LIFE OF THE

REV. JOHN FOX, A.M.[1]

(1517-1587)

Formatted, lightly modernized, and annotated by
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IT is seldom that we are deeply interested in the works of an author with whose personal and private history we have no desire to be acquainted. The few instances in which this may be the case regard writers of acknowledged fiction, and such other works as from their nature require no guarantee of their being conformable to the reality of things. But they will never be found to include a single writer on civil or personal, political or sacred history. Authors who have undertaken to inform us on the latter subject especially, and who have succeeded in winning general attention to their works, are the men whose own history becomes a field of curiosity and research. The scenes through which they passed may assure us of their competency to the task, and the character they have preserved amidst ordinary or peculiar trials may attest the honesty of every part of their important record. Hence it is that histories of the Christian church have, beyond all other works, required a sure and safe appeal to the character of their authors to give them currency. And they have circulated and flourished in the walks of literature in proportion as that appeal has been fearlessly and faithfully answered.

When special periods of ecclesiastical fame or disgrace, triumph or suffering, are chosen by an historian, it becomes of greater importance that we know who and what he is. Few will commit their faith to the details of such a period, who are not first informed to their satisfaction that the author was a man above suspicion — a man resolved in the love of truth and the fear of God,

"Nothing to extenuate,
or set down aught in malice." [2]

It is true that such periods are most fertile in determined partisans, and it is equally true that they require every public character to deliberately choose and resolutely defend his party. And in reference to active and warlike agents, this can scarcely ever be done without inflaming the passions beyond all reasonable bounds, and giving ascendancy to feelings often at perfect variance with integrity and charity. But writers who undertake a subsequent record of what these fierce combatants have done, need not be under the same injurious impulse. They may without difficulty release themselves from that angry constraint. They have, in fact, the best opportunity and the purest and most powerful motive to atone for the wrongdoing of their friends, while they wield the weapons of truth against their foes. How far the subject of the present memoir merited the censure or the praise to which these remarks refer, will appear in some measure from the annals of his life, and the features of his general character. Meanwhile, from his great work which this memoir precedes, [3] it must be sufficiently manifest that with whatever errors of spirit or judgment he may have been chargeable, he could have fairly said of himself, in the words of a later author —

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[1] Taken from *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, J. Milner & Ingram Cobbin, ed., (London, Knight and Son, 1856).

[2] Shakespeare's *Othello*, Act 5, Scene 2. – WHG

[3] Referring to Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. – WHG

> "My work is for the service of truth, by one who would be glad to attend and grace her triumphs; as her soldier, if he has had the honour to serve successfully under her banner; or as a captive tied to her chariot wheels, if he has committed any offence against her."

JOHN FOXE, or Fox, was born at Boston in Lincolnshire, A.D. 1517, the year in which Luther published his Theses against the papal church, and just before the growing power of Henry VIII led him to shake the foundations of the vast Roman hierarchy, which no British prince before had the courage to speak of but in terms of the profoundest reverence and submission. The town of Fox's birth, on account of its remoteness and seclusion, contained an unusual proportion of independent gentlemen of small fortune, to which class his father belonged. But not being a native of the place, his constitution suffered from confinement in the extreme humidity of that corner of the kingdom, so that he died of decline a few years after the birth of this distinguished child of his, and we believe his only son. His mother, a woman very generally admired and esteemed, soon embraced a second offer of marriage. However, it neither drove her son from under the paternal roof, nor diminished the care with which she had begun to tutor and train him. His second father became warmly attached to his foster son, and is said to have elicited more of his rising talent than the mother could venture to hope he would ever display, sanguine as she was on this point. Afterwards indeed, when young Fox openly avowed partiality to Protestant principles, his father-in-law either became deeply prejudiced against him on this ground, or was alarmed at the probable consequences of the change to the family, so that he withheld from him the means of support. But as someone remarks,

> "As the hunted deer takes sanctuary by flying to the rest of the herd, out of a principle of self-preservation, they drive him away for fear lest the hounds in pursuit fall on them. So Foxe's father-in-law was loth to receive him, and forbade him the protection of his family, lest persecution in quest of his son should bring him and his house into trouble."

At the age of sixteen his "good inclinations and towardness to learning" led to his being sent to the university of Oxford. He was accordingly entered at Brasenose college, and placed under Mr. Hawarden, one of the fellows. It would seem strange that the more distant university should have been preferred, at a period of difficult communication between one town and another; especially as Cambridge lay mid-way on the road from Boston to Oxford, and it was, moreover, of easier access as a place of learning for the sons of the poorer gentry of the land. It was a favorable circumstance for young Fox that the frugality of his parents, while it did not shrink from the expence of an Oxford education, rendered it necessary that the youth share his college apartment with another pupil. This incident was even more favourable, in that the other pupil was some years older, and a youth of distinguished genius, industry, and kindness. But the most favourable as well as extraordinary feature of the event was the decided and growing Protestantism of the other collegian, whose abode it was the privilege of young Fox to share by night and day. This undoubtedly laid the foundation of his early and decided love of reforming principles, and of his resolute and undeviating course in their defence, when poverty stared him in the face and death seemed to threaten him at every step.

