

Notes and Queries

WILLIAM PENN'S SCHOOLDAYS
It is the generally accepted tradition that William Penn went to school at Chigwell Grammar School near Wanstead, Essex, founded by Archbishop Harsnett in 1629. The early records of the school are too scanty to provide documentary proof of this. Modern biographers refer the reader to Thomas Clarkson's *Memoir of William Penn*, 1813. In Clarkson's list of authorities is Anthony à Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses*; and therein (2nd edition, 1721: vol. 2, 1050) we find it stated that Penn was "born on Tower-hill near London, on the 14th of Octob. 1644, educated in puerile learning at Chigwell in Essex, where, at eleven Years of Age, being retired in a Chamber alone, he [had a religious 'opening']. Afterwards he went to a private School on Tower-hill, and had, besides the benefit of a Tutor which his Father kept in his House. In 1660 he was entred a Gent. Com. of Ch.Ch. [Gentleman Commoner of Christ Church]." Wood is said to have owed some of his material to John Aubrey, and Aubrey was a friend of Penn. In Aubrey's *Brief Lives*, edited by Andrew Clark, 1898, vol. 2, p. 132 (or 1949 edition, pp. 359-62), we read that Penn "Went to schoole in London, a private schole on that hill, and his father kept a tutor in the house: but first he went to school at Chigwell in Essex. [Aubrey reports the 'opening', and adds] His schoolmaster was not of his perswasion." It is probable that all later statements

depend on the authority of John Aubrey.

JAMES NAYLER'S LAST TESTIMONY

IN *Journal* XLI (1949), pp. 3-4, appeared some notes on variations in the early printings of James Nayler's last recorded saying. Geoffrey F. Nuttall has drawn attention to an earlier printing than any hitherto noted. It occurs as the last of a number of quite brief papers by Nayler under the heading: *To all the Dearly Beloved People of God, Mercy and Peace*, 8 pp. 4to, printed in 1660 (Joseph Smith's *Catalogue*, ii, 227.)

This version contains the seven words noted as missing from some other early printings. Its occurrence at the end of this pamphlet of papers all by Nayler, in 1660, tends to confirm the tradition that it is one of his latest sayings or writings.

It remains to be explored whether these little papers or some of them are here printed for the first time, or are they excerpts or reprints of things that had appeared previously? If the former, then probably Nayler wrote them all very near the end of his life, and the last would be his latest published writing. A perusal of Joseph Smith's *Catalogue* suggests this. If the papers were collected and printed after Nayler's death by (probably) Robert Rich, then the last is probably a saying taken down by someone and transmitted to Robert Rich.

A FRENCH VIEW OF QUAKERISM

THE following dissertation presented for the degree of bachelor of theology in the faculty of Protestant theology at Montauban by Elisée Marty in March, 1879, does not appear to have been noticed before. It is entitled *Essai sur les Quakers* (Montauban, Typ. de Macabiau-Vidallet, Rue Bessières, 25, 1879. 8vo. pp. 60), and is divided into 4 chapters. I—Origine des Quakers; II—Doctrines des Quakers; III—Culte et discipline des Quakers; IV—Moeurs et coutumes des Quakers.

Chapter IV gives a fair survey of Friends' views on many subjects, and mentions their care in educating the young to develop their own abilities and use their time wisely; avoidance of harmful games, card-playing, novel reading, horse-racing, cock-fighting; disapproval of Stock Exchange gambling; and, on balance, disapproving of music—as taking time which would be better employed in religious pursuits. There was an annual inquiry made to make sure that no Friend danced(!).

The Chapter on Origins is mainly concerned with the life of George Fox, William Penn and Robert Barclay. The references quoted comprise articles in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, I, 15 avril 1850; *Revue britannique*, octobre 1851; and J. F. Astié's *Histoire de la république aux Etats-Unis*, Bridel's translation of Barclay's *Apologie; Religion aux Etats-Unis*, par Baird; Notice sur les Quakers, by A. de Mestral, in the *Vie d'Elisabeth Fry*, J. J. Gurney's *Observations on the distinguishing practices of the Society of Friends*, and Tuke's *Exposition succincte des principes religieux*.

