

Elisha Bates.

The reference to Elisha Bates in a recent number of THE JOURNAL¹ has suggested the propriety of furnishing a few additional facts relative to this remarkable man, who, after having long been a favored Minister among Friends, departed from the faith, and assailed the principles which he had once so earnestly advocated.

Elisha Bates was born in Virginia in 1781, and removed in early life to Ohio, where he resided at Mount Pleasant. He was a prominent member and Minister, and at one time clerk of Ohio Yearly Meeting, and, prior to his apostacy, was one of the most conspicuous and influential characters among Friends in America. In the controversy incident to the preaching of Elias Hicks, he was an active participant, and was clerk of the Meeting of Representatives of American Yearly Meetings, which issued a declaration of faith showing the contention of those Yearly Meetings in the controversy in question. It is probable that that declaration was mostly his work.

The testimony of disownment against him, a copy of which is appended to these remarks, throws some light on the cause of his change.

Subsequent to his disownment, he wrote a book of over 300 pages, entitled, *An Examination of Certain Proceedings and Principles of the Society of Friends called Quakers*, which was printed in 1837 at St. Claresville, Ohio. In this he violently and bitterly assailed the Society and its principles, as well as many of its prominent members, including George Fox, and displayed a spirit hardly in harmony with Christian impulses. There is no doubt that his defection was due primarily to a weakening of his spiritual life, and in reading the work in question, suspicions will be aroused as to whether he may not have been in a degree mentally unbalanced, and perhaps not altogether responsible for his course. This book does not appear to have made any particular impression on Friends, his action in submitting to the rite of water baptism having opened the eyes of many who had previously looked upon him in a favorable light.

¹ Vol. iv. p. 92.

It is thought that in his latter years his antagonism towards Friends was greatly lessened. He is said at times to have attended Friends' meetings, sitting in the back part of the house, the ministers' gallery of which he had formerly adorned.

The notice of Elisha Bates's last days and death (1861), which appeared in *Friends' Review*, vol. xiv., is cautiously written, and does not give a very clear view of the subject, nor from what standpoint it was written, and these points should be considered in forming an opinion of it. Keeping this in mind, it may be stated that the writer of it says, "Although alienated from it [the Society of Friends] for several years, he became increasingly attached to it as he approached the close of his life;" and toward the end he said, "Tell Friends that I love them with an undying love." There seems to be no doubt that he had a peaceful end, but the problem of whether he had thoughts of disapproving his course remains unsolved.

G.V.

TESTIMONY OF DISOWNMENT AGAINST ELISHA BATES :—

"Elisha Bates has written and published, contrary to discipline, sundry articles or pamphlets relating to our religious principles and testimonies, calculated to excite disunity and discord, and containing unfounded charges against the Meeting for Sufferings and our religious Society in matters of faith and doctrine : alleging erroneously that our Society is inveterately and extensively opposed to evangelical doctrines and to the preaching faith in Christ, and says the Society is holding up their own writings as standards of doctrine more immediately binding upon us than the Scriptures. He has insidiously attacked the Christian character and religious writings of George Fox ; he has also departed from our Christian belief in the one essential and saving baptism—that of the Holy Spirit, by submitting to the ceremony and use of water. In a communication which he forwarded to this Meeting in Second Month last, tendering his resignation of his right of membership, he further evinces that he is not in unity with us : and having been treated with, he endeavors to justify himself in the course he has pursued

against the Society, and manifesting no disposition to condemn his deviation, we therefore testify against his said conduct and disown him from being a member of our religious Society. Nevertheless we sincerely desire that he may be favored with a true sense of his present condition, and become prepared to condemn his late course of proceedings to the satisfaction of friends and to the peace of his own mind.

“Signed in and by direction of Short Creek Monthly Meeting, held 23rd day of the 5th Month, 1837.

“NATHAN HALL, *Clerk.*”

Marriage Certificate Keye-Worsley, 1666.

The thirteenth daye of the twelft Moneth Jn the yeare According to Account—1666.

This is to Certifie all whom it Maye or doth Concearne That John Keye the younger of Mobberley wthin the County of Chester did, the daye And yeare Aboue written, Jn the psence of vs whose Names Are hearets Subscribed, take Ann Worsley of Hale wthin the Abouesaid County to bee his Wife. To the truth of the Said Marriage, Jt being According to the Marrages of the Holy Men of God w^{ch} tooke to themselues Wiues, As Relation is Geven in the Scriptures of truth, Wee thearefore Are Wittnesses : And shall Willingly, Jf wee Maye haue Liberty, And bee thearevnto Called by Any in Authoritie to testifie to the Veritie thereof. Wittness our hands

* ELIZABETH LAMBE	THOMAS POTT
* HANNAH WORTHINGTON	THOMAS HEELD, Sen.
* MARTHA WORTHINGTON	WILLIAM HEALD
* MARGERIT HARRISON	RICHARD BURGES
† ELLEN DUNCALFE	JEFFREY BURGIS
† ELLIZABETH DUNCALFE	JAMES HARISON
† ELLEN DUNCALFE, Jun.	WILLIAM KEY
† MARGARET BURGES	THOMAS JANNEY, Sen.
† ELLIZABETH MILLNER	PETER KEYE
EDW : ALCOCKE	THOMAS JANNEY.

* In the same handwriting.

† In the same handwriting.

Other signatures appear to be original.

The original is the property of Charles Drury, of Sheffield.