The companion referred to was no other than Alexander Nowell, the celebrated preacher of Elizabeth's days, and the exemplary dean of St. Paul. He had entered Brasenose at an early age, and continued as an undergraduate thirteen years. This suspension of graduateship did not imply inferiority, for the first degree was not then, as it is at the

present day, usually taken at the expiration of the fourth year. At the age of twenty, two years before Fox was admitted as a student, and after a residence of seven years, Nowell was appointed public reader of Logic in the university, which he taught from the work of Rodolphus Agricola.[4] There is something worth dwelling upon in the circumstance of two such individuals being thus early and, as it were, accidentally coupled. Rather than pull in opposite directions and thus impede each other's progress, they ministered to each other's strengths. Thus they multiplied their separate talents and zeal, as well as furnished all the additional energy and efficiency that could be derived from the most friendly combination. The few years difference in age was soon lost sight of; or it became a motive for the elder to be more generously and faithfully communicative, and for the younger to receive his communications with all the openness of an ardent pupil, united with all the gratitude of an obliged and affectionate friend.

But it is in their like-mindedness as studious and zealous Protestants, that we reflect on their early union and later co-operation, with the greatest delight. At that period there was just enough in the posture of public affairs to encourage two such minds to proceed in their investigation of ecclesiastical evils, and at the same time so little to convince them that such investigations alone might expose them to the greatest danger. One new impulse acting upon the fickle mind of an arbitrary monarch (Henry VIII) might spoil all their hopes, transfer them for the remainder of a short life from a college to a prison, exile them from their native country, or bring upon them a violent and barbarous death. How far these considerations stimulated their zeal and tempered it with due discretion, we have no means of accurately judging. But we have enough in their history to convince us that their critical circumstances, which must have suggested some such reasoning, neither abated their Protestant energy nor deprived them of Christian prudence and caution. Undoubtedly the universities contained many young inquirers eager to ascertain whether the Protestant or the papal cause were the more just one, as well as more likely to triumph in the approaching conflict. But it is still more certain that the number was comparatively small of those who turned their inquiries to so much real edification, and directed them to such honourable purposes and aims as these noble and persevering reformers, Alexander Nowell and John Fox.

Fox took his bachelor's degree in the year 1538, when he reached his twenty-first year; and his master's degree in 1543. In the latter year he was elected fellow of Magdalen college, though many objections were made from various causes. About the same time, Nowell left Oxford to become second master of Westminster School, "where he instructed his pupils in the ancient principles of the true catholic faith, as they were cleared from the papal errors which had so long blended with and disfigured them." The change in both instances, especially in Nowell's, doubtless arose from the growing disaffection of the leading men at Brasenose to reform the church, which had now begun to assume a rather auspicious and active appearance. Westminster afforded Nowell a more secure and promising sphere for his bolder efforts in this great and growing cause; while Oxford, having offered to Fox a fellowship which he thought he might safely accept in a more liberal college, continued a few years longer to shelter him in the less public and more cautious pursuit of Protestant principles.

[4] Rodolphus Agricola (1443-1485) Dutch humanist (using reason to derive scriptural truth, as opposed to superstition or mere tradition); opposed the scholastics; skilled in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. – WHG

Cultivating an early taste for poetry, some portion of the seclusion of his fellowship was given to this pleasing art. But it was an art which he never dissociated from theology, nor allowed to essentially interfere with that sacred and ascendant theme. Nor was his love of poetry ever permitted to divert his attention from those Protestant views of theology, which were acquiring the strongest influence over him every year. Poetry was, in fact, very early and efficiently subservient to the extension of those views, and to his assurance that they were strictly in unison with the will of God as revealed in holy writ. In a very few years he made himself master of all the controversies which then agitated the Christian world. And before he was thirty, he had read all the Greek and Latin fathers, together with all the decrees of consistories, convocations, and councils. His acquaintance with Jewish and Rabbinical literature was not so extensive or so profound, as with the erudition and the annals of Christian churches. Still, he was a respectable Hebrew scholar, and had by this time become master of the chief intricacies of that ancient and sacred language.

In early youth he had been, like most others, a zealous and bigoted papist. He might be said to belong to the strictest sect of the Romish church. Had he possessed less ingenuousness of mind, his studies receiving a papal direction, might have rendered him a still more devoted catholic, and prepared him for the honours of the conclave, if not the glories of the popedom. But his native candour was equal to his industry, and it led him to examine and compare at every step; this soon turned the balance of his judgment in favour of Protestant truth. He is said to have been first shaken in his popish belief by perceiving in the writing of its advocates, things that were most repugnant to each other; such as, that the same man might be superior in matters of faith, and yet his life and manners be inferior to all the world besides. He now pursued his investigations of the system with more ardour than ever. His mind rapidly advanced to a perfect assurance which nothing could shake, that some great effort must soon be made to reform the church of Christ. And it had in fact already commenced, especially in his own beloved but deluded country, in which the heresy and tyranny of the Romish faith had acquired a long and almost inveterate entrenchment.

There can be no doubt that his conscience and character became proportionately conformed to the will of Christ — that he grew as a Christian in the grace of the gospel with the same rapidity, enlargement, and strength, as he increased in his acquaintance with its history and truth, and in his zeal for its most extensive diffusion. So ardent was his pursuit of personal godliness, that he would spend whole nights in sacred studies and spiritual devotion, reading the scriptures in their original tongues; beseeching God in humble prayer for the spirit of wisdom and knowledge to rightly understand them; and comparing spiritual things with spiritual, that he might comprehend the whole truth as it is in Jesus Christ. He would often leave his study or his bed at midnight, and resort to a neighbouring grove to meditate on what he had been reading, pouring out the desires of his soul in earnest supplication and grateful thanksgiving. On these occasions his fellow students would sometimes watch and listen to him, and several were deeply impressed by what they overheard in favour of a more earnest pursuit of Christian truth and duty.

