

Seeking a Settled Heart

The 16th Century Diary of
Puritan Richard Rogers



*The Pourtraicture of the most trewly reuerend
faithfull Painefull and Profitable Minister of God
word M^r Richard Rogers Preacher of the word
of God at Wetherfield in Essex.*

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EDITION



**SEEKING A SETTLED HEART:
THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY DIARY OF
PURITAN RICHARD ROGERS**

Transcribed and prepared
by
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Bluefish Books



**Cowart Communications
Jacksonville, Florida**

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INTRODUCTION

by

John W. Cowart

Although I am certainly no scholar, the diary of Richard Rogers, a Puritan minister in the time of the first Queen Elizabeth, resonates with features of my own life. For instance, he's trying to write a book (Seven Treatises On The Christian Life) but he keeps getting interrupted by the affairs of daily life.

He bemoans the fact his own book shelves groan under the weight of good books which he had not gotten around to reading.

He got a lift by reading the daily diary of someone else whose writing resonated with his own heart.

Isn't that exactly what those of us who read other people's diaries and journals want to happen?

We build each other up by sharing our common experiences.

Often in reading diaries I'll say, "Hey, I'm not the only one! I know exactly how he feels; I feel the same way. I've thought that way myself".

When I first encountered the Diary Of Richard Rogers, the man's search for God moved me to seek the Lord myself with more intensity and less pretense.

The diary of this good and godly man inspired me in my own spiritual walk.

That's what spiritual diaries are supposed to do.

Rogers lived between 1550 and 1618; his extant diary covers from February 28, 1587 to August 26, 1590. Appended at the back of this book is one of 52 sermons he preached on the Book of Judges.

One day when Rogers was down he talks about writing his own diary then says, "Reading the writings of an other brother about his estat an hour and longer, I was moved to write and to bring my hart into a better frame..."

Reading the other man's diary uplifted him, as his diary does those of us who follow him.

On September 2, 1587, Rogers records how reading back over his own past journal entries helped him with the problems confronting him years later:

And lookeinge backe, I acknowledge that my course hath been farre unbeseeing one who hath so longe geven name to the gospel Oh what had become of me if God had put me to my plundge in many trials as He might have done? For I had been utterly unable to have stood. Would it might please the Lord to geve me cause of greater reioiceinge hereafter, and that I may keepe in this harty and sensible feeleinge of care, watch fulness and vew of mine estatee that I might nether covertly desire to inioy that liberty which I could not soundly approve to my conscience in pleasure and profits. ... For my mind hath been all the daye longue with the Lorde.

And problems confronted him big time.

As a preacher out of step and out of favor with the established church hierarchy, Rogers lived in apprehension that he would be barred from his ministry, fired from his job, separated from his family, thrown into prison, and perhaps be beheaded for his faith.

But these were earthly concerns. Rogers diary focus on his internal life. He struggles with natural human desires for a better

paying position, what he calls *profit*. He struggles with anger and envy, gluttony and keeping company, bitterness and ambition... and it seems as though he did not get on with his wife all that well either.

Rogers sharply distinguishes between the godly and the ungodly when it came to people. He writes of being appalled at the unsavory character of a young man who wanted to run him through with a sword when he rebuked the ungodly fellow for his unbelief. And Rogers relished the godly character he espied in other Puritans.

But this distinction between godliness and ungodliness is nowhere more marked than inside his own heart. His constant introspection rejoices in profitable realizations of God's majesty, sweetness and purity.

That same introspection contrasts profitable thoughts of godliness with unprofitable thoughts about worldly matters.

With his mind settled on God, Rogers found satisfaction; when thinking of lesser things, he speaks of himself as unsettled.

His heart oscillated between godliness and ungodliness within himself and his diary records these oscillations. During the entire period covered in these surviving diary pages, Rogers sought a settled heart, but recognized his failings.

This honest feature makes his diary so appealing.

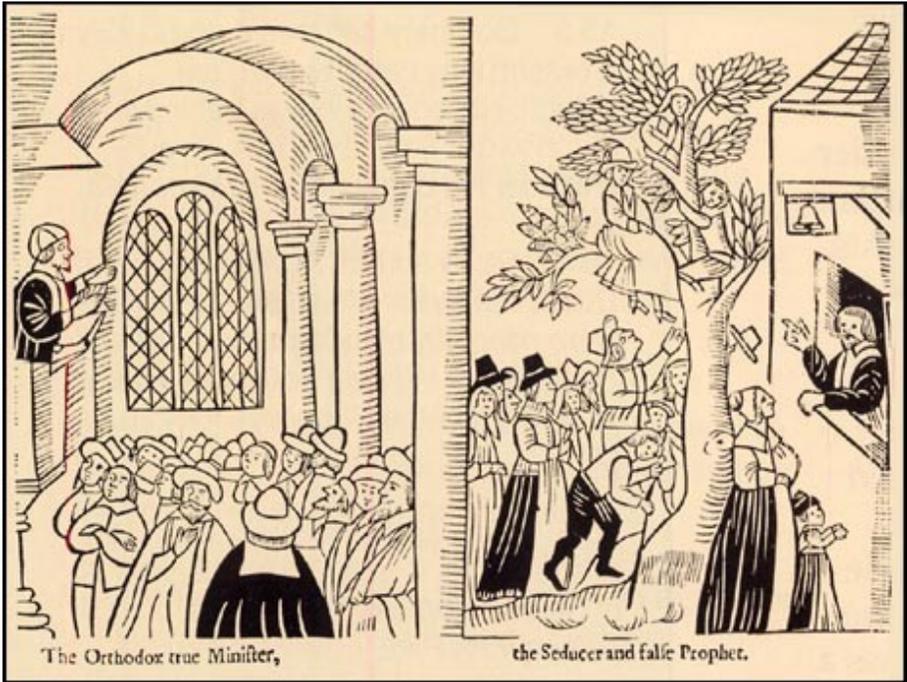
He wanted to write his book, a book he viewed as his Magnum Opus, a treatise on Seven Rules For Christian Living. He wanted to read, study, and prepare his sermons — yet life kept interrupting him. Visitors, stray thoughts, domestic problems, financial worries, and church politics distracted him daily.

And he strived to maintain a sweet Christian spirit amid it all.

Rogers lived in interesting times.

Outside his household the Queen threatened to marry a Catholic, her bishops threatened to defrock all Puritans (who refuse to wear the mandated ecclesiastical gowns).

This 1641 handbill shows how the established church regarded Reformers and Puritans:

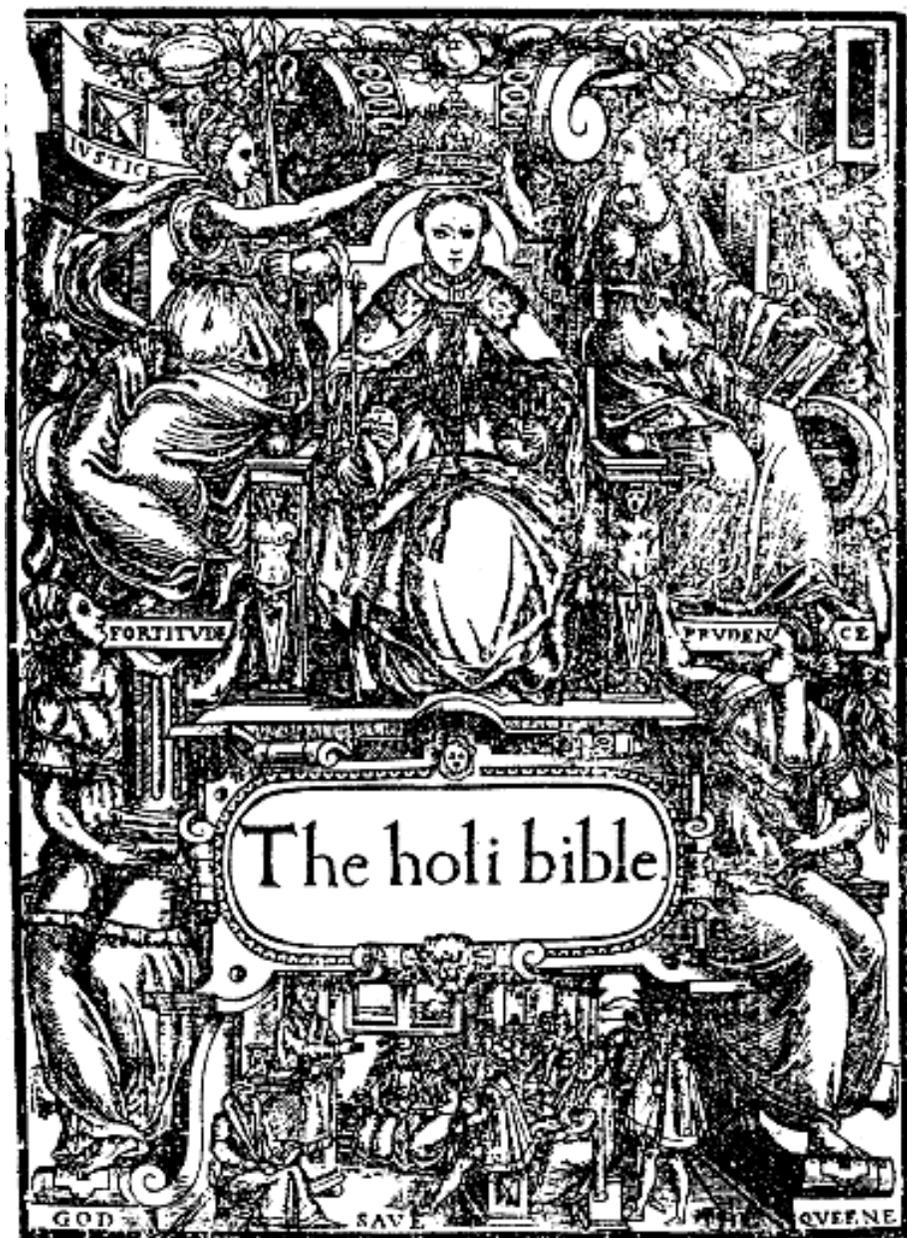


Another source of tension between the Puritans and the established church involved which Bible to use. The queen and bishops favored the Bishops' Bible which she had translated in 1569.

The Puritans, reformers, Presbyterians and separatists favored the Geneva Bible with Calvinist notes published in 1560. It was the first Bible to contain verse numbers so readers could easily locate specific Scriptures.

However it also contained marginal notes which established church officials felt inflammatory. Feelings ran high on the matter.

By the time of Rogers' death in 1618, the King James Bible had appeared.



In 1569 the portrait of Queen Elizabeth I appeared on the title page of the Bishops' Bible.

Bible. English

THE BIBLE
AND
HOLY SCRIPTURES
CONTAINED IN
THE OLDE AND NEWE
Testament.

TRANSLATED ACCOR-
ding to the Ebrue and Greke, and conferred With
the best translations in diuers langages.

WITH MOSTE PROFITABLE ANNOTA-
tions vpon all the hard places, and other things of great
importance as may appeare in the Epistle to the Reader.

FEARE YE NOT, STAND STILL, AND BEHOLDE
the saluacion of the Lord, which he will shew to you this day. Exod. 14.13.



THE LORD SHALL FIGHT FOR YOU: THEREFORE
holde you your peace. Exod. 14. 14. ver. 14.

AT GENEVA.
PRINTED BY ROVLAND HALL
M. D. LX.

Puritans favored the Geneva Bible with its
“Moste profitable annotations”.

Rogers' problems were not limited to religious conflicts. At the same time, the Spanish Armada threaten to invade England.

“By fearfull noise of warre and trouble in our lande I laboured to bringe myne heart to a more neere drawing of it to the deeper contempt of the worlde,” Rogers said.

Yet he regarded the coldness of his own heart as the greatest threat of all. He enjoyed times of sweet fellowship with his God and feared the loss of that closeness above all else.

He considered Bible study the primary source of his intimacy with the Almighty. He attended conferences with likeminded people to fan the embers of his faith. He discounted conversations which did not lead to a deeper walk with God.

He incorporated his faith into daily life not because he was a preacher but because he was a Christian. His diary reveals his concern with his heart and mind as being “settled” or “unsettled”, that is focused on God or on something less..

The Puritan preacher was a focused man. His diary concentrates on things that really matter, the state of the human soul in the light of eternity.

In presenting this edition of Richard Rogers Diary, I strived for readability first.

His diary makes for difficult reading not only because of the antique spelling. His language is neither the lofty Elizabethan cadences of Shakespeare nor the majestic prose of the King James Bible, but he speaks in the common idiom of his day.

Not only that, but his thought patterns are so foreign to my way of thinking because here was a man intent on God to the exclusion of lesser things.

I am not such a man.

I envy his devotion.

“It is the work and occupation of a Christian,” Rogers said, “To learn to understande the lawes of god and to walk in his wayes, and thus that should be the chieftest thinge which should be looked after and from thing to thinge practized”.

This book draws heavily from the scholarly work of Dr. M.M. Knappen, assistant professor of English History at the University of Chicago.

Dr. Knappen transcribed the original text, researched extensive footnotes, wrote an introduction, drafted a biography of Rogers, and published the text in 1933. His work, *Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries*, forms the basis of this present edition.

My role in presenting this edition is one of rendering it readable and available to modern readers.

In his zeal for preserving the text for researchers, Dr. Knappen retained Rogers' 16th Century spelling, abbreviations, capitalization, and punctuation. He inserted diacritical indicators on every page.

While these tools may prove invaluable to the scholar, they distract me in my own reading of the diary for its spiritual inspiration.

So many words have changed spelling since 1587 that as I entered these diaries in Word on my computer, Clippie, that little talking paperclip man on the Help menu, pops out and says, "There are too many spelling and grammatical errors in Rogers.doc to continue displaying them. To check the spelling and grammar of this document, chose Spelling and Grammar from the TOOLS menu".

Yes, words change and new ones appear even today.

Why, when a young lady offered to show me her bling, I got all excited till I found out she was showing nothing but a stupid charm bracelet!

So I am updating Rogers' Elizabethan language as best I can.

I hope to make these diary pages readable for people today because they show the writer's walk with Christ; therefore, they help me in my own walk.

Few books help me more than the diaries, journals (and blogs) of other Christians. And when I read my own diaries from years past, they help me live my life today a little better.

Seeing where I've been helps me see where I'm going.

Richard Rogers enjoyed that same experience

Although I have kept some of these features to retain the flavor of the original, take a look at a list of common words used in the diary and you'll see why I felt the necessity of updating for readability:

A word such as *abhominacion* easily translate into *abomination*. Other words do not lend themselves as readily; when the minister says he went to a meeting for *Prechinge and Praier*, I have to stop reading and interpret those words into *preaching* and *prayer*.

Sometimes simpler words have been harder for me to figure out. Depending on the context, the word of can mean either *of*, or *off*, or *often*.

One word in the diary I had to watch for all the time is the word *then*. Sometimes that word means the same as it does today, as in the sentence: "I went to Wal-Mart, *then* to have all my teeth pulled".

Other times the word *then* means *than*, as in the sentence, "I have more *than* ten books".

Stumbling over *then* used as *than* or *then* confused me until I realized that in everyday Elizabethan English, the diarists often spelled things just as they pronounced them. And if I say the sentence I'm editing out loud, the meaning in context becomes clear because as I listen to what I actually say, I find that I pronounce the word the same way the diarists did!

Unless in print, or spoken by someone who enunciates clearly, practically everyone here in the South today says, "I have more *then* ten books".

Yes, we Crackers pronounce many words just as the Elizabethan Puritans did.

Here is a list of some of the words I have updated:

Allwaies = always

Aunsweringe = answering

Badde = bad

Barraines = barrenness

Bedde = bed

Chaung = change

Daies = days

Daungerous = dangerous

Dimme = dim

Evel = evil

Evry = every

Farre = far

Geven = given

glaunceing = glancing

glorfy

Godes = God's

Greef = greif

Herde = heard

Inioy = enjoy

Iorneis = journeys

Kepe = keep

Lardgly = largely

Lif = life

Longr = longer

Lookeinge = looking

Mak = make

Maryed = married

Mervail = marvel

Mindeinge = minding

Morneinge = morning

Myne = my

Neere = near

Of may = either *of*, or *off*, or *often*

Ordre = order

paterne = pattern

Perswade = persuade

Pitie = pity

pleasauntness = pleasant

Praier = prayer

Preching = preaching

professors = believers

redde = read

Retourne = return

Seinge = seeing

Setle = settle

Shalbe = shall be

sizar = poor student

Slavry = slavery

soommer = summer

Sodaine = sudden

Streine = strain

subduinge = subduing

subject + subject

Thei = they

Theise = these

Then may = either *then* or *than*

Thinck = think

Uppon = upon

Veary = very

Vew = view

Wayt = wait

wandringe = wandering

Wayteinge – waiting

Whi = why

Woorcke = work

Yeelde = yield



I read this book for my own edification, to let this focused man's thoughts from long ago nudge me closer to Christ in my own life today.

Since the Diary Of Richard Rogers helps me in that way, I think it only proper to preserve his words as best I can to help some other struggling reader in the future.

—— John Cowart
www.cowart.info





PREFACE

by

Dr. M.M. Knappen

The document printed in the following pages has been transcribed and edited from the original. The Rogers diary is No. 3 of the Baxter Unbound MSS 4° & 8° in Dr. Williams' Library located at 14 Gordon Square, London, W. C. 1.

It consists of forty-one leaves of an anonymous unbound paper book measuring $5 \frac{3}{4}$ by $7 \frac{3}{4}$ inches. The edges and corners are much frayed, and approximately the bottom inch of the first four folios has been torn off. The numbering of the pages indicates that originally there were at least forty-nine folios, of which the first six and the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth are now missing. The extant pages are those numbered 13-46 and 51-98.

In his will the diarist left his papers to his sons "Danyell and Ezekiell and to my cosin John Rogers of Dedham, with those which concern my state in my Christian practize, which are seven, which I will some to use some of them and other some other of them as they please."

At the end of the seventeenth century some of the Rogers manuscripts fell into the hands of that tireless collector of materials



for Puritan history, Roger Morrice,¹ and his amanuensis transcribed portions in the volume now entitled "Morrice I."

The Morrice Manuscripts found their way into Dr. Williams' Library at an early date, but the original was neglected, and the portion which has been preserved was only saved by its being inserted, along with other papers, in the manuscripts of Richard Baxter, for whom Morrice acted as literary executor.

However, Benjamin Brook made use of the transcribed excerpts in his account of Rogers, published in 1813 in his *Lives of the Puritans*.

In 1858 W. H. Black, the noted antiquarian, catalogued the manuscripts in the Dr. Williams collection, and his three-volume longhand description of them is now in the library.

In one of the volumes of the Baxter group, he found thirty-five leaves of the manuscript here presented, and six more in the loose fragments of the collection. He arranged the sheets in their proper order, and gave the document its present classification. Since that time, so far as I am aware, no scholar has made use of this document. *The Third Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts* (London, 1872), which covers these manuscripts (pp. 365-6), dealt only with sources valuable for "general history."

Mr. Black attempted to determine the authorship of "this curious Puritan relic (which perhaps is unique of its kind)." He noted the acquaintanceship with Newman, Culverwel, Leaper, Fenner, and Field, the fact that the author was born at Chelmsford, had a son Ezekiel born February 1587/8, was the subject of an excommunication, 30 Nov. 1589, and "that he lived long enough to review these records of his experience in the years 1608, 1613, 1617, 1618, as appears by notes written in the margins" .

But from a mention of Cambridge in the diary Black concluded that the author was a minister in that city, and decided that "of all persons of that time described in Brook's *Lives of the*

¹ 1. Morrice M. Section XIII, p. 10. For a sketch of Morrice and the history of his manuscripts, see Albert Peel, *Seconde Parte of a Register* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1915), I, 1-20, and the article by the same author in *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*, V (1912), 298-300. cf. pp. 370-371.



Puritans, Paul Baine, who curiously enough was probably a student in Rogers' school, seems most likely to be identified as the writer: but farther research perhaps may ascertain the truth."

This additional labor may be briefly described. Upon examination of the diary, Cambridge was found to be rather the location of the author's old university and the object of occasional visits, than his home. The fact that the writer lived only some twenty miles from the coast made it certain that he did not reside in the university town, which is over forty miles inland.

With Cambridge residents eliminated, Richard Rogers was at once suggested as the author because of the inclusion of portions of his identified diaries in the Morrice Manuscripts, as mentioned above. All the details concerning the author which Mr. Black collected — with the exception of the excommunication in 1589, for which corroborating details are lacking — fit the description of Richard Rogers which we have from other sources.

Although no other specimens of Rogers' handwriting are available, the Rogers hypothesis is confirmed by the virtual identity of the wording of one passage with certain lines in his published works and by the discovery in the Holman Manuscripts of a copy of an inscription containing the first name of his wife, who is referred to in the diary by that name in an abbreviated form.

In the preparation of this work complete and fully annotated transcripts of the documents were prepared. This Rogers transcript was kindly placed at my disposal by the Governing Body of Sidney Sussex College. It was corrected by comparison with the original, and it is this revised version of the Rogers' transcript which appears in this volume.

The complete texts appear repetitious and confused. This is partly because of actual reduplication of similar entries, and Rogers' habit of making frequent changes in the text at dates subsequent to that of the original writing. Rogers was also accustomed to make preliminary marginal notes, which he expanded in the body of the text, and also marginal comments when he reread his diary. I have simplified and abridged the text. Most of the uninteresting marginalia have been eliminated, and the effort has been made to present only the original form of the body of the text.



Exceptions have been made where the later insertions were made to clarify the original text — and so are essential to its understanding—and also in one or two places where preliminary notes were not properly written out. Such matter is included in the text without comment. Redundant passages have been omitted, but in the first part of the diary a large section has been left intact to illustrate the original style of the work. The resulting text is somewhat less than half the length of the full one. For the benefit of any who may wish to consult them, the complete, annotated transcripts are being deposited in the respective libraries which contain the originals.

In the details of preparing the Elizabethan material for publication I have endeavored to follow the best modern usage. Punctuation has been altered to current forms, but it has been kept at a minimum, especially in cases where it could affect an otherwise uncertain meaning. The sentence structure has been changed to the extent of breaking up some of the longer sentences and combining some of the loose clauses, with corresponding changes in the capitalization of initial words.

Names of the Deity were capitalized and allowed to remain in the text. Otherwise the capitalization has been left as it stands, though it is not always possible to be certain whether the writer intended to capitalize or not. Abbreviations of proper names have also been left unaltered, except in the relatively few cases where it is possible to be reasonably certain of the identification. Abbreviations of other words have been expanded without comment in cases where there was no doubt as to the meaning and where the modern spelling is the same as Elizabethan spelling. Otherwise the letters added have been put in brackets, and, in cases where it seemed possible that another completed word was intended, a question mark inserted. Brackets and interrogation points have also been used to indicate passages in which the reading is doubtful. The dates have been reduced to a uniform style...

***Editor's note:** I have removed most of the above diacritical markings for the sake of general readability. Scholars interested in the full text should consult Dr. Knappen's 1933 edition *Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries*, published by The American Society of Church History and reprinted in 1966 by Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass.... jwc*



In accordance with the conditions governing the use of manuscripts in Dr. Williams' Library, the following facts should be made clear. The Trustees of that institution have allowed access to the manuscript, but are not responsible for the selection made....

The picture of the diarist here reproduced deserve a word of explanation. The portrait of Rogers is taken from the original engraving in the possession of my friend, Professor F. G. Marcham of Cornell University. It is also to be found (M, 3) in the *Bibliotheca Chalcographia* of Johannes Boissardus, published in Heidelberg in 1669...



It is a pleasure to express my gratitude to all those who have so kindly assisted me in the preparation of this work. The Trustees of Dr. Williams' Library have given their permission to publish the Rogers diary, and the Librarian, Mr. Stephen K. Jones,



and his staff have shown me every possible courtesy. The Governing Body of Sidney Sussex College has given a similar permission, and E. J. Passant, M. A., the Librarian of the college, has been equally helpful, often at considerable inconvenience to himself. Guy Parsloe, B. A., Secretary of the Institute of Historical Research, and his assistants have been most hospitable in providing research accommodations during several summers. The facilities of the British Museum and the courtesies of its staff are, of course, proverbial in the scholarly world. Professor Wallace Notestein, formerly of Cornell, and now Sterling Professor of English History at Yale, who directed my first research in the field of Puritanism, has also taken a helpful interest in the preparation of this work. Other friends, A. B. Emden, M. A., Principal of my old academic body, St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, Professor F. G. Marcham of Cornell University, Professor Wilhelm Pauck of Chicago Theological Seminary, Dr. Ross Hoff-man of New York University, and Professor L. R. Gottschalk of my own department, have read the work in manuscript and made valuable suggestions

The responsibility for the final content is, of course, mine.

Lastly, Professors Robert Hastings Nichols of Auburn Theological Seminary and Matthew Spinka of Chicago Theological Seminary, The editors of *Studies In Church History, Volumn II*, have rendered far more than the usual assistance in the final preparation of the work.



THE PURITAN CHARACTER AS SEEN IN THE DIARY

by

Dr. M.M. Knappen

The diary here printed is set forth as a contribution to the better understanding of the Puritan way of life, which has played such an important part in the drama of the development of Anglo-Saxon civilization.

It is, however, clearly impossible, in such a work, to present any exhaustive treatment of the subject of Puritan character as a whole. The beginnings of Puritanism may be traced back to the Middle Ages, and we have yet to see its end. It is obvious that a great movement, extending over such a period of time, and existing under such different circumstances, must undergo great changes. Certain fundamental attitudes may remain essentially unaltered throughout its history, but the details vary.

Consequently, documents from a single period can only illustrate, with any claim to adequacy, the Puritan character of that date. But while these documents cannot be of completely general significance, the period which they help to interpret is one of outstanding importance in the history of Puritanism.

At the end of the sixteenth century the party was developing in clarity of aim, in organization, and in the numbers of its adherents. It had not yet attained the success which brought about that fullness of unconscious, but none the less disastrous, compromise with material interests, which was the attitude of so



many Puritans of a later day. Documents depicting the Puritan character at this early stage of its development should be worth reproducing.

Even if we confine ourselves to one period in the history of a great movement, we cannot find a single uniform mould of character to which all its adherents conform. Temperaments vary from individual to individual, and men of widely differing natures may be found in any party. But, at a given time, it is possible to discover something approaching a predominant type, and, in this sense of the term, I think it may fairly be claimed that the diarist, with whom we are concerned, is typical of the Puritans of their day.

Rogers was trained in Christ's College, Cambridge, the leading Puritan seminary of the day, and, when His diary was written, was in high repute among the leaders of the movement. The published devotional writings of Richard Rogers went through many editions, and excerpts were combined with similar products from the pens of others to make a popular Puritan devotional work.² A reference to "the writeinges of an other brother about his estate" proves that the practice of keeping such diaries was not confined to our authors, and a comparison with the diary of a laywoman, written a few years later, shows that the type of character, which we are about to describe, was not exclusively clerical.³

The most striking feature of the Puritan way of life revealed in this diary is the overwhelming predominance of the ethical element. It was the good, rather than the beautiful or the true, which occupied the Puritan's mind. Though the diarist lived in a most attractive countryside, the glories of the landscape seem to have been almost entirely lost on him

² *A Garden of Spiritual Flowers*, by Richard Rogers, William Perkins, Richard Greenham, M. M. and George W«bbe (London, 1612, and many subsequent editions) includes selections from Rogers' *Seven Treatises*.

