

Christian Lodowick

THE indebtedness of early Quakerism to educated Englishmen like Keith, Barclay, Penn, Stubbs and Richardson is generally recognized. But Quakerism in both England and America profited from the learned and skilful services of several continental scholars who, unlike Benjamin Furly and Willem Sewel, left their European homes and became scribes, editors, school teachers or authors in the service of English-speaking Quakerism. In this list were Hilary Prache, John Matern, Albertus Otto Faber,¹ Mark Swanner, Francis Daniel Pastorius and most romantic of all the "Scholar Gypsy", Francis Mercurius van Helmont. Though like the last two named, he later lost standing with Friends, Christian Lodowick apparently belongs in the same list. Since except in a single connection Quaker histories and bibliographers do not mention him, I shall set down such scattered fragments of information about him as I can, hoping more will come to light later.

The earliest reference is in the minutes of Rhode Island Monthly Meeting, "a man and womans meeting at ye hous of Mathew Bordens,"² dated 24th of 12th month, 1684 and quoted in Zora Klain's *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 1928, p. 34f. : "Upon the Request and desire of Christian Loddewick to have the yous of the meeting hous in Newport for keeping of a scoole, friends upon Consideratione and desire to doe him good doe grant it and all soe are willing to give him what Incoragement theye Cann." Nothing further is known of this school. But it has the distinction of being one of the oldest Quaker schools in America. Enoch Flower was appointed by the Governor and Provincial Council of Pennsylvania to teach school there just twelve months before (December 26th, 1683. See *B.F.H.A.*, xxiii., 1934, 54), but so far as I know neither the Quaker histories nor the histories of Quaker education by Klain and by Woody mention any other schoolmasters so early among Friends in America.

¹ *Jnl. F.H.S.*, xxxii, 54-57.

² In the Newport records of Births and Deaths the first entry is: Mathew Borden 3 mo. 1638, "hee being the first English child that was born in Rhood Island".

At the monthly meeting in 9th month, 1688, Christian Lodowick asked for a certificate which was granted. What the certificate was for is not stated. If it was for travel abroad it was not permanent, since he returned to Newport.

The next reference is in another of the old Quaker record books now at the Newport Historical Society. The quaint inscriptions in the front and back of this book are worth recording here :

FRENS

two books brought at Boston cost twenty shillings the biggest for births and deaths and the lesser book for marriages only. so ordered at the mans meeting of friends at the house of William Coddington in the towne of New Port in Road Island in the year 1672, the 22th Day of the $\frac{m}{8}$ 1672 (this for Mariages).

The Marriages of Friends in Road Iland Coloney with some of Plimoth Coloney in Dartmuth Being Collected in the yeare 1672 from time Road Iland was first seatled by the English in the year 1638.

By Peter Easton $\frac{d : m}{6 : 7}$ 1672.

It may be remarked in passing that these books were probably acquired at the direct suggestion of George Fox. At least we know that he had suggested such record books a little before in Barbadoes and a little later in Virginia and that it was only a few weeks earlier than the first entries that he had attended for several days the business meetings at Newport, 9. v. 1672, at which time purchase of such books was provided for (New England Yearly Meeting Book of Epistles in MS., p. 13).

Among the certificates copied in this interesting old book is that for the marriage of Thomas and Mary Coddington 22nd of 11th month, 1689/90 and among the witness to this marriage the name appears of "Christianus Lodowick".

By 1691 Lodowick was no longer in good standing in the Society. Our evidence comes from no less a person than Cotton Mather, who in his *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves* (Boston, September 1st, 1691, copy in Harvard College Library), p. 15 refers to "Mr. Lodowick, a Gentleman of Rhode-Island lately recovered out of

Quakerism". Evidently Lodowick had written "a challenge to the Quakers", but whether in print or not I cannot say. Possibly like Mather's work it was in part an answer to George Keith's *Catechism*. At any rate we do have in print a reply of Lodowick to Mather entitled *A Letter from the most Ingenious Mr. Lodowick, Rhode-Island, Febr. 1, 1691/2* (8 pages duodecimo, without title page or imprint, copy in Harvard College Library). Referring to Mather's mention of him Lodowick writes at length explaining how Keith and a handful of other "Semi-Foxonians or Semi-Quakers" have come to diverge from the older true Foxonians. Quoting from their writings especially Keith and Barclay and from conversation he had had with Keith "last summer",—we know from other sources that Keith was in Newport in the summer of 1691—Lodowick analyses their doctrine of Christ and their doctrine of pre-existence and transmigration of souls. It is interesting that Lodowick suspected that Keith was diverging from Quaker tradition before Friends themselves realized it. He also supplies (p. 6) the first definite statement I have seen that "G. Keith, as he told me last summer, favours the Twelve Revolutions or Transmigrations of our Souls".

In 1692 there appeared from the press of William Bradford of Philadelphia an answer both to Cotton Mather and to Lodowick. Its title begins:

The Christian faith of the People of God, called in scorn, Quakers in Rhode-Island (who are in Unity with all the faithful brethren of the same Profession in all Parts of the World) Vindicated from the Calumnies of Christian Lodowick that formerly was of that profession but is lately fallen therefrom.

The title also claims that the piece is a refutation of Mather's slanders "against our Friends in general and G. K. in particular, whom he hath most unworthily abused". But the body of the reply to which G. K. is one of the thirteen signers mentions neither Keith nor Mather but takes up seriatim the accusations that Lodowick had made of Quaker beliefs. He had formerly "given forth several papers challenging these belonging to Newport Meeting who speak in the Meetings of the people called Quakers" and as the result of a further challenge he had met those whom he had challenged to select a representative for a dispute "at the house of Walter Clark in Newport in Rhode Island,

the 18th of the 4th month, 1691," and after some unsatisfactory discussion had gone away.¹

The last half of the sixteen page quarto tract—a collection of quotations from Friends' writings showing their orthodox beliefs—is interesting in that it was not only printed but "faithfully collected" by William Bradford.