Some, however, to whom these extraordinary studies and exercises of mind were known, were neither so candid nor so charitable. They reported Mr. Fox to the heads of the university as an abettor of the new faith, which occasioned him to be narrowly watched

and restrained in many of his most favourite pursuits. At length his conscience constrained him to cease from attendance on the national worship which continued, especially in the universities, to be conducted in strict conformity to papal rules and rites. Without abetting the formation of separate Protestant societies, a practice commenced by some older and less exposed members of Oxford, he was yet constrained to absent himself (except on necessary and official occasions) both from the Magdalen chapel and the university church. At last he was openly charged with heresy, brought before the heads of his college, and commanded to leave the city and county without delay, and to be thankful that he had met with judges so merciful, and a sentence so far below what his apostacy merited!

Very small is the number of true friends who will firmly withstand the day of trial. Many will fawn, and smile, and live upon us in our prosperity, who when adversity overtakes us, will refuse to know us, and even basely deny that they ever knew us before. They leave the garden in winter when there is nothing to gather. So it fared with Mr. Fox. He had several patrons and friends both in the university and the country, who afforded him their countenance and protection while he continued but privately a Protestant. But as soon as his new principles assumed a tangible and public shape — that is, as soon as he became faithful to his trust, and began to appear openly as a Protestant, in deed and in truth, those who had before most befriended him, avoided his society and left him to his fate, either in anger or in fear — especially when the ruler of the university took cognizance of his neglect of papal ceremonies, and his opposition to papal credence and authority. Up till then, he had found no difficulty in obtaining periodical remittances of the little property he claimed from his mother, and to which she usually made some addition from her own. But now either her mind was turned from him, or she was obliged to yield to the influence of her husband, whose rigid Romanism made him the adversary of his "heretic" son-in-law, and determined to withhold from him all further pecuniary supply. Some of this incensed gentleman's friends have apologised for his conduct, on the plea that the courts of justice would have called him to account for granting further supply to someone who had become a voluntary outlaw. But there is much greater reason to believe that he was induced by superstition and priestcraft to appropriate the property of a heretic to the support of a tottering church, and the absolution of his own guilt. Be these things as they may, Mr. Fox was reduced by the simultaneous loss of his fellowship and fortune, to the deepest personal distress.

> "Troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." 2Cor 4.8

Mr. Fox now went from one place to another in the hope and search of honourable and useful occupation. The county of Warwick, and especially the city of Coventry being well disposed towards the Protestant cause, he bent his steps there, and made his injured case known to a few families in whom he could safely confide. But for some time this was without any success beyond the temporary supply of pressing necessity. At last when hope appeared to fail, divine Providence directed him to the mansion of Sir Thomas Lucy, in whom he found a patron who was both able and willing to render him efficient aid. Averse to receiving that aid except as recompense for honest service, Mr. Fox undertook, at the request of Sir Thomas, the tutorship of his sons. He entered upon this task with the best mental, moral, and theological qualifications for its due performance.

While in this occupation, Fox married the daughter of a citizen of Coventry, who visited at Charlecote, the seat of his patron. His engagement as tutor could not have been of long duration. It was probably terminated either in consequence of his marriage, or of the strict search then being made for supposed heretics, both publicly and in private families. On leaving Charlecote, Mr. Fox was reduced to great distress. He remained with his wife's father, at Coventry, so long as he could do so with safety; and from there he wrote to his father-in-law at Boston, to ask if he could be sheltered there. He received for an answer, that "it seemed to his step-father a hard condition to take into his house one whom he knew to be guilty of and condemned for a capital offence; nor was he ignorant of the risk he would undergo in so doing. Nevertheless, he would show himself a kinsman, and for that cause, he would neglect his own danger. If Fox would alter his mind, he might come on that condition, and stay as long as he desired. But if he could not be persuaded to do that, he should content himself with a shorter tarriance, and not bring him and his mother into the hazard of their lives and fortunes, who were ready to do anything for his sake."

The necessities of Fox compelled him to accept this offer of protection, to which he was also privately urged by his mother; but how long he remained at Boston is uncertain. It was probably of very brief continuance. Nothing is known of his trials and mode of life after leaving the country, till within a few months of the king's death, when the influence of the queen (Catherine Parr) and Cranmer allowed the reformers to appear more openly in public, at which time Mr. Fox was discovered in London. The doors of St. Paul's were then always open; and numerous idlers, as well as worshippers, were continually found within its precincts. "He is as much known as the middle walk of St. Paul's," became a proverb. And in Lupton's description of the metropolis at that period, the "idlers" in the cathedral are called "dinnerless pedestrians." Some watched for the opportunity of an invitation, having donned their visiting garments; others, in tattered clothes and with a mournful visage, brooding over their disconsolate condition. Mr. Fox appears to have been among the latter. And the circumstance is thus portrayed by his son, whose narrative of the subsequent events in his father's life are set forth with less interruption: —

> "As Master Fox one day sat in St. Paul's church, spent with long fasting, his countenance thin and eyes hollow, in the ghastly manner of dying men, everyone shunning a spectacle of so much horror, there came to him someone whom he never remembered having seen before. Sitting down by him, and greeting him with much familiarity, he thrust an untold sum of money into his hand, bidding him to be of good cheer, adding that he did not know how great the misfortunes were which oppressed him, but supposed it was no light calamity; that he should therefore accept in good part that small gift from his countryman which common courtesy had forced him to offer; and that he should go and take care of himself, and take all occasions to prolong his life — also adding that within a few days new hopes were at hand, and a more certain condition of livelihood."

