

George Fox and James Nayler

Continued from vol. xxvi. p. 15

We print further references to the attitude of George Fox towards James Nayler. The following has been received from Henry J. Cadbury, Ph.D., of Haverford, Pa., among a series of notes and queries suggested by a study of the life of James Nayler, written by Mabel R. Brailsford¹:

“ To the evidence of interest in Nayler’s episode quoted from Dutch, German and Italian sources,² one may mention a little (12 pages, quarto) French tract with a portrait of Nayler, published by Alexander Lesselin in Paris, without date or author’s name. Its title is *Le Véritable Portrait et L’Histoire de Jacques Naylor, Chef des Trembleurs & prétendu Messie, Avec son Arrest de condamnation, prononcé par le Parlement d’Angleterre*. This rare item apparently is not to be found in London either in Friends Reference Library or in the British Museum. A copy of it is included in the Jenks Collection at Haverford College. The title is listed in W. C. Abbott’s recent *Cromwell Bibliography*, No. 491, page 62. The date given—1650—is, of course, a mistake.

“ The latest work on Nayler is also continental and may be named here for the sake of completeness:—Emilia Fogelklou, *Kväkaren James Nayler: en Sällsam Gestalt i Religionens Historia*. Stockholm, 1929.³

“ Miss Brailsford gives (p. 112f) an account of the dealings of Fox with Nayler which reflects unfavourably on Fox. This episode is important not merely because of its historical effect in exempting the Society as a whole from complicity in the extravagances of Nayler’s admirers but as throwing light on the character of the two individuals.

“ It is perhaps worth while to mention some unpublished material concerning this relation in the hope that it may soon

¹ *A Quaker from Cromwell’s Army: James Nayler*, London, 1927.

² Brailsford, *op. cit.*, page 186.

³ In **D**. For a review, see *Friend* (Lond.), 16 Aug., 1929.

be made accessible. There is, for example, in **D** a long letter written by Fox to Nayler in September 1656,⁴ 'neere when he was freed from Exon prison.' Miss E. Brockbank has also found in connection with her study of Richard Hubberthorne a long account of the interview between Fox and Nayler written by Hubberthorne to Margaret Fell in the following month (Gibson MSS. v. 98).⁵ From the latter of these sources it is possible to ascribe a much more favourable attitude to Fox, even when he offered Nayler his foot to kiss."

Here is a portion of the letter referred to above :

" Ah James

" A Copy of a Leter sent to James Naylor neere ye time hee was freed out of ye prison in Exon. September, 1656.

" I forebore Judging thee openly till I Came to Exeter, though, y^r Actions weare Judged. and when I Came thether I sent for thee. and thou wouldest not Come to mee. though thou hadest not ben wth mee outwardly since I left thee att London, wheareby prejudice & Jealousie might have ben stoped in thee, but thou appeared before mee before I saw thy face, as aman Come out of a Clay pitt, whose garments weare dirty, and thou being stoubrne would not owne mee, when I was moved to pray, but stoode, in ye high nature Rebelious, and I sawe there at Exeter a Cloude of darknes would arise up agaynst mee, wch was entred into thee, and wicked nes as I told thee was groweing unto a mountain wch would have betrayed ye Lambe, ye Just ; And thou the same thy selfe after would have done in ye streets, though since thou saw some thing of it.

" And now James ye darknes is entred into thy disciples vesells out of thee, & is powred abroad ; and is droufen home agayne by ye life & power of truth, And as Martha⁶ Cried agaynst ye truth, and Hannah,⁶ soe now doe thy disciples, and such as have had relation to ye Ranters, wch are gotten up, & Comes & Cryes agaynst ye truth wth Empudence & boldnesse, & such bee you and they have

⁴ Printed in part, below.

⁵ Printed in volume xxvi.

⁶ Martha Simmonds and Hannah Stringer were actively associated with Nayler in his sad doings in Bristol.