The Challenge is mentioned also in "Edward Wright's letter in answer to Christian Lodovick's Dirty letter to him". Wright's letter but not Lodowick's is copied in the minute book of Rhode Island Monthly Meeting already mentioned, and this minute about it is entered under date of 10th of 3rd month, 1692 :

Edward Wright of Barbadoes his answer to Christian Lodowick was read in our meetings and approved and Tho: Rodman is desired to seal it and deliver it to Christian Lodwick and acquaint E. W. of friends Likeance.

The letter itself begins as follows :

Barbadoes the 3^d 11^m 1691

Friend Christian Lodvick,

Thy letter directed to me and John Pegg (whom I know not) have received also thy account of the difference between thee and friends of (Rhode Island) also thy challenge.

To judge from the answer the challenge to Friends was that they should make good their principles, to which Edward Wright replies that the principles have already been vindicated by the faithfulness of their supporters, having "reached thy own country to the convincing and gathering of many therein". Here is reference to Lodowick as a foreigner.

One other reference to Lodowick's earlier life occurs in the printed letter already quoted. Speaking of the Keithian doctrine of the Light within and its relation to the Cabbalistic Aensoph and Adam Cadmon, Lodowick says, "They have framed their Doctrine Concerning Christ, according to this their Hypothesis, borrowing several of their Notions out of the Writings of some Rabbies among the

¹ The interview is similarly mentioned by Keith in his *Farther Account of the Great Divisions among the Quakers in Penna*, London, 1693, p. 1.

Eastern Jews, Translated into Latin, by a Learned Noble Man in Germany whose Children I Tutored some years agoe". Though I cannot confirm the conjecture, I cannot doubt that this German nobleman is none other than Baron Christian Knorr von Rosenroth (1636-89). This famous Christian Hebraist, born in Silesia of a family that had been raised to nobility by Emperor Maximilian, lived at Sulzbach where the Count Palatinate Christian August made him chaplain in 1668. It was in the same year that he married. (*Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, xvi., 1882, 327; *Encycl. Judaica*, x. (1934), pp. 141f.) His children, probably the ones mentioned by Lodowick, are immortalized (with their mother) in the hymns which he wrote and dedicated to them, for his productions entered the hymnology of the church (see Carl Winterfeld, *Evangelische Kirchengesang*, 1843-7, ii., 512ff.). To others his immense *Cabbala Denudata* (1677-84) is better known. It corresponds to the description of the Latin translation mentioned by Lodowick. In these cabbalistic interests he was associated with Baron Francis Mercurius van Helmont mentioned at the beginning of this sketch. And it is possible that the latter when visiting von Rosenroth introduced Lodowick to Quakerism at Sulzbach about 1680. At any rate we can almost certainly assign Lodowick himself to that time and place.

The last evidence I have found of Lodowick's existence is *The New-England Almanack for the Year of our Lord Christ*, M DC xc v. By C. Lodowick, Physician, Boston. Printed by B. Green, for S. Phillips, at the Brick Shop near the Old Meeting-house, 1695 (only known copy in the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester). Beside the calculations made for the Meridian of Boston and certain "choice, experimented, cheap, easy and parable Receipts, of a General Benefit to Country People" the author has supplied a two page criticism of the astrological predictions in Tully's Almanacks "the direct tendency whereof is, to withdraw Persons from a holy Reliance in God's will & Providence, and to precipitate the minds of such as are lovers of Specious Novelties, into a sinfull love of that Soulbewitching Vanity of Star-Prophecy, commonly called Astology the foundations of which are meer Chimaeras". There is no evidence that other almanacs followed from the same hand although the author prefaces the remark,

“ If this Essay, find Acceptance, the Country may for some following Years, with God’s leave, be entertained with larger Communications.”

In publishing an almanac Lodowick is not unparalleled among American Friends. A long continued series of almanacs published first in Philadelphia and then in New York was started in 1687 by Daniel Leeds and continued by his son Titan Leeds.¹ In Rhode Island a century later than Lodowick, another Friend, Elisha Thornton, published for a decade (1787 to 1796) a similar annual.

Two old Semitic grammar books published in 1699, by Christian Ludovici, bound together in a quarto volume, have lately come into the possession of Haverford College from the Friends Library, Philadelphia. When or why the latter acquired them does not appear, though they are marked, “ The Gift of Gaspar Schultz of Oley ”. They are listed in the catalogues of Friends Library issued in 1831 and 1853, but not apparently in the two older catalogues. Perhaps they were acquired under the impression that their author was a Friend. His name is certainly the same as the Quaker of Newport. He also was a German scholar, and of the same period. But he is not the same person. A sketch of his life (1663-1732) will be found in the *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, xix., 1884, 395f.

There was also in Philadelphia two generations later a Christopher Ludwick (1720-1801). See his life in *The Constitution and Law of the Philadelphia Society for the Establishment and Support of Charity Schools*, Phila., 1831, 2nd edit., 1860. But I can trace no kinship here either.

HENRY J. CADBURY

¹ Finally superseded at the latter’s death about 1741 by its rival, *Richard Saunders Pocket Almanack*, published by Benjamin Franklin, who under the pseudonym of “ Poor Richard ” wrote it for many years. Joseph Smith lists Richard Saunders as a Quaker writer. See also B. Faÿ: *Franklin*, 1929.