Fox used every endeavour to discover to whom he was indebted for this relief in his hour of need, but without success. Great cities are great solitudes, and Fox felt himself alone in the metropolis, without friends or occupation — though his lack of them probably arose more from the danger of making application to individuals likely to patronize him, than from the scarcity of employment for a scholar of his attainments.

"Some who looked further into the event by which that prophecy became fulfilled, believed that the friend who performed the kindness did not come of his own accord, but was employed by others who were deeply concerned for Mr. Fox's safety; and that it might feasibly be through the negligence of the servant, or person commissioned, that he had endured so much misery before the means of relief were afforded him. It is certain, however, that within three days after the transaction, the presage was made good. Someone waited upon him from the duchess of Richmond. She invited him, upon fair terms," says the writer, "into her service. It had so fallen out, not long before, that the 3rd duke of Norfolk, the most renowned general of his time, together with his son, Henry, the earl of Surrey — a man, as far as may be imagined, of sincere meaning and sharp understanding — were committed to custody in the Tower of London, for what crime is uncertain. [5] While they were in prison, the earl's children were sent to the aforesaid duchess, their aunt, to be brought up and educated. These were Thomas, who succeeded in the dukedom; Henry, afterwards 1st earl of Northampton; and Jane, wife of Charles, the last Neville, earl of Westmoreland, afterwards countess of Westmoreland."

Fox became their tutor. It is uncertain whether his first publication appeared just before or just after he entered on the duties of this honourable office. The probability is that while in London and in want, he had offered the manuscript to some booksellers; and when they found him thus nobly patronized, one of them ventured to publish it. The reader will be pleased to have the title of this curious work before him in its own tongue and shape. It is as follows: —

DE NON PLECTENDIS MORTE
ADULTERIS CONSULTATIO,
JOANNIS FOXI.

Impressum Londini per HUGONEM SINGLETONUM,
sub intersignio D. Augustini,
Anno Domini. M. D. 1548.

The work is preceded by an affectionate and able dedication, which the author thus introduces:

GENEROSO VIRO Thome Pictono,
I. Foxus salutem et pacem in Christo.

There are about forty pages in the body of the work, but not a number on any one of them. It is the duodecimo size; the letter is large and open, a Roman character, and on the whole, the impression is uniform and good. We have not been able to discover a second edition of this work, nor is it on a subject likely to have created popularity for the author. It contains many admirable remarks, amidst some doubtful propositions. As a whole, it is inferior both in style and sentiment to the later productions of the excellent author.

We now follow him to Ryegate, Surrey, where he commenced the important duties of his new office. He passed six or seven years there in great activity and peace, until the accession of Mary [6] clouded his prospects and sent him into exile. It is proper to here remind the reader that the outraged earl of Surrey had five lovely children, three

[5] Thomas Howard, 3rd duke Norfolk (1473-1554), and his son, Henry Howard (1516/17-1547), earl of Surrey, a famed poet. Henry was executed for treason; his father Thomas was not, but remained in prison. The earl's children were the ones tutored by John Fox. The eldest was Thomas (1536-1572), later 4th duke of Norfolk; he would be executed for conspiring with Mary Queen of Scots against Elizabeth I. The earl's other son was Henry (1540-1614). – WHG

[6] That is, Mary I of England ("Bloody Mary"). – WHG

daughters and two sons, and that his death rendered his eldest son immediate heir to the dukedom of Norfolk. It was a rank which the youth seemed likely to reach very soon, as there was no hope entertained at this time that either the duke or the earl, who were both prisoners in the tower, could be saved from death. It will be remembered that Henry VIII's rage soon cut off the earl,[7] and that only the king's rather sudden death gave the condemned duke a few years more of life, though not of liberty. A question or two of some importance here suggest themselves. How did the children of the earl of Surrey come under the care of the duchess of Richmond? And how was it that the heir of the dukedom of Norfolk, always a popish family, was committed to John Fox for an education, one of the most marked Protestants of the age?

These problems can be solved only by referring to the peculiar circumstances under which the arrangement took place, and the control which the government (if not the king himself) must have exercised in the affair. The duchess of Richmond was Surrey's sister and the children's aunt. She was a retired widow without son or daughter of her own, and was with this a Protestant of superior education and understanding. But then she was the chief witness against her injured and innocent brother! She was in fact the cause — it is to be feared the voluntary cause — of bringing him to the block, by deposing against him all that could be construed into treason! These distressing recollections create the greatest wonder that she, in preference to all others, should have been chosen to govern and guide their youthful course. It would seem scarcely possible to conceal from the children themselves the dreadful secret that they were in the hands of the cruel relative, whose testimony had been mainly instrumental in depriving them of the protection of one of the best of fathers! How could their mother submit with any patience to such a disposal of her almost infant and orphan family?