³ *The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1605*, ed. Dorothy M. Meads (London, 1930). Adam Winthrop's diary, printed in the *Winthrop Papers* (Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, 1929), I, 39-145, covers the period subsequent to 1592, but does not deal with the points under discussion.



The author was a university man, but, in the period when his diary was written, study was regarded as a moral duty, a preparation for more effective religious service, rather than an end in itself. The gratification of intellectual curiosity was more likely to produce, not pleasure, but remorse, because of the supposedly sinful pride which it engendered.

The best way to classify a particular variety of the great family of those groups which are primarily ethical in their outlook is to ascertain its practice in the matter of the inevitable compromise. It is true that man does not live by bread alone, but neither can he exist solely by altruism or spirituality. Some concessions must be made to the other parts of human nature, and the type of compromise adopted is largely indicative of the character of those who make it. On this classification the puritans belong far to the left among ethical parties, close to the medieval monastic element. Each wished almost entirely to suppress the flesh, and so made very few concessions to the enemy. Both recognized the necessity of sustaining physical existence, and so provided for reasonable care in the matter of food, shelter and clothing. The Puritan moved a farther to the right, and conceded also, though with strong reservations, the expediency as well as the lawfulness of family life and the ownership of private property. But beyond that he would not go. The Anglican delight in nature or the simple joys of daily living was beneath his ethical standard. He belonged to the school of little compromise.

It was therefore natural that the Puritan should seldom rest on the assurance of having done all things well, but, rather, be engaged in a constant struggle to reach the high standard which he had set for himself. It is this interminable contest which is the theme of this diary. The writer composed the work in order to spur himself to greater endeavor. He notes and laments his lapses, so that he will be ashamed to repeat them. Other times he analyzes his comparatively satisfactory states of mind so that he will be able to recover them on future occasions. For similar reasons, weapons which have proved useful in the battle are described, and the stumbling blocks are also recorded.

The ideal state, which the Puritan was constantly seeking to attain, may be described by his own term *Godliness*. It is seen, upon analysis, to have consisted of an attitude of mind. When the



writers are "staid," "settled in their course," "well-seasoned," having "fruitful" meditations and good thoughts, they are content, but when they are unsettled, "wandering," "roving," dull, dead, slack in hearing chapel talks, making "imperfect" prayers— in other words, unable to concentrate on the right things— they are driven to complaints and to self-accusations. The proper frame of mind was one which kept a man constantly fit and willing to fulfill his Christian obligations, whatever they might be. A phrase which briefly describes this desired attitude is "settled firmness in fitness to some part of duty."

The nature of this duty varied with the circumstances.

It included the general obligations to think on spiritual matters, to humble one's self, and to assist one's fellowmen spiritually or materially. Thinking on religious matters meant meditating on God and the believer's relation to Him, the plan of salvation, the thinker's past conduct, the making of resolutions to do better, and such matters. Of mystical dwelling on the abstract qualities of the Deity there is little evidence. The Puritan thought rather in terms of his own conduct and God's opinion of it. Spiritual assistance to another human being meant aiding him, also, to attain the ideal state by persuading the unconverted of the error of his ways and thus starting him on the upward path, or the furnishing of inspiration or helpful suggestions of those already engaged in the struggle. Of these various elements of the Puritan's duty, the first, spiritual meditation, seems to have been stressed more than any other,⁴ though all were considered important.

These general conclusions about the Puritan's conception of duty may be illustrated by noting some of the characteristics of men whom the diarist desired to imitate, and also his own faults, of which he complained so frequently. We have Rogers' praise of the great Puritan, John Knewstubs. First among his good traits the author placed prayer, as the best outward sign of ability to meditate properly: "in this he is unwearyed if it were to passe the most part of dayes and nightes in it." Then follow tributes to his rare humility

⁴ Rogers speaks of his desire to "winne and keep mens love to the gospel" "so farre as other duties therby might not be neglected," which shows that he considered other elements of his duty, such as meditation and prayer, rather more important than this one of assisting his fellow men.



joined with great knowledge and wisdom (the tools of his trade), his bearing of wrongs, his bountiful liberality with mercifulness, and his contentment in a single life, ending with his constancy in his whole course—in other words, his condition of being settled in the right attitude. Rogers' neighbor, Culverwel, earns respect for his ability to be stimulating in spiritual conferences.

Material dealing with the Puritan categories of vices overwhelms us, and we shall mention only the chief ones. Rogers had so far systematized his life as to have his faults classified into "major" and "minor", or at least into those for regular concern and miscellaneous ones. "The four usual," "about the which I am especially occupied," were "light thoughts" or "roaving fantasies"; "liking of worldly profit," financial gain, that is; "unprofitableness" or ineffectiveness in communicating his attitude to others; and, lastly, neglect of study. Over and over again he organizes his survey of his estatee around the question of how he is faring in his efforts to overcome these besetting sins.

On the theme of the fantasies Rogers is nowhere specific, but they probably included all thoughts which were not spiritual in nature. There is no evidence in this diary to support the charge that the Puritans were obsessed with the subject of sex and fond of discussing such matters at length.⁵

The only other one of these four faults that calls for any comment is the desire for financial gain. This plays the role of the chief villain in Rogers' drama, and the bitterness of the struggle which he waged against it illustrates both the severe restrictions which the Puritan of this period put on the right to private property and the strength of the temptation, once even this slight compromise was made and the door opened ever so little.

Pride and anger were faults mentioned—pride in being seen with people of importance or in exhibiting superior knowledge, and anger with everyone from the servants to the Almighty Dispenser of the weather. To this last vice Rogers was subject, though he does not put it in the front rank.

Among the faults less often mentioned are lack of charity or sympathy flattery, and covenant breaking, "too merry talk" and

⁵ James Truslow Adams, *The Founding of New England* (Boston, 1930), p. 265n.



"over much myrth" but it will be noticed that the fault was not in being merry but in the overindulgence of such emotions.

The Puritans did not oppose pleasure as such, which they admitted was necessary in moderation to refresh the body, but objected to it if it exceeded this essential minimum and hence took time and energy which might be devoted to better ends.

Lastly, some comment may be offered on the comparatively minor nature of the faults enumerated. To them it was a sin to steal a pin, and although at first glance it would appear that the author was constantly going astray, neither does writer confesses to any offence which the modern critic would consider of major proportions. Murder, arson, and larceny are, of course, not mentioned.

From this discussion of the diarist's ideas of right and wrong we are able to gather the Puritan conception of the *summum bonum* as an attitude or state of mind which fitted the believer to perform good works, both of the contemplative and the active sort. The means employed to secure and retain that desired frame of mind should also be noted. The medieval church, faced with the same problem of holding the attention of its followers, had developed an elaborate system in which routine and appeals to the senses played the greatest parts. There were frequent services at stated hours, made attractive with music, processions, vestments, pictures, and images. There was a church year, with saints' days and periodic fasts. Pilgrimages and rosaries also helped to fix the believer's attention on higher things. In the heat of party conflict the Puritan abandoned this system. But as his problem was a very similar one, his solution employed the same principles, routine and stimulation of the senses, much as it might vary in the details.

Rogers tells us in his diary of composing a book of daily directions for the Christian. It was first published in 1603, and was entitled, in part, *Seven Treatises containing directions leading and guiding to true happiness both in this life and the life to come; and may be called the practise of Christianize*. The main argument of the book was the persuasion of the reader, lay as well as clerical, to practice a "daily direction" of which he enumerates the necessary parts as follows:



First, that euerie (every) day wee should be humbled for our sins as through due examination of our lives by the law of God we shall see them.

2. That euerie day we be raised up in assured hope of the forgivenessse of them by the promises of God in Christ.

3. That euery day we prepare our hearts to seeke the Lord still, and keep them fit and willing thereto.

4. That euery day we strongly, and resolutely arm our selues against all euill and sinne, fearing most of all to offend God.

5. That euery day we nourish our fear and loue of him, and ioy in him more than in any thing, and indeuour to please him in all duties as occasion shall be offered, looking for his coming. 2 Thes. o.o.

6. That euery day our thanks be continued for benefits receiued, and still certainly hoped for.

7. That euerie day we watch and pray for stedfastnesse and constancie in all these.

8. That euerie day wee hold and keepe our peace with God, and so lie down with it.

And this is the direction which euerie Christian must practise euerie day in his life, and these are the necessarie parts of it, which may not be omitted any day at all without sinne; nor carelesly and wittingly without great sin.

In addition to this program of routine meditation we can see our diarist establishing regular times for study, private prayer, and family or group prayers. Here belongs also the mention of the practice of regularly keeping diaries, the writing of which obviously served to keep the attention fixed on the goal. This device was apparently more effective than most other means. It interrupted incorrect trains of thought, and caused the writer to renew his resolution to live correctly.

The fixed preaching appointments on Thursday and Sunday also assisted the minister in his efforts. "Thursday, sabbath season me well", notes Rogers. Any variation from the customary routine was likely to bring about defeat in the struggle for the proper frame of mind. Trips away from home, the entertainment of company, sudden changes in the weather, or unexpected word of



possible troubles commonly had disastrous results. The Puritan, as well as the Catholic, found an established routine of spiritual exercises necessary if he were to retain the proper attitude and so rightly conduct his life.

Other means remind us of Catholic practices also. Covenant making was the Puritan equivalent of the medieval vow. Instead of promising to go on a pilgrimage or make gifts to a shrine, the Puritan, in time of stress, would vow to keep a better course, or even to cause others to do so.

Bible reading is spoken of frequently, and our diarist notes the value derived from singing psalms, and the mentions of aid received by contact with fellow Christians are very numerous. The preaching services we have already referred to.

Fasts involved not only a measure of abstinence, but public exercises as well. Conferences with fellow Christians on spiritual matters were a very important part of the Puritan's spiritual life. Spiritual writings were interchanged for the purpose of stimulating each other, and it is obvious throughout the diary that visiting with friends, singly or in groups, contributed much to the writer's spiritual progress.

Lastly, we must examine the motive which impelled the Puritan to set before him the ideal we have described and which spurred him to follow it by the use of these means. Briefly stated, it was the desire to experience the immediate feeling of satisfaction which came from approaching the ideal state of mind.

Theorists might talk of a future life with rewards and punishments. The diarist doubtless believed in it, and preached it. But his writings are free from any dwelling on such matters.

Rogers resolved not to make this world a heaven, and experienced a "joyfull expectation of departure from hence", but there are no very lengthy discussions of the joys of heaven, nor any very keen anticipation of them.

There is only a single doubtful reference to punishments in the "next world, and the heavenly rewards of the righteous are



seldom, if ever, mentioned.⁶ In practice, this author was otherworldly only in the sense that immaterial desires are otherworldly.

For all practical purposes, the Puritan, even when "in good Frame," lived nine-tenths or more of his time for the joys of this world. They were spiritual joys and not material ones, it is true, but they were of this world in the temporal sense of the phrase. One did not need to wait for the future life or live only in anticipation of it. What the Puritan lived for was the joy of having the right spiritual attitude here and now. He had a *joie de vivre*, though not one based on the enjoyment of tangible things.

This conclusion is established by noticing the number of instances in which emotional pleasure is mentioned. Rogers is constantly speaking of his sweet meditations, his cheerful frames of mind, and on one occasion declares that his spiritual experiences made him not less merry than one who had made a good bargain. Although this diary is constructed on negative lines, and written in terms of self-accusation, we do not have to read very far to find recurring such words as "delight," "injoy," "rejoic," "liberty" (in the sense of exaltation), and "comfort."

To be able to shed tears while preaching or in prayer was a sensible proof of God's favor. This may seem a perverted kind of enjoyment, but it was nevertheless a very real piece of emotionalism, in which the Puritan found great pleasure.

Finally, the poignant remorse which is constantly expressed in the diary is a further proof of the manner in which the Puritans were swayed by the feelings of the moment.

All this is not to overlook such passages in which Rogers speaks of Godliness as burdensome. We have already stated that the Puritan found life a constant struggle and the temptations to take the lower path exceedingly strong, but he balanced these against equally keen and immediate delights in living properly here and now.

"What should be so regarded of me, that for the seekinge after it I should deprive my self of comfort and happines?" he asks.

⁶ Even there it is not certain whether Rogers is not referring to an earthly or a spiritual reward.



Again he notes that "the sweet peace which I finde and feele since I wrot this, which seasoneth mine heart with aptness and willing-nes to doe duty aright, differeth unspeakably from that untow'ardnes which before was in me".⁷

Enough has now been said, I think, to justify the conclusion that current conceptions of Puritan character, based largely on the brilliant, but sweeping, generalizations of Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch,⁸ must undergo some modification. Stimulating and learned as these great scholars were, they nevertheless suffered from some serious limitations in their treatment of Calvinism in general and Puritanism in particular. Anxious to refute the Marxian thesis of materialistic determinism as the sole factor in historical causation, they exaggerated the role of theological dogma in the formation of human character. Their judgment was also affected by the peculiar events of church history in Germany, where Pietism developed into a movement distinct from the older church bodies. Troeltsch, furthermore, was committed to the theory that doctrines must vary with the type of ecclesiastical organization employed. Lastly, in the preparation of works covering such large fields, neither scholar had time to make a thorough study of Puritan life from the records of actual religious experiences. Consequently, they tended to generalize from evidence supplied by theoretical writings on the Christian life and by works on theology. The most

⁷ On the signs of emotionalism and interest in the things of this life shown by the religious thinkers of this period, compare the interesting work of Helen C. White, *English Devotional Literature (Prose) 1600-1610* (University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature, Number 29, Madison, 1931), pp. 211, 227, 234. Unfortunately Miss White does not always distinguish between Anglican and Puritan writers.

⁸ A discussion of the theories of these men is exceedingly difficult. There are many saving clauses in their works, and some apparently contradictory passages. The main features of their picture of Puritanism are, however, fairly clear, but I have taken the precaution of quoting somewhat at length from their works. The English versions, which are cited for the convenience of the reader, have been compared with the originals.



striking of these were selected from the period when Puritanism had already been largely overcome by hostile forces, and the resulting picture was attributed to the movement as a whole. Without attempting to minimize the great service of these writers in calling attention to the importance of the relations between religious attitudes and social and economic forces, some changes may be suggested in their characterization of the Puritans.

It is customary to think of the Puritan as one who was primarily concerned with the future life and the assurance of attaining it. "The after-life," says Weber, "was not only more important, but in many ways also more certain than all the interests of life in this world." "The questions, Am I one of the elect? "And how can I be sure of this state of Grace" must sooner or later have arisen for every believer, and have forced all other interests into the background."⁹ The Puritan was convinced that his fate depended solely on the decree of God, who either had or had not elected him ages ago, once for all.

In what was for the man of the age of the Reformation the most important thing in life, his eternal salvation, he was forced to follow his path alone to meet a destiny which had been decreed for him from eternity. No one could help him. No priest, for the chosen one can understand the word of God only in his own heart. No Church, for though it was held that *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. . . . nevertheless the membership of the external church included the doomed. . . . Finally even no God. For even Christ had died only for the elect, for whose benefit God had decreed His martyrdom from eternity.¹⁰

⁹ Max Weber, "Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus," " *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, I, 103; English translation, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, (London, 1930) p. 109-10.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 93-4. Eng. trans. p. 04. Troeltsch agrees in making the doctrine of Predestination the most important element in Calvinism and Puritanism. Ernst Troeltsch, *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen*, Vol. I of his *Gesammelte Schriften*, (Tubingen, 1923), p. 615 ff. English translation, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, trans. Olive Wyon (London, 1931), II, 581 ff.



The result was that the Puritan became a lonely individual, forsaking his family, like Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress*, eschewing friendships, striving for assurance of his salvation. This could be attained only by zealous activity in a calling. It was necessary to practice a "worldly asceticism" *innerweltliche Askese*¹¹ an asceticism in which, rather than fleeing from the world, one conquered it by active hard work in one's calling.

In order to attain that self-confidence of election, intense worldly activity *rastlose Berufsarbeit* is recommended as the most suitable means. It and it alone disperses religious doubts and gives the certainty of grace. . . . However useless good works might be as a means of attaining salvation, for even the elect remain beings of the flesh, and everything they do falls infinitely short of divine standards, nevertheless, they are indispensable as a sign of election. They are the technical means, not of purchasing salvation, but of getting rid of the fear of damnation. . . . Calvinism added something positive to Lutheranism, the idea of the necessity of proving one's faith in worldly activity *Berufsleben*, better: *professional life* What God demands is not labor in itself, but rational labour in a calling.¹²

So the Puritan became coldly unemotional, rational, disciplined, unfeeling. Weber says "Calvin viewed all pure feelings and emotions, no matter how exalted they might seem to be, with suspicion", and Troeltsch agrees:

Above all this specifically Calvinistic individualism possesses this peculiar characteristic that in its refusal to expand on the emotional side it always directs attention towards concrete aims and purposes. . . . Puritanism differs from Lutheran Pietism in its still unshaken loyalty to the Church, in its lack of emphasis upon a passionate "conviction of sin" *Busskampfes* and of a sudden emotional "assurance" of grace. . . In Puritanism, conversion was regarded as the effect of predestination which had gradually evolved, and it believed in the careful control and cultivation

¹¹ Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 35; English trans., p. 193-4.

¹² Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 105, 110, 120, 174, Eng. trans., pp. 112, 115, 121, 161-2 Cf. R.H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, (New York, 1926), pp 199-201.



of this process, and not in "feelings", which a mere temporal faith can have also.¹³

Weber denies that the desire to enjoy the blissfulness of communion with God in this life was to be found in Puritanism, but makes it rather the decisive characteristic of the Pietism which developed later within the Reformed Church. For this element of emotion which was originally quite foreign to Calvinism, but on the other hand related to certain mediaeval forms of religion, led religion in practice to strive for the enjoyment of salvation in this world rather than to engage in the ascetic struggle for certainty about the future world.¹⁴

Again he states that the

Lutheran emphasis on penitent grief is foreign to the spirit of ascetic Calvinism, not in theory, but definitely in practice. For it is of no ethical value to the Calvinist; it does not help the damned, while for those certain of their election, their own sin, so far as they admit it to themselves, is a symptom of backwardness in development. Instead of repenting of it, they hate it and attempt to overcome it by activity for the glory of God.¹⁵

In applying this picture to the typical Puritan of any age there are difficulties which appear at the first glance, and others which suggest themselves to one acquainted with the life of Calvinists in the past and present. It is common knowledge among the clergy of churches of the Reformed type that only a very small minority of their congregations have extended worries about the assurance of their election. Even to the uninitiated it seems peculiar that a man should be driven to superhuman exertions to make sure of something which his efforts cannot affect in the slightest. The causal connection between the desire of assurance of election and worldly activity is not clearly proven by the citations from Baxter, who was evidently more concerned with preaching the duty of labor by way of attacking Catholic monasticism and insuring provision for the good of the commonwealth than with recommending it as

¹³ Troeltsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 623, 777; Eng. trans., II, 589, 680.

¹⁴ Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 133; Eng. trans., p. 130.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-21, n. 4; Eng. trans., p. 237.



furnishing a means of attaining a sense of the certainty of one's ultimate destiny.¹⁶ The fact that many serious-minded Christians, such as Luther, Pascal, and the Jansenists, have believed in the doctrine of predestination without being driven to intense worldly activity¹⁷ is puzzling. It would seem that whatever "worldly asceticism" may have existed among the later Puritans is best explained by other means. The loneliness and coldness of the Puritan seem also to have been exaggerated.¹⁸ The career of Christian, whose prolonged conversations with his fellow-seekers

¹⁶ In the passage (*Practical Works*, London, 1838, I, 902-4) especially cited by Weber (*op. cit.*, p. 105, n. 5; Eng. trans., p. 229), the living of a Christian life, without particular reference to the duties of one's calling, is only one, though given as the most important, of twenty-eight suggested means for gaining assurance that one was of the elect.

¹⁷ Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 92, 105-106, n. 5; Eng. trans., pp. 102, 229.

¹⁸ Nor, it may be added, (though the matter is not of great importance here) is it beyond challenge that the Puritans were influenced more in their outlook by the Old Testament than the New (Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 122, 181; Eng. trans., pp. 123, 165, quoting J.L. Sanford, *Studies and Reflections of the Great Rebellion* (London, 1858) p. 79 f. and Edward Dowden, *Puritan and Anglican* (London, 1900) p. 39).

This is a common characterization, but I have never seen any clear substantiation of it. If the New Testament doctrine of election were the central element in Puritanism, it is difficult to see how it could be said to depend more on the other section of the Bible. Good works and the doing of one's duty were enjoined in the New Testament as well as in the Old. With the exception of the topic of political theory, where the Old Testament afforded precedents more suitable to their purpose, it is open to argument that the Puritans were at least equally influenced by the New Testament. In fact it is difficult to find any one attitude in the Old Testament, and some passages of it did not appeal to the Puritan, as Weber grants (p. 180, Eng. trims., 164). It is probably better to consider the Puritans as influenced indiscriminately by both sections of the Scriptures. Since they regarded it all as the



Weber mentions, would not appear to be a very good illustration of the Puritan's supposed spiritual isolation, and the historian knows that "passionate conviction of sin" was common in Puritan circles.

William Perkins, who is mentioned with such respect, experienced such a sudden conversion, and in his turn wrought similar changes in his hearers by striking sudden terror in their hearts. The cousin of Richard Rogers, John Rogers of Dedham, was another preacher whose words had the like effect.

But whatever may be the truth of this theory of Puritan character in general, as applied to the particular period which the diaries illustrate it is certainly open to serious criticism. From the analysis, as presented in the first part of this chapter, it is doubtful that the Puritans devoted much time to thinking about matters of the future life. In fact, Weber's description of the Pietists, as striving for the enjoyment of religion in this world rather than engaging in the ascetic struggle for certainty about the future one, fits these Puritans very nicely indeed. We shall no doubt be more nearly correct, therefore, if we abandon the attempt, induced largely by the desire to universalize peculiarly German conditions, to distinguish between the Puritans and the Pietists. Furthermore it seems clear, that, at least in the period when the diaries were written, many, and, in all probability, most of the Puritans were of the type of Calvin himself,¹⁹ in that they had no particular worry about securing assurance of the certainty of their election. Some unusual cases there were²⁰ and no doubt many Puritans passed through a time of anxiety over this matter when first entering upon the Christian life—or perhaps at death²¹— which would account for

Word of God, they naturally commenced their study at the beginning, as did Rogers, which would explain the reason for the great number of Puritan treatises on this section of the Bible. Furthermore, the Old Testament is some three times as long as the New, which probably accounts for the greater number of references to the books of that portion of the Bible, if such a preponderance actually exists.

¹⁹ Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 103; Eng. trans., p. 110.

²⁰ John Knox's mother-in-law is a famous example (*The Works of John Knox*, ed. Laing (Edinburg, 1895), III, 331 ff).

²¹ In the Egerton MSS in the British Museum, No. 2645, fols. 156 ff., there is a lengthy and interesting account of the



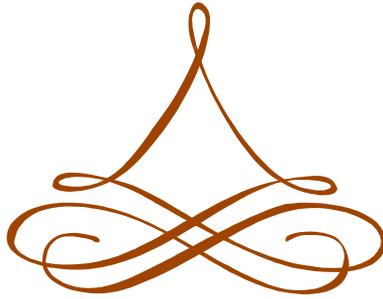
the space given to this topic in the literature of the party. But that great numbers lingered so long in this state that it exerted any profound influence on the character of the average Puritan, is highly doubtful.

In fact, there is little evidence that the theoretical notions of Predestination and the complementary doctrine of the denial of the free will had much effect on actual conduct. The diaries imply a surprising amount of what was later called Arminianism. Though Rogers does make a remark with the genuine Augustinian Calvinist ring, to the effect that no one has grace at his command, the remainder of his work gives the reader the impression that the writer thought he could do a great deal toward shaping their conduct. The frequent self-accusations suggest that the author could have done otherwise had he tried, in other words that he had a free will. Such passages confirm the old ministerial proverb that all are Calvinists when they pray, but Arminians when they preach.

We have already pointed out that the writer of this document made much use of Christian fellowship as a means of spiritual growth, and was far from the lonely souls described in current works as typical examples of Puritan character. There is, furthermore, no evidence in the diary that activity is any more highly esteemed than contemplation. In fact the tendency is in the opposite direction. Proper meditations are rather more important than any kind of labor. The concept of the calling plays no great role in these documents. Presumably study and the communication of spiritual attitudes would be the duties of the writer's calling, but these obligations are not emphasized as much as is the obligation to have profitable spiritual thoughts. Other ideas may have permeated the Puritan movement in the days when it was moving further from its medieval base and succumbing more and more to materialistic forces, but they are not typical of the Puritan of this period. An attitude predominately ethical, involving the individual in a methodical struggle for the Pietistic delight in a correct state of mind resulting in the fulfillment of all duties, both contemplative and active, is a better description of the Puritan character.

dealings of the well-known Puritan, John Dod, with one of the Trogmortons—of *Marprelate Tracts* fame—who when dying doubted his election.





THE LIFE OF RICHARD ROGERS

by

Dr. M.M. Knappen

Richard Rogers was a product of those eastern counties which produced so many Puritans in the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts. Born and brought up at Chelmsford in Essex, and educated at Cambridge, he settled in a village of his native county. Here he remained, except for short journeys to the neighboring districts, throughout his life. So far as we know, Huntingdonshire, London, and the sea constituted his horizon.

Due to the fact that our diarist's surname was Rogers, the historian finds that the genealogists have already done most of the work of tracing out his family connections. John Harvard's mother was a Katherine Rogers, and John Rogers was the name of the stout-hearted Protestant who "broke the ice" at Smithfield in the days of Mary Tudor. Furthermore, there are many New Englanders—some say more than of any other one family—who are descended from a Nathaniel Rogers who crossed the Atlantic early in the seventeenth century.²² The natural result of these facts has been that students of family history have already worked out the Rogers' relationships with considerable care. One honest descendant of the original Nathaniel disproved the tradition that he and his kin had sprung from the protomartyr, and in the process added much to our knowledge of the Rogers' pedigree.²³ A professional genealogist, of a somewhat later date, has discovered the wills of several members

²² See *DNB*, art. "Nathaniel Rogers."



of the clan, including Richard,²⁴ worked out a more complete family tree than did his predecessor, and added other details.

