

## Notes and Queries

### KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

**D.**—Friends' Reference Library, Devonshire House, 136, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.2.

**Camb. Jnl.**—*The Journal of George Fox*, published by the Cambridge University Press, 1911.

**D.N.B.**—*The Dictionary of National Biography*.

**ELIZABETH FRANK, OF YORK** (xv. 125).—Thomas P. Cooper, of 16, Wentworth Road, York, writes that he also is wishful to know more of this lady, the compiler of the *Memoirs of Lindley Murray*. He states that she was a person of means and lived on The Mount, York. In her Preface she states that she was acquainted with L. M. only when he was advanced in life, but that "during many years, from motives of friendship to himself and his wife, I lived under his roof." A list of other productions of her pen is given on p. 291 of the second edition of the *Memoirs*.

**GEORGE THOMPSON, ANTI-SLAVERY SPEAKER** (xiv. 54).—William G. Smeal, of Glasgow, has forwarded for information some voluminous notes respecting George Thompson. He was of London and probably spent more time at Glasgow than Edinburgh. A third visit to America took place in 1864, when the warmth of his reception atoned for the indignities to which he had on earlier visits been subjected.

John Bright said of him, "I have always considered Mr. Thompson as the real liberator of the slaves in the British Colonies, for without his commanding eloquence, made irresistible by the blessedness of his

cause, I do not think all the other agencies then at work would have produced their freedom."

**ALICE WRIGHT.**—On page 24 there is a notice of visits to Ireland in 1858 and 1860 by Alice Wright of Manchester. By the courtesy of Lawrence R. Wilson, *per* John Ashworth, and with the aid of records in **D.**, we are able to give an outline of the life of this Friend.

Alice Taylor was born in 1812, a daughter of Peter Taylor, of Manchester, a twine manufacturer, and Alice, his wife. In 1853 she married David Wright, of Kettering, a brother of Leslie Wright, who was the first husband of Elizabeth L. Rous, afterwards Comstock (*Life and Letters of Elizabeth L. Comstock*, 1895).

On the death of David Wright in 1854 (followed shortly by the death of an infant daughter) his widow returned to her early home in Manchester, where, in 1857, she was recorded a Minister.

In 1861, Alice Wright married, as his second wife, Samuel Alexander, of Leominster, and on his death in 1884, at the age of 74, she removed to Cheltenham, where her death took place in 1898, aged 86 (*Annual Monitor*, 1900).

QUAKER AND COMEDIAN.—Ezra K. Maxfield, of Cambridge, Mass., and Winthrop, Me., sends a copy of a letter, printed in *The Life of that Eminent Comedian, Robert Wilks, Esq.*, London, 1733—a book recently come to light in Harvard University Library.

“A CHARACTER OF MR. WILKS. BY RUTH COLLINS, A QUAKER.<sup>1</sup>”

“Sept. 27, 1732.

“Died this Day Master ROBERT WILKS of the *Irish Nation*. He was one that shewed great *Behaviour* of Body, and spake many *quaint Words* of *Vanity* upon a *Stage of Wood*, before *People* who delight in *vain Babbling*; and they are now greatly troubled at his Loss. For, say they, *where shall we find his Fellow, to yield Delight unto our Ears* and unto our Hearts, in the doleful Evenings of the Winter. Those that were of his *Company* also *mourn*, and say, *Our Neighbours will rejoice*, as hoping to be Gainers by his *Departure*.”

In the card-catalogue in D. is a cutting from a second-hand book-list of a volume of tracts, dated 1732, headed: “Collins (Ruth). The Friendly Writer and Register of Truth,” followed by titles of four other publications. No other reference appears.

There does not seem any genuine Quaker ring about the letter.

“<sup>1</sup>See the Friendly Writer and Register of Truth. For Sept. p. 30.”

EZRA K. MAXFIELD (Ridgely Hall 41, Cambridge, Mass.) writes:

“I am much interested in the literary side of Quaker history and have been at work more or less for the past ten years on the subject. I intend eventually to publish a book, which shall cover both the Quaker and the Opponent sides.

“At present I am simply preparing certain chapters covering the first hundred years of Quaker history and am confining myself to the anti-Quaker side. Such captions as ‘The Quaker and the Stage,’ ‘The Quaker and Prose Satire,’ ‘The Quaker in Verse Satire,’ ‘The Quaker in Chronicle and Diary,’ will give an idea of the content of my present work. I am taking up such special writers as Daniel Defoe, Dean Swift, and Addison and Steele, in particular detail.

“It has long been my feeling that a great gap exists between Quaker history as written by our Society and Quaker manners, customs, and beliefs as interpreted by worldly historians. My work will attempt to reconcile the two points of view and show the effect of Quakerism on English Letters. Eventually I shall try to cover the entire field. In my present work, as I have already stated, I shall treat only what concerns the period 1650-1750.”