The only explanation of these mysteries which has been offered is this: that their father being doomed to death on a charge of treason, however unjustly, the children were at the disposal of government. And the duchess, whose loyalty was undoubted, was most likely to train them in a course of devotion to the reigning prince. Such had been the rapid advance of the reformation, that loyalty was likely from this time forward to be identified with Protestantism. Henry was drawing towards his end, and he had appointed his son Edward to set aside the claims of Mary. The earl of Hertford, into whose hands the regency was likely to fall, was known to be resolute in carrying on the reformation. Hence the expediency of imparting a Protestant education to the earl of Surrey's children, and hence the policy of substituting as their governess the earl's sister, a Protestant, for the more natural appointment of their own mother. The latter was more than suspected of clinging to the ancient faith, and was known to prefer obscurity and a separation from her family to what she deemed the fellowship and fate of heretics. In her retirement in the north she soon married a second husband, a catholic gentleman of the name of Steyning.

Returning to the incidents of Fox's personal history, we find him residing at Ryegate about seven years, comprehending a few of the last months of Henry VIII, the whole short reign of his son Edward VI, until his cruel sister and successor commenced the

[7] The cruel eagerness with which Henry hastened the execution of the earl of Surrey has generally been pronounced a mystery; but if the report is true that he had aspired to a marriage with the princess Mary, the mystery becomes easily solved.

measures which turned the kingdom into a Protestant furnace, heated by her fury "seven times hotter than it was usually heated." Dan 3.19 With the exception of the duchess of Richmond and a few of her attendants and friends, Ryegate had not only been without advocates or examples of the Protestant faith before then, but it had betrayed for ages unusual features of gross ignorance and vulgar superstition. The glad tidings of Christian truth had never been heard by its inhabitants, nor had they been directed to any of the spiritual and scriptural exercises of Christian worship. No disciple of Wickliffe — no faithful Lollard — no enlightened reformer, had ever been known to lift up his voice in the church or in the streets against a system of the most absurd and stupid idolatry which the secluded and populous town of Ryegate had been known to prefer to every other mode of expressing its religious feelings.

The fame of the virgin Mary had long fled from the town and its temple, and her image, wherever it had previously been exhibited, had given way to that of an old fortune-teller and quack-doctress, reverently called by the besotted people of all ranks, "the old lady of Ouldsworth." This woman, if she ever existed beyond the ancient fables of the place, was reported to have been skilful in recovering the sick to health, and causing the lame to leap for joy. There were other saintly idols held in esteem and adoration by the sages as well as peasants of Ryegate. But no one had such lasting and abounding popularity as this lady — no one was supposed to have conferred half so much benefit on the church and people as she had done. "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" Act 19.28 was not a louder or warmer cry than was continually uttered by all ranks in her praise. More than half the industry and traffic of the town were occasioned by the embellishment she was thought to claim, and by the new honours which her priests and people gathered around her!

No wonder that at such scenes the spirit of Fox "was stirred within him," and that he burned with zeal to bear his testimony against them, and to cast from the temple of religion such profane and vulgar abuse of divine service. But it was some time before he had an opportunity to accomplish his pious purpose. He had to wait for a pioneer of government to open the way, before he could begin a successful march against evils almost as inveterate as they· were absurd and contemptible. Soon, however, the establishment of the reformation under Edward VI enabled him to cast off every restraint, and to stand forth as the first Protestant preacher in the church of Ryegate. He embraced the opportunity with the liveliest feelings of gratitude, and began proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation through Christ alone. He did so with a zeal sufficiently tempered by discretion to obviate improper offence, and yet constraining him to bear an unmistakable testimony against the idolatries which had so long darkened and deluded the people. The old lady of Ouldsworth met with little forbearance from him: and through the power of his persuasive eloquence and resistless reasoning and wit, she soon lost her hold of the public confidence, and was removed by common consent from her lofty place in the church.

Uncertain and inconsistent dates render it difficult to determine the precise year in which Mr. Fox commenced his public ministry. Some have led us to believe that he opened his faithful commission soon after the accession of Edward VI; while others tell us that he was not ordained till the midsummer of 1550, more than two years after that welcome event. The probability is either that he was licensed to preach before his ordination, and eagerly availed himself of the privilege, or that the latter is the date of his ordination to the priesthood, and that he had become a deacon of the church some

time before. Of one fact, however, we are certain: that as he had no clerical appointment at Ryegate, his ministerial labours, however irregular, were as gratuitous as they were intrepid and faithful.[8]·He abounded rather than relaxed in his services as tutor to Surrey's children, and received nothing beyond the stipulated compensation which those services merited. They now began to impose upon him a task as difficult as it was honourable, and requiring the utmost prudence as well as assiduity and erudition. The duke of Norfolk had been reprieved from death by the rather sudden death of Henry. But the timid and cautious advisers of Edward VI would not allow the duke, an old man, to enjoy his liberty, notwithstanding imprisonment was uniting with age to weaken a frame that was naturally robust, and to hasten a departure which at best could not have been far distant. Thus the eldest pupil of Fox was likely soon to reach the most ancient ducal title in the realm. And this illustrious pupil, with his brother and one sister, were to be fully initiated — such was the engagement — in religious principles which were the reverse of those which a long line of ancestors had held as a sacred inheritance.