At the end of the seventeenth century family tradition declared that Richard Rogers' father was steward to the Earl of Warwick at Leighs, Essex, in the time of Henry VIII.²⁵ But, since there was no Earl of Warwick who lived during that reign, the genealogists were rightly skeptical, and by dint of much careful searching have uncovered for us most of the facts. Rogers' father was, in reality, a resident of Moulsham, a parish of Chelmsford. By trade he was a joiner, and his father, the grandfather of Richard, was apparently a carpenter. Both were named John Rogers, and the younger was twice married. His second wife was Agnes Carter, a widow, and by her he had three children—Mary, John, and Richard, our diarist. Richard's baptismal date is given in the parish register as June 29, 1551. Mary²⁶ became the wife of a man named Duckfield, and left a numerous family. John remained in Chelmsford and earned his living as a shoemaker. Among his children was one who bore his own name, John Rogers IV we may call him. After being helped through Cambridge by his uncle, he became a famous

²³ Joseph Lemuel Chester, *John Rogers* (London, 1861), especially pp. 238-45.

²⁴ Henry F. Waters, *Genealogical Gleanings in England* (Boston, 1901), I, 209-36, and II, 1137-38. The will is printed in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XVII, 326-29. I have checked it with the original in Somerset House.

²⁵ John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1812), II, 550, 556; Chester, pp. 242-44.

²⁶ Waters, *ut supra*; W.P.W. Phillimore and Thomas M. Blagg, *Essex Parish Registers, Marriages* (London, 1919, etc.), II, 2. John Peile (*Biographical Dictionary of Christ's College*, 2 vols.; Cambridge, 1910, *sub nomine*) gives Rogers' age at ordination in 1571 as twenty-four, but the evidence of the tombstone is against this, and would confirm the date given in the parish register. Though he died in April of 1618, he may easily have been three months old at his baptism and so in his sixty-eighth year at his death.



Puritan minister at Dedham in the northern border of Essex, and it is from his son Nathaniel that the New England line has sprung.²⁷

Many of the facts yielded by these researches are corroborated by this diary, which tells us that the author was born of a comparatively humble family at Chelmsford, "that doungehil of abhominacion." From his comments about his good fortune in reaching Cambridge, and thus escaping the sad fate of marrying and settling in his home town, we conclude that his people were not able to send him to the university. Doubtless, like many another of his profession, he early attracted the attention of some patron who encouraged and partially financed his further education. Certainly he matriculated at Cambridge as a sizar, that is, a poor student who could not afford the expense of a University course unless he eked out his means by acting as a servant to the fellows of his college.

The year of his matriculation was 1566, and it is interesting to note that the name of Spenser's friend, Gabriel Harvey, occurs shortly before his on the lists of his institution.²⁸

Cambridge was already a hotbed of Puritanism, and, by accident or design, Rogers found himself in what was at the time the most Puritanical of all her colleges, Christ's. One of the fellows was Edward Bering, who but for his early death would doubtless have been the leader of the Elizabethan Puritans. As a partial result of his influence, no doubt, there grew up a Puritan tradition at Christ's which produced not only Rogers, but, among many others, Laurence Chaderton, first master of Emmanuel College, the great William Perkins, Paul Baynes, and John Milton himself. Unfortunately we cannot discover the particular influences which affected Rogers, for we are ignorant of all save the technical details of his university career. He graduated B. A. in 1570-71, and was ordained deacon and priest in the same year. For some unknown reason he migrated to Caius College, from which he took his M. A. in 1574. A year or two later he settled in the village of Wethersfield, some seven miles northeast of Braintree in Essex, as a Preacher Of The Word Of God²⁹ — a Puritan lecturer, in other words.

²⁷ Waters, *ut supra*.

²⁸ Peile, I, 95, and John and J.A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (4 vols., Cambridge, 1922), III, 479.



Lecturers were men without official rank in the church who were employed by the Puritans to deliver sermons in addition to those, if any, of the ordinary clergyman. Usually such special exercises were held on a market day, often before the day's trading began. But it is probable that Rogers had more of an official position in the church than that of a lecturer. The incumbent of the living at Wethersfield during most of Rogers' stay there was a John Ludham, who was appointed vicar in 1570 and died in 1613.³⁰ However, since his name never seems to occur in the diary, it is likely that he was nonresident, and that Rogers performed the work of a curate. In his diary he speaks of his "benefice," and clearly indicates that it was an addition to his ministry. Certainly he held services on Sunday, which was more than some lecturers did. He was troubled, too, about the surplice, a requirement from which lecturers are supposed to have been exempt. The fact that he is never referred to as anything but a "preacher" or "lecturer" need not concern us, as the term "curate" was not commonly employed in such cases. It is therefore probable that he was the only officiating clergyman in the village.

The visitor who today leaves the railroad, and drives or cycles the six or seven miles to the quiet village of Wethersfield may wonder that any person of importance should ever have spent his lifetime there. But we must remember that in the seventeenth century it was not far from the center of English life. The southern and eastern counties were the most populous and prosperous at that time. Agriculture, for which they were admirably fitted, was still the main industry of the island, and the second greatest industry of the time, cloth-working, was centered in the east counties in this period. The village of Cogges-hall, the home of Rogers' friend and neighbor, Laurence Newman, was famous throughout Europe for

²⁹ Peile and Venn, *ut supra*. Venn states that he was located in Wethersfield in 1572, but the inscription on his tombstone makes that improbable.

³⁰ Richard Newcourt, *Repertorium ecclesiasticum parochiale Londinense* (London, 1708), II, 654. The alternative suggestion that Rogers was really an incumbent whose name has been omitted from the records is rendered difficult of acceptance by reason of the fact that the next vicar, Pasfield, is put down in Newcourt as succeeding *per mort Ludham*. The patron was Trinity Hall, Cambridge.



its "beyes" and "whites." The leaders of English political life lived in the great country houses. This is particularly true of the neighborhood about Wethersfield. Sir Robert Wroth was at Great Bardfield, just across the valley,³¹ and the Riches, Barringtons, and many others, who were ruling or preparing to rule England, were in the vicinity. Rogers' successor, it may be remembered, was the great Stephen Marshall. In Tudor and Stuart times Wethersfield was far from being a place where one's light would be hidden. No doubt the village also possessed then something of the charm which it has today. Built around an open green, it is pleasantly situated between gently rolling hills from which one may catch occasional glimpses through the trees of a glorious countryside. Should the reader have the good fortune to visit it in hay time and find himself as courteously received as was the writer, he may wonder, with the poet, why men depart to seek the Happy Isles.

Like most Puritan ministers, Rogers, in spite of his avowed hostility to the principles of "popery" had a lingering belief in the superiority of the single life and, as we have seen, a high regard for a man who could be content in such a station. Yet he had a keen appreciation of the advantages—material as well as spiritual—to be derived from marriage. And doubtless feeling himself unable to have "contentation in a singl life," he married. What his wife's maiden name was we do not know, but her first name was Barbara, the "Ba" of his diary.

As this is one of the points which the genealogists have overlooked, and as it is also of importance in establishing the authorship of the diary, the reader's attention is especially directed to the footnote in which this point is made.³²

³¹ Philip Morant, *History and Antiquities of the County of Essex* (2 vols.: London, 1768), II, 519.

³² The Holman MSS (in the keeping of the Essex Archaeological Society at Colchester Castle) contain the following passage (No. XXXVII, Hinkford Hundred, Vol. II, Part III):

Weathersfield Monuments in the Churchyard.
On the north side towards the street are
several Tombs. The first in a Blak marble stone
raised on Brick having this inscription:



By this marriage he had a numerous family, of whom two boys and four girls were living at his death in 1618.³³ The birth of a son, Ezekiel, and a daughter, probably Mary, and the death of a son, Nathaniel, are mentioned in this diary. Like other Puritans, Roger thought second marriages "daungerous", but, like many of them, some time after the death of his first wife, he married again. His second wife was Susan Ward, the widow of a neighboring

' S. Memoriae Reverendi viri & fidelissimi
ecclesiastae nostri Mri Ricardi Bogersii nec non
dilectae eius conjugis Barbarae Defunctorum in
Domino: Populus Wethersfeildensis et Filii
Filaeque in pii gratisque animi perpetuum
Testimonium maerentes Lubenter Posnerunt.'

'Here Lyeth the Body of Mr. Richard Rogers,
Preacher of this place who for the space of
fourtie one yeares and upwards continued the
faithfull and painfull Labours of his ministry in
this Congregation who died the 21 day of April
1618 in the 68 yeare of his age.' " (*continued on
next page*)

It is thus evident from the Latin inscription that the name of the first wife was Barbara. This inscription is reported in a letter from "Young Mortality" in the *Congregational Magazine*, N. S., II, 183, for 1826, but the Latin is so badly garbled that it concealed the name of the wife in this fashion: "nee non dilecte ejus coniuci barbarae defuncte in domino Ro vius, etc." The writer states that "the action of the atmosphere and the more destructive efforts of idle boys have well-nigh obliterated" the inscription, but he transcribes the English part of it much more accurately. He goes on to suggest that the " remains of two ejected ministers are also interred in the same ground and it would be well if the large congregation of Protestant Dissenters in that village were to place the tombs of these confessors in complete repair." These remarks, as far as the inscription is concerned, are still in order. The tomb of Richard Rogers is approximately fifteen feet northwest of the north door of the church, and parts of the inscription such as the word "Reverendi" are still (1930)



minister, and by her he seems to have had no children. She survived him many years, for she was still living in 1639.³⁴

Rogers' family became well known in English Nonconformist circles. The older surviving son, Daniel, after being successively a student and a fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, became a minister at Haversham, Bucks. Later he succeeded Stephen Marshall in his father's place at Wethersfield, and became a leader in the Essex Presbyterian movement during the troublesome days of the Long Parliament and Commonwealth³⁵ Daniel's son and namesake, after filling various places, succeeded him at Haversham, of which he held the living from 1665 to 1680. A grandson of that Daniel Rogers was the well-known eighteenth-century author and divine, John Jortin.³⁶

The younger son of our diarist was named Ezekiel, and he also became a clergyman. He succeeded in attaching himself to the Barringtons, and his rather pusillanimous negotiations with that family, concerning his troubles with the ecclesiastical authorities, may be traced by the curious in the Egerton MSS in the British Museum.³⁷ Eventually he emigrated to New England, but he left no American descendants, for though three times married he died without issue.

Of three of the girls in Richard Rogers' family we know nothing save the names of the husbands of two of them, Makin and Hasteler or Hasselder, the latter a merchant of Maldon, Essex. The fourth, Mary, the "Mar" of this diary, had two husbands, William Jenkyn and a certain Harsnett, otherwise unknown. By Jenkyn, who had been in Rogers' home as a student of theology, she was the mother of the better-known William Jenkyn, and the

faintly visible.

³³ See the will, *tit supra*. In addition, a son Ezra is given in the Candler pedigrees in the Bodleian (Tanner, CLXXX, 69v.) as having died without issue.

³⁴ Waters, I, 19.

³⁵ See *DNB*, art. "Daniel Kopers."

³⁶ See *ibid.*, art. "John Jortin".

³⁷ No. 2646, fol. 104, etc.



grandmother of Thomas Cawton the younger, both prominent dissenters.³⁸

The outstanding traits of the two boys in the Rogers family should be briefly indicated. Ezekiel, as we have suggested, seems to have succumbed to the pull of the material, against which his father struggled so hard, and to have been definitely inclined to seek the loaves and the fishes. Richard evidently recognized the acquisitive streak in at least one of his progeny, for in his will we find this remarkable provision:

Provided also that if any of my said children shall goe aboute to hinder or molest mine executors in any business that I have committed to them under any pretence whatsoever or shall by any suite or open acts declare and showe that he, she, or they are discontented with it or give any counsell to the molestinge of my said executors that then they or such of my children soe goinge about to molest and hinder my said executors as above said or so shall showe his, hers or their discontentment then they shall lose all such legacies as I have given or bequeathed to them or their children, etc.³⁹

On the other hand, Daniel developed his father's pessimistic attitude to an even greater degree. His stepbrother, Nathaniel Ward, used to say of him, "my brother Rogers hath Grace enough for two men, but not half enough for himself,"

Another relative, Giles Firmin, author of the celebrated *Real Christian*, wrote partly to counteract this tendency in him. In speaking of the execution of Charles I, Firmin notes that though Daniel Rogers "was a very gracious man i. e., one well supplied with grace yet he was exercised too much with God's Hidings of himself from him to have any Hand in such Acts."⁴⁰

To complete the story of Rogers' family connections, we may add something about Rogers' stepchildren, his second wife's children by her first marriage. There were four boys and two girls.

³⁸ See the will, *ut supra* and *DNB* articles on Jenkyn and Cawton.

³⁹ The will, *ut supra*,.

⁴⁰ *The Prediction of Mr. Daniel Rogers*, attached to Giles Firmin, *Weighty Questions Discussed* (London, 1692), and *Real Christian*, B. 4v.



Three of the boys—Samuel, John, and Nathaniel—became Puritan ministers, and, in Laud's time, all ran afoul of the ecclesiastical authorities. Samuel distinguished himself as a Puritan lecturer at Ipswich, after losing a previous living in Suffolk. The third, Nathaniel, went to New England, where he is known as the author of the first code of laws of the commonwealth of Massachusetts, and also as the author of *The Simple Cobler of Aggawam*. Of the fourth brother, Edward, we know nothing. Probably he died in infancy.

The two daughters were evidently younger than the boys, and Rogers seems to have arranged their marriages. Their husbands, Francis Longe and Samuel Waite, are mentioned in his will; Longe was named an executor and Waite was appointed to superintend a distribution of alms to the poor of Wethersfield. Either there was still a third daughter or one of them was married twice, for Giles Firmin, of whom we have spoken, tells us that his grandmother was married to Richard Rogers.⁴¹

In the diary we get many touches which reveal something of the everyday life of the Puritan minister—a life which it is not always possible to distinguish from the interest in regular devotions mentioned in the preceding chapter. Though Rogers was turning forty when this diary was written and his son Daniel was almost ready for the university, we hear little of his children except the laconic notes of their births, baptisms, and deaths. But of prayers, covenants, and religious discourse with "Ba." and of spiritual "fruit" of the marriage, we are told much.

On other occasions, such as that when his wife was near death, we learn something of affections of a considerably more mundane sort, including an occasional confession that he had not been "amiable" with her. As he admits to being "waspish" with others, and boarders are frequently mentioned, it would not seem that the life of the diarist's consort could have been a very pleasant one, though the tombstone assures us that she was *dilecta*. Only when his wife was at death's door does Rogers express concern about her,

⁴¹ See the will, *ut supra*; the *DNB* articles on the Wards; and John Ward Dean, *Memoir of Nathaniel Ward* (Albany, 1868), especially Appendix V and VI; Giles Firmin, *Real Christian* (London, 1670), *To the Christian Reader*, B. 4v., pp. 75-76; Chester, p. 248.



but he duly chronicles each of his own small ailments. He is unable to sleep; or he is too ill to study properly, as was frequently the case in the winter. Once the complaint is particularized as a "vehement cough and stuffinge through colde".

Rogers combined the duties of a minister with the pursuit of the country interests common to the rural clergy of his time. In his will he disposes of a meadow "containinge by estimation one acre and a half," and he has cause to express his anxiety about the weather during the hay season. With the servants needed to attend to such matters, the school of which we shall speak later, and his "borders", his household must have been of considerable size.

The boarders require some explanation. Some of them were doubtless theological students, who at that period sometimes finished their preparation with a well-known minister instead of at the university. One of these married his daughter, as we have said. Others of his boarders were, no doubt, those curious individuals who also after the manner of the time, used to stay for a season with some famous "surgeon of souls," especially when they were in spiritual difficulties. To Rogers they seem to have been a source of gratification, if not material profit. With such a gathering about him, we do not wonder that the housing problem occasionally grew acute, and that he became "unsettled" when negotiations for a better place seemed to fail.

But most of our diarist's time, aside from the periods of meditation and prayer — which probably did not exceed, on the average, over two hours a day — was devoted to the duties of his profession. First among these, both in his diary and in his published works, he placed study. Pastoral calling was not yet fully established as a ministerial obligation,⁴² and definitely took a place second to his book. Nor had parish organizations and the business side of church work grown to such proportions as to occupy any considerable amount of time.

The diarist's ideal was to accomplish nine or ten hours of study a day, and bitter were the pangs of remorse if this obligation was neglected. Yet on one occasion we find him suffering from that acute lack of preparation for the exercise of the following day which is technically known in the profession as "preacher's Saturday night".

⁴² Usher, Presbyterian Movement, p. 72.



Though Rogers obviously preferred study to pastoral visitation, especially among those who were indifferent to religion, he did a great deal of work of this sort. In the chance contacts of everyday life, and in others purposefully sought, we find him endeavoring to be "fruitful." He talked with everyone, from yeomen to gentlemen, and from "a woeful creatur" to a member of "the privy church".

In 1588 he tells us he went so far as to organize some of his parishioners into a private devotional group after the manner of a modern prayer meeting which he considered so unusual as to deserve a special description in his *Seven Treatises* (p. 515). Since he there dated it as 1588, we conclude that it did not survive the year. This work and a difficulty or two about his remuneration seem to be the closest approaches to the type of activity that takes up so much of the time of the modern clergyman. However, he had a vexation of a sort which is not so familiar to the present-day pastor. There was a school in his home for which he doubtless chose the master, and over which he exercised general supervision. At noon he was accustomed to catechize the pupils, and disciplinary problems seem to have annoyed him considerably⁴³.

To make time for such a full program, Rogers attempted to rise early in the morning and to have a regular routine for the day's activities. But he did not always succeed, especially on winter mornings. Domestic matters upset him, as we have seen, and though he originally planned to devote an hour to reading, before meditation and private prayer in the morning, he altered this entry at a later date to read "half an hour".

For one living in a time when England is supposed to have possessed such bad roads, the amount of visiting and traveling

⁴³ The well-known Puritan. Paul Baynes, was probably a product of this school. "The famous Paul Baines had his Education in his younger yeares under one Mr. Cozens, a schoolmaster in this town (Wethersfield). From hence he was sent to Christ College in Cambridge" (Holman MSS, XXXVII, 16). Since he matriculated at Cambridge in 1590/91, it is practically certain that he was in Rogers' school. It would be extremely unlikely that there should be two schools in such a village (Peile, I, 199; Venn, I, 113).



which Rogers managed to do is remarkable. This adjective seems appropriate because a Congregational minister who had resided in this area some two years stated recently that he had not yet seen all his fellow-ministers in the association, which covered the northern half of the county, because it was "so large that they cannot get to the meetings." Perhaps Rogers' travels are not so much a tribute to the roads as to his religious zeal.

In three and a half years he was in Huntingdonshire once, Cambridge four times, and London, some forty miles distant, ten times at least—not to mention numerous occasions on which he went shorter distances, such as the six miles to a gathering of clergy, or twice as many miles when he assisted Newman at Coggeshall.

We know from the minute-book of the Dedham classis published by Professor R. G. Usher that Rogers was an active participant in the classis, or secret presbytery movement which was at its height⁴⁴ at this time, and some of his journeys are to be explained by this fact. Yet he very rarely alludes to the business that was transacted at these gatherings (cf. Usher, p. 17), but rather concentrates on the spiritual exercises that were another feature of them. This makes it very difficult to be certain as to which of the gatherings he attended were connected with the classis movement. However, we shall probably not be far wrong in connecting the trips to Cambridge (where synods were often held at the time of the Stourbridge fair) in September, 1587; November, 1588; September, 1589; and April, 1590, as well as the one to Huntingdonshire in October, 1589, with such activity.

Wethersfield was in the diocese of London, and so we cannot be certain whether his visits to that city were for synodical gatherings, ecclesiastical trials, or other reasons. The one of July, 1589, seems to be connected with the Presbyterian movement, however, for Rogers' reference to it is immediately followed by a comment on the dark prospects for the church. It is also worth noting that his stay in April, 1588, occupied ten days' time.

Generally speaking, Rogers seems to have considered questions of government, even of church government, to be matters for those above his station — a foreshadowing of the later Nonconformist's political indifference on which Defoe commented

⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 94.



so sadly. In the great activities of the Elizabethan times which were starting England on the road to world-dominion he took no interest, except as they affected the fortunes of the church or his own security. Parliamentary elections are not mentioned, although there was one in 1588. Only the Armada, the religious wars in France, and the prospect of Elizabeth's marriage to a Catholic stirred him.

One of the most interesting chapters in Rogers' life, certainly one of the most exciting so far as he was concerned, is the story of his relations with the ecclesiastical authorities. In the Episcopalian hierarchy there were many officials who might trouble him, the archdeacon, the bishop or his chancellor, the archbishop, and, in his time, that special disciplinary body, the High Commission. Rogers seems to have had dealings with all of them, though it was the bishop who was most in his mind when this diary was written. Wethersfield lay in what was then the archdeaconry of Middlesex of the diocese of London, though the village was well within the borders of Essex. We should have official documents from these various authorities to give us their side of the story, but unfortunately they are not available, and we can only hear the Puritan version. In addition to this diary there are short passages⁴⁵ from another diary of Rogers, and also excerpts from what seems to be Rogers' summary of his ecclesiastical troubles. From the latter source it would seem that Rogers' first serious difficulty resulted from Archbishop Whitgift's efforts in 1583 to enforce subscription to the three articles, including one dealing with the Prayer Book.

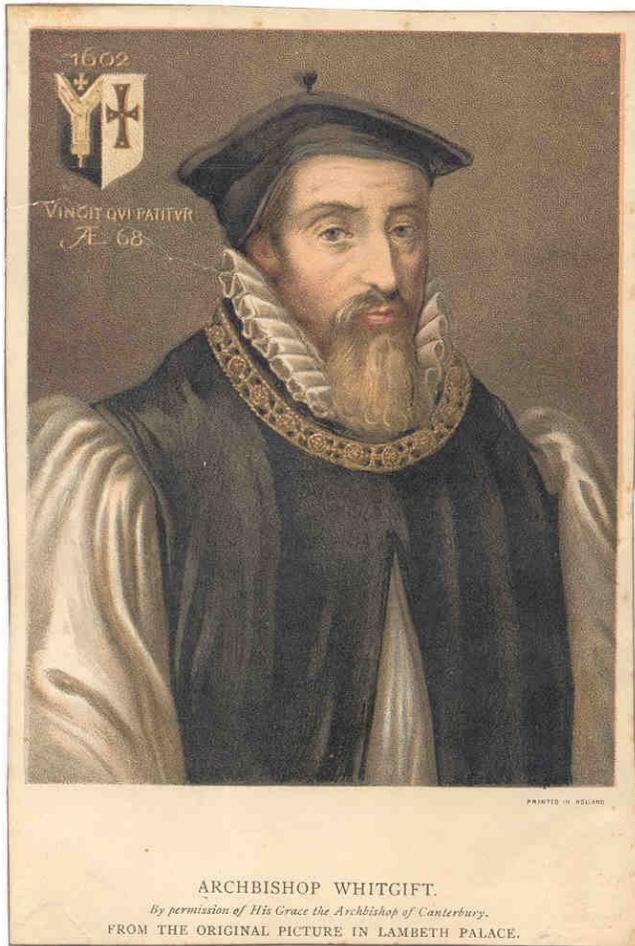
⁴⁵ Chronological Account, II (Morrice I), 589 (10-12).



Queen Elizabeth's picture appears in her 1569 Prayer Book

For refusing to sign the Archbishop's articles, Rogers was suspended from the performance of his functions as a priest, and "silenced," that is, forbidden to preach. What followed is best told in his own words:

The Archbishop protested none of us should Preach without conformity and Subscription. I thanke God I have seen him eate his Words as Great and as Peremptory as he was. For after Thirty Weeks I was Restored by Dr. Aylmer, Bishop of London, to whome Sir Robert Wroth Lord of the manor of Great Bardfield near Wethersfield Writ in favour of me, and bad me Preach and he would beare me out, and so I have continued about 20 yeares to the end of Archbishop Whitgifts Life who deceased the first of March 1604.



From this passage, and the extracts to follow, it is quite clear that the gentry of the community enabled the Puritans to violate ecclesiastical regulations. This interference from the outside explains, in large part, that ineffectiveness of the church courts in enforcing discipline among the clergy which is described in Canon Foster's excellent introduction to the documents in his *The State of the Church in the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I.*⁴⁶ Rogers' case is another illustration of this continual weakness and delay on the part of the church courts of this time.

Throughout the subsequent period, in which the main diary was written, the fear of "looseing liberty" to preach haunted Rogers

⁴⁶ "Publications of the Lincolnshire Record Society" (Horncastle, 1926), XXIII, xxiv-xxv, lxix-lxxv.



like a nightmare, but usually it was the bishop (Aylmer), rather than the archbishop, who held him in terror. The "b" was much in his thoughts, and once he appears to have gone so far as to call him a "beast," in a passage he took pains to obliterate later.

The issue was no doubt usually one of subscription, the surplice, or the *ex officio* oath. The fact that he often seems to have feared the unsettling of his mind by such difficulties more than the troubles themselves, as well as his resolve not to compromise to retain his freedom, but to accept what God might send, make him appear in not unheroic guise.

Nevertheless, there is a more human side to this martyrdom. At other times Rogers was mostly disturbed by the effect of "silence" on his material well-being, and on at least one occasion the issue was not one of conscience, so far as we can tell, but the prosaic one of his share in an assessment which had been levied on the clergy to provide armor for the troops at the time of the Armada danger.⁴⁷

One must be pardoned for worrying when his livelihood is endangered, but from the vantage point of our detachment and knowledge of later events, Rogers' extreme apprehension seems somewhat out of place. He must have often read in his Bible the verse cited by Samuel Ward, a translator of the King James Bible, when similarly fearing the future, about all things working together for good to them that love God.

Furthermore, though his friends occasionally suffered, he does not seem ever to have lost his liberty, for more than a few weeks at the most, in the remaining thirty years of his active ministry. While reading the elaborate meditation on this subject written in November, 1589, we are certain that the catastrophe is inevitable, only to find, a little later, the note typical of the situation in the ecclesiastical courts of the period, "deffered to Easter terme." This case was possibly heard before the High Commission, for Stanhope, a member of that body, seems to be mentioned, and the next June Rogers was bound over to the consistory court. But from what he has already told us we are safe concluding that Sir Robert Jermyn, a Suffolk gentleman⁴⁸ who was assisting him, saw to it that

⁴⁷ See Foster, *op. cit.*, p. xxxix.

⁴⁸ Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, p. 61, n. 3.



the matter was allowed to "sleape." The excommunication mentioned also cleared up the same way, no doubt, as such things frequently occurred in the archdeaconry records of those days...

At the time of the attempt to tighten up ecclesiastical discipline in 1604, Rogers was again much agitated, and we find him writing as follows:

By God's great mercy I have gained these 12 Weekes Liberty more then I looked for and therefore have cause to be content when silencing cometh, and the rather because many are silenced before. In London Mr. Stephen Egerton, Mr. Wooten, that learned Minister, Mr. C. Jackson, Mr. Home, Mr. Smith, Mr. Evans. In Northhamp-tonshire 15, in Cambridge 2 or 3 town Ministers. In Suffolke many I feare daily. God Guide the people here after that day cometh.

