

A Private View of Beaconite Troubles

Extract from a letter from Edmund Sturge, of Birmingham, to James Clark, of Street, dated 5th month 3rd, 1836:

" This morning Joseph [Sturge] set off on horseback to join some teetotal lectures on the railway, they are going two days journey up the line.

" Charles Gilpin was here last week and I understand addressed one of the meetings in which I suppose thou and he would not disagree. In reference to Society matters, however, Sophia [Sturge] remarked that she observed that at almost every visit one of you was moved farther one way and the other the other. Thou art perhaps aware that he has appeared as an author and is much caressed as a 'defender of the Faith.'

" Our quarterly meeting was held here last week. George and Ann Jones and Richard Burlingham were here and the result has been I regret to say such as one would have spared no pains to avert, I mean in the '*patrician circle*.' I think I told thee that we were accounted in a 'dark state' by both parties, we thus stand a chance of being torn in pieces of both.

" In a letter I lately received from R. M. Beverley he says: 'There is every appearance of an increase of strife in your society; I am sorry for it and sincerely hope that the spirit of Love and union may prevent a serious rupture. You want some amendments in my opinion, but they are such as might be effected without the necessity of a new rent in Christ's garment, which the evil passions of men have almost rent into tatters already. If you could only get rid of your hereditary membership and alter one or two mysticalities you would I believe be as near the truth as any Society of Christians existing.' This from a man of war I take to be sound counsel. I wish some of our new *soi disant* men of peace were more imbued with the like."

Who formed the "Patrician Circle"? Was it the Birmingham to Bristol railway which was in building?

J. EDMUND CLARK.

At Hardshaw West M.M., 27 xii. 1838: (Liverpool)

" A letter rec^d from Rich^d Rathbone, wife & 3 oldest children, tendering their resignation, a very kind letter, & he has behaved so nicely, as greatly to endear himself to friends. Finding a collection was making for the Poor after his letter was sent in, he sent a note to my Father, enclosing £5, requesting he might be allow'd to contribute for the last time towards the maintenance of his poorer friends." Resignation accepted next month.

From notes of M.M. sent by Henry Robson, of Liverpool, to his uncle, Thomas Robson, "Care of Bengⁿ H. Warder, merchant, Philadelphia."