There is no hint that the author

had any knowledge of French Friends.

FRIENDS IN SWINDON

AT the end of a chapter on Swindon in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, by H. B. Wells (in *Studies in the history of Swindon*, Swindon Borough Council, 1950), there is a brief note on Friends (pp. 141-2), and mentioning the birth of John, son of Thomas and Mary Duckett (taken from *Wilts Notes & Queries*, III.318) of that place.

BRIDPORT MEETING HOUSE

An Inventory of the historical monuments in Dorset. Vol. I—*West*, issued by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England (H.M. Stationery Office, 1952), includes (pp. 46-48) a descriptive account and plan (scale of approximately 24 feet to one inch) of the Bridport Friends' Meeting House and Almshouses on the east side of South Street. The Meeting House was given by Daniel Taylor in 1697, but the structure includes fifteenth and sixteenth-century features. Alterations were made in the eighteenth century and later.

THOMAS PARSONS,
OF PORTISHEAD

THE 1951 volume of the *Transactions* of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society includes an article by I. V. Hall, entitled "The connexions between John Knight, Jnr., and the Parsons and Jennings families, 1641-79" (vol. 70, pp. 119-125). He brings to light the puritan leanings of the Parsons family—in which John Knight of Bristol shared—and mentions the Quaker connections of Thomas Parsons.

It was at The Grange, Parsons' home in Portishead, where Friends held their meetings for many years. Meetings were kept at the house even when the head of the family was in prison. Thomas Parsons died of gaol fever in Ilchester in 1670, and Bristol Friends, together with those of north Somerset, were active in caring for his young children left fatherless.

LONDON WELSH FRIENDS

THE *History of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, by R. T. Jenkins and H. M. Ramage (London, 1951. *Y Cymmrodor*. 50), includes notices of Silvanus Bevan, F.R.S., of Allen and Hanburys and Thomas Roberts (1767-1841). Bevan is reported to speak Welsh "very brokenly"—"A dilettante, a collector of fossils, curios, paintings, an amateur wood-carver, and enthusiastic gardener, he was slovenly, and with trembling hands, and his table-manners (like Johnson's) were queer" (p. 71). Of Thomas Roberts, a member of Devonshire House Meeting, another corresponding member of the Society it is reported that he "on one occasion stubbornly withstood a proposal that smoking should be forbidden at Cymreigyddion meetings" (p. 110 ff.). In April, 1802, there was an argument on the question "are the people called Quakers nearer the Apostolic Church than are the other religious folk of today?" In the discussion one, John Jones of Glan-y-gors, "tore the Quakers to tatters, asserting that scripture forbids women to speak at Church meetings, and that Quakers are snakes in the grass, etc. Thereupon Thomas Roberts clean lost his temper, and in an angry

speech, quivering with rage, asserted that Glan-y-gors was a weapon of the Devil to destroy all religion . . . and that he had succeeded only too well" (p. 132).

WILLIAM BRADFORD

A USEFUL survey of William Bradford's printing activity during his colonial Quaker period appeared recently in the volume of *Essays honoring Lawrence C. Wroth* (Portland, Me. 1951), pp. 209-222. The article, "William Bradford's book trade and John Bowne, Long Island Quaker, as his book agent, 1686-1691", by Gerald D. McDonald, is based on a study of the relevant bibliographical portions of John Bowne's account book which is now in New York Public Library.

"ON THE TRUE FAITH OF A CHRISTIAN"

More Anglo-Jewish leading cases, by Professor Norman de M. Bentwich, an article in vol. 16 of the *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, 1952 (for 1945-1951), pp. 149-162, includes a short section on the Parliamentary Oath case, *Miller v. Salomons*, in which Alderman David Salomons, elected for Greenwich in 1851, was debarred from sitting in the House of Commons because he had omitted the words "on the true faith of a Christian" from the Oath of Abjuration which had to be taken before sitting in the House.

"The Jews and the Quakers were constantly associated in the struggle for religious toleration. . . . But the Quakers obtained complete political equality with much less struggle because they could subscribe the final words." (p. 156).