged by the addition of several other members of the Kensington Church. The Rev. W. Roberts was publicly recognised on the 17th of April, 1850, when the Rev. Dr. Morison, the Revs. J. Stratton, J. H. Godwin, and J. Stoughton took part in the service.

[88] They were joined afterwards by Mr. Thomas Wilson.

[127] See a striking sermon on these words by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, in the *Tabernacle Pulpit*, for January, 1883.

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