Caused ye truth, ye right way, to bee evill spoaken of ;
 And thou when first thou wast tryed at Exeter,
 thou wast out of ye power of god, for thy sacrifice is not
 excepted. Now it is manyfast, them that bee of thy flocke,
 begoten disciples . . . they have Joyned themselves
 wth ye Edemights & Called thee Lord. Therefore oh
 James bee awakned & Consider aright & shake of, &
 Come from under ye Cloude of earth & darknes, hadest
 thou ben obedient to ye voice of ye Sonne of god, ye lamb
 of god, Innocency should have Cleared thee, the power
 of darknes should not have touched thee, but James thou
 & thy disciples being out of ye power, ye power is over you :
 & all yo^r poyson & rayling speaches doth not touch mee,
 though they Come and rayle agaynst ye truth, as ye world
 doth. . . .

“ James thou seperates thy selfe from friends and draw
 a Company after thee, & seprated from ye power of ye
 Lord god, yett truth folowed thee, & bowed downe to thee,
 under thee to recover thee. And you Kicke agaynst it.
 . . . Though you may rune and Compase awhile & bost
 of Joy & peace, up in ye ayre from ye truth, but truth hathe
 Comprehended them & thee.

“ This is the word of ye Lord god to thee & ye rest of
 thy disciples, and Come downe to ye witnessse of god in you.

“ ffrom him who is of ye world Called

“ GEORGE ffox.”

Endorsed: “ Georg ffoxs Leter to James Naylor at Exeter.”

Written on behalf of George Fox in a clear educated hand
 on one side of a folio sheet (D. Port. 24. 36).

Also a letter of Fox to Nayler and others :

“ To the Prisoners at Exon.

“ Friends, mind that which keepeth you all meek and
 low to be guided with it. And all consider that which
 keepeth you in the way of peace, that none of you may be
 pudling in your own carnal wisdom which is to be con-
 founded, which is shut out of the Kingdom of God : All
 wait to have dominion over that, that ye may know peace
 and unity, and the love of God that doth not change.
 And do not strive one with another, lest ye do hurt one

another ; for it is not the hasty spirit that doth get the victory but the Lamb, who must reign over the world, and was before it was. And the mind which is forward judge and dwell in the peaceable way ; and that ye may be patterns in your imprisonments to them which be out of the image of the Son of God.

" To the Prisoners in Exon, written whilst J.N. was there with many more in prison. G.F."

From the printed volume of George Fox's Epistles, 1698, no. 110.

To be continued

"Business Changed by a Picture"

" This month sees the 200th anniversary of a famous London firm, that of Beaufoy and Company, vinegar brewers. A remarkable story lies behind the title. The founder, Mark Beaufoy, started a gin distillery in 1730. He was a Quaker, and a painting by Gainsborough in Beaufoy House, attached to the factory in South Lambeth, represents him in Quaker costume.

" But another painting was decisive in changing his career. This was Hogarth's 'Gin Lane,' in which is represented the sordid misery produced by over indulgence in alcohol. Beaufoy was so impressed by the picture that he gave up his gin business, and went to Holland to learn vinegar brewing. The business he founded on his return is flourishing to-day."

Mark Beaufoy, Senr. (1718-1782), was a prominent London Friend. In 1743 he married Elizabeth Hanbury. (The reference in *The Hanbury Family*, ii. 289, confuses father and son of the same name.) For Mark Beaufoy, the younger (1764-1827), F.R.S., see *D.N.B.* He lived at Bushey Heath in Hertfordshire.

" During a solemn Quarterly Meeting dinner, when Friends from a distance were entertained during the intervals of their meetings, David [Clement Young Sturge, Barrister-at-law, 1860-1911] provoked much amusement by asking in a loud voice : ' Mamma, was that fish killed with a sword or a gun ? ' The following day, some of the ' baked meats ' being gracefully ' resurrected ' under cover of creamy sauces, and some of the guests being still present, he asked in stentorian tones : ' Mamma, is that the *old* pudden '."

From *Some Little Quakers in their Nursery*, by M. Carta Sturge, M.A., new edit., 1929.