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EARLY ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY.*

IF we distinguish between Presbyterianism as an ecclesiastical *organisation* and an ecclesiastical *theory*, or mode of thought, the date of its earliest organisation in England will be found to have been much later than that of its earliest conception as a connected group of principles. But even its first organisation was at least several years earlier than that of the Presbyterianism of Scotland. It dates from the 1st of November, 1555, when the Church of the English Protestant Exiles in Geneva was "erected," and on which day Christopher Goodman and Anthony Gilby were appointed, in the absence of John Knox,† to preach the Word of God and administer the Sacraments. Only four months after the "erection" of the church—viz., in February, 1556—was published in Geneva, "The Forme of Prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments, &c., used in the Englishe Congregation at Geneva, and approved by the famous and godly learned man John Calvyn"—the same book which was carried into Scotland in 1559 by Knox, and was adopted by the Reformed Church of that kingdom in 1560,

* [This paper constituted the main part of the last opening address by its lamented author, in the English Presbyterian College, of which he was Principal. It was suggested by the line of inquiry which he proposed to the Edinburgh Council under the title, "Desiderata of Presbyterian History." The second part of his address was intended to illustrate the great need of historians for English Presbyterian history, but he had time for little more than quoting the remarks made by himself on the subject, as recorded in the "Proceedings of the Council," p. 250 ff.—Ed. C. P.]

† "In the absence of John Knox:" such is the language of the original record entered in the remarkable MS. preserved in the public archives of Geneva, entitled "*Livre des Anglois*"—written for the most part in Knox's own hand, and of which I recently made a complete transcript. This entry evidently implies that Knox was still considered to be one of the ministers of the Church, as it was to follow his ministry that the most of its members had left Frankfort for Geneva, on occasion of his being compelled to leave the former by the "troubles" which arose there from the opposition of the Episcopal party among the English exiles, and which rendered the Church organisation, which Knox and his party desired to establish there, a failure. In the interval between his departure from Frankfort and the arrival of his friends in Geneva, Knox had made a visit to Scotland, from which he returned to Geneva in the autumn of the following year, 1556.

English Reformation is acknowledged by eminent secular historians—such as Hume, Hallam, Macaulay, and Froude—to have exercised upon the free political development of the kingdom, not only by the teaching of some of its earliest preachers, such as Knox and Goodman in Geneva, but also by the political action of the Presbyterian party in the Parliaments of Elizabeth and her successors.

And lastly, there deserves to be indicated the wide-spread influence of the early English Presbyterian Colonists in the New World. The "Pilgrim Fathers," indeed, were the first band of Puritans who carried over to the New World the Geneva Bible, and the principles of religious and civil liberty; and the Pilgrim Fathers, the flock of Robinson, were Congregationalists, not Presbyterians. But ere long there followed successive bands of colonists who were Presbyterians, not Congregationalists. They, too, carried with them the Geneva Bible and the free spirit of its marginal notes (so abhorred by the first James); and they, too, planted these principles in other parts of the territories of New England, where they took root and flourished as vigorously as in any other part of the soil of the great American Republic.

PETER LORIMER.

ALBERT BARNES: HIS TEACHING AND HIS INFLUENCE.

IT is to be regretted that no adequate memoir of Albert Barnes has been given to the Church. There was, indeed, little in his personal life that would have been striking or stirring in detail; and most of his public services are already too well known to require formal enumeration. But amid the even and quiet flow of his career, and beneath the dignified reserve so characteristic both of the man and of the preacher, there was much, revealing itself in personal experience, in private correspondence, in the more intimate relations of life, as well as at great public crises, whether in Church or in State, which many would still be glad to know more intimately. The probability that any such record will be attempted grows less and less with the passing years; and it may be that an occasional recognition, such as is proposed in this paper, or some brief biographic sketch published here or there, will be all, beyond his own writings, to remind the Church or the world of Albert Barnes.

Born in Central New York in 1798, graduating from Hamilton College in 1820, and educated in theology at Princeton, he entered on his ministerial work in Morristown, New Jersey, early in the year 1825. Five years later he was transferred to Philadelphia, where he continued in active service in connection with one congregation for a period of thirty-seven years. Resigning his charge in 1867, and thenceforward

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ceasing to be actively employed, though always interested and zealous in all Christian work, he became a pastor *emeritus*, and so continued three years longer, until his death, which occurred suddenly, near the close of 1870.