Contrary to general expectation the task of the tutor was nearly over, and his continuance in England began to be unsafe, before the elevation of his pupil took place. The duke of Norfolk, after escaping execution by the death of Henry, obtained release from imprisonment by the death of Edward. One of the first acts of Mary I, upon her accession to the throne, was to restore to liberty this aged nobleman, whom she called her father's most faithful servant — an act and a speech too plainly intended to censure his imprisonment by Protestant influence over the minds of her father and brother. One purpose of his release evidently was to employ his high military talents against the forces of Sir Thomas Wyatt. This task he executed with great success; but the excitement it produced in his aged and tottering frame very soon brought him to the grave.

> "Of no distemper, of no blast, he died;
> But fell like Autumn fruit that's mellow'd long:
> Even wonder'd at because he dropt no sooner.
> He pass'd man's life of threescore years and ten,
> And then ran on eleven winters more;
> Till, like a clock worn out with eating time,
> The wheels of weary life at last stood still."

Now the darkest and most dense on the clouds came, portending the storms which soon burst upon all the distinguished Protestants who were either resolved or compelled to continue in the land. Persecution had begun to assume its worst forms. Many excellent men were already thrown into dungeons, and some were brought to the scaffold and the stake after brief proceedings. This too clearly showed the malignant purpose of the court, and that it was religion and not sedition which Mary was resolved to punish and suppress. Upon hearing of these events — and especially upon finding that they most abounded in the diocese of Stephen Gardiner, who had been appointed bishop of Winchester, and to whom Mr. Fox as a clergyman was locally subject — he began to prepare means for the safety of himself and his beloved wife. On his purpose being mentioned to his chief pupil, who had now become duke of Norfolk, the duke spurned

[8] Anthony Wood tells us that Edward VI. restored Fox to his fellowship of Magdalen college, Oxford. If this were the case, marriage was in that day no impediment, as it is in the present day, to a Protestant being fellow of a university college. Fox was then, as at all other times, living openly with the wife of his bosom.

the thought of danger, and assured his revered tutor that he was perfectly safe.in the shelter of his mansion Undoubtedly the young nobleman thought as he spoke, since he then looked upon Gardiner as his friend. Not having studied the character of that dissembling prelate, he considered that he might implicitly confide in his promise and influence. A remarkable circumstance is mentioned which appears to have suddenly undeceived him. And while it shows that crafty men impose upon themselves as often as others, it manifests the perception which the young duke at once acquired of Gardiner's real character, and of Fox's actual danger.

The bishop's intimacy with the Norfolk family, and the obligations he had been under to them for much of his dignity, often led Gardiner to visit their mansion in London. And now he had additional reasons to repeat and multiply his visits: he feared the effects of Mr. Fox's instructions. Suspecting the tutor to be concealed in the house, Gardiner deemed it necessary to dispossess Fox as soon as possible. He began his scheme by requesting of the duke that he might see his tutor; and on one occasion Mr. Fox, not knowing the bishop was present, entered the room, but instantly withdrew. The bishop inquired of the duke who that stranger was. The duke, fearing some craft in the question, answered that he was a physician, fresh from the university and somewhat uncourtly in his behaviour. The reply of the bishop was, "I like his countenance and aspect well, and when occasion offers I will send for him." This speech confirmed the duke in his suspicion of the bishop, and determined him to provide without delay for the flight and security of Mr. Fox. He dispatched a faithful servant to Ipswich, where he had agents on whom he could depend, and where a vessel was prepared to take his tutor, along with a few other Protestant friends, to some near and safe port on the opposite shore. Mrs. Fox was at this time near her confinement (due to her pregnancy), but the danger was too great to delay their departure; and so they journeyed to Ipswich and embarked with the utmost possible speed.

A sudden and violent storm drove them back to Ipswich the day after they had set sail. Mr. Fox soon heard that a messenger from the bishop had been in the town inquiring after him and his companions. The officer had even broken into the house of a tenant of the duke, where Mr. Fox had slept the night before his departure, and where he was returning for renewed shelter. On receiving this intelligence, Mr. Fox secretly left the town on horseback, and returned with the same caution, as soon as the weather would allow the vessel to put to sea again. His second embarkation was successful, and within two days he and his wife and friends were safely landed and lodged in the secluded town of Nieuport in Flanders. In a few days he left that place for Antwerp, which was then the most flourishing city in Europe, and contained within its ample walls a large number of Protestant merchants and a few ministers of the reformation. However, as the object of Mr. Fox was active occupation, and no opportunity immediately presented itself of turning his talents to any profitable account in this place, he went to Strasburg, and soon after to Basle. A considerable number of his English brethren, as well as Protestant ministers from other countries, had already taken refuge there, and were uniting in measures to diffuse and propagate the truth.

Mr. Fox cheerfully joined with these pious refugees, and soon made them sensible of his superior worth both as a private Christian, and a public minister and author. To secure an independent subsistence, he engaged to assist John Oporimus, a distinguished printer in Basle, in conducting several valuable works through the press. And in a short

time he produced a singular work of his own, which he had evidently prepared for publication in England. He would have printed it here but for the necessity of his sudden flight. His early taste for poetry, and the subserviency of his poetic studies and compositions to theology, have been mentioned in an early part of this memoir; and the work now referred to is a remarkable proof of both facts. The reader will be interested in a literal transcription of the title.

