

“The First Publishers of Truth.”¹

The fourth number of the Supplement is no less interesting than its predecessors, and contains some aspects of the early spread of the Truth not dwelt on before. The Westmorland account is continued, followed by Worcestershire, Yorkshire, and South Wales, with several Addenda.

The reports from Westmorland speak of more than one or two who had “laboured zealously for a time in the service of truth,” but who had, “in process of time, for want of watchfulness, run out into things Inconsistent with the profession of truth.” Of one we read that “the Lord was with him while he kept Close to his power,” but that “through want thereof, he became much darkned and vailed.” Of another, that he “had a pretty gift in the ministry, and while he kept litle and low, the lord was with him . . . but growing proud of his gift, grew high and exalted, and also Covetious.” The saddest account is of Thomas Ayrey, of Birkfield, who set out with some of those who first were called forth into the South. He accompanied John Audland through Wales, to Bristol, Exeter, and Plymouth, where he “begun to ffainte, and turned homewarde, and left John Audland alone.” We cannot refrain from quoting the rest of the story :—

This poore, ffainteing man returneing home, Endeovered to Appeare in publike testemony, but haveing lost the power, Could not be borne. And although he mostly held the profession of Truth in frequenting ffriends Meettings, yett a very weake & faithless man all his days after. Could suffer nothing for truth, for when like to sufer for keeping Christs Comand in not sweareing, he truckled under, and tooke an oath ; when like to suffer for Truths Testemony against ffighting and beareing outward arms, he Consented to take the arms. And also when like to suffer for not Conforming to the Nationall worshipe, soe undrly was he that he went one day to that worshipe to prevent suffering. And soe in that weake and unsenceable Condition went to his grave. Oh ! that he may be a warneing to all to kepe to the rocke, Gods power, for which end this is recorded.²

¹ For a short time longer, until the fifth and last Supplement of this series has appeared, subscribers to the Historical Society may obtain the set of five Supplements for ten shillings (\$2.50) at the offices of the Society at Devonshire House, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.; 1010 Arch Street, Philadelphia; or 51 Fifth Avenue, New York.

² *F.P.T.*; p. 266.

We have from Kendal another description of the cruel usage meted out in Oxford to two young women from that town, which has already appeared in the accounts from Oxfordshire. In commenting on these events in a previous number of *THE JOURNAL*,³ John W. Graham remarks that "these outrages occurred before William Simpson marched through the city naked, for a sign. Had it been after that strange event, we might have excused something of the violence of public opinion." It is interesting to note that in this account we are told that Elizabeth Fletcher had herself gone naked through the streets of the city, as a sign against that "Hippocreticall profession" they then made there. She was but nineteen years of age when she died, and she is spoken of with such love and tenderness that she stands before us to-day "filled with wisdom to devide the word aright, and greatly exemplary in her vertueous, Inocent, and Chaste Conversation."

Edward Bourne, writing from Worcestershire, gives long and interesting accounts of visits paid by Thomas Goodaire and Richard Farnsworth, and of the persecutions that followed. He also mentions a visit from George Fox, and describes a discourse which he himself had with G.F. "Hee was Instrumentall," he says, "in the hand of the Lord mightly to help mee, and to Confirme and establish mee in the eternall truth. I loved his Company, and to bee wth : him and to heare him, and His memoriall is blessed to many."

Benjamin Bealing's list does not contain any documents relating to "First Publishers" in Yorkshire, but various accounts and testimonies have been copied from early manuscripts belonging to Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting. In connection with these accounts we may refer our readers to the lectures on "The Rise of Quakerism in Yorkshire," by John Wilhelm Rowntree, published in his *Essays and Addresses*, and particularly to the map and the short biographies in the Appendices.

We hope that the many biographical notes which are so ably contributed by Norman Penney may some time be collected as a nucleus of a Quaker biographical dictionary.

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³ Vol. ii. p. 86.