The Presbyterian Church already knows how much of patient and fruitful labour in private, of active and conspicuous service in public relations, and of able and beneficent literary effort, was condensed in that uneventful career. No ordinary man could have sustained himself so well in such a church, in such a community, for a period so prolonged. Few minds could have carried themselves so calmly and worthily through the ecclesiastical conflicts in which he became involved, or have so efficiently performed the public work to which he was at different times called by that branch of the Church which accepted him as one of its foremost leaders during the period of the separation. But his literary services in the religious press, in the columns of various reviews, and especially in his printed volumes, demand even higher recognition, and mark him as one of the most useful men whom the American Church has produced. His Commentaries on the various books of the New Testament, and on Isaiah, Daniel, and the Psalms; his published works on the "The Way of Salvation," "Justification by Faith," "The Atonement in its relation to Law and Moral Government," "The Apostolic Church," and "The Evidences of Christianity in the Nineteenth Century, all show him to have been not merely an industrious and voluminous writer, but also one of the ablest of thinkers, a diligent, extensive, and devout student, and, in respect to the themes thus discussed, a theologian worthy of a place in the list of those who, from Edwards to Hodge, have been eminent in shaping the thought, the belief, and the life and labours of the Church of Christ on the American Continent.

Two recent writers, both familiar with him personally, and both competent to speak of him as a man, have given us an outline portrait of Albert Barnes as he appeared in these more private relations. One of them describes him as being no less remarkable in his character than in his work—remarkable for the method and system which were apparent both in his labours and in his thoughts, and for the equipoise of feeling, the freedom from mere impulse, the conscientious regard for duty, and unswerving loyalty to what he conceived to be right—remarkable, also, for the sensitiveness of his nature, his delicate regard for the feelings of others, his genial and affectionate manner among friends, and his shrinking modesty and absence of all assumption or affectation. The other has added a pleasant colouring to the picture by calling to mind the serene quality of his mental constitution, the child-likeness of his intercourse with others, his full and sweet charity for all, his deep religious experience, his sympathy with humanity and with all movements intended to benefit mankind, his cheerful views of the future of the world, and his supreme Christian trust and resignation. That these high traits really

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belonged to Albert Barnes, and were in special measure displayed in his personal character and walk among men, will not be questioned by those who knew him. He was, in a rare degree, all that he has been thus described.

It is not the purpose of this article to detail the events which first made the name of Albert Barnes conspicuous, or to express any opinion in regard to the ecclesiastical trials through which he passed. Like Lyman Beecher in the West, he had the fortune, good or ill, to become the representative in the East of certain phases of thought and teaching, the exponent of certain varieties of opinion on the main points of Calvinism which were conscientiously regarded by many minds as at variance with the Westminster Symbols, and as requiring even the ejection from church fellowship of those who held and proclaimed them. It was during his first pastorate, at Morristown, that his opinions, especially as expressed in his printed sermon on the "Way of Salvation," began to be regarded with distrust. His proposed transfer to Philadelphia furnished occasion for the more formal expression of that distrust; and on the publication, in 1835, of his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, he was formally arraigned as heretical. On this charge, after much of ecclesiastical and of public controversy, he was at length acquitted by the General Assembly of 1836, that acquittal becoming one among the occasions of the noted denominational disruption of the following year. After this disruption, he naturally became a leader in the New School branch of the divided Church, not simply because he had suffered for his adherence to principles regarded by that branch as vital and precious, but quite as much because his cast of mind fitted him for such leadership, and because his high personal qualities spontaneously attracted to him multitudes of adherents among men of kindred faith and experience.

We are often impressed with the fact, that the prevailing currents and the permanent quality of a human life are, in many cases, determined by causes incidentally interposing themselves, or by occasions, almost trivial, gradually but surely changing the movement of that life through all its future. The sermon on the Way of Salvation, preached in a time of religious interest, and with no thought of any result beyond the immediate impression it was intended to convey, not only attracted general attention and elicited adverse criticism at the time, but became the starting-point of new lines of thought, of new phases of experience, and even of a new type of character in the preacher himself. It did much, for instance, to make Albert Barnes, through all his subsequent career, the earnest advocate of temperance, the cool and courageous and efficient antagonist of slavery, the friend and helper of all Christian reform. The general principles recognised in that discourse as to the freedom and responsibility of man, the guilt and doom of sin, the fulness and freeness of the Gospel salvation, must, if carried out to their logical and spiritual results, make every man a reformer, in the Scriptural sense of that term.