But his retrospect gives the sequel:

And in that year 1604, the year of Whitgift's death I and six other ministers for refusing the oath *ex-officio* were suspended by him Whitgift. And the day of his death being the day appointed for our appearance we were discharged by four Doctors of the Law. All that summer we were Horsed up to London by Archbp. Bancroft but were Released by him of his own accord see below on the 15 of October 1605 and during his sitting in the Choir of Canterbury I had mostly quiet. Dr. Thomas Ravis succeeded him⁴⁹ in the See of London who affirmed to me " by the help of Jesu I will not leave one Preacher in my Dioces that doth not Subscribe and Conform ". He was a Well favoured Lusty man, not fifty years of age, dyed within 2 yeares. Thus he was disappointed notwithstanding his peremptory speech, and Jesu helped him not to root us all out. God have praise.

25 of April, 1605. I was much in Prayer about this matter, and my God granted me to be dispenced with by Archb. Bancroft. By William Lord Knollys of Grayes, afterwards Earle of Banbury his meanes. So God gave me this breathing to mine and the peoples comfort, O that I may make a holy use of it.

⁴⁹ Evidently the copyist has here varied the order in the original document. Thomas Ravis was translated to London, May 18, 1607 (Le Neve, *op. cit.*, p. 302).



July the 5. Our liberty was continued to us through the meanes of the said Lord Knollyes.

November the 18th. I prepared for the hardest. After 33 or 34 yeares labouring in publick now not counted worthy to Preach, while so many Idol Shepherds, Scandalous livers etc. live at ease. This dealing with God's ministers troubleth me.

Since the discovery of the Powder Treason the gunpowder plot, Nov. 5, 1605 Dr. Richard Vaughan, Bishop of London hath Restored the most Suspended Ministers.

30th May, 1606. If I Preach no more I thanke God heartily for this yeare and halfe liberty at home and abroade and I hope with good fruit. The Bishop my good friend.

April the 2, 1607. This weeke came the sorry news of the death of our Bp. Vaughan, who for 28 months (for no more he continued) permitted the Godly ministers to live peaceably and enjoy their liberty. On the 8th of September, 1610 Dr. George Abbot New Bishop of London visited. No hurt done. *Laus Deo.*

November 16, 1611. Dr. John King, the 8th Bishop of London since the beginning of Quenne Eliz. Reigne entered this month. February 19, 1612. The church hath had rest ever since Archbishop Bancroft's death on the first of November 1611. But in Northamptonshire and in Coventry many were troubled by Bishop Neal, etc.

And so he went on, we may suppose, to the end of the chapter, constantly fearing but practically unharmed. The church courts' Indian summer under Laud had not yet come, and meanwhile the Puritan country gentlemen were standing within the shadow, keeping watch above their own.

Aside from manuscripts of the sort which we have been discussing, Rogers composed several other works, some of which were printed. The best known was the rather remarkable systematic treatise on Christian living, based largely on his own experiences, the *Seven Treatises* to which reference has already been made. It appeared in 1604, with a dedication to King James and endorsements from Ezekiel Culverwel, Francis Merbury, and Stephen Egerton. In its complete form it went through five editions, and in an abridged form through many more. His labors



with the "prophane," of which we have little evidence in the diaries, but in which he was quite successful, as we learn from others, are illustrated by his book entitled *Certaine Sermons*, dedicated to "Edward Denny Lord Baron of Waltam," which dealt with the doctrine of salvation. The volume contains nineteen discourses from different texts of the Old and New Testaments on the subject of conversion. A perusal of it would seem to confirm the admission of one, who otherwise respected him, that he was not talented as an orator, for the contents are mostly dull exposition and methodical argument with few illustrations. His other works were in the form of commentaries, but they included material originally prepared for his lectures.

The custom with lecturers in those days was to select one book of the Bible and preach on its texts in order. One worthy of that age, named Arthur Hildersam, produced, for example, *CLII Lectures on Psalme LI*. Rogers evidently began at the beginning of the Bible and worked forward. In the course of the diary he is dealing with the book of Exodus, but before his death he reached the historical books of the Old Testament. The lectures on Judges he collected into a *Commentary upon the Whole Book of Judges*, (See appendix) which he prepared with a most appropriate dedication to the great Judge Edward Coke, written "from my poore house at Wethersfield in Essex," January 20, 1615/6.

The gist of this foreword was to remind the champion of the common law that

"The ministry of the word should not so much prevaile as it doth, little though it do in comparison, except the pleasant dewes of Herman did refresh the barren mountains of Zion, I meane, except the civill sword of justice did backe and authorize the same against them who profanely contemne the word as the smartles stroke of a leaden edge"

—a grim reminder that the original Puritans were not a tolerant group.

On his death Rogers left "my sermons and the two bookes of the Kinges and the two bookes of Samuells to my sonne Danyell, so farr as I have proceeded, and one of the Acts, wishing him if he think good to take some paynes to convert and sett some of them



forth."⁵⁰ Daniel apparently thought it good to set forth only a fragment of his father's remaining efforts, for all that appeared was *Samuel's Encounter with Saul*, a commentary on I Sam. 15:13-30, "preached and penned by that worthy servant of God Mr. Richard Rogers late Preacher of Wethersfield in Essex and published word for word according to his own copy finished before his Death." It came out in 1620, Stephen Egerton again contributing a preface. Like his other commentary, it was a lengthy treatment of the subject under the usual homiletical heads of "Doctrine," "Proof," and "Uses." What became of the remaining manuscripts we do not know.

During his life, and for some time after his death, Rogers enjoyed a considerable reputation as an evangelist, counsellor, and saint. Egerton, the great Puritan leader and preacher at Blackfriars, London, described him as "one who hath long laboured the conversioun and confirmation of many other; but especially the mortification and quickning of his own soule and conscience."⁵¹ Giles Firmin said that he was not "John Chrysostom" and suggested that he was too austere in his dealings with the "prophane," yet he concluded that "God honoured none more in

⁵⁰ See the will, *ut supra*.

⁵¹ *Seven Treatises*, Foreword, *To the Christian Reader*.



these parts of England with conversion of Souls,"⁵² while William Jenkyn, his grandson, offers this incident by way of tribute:

That blessed saint now with God, Mr. Richard Rogers, who was another Enoch in his age, a man whose walking with God appeared by that incomparable direction of a Christian life, his book called the *Seven Treatises* woven out of Scripture and his own experimental practise, sometime said in his life that he should be sorry if every day were not to him as his last day.⁵³

Another dissenting minister of a later date referred to him as "the famous Mr. Rogers, the author of the *Seven Treatises*, than whom it may be truly said, England hardly ever brought forth a man that walked more closely with God."⁵⁴

⁵² "It was a notable answer old Mr. Richard Rogers gave to a Gentleman in whose company he was, the Gentleman told him 'Mr. Rogers I like you and your company very well, but you are so precise.' ' O Sir' said he, ' I serve a precise God.' It is very true but cannot Christian cheerfulness stand with holy and due preciseness! Austerity may awe inferior persons, but it will never take with persons of good breeding, nor ever win to the Gospel. I heard that the former Mr. Rogers and Mr. Knewstubs (who preached his Funeral sermon) were once riding abroad, Mr. Rogers riding before the other at some distance, there meets him a person whom he knew, one of good estatee, but a carnal man. Mr. Rogers rides by him, takes no notice of him. Mr. Knewstubs riding after, meets him also, and salutes him very courteously, and talks with him a little space of time very affably, and so parted. When Mr. Knewstubs overtook Mr. Rogers he asks, "Mr. Knewstubs why do you shew so much familiarity to such a wicked man. This is the way to harden him in his sinful course". To whom Mr. Knewstubs answered "Ah my brother, this kind of (austerity he meant) carriage is not the way to win wicked men to the Gospel and the wayes of God, but rather to beat them off." "*Seal Christian to the Reader*, fol. 1 v. and pp. 67-8.

⁵³ An Exposition of the Epistle of Jude (London, 1654), pp. 453-54.

⁵⁴ Nathaniel Vincent, *Israel's Lamentation* (London, 1677), p. 31.



A final Puritan verdict is in the passage, cited above from the Morrice MSS containing excerpts from his writings, which concludes with these words of the compiler: "Less cannot be said of this excellent man without unthankfulness for the good many have received both by his Life and Works."⁵⁵

Our appraisal, based on the diary and this necessarily patchwork collection of facts concerning Rogers' career, must be somewhat more moderate.

The chief impression made upon the modern reader is probably that of a narrow-minded and morbidly pessimistic introvert, whose tortured soul could find neither rest nor victory, though it did experience interludes of great spiritual pleasure. The pattern he set for himself was in part to blame.

It was faulty, both in being so preponderantly ethical, without regard to the intellectual and aesthetic sides of man's nature, and in prescribing a conduct involving a mental concentration continued beyond the limits of human endurance.

In part Rogers was himself to blame—not perhaps for failing to change the standards which proved so difficult of attainment, for to have done so would have required an intelligence in advance of his time—but in falling farther short of them than did other Puritans of his day.

Such contemporaries as Knewstubs, Richard Greenham, and John Dod seem to have lived on an equally high plane without being so maladjusted or ill at ease in the face of opposition. Rogers also fell behind some of his associates in his failure to overcome the desire for financial gain.

Puritan lecturers were usually well paid⁵⁶ and he seems to have made much of his opportunities.

In his will,⁵⁷ after a few small sums in shillings have been allotted to the poor, there remained amounts running into the hundreds of pounds in cash and annuities to be conferred upon his family. The son of the Chelmsford carpenter had, indeed, found

⁵⁵ Chronological Account, II, 589 (12).

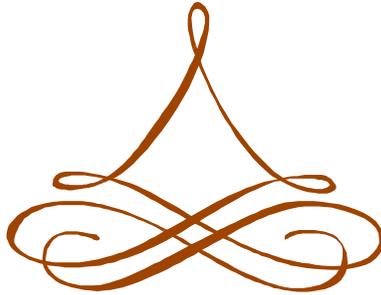
⁵⁶ Usher, *Reconstruction*, I, pp. 274-5.

⁵⁷ See the will, *ut supra*.



Godliness to be profitable unto all things. But the modern critic is probably too harsh in dealing with such cases.

Rogers' firmness in standing his ground on most matters of conscience, and the great energy which he directed to the end of right living, however defectively that end was conceived and the energy applied, entitle him to a considerable measure of the respect of all thoughtful people.



THE DIARY OF RICHARD ROGERS

Feb. 28, 1586/7. Of things worth the remembrance in this month this was one: a most sweet journey with Mr. Culverwel⁵⁸ for 2 days, with much time bestowed on the way about our Christian estate, about God's mercy in our calling to the fellowship of the gospel, about true testimonies of faith, and about the great comfort which, by continuing herein, doth come unto God's people.

I am stayed, though hardly, when I consider that God hath brought many to the knowledge of his truth by my weak ministry, and that He doth increase His gifts in me in some measure. For though I ought to have known that which I know many years ago, yet seeing I behold that daily whereof I have been ignorant, I am much comforted. But I would not choose to be a partaker of all knowledge, as some excel others therein, without the comfortable use of it through love. . . .

March 31, 1587. (.Page torn)... by it, and this I say, that I never enjoyed the like with any neighbor or brother at any time, for it is not out of season at any time to be occupied ether in conference about knowledge-attaining or growing in godliness. We have made small use of our meetings⁵⁹ in time past for either of these almost,

⁵⁸ Rogers' friend and neighboring minister Ezekiel Culverwel, located near by at Felsted at this time. He came of a prominent Puritan family. See the *Dictionary of National Biography*, art. " Nathaniel Culverwel".

⁵⁹ Evidently a reference to the classis meetings, used for spiritual purposes as well as discipline. In June of this year,



before his coming. Only I have seen a continuance of love thereby. And this shall be one of the greatest stays unto mine heavy heart, if it may please the Lord, to continue this benefit.

Myne heart hath been much occupied in thinking of the uncertainties of our life and the momentary brittleness of things below by occasion of the death of Mr. Leaper.⁶⁰ I find my self at great liberty by this means: when I find a sensible contempt for this world and a joyful expectation of my departure from hence.

The contrary estate is full of uncomfortableness and anguish.

May 20, 1587. I see the course of this world carries men, especially those of our calling, after it, and for profit and promotion to foresee or refuse no slavery nor shameful dealing, and to please men, howsoever God be displeased. I thank God I loath such a kind of estate.

And seeing the mortality of all flesh and how the jolliest suddenly go to the earth, I would be loath to set my foot in such a path wherein is no continuance, but utter danger in the end.

I love and wish allwayes to be free and at liberty to delight in that wherein I may boldly delight without repentance, and that is, to be allwayes doing or seeking occasion to do some good.

And whither my liberty be taken from me utterly (which thing I fear) or whither I enjoy it, I would that my life in my family guiding and with the people and especially to mine own self-ward might be a pattern of good. . . (*page torn*) to others. . . .

Rogers and Culverwel, who is evidently referred to here, signed a letter to the Dedham Classis asking that their neighbor Laurence Newman, of Coggeshall, be transferred to the Braintree Classis, of which they were members (Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, p. 98), but no mention is made of this incident in the diary.

⁶⁰ Marginal note: *March 12. dyed mr. Leper.* William Leaper was B.A. from St. John's, Cambridge, in 1537/8, and later a fellow there; vicar of Braintree, the most important town near Wethersfield, 1562-79 (Venn, III, 75). He must have been one of the earliest Puritan ministers in this district, and no doubt had much to do with rooting the movement there.



July ?, 1587. . . . One thing this time I remember is that going among a company of bad fellows...(*illegible*)... I prayed especially for wisdom and grace if I should have to deal with them.

By means of that I did, in reasoning with one young man, who is become a very Atheist, receive a sensible blessing of my prayer that I was not thrust through by him with his sword for being earnest against his atheism, who stiffly held that all the sort of believers in Christ were rank hypocrites and the worst of any.

Thus I have set down some part of those things which have fallen out this month and the sweet peace which I find and feel since I wrote this — which seasons mine heart with aptness and willingness to do my duty aright — differs unspeakably from that untowardness which was in me before. For in this estate my mind is on some good thing with delight; and upon transitory things with little regard for them.

But before it was my chief delight to be thinking upon any profit or vain pleasure, even long before I had to do with them. Yet thus I must say, that whensoever I have weltered in any looseness or security, (Yes such wherein I have been unwilling to be awaked) yet I thought even at the same time that God would bring it against me some one time or other, and the longer I have deferred it, the greater is my torment, and then have I no sound peace until I return.

July 22, 1587. This month — for all the gracious entrance into it which I made mention of before, a sweet seasoning of my mind with sensible sorrow for mine unworthiness and wants — has been much like unto the former month. For though I began well yet I, by litle and litle, fell from the strength which I had gotten and became unprofitable in study. Prayer and meditation were not continued privately by me with such joy as the first week, yet not broken off.

But I felt not how the fruit of them did sweetly accompany me all the day after. And study was better followed the first and 2nd week since then. But settled at it I cannot feel myself, which is my sorrow.

Among other things, I cannot feel the use of that which I know, nether have I any fresh remembrance of it, for that I do



not still increase it. Whatever strugglings, and yet apparent hindrances I feel about it, yet it is marvelous.

In the other 3 things⁶¹ about the which I am especially occupied, I cannot say that there hath passed much against me to accuse me. I count that to have been because I have not had such occasions offered me as might have proved me. And for that the Lord hath kept these from me in great measure, let me give glory to the Lord allwayes.

I thanck God that at the writing down hereof I was well affected, and mine heart since yesterday was grieved to see such a decay of grace as partly now I have set down.

And indeed I am glad that I may view with grief when there is any declining in my life, seeing it cannot be avoided but such shall be, but yet that they are so often. And I view with grief that so few times of grace may be read in these papers to have been enjoyed by me. That is no mean grief unto me.

I escaped a great peril of the disfiguring of my face, if no greater, under a tree at the commencement, where, to see how their orderlynes⁶² in other places creeps in also, it may justly grieve a Christian heart.

We met at B. also this week and conferred. I visited 2 sick persons at this time, not without profit. I have also been well affected at the doctrine of Exodus 16 for the most part this month, weeping once or twice.

August 4, 1587. I cannot yet settle my self to my study, but through unfitness of mind, weakness of body, and partly discontinuing of diligence thereat, I am held back. And I am in every kind of study so behind hand, more than I was some years agoe, that I am much discouraged.

I do not see, but that if it pleased the Lord to grant me that benefit, I were many ways to count mine estate good above many men. For some recovery of strength and freedom this way I do purpose to entreat the Lord more specially this day. I hope for

⁶¹ A reference to Rogers' four major sins.

⁶² Apparently a reference to the growth of ceremonial practices in the Cambridge college chapels. The university commencement came in July.



blessing not only in that behalf but also against some corruption which I see break forth in myself by occasions — although it seem not so before trials come — as to stir me soon when any thing goes otherwise with me than I would want.

Also, I have wandering and fond desires, though not strong. Sometime I too long dwell on them, which I know to be condemned by the law.

Further, though I do not much feel my self disquieted about the world, nor hurtful to any, yet I am not so profitable and painful through love to procure the good of others as I have been, though I study little. But I am most occupied about an entering in to study, and heavy for that I attain not to it. For indeed when I obtain grace that way and gather strength of matter by reading, I am the fitter afterwards to be ether in company with others, with doing good, or to be solitary by my self with comfort. I pray God send me fruit of my request herein.

August 18, 1587. I have long been troubled by my want of knowledge, but I see that I have not cause of grief from thence only. But I and my friend⁶³, falling yesternight into a special conference about our estate, I found that much decay of care, zeal, and watchfulness is grown upon me. For times have been when I was no sooner risen from bed and board but I was immediately with the Lord in meditation about my self, or seeking the good of some others, or in company profitable.

As for dealings in the world about commodities or further licentiousness in things unlawful, I weaned my self from them, and had no liking of many things which I see many people to go after and godliness to be meanly followed. This I have seen, though hardly I could yield or consent to it, that any good means were neglected by me. Now I see that these have been the cause, and that very justly, why I have seen my study go so ill forward, and so small blessing to have been granted me therein. I see also that for these causes my God hath taken from me much comfort, and my gift in conference is much abated.

We complain that many things are amiss in our lives, but we can see no cause for it. But this is a very common thing with good

⁶³ Probably Culverwel.



men that when they come to have dealings, occupiyngs (jobs), and families, much of their delight is employed upon them which was wont to be given to the Lord, and yet all was thought to be too litle. And the Apostle, in *I Corinthians 7*, hath taught us that as single men bestow all their care on how they may please the Lord, so the married men have commonly their care, without especial grace, on how they may grow on together and prosper. By means whereof coldness and negligence grows upon them before they be aware.

Besides, we may observe by experience that even the most zealous people do somewhat, in time, decline and wax remiss in caring for the matters of God. So that no prayer may be more meet and right for a good Christian than this — that God would keep us in our age from the corruptions of the time and of the world.

For full soon a man falls to be like others, and there is great force and strength in the times and persons with whom we live.

When we enjoy our peace, liberty, and other commodities upon such conditions as the times do often offer unto us, it is to be feared that we yield to some things that we should not.

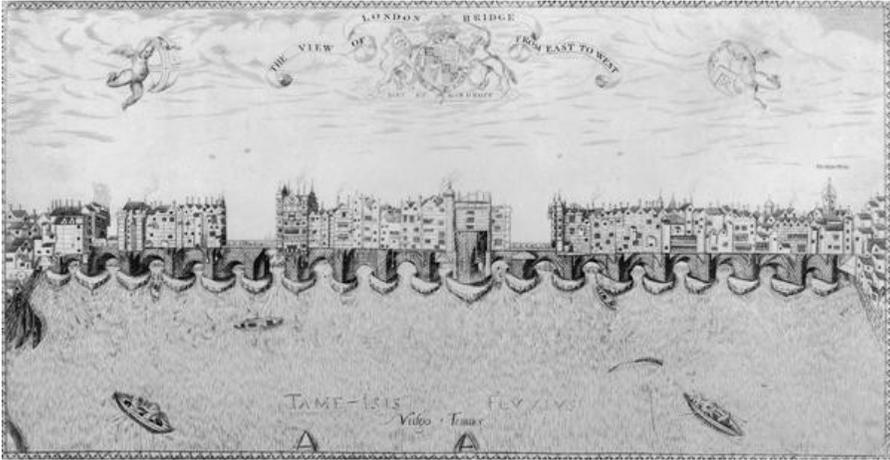
For mine own part I see cause to fear this in my self, and I hope I will look more diligently to my self than I have done and wean my self from some lawful profiles and pleasures, so as to be much more conscious of such things as be unlawful, yea even of my thoughts which delight in things that ought not to be.

I will wait what encouragment the Lord will give me.

August 30, 1557. He that should read my former writing would think that I might have continued a month afterwards in a very gracious and godly manner.

But for all that, the next day after I wrote the same, I was occupied in private study for my Sabbath's exercise, and passed that same day in very good sort. And the Monday after that, Mr. Culverwel and I studied privately together.

Yet the next day as my wife and I were riding to London, and by the way not setting our selves to pass the time profitably — although we prayed together before we went forth — we wandered by litle and litle into needless speech, thus somewhat of my former fervency was abated.



London Bridge, Late 16th Century

Although in the whole journey to London there was no great default committed, yet because there was not a continuance in the first beginning, full soon, before I was aware, I found cause of complaining.

And thus it may easily be seen what declineings there are in our lives, what remitting of zeal, what a growing in a short time to a common course.

And if we had not since our return had a fast in which we were well stirred up on *Aug. 28th*, I think I should have further fallen some ways. The Lord be praised for such gracious helps.

Our purpose at that time is set down in my book of sentences for meditation in this month.⁶⁴

These 2 days my body is much diseased so that I cannot greatly study. Mine earnest desire is to set before mine eyes my estate for 12 years past, that the affection to do good which then was in me may be continued.

Especially that the world deceive me not by drawing mine heart to more dealings therein than are expedient for me, and more than heretofore I have been accustomed to. And that I may ever have staidness and watchfulness as a companion with me.

Sept. 2, 1587. Myne heart is very well eased this fortnight. For though I dare promise to my self no great thing for

⁶⁴ A reference to another series of devotional writings which Rogers composed.



continuance because I so soon turn from any good way which I have begun to enter into. This I may say — that I have espied in this time wherein for the most part I have used more watchfulness, except in our journey to London, than commonly.

I have espied, I say, that the most part of my life hath been very hoverly⁶⁵ and idly passed over. Great liberty I have given my self and with my godliness I well remember much slightness hath been adjoined.

Much froth is in our best actions when we lead our lives after so common a manner. I need not here set down the particulars which in my book are largely set down.

Looking back, I acknowledge that my course hath been far unbeseeing one who hath for so long given name to the Gospel, and that not after a common manner. Oh what had become of me if God had put me to my plunge in many trials as He might have done? For I had been utterly unable to have stood.

Would it might please the Lord to give me cause of greater rejoicing hereafter, and that I may keep in this hearty and sensible feeling of care, watchfulness, and view of mine estate that I might nether covertly desire to enjoy that liberty which I could not soundly approve to my conscience in pleasure and profit. And though my studies have not been greatly to be commended at this time, yet I am sure that my practice hath far gone beyond that which hath been heretofore. For my mind hath been all the day long with the Lord.

Sept. 12, 1587. My care in general hath continued as the last month I determined that I have been affraid to let go care and watchfulness as far as I was able to continue it. And to call to remembrance, I gave my self often to meditation, especially as I rode to Draiton⁶⁶ from Cambridge, with sensible relenting, as also much conference passed betwixt me and Mr. Culverwel at this time, about godliness — and that not in vain.

But much heavyness I was in by considering my want of knowledge. And this I briefly note, that I may show I continued my

⁶⁵ Lightly or slightingly

⁶⁶ Probably Dry Drayton, some five miles northwest of Cambridge, the home of Richard Greenham, a prominent Puritan preacher.



covenant. No rebelling against any good duty, but a restraining of my mind from many things which it was wont to delight in and which restraint was oftener and more used these past 3 weeks and few days than long before.

But this after noone I felt a strong desire to enjoy more liberty in thinking upon some vain things which I had lately weaned my self from.

Me thought it great bondage to be tied from delighting in such things as I took pleasure in, and if I had not either written this diary immediately, or by some other means met with it, I had almost been gone from this course and become as plainly-minded and idle as before.

And thus I see how hard it is to keep my mind in awe and attending upon the Lord in some good duty or, at least, to be strongly settled against evil.

Sept. 30, 1587. Declining this first week, I have sensibly found my self, from that staidness in a godly life which I lately determined anew to continue.

But I broke off.

Ether now or at other times, it were hard for me to set down the particulars. Sometime by unfitness and journeying my study is intermitted, and, except in place thereof my mind be well taken up some other way, even that is cause sufficient for hindering my purpose in proceeding. For I am exceedingly cast down when my study is hindered.

Other particulars I have noted at times, such as that sleep cuts me off from some piece of study, or the inordinate love of some things in this life makes me dull, unapt to go on as I desire.

In this time it cometh to my mind in what reverent account in many places I have been, whereas by the bishop's discountenancing of us who have refused subscription to the book we are more odious to all that company, and to such as they can persuade, than the worst men living.

The seediest minister in gifts may not only be hard against us, but may insult upon us. And further, they gossip against us to such folk as have taken good by our ministry and who, God be thanked, in more soundness of judgment do make account of us.



Further, I say, we have no great cause to glory in our favor or credit which we have in the world. But I trust the Lord will hereby acquaint us the more with the contempt of it. For mine own part I freely confess that it is the happiest time when I can set least by it. But the cause why I made mention of this change was that I may look for more of them, and count them no strange things even till my life be taken from me also, as well as my credit, countenance, and all hope of maintenance, if it were not by those few which have profited by my ministry.

This last week I stayed with certain of our friendes till the end of it allmost, whereas through taking good, I lost nothing of any good thing which I carried thither with me, save at the end, a little speech of some unkindness betwixt me and him.⁶⁷

Oct. 30, 1587. Among other meditations, this was one in this month: That I behold how graciously the Lord hath hedged me in on every side with that sweet knowledge of His will, in comparison to that which I was likely to have attained to otherwise. He hath given me other blessings, good will, and a good name with the godlier sort of people, and communion with them. And He hath given such manifold comfort in my life, and with His people, and with liberty in my ministry.

I looked back to the year 1570 and thereabout, and see how likely it was that all this should have been withheld from me. I see how I, before I had ether learning or goodness, might to have been drawn to marry and to have lived in that doungehil of abomination where I was born,⁶⁸ whereas by all likelihood I must have been undone both in body and soul.

Then this one thing much occupied me, that as I and some others of us here, have obtained mercy of the Lord to believe in Him, and to be comforted exceedingly by Him so that we might grow and that our profiting might appear to all men, that we might see in what particulars we were changed as well concerning knowledge and practice.

Somewhat in the right use of the world I seemed to my self to have gotten determined in this great abomination not to be

⁶⁷ Bitterness at the classis meetings was not unusual (Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, pp. 73-74).

⁶⁸ Marginal note: *At Chelmsford.*



hunting and grasping for more with discontentment or torment, or such affections as might hinder my course in godliness; wherein, since our last fast, I thancke God I may say with some comfort, that I have been better in watchfulness about my heart and life more continually and stayed, more constantly also in keeping that my covenant of wary walking with the Lord.