CHRISTUS TRIUMPHAUS
Comoedia Apocalyptica
Autore JOANNE Foxo Anglo.
Basileae per JOANNEM OPORINUM.

An epistle dedicatory precedes the drama, addressed thus:

CLARISSIMUS VIRIS, D. BYNKSIO, D. ALCOSTO,
D. KELKO, cumque his universo Mercatorum
Christianae pietati fanentium Sodalitio
JOANNES FOXUS, SALV.

The *dramatis personae* are rather numerous, comprising about twenty-five characters, including angels and *adolescentes*. The leading parts of the drama are taken by CHRISTUS, *Eva, Saulus qui et Paulus,* and *Maria Petris* also occupies a conspicuous place; while the "principalities and powers of darkness" often come forth to commit "spiritual wickedness in high places." The first edition of this remarkable work is printed in a good clear italic type, and is of the duodecimo size. There were two other editions of the work, one published in 1556, and the other in 1672. It was also translated into English, by John Daye junior, son of the printer to queen Elizabeth *over* Aldersgate. Three editions of the English version were published in 1579, 1607, and in 1672.[9] The distaste of the people of this country to sacred dramas will account for their not being acquainted with this and numerous similar works. Most parts of the Old Testament are Highly dramatic; a few entire books are especially held in the greatest esteem, and read with the deepest delight. But even these meet with little or no attention when the hand of man has presumptuously attempted to improve upon the form which the inspiration of divine wisdom chose to give them.

Soon after this publication, Mr. Fox prepared for the press a Latin translation of *Cranmer's Answer to Gardiner on the Sacrament,* intending it to circulate through the several states of Germany, and through other parts of the continent where symptoms of reformation in religion began to appear. But upon inquiry and advice, he saw fit to withhold it. This was on account of the several points it contained being hotly contested among Protestants themselves; and on account of the diversion it might give to their talents and zeal, from objects of more general interest and more essential advantage. In some notes appended to the translation, he complains strongly and satirically of Gardiner's style of writing. In a letter to Peter Martyr, he repeats some of his criticisms and observes, "You may as soon extract water from pumice stone as find light from Gardiner's sentences!" His next work was the commencement of the undertaking which has immortalised his name in all Protestant churches. Its title is as follows:

[9] The last was revised by a clergyman of Cambridge who signs himself T. C., and who dedicates it to all schoolmasters, on account of the peculiar excellence of its style!"

"Commentarii Rerum in Ecclesia gestarum
maximarumque per totam Europam persecutionem
a wiclevi Temporibus. — *Strasburg* 1554." [10]

In all probability it was printed as he tarried awhile in that city, where he might have stayed to print the other volumes if not for the disputes then prevailing among the reformers on ceremonial questions. The remaining volumes, all octavo,[11] were therefore printed at Basle, to which he proceeded in the hope of greater quiet as well as more active and profitable employment.

The contention of the Protestant exiles in Strasburg and other continental cities at this time was not confined to the sacramental points just referred to, but extended to questions of ecclesiastical discipline and ritual service. It is well known that the Swiss and French reformers from the beginning proceeded much further than the English in simplifying both the government of the church and the performance of divine worship. Most of the English exiles were of course attached to the laws and ceremonies established in their own country by the statutes of Edward; while a few were won over to the less intricate and burdensome system adopted by the leading spirits of reform in Switzerland and France. Mr. Fox was among them, and advocated with his usual zeal the general adoption of the rites and rules of the people among whom they had taken refuge. With very slight alterations, these continue in force to this day in most of the Protestant churches of the continent. In this honest preference he met with much unbecoming opposition from his British brethren, then abroad and afterwards at home. We have no proof that he ever behaved uncivilly to them; but in some of his letters he complains of great incivility from them. In one to Peter Martyr, he has a passage worth reciting.

"I have discovered what otherwise I could not have believed, how much bitterness is to be found among those for whom continued acquaintance with the sacred volume ought to render gentle, and should always incline to all kindness. As far as in me lies, I persuade all parties to concord."

We will soon observe how far this variation from the national standard obstructed Mr. Fox's promotion in the Church of England under the rigid dominion of Elizabeth. At present the order of events requires us to trace his progress as an author, labouring with the utmost diligence to defend and diffuse the principles for which he had emigrated to a foreign and friendly land. Supremely dependent on the divine blessing, he appears to have relied for subsistence, and for the support of his wife and infant daughter, on his daily labour in revising manuscripts and correcting the press for John Oporinus. This man's famous printing office was at that time honoured by the services of some of the most enlightened and devout men who ever lived, while it gave permanence and publicity to their works. Mr. Fox also found time to proceed with the great work which he had auspiciously commenced, and for which Oporinus was more than willing to undertake the pecuniary responsibility. It has been frequently said that the entire

[10] *Translation*: "Commentaries on events in the Church and the greatest persecution throughout Europe from the times of Wycliffe." – WHG

[11] *Octavo*: The size of a book whose pages are made by folding a sheet of paper three times to form eight leaves; it is usually 4.5 to 6 inches wide and 7 to 10 inches high (roughly 5x8), depending on the original sheet size. – WHG

materials of his "Acts and Monuments of the Church" were collected by himself, without the assistance of any individual. The honour of our Protestant hero and literary colossus by no means requires us to credit this report; nor is it correct in point of fact. In the absence of direct evidence against it, we should fairly infer that among his brother exiles there must have been a few at least who, unaccustomed to authorship, were yet both able and willing to render him valuable aid in gathering appropriate facts for his use. But we have information of one distinguished individual at least, who greatly assisted him in this respect. Grindal, who became one of Elizabeth's archbishops, was at that time in Strasburgh. He did much, by his studies and letters, to furnish Fox with matter for his great work. We have seen that the first volume was published in that city, perhaps under Grindal's own eye, since we find that faithful friend peculiarly anxious that the work should appear in as accurate a state as possible. Still, the disputes in Strasburgh and the greater facilities for printing in Basle, will sufficiently account for the remainder being published at the latter place.

Leaving further mention of the progress of the various editions, we cast an eye a little back to notice a circumstance not mentioned in its proper place — that on his way to Basle, Mr. Fox tarried a short time at Frankfort. His name occurs in a tract descriptive of the "Troubles" of that city, published some years after this period. But evidently it refers to events which then occurred, and which appear to have involved Fox as well as others in some tribulation. They were in fact "Troubles" rising out of the old question of ecclesiastical discipline and ceremonies. And these probably contributed, like those of Strasburgh, to hasten his departure towards Basle, and also determined him to fix his residence there.

Either at Strasburgh or at Frankfort, the birth of his first child and only daughter took place. This was an event which gave him much satisfaction, because it not only removed the fears he had entertained of the effect of recent events on the weak constitution and timid nerves of Mrs. Fox, but it was the occasion of her thereafter enjoying a remarkable share of health and spirits. The child was baptised by his friend Grindal, and received the name of Anne, perhaps in memory of Anne Boleyn, for whom be always cherished great esteem. The child grew up an object of great admiration, more for her mental qualities and the excellence of her religious character, than for any remarkable attractions of person. At a proper age she became the esteemed wife of Sir Richard Willis, bart. of Ditton in the county of Essex. [12]

No further events of importance occurred during the sojourn of Mr. Fox on the continent. He printed four or five more octavo volumes towards completing his great work, and two or three minor works, all in Latin. He persevered through the greater portion of his time in the humbler task he had undertaken for his employer, doing so with the utmost industry and integrity. At length the time arrived in which he might safely return to England. The death of Mary I and the accession of Elizabeth created the opening for this desirable change. However, he did not avail himself of this till several months after his brethren from England were again settled in this country. The delay on his part appears to have arisen, not from any distrust of the new government, but from the advice of Grindal and his own conviction, that it was rather his duty to remain abroad some time longer to better advance his important undertaking. It is not

[12] *Bart*: A member of the British order of honor; ranks below a baron but above a knight. – WHG

improbable that his peculiar opinions on church government rendered him either indifferent to or apprehensive of an immediate return. Though he disapproved of the heat of the rigid Puritans, and called them on one occasion factious and turbulent spirits — a new sort of monks more pernicious than the old [13] — it was yet manifest that he himself was partly a non-conformist. And he might wish to know how Elizabeth would deal with such ultra reformers, before he ventured to place himself at her mercy. Grindal, too, might be fearful of hastily exposing so bold a Protestant and so good a man to the displeasure of a queen known to be almost as hostile to dissenters from high episcopacy, as to Catholics themselves. That Grindal wished (as some have insinuated) to keep Fox from preferment until he had secured preferment for himself, is contradicted by every part of Grindal's character, and every act of his behaviour toward his esteemed friend.

The first month of the year 1551 saw Elizabeth seated on the throne. Before the spring arrived, most of the English exiles had returned to support the Protestant cause at home. Mr. Fox, however, remained till the year had closed, ostensibly at least, for completing the first folio edition of his work in Latin, the title page of which bears the date of 1559. Even then, he was with difficulty persuaded to leave his studies and labours at Basle, though he knew that preferment awaited him in England. It does not appear that any communication had passed between him and his pupil, the young duke of Norfolk, during his absence; but soon after he arrived in London, he addressed to his grace a Latin letter, soliciting his future patronage and some present aid. He received an immediate and favourable answer, and soon took up his abode in the city mansion of the duke, then in Aldgate. There he was furnished with all desirable facilities for proceeding with the English translation of his recently published Latin folio. He was thus engaged without interruption, for twelve or thirteen months. That was when he visited Norwich, where his patron sent him on some commission, probably with the kindlier purpose of promoting his health and that of Mrs. Fox, who accompanied him, by a sojourn at one of his country seats. There Mrs. Fox gave birth to a first son, Samuel, in the spring of 1560, of whom the few particulars claiming insertion may at once be introduced.

It was intimated above that this son was trained and intended for the church, but was deprived of his fellowship in his father's college by Puritan influence. We are indebted to him for what must be deemed the most accurate life of Mr. Fox, prefixed to the fourth English edition of the *Acts and Monuments*. He differs on several material facts from Anthony Wood; [14] but every candid reader will take his integrity for granted, while drawing the inference that he must have been much better acquainted than Wood with the motives and movements of his father's course. Upon leaving Oxford, the son took up his residence, probably as tutor, in the house of Sir Moyle Finch, an ancestor of the present earl of Winchelsea, at Eastwell in Kent, where he married a distant