E. K. Maxfield would welcome any suggestions offered by the readers of THE JOURNAL and others.

A QUAKER INVENTION.—Extracts from an article which appeared in *Household Words, a Weekly Journal*, conducted by Charles Dickens. Vol. VI. 1852, p. 31.

“About thirteen years ago, a Quaker was walking in a field in Northumberland, when a thought struck him.

“Well, what of that? There are men walking in fields in Northumberland every day; and there are Quakers walking in fields everywhere in England, at all times, and all with some thought or other in their heads. What is the wonder of that particular case, thirteen years ago?

“Why, the idea was a noticeable one. It has produced some rather important results—results which make that walk in the field a matter of considerable consequence to everybody who reads this page.

“The man who was walking was named Thomas Edmondson. He had been, though a Friend, not a very successful man in life. He was a man of integrity and honour as he afterwards abundantly proved, but he had been a bankrupt, and was maintaining himself now as a railway clerk at a small station on the Newcastle and Carlisle line. In the course of his duties in this situation, he found it irksome to have to write on every railway ticket that he delivered. He saw the clumsiness of the method of tearing the bit of paper off the printed sheet as it was wanted, and filling it up with pen and ink. He perceived how much time, trouble, and error might be saved by the process being done in a mechanical way—how tickets might be printed with the names of stations, the class of carriage, the dates of the month, and all of them, from end to end of the kingdom, on one uniform

system. Most inventors accomplish their great deeds by degrees—one thought suggesting another from time to time; but when Thomas Edmondson showed his family the spot in the field where his invention occurred to him, he used to say that it came into his mind complete, in its whole scope and all its detail.”

. . . . .

“The Manchester and Leeds Railway Company were the first to avail themselves of Mr. Edmondson’s invention; and they secured his services at their station at Oldham Road for a time. He took out a patent, and his invention became so widely known and appreciated that he soon withdrew from all other engagements to perfect its details, and provide tickets to meet the daily growing demand. He let out his patent on profitable terms. As his profits began to come in, he began to spend them, and it is not the least interesting part of his history to see how. It has been told that he was a bankrupt in early life. The very first use he made of his money was to pay every shilling he had ever owed. He was forty-six when he took that walk in the field in Northumberland. He was fifty-eight when he died, on the 22nd of June last year (1851).

“When we glance over the railway reports of the United Kingdom for a single year, it may strike us that a vast deal of riding has come out of one single solitary walk—a prodigious machinery of convenience out of one turn of a sagacious man’s thought. It is not an exaggeration to attribute a considerable proportion of

the existing passenger traffic to the skilful administration of tickets, any more than it is to ascribe much of the increase in commercial business to the institution of a convenient currency. The present number of travellers could not have been forwarded if their tickets must have been torn off printed books or sheets, and filled up with pen and ink. If it be said that this is one of the inventions which was sure to come because it is so much wanted, and that Thomas Edmondson happened to be the man: we may safely say that he was the man who conceived a vast idea with the true sagacity of genius, and worked it out with industry and patience, and enjoyed its honours with modesty and dispensed its fruits with honour and generosity.

"We do not know what his best friends need claim for him more."

Note by William G. Smeal, who forwarded the extracts. The article in *Household Words* traces the development of T.E.'s system and describes several of his other inventions connected therewith, which ultimately were adopted by every Railway in this country and on the continent, and some of his instruments may to this day be seen in operation in every railway Booking Office in the U.K. The foregoing extracts contain the opening and the closing paragraphs. The whole article is of a most interesting character.

BAPTISMS.—Notes on the Parish Registers of St. Mary's, Nottingham, 1566 to 1812, by John T. Godfrey. Nottingham, Henry B. Saxton, King Street, 1901, p. 49. Baptisms.

"Christ: ye sonne of Christ: Berriman & Alice his wife born March ye 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1654, but ye parents bee Quakers it were not baptised till October 20<sup>th</sup>, 1658, by ye desire of the mother then converted & convinced of her erroneous judgm<sup>t</sup>."

J. E. GRUBB.

ANN BLAYKLING.—In Braithwaite's *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 345-346, there is an account of various pieces of foolishness committed by this woman, bringing scandal on the Quaker Church, before she settled down into sober ways.

Bunyan, in his controversy with Edward Burrough, alludes to her: "Lest you should think that the Quakers are not such as condemned me and others for preaching according to the Scriptures, as you would fain clear yourselves of this charge laid against you in my book, by your saying you deny the accusation to be true upon any of the Quakers, I shall therefore tell you of your sister Anne Blackly who did bid me in the audience of many 'to throw away the Scriptures.' To which I answered, 'No, for then the devil would be too hard for me'" (*A Vindication of Gospel Truths*).

A. NEAVE BRAYSHAW.

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Sarah F. Smiley died in 1918, aged about 88. See p. 69.

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Sent to press, 2nd November, 1919.