And surely God hath been very merciful to me in this time to awake me againe when I have been declining or growing weak or wearisome in well doing, to offer me occasions and many ways of continuance by good company, such as Culverwel. So that I must needs with admiration say, Oh Lord how wonderful are Thy mercies.

Then also, exceeding free we have been from the bites of evil men, etc.

Although, this I must say with much grief, there breaks out of me much corruption, though nether so often nor so strong as before. There breaks out of me by occasions, especially when I am not watchful and before I perceive it, some hard speeches — for I count them *so* which are not mild — and some rising of heart against Mr. ***, and some glancing back at my old sin. But in none of these do I abide.

I thancke God for His goodness as I have felt this month.

My study, as time hath suffered, hath not been unpleasant to me nor much neglected, save that I have been much abroad in good company and visiting the sick. Once in this while, I see mine untoward heart to my study; it appeared so gross to me that I twitted myself thus:

I, who now in a manner do want for nothing and yet am oft untoward to my book which is my calling, would think about that liberty and estate happy which I enjoy if the Lord should bring me low as it might please Him to do in many ways — in povertie, in continual trouble, abroad in all weather — whereas it would be dainty to have liberty to study.

And, except I labour to maintain a delight in my self that way, I look for no other but that the Lord shall cast upon me some gross blindness to embrace the world or plunge me into many grievous calamities or notorious offences, as I see with mine eyes that many have been thrown down because they kept not in their place with humility. This I desire to fear so I may never fall into it.



An other thing that I desire is to know my own heart better.

I know that much is to be gotten in understanding of the heart and to be acquainted with the diverse corners of it, and what sin I am most in danger of, and what diligence and means I use against any sin, and how I go under any affliction.

To conclude, I hope it shall somewhat further my desire and purpose to please God — which I taught yesterday (Exodus 18:21).

It is the work and occupation of a Christian to learn to understand the laws of God and to walk in His ways, and this should be the chief thing which should be looked after and from thing to thing practiced.

Nov. 17, 1587. In this time for the most part I have obtained great mercy of the Lord.

The first week was the worst.

I, going to speak a word for a godly neighbor⁶⁹ to a gentleman by, saw such unsavorynes in him in godliness that, though I confess I might praise God highly for a better portion, yet I was very heavy and dull afterwards even in good company. I see good cause to be thankful for not being tied to attend or to have much to do with such a man.

I visited a woeful creature, Bra., who was more hardened against God than anyone I have seen. No repenting for sin, yet despairing of God's mercy for it, and seeking to undo her own self.

She was not touched with any thing which was spoken to her, neither minding any thing but to hurt her own self.

This time I spent carefully with her.

After my return home, I went to my study diligently, and have had until now the benefit of the mornings, seasoning myne heart with prayer and meditation in mine entrance.

⁶⁹ Marginal note: *Travailed this day to gospil for Nevрман.* Laurence Newman, vicar of Coggeshall beyond Braintree, matriculated as sizar from Queen's, Cambridge, 1564/5; M.A. 1571.



I find very sweet blessing and comfortable staidness, more than I have done sometimes, all the day after. And the joining of these two together with delight so that I being seasoned both with knowledge and grace to be the fitter to other duties in conference or otherwise as I have occasion, I count it a sweet portion, one that I would desire before any other, for so I should not rove or wander after the world nor the vain delights, which I so often complain about.

God, besides all this, hath been very merciful to me in my sermons. For ether in my meditation of them beforehand or in my uttering of them to the people, sometime in both, I have been very well moved and have seen the same in others.

Great hope we have by our private company among our neighbors to work as well more conscience in their whole course as knowledge.

Also sweet conference I have had this time, especially with Mr. Newman and Mr. Culverwel.⁷⁰

By fearful noise of war⁷¹ and trouble in our land I laboured to bring my heart to a more near drawing of it to the deeper contempt of the world and sincerity through my whole life.



Attack of the Spanish Armada

⁷⁰ Marginal note: Newman. Ezk. Culverwell.

⁷¹ Rumbblings of the Armada storm.



Some savor I thanck God I have of it.

Many also strangely visited about us, some half-senseless, some otherwise. Methinks it gives good cause to us to think that God would awaken us and bring us nearer to Him. But among all griefs which this long time fell to me, none was like this: that so sweet a blossom, who for his years I never heard in judgment, discretion, and all toward points of a faithful minister, is taken out of this woeful world which was not worthy of him — Mr. Fennour.⁷²

And I pray God I may joy less in the world. For this cause I have firmly purposed to make my whole life a meditation on a better life and on godliness in every part ever of my occupation and trade, that I may from point to point and from step to step with more watchfulness walk with the Lord.

Oh the infinite gain of it.

No small help hereto was our whetting on one an other who being 4 days together communicated many things together: our wants, our poverty in the practice of religion, which thing yet we saw more apparently in others.

We spake about the favoring of our selves, and about what liberty we take in our thoughts and words, as also in our deeds, about how hardly we enter into watchfulness over ourselves against any inward or outward evil, about how soon we wax weary in our course, and about what a prison it is to the flesh.

Also we spake how we lose many happy and good days in familiarity and near communion with the Lord for the momentary enjoying of our fond desires and that hereby we had made our profession the less glorious to men.

That is to be seen in how slightly even the better sort of men beautify the religion.

⁷² Dudley Fenner matriculated as fellow-commoner at Peterhouse in 1575 and so would be only about twenty-eight at this time, which explains Rogers' comment on his "yeares". He was an extreme Puritan for his time, and withdrew to the Netherlands where he renounced his Anglican orders. He died at Middelburg (see *DNB*).



In a word, hitherto it tended principally that, seeing the Lord had granted to us some sight of the coldness and half service... which is in the world, and in our selves also being much carried away with it, that thus we would renew our covenant more firmly with the Lord than we had done, to come nearer to the practice of godliness and oftener to have our conversation in heaven, and our minds seldomer and more lightly upon the things of this life, to give to our selves less liberty in the most secret and smallest provocations to evil, and to endeavor after a more continual watch from thing to thing.

That way, as much as might be, we might walk with the Lord for the time of our abiding here below. These and such like things we communed about together, I may not say in vain, but with a great inflaming of our hearts far above what is common with us.

Nov. 29, 1587. Since my last writing in this diary God hath continued His kindness to me, for I have had a comfortable and sensible feeling of the contempt of the worlde and in study, good company, and other peaceable thinking of my liberty and happiness in Christianity. This so occupied me that I have not meanly thought of earthly peace or provision, nether of any increasing of our commodities, although God's hand is not shortned to us that way. I thancke God — except in wandering thoughts against my will, although with some likening of them about B***⁷³ — I have not had so continual a fitness and cheerfulness of mind to such duties as lay upon me in any manner as here of late.

And this is the benefit of keeping rule over my mind and bridling my rebellious heart, that whereas in the untowardness of it, all things taken in hand go forward untowardly and there is an unwillingness to holy exercises; yet by mastering it, my time in other things is with much cheerfulness and fruit bestowed.

The Lord also this month hath granted me the liberty of the mornings for my study, and to enter the same with prayer and meditation to the better keeping of mine heart and life all the day after. And especially, this I may say, that my idle wanderings after the world, my frowardness, & my other such boisterous corruptions have been much abated, though I see them rising at times, since I entered into this course of life more faithfully.

⁷³ May be either *bishop* or Barbara, his wife.



And this is mine hearts desire that I may make godliness, I mean one part or other of it, to be my delight through my whole life, as this month hath been a good beginning thereof, which in this time hath been no hard yoke to me, though at some times heretofore an estate most difficult for me to enter into. And this careful observing and watching over my heart in particulars I do far better like and go forward in than ever heretofore.

Now in this while one temptation arose, the loss of . . . (*illegible*) which began to go near me at the sudden hearing of it. But yet indifferently I stayed my self that it did not trouble me. Yet, in that I was somewhat moved at the hearing of it, being but the value of a mark.

I saw that the love of worldly things cleaveth so near to my heart that I must purge it out stronger than yet it hath been. And except that we had in our journey well seasoned our hearts, I know how soon any small ill tidings would have unsettled me.

And it is a thing to be wondered at that such troubles in infinite number, being incident to our lives, are in no way made tolerable but by the staidness of our hearts, yet that we should not keep them in peaceable and patient plight.

In this time a sensible weariness of this straight course-keeping grew upon me, but it had not the work which commonly it hath had, but was allayed and stopped. And I was well helped herein by meditation on Psalm 137: 1, which I preached about.

And so God made sweet to me that this course of purposing the practice of greater godliness more than lately had been in me, and that, being comfortable all that day, my study the next day for the Sabbath following was with delight exceeding. The fruit I saw the next day in my sermon and meditation on Exodus 19:5, with many tears and relenting. The savor of that was not lost till it had brought forth many good effects.

The day after we met again. Wherein I noted that the Lord gave us such like minds that we fell into most sweet and pleasant communication of our gain which we had gotten by our course betwixt us covenanted. And, having much been comforted by it, we were no less merry than 2 men might have been who had gotten some great gain together by a good bargain.



And to help our selves forward in this our good covenant we strengthened our selves not a little at that place (Timothy 2:4-5, very fit for that purpose) and we renewed our covenant concerning a more gracious and holy passing of our time, so that no common follies of this life might break us off.

Nether should the enticements of profit or pleasure withdraw our minds, though both of us saw that, with dealing in the world as others of our calling do, we could have increased our commodities not a little.

But we saw that our time and minds and travail could be in no better way bestowed than to exercise our selves this way, and thus to have to do in matters of profit no more than we must need, but to abstain and continue a delight in walking with God in all parts of our life, though godliness naturally be burdensome and tedious unto us.

For my part — though I may not deny that I have had a desire that way as much as many other men — yet it hath been so often and in so many ways interrupted, and thereby the fruit of it not seen nor any comfortable experience gathered, I hope that some years hence I might truly that I have grown forward according to this attempt. Yea, and allso that when troubles shall take hold of me, I think I should have cause to magnify the Lord in exceeding manner.

On my return home my mind on the road was taken up in very heavenly sort, rejoicing not a little that the Lord had so enlarged mine heart so that mine old and accustomed dreams and fantasies of things below were vanished and drowned. The meditations of mine heart were such as carried me to the Lord, and full graciously seasoned me against my coming home.

Yet, ceasing but a little from good-doing some way, I began to wax cold, the which grew upon me by reason of longing after Barbara(?)⁷⁴ wherewith I feared that I should be forced to remit somewhat of my former covenant, which to think about was as grievous to me as it was comfortable to hope for the continuance of it. And although I found gracious

⁷⁴ His wife. *Lingering afier is* used in this diary in the sense of *longing* or *craving for* (*New English Dictionary*, definition No. 8, where the first example given of this use is dated 1641).



deliverance again, yet I see that I shall be, without special grace, in great danger.

But thus it must be till our sins be better looked to and their strength better diminished in us.

In this time, once again I felt rebellion arising in me, so that I see not how one may safely grow secure and bold but one danger or an other may hold him from it, if he look about him.

In deed, I did not a little rejoice before in the late preferment⁷⁵ which the Lord had brought upon me and, least I should have been too joyful, the Lord did show me my weakness that I might still be holden under with it, and be driven to Him as in times past. And it was very good for me to be thus abased. After I recovered my self yet I felt remaining some print of my weakness in that I was not so fruitful as before.

The next day we met publicly with much comfort; and afterwards met privately with that company which came by course that day. We conferred, after the matters of judgment and knowledge ended,⁷⁶ about such things as concerned our edifying, and most of us went home to a neighbor's house where I urged them to see the necessity of this covenant-making, which I lately entered into. They consented that they had especial cause to complain that they had much decayed in fervent and earnest desire of pleasing God.

And this was acknowledged amongst us with tears,

We determined to be further proceeded with, and in a day to bring this matter into a determining about a remedy and a redress of the same. The strength of this refreshing carried me on with cheerfulness, so as I saw it kept me on in my way, and I well felt mine heart to be comforted by it.

The next day, at night, before my sermon day I was very sick 2 or 3 hours together. And though by means of pain I had no deep entering into consideration with my self, yet I was quiet and felt sensibly fruit of my former time-spending and had good use

⁷⁵ Unidentifiable.

⁷⁶ A reference to the official business transacted in the classis meeting.



now of that grace and goodness which I had obtained from the Lord before.

But my trial herein was both short and small.

I had good conference with 2 wise yeomen, O***. and F*** from B***, the day after my sickness, right after the sermon.

And this mercy I see: God hath given me to enjoy with some comfort, that, as in other parts of my life, either in study when I am at it, or in other like, as my God hath drawn my heart from much foolish dreaming on vain pleasure or on profit here of late and that with great contentation, yea delight, so I must not deny that He hath also caused me in company to make best profit of my time, either in seeking to take good, or in offering it — unless I be among such as are far above me in place and far off from my affections — with whom it is but foolishness. If any good talk be used at all in such company it is to small purpose. But seldom am I conversant or fall in company with such.

An other sweet conference at Ba. with much cheerfulness.

Now after this, as I remember, I began, by little and little, to feel the vehemency of my zeal and of my heavenly affection to slack. And, as many times since, my feelings of joy in well-doing, or such settled firmness in fitness to some part of duty, I felt only a likening and groaning after it, but not without some hindrance either by unfitness of mind or some little unsettling through outward occasion, such as about household matters.

After our meeting according to our custom this 30th of November I had a very sweet conference with Mr. L*** on the practice of godliness, on the necessary fruit, on the comfort of it, and on the way to bring it forth.

After, at night, we had a meeting at C*** bethinking our selves of how we might rouse up our selves to a further care of beseeching the Gospel, which was very fruitful. After this also I was in comfortable plight, feeling no hindrance from having my heart upon the Lord.

After this I was suddenly moved at a pi. (some money) lost, but stayed my self.



And thus continued till December 4, when 12 of us met to the stirring up of our selves, Per. & Sand, and others, 4 or 5 hours, with much moving of our affections.

It is not to be doubted that in this while that I could not bestow much tyme at my study, yet I continue my rising in morning about 5, and spent time either in my study, or about my heart, and the bettering of my life in writing this diary, and such like things.

I thank God, my tyme is bestowed so that I must needs confess with much comfort that for unfitness to duty, weariness or untowardness, earthliness, wandering desires, or any other inordinate carings of my mind, I have been greatly freed from them, which estate, being compared with my life past for the most part, now differs from then very much. I know it is a course to be labored after exceedingly.

*Dec. 22, 1587.*⁷⁷ The 6th of this month we ministers fasted betwixt our selves to the stirring up of our selves to greater godliness. Very good things we gathered to this purpose (Ephesians 1 :1-2) and then we determined to bring into writing a direction⁷⁸ for our lives, which might be both for our selves and for others. And, till we ended, all the time passed fruitfully.

But when we should end with prayer, while it was conceived by one of the company, I wandered, neither did mine heart go with the least part of it, which at such a time was no small sin and occasion to unsettle me. Oh woeful heart. And thus I am carried either with drowsiness and wearisomeness commonly at the prayers of others. Yes, I, who should ill take it that others should do so at my prayers.

I saw how it was with me in my returning home. But my heart was so unsettled with disquietness that all the 6 mile was not enough for me to come to my self heartily to bewail it and so to obtain ease to my soul, but rather hardness of heart grew on me for that it should be so with me.

⁷⁷ This date is evidently an error, as entries for earlier dates follow it. It was probably inserted at a time subsequent to the composition of the diary.

⁷⁸ The origin of Rogers' book, *Seven Treatises...*



Yet I sought to do it, and this stayed me that I durst not sleep in it and set light by it.

At home much after the same sort, at prayer heavy and uncheerful, more than I had been of late. And I feared greatly some unsettledness. But it drove me especially to this consideration: that we, having some weeks before purposed great watchfulness over our hearts, methought I had very slightly regarded or looked to find out any corruptions, ether old or new, in my self.

And great want and neglect of duty I saw in my self by this occasion — namely that I had marked little in my heart, no not now — immediately after it was newly determined betwixt us. Thus we had no need to trust to the goodness which is in us, for it soon flitteth, but to nourish good beginnings in our selves with care, etc.

And I thancke God it was good for me at last, though bitter for the time. For I cannot be comforted with any grace from the Lord, but I am soon carried to lightheadedness and so to lose it again, yea and worse. But I misliked this. And I rose up from this forenamed sin and my heart grew to former peace, and I to my study and other duties as before.

One of these days I visited a godly sick woman with comfort and also fruitfully occupied in the way.

And I had this meditation one morning, that, comparing this course in which I view my life continually with my former way — wherein I did it by fits and thus was oft unsettled, out of order, and then either not seeing my self, though I had been unwatchful, *sic* walked in great danger by every occasion, or, seeing my self, I could not easily recover my self, and so went unfit many hours and sometime days for my calling, and I was sometime dumpish and too heavy, sometime loose, and many such fruits following, as no study, but unprofitableness — When I compared these two ways of life, I saw an immeasurable difference, and said within my self that as this was the life of a Christian so I desired that it might ever be my companion.

“Oh Lord”, say I to my self when I deeply weigh the benefit of such a course keeping, “How little a man doth taste of the bitter cup of other men who run their course in folly and licentiousness. What should be so regarded of me, that for the seeking after it, I should deprive my self of this comfort and happiness”?



Dec. 16, 1587. This day as I do not marvel at it, I understand that by some envious persons — I shall know them better hereafter — there is a platform laid for my loosing my liberty to preach. Their practice is most malicious and shamefull.

Leaving the persons, I did consider how long liberty and peace God hath given me unlooked for. This is good reason why I should thankfully and patiently go under it, knowing that if it be His pleasure I shall enjoy it still; and if it be otherwise, the Lord hath done it, and that for my trial and my good — if I receive it aright.

Although it be the sweetest liberty that I have long been partaker of, yet I thank God it doth not disquiet me, and I pray that I may mark and see my heart resting upon God till it have an issue.

I did think none other but that after the sweet comfort which of late I have received more than in times past, that some cross was like to come. And I thank God who hath given me such encouragement as He hath to beare it.

Dec. 19, 1587. For this former matter, it hath as yet no issue. I wait on God, and am thus affected, that at the first I could not assuage my trouble which it raised in me. I saw it did hurt me.

After, it was somewhat eased, when I saw that, except it had been of purpose intended against me, it might please God to continue my liberty still, which if He does I trust I shall use it more preciously.

After the first night I stayed my self better, and so proceed in my calling as before.

Other things continue in good estate. My time chiefly hath been bestowed in study for sermons and in 2 conferences and in occupying my self about the gathering of a direction of life for to guide us by.

This 20th we met about conferring of that together which we had wrought of the direction to a Christian life. The next, well seasoned with studying for and uttering of my sermon. And this day in good plight and cheerful in duty at ether study or practice.

Dec. 22, 1587. And here in this diary these 2 months I have more particularly set down things — not to observe the same course throughout, for that were infinite — but where any part of my life



hereafter shall agree with any of this, which I have here set down, that I may make relation of it to some of this and not allways set down the same things again.

If question should come about why do I make account of mine estate to be better now than many years hence, I say, if I may hold out in this my covenant-keeping, that I may so observe mine heart that I may see my life in frame from time to time, I should then be oftener, and with more certainty, be doing good to my self and to others in my study, in meditations, in my whole life.

And I should be free from many falls, temptations, dangers, and walk continually with sweet comfort, etc. —whereas though I enjoyed all these before, yet it was at times only, not from time to time continually. For some times falls should be, my heart being deceived, and such unquietness arise, that in 2 or 3 hours, yea even days, I should not be in good estate again, etc.— much more dullness, unprofitableness, earthly-mindedness, wandering after folly, inaptness to study, fear of breaking off my course.

And though it please my God to make His yoke easy to me, yet I obtain not such liberty to live in this course but that I find it a straight way, and am fane to look warily to my self and to cut off many things which would hinder me. For when it is otherwise I am soon made uncomfortable.

Dec. 31, 1587. This may be observed: that it is a most hard thing to keep our lives and hearts in good order any long time together, but lightness will ether arise after we have had some measure of God's grace and comfort thereby, and this doth our hearts as naturally bring forth like as good ground abound with weeds when it is not kept in tillage.

Dullness is ready to take hold of us when by little and little the heavenly dew of God's gifts begins to dry up, which dullness yet cometh if we be not aware, and have not experience of it, and so be circumspect against it.

Both these have I been overtaken with, and that of late, even since I entered into this course. At the coming of the which 2 things, not at one time but yet altogether unlooked for, I was not a little amazed to behold that change in my self.

At one time cheerfulness turned into dull unprofitablnes and I could show no cause why. That was apparent till I beheld that



there is corruption enough behind to bring forth such fruit. At an other time our holy and sound rejoicing to be turned into fleshly and earthly rejoicing which would hardly be suspected.

Also I find that this one thing is like to be a great hindrance if it be not prevented: that we shall rest our selves too much in the means by which we are made godly, the ministry of the word, and good company by which we are stirred up. And much of our comfort shall be raised through them, and by them, as well as by the subject matter which we shall hear and learn through them.

Now seeing we may be cut off from these in many ways, how shall we be astonished when in forgoing them we shall be cast down from our former peace and fruitfulness?

So it may be said of our outward prosperity that for as much as God giveth us such great encouragement, we can willingly delight with others in things which are good. But we must find that our hearty embracing of the doctrine of God and love of it and laboring after a good conscience to find joy in Christ's redeeming us, is that which maketh our lives joyful, for this cannot by any malice of man nor devil be taken from us.

I had experience of this of late.

I find also cause to complain that whiles I have tried my self to meditate and pray at one time of the day by myself, I can hardly, though I have time, do the same in other seasons. Yet hitherto, I thank God, neither these nor any have I broken off, neither discontinued my covenant.

I was very well stirred up this 26th of December out of Proverbs 6:19, 20. We met next day at Mr. F***., at home. The next day I was very rarely stirred up in plenty and variety of heavenly matter about the differences betwixt the reprobate hypocrite and the true Christian out of Mathew 7:21 "Not every one that sayeth unto me, 'Lord, Lord'" etc.

We met at night at Barnston?, Stebbing(?)⁷⁹ Next day reconciled with Va.⁸⁰ These last 2 were bestowed, one at study, the other, being Sabbath, fruitfully and comfortably.

⁷⁹ Two neighboring villages southeast of Wethersfield.



Jan. 12, 1587/8. By occasion of the strange visitation of one of our neighbors, Mrs. A***⁸¹ I— seeing by much pain in my wife and near childbirth many likehodes of our separation — considered how many uncomfortablenesses the Lord kept from me hitherto by those which I then saw must needs come if He should part us, that I might more thankfully use the benefit if it should be continued, and acquaint my self with thinking on some of them beforehand, so that this might not be altogether sudden.

But alas this latter is hard.

- First, the fear of marrying againe, dangerous as 2 marriages are.
- Want of it in the meanwhile.⁸²
- Forgoing so fit a companion for religion, housewifery, and other comforts.
- Lose and decay in substance.
- Care of household matters cast on me.
- Neglect of study.
- Care and looking after children.
- Forgoing our borders.
- Fear of loosing friendship among her kindred.

These are some. The Lord may cast me down with them also in sickness.

The first day of this month I could not provide for my sermon as usually and was put to great straights.

But since then, I am well, continuing joyful in the keeping of my covenant, and not breaking it off through weariness or love of the world. Very contentedly I have walked in the restraint of

⁸⁰ Richard Vaughan, later bishop of London, was located at Dunmow, near Bamston at this time. He may be the person here mentioned (John C. Challoner Smith, *Additions to Newcourt* (reprint from the *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*, Colchester, 1899) p. 44).

⁸¹ Marginal note: *Lyings lik one senselesse, no cheere, nor wordes, which strook us that were present. Mrs. Arg. died Jan. 5.*

⁸² He had already resolved to remarry, and in spite of the danger.



loose liberty and licentiousness, which hath not been obtained in times past but counted irksomeness. So that although I must confess that I have had no great trials, yet I know it is a great mercy that prosperity and outward blessings have been used of me to good and not to idleness, and my time hath wholly been bestowed in conference and time spent in writing my direction of a Christian, and my sermons.

And this week, Jan. 11th, was our fast public, which I kept the whole day my self alone⁸³ out of II Chronicles 20 and Nehemiah 10:29 with good strength, God be thanked, to the end of the day.

Wherein I was muchly delighted with this point: that we must savor of, and be the better for such exercises long after, and so might well have been. Yet being the evening and morning after in company with diverse people, who, being from diverse places, could not so conveniently be conferred with in matters fit for all, and so have been the less heavenly minded to this hour, though no vehemency of affection any way but only not such readiness to, nor delight in, the meditation of the heavenly life as I hoped for.

But these offers to be weary therein do oft arise. I trust at my writing down of this that I shall still go through it.

Jan. 13, 1587/8. Grief hath taken hold of me in exceeding manner. For whereas I had no small hope that I should have been much the better by our late fast — and I prepared my self for it also as carefully as ever I did, and was very well stirred up and affected all the day long, and, excepting tears,⁸⁴ which in my prayer at the entrance began also, as pathetically as at most times — Yet the Lord hath humbled me since then, as yesterday's work is set down before,

⁸³ Marginal note: *We held a public fast yesterday, and I was driven to keep it alone, my other brother sending me word the day before that he would not holde his promise.* Public fasts involved public religious exercises as well as abstinence.

⁸⁴ An evidence of the Puritan's interest in emotional display.... Marginal note: *I see there was good cause whi the lorde denied me the grace of weeping in my sermons at our fast, which I had hoped for, seing I had been very like to have abused it.*



little to be rejoiced in after so gracious an exercise, so this day worse.

I have been very unprofitable the most part of it, and, in respect of the times of late, little good-doing at my book or yet at my studying day for the Sabbath, but I have more wanderings and more unsettling of my mind than I have felt these many days.

Indeed, no deep falling into any noisome evil, for that might have been monstrous in so short a time, yet if I had not in time espied, and found it out, and cut off the course of it, much unsettledness with answerable fruit had undoubtedly followed.

I was also inclining to much peevish frowardness, more than of late. It had been too much if I had been constrained to have set down this, that I had not some special fruit of our fast, but this which I have noted is much more lamentable. And thus I may see what staidness of grace there is in me — the best trial that I had of that thing this long time.

And what to say of it I cannot tell. I ascribe it chiefly unto 2 causes:

The first was that I, somewhat pleased and satisfied my self in my day's work, and pitied of others, as one wearied through labor, did the less give my self to grow up by the direction of the doctrine delivered that day, nor could not so well be occupied with the company, being of diverse sorts, as I am wont. From hence I remember, though I did not at the present time perceive it, that I grew thorough these forenamed occasions to be light, I mean not stayed with grace so sensibly as I had oft been.

An other reason was that on the morning, through sending away our company, which lasted almost the fore-noon, I omitted mine usual beginning of the day with private prayer and meditation.

And the next morning, rising late because of weariness, I began this wretchedness about me this day, as I have said. And, more than that, my mind hath much been troubled for that I have missed the fruit of our fast, and I have been unsettled.

So at this hour at candlelight I have not spent one hour about my sermon for too-morrow, neither could I peaceably go to my book untill I had somewhat shamed my self with this sort,



purposing the first day that I can conveniently, to fast again. I mean after my sermons to-morow to look after this matter again. Thus it may be seen what goodness I may rejoice of.