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To the sermon on the Way of Salvation, and all that grew out of it in his personal development, may also be traced his theological position and teaching. The principles enunciated in that discourse were those around which his subsequent thoughts habitually turned; they became the nucleus and germ of further thinking along the same lines; they gathered about themselves, by magnetic influence, all the elements of a compact theological system; they both inspired and regulated his preaching, and diffused their specific influence through all his public life and work. The writer raises no question here as to the soundness of these principles, their ecclesiastical validity, or their practical efficiency when adopted by other minds. It is enough here to note the fact that they were the principles of Albert Barnes, bone of his bone theologically, and the heart of his personal experience and activities. He became what he was because they were what they were; and his life stands out before the Church as the enduring witness to their power.

It may not be unprofitable to mention here, informally, some of the characteristics of the theological system thus originating. The writer has a tender recollection of the first and only sermon which he heard from the lips of Albert Barnes. It was a morning discourse, delivered nearly thirty years ago, in New York, on the occasion of a visit to that city. The discourse was based on that noble text of Peter: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." The discussion involved a presentation of the intrinsic reasonableness of Christianity, the possibility of explaining and justifying the Gospel, the duty of having adequate reasons for our own faith, the obligation to make these reasons known to others, the duty of presenting such a faith to the world, as one that must command the rational and moral assent, and the spiritual acceptance of all men. The aim which ran so clearly through that discourse, ran no less clearly or strongly through the entire theological belief and teaching of the preacher. He believed in the obligation to make all theology reasonable; he clung tenaciously to his faith in the actual reasonableness of Calvinism; he was moved in his acceptance of specific doctrines by reason, and he gave reasons for whatever doctrine he accepted. It may be that this characteristic of his mind led him sometimes to attempt philosophic explanations where simple resting in the Divine facts, as stated in the Word, would have been the higher wisdom. But in the main, the theological teachings of Albert Barnes will commend themselves to the Church as reasonable, in the best sense; and the more his system is studied, apart from any and all controversial connections, the more will such reasonableness appear.

It was also characteristic of the man and his system, that both alike exhibited so high a measure of Christian Catholicity. How calmly he bore himself amid the collisions of opposing opinion, and in the heat of ecclesiastical conflict, is still matter of affectionate tradition. How ready he was to recognise in his opponents the better motive rather than the

worse, how freely he forgave the wrong which he judged himself to have suffered, how cordially he cultivated the broadest theological affinities, and entered into brotherly relations and labours with those from whom he differed most widely, need not be detailed here. The secret of all this, as evinced both in his thinking and in his life, lay largely in the genial catholicity of his nature. Of that catholicity, his theology was at many points the natural expression. As between Calvinism and evangelical Arminianism, it was a mediating rather than differentiating system; in its enunciation of specific doctrines it was never dogmatically severe; it consisted little in the condemnation of opponents, but was much concerned with the description of territory where all had common inheritance. As a type of Calvinism, it was moderate, generous, and catholic, reflecting;—both in its principles and in its statements, the temper of the mind that framed it. Those who have been accustomed to regard Albert Barnes simply as a representative controversialist would do well, now that he is slumbering in the grave, to read his best treatises again, and to mark the abundant traces of a spirit infinitely higher than that which theological controversy commonly engenders. And one may venture to predict that in the coming period, when all branches of the evangelical family of churches shall turn more ardently to the study of their points of resemblance and of unity, the writings of Albert Barnes will be found to furnish many conceptions of Divine truth, many felicitous statements of Christian doctrine, which will be accepted by all sides as aptly embodying the sum and substance of the Christian scheme.

Allusion has already been made to the practical character of his theology; a few more words may be added here. As it was a theology born of revivals, so it was a theology pervaded extensively by the revival spirit; originating in the exigencies of preaching, it was a theology shaped throughout with primary reference to the needs of the preacher. It emphasised the legal relations and offices of the atonement, regarded as a Divine expedient for the justification of the sinner in harmony with the demands of moral government, in order that it might furnish a theologic basis for the largest and freest offer of redemption. It emphasised the fulness of the Gospel provision, the comprehensiveness of the Gospel offer, the love, sincerity, and equity of God in inviting all men to be saved, in order that the way might be open for the broadest and most earnest summons to every sinner to repent and believe. It emphasised the doctrine of natural ability, maintained the real freedom of the will, though morally disabled, guarded against all conceptions of sin as constitutional rather than voluntary, laid much stress on personal responsibility, in order that, in all, and by all, it might impel, encourage, constrain men to turn to God and be reconciled. In like manner it exalted the Divine law and government, magnified the duty of loyalty, asserted the exceeding sinfulness of transgression, dwelt much on the guilt of every hour of unbelief, so that it might the more persuasively

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offer that scheme of grace by which even the sinner is made righteous, and the rebel restored to citizenship and favour. In these and many other aspects, the theology of Albert Barnes was a theology for the pulpit,—a theology fitted to persuade and move the people, and therefore a theology whose strength and worth became most apparent at times when the people were most deeply persuaded, and where sinners were moved to flee in large numbers to the Cross.

As the theology of Albert Barnes was reasonable, catholic, and practical in its general cast, so it was also eminently hopeful in its conceptions and influence. His beautiful discourse on "Life at three-score," and some of the personal passages in the Introduction to his Commentaries, show how thoroughly hopeful his own nature was, and with what cheerfulness he contemplated the progress of humanity along the lines prescribed by the Christian faith. With the notion that Christianity is a failure, or that the career of humanity is to terminate in a catastrophe rather than in a true *civitas Dei* on earth, he had no sympathy. There was nothing in his own nature or his system that accorded with low views of man, or narrow conceptions of the Gospel, in whatever form. It is for this reason that his writings are so cheering, so encouraging alike in the truths they express and the spirit which they breathe. His theology was one which justified such hope, made the future attractive, stimulated to present endeavour, and inspired to sacrifices for the promotion of that consummation on which his eye of faith was ever fixed. It was a theology that quickened the zeal of men in missions at home and abroad, led to schemes of active usefulness in the Church, and awakened believers to earnest and united prayer for the establishment everywhere, through the Gospel, of the blessed Kingdom of Christ among men.

Other characteristics of the theological system of Albert Barnes might be named, such as its logical nature, its close coherence, its crystal clearness on points within human apprehension, its reverent pausing where the little visions of earth fade away into the broad, blue mystery of heaven. Under other circumstances, it would be pleasant also to analyse that system and present it in detail, and to trace it back into its remote connections, particularly with the theology of Jonathan Edwards. A kindred task, even more attractive, would be, to describe the historic effects and results of this system, as these are seen in the development of like opinions in other minds, in the formation of what was termed New School theology, and in the determination of the distinctive beliefs and position of the New School Church, especially during the last two decades of its separate existence.

But these general hints must suffice. It has well been said that the arithmetic of earth furnishes no figures adequate to measure the power of such a life, the effects and worth of such a character. And it is one of the peculiar testimonies to the Divine origin of our blessed faith, that, wherever it is rationally and heartily received, it produces lives and

characters which nothing but the arithmetic of heaven can at all compute. Among the many contributions which Albert Barnes was permitted to make to the Church at large, the most important probably lie in the materials he has furnished, and the quickening he has given, by his writings, to the preachers of this generation, in Europe as well as in America. Thousands on thousands of sermons have grown out of his apposite and practical expositions of Scripture ; hundreds of ministers have been cheered in times of discouragement, strengthened in presenting and enforcing the Gospel, animated in seasons of revival, by his wise and earnest teachings. It may be that his theological treatises will pass into comparative disuse ; but the man still lives in his broader work, and will long live in the pulpit, in the Sabbath school, and in the Christian household, as one whom God honoured with the privilege of eminent usefulness, and whose whole life and work were alike a blessing to mankind.

Being asked to contribute to this journal a paper on Barnes, the writer has thrown together these fragmentary suggestions respecting the personality, the teaching, and the influence of one whom all would regard as a representative man in the Presbyterian Church on the Western Continent. The task has been performed amid other pressing occupations, not in any spirit of partisanship, but in the belief that it is well for that Church often to recall to memory her great men, of whatever school or tendency, and to enrich her own life by gathering into it the precious influences still flowing out from theirs. It will be well for that Church if, in time to come, she is able to produce other sons as worthy of remembrance as ALBERT BARNES.

EDWARD D. MORRIS.

THE EARLY BRITISH CHURCH : INFLUENCE ON MODERN LITERATURE.

THE death of Arthur marks that crisis in the early British Church which, in the end of the sixth century, brought about a schism in the United Church of this island. Then Augustine landed from Rome, and became the founder of the English Church. The British Church withdrew into Wales and Cornwall, into Northumbria and Scotland. The direct fruit, in Christian life, of the Early British Church, is historically marked by its great storehouses at Bangor in Flintshire, at Lindisfarne in Northumberland, and at Iona. These were great Christian schools and centres of missionary effort. I do not, meantime, propose to treat of the results of these in the Church life of this and other lands, but to restrict attention to the less familiar influence which that Church has exercised on modern literature. This it has done, unintentionally no doubt, but not the less directly, through her