

George Fox and the Durham College.

John Sykes writes in his *Local Records*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1833, vol. i. p. 108 :—

“1657, May 15. A writ of Privy Seal for founding an university at Durham was signed by Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector. This university, rather intended to be founded than actually settled, was soon suppressed. The original writ is preserved in the archives of the Dean and Chapter of Durham ; it appears to have been suppressed on account of petitions against it from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. It had been obtained by a petition of the city and county of Durham, county of Northumberland, and town and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

“It is a singular fact that George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, has assumed to himself the consequence and what he thought the merit of having been the means of suppressing this laudable institution.”

The author of the above extract then quotes the printed *Journal of George Fox*, under date of 1657. We give below an extract from the MS. *Journal*, setting forth this Durham episode¹ :—

And soe we came to Durham & there was a man Come down from London to sett vpp a Colledge there to make ministers of Xt as they saide. And soe J & some others went to y^e man, & reasoned with him, & lett him see y^t was not y^e way to make y^m Xts ministers by Hebrew, Greek & latin & y^e 7 arts ; w^{ch} all was but y^e teachings of y^e naturall man . . . Soe y^e man Confest to many of these thinges ; ffor we showed him further Jtt was Xt y^t made his ministers & gaue gifts vnto y^m. . . And Paul was made an Apostle not of man nor by man, neither receued he his gossell of man, but by Jesus Xt.

It is curious that the MS. account of this incident closes here, omitting the concluding words of the printed *Journal*, “when we had thus discoursed with the man, he became very loving & tender ; and, after he had considered further of it, declined to set up his college.”

There is no clear evidence of a *lacuna* in the manuscript; the account, as given, reaches the bottom of the page, but the last line is a broken one. On what authority did Thomas Ellwood, the editor, insert the concluding words ?

¹ D. Spence MSS., i. 201.