The report of sects⁸⁵ sore troubled me. . . .

Feb. 5, 1587/8. . . . By labor I have been tried, and especially here of late, that God hath made hard things and such as I durst hardly venture to preach of them. I have, I say, by using faithful means, found them as other scriptures, and beyond all expectation, easy, as Exodus 21, 22, 23, 32, 33, etc.⁸⁶ .

Feb. 17, 1587/8. Wonderfully unlike hath mine estate been here of late to that it hath been for the most part the whole quarter of a year before. . . . And thus by this which I have set down I may see that no man hath grace at his own command, etc. . . .

March 11, 1587/8. . . . Other matters were not other than common, save that we hear that our fasts are called into question.⁸⁷ . . .

March 31, 1588. . . . Unsettled at study through going from home.⁸⁸ For besides the great fear of wars at hand, and the departure of sundry godly brethren of late, which hath cooled my heart toward the world in some good measure, I do, with indifferent feeling, contemn the glory of this deceivable world.

This day I spent the half by my self to good purpose, but at noon cut off.

April 16, 1588. I would touch things briefly, seeing they arise to be many:

Study hath not been followed, partly through the unsettledness of my mind, which hath this time shaken off the

⁸⁵ The reference is to the Separatists, such as the Brownists. To Rogers the Puritans were not a sect, as they merely wished to reform the established church.

⁸⁶ Marginal note: *Natus est Ezechiel meus and my wife hardly escaped.*

⁸⁷ This was two years before the arrests of Cartwright and his associates, but complaints were made previous to that time (Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, p.74).

⁸⁸ Marginal note: Mr. Fild was buried March 26, 1588.



delight of it,⁸⁹and partly by being 10 days at London. I see in such times it is not well with me, but I am not able to recover myself.

I was in good case at my going upp, and made it my full purpose so to continue, and so did, till 2 days before my return, keep so. At which time, visiting the poor at Bridwel, I perceived, even before I was aware, that I was carried in my heart from my steadfastness, by litle and litle letting mine heart wander, and I was withal stricken not a litle, and could never since recover my self perfectly. Yet, for want of continuance by my self in one place without hindrance, I could not turn to my God by fasting and prayer.

I know that is the cause why I am no better.

Since my return I have been somewhat troubled in thinking I am likely to loose my liberty, and I would not be senseless about it, but yet it troubleth me when I consider it and rest not contentedly in God, holding that best with bold persuasion which He will have. . . .

June 6, 1588. . . . And to show at this time how I fell, the nearest occasion that I can set down was that I used my meditation in the mornings **hoverly** (sluggishly), which yet did not move me till, in meeting with the ministers, I took hard some words of indirect rebuke, and in prayer, conceived by one of the company, my mind was carried away in a most unreverent manner.

These things, laid together as I rode, troubled me.

And later some outward grievances took hold of me also, such as my likelihood to loose liberty and, which no less grieved me, that I must appear before a bishop.

⁸⁹ Marginal note: *Looke in my mediations, April, 1588.*



John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury

Also I felt doubt about changes in our family, and about the bringing of a teacher⁹⁰ into it. This held me half a day so that I could not quietly go to my study. . . .

July 16, 1588. This time still brings forth more difficulties and doubts about how I shall live in my calling and enjoy liberty in my ministry, more than any time heretofore.

For now, besides likelihood of loss of liberty from the bishop for not wearing the surplice, so now it comes in question whither there may be any receiving with an unpreaching

⁹⁰ Probably the teacher was named Cozens. In Rogers' will he left his wife the occupancy of the house " wherein Mr. Cousens now dwelleth." A William Cosyn left Trinity, Cambridge, about this time (Venn, I, 401).



minister, and whither we must cease from preaching being forbidden,⁹¹ and so other troubles and doubts arise, as to the lawfulness, or convenience at least, of that yearly benefice which I receive besides my ministry.

But none of all my outward troubles go so near me as this, wherein yet I have most labored for freedom first — that I can this summer no better settle to study, I mean for continuance in it, than heretofore, which is, as I can judge, my greatest grief. . . .

One day this while (recently), I was suddenly overtaken with hardness of heart because of the rain. I held from murmuring, but I could not like nor be contented with it nor bring my heart to it. This went to my heart when I saw what rebellion was in me.

I was then to study for my sermon, and nether could I go about that with such unsettledness of heart, nor yet not to go about it. My sorrow was the more to be idle. I purposed to bewail my sin at more leisure, and for that time to proceed in my study, and so I did.

The next day I had a hearty detestation of my sin, and so returned again to my God. . . . And thus may be partly seen my poor course in this pilgrimage.

The broile with Spain was well ended. I was nothing unsettled at the hearing of the tax charge which I was urged with, about armor.⁹²

⁹¹ See Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, p. 7.

⁹² It was customary for the clergy to be assessed to provide armor for the troops in time of war (see C. W. Foster, *State of the Clergy*, p. xxxix).



This 1588 portrait of Queen Elizabeth shows the Armada's defeat in the background

July 30, 1588. This week I have been wrapped in, I know not how, in foolish busying my self in the world, sometime fearing high prices⁹³ of things by reason of unseasonable weather all this soommer (summer), and I was thus, upon the sudden, disquieted and unsettled to think that we had not in the time of cheapness appointed our provision. . . .

. . . The next day, when our neighbors were gone to training 3 mile hence, of a sudden there was proclaimed⁹⁴ among them, when all were not yet come together, that they must with speed depart to the sea coast more than 20 miles off, so that few returned from the first place, but went on to fight (the Spanish),

⁹³ As a matter of fact the prices did not rise in this year, but they had done so in 1586 (J.E. Thorold Rogers, *A History of Agriculture and Prices in England* (7 vols., Oxford, 1866, etc.) III, 6-8).

⁹⁴ The action with the Armada took place in the ten days preceding this entry.



never seeing wife, nor taking order about their goods, or their business — which sudden thing flayed⁹⁵ many, and still yet we know not the end of their going.

Hereupon we consented to fast, 40 of us, with good grace, wherein I was very well affected, armed against the worldly pleasure. There was no such pleasure to me as that day's work was. The taste of it did sensibly continue with me till yesterday.

Then the weather, being heavy, troubled me again, as before, and unsettled me at study for the good part of the day, and that for thinking that things would cost dear, which, by a chapter of Ecclesiastes (5:9), I saw with hearty shame that I should thus rove after profit, who had so litle cause, and who for many years together had litle used so to do. I was ashamed of it heartily that night, and so do still continue this morning.

It is wonderful that ever such mist should be cast before one's eyes as to be so excessively carried after earthly things, and yet not to see it a fault nor one's self unsettled.

I have seen and said it of others, which, I pray God, I dye before it be verified of me, that many of our bishops and great clerics, as they are accounted, did never seem grossly to have departed from God till they grew in wealth and promotion.

Aug. 4, 1588. For all my endeavor to shake off love of world more than of late, yet I see I profit not. Though in that respect, as much as for any other, I fasted July 25, and especially marked that my course since might be better. The means thus hitherto have been too weak.

A little hay, which we have, hath more letted me this month, taking up my time, my heart, and troubling me, for that it hath been near lost by the weather, and I see if I had to do with such things I might give over study.

Further, such excessive care about provision as never I remember the like. . . .

And it shames me that I should be trifling out my time thus, whiles the troubles are so great as we are in every day and hour fearing them coming upon us.

⁹⁵ Frightened.



Many of my corruptions at this time I have felt and seen, all which, with the dangers that are, should occupy me otherwise. Oh the cheerfulness and courage in teaching that which I have been able, and now I feel little ability to stir up either our selves or the soldiers, to whom I would go if I felt meet to do them good.

Aug. 13, 1588. If anything may be fit to stir one up to the continual and earnest meditation⁹⁶ of a godly life, this may: that we are now in peril of goods, liberty, life, by our enemies the Spaniards, and at home papists in multitudes stand ready to come upon us unawares.



In 1591 Lord Howard commemorated his victory over the Armada with several such tapestries.

For my part, I am so resolutely persuaded that God will visit us in some way, that if He should not by some universal calamity sweep us away, I protest that I should be in a most woeful case if I should not recover myself better than here of late, and if I should not come to a more fruitful and Christian like estate than lately heretofore.

I mean both to set less by the world, to have less dealing in it, to spend more time in study, to prepare better for affliction, and to loath that detestable bait which so much snares me. For I have seen now that we should and ought 100

⁹⁶ Marginal note: *Nathaniel buried*



times more willingly yield to common affliction than we have done, if the Lord should spare us with His gospel, that our domestic enemies might not come upon us while our foreign are invading us.

I feel my self brought very low and the fruits⁹⁷ . . . should come from me to be very small . . .

In the camp, and was many ways . . .

Her majesty and to weigh her and our ... danger and to think that God hath be . . . n our then that which I saw there. . . .

Oct. 5, 1588. My wife narrowly escaped.

I saw then more clearly what benefit it was to have her.

I purpose to be more profitable together. . . .

Oct. 12, 1588. An other covenant I made if I might be free from Bishop as I have these 4 years.

Oct. 26, 1588. . . . And waking a little after midnight, I saw in my lying in bed that I was carried much, and in deed more than was meet, to think of my outward estate, how greatly the Lord had blessed me, till I perceived that it waxed too sweet to me, and though my mind was about no unlawful matter, yet I saw that it was nothing meet for me, but dangerous, to solace my self with trash, and that blessing which the Lord had given me to be an help to better, that I should now use it as my treasure.

And I saw that grace and heavenly matters must stand, in comparison hereof, aloof and little delighted in, I mean at that tyme in feeling. So I utterly renounced it, and gave my self immediately to contrary considerations.

And then considering that which I lately covenanted, to enjoy more heavenly communion with Barbara, so thereupon we prayed to that end, and came in the morning with much cheerfulness to study and meditation. . . .

I have been oft times well moved with thinking on our late deliverance from the rage of Spain, as memorable a work of God as ever was any in my remembrance, more than that of

⁹⁷ The corner of this page, which evidently alludes to the author's visit to a military camp, is unfortunately torn off.



Mounsieur⁹⁸ Blessed be his name for ever. I trust I have much use of it. For, even now and ever since, I say, as Israel⁹⁹ and I uttered it to others, "If God had not then been on our side, we had not been here to enjoy His blessings, but had been swallowed up." . . .



Entrance to Peterhouse Chapel, Cambridge

⁹⁸ The title given to the younger brother or second son of the King of France. In this case the reference is doubtless to the proposed marriage (ca. 1572) of Elizabeth and Alencon, who, being a Catholic, was considered a great menace by the Puritans.

⁹⁹ Marginal note: *Psalm 124:1*.



Detail of Peterhouse Chapel Door

Nov. 29 and 30, 1588. . . . In riding to Cambridge I was more unprofitable in mind — though in no hurtful manner occupied — and what, I perceived, did somewhat unsettle me, and the fruit of all this is sensible, and hath been in me: that sweet and heavenly savors and joy are not present with me.

God make me once to be settled continually through out my whole course, that neither my peace toward God nor my Christian boldness with Him be broken off, and that I tempt Him not to deal more hardly with me.

And to shut up the matter this morning in my meditation I read my diary writings from October, 1582, whereby I perceived how dangerously I am broken from the holy league which there I find that most faithfully I entered into with the lord. . . .

Dec. 9, 1588. . . . That which I have perceived most amiss in this time hath been some roughness, sharpness in my speech, and that much more than usual, to Barbara.

I have otherwise taken likinge of my present estate, for I have walked in my calling with much sweetness. Our dealing about house hath not unsettled me, my rising early hath yet continued. But I find my study much broken off in the day time.

My greatest desire is that my peace be not broken of with the Lord.



Dec. 12, 1588. Too long thinking about ordering of our outward estate to and from Bumstead¹⁰⁰ made me with less profit to be there and to return more unsavory home.

I feel it, but I am weary of it. . . .

Dec. 16, 1588. In this time God visited my wife, never more near to death, whereby all the former considerations, January last the 5, were revived. And this fell out in a time in which had been broken or discontinued the keeping of some covenants betwixt us made and entered into, as private differences, some harshness, not that pleasauntness in that behalf required.

I saw allso that this was much out of the way a week or more before, and waited opportunity to cut it off, but I moved too slowly. And though it was no such thing as was noted of any, or so much as betwixt our selves, only I saw that there was some abating of the affection which had been, yet I would not willingly see it so again, nor that we had so parted.

And hereby it may be seen that many of our oversights, which pass us without any check, do come to remembrance sometime after — with great grief.

Dec. 21, 1588. I find small comfort as yet after my covenant, for partly by thinking of our placing in an other house, and hearing that after our travail we are like to be disappointed, I was constrained to attend about that, and partly, because of my not rising early of late and then looking after the boys, I have been much unsettled; my time taken from study.

Feb. 28, 1588/9. . . . I was much quickened and made joyful by a woman¹⁰¹ of 60 years who visited among us. Besides her diligence in ordinary hearing and quiet living by us, she shewed little to be rejoiced in. But now, in her sickness, she should

¹⁰⁰ A neighboring village.

¹⁰¹ Marginal note: *G. Walford*. The Walfords were a prominent family in Wethersfield. One, Richard, is commemorated on a modern tablet in the church as one who donated some land for the repair of the building in 1574. Gyles Walford was prominent in the next century (E. Vaughan *Stephen Marshall*, London, 1907. p. 37).



set light by it, for the hope of the glory which was beside her tokens of hearty repentance, unfeigned faith, and great love of God's people and his word.

She rejoiced also exceedingly with thanks for her estate, with earnest protestations that, if she should be burned at a stake, she should set light by it, for the hope of the glory which was set before her. By the which we may see how, contrary to all reason, God helps His own, when it might rather be feared that the contrary might torment them.

I have perceived my self to be stirred upp here of late to more waspishness and bitterness of speech, than 7 years before.

In my fast this day I found, through examination, diverse blemishes in my self, which, if they be not purged out, I witness against my self that they remain to trouble me the more after this sight and acknowledging of them. Besides the 4 usual and that before mentioned, an other not the least is: the covenant betwixt us in usual private praying alone and daily stirring up to the practice of godliness is much neglected.

With small comfort I think of it, that either no amiableness should be commonly, or, if it be, yet no other fruit should come of it than fruitless earthly-dwelling together. I mean . . . (*illegible*) it, though it be not gross to men, then were fitter to be found in me.

Also I see much self love.

April 11, 1589. I litle looked to have stuffed my book with such matters as now to my great grief I see I must:

Since the last time I have been much after that which I have set down last December 21. And withal I have not reformed the abuse which was last of all set down 6 lines before.

I have not been settled since our first moving, though not so much desirous to take up my time or occupy mine head in worldly matters. I have been also this month much troubled with a vehement cough and stuffing through cold, that it took away both delight and ability from every good duty. Nether do I remember any month together this long time in the which I have been so unprofitable to my self and others. . . .

May 23, 1589. . . . I conferred with Den., and I perceived how he, after my sermon, observed that my gifts did not increase,



which I my self see, and it went near me that, ether in this or any other part of duty, I should be so wanting in respect of the days past, as that I should be a grief and offence to any good people. . . .

June 17, 1589. . . . So many thoughts stuff my mind: on the one side, some lawful, but yet either out of season or too long or too deep, some fond and fantastical. On the other side, unsettling with journeys, comers to me (i.e. visitors), etc.

But the chief is mine evil heart, which cannot settle to study, though there be no lettes (hindrance) to me in the same, that, if it might please the Lord, I could even for mine unprofitableness be heartily glad that I were unburdened, that I might dishonor the Lord no longer.

Oh Lord, what heavenly books lye by me unoccupied and unsearched.

And my grief is the greater about these matters, for that the Lord hath dealt so graciously and mercifully with me many ways, and namely in the liberal granting of outward blessings above expectation, as not to want.

July 9, 1589. . . . I remember no such bad estate these many months. I have set down oft how such distemperature arises, namely, by my being unwilling to take pain about the weaning of my self from secret outstrainge into unlawful liberty.

My purpose is, if God blesses us in it, to drive out this devil by fasting and prayer. God forgive such coldness. The particulars have been the scurviest of all the sins which I in this book set my self against, leaning too much and inclining towards them, but not abiding in any — only this excepted, that knowledge-seeking hath been for the most part neglected, except my study for sermons.

There is still fear of the loss of liberty.

Reading the writings of an other brother about his estate an hour and longer, I was moved to write, and to bring my heart into a better frame, which in the beginning was impossible for me, but, I thank God, I feel a sensible change of that, and will set down afterwards how my heart grows better seasoned.

In my journey to London I went and came and indifferently stayed.



There is litle hope of any better state to the church. Sudden dangers are greatly to be feared. We are generally so secure and so litle dreaming of them. Of many things, this presently grieves me, that I, seeing so much cause to mislike the gross course of many preachers, should my self be so unprofitable alike them and out of savor.

July 21, 1589. . . . Lord, say I many times, how litle did I think, many years agone, that I should thus long after have had cause to complain of my present wants in respect of the day past. And I fear it threatens more hard things¹⁰² against me hereafter. . . .

I further espy in my self much untowardness for study and meditation and to such like godly things. And, hardly finding the cause, I do yet persuade my self that I see some cause of it:

Want of a stricter diet, and the taking of too much liberty in God's lawful blessings, and a contenting of my self to keep a common course and my taking to much ease.

I do thus intend, God assisting me, to try what may be obtained in this behalf by a more spary and wise course taking.

For doubtless a filling of the belly and so plentiful a use of lawful liberty without watchfulness, fear, and regard, doth, if there were no other thing, bring great unfitness to all good duties.

And I know that, without especial grace, it will be hard for me to abridge my self therein, and except the Lord make it one of mine especial suites and prayers to Him continually.

Aug. 30, 1589. The first of these 2 weeks, being abroad and so unsettled at my book, and then also not so well seasoned at my going out, though I have no great things to set down to accuse me, yet, seeing the time was not filled with fruits of Christianity — even that is enough against me.

And yet I must say that I was not altogether unoccupied where I was. Save that after my return home, I was driven into a company, which is not usual to me, where the good which I got was that I was caused to glorify God in that I am so seldom with such people...

¹⁰² Marginal note: *Before this was wrote I mett Bri. in the way to the Bishop. Remember my thoughtes then, he—favor, I—disgrace. He with his two men, I alone.*



In deed, my time, through unprofitable and unwilling waiting, was so wearisomely passed that when I came home, and looked to my family and examined their passing the most of the time, I was neither soundly settled at my study nor at godliness.

I was not to my liking.

And so there was want of providing for my lecture, as I was account to do. Yet one day I saw, by spending 9 or 10 hours at study, I saw what might be gotten by continuance in shutting my self up from company. . . .

Besides, that which has taken me up hath been much dull and unprofitable conceiving hardly of my neighbors almost generally. Though not without cause in some of them. For exempting themselves from good exercises and fruit by them, so the most of them drone on very dangerously and palpably in the earth after their profits, with much eagerness and hard dealing one with an other.

The world seems to them as a new heaven. Yet I do not so marvel at them, seeing that some times — when the Lord hath let me loose to my folly — I my self have been set on such intemperate thoughts about becoming rich that for that time nothing heavenly might be looked after.

But to return, I was grieved at them — not telling them of it through conceited grief, nor praying for them through pity, but I kept away from them and had no society nor fellowship with them.

This estate continued this whole week to this very hour, 3 o'clock, when in my meditation I considered that, though their fault be great, this is no way to amend them. And I, saw it very irksome to my self to be so estranged from them, to be so without affection to them, and so unprofitable among them.

I stayed my self, purposing to lay open my mind publicly and as I shall have occasion otherwise, and to commit the success to God, looking to my self, that I may be no stumbling block to any of them, which, if it be taken heed to, I may allways have vantage enough to deal with them. And for my course of life among them, as I would be no dealer about profits among them, so I would not be strange nor unacquainted with them — for no good, but much evil, cometh that way.



I am presently well disposed to duty, without any vehement distractions or hindrances, but I am not, through mine own fault, in so high a degree this way. . . .

Sept. 20, 1589. Considering then what complaints I have made in the former pages, good cause I see there why I should pray, “Lord keep me in mine old age as Thou hast in my youth”.

It might be thought when a man hath escaped the dangers of his youth, that little fear is to be had of his latter times, for the which experience hath so prepared a man beforehand. But I freely acknowledge that I did not fear so much, neither saw I such cause in my younger time, as now. Doubtless it is few men’s cases to hold out long in an unoffensive course, and so, consequently, to their doe age¹⁰³. The flesh is so weary of penting in and so glad of liberty. And, though I have much bewailed the untimely taking away of some fresh, rare young men among us, such as Mr. Fenor, Cholmly, Axden, Deering, Feild,¹⁰⁴ with others, yet I see that for good cause we ought to yield to the Lord, if it were but for this one thing, that they might possibly have gone astray to the offence of His majesty and of His people, which would have brought an other manner of grief with it.¹⁰⁵

And, to return to my self, I would desire the Lord that my days may be ended with peace, rather than that I should live with reproach. Indeed, I must confess that my prayers are not to God effectual,¹⁰⁶ and for humility, meekness, and love. Thus am I soune

¹⁰³ Obviously this phrase is the equivalent of *dotage*, but this sense is not given in the *NED*.

¹⁰⁴ Cholmley was evidently located in Antwerp, and one of Field's correspondents (Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, p. 8). William Axton was a Puritan clergyman who was tried for nonconformity by the Bishop of Lichfield, and who later retired to Holland (Peel, I, 68; Venn, I, 58).

¹⁰⁵ After this word there was inserted, probably at a later date, the words *as Hold (?) Mr. A.(?)*.

¹⁰⁶ Marginal note: *Though a man pray and meditate and keepe a good course in his life over some doe, yet if it be perfourmed slightly, that the flesh prevaileth much in hindring the holy doing of it, he may perceiv it by the sway it beareth in other partes of life, and thus it be speedily amended.*



(soon) void of them, and for want thereof I am carried in a wandering, uncertain, and fruitless course, the contrary corruption prevailing much in me. For I see that I carry not my self in a wise manner towards all sorts with whom I have to deal, as winning them back again:

(1) Whom I perceive to be fallen from grace, and that with meekness and kindness, as in times past I have done,

(2) Towards those who have offended me, to pass by an offence as it were not to see it, which faith is an high point of honour, and not to keep from them and estrange my self from their acquaintance and so suffer them to fall further,

(3) Towards them who conceive ill of me, to sift it out in mildness betwixt them and me,

(4) Towards the lower sort to be lowly,

(5) To keep credit to my ministry with all. This I have been glad to do heretofore, but I see that it is not so with me. And thus I mislike my self, knowing that I do not labour, through love, to win and keep Men's love to the Gospel as it were meet. I mean so far as occasion should be offered and so far as other duties thereby might not be neglected.

(6) I know it hath been my delight to take opportunity to do good to all in all places, and I do not a little marvel to see my self so altered that I should seek my self, mine ease, my profit, which I have not done heretofore, with the leaving undone of all these.

This I have written, as that which most troubles me, to force my self, through God's goodness, to come out of this slavery. For surely I am persuaded that if my light did shine more clearly, and that mine example were seen more manifestly in all these — which are not of small force to persuade the people — that both my ministry should be of more power, and that I should draw them also to be better.

I am not a litle troubled to consider that long ago the Lord wrought much good by me, and as great a care also I had to keep my self in good care, fit to do good as I was able,



(7) And that I should now be dimmed to give small light, whereas, not only it is looked for at my hands, but I do my self acknowledge, that every part of my life ought to bare fruit.

As in solitarines to be least solitary, in company taking or doing good to my wife, severally to family, to neighbors, to fellow ministers, to all with whom I deal.

I want to be kind, amiable, yet modest, humble in mine own eyes, oft with the sick and afflicted, attending to reading, painful for my sermons, not provoked to anger easily, not carried away with conceights hastily, not wandering in fond dreams about ease and deceivable pleasures, not snared in the world, nor making lawful liberties my delight, helpful to those which need my help readily, yea, and all those I ought to regard if liberty of preaching were denied me.

The Lord knows that these, with the like, as patience and continual delighting in the Lord, my salvation, are the riches which I have desired to be furnished with, and to behave my self towards all, even such as provoke me, without offence.

And though they are but a few of many duties besides, yet rare are the times wherein I can keep my self to be fit for them, or the most of them, but I am holden back as though I had to look after them, which makes my sin the greater, seeing the Lord hath hedged me in on every side, that I could not have looked for, nor asked so many helps and encouragements as I have in so bad an age, outward peace these 5 years with liberty, plenty of outward blessings, little anoyance by enemies, comfort among neighbors —

I do not so much complain of the great evil that I do, as of the litle good.

Yet I see sometimes when I have fasted, or thoroughly seasoned my heart with good meditation and prayer, and when I have set my self hereby to moderate diet and regard of good order in every way, that I have felt and found my heart as well contented in such a sober course and in subduing all inordinate affections every way as I can wish, as, namely, this day fasting I can say the same, and the things which I am most deceived by and carried away with I am nothing troubled with.

But when I go from these to walk among many occasions and deceivable allurements, the former grace and strength is utterly



quailed, as fire with water is quenched, whereby I might see what cause there is to be in fasting, at leastwise in some such like exercises often, as I read that the apostle was.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a diary entry, with some numbers and headings like '29' and '109' visible. The text is dense and covers most of the page.

Folio 29A of the Rogers Diary

But when strength over corruption is lost, it seemeth to me an impossible thing for the time present to recover it again,.



And thus slow and unwilling I feel my self to go about to rouse up my self to shake off such sottishness, and thus sometime I am fain to give place, and to suffer my self to be overcome, and sometime, by some good occasion, I break through.

And, I would to God, when I cannot presently recover my self, yet that I might go about it by litle and litle, and so mark the strength of sin in my self when I shall see how hardly my heart is brought to yield. But to suffer my self to be carried away with any inordinate passion, and so to be made subject to it, as take over much sweetness in diet, in living, health, any such like, I see how they dim spiritual things, that they cannot shew their light as they ought to do, and are ready to season the mind with such a custom in dotage and sottishnes that hardly can a man be brought to do otherwise. . . .

Oct. 20, 1589. . . . And, namely, at this time, I, who having privately fasted the 18th of this month with our young men and the 20th with my brethren,¹⁰⁷ have, especially by this last, recovered sensibly that good grace, and banished slavish sottishnes about folly and vanity, and blockish barrenness and unprofitableness of life —

But, as it hath oft been with me, I must fear the dimming of this light in me again.

For whiles, after such good banquetes I reserve some part of the cheer, afterwards, by being much and oft with the Lord, I retain good use thereof. But, when I come to walk amonge outward objects and people, I perceive my life to be nothing answering, in my judgment, to my course in study and solitarines, especially I mean, dealinges and serious-minding of provision, conversant with profit, hearing of discommodity, and shrewd turns by several neighbors, cattle, buying things at high prices, etc. In all which, I think, I am as spareing and litle occupied as any one, yet when they come, they pierce and wind in unawares, and make conflict, and without great heed, dispossess my former peace. . . .

¹⁰⁷ Marginal note: *For our liberty. The King of Navarre (Later Henry IV of France). A graciouser course against the iniquity of the time.* The phrase *youngue men* in the text probably refers to theological students.



Oct. 31, 1589. I, being this week in Huntingdonshire, went out with our neighbours, 4 or 5 well-disposed men in good sort, prepared both for preaching and conference. In both I found cause to be thankful. For, beforehand, I determined fit texts for the places, and seasoned my heart with reading and pondering many good meditations which I had gathered together before.

We bestowed the time by the way comfortably. And at Mr. Castles¹⁰⁸ place, we abode 2 nights with exceeding joy and consolation together, and so at other places the time was well bestowed. I found no trouble nor distraction of mind by dangerous lusts, ether after the world or etc., which I took as a fruit of a mind thoroughly and holily occupied. . . .

Nov. 3, 1589. I, being much greived to see how suspension from my ministry is brought upon me, having had a promise before of the contrary. As it is one of the greatest crosses which could have befallen me, so I saw it very necessary to stay up my weakness with some strength of persuasions to rest contented and thankful to God under it, and prepared with fit readiness and cheerfulness to any good which my place may yield. As first this was one:

1. Seeing it is of the Lord, His will, and thus good reason it should be mine.

2. Seeing I have enjoyed my comfortable liberty so long.

3. Seeing I did not honour God in studying for my sermons at sometimes as I should have done.

4. Seeing it is the lot of other my betters, yea and a heavier portion than this also, such as deprivation of their living, and their imprisonment.

5. Seeing my beginning — how unlike I was, not only not to govern my self, but much less a part of God's church. I have no cause to take it hardly.

6. Seeing the iniquity of the time affordeth no better thing, but groweth to hinder and cut down those means which are seen to stop the course of sin most.

¹⁰⁸ Probably Robert Castel, Esq., of Glatton, Hunts., M.A. from Christ's in 1582, and a member of Gray's Inn (Venn, I, 305).



7. Seeing God, by this, meaneth to rouse me from making this world my heaven, which, as I am like enough to offend in and go Maying in respect of my corruption, so the rather for that many good men are deceived with it.

8. Seeing the Lord will exercise my faith, patience, obedience, etc. hereby.

9. Seeing He will prepare me for greater afflictions by this.

10. Seeing He would keep me from further corruption of the times, which might, by litle and by litle wining ground in me, blindfold my judgment and weaken that litle measure of good conscience, godly zeal, and courage for the glory of God, which is in me. Wherein I pray God that our coldness, in giving place to all that is thrust upon us, be not laid to our charge, while none stand up against it.

11. Seeing the Lord leaveth many encouragements to me, in respect of many other, both in the people's love, and in communion with them, and otherwise.

12. Seeing I suffer not, though the reproach and grief and discommodity be great, not as an evil doer, but for the quietness of my conscience (I Peter 3).

Nov. 18, 1589. I — perceiving my mind not so cheerful nor of so good courage as to be readily disposed to duty, and that by reason of my great liklihood of suspension — I did this morning, after the reading of some part of my writings, fall to further consideration with my self how to frame my mind willingly to go under it, though in itself most unwelcome.

I was the easilier drawn on to it by calling to mind how graciously the Lord hath kept me since my first beginning to preach, and though the times were, till these latter years, nothing so hard, yet nether had I then the experience of God's upholding me as since I have had. I resolved not to be unsettled through discouragment in the meanwhile from the hearty seeking after the Lord, nor unfit or unwilling to study, but occupied as I ought to be, of the which to have experience shalbe no small comfort to me.

And least I should be driven to somewhat whereby my conscience might be wounded, for the keeping of my liberty (for



the which God knoweth how much I would do which I might do) I desire of Him that I may lose none of my freedom of mind which I do yet enjoy, knowing that besides the grief which might come to my self by it, I ought to hold fast the credit which the Lord hath given me with His good servants.

And, if it please the Lord to free me peaceably from this which I fear, though not from loss of liberty, which I have small hope of, Yet from taking hurt hereby.

My full purpose is, God assisting me, to set upon a good course, as far as I shall be able, to regard my own profiting and the people's, with some clearer glorying of my God.

Nov. 30, 1589. As it is meet I should, so now, after my great and long turmoils, I, having some resting time, though the situation hath no ende,¹⁰⁹

I have here set down the sum of that which hath passed this latter part of the month. And first, though my grief was sufficient when I saw liberty taken from my next neighbour, even for the same cause that I was troubled, yet, when I thought that further danger had been past, behold I was certified of an excommunication against me, which, being not before feared, did the more upon the sudden go near me because I thought it would be a greater occasion of losing my liberty, rather than because of any person executing it upon me.

But now to show how it wrought and how I took it for my experience hereafter. I thank God, though I was much occupied in mind about the trouble and what unsettling of me might grow from thence with great charge and journeying, yet I was not hindered from my business the next morning, which was to preach before I went. Neither was I unfitter to Christian duties, nor cast down at it, neither moved with the reproach and other hardness, which might have followed upon the same, but I framed my talk in company to the same, that my meditations were by my self alone, to these ends:

To look to acquaint our selves with an harder estate than we had hitherto been accustomed to.

To learn to contemne the world more heartily,

¹⁰⁹ 53. Marginal note: *Deffered to easter terme.*



To cleave to the Lord more nearly,
 To delight in good-doing more joyfully,
 To love one an other more unfeinedly,
 To use this world more straungerike than we had done,
 And to be more lowly and meek.

These, with such like, were mine especial thoughts, speeches, prayers, and rejoicings, to think whatsoever they brought to pass to the impairing of mine outward estate, yet that they could not take from me my chief treasure — my confidence in God.

And thus was my mind occupied for the whole time, until I had mine answer, which the Lord made much easier than I looked for. So that I see my self wonderfully indebted to His majesty for the torning away of these outward evils which I feared, and of all others, the greatest which of late have come towards me, and that He hath turned them also to my great good.

For I can truely say, and having respect yet to my frailty, yet I passed no week in better order these many years — and yet I preached not, which is one of my best helps to godliness — then that wherein I was doubtfull what issue the Lord woulde send. My prayers were with power, and my course of life was harmeless and innocent and, as company gave occasion, notwithstanding my trouble, profitable to my self and to others. . . .

Dec. 31, 1589. The weather, being hard since my coming from London, hath kept me at home. And here I have been with harmlessness and providing for my sermon with good delight, which thing, with conference, hath taken up the most of my time, (Job 1 and 2), to my great stirring up and that of others also.

I do fear the time should have been very irksome to me otherwise, and much idleness and unprofitableness had been like to have occupied me, as I perceived somewhat betwixt sermon and sermon, but that the Lord chased it far from me by gracious helps.

My chiefest anoyance was from that common eye-sore, profit, wherein I would I were able to shame my self, or to fear my heart from such unsettlednes as breaketh out that way so often. There is no one thing more set against in my prayers.



I am never more uncomfortable than when mine affections do but even so much as secretly draw me that-way. The dangers¹¹⁰ I have weighed often, and yet I am holden that I cannot be free wholly to trample it under foot.

I know the means which I use are not forcible enough, but yet such as I can use. I am grieved to see that I should have any cause to complain, yet whither I must strain my self further, or whither the Lord will hereby keep me under, I wait to see.

And this is my poor course even to keep my self from evil, wherein I could the more rejoice, if it were in some new kind of trial, and not in such an one as I have long had to do with.

I have thought of removeing one especial occasion of this my grief and complaint, but that is with such inconvenience on the other side that I know not which is the greatest. But, if God slake it not, I will proceed so to do.

Some especial things in Job have not litle amazed me, shewing me my froth & favouring of my self, especially these two:

(1) That he lived in his greatest prosperity without delighting and rejoicing therein,

(2) That he forwent them so willingly and contentedly, yea and other manner of calamity than they were also. What grace did these things require in him, which we see our selves wide of?

The weather hath been so extreme that the mornings have been lost to me.

Jan. 17, 1589/90. The part of this month which continued till the end of the 12th, I passed, as before, privately and publicly in good sort, and to good use.

The 7th *nata est maria mea.*

¹¹⁰ Marginal note: *No necessity. Thus the greater sin. 2. Condemned of God. 3. Most reproachful to me. 4. The 'burdein of conscience importabl. 5. The disgrace of it unspeakable. 6. The grief of the Godly unutterable, the fleshing of devil and wicked ones unsatiabable. 7. rubbed . . . ing for ever. 8. and p. injury intolerable.* This phraseology is duplicated in large part in *Seven Treatises*, p. 488.



The other time till Jan. 15, the baptism, when Mr. Knewstubs¹¹¹ came, I was in reasonable case, save that ordinary study was letted (hindered), partly by neighbours' matters and company, partly by mine own unsettledness. These 3 days we two had very comfortable and profitable companyings in prayer and conference together. And, as it was my purpose to make profit of his company, so, for the better trying of my self to reap it indeed, I have set down some particular things wherein I desire to better mine estate by him.

First, in prayer he is unwearied, if it were to pass the most part of days and nights in it. In the which gift, though God hath bestowed somewhat upon me, yet I think for delight therein, oft use of it, and sincere, I see my case exceedingly differing from his, wherein, if I amend not these 3 points especially, I acknowledge that my sin must needs be great.

Then, his marvelous love to all in diverse sorts as the persons are. His rare humility, joined with so great knowledge and wisdom. His bearing of wrongs, his bountiful liberality with mercifullnes, where he sees cause, little account making of any thing that he hath, or keeping any stock, and his contentation in a sol life, these, with such a constancy in his whole course, to walk with the Lord, and such a preventing of the devil's subtleties that he may not be unsettled by them — I confess they did go near me and blemish my course more than any thing else long before.

For my own part, in every of them I have great cause to desire to help my self forward by them, and most of all to cast off profit, seeing he is free from all such with contentednes. I perceive not that any thing, almost, toucheth him greatly to disquiet or distemper him, but he so handleth and ordereth him self that he proceedeth in every good course and part of his life with marvelous fitness thereto.

This glass (mirror) I desire to set before mine eyes daily, that I may not be carried unsettledly by diverse and daily occasions and so be unframed, which thing to me is no small grief. . . .

¹¹¹ Marginal note: *The exampl of mr. Knewstubs*. John Knewstubs, rector of Cockfield, Suffolk, was one of the chief Puritans in the eastern counties. He was later a representative of the party at the Hampton Court Conference (see *DNB*).



Feb. 7, 1589/90. In few words, I yet continue the course entered into 20 days ago, with great liking of it.

My manner of passing the time, which is an hour¹¹², is in reading, meditation to prepare me for private prayer. Study is with sensible willingness followed till our meeting at prayer and catechizing or reading before dinner.

Afterwards, also, without sleepiness, lingering after any fantasy, worldliness, or wandering and unprofitable walking. I see so little can be read in a day, and so much needful. And so long time wherein I could not be brought to perform the duties of my calling in private reading, that though it should be no new thing for me to set this down now, yet I rejoice, and shall much more if I may see this constant settling of mine heart upon good things to continue.

As I endeavor to see one year thus passed, that it may be a glass to me for hereafter, I do now rejoice, so far is it off from seeming drudgery to me to think before how every time and part of the day hath its several duties appointed¹¹³ . . .

Feb. 14, 1589/90. . . . This evening past I was sore disquieted for that I saw not how I could renounce profit hereafter — and yet, without that, what peace can there be?¹¹⁴ . . .

March 10, 1589/90. I did, to my great contentment yesternight, by prayer late with my self and wife, I did commit my self to my God with a mind cheerily enlightened with more ample knowledge or comprehension of God, and so also this morning, beholding at large how a righteous man doth live by faith, as in Romans 1:18.

¹¹² At a later date the word *half* was inserted before the phrase *an hour*.

¹¹³ Marginal note: *As after prayer and meditation, reading, and therein variety, and then comfortabl meetings together, noone and night, and yet, for all this, the olde man resisteth and rebelleth to hinder.*

¹¹⁴ Marginal note: *October 4, '95. Remember to put in this place how hardly I was brought to release 5 marks which was yeilded me for giving up walfordes house to Hams. Yet I did willingly at last, and he gave four back.*



And no marvel this, for what will not he undergo and take in hand, who is persuaded that he shall be plentifully rewarded as among men. Oh, I desired that I might grow up in this, and avoid all lettes (hindrances), as breaking of study, one of the chief, idle and unprofitable walking, **barraines** of mind, and untowardness that way, liking of the world, or servile fear of trouble.

March 19, 1589/90. We having spent 2 day together with good profit, light in the text, I returned well refreshed, thinking — by that strength which I had gotten and withdrawing my mind in the meanwhile from home matters and other hindrances — that I had now been prepared to have passed my days with much sweet delight, while peace should be granted me.

And me thought I saw by the help which we had one by an other, that I could both follow my study with delight, and keep my heart and life in that government and measure that I should not be molested and disquieted by any unsetlednes of mine own procuring.

But, dealing homeward with boys and, finding matters of discouragment by the untowardness which I found in them, I was already much grieved.

Yet I recovered, and the next morning in very good case as before, but breaking of my study to look to them, seeing that, without some such duty, I find much uncomffortableness and deceiving of their master, I returned not settled to it again.

And in the meanwhile . . . (lucaena in ms) came in before I could, to my liking, enter again with the Lord as before, study for sermon came. And I found sensibly, for want of that speedy recovering of my self, that by this trifling occasion¹¹⁵ I sustained great hindrance from that which I so highly desire to go forward in. Thus this morn I stay my self, and seek to return. . .

¹¹⁵ Marginal note: *I have in purpose to remove such as will not follow study and duty without my disquieting and hindrance.*



Turner rendered this painting of Cambridge in 1796

April 5, 1590. I went out to Cambridge in good case and well furnished against falling, doing good as occasion offered itself. But, in my return, lighting upon one at Hars., weak, with whom I could not spend the evening as I wished, and, in deed, in the way (road) thither from Cambridge not minding things fittest for that purpose, I was, after half an hour, seeing no profitable course entered into, enforced to go forth and humble my self before the Lord to pardon that sin, and so returned better, though not as at some other times. . . .

April 29, 1590. First, what came to pass to my going up to London, April 17, then of the things which followed, to this day:



16th Century Map of London

To my going up I was well settled to all duties with ready cheerfulness, save that ordinary proceeding in study was sometime interrupted, the particulars, as continuance of prayer, delight in keeping one course of Christianity, taking occasion to do good, passing the time well without weariness, exercises in family, etc., not much unlike that which hath been set down before.

For the 2nd point, part of the time, I went out, well occupied with S. and with my self in good manner by the way, and the first night, and with To. And no cause was there of any other when I came thither, but yet I was there little to my liking.

I returned the 19th, on the which day my affection was, to my sensible beholding of it at 12 and 7 —diet. Worse after. Body out of frame. One boy at board for the most part hindering the redeeming of the time, though I may not hereby be excused, who, by preventing it, might have bestowed it better, but in that case it is so with me commonly in like company.

2 days I was sick, quiet, but not so profitable, weary in body and mind.

On the 22nd we walked 2 mile off, not helped to Godward, if not hindered.



The next day, going with N. and company about bishop¹¹⁶. At night lying 4 mile off from London, I passed the time well with a gentleman, but, walking also alone and desiring to enter into a deep, comfortable meditation about my state, I satisfied not my self, as of late I have done. Yet I had no great thing to accuse my self of, save only that I have been unseasoned with my being in the city, for want of opportunity of company not doing the good which I desired.

Journey home little pleasant. But after my return, to this day, little better. For I have been without cheerfulness of mind and strength of body. In mind, grieved partly for the variety of opinions about governing the church among the learned. It troubled me sore to see my unsettledness therein.

Neglected book. Partly looking for troubles, such as loss of liberty, conventing, oathing, uncertainty of outward estate in failure, fear of loss by brother, little proceeding in marriage and fellowship. I was not more unable to satisfy my self in this and such like, as profit, nor to comfort my self this quarter. . . .

May 26, 1590. . . . Divers times with Sn., Per., West., and my self, my mind hath very heavenly been exercised in considering, both by meditation, by singing Psalm. 119:14, 15, 16, and by, conference, of God's goodness in cheering our hearts with the bottomless and unexpressable treasure of His word, and feeling of His favor, and enjoying of His benefits.

He will condescend to such as we are. He will have us not to taste barely, but plentifully to digest, many comfortable pleasures, and that daily.

And He maketh godliness the pleasantest delight to His people, which to the world is most irksome and bitter.

Now I finding my self yesterday, for all the well-passing of the Lord's day¹¹⁷ immediately before —as, God make me thankful, the Thursday and that, at night, do marvelous graciously sweeten and perfume my soul, and bring my life in frame.

Feeling, I say, that I was not so fitly disposed to study, I set my self to go confer that day with my neighbor and to bring

¹¹⁶ Marginal note: *Talked with one of the privy church.*

¹¹⁷ Marginal note: *Thursday, sabbath, season me well.*



back my mind again from untowardness to my book. For, that excepted, there is no great thing of importance which need greatly cause me to complain...

In few words, I found good stirring up of my mind by our conference — which seldom is at our particular meetings without some sensible fruit and blessing — that though we were at that time more than commonly heavy for some unsettledness. Yet, I thank God, I was well refreshed and recovered my desire to study and willingness to renew my Christian course.

And, returning all the way home I most joyfully was occupied in thinking of God's merciful dealing with me in many ways, in liberty, in communing with brethren, in ministers and others, in marriage, in outward estate, in opportunity to do good.

And so I continue this morning with good fruit of yesterday's work. . .

June 15, 1590. . . . This question, about communicating with the ministers ignorant¹¹⁸, doth still spread further unresolved. I am careful in my journey to London.

May I be nothing unsettled.

June 23, 1590. I have sustained no unsettledness in my journey, but passed the time with fruit in good part, save that when I found — contrary to the word sent me by Sir Robert Jermyn¹¹⁹ — that my liberty in preaching was stayed by Stanhope¹²⁰.

The suddenness of it and unlooked for restraint, or short continuance of liberty with so hard a condition as to be bound over to consistory (arrested), this, I say, did bewray much weakness in

¹¹⁸ See Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, p. 17.

¹¹⁹ One of the gentry who protected the Puritans, a Suffolk J.P. (see Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, p. 61, n. 3).

¹²⁰ Probably Edward Stanhope, a member of the High Commission after 1587. According to the records of the ecclesiastical courts for the neighboring archdeaconry of Colchester he was the bishop's officer for licensing schoolmasters in the diocese (see *DNB* and Clark MSS, "Colchester Visitation" (MSS in possession of the Chancellor of Chelmsford Diocese), I, 47).



me, and taught me that my strength was not great. For I was cast thereby into a deep heaviness, which did stay me in mine own feeling from cheerfulness and fruit in company. And other people did espie it, as I was too much touched with grief in thinking that we must bid farewell to all our sweet company and communion, public and private,¹²¹ void of a preaching ministry, our people scattered, the bad sort fleshed and hardened in evil, and uncomfortableness to become our company in all our course.

And while my heart was wholly taken up this way, considering also that breaking up of my house and decay in my outward estate was like to follow, so I could not enter thoroughly into any resolute conclusion to welcome and embrace this hard condition, though the doctrine concerning wanting willingly, as well as abounding, have often and plentifully been taught by me.

But all lingering to keep or bethink my self how I might be freed from it... (the end of this sentence is missing).

July 17, 1590. ... I was glad, this evening, to write down briefly how this day, being passed in fasting, wrought on me.

This I find, that at my end my mind is well seasoned, chiefly by reading my own meditations, 40 or 50 of them, though I felt disordered and confounded very much.

If God will that it may continue, I see liking of my course, and particularly from one point of duty to an other. Which desire was quenched through idleness of mind and barrenness. I was well helped by the meditations in (my diary) from March and April, *Anno* 85. I see again that faith and godliness are the upholders of our joy, and make an hard estate easy and a prosperous fruitful. . . .

July 25, 1590. ... I stayed myself in the matter about loss of liberty, to be contented with it, seeing I have long enjoyed it, and lest I seem to men that my joy before was for my liberty and outward communion in the Gospel with the people, rather than in the love of my God and His Christ. To this I was well moved by reading a meditation from March 17, 1582.

¹²¹ Marginal note: *Thanck I God, who have continued to this day, June 30, 1608, (later) and 1613, (later) and 1618.*



I resolve to be cheerful in my life — which grace I felt sensibly restrained in me, and with it unprofitableness — and with the people of God.

And if imprisonment come with it, I have good hope that God will season and exercise me therewith some grace of humility, heavenly-heartedness, some rejoicing, freedom from sottish idleness, and untoward weariness of good duties, etc., which virtues in my freedom have been wanting, to my great grief, and could not, as I desired, be attained by me.

And as for decay of my family and my outward estate, I resolved not to weigh it, as it comes from the Lord. If I should live with them still at home, though without liberty, I saw many opportunities of doing good with my self and other Christians such as pe., we., th., nu., ha., cl., pa., la., wa., and still others. . . .

This evening, walking and considering how I had been wont, many years ago, to muse, with relenting, on God's love and kindness, which with much comfort I have long enjoyed, it grieved me not a little to think how new times offering new occasions have won out, in great part my meltings of heart.

These feelings, with sighs and complaints, were more sweet to me than honey.

With tears I desired that I might sometimes before bed recover that sweet recourse to God.

For though many good duties are performed by occasion of keeping a family, more than were, in house and out, before marriage, yet I would that I might continue sometimes that seasoning of my mind on evens as then.¹²² . . .

Aug. 26, 1590. . . . An other thing is that, in this likelihood of loosing my liberty and breaking up of my family, which is as much as half my substance, I desire of God not to tie Him to my request herein, nether to fix mine heart upon this peaceable estate which I have long enjoyed here.

I am ready to serve Him in any place and any state, yea, even in prison, as also in silence.

¹²² At a later date there were added the words some times I did. *Think I on them oft at Bed, winter.*



The 3rd is that I may live with more Christian fruit and comfort with Barbara in marriage, acquainting our selves to all duties, and taking all help, one by an other, both for mutual comfort now and for hereafter. And, because our time of abiding together is short, thus to take that good in it that might be, without strangeness and contrariness, with amiableness, to the which, and the rest, I have been much encouraged and stirred up by preaching this week on I Corinthians 7:29-31. (Look notes there).

The last, I desire to have daily before mine eyes the times and years past of my life, which do not a little rouse me up to care, if it were neglected.

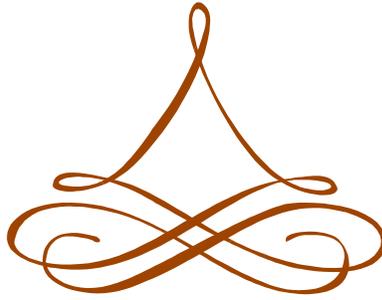
Upon these matters, chiefly, hath my mind been occupied in this time, and to come out of the contrary bondage. . . .

HERE ENDS THE EXTANT PART OF ROGERS' DIARY



PLATE XXXVIII. QUEEN ELIZABETH, 1588. Water-colour drawing by Isaac Oliver
Royal Library, Windsor. By gracious permission of H.M. the King

Queen Elizabeth in 1588



A Copy
Of
Richard Rogers' 52nd Sermon
On
The Book Of Judges
Published in 1615



THE FIFTIE TWO
SERMON ON THE EIGHTH
CHAPTER OF THE BOOKE
OF IVDGES.



Now I will goe forward with the rest of the text that remaineth, from the eight verse in these words: [*and he went thence to Penuel*] and so forth, as they are to be read before the last Sermon. Here we may see another discouragement and repulse that *Gideon* sustained by the men of *Penuel*: for he being with his souldiers faint and weary, was denied bread not only by the of *Succoth*, as wee haue seene, but by the men of *Penuel* also, as appeareth in this verse. For to them he went in the faintnes and wearines of himself and his souldiers, and had the repulse: whereby he might easily haue been tempted, and brought to thinke and feare, that God did not approve of his iourney, but did set himselfe against him. For so we are wont to conclude by the ill successe we haue euen in good attempts, especially when the lets be forisable, many and diuers, and one in the necke of another: as *Iobes* afflictions were, when among hard messages brought to him of other calamities that were befallne him, this was one that the fire

Vers. 8.

Notes.

*The 52. Sermon vpon*

of God was fallen from heaven, and had burnt vp the sheepe and the seruants, as if God had been against him. So that we may learne by this, that things sometime may goe so contrary to our desire, liking, and expectation, and that in duties which God requireth, and will haue to be done of vs, as if he were not with vs, but against vs, yea as if hee would crosse vs in them of set purpose. Our dutie here is to looke what God bids vs doe, as the man of God sent from Iuda should haue done, who was drawne by the old Prophet of Bethel contrary to Gods commandement, to eate there. But indeed the case is not alway alike, when such difficulties befall vs: for sometime we may more clearly see cause thereof, then at other. For it may bee the same mans case, at one time to doe a good action, yet in an euill and inconuenient manner: and at another time to be well occupied, and take a good thing in hand, and doe it in a good manner: in both kinds it may fall out, that he hath many discouragements. If things succeed not with him, whē he goeth about them in the best manner, that is, the latter of these two; What then? may not the Lord trie his faith and patience, by so crossing him? And in the first kind, much more I may say, what maruell, if the Lord crosse him, when he hath done a good thing in a bad manner, to the end he may call himselfe to a more due examination of himselfe, and amend that which was amisse, ere he take in hand such holy duties? It was Gods wil that the cleuen Tribes should fight against *Beniamin*: but were they persons for their true repentance fit for that businesse? yea and for all their zeale they wanting the principall; to wit, faith; that God would bee with them, did they not goe to worke amisse? was there not great cause therefore why the Lord should fight as fast against them (to driue them to repentance for their reuoltings from him) as they fought against *Beniamin*? And to teach them that they wanted meekenesse, loue and discretion to temper their seruent reuenge withall, that so they might doe the holy worke of God in an holy manner? Therefore in such a case let men be contented, nay glad, if God crosse them, that they may the better spie out what poysoneth their best duties and desires, as pride, rashnes, boldnesse, and learne hereby, meekenesse, humilitie, repentance, feare, &c. for God doth iustly suffer many discouragements to be vpon such, (as he did also oft times deale so with the Israelites going vp to Canaan out of Egypt, *Exod. 3.*) that they may stay their courie, in any euill attempts, and proceed more aduisedly and commendably in their doings. But it falleth out sometime, as I said before, that sore and great difficulties stand vp in mens way, not vnlike to *Gedeons*: wherein the Lord deales with his, as if he sending them on a journey, would make heaven and earth to be against them in their travels, which is greatly to their admiration and astonishment. As who would haue said that *Dauid* had been chosen of God to be king, when yet the promise thereof, was oft renewed and confirmed to him, seeing his discouragements were so many and strong that he met with whereas *Saul* came to his kingdome easily & without trouble? And in such cases, wherein we haue so much to dismay vs, yet Satan is cuer at hand also, to worke vpon our weakenes, and to set vs much more backward, especially when wee shall bee brought to thinke, Gods deeds seeme contrary to his words and promise, as the death of the Shunamites child, which yet had bin giuen her as an vnlooked for blessing.

Now

1. King. 13. 19.

Iudg. 20.

Exod. 3. 19.



the Booke of Iudges.

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Now when it pleaseth God to trie vs, by seeming to set such barres in our waies, few of vs are wise enough to see, or at least, rightly to consider, why it is thus with vs, and why God suffereth things so to trouble vs: but as though wee had thereby iust cause to complaine of his doing, and to expostulate Note. with him; we begin to doubt how he wil make good his promise to vs, and whether we may go forward in the good course in which we haue begun: yea, and we are impatient (perhaps) or much disquieted at the least, (if we doe not also fret and fume) and so are discouraged from our good beginnings. Whereby we may see our froth rather then faith, which seemed before to bee good substance, and feele the stinck of our vnsauourie hearts, which vpon small occasion cast out such euill smells. And yet herein wee differ from *Gedeon*, that, as he was found in his discouragements and crosses to be of farre greater courage and confidence then wee; so his trial was in great matters, and ours but in trifles for the most part.

And not onely when wee bee crossed and hindred in good actions we do thus, but if we haue but some one let in our way, as euen in our common businesse, such distemperature, as I haue spoken of, shall possesse vs: or if we haue lost something, though of small vales, yea though it be but only missing and out of the way: or if we be hindred by the weather which is ordinary, or (as oft it falleth out) through our own rashnesse only, as when we Note. do but stumble and hurt our foot against a stone, what should we then bee like to do, if in going about any duty, we should haue so many and great lets in the way, and crossings of vs, as may easily meet with vs, and those also as it were sent from God to resist vs? It is therefore the singular and onely grace of God to inable vs to belieue and bee perswaded, that hee doth oft times such things to trie vs, and that we may shew forth the grace of faith and patience that is in vs; and therefore we are to hold our peace, seeing he hath done it. And such hinderances and crossings fall out sometimes, when we are going to prayer priuately, or in our familie, or to the hearing of the word preached, or to receiue the sacrament, &c. from which no wise body will say, we should be withdrawne by any pretence, as though wee pleased not God therein, seeing euen in them some lets do rise vp in the way to hinder vs. And the like we may obserue in those discouragements which are from within our selues. For example, when a Minister in his course of preaching, shall find ill measure at the hands of others, whose good he most seeketh, while they see not the purpose of God toward them; (as *Moses* did by the Israelites when he was first sent vnto them, *Exod. 6.*) or if they shall Exod. 6.9. but despise Gods providence toward them, as the Pharisees are said to haue Luke 15. 12. done, how (thinke we) is this like to worke vpon him? or (which is more) if he shall feele within himselfe great vnsitnesse, as *Moses* did, *Exod. 3.* and Exod. 3. 10. some vnwillingnesse, deadnesse, drouinesse, or want of assistance from God in discharge of the worke of his ministry, (all which are great dampings to a man, who hath vsed the best meanes to furnish himselfe both with knowledge and conscience) and yet euen the best sometimes haue the proofe hereof in themselves. What thoughts (thinke we) are like to arise in him in such a case? Therefore if a man looke not for these, and if he be not resolued before hand, that such quailings of him may fall out, and also if hee be not armed against the temptations which may arise therefrom, it is wonderful,



The 52. Sermon vpon

how the diuell may weaken his faith, and zeale, and slacken his purpose of diligence in the Lords worke. But on the other side, it is such a case hee be able to stay himselfe by considering that such trials are vsual (more or lesse) to the best seruants and Ministers of God, (and alway haue been) who haue their ebbings as well as their flowings, (as *Eliah*, *Paul*, yea our Saviour himselfe had strong discouragements,) what a singular benefit is this? Much more, if he hauing overcome the first onset, shall in the second place meditate of the end which the Lord hath in abusing him thus, (he being occupied in Gods owne worke) and that is, that hee may teach him humilitie, yea how to flee out of himselfe and depend immediatly vpon the Lord for sufficiency and assistance, and not trust to his own wit, study, memory, tongue, or gifts, (which others make their onely refuge, and therefore are often disappointed) oh what gain shall he reape thereby, and say with *Paul*, I am neuer fitter for Gods seruice then when I am lowest in mine owne opinion: hereafter therefore if I boast, I wil boast of mine owne infirmities, as the Apostle speaketh, in which the glory of God is most perfected and advanced.

2. Cor. 12. 9.
Verf. 9.

Gedon receiuing the like discourtesie and rude answer of the men of *Peuel*, as he had before of the men of *Succoth*, doth in like manner threaten them the throwing downe of their tower in which they so much gloried. And this threatening, (seeing it was afterward put in execution, was a crosse and discommoditie: which they did needlesly and by their owne sin bring vpon themselves. By which we may see, that many are authors and causers of their owne sorrow and trouble, which need not haue been, and that by their sinne, as stoutnesse, wilfulnesse, stiffneckednesse, and other vndutifulnesse, and rude behauiour, they doe (I say) bring vnseasonable affliction vpon themselves, euen as these men of *Succoth* and *Peuel* here did. Wee know that peace with men, to liue without feare by them, is a great benefit, and soone lost, and hardly recouered, men being wolues and lionlike one to another, especially if they be prouoked, and most of all, when they haue authoritie and superioritie one ouer another, and so may iustly vex them who shall fall into their hands, by their wicked deserts and leaud behauiour. Therefore all should take heed how they prouoke one another in the least maner, as these did here.

Gal. 5. 15. ff.

But lamentable it is, that the most men make breaches of their peace, and losse of their commodities, by rigour, crueltie, and by an high mind, and proud heart, not bearing the least iniurie, but bending themselves by and by to reuenge, looking for all good measure to bee offered them by others, but yeelding little or no kindnesse againe: which perversenesse is also euen betwixt many couples in the married estate, which causeth continuall iarring and vnquietnesse, whereas peace (a man would thinke) were fitter to be seene both betwixt them and all other, whom I speake of. Which they are commanded to seeke with all men, as much as in them lieth, yea and to pursue and follow it, though it flee from them, yea and to buy peace, though it cost them somewhat, but not to sel it at any hand, much lesse for trifles. Thus *Abraham* bought his peace of *Lot*. And let men learne to this end to know and consider what they are; to the pulling downe of their peccocks feathers, euen earth, earth, earth, and if they bee weighed in an equall ballance, farre worse then nothing. But of this I speake in verse 4. of this Chapter.

Heb. 12. 14.

Genes. 13. 9.

Gedon



the Booke of Iudges.

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Gedeon goeth forward after the rest of the Midianites, and findeth them resting themselves in Carkor which was in the precinct of the Israelites; from whence they hoped to passe after that night, and so to escape. But *Gedeon* came upon them on the backside of these two cities, Iogbeah in the Tribe of *Gad*, Num. 32. and *Nobah* in the halfe Tribe of *Manasseh* being hard by, Num. 32. And so the two Princes were suddenly stricken with astonishment and feare, and flying were taken, and the host smitten and slaine: with whom were many hangbics, as scullions and such like that followed the army. And in that it is said, that hee returned backe with the two Princes when the Sunne was risen, it appeareth that the warre betwixt them was begun in the night, and in the same night was ended.

By this latter victory of *Gedeon*, it is manifest, what great things through Gods blessing are brought to passe by faith, and the diligence, and unweariednesse of men in their callings. This is the maine point contained in these verses. Whereas delay and sloth (for I put them together to shew what delays I meane) are alwaies dangerous, euen as here if *Gedeon* had tarried to rest himselfe but one night by the way, hee had lost all his labour, and the fruit of it, to wit, the destroying of these Midianites. So God to the diligent hath promised his blessing, and good successe as *Gedeon* here found it. The men of *Sueoth* and *Penuel* laughed him to scorne, but hee looked to God, and had an eye to his promise, which was, that he would giue them into his hands: and yet (as we see) he was neuer awhit the bolder to presume thereof, without diligent vsing of the meanes. It was as vnlike, (nay much more vnlikely) that *Dauid* should haue smitten downe *Goliath*, that *Neb* should haue saved the world by the Arke: and many other such things to haue bin brought to passe, as the conquering of the Nations by *Ioshua*: but they all, when they belieued God, that he would doe that which he promised, went to worke with great care and diligence to serue Gods prouidence, seeing he wrought by meanes (as he doth still) and so they preuailed, and obtained that which they fought.

And this was the power of God through faith, they trusting and resting in him through the Mediator to come, so it is no lesse in vs, (for I will briefly apply it againe, though I haue stood largely on this point before, a new occasion being offered) that we outgrow many lets and discouragements by the same our faith, though wee bee pritic that there is otherwise nothing in vs, and that (when sometimes it hath seemed to vs almost impossible) the Lord hath done much for vs, and wrought great things by vs, while wee haue, although but weakely and poorly gone to work, whether we respect our faith, or our labour, which is the fruit of it. And we hauing been diligent to approue our selues in both, we haue found the truth of that Scripture verified in vs, which saith, that faith ouercometh the difficulties that are in the world; and haue growne to the contempt of many finnes, and the subduing of them, in great measure, which had sometime preuailed against vs; and to be better heartned against afflictions, and to get strength of hope by experience for the time to come. But to see how loone *Moses*, *Ioshua*, and *Gedeon* here grew strong in faith, as in a few daies, which we are going about many yeeres, this ought as to humble vs, for that we are so farr behind them, so to encourage vs, looking duly vnto this, how gracioullie God

Ver. 10. 11.
12. 33.
The cleauiug of
the veise.

Num. 32. 35.
& 32. 42.

Doth out of all
these verses.

2 Sam. 17. 51.
Heb. 11. 7.

Ioshua 10. 40.

1. Iohn 5. 4.

Num.
Rom. 10. 4.

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assisted them. And so (to apply this to the Sacrament) we have communion with God and with Christ therein, and are much confirmed thereby in the covenant he hath made with vs, by our diligence and faithfulness in preparing our selues thereto, which they that beleue not think absurd, and more then needs, to looke after. And to conclude this point (seeing I haue shewed the necessitie of it, and the euill and hurt that falleth out on the contrary, I meane by loosenesse, idlenesse, and vnbeliefe, in Christians, by many occasions heretofore) this I adde, that the cause of so great difference in the degree and measure of grace and goodnesse, which wee obserue in many professors, is this, that some are painfull in hearing, vsing good companie, marking, with their hearts deeply set vpon the same, remembering, and making vse of their knowledge, watching thereunto with prayer, &c. whereas others comber theselues so much with other matters, that there is no roome or leisure left for these. They looke to thriue spiritually, whether they take paines or no, sleeping or working. It is a true saying of a Father, sit to be vrged vpon such: *He that made thee without thee, will not save thee without thee.* He will not saue thee for thy labours sake, but by thy labour. They that gathered more Manna then their fellowes, got nothing thereby: but it saerth otherwise here: gather much and haue much, labour little and haue little, euen as the Apostle speaketh of another thing on the contrary, he that soweth sparingly, shall reape sparingly. As we mete to the Lord, so will he measure out to vs againe. He that laboureth not, eateth not: but he that laboureth much, enioyeth the fruite thereof: some thirtie, some sixtie, some an hundred fold: euen as his diligence is. Oh it is strange to see how men set themselues to work in earthly businesse, wherein yet they haue no absolute promise of thriuing, because faith the chiefe help is wanting, but here where the Lord hath tyed himselfe to blesse their labour with abundance, men haue no list to stirre. A mediocritie of wealth contenteth few, and that maketh them so endlesse and restlesse in their desires and trauailes: but the commonest measure of grace pleaseth them best, because that is gotten with least trouble. It is fearefull that men should doe so much for the fulfilling of their lusts: and so little that they might excell in goodnesse. But their reward is thereafter. And in the meane season God puts as great difference betwix such, as there is betwene *Alexander, Cesar* or the like Captaines (who were vnweatied also in their conquests) and *Gedron*, or others like, who fought the Lords battels, and laboured therein by faith in his promises. Now it followeth.

Note.

Note.

14 *And tooke a seruant of the men of Succoth, and enquired of him, and hee wrote to him the Princes of Succoth, and the Elders thereof, euen seuentie and seven men.*

15 *And he came vnto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold Zeba and Zalmunna, by whom ye vprayed me, saying, Are the hands of Zeba and Zalmunna already in thy hands, that we should giue bread vnto thy wearie men?*

16 *Then he tooke the Elders of the citie, and thornes of the wildernesse, and brought, and did teare the men of Succoth with them.*

17 *Also he brake downe the tower of Penuel, and slew the men of the citie.*

Now



the Booke of Judges.

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NOW in these verses following it is shewed that when *Gedeon* had taken the Princes of Midian, and was returned to Succoth, he seeks diligently to know the names of the chiefe men and Elders thereof: and he brought and shewed the Princes *Zeba* and *Zalmunna* vnto them: for hee kept them aliae, not to make his boast of them, but that he might shew them that God had deliuered them into his hands, as hee made no doubt thereof before, that so they might be the more ashamed and accused for that which they had done to him and his men, in denying them bread. And thereupon hee did vnto them as he had threatned, for he tare their flesh, to wit, of them of Succoth, with the thornes and briers of the wilder nesse: and then overthrew the tower of the men of Penuel, and slew the citizens, either because they insulted more arrogantly then the men of Succoth did, or else because they resisted *Gedeon*, trusting in their tower, and so were slaine. Whether they of Succoth died by the paine & punishment, (as it is most like) or whether their flesh was onely torne, and yet life remaining in them, though the storie doth not declare; yet we cannot be ignorant, how sore and extreame the paine was. What kinde of execution was done vpon the men of Penuel themselves in putting them to death, the storie setteth not downe, but as it is sure they were slaine, so it is (not without good probabilitye) that the other were torne to death also.

Ver. 14, 15, 16, 17.

Gedeon meeting this young man, causeth him to set downe the names of the chiefe Elders and gouernours of Succoth in writing, (as it might be the names of the Aldermen and citizens) for he would not trust his owne memorie in so waightie a matter. And this hee did, because hee would not flie vpon any in rashnes and anger, and would be sure by that his aduised deliberation, to punish onely those who were guiltie, and those were the ancients of the cite. As *Salomon* also was very attentiu in hearing the cause of the harlots. To teach vs our dutie in this point, that when any fall into our hands to be corrected by vs, wee doe not at any time hastily in an angrie mood, and without due consideration, vie correction, but weigh the cause rightly, and not reuenge our selues, by satisfiing our brutish affections vpon the persons: yea and to let them also see iust cause why they be corrected. And in this wee resemble the Lord himselfe, of whom *Abraham* saith, *It is farre from the Iudge of the whole world to destroy the righteous with the wicked.* *Gen. 18. 25.*

The clearing of verse 14.

1 King. 3. 23.

Doct.

Gen. 18. 25.

It is an hard thing to be ruled by the word of God in correcting others, whereas flesh looketh to nothing, but to the will and reuenge of it selfe, and not to the bettering of the partie, and the good example of other, and discharge of a good conscience before God. Therefore *S. Paul* hath giuen a good rule to all by teaching one kind of correcters, namely fathers, that they should not be bitter to their children: euen as *Achan* in a waightie case was wisely handled, and kindly dealt with by *Ioshua* in a matter of life and death, and was regarded in, and concerning his soule, when sore punishment was inflicted vpon his bodie. Sundrie waies doe men shroud this cursed humour, vnder the false habit of zeale or lawfull seueritie: sometime to couer their ambition, as *Iehu* in killing *Ahabs* posteritie; sometime couetousnes, as *Saul* in slaying some of the Amalekites: sometime pride and reuenge, as the Israelites in warring vpon the Beniamites. All of them failed of the ground,

Col. 3. 14.

Ios. 7. 19.



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end, manner or measure in executing the correction: all which being neglected, and not obserued, doth marre the action, be it neuer so lawfull in it selfe, and necessarie. As when the offending partie seeth not the cause of his correction, or is cruelly handled by the correcter, who maketh not the end of his correction or punishment to be the sauing of the partie, and to make the sinne odious that he is punished for, and the same an example to other. And here is iustly condemned the doing of them who say, they cannot correct but in anger, and while their hearts are exasperated against the partie, as if they should say, they can neuer doe it rightly or without sinne, whereas God saith, *Be angrie, but sinne not*: for anger doth nothing well. Although what needs the word of God or the examples of the Saints hee vsed to shame them, whom heathens may shame? Of whom some prescribe rules to such as are angrie, how they may bridle anger from rash outrage: and one among the rest told his seruant, I had surely beaten thee, but that I was angrie. This doctrine is to be applied to Magistrates, Parents, Schoolemasters, and other superiors, namely step-mothers, and such as haue rule ouer poore orphanes, or any other, whom it litle becommeth to excuse their own corruption by the fault or desert of the partie guiltie: who though hee haue but his due, yet the punisher being no fit person to reuenge by his intemperate heate, may deserue a greater punishment at Gods hand, euen of a murderer (in heart) of his brother. And we see the effect of such seueritie, is to make the partie corrected to contemne it, and waxe desperate, not penitent, which is the peruerting of the right end of correction.

Note.

Ephes. 4. 26.

Ysa. 54.

By *Gedeons* shewing of these Princes to the men of Succoth and Peniel, to their shame and astonishment (who thought they had beene farre enough out of their hands, and therefore scoffed at his pursuing and following after them) I say, by this, wee may note how God oft times turneth the taunts, flouts, threatnings, curses, and iniuries which the wicked doe vexe Gods children withall, he turneth them to their owne shame and euill, and to the comfort of his owne people so abused and wronged by them: as here these mocked *Gedeon*, liuing and walking according to the life of faith, and going about the Lords worke carefully: who now hauing overcome the Midianites thereby, these wicked mockers are put to shame and paine, yea and to death also. And in like manner it fell out to *Shemei* when he had cursed *Dauid*, to *Zenacherib* scorning at *Ezechias*, for trusting in his God, yea and for blaspheming God himselfe, also to the Pharisees who scorned Christ vpon the Crosse, but after his resurrection were abashed, and to *Haman* deadly hating *Mordecai* the faithfull seruant of God. Now if this appeare thus often times euen here in this world, how much more at the comming of the solemne and great day, when God shall iudge them? For when they see the Lord withdraw himselfe from his people neuer so litle, (wherein hee doth no more then he did to his only sonne in whom he was well pleased) or behold them in some disgrace and abasement in the world: then they insult and crow ouer them, as the Babylonians and cursed Edomites did ouer the Iewes in captiuitie: but when as beyond expectation, they see them deliuered, yea and that the Lord graceth them, giues them fauour, restores them to libertie, and bleisseth them with many benefites, then I say, they turne their scornes into admiration, and are ashamed of their vnreasonable disgracing them.

Psal. 137. 3, 7.

Note.



them. But further, if (besides this) the Lord shall pluck themselves downe, and humble them by the like afflictions, then they will themselves in their case euen with the hardest and worst conditions.

So that we haue good cause abundantly to be contented to seeke to liue by faith in the sonne of God, trusting in, and cleauing to him and his word aboue all other things, esteeming our selues farre more rich thereby (euen when wee are counted most foolish and vile of the scornefull world) then they in their flourishingest estate and condition: for why? we rest on God, and waite by hope, hauing him on our side, and are not disappointed: they cast all (as the desperate Dicer) on blinde hope, likelihoods, and haphazard, and so are deceiued of their expectation. They haue a time of boasting and glorying, which deceiueth them, and maketh them thinke, that their iollitie and prosperitie will last alwaies, when yet it changeth as the weather, and continueth not in one estate, and they haue no wisdom to consider it, or their end which shall be worst of all. Gods people haue a time of mourning, but the end shall be reioycing: as here *Gedeon* bringeth before his vpraiders *Zeba* and *Zalmunna* with triumph and glorie. Psal. 10. 7.
Note.
Psa. 126. 6.

And with this we may also see, that the euill which they either doe not once dreame of, or which they thinke to be farre off from them, and make a mocke of it, is neere vnto them. According to that which the Apostle saith to the Thesalonians, *When men crye peace, peace, then commeth sudden destruction vpon them, euen as the sorrow of a woman at her travell.* *Chorah* and his companie, *Benadad* with many other are examples hercof. So that there is no need to be taken how iocund they be, when they be aloft, or haue their hearts desire, neither neede any to be afraid at the beholding of their greatness, for why euen while it abideth, it is departing, and while it standeth, it is in falling, for when they be at their best and greatest, there is a greater then they, who is working their ouerthrow. But who is warned by others woe? But of this briefly, because often. 1. The. 5. 3.
Eccles. 5. 8.

Gedeon hauing well shamed these men of *Succoth* and *Penuel*, doth to them now as he had threatned, verse 7. and 9. that is: he tore the flesh of the men of *Succoth* with thornes, and cast downe the tower of the men of *Penuel* (euen their strong hold that they gloried in) he cast it downe (I say) to the ground and slew them. And might not both these punishments haue been auoided, thinke we? Yes, and so had been but for their owne sinne: I meane their vndutifulnes, boldnes, stout and sturdie stomacks, and their slinnesse, hoping if *Midian* had preuailed, to haue gained by their vnnatural dealing with their brethren, denying bread vnto them. Vest. 16. 17.

Oh therefore how lamentable is it to see, how men bring shame, sorrow, and destruction vpon themselves by their wicked qualities, and bad behaviour, as wilfulnes, proud stomackes, crueltie, curish and vnkinde dealings, and such other, without the which they might haue enioyed their peace and welfare euen to their hearts desire, and good contentment, yea and the fauour of God also: for it is nothing but mens sin that kepeth many good things from them, and heapeth many contrarie euils vpon them. As *Achan* by stealing, *Dathan* by rebelling against Gods faithfull seruant *Moses*, and *Israel* by oft reuolting from God, and falling from their couenant, whereof this booke is too plaine a prooffe against them. Doff.
Note.



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Notes.

So some among vs, are vndone by their idleness, vnthriftinesse, and needlesse spending, some by their vnfaithfulness, and deceitfull dealing, lose their credit, and being no more trusted, come to naught: some by their oppressions sundry waies, are on their death-bed so terrified, that whereas by making restitution of a shilling, noble, or a pounds valew, while it should haue been done, it might haue brought great ease to them: they would now in their terror restore ten for one, and yet cannot be quieted neither. So some for aduultrie are brought to shame, and to worfe should bee, if they had their due: and other by spitefull, malicious, and reuenging spirits, make themselves odious to all, and they procure small ioy to themselves. And to adde something touching the particular sinne of these men, which was politike shifting and subtlety in playing the Newters, while the battell depended in an vncertainie of issue: this I say, that of all other kind of offenders, these flie and wily companions are least pitied of men, when the Lord entrappeth them in their owne snare. Sooner would a man let loose a Lion (if he durst) out of the pit, or the danger wherein it is, then the Foxe: because (besides the hurtfulnessse) it hath so many shifts to conueigh it selfe from danger, and is so hardly caught. Who pitieth these men of Succoth and Penuel: because they in seeking by subteltie to preferue their liues, iustly were beaten with their owne rodde, and lost them. Whereas he who falls into danger either in a good quarrell, or in his simplicitie, is either saued by God, or pitied in his ruine by men. And is not this a double miserie, when men are in distresse, to heare others say of them, they are well serued? Heathens haue obserued this cowardly subteltie (for who is more subuill, then hee that is most fearefull) to be euer vnprosperous: and seldome euen in forren distinctions of Kings and States, haue they sped well, who haue held off, and plaid the spectators of other mens successse. For who soeuer hath got the vpper hand, they haue smarted: if they whom they denied to succour, they are made the prey of them whom they forsooke: if the other, yet they smart also, in that they did onely forbear for their sakes, and not actually helpe. So vnnaturall is it counted, in a common calamitie, to betray one enemy to another, or not to helpe when we are able. Which I speake not to excite men to parts taking away, in other mens iarrs: but to shew how iustly these were handled for their craftinesse, in denying helpe, not to strangers, but their owne captaine. And euen so, how odious doth God make Newters and Temporiers in religion: they are hated of Papist and Protestant, and are as cursed, as he that is hanged betwixt heauen and earth. Touching the vse of this, and how to abhorre this sinne, reade before in the 2. doct. of the 6. verse.

And these with like punishments for the like iniquities, doe not light vpon other that are plaine, vpright, mercifull, and in a word, religiously circumspcct in their carriage, and who make conscience of their waies. I doe not deny, but that the best doe oft meete with sharpe persecutions, but they are for good causes: so S. Peter saith, *If ye suffer for righteousnesse sake, blessed are yee: And againe, If the will of God be that ye suffer, it is better that ye suffer for well-doing then for euill.* So that we see, such haue to beare off the sharpenes and painefullnesse of their sufferings, by their reioycing in the Lord, and by the blessed estate

1. Pet. 3. 14. 17.



estate that they are in : whereas the other haue their punishments, as fore-runners of greater, euen here before hand, as the Apostle saith. Indeed full often (I confesse) they shelter themselves to men-ward by their greatnesse, and shift well inough when meane persons go to wracke. According to the prouerbe, *Great men dose, and poore men smart.* But when God (who is higher then they, as *Salomon* saith) calleth the to account, (as being their only competent Iudge, when they haue broken through other iudgements, by fauor, feare or bribes, as great flies breake through cop-webbes) then they meeete with their match. As alas who seeth not what waies there are to bring this about? As displeasure of prince, factions and partakings, treacheries challenges, and highnesse of spirits. As our owne English Chronicles for these 2. or 300 yeeres, plentifully witnessse. Now if the Lord spare not great ones, let all fawning flatterers who seeke to such, and willingly offer themselves as instruments of oppression, cruelty and wrong, because they looke to be safe vnder their wings from punishment (as *Ziba* and such like) let such feare I say: for their patrons shall not shelter themselves, howloeuere they (no doubt) thinke otherwise. And this be said of this point, for the fuller handling of that which I noted vpon the 9. verse to the same purpose.

And here we may more particularly marke by the executing of punishment vpon these chiefe men of the citie, rather then vpon the common citizens, that as the greatest in place and authoritie haue many priuiledges above the meane persons, both in credit, wealth, estimation, and commanding others: so the Lord brings them forth to the terror of inferiours, and they lie open to greater danger, hurt and losse thereby, then others doe, and in time it breaketh out and appeareth, if they doe ill behaue themselves in their places. This is a great cause why men who are above other, should carrie themselves humbly and not proudly, as too many of them doe: and also looke well to themselves in euey part of their dutie: for a time will come when they shall pay for all, and when their estate shall be such, as the meanest vnder them, would be full loth to be in their roome. And to such I say as *Dauid* in Psalm. 2. *Be wise now therefore, serue the Lord in feare: and kisse the saune, yee mightie ones, lest he crush you in peeces: Happy then are all they that trust in him, if his wrath be kindled.* Also the inferiours should here learne, not to murmur against them, because they are so farre above them, for they sometime goe vnder more sore and heauy punishments, then they themselves doe: yea and though they behaue themselves commendably in their places, yet God oft correcteth them more then some others, lest they should kick vp their heele against him by meanes of their wealth and greatnesse: as it is too common a thing for such to do. So that as God hath his number among all estates both high and low, so he nurreth them all by afflictions according to his heauenly wisdom, that they may safely in their appointed time be gathered to their fathers. But here being a fit place to make an end, I will stay for this time.

Doct. 2. in
ver. 10. 17.

Note.

Psalme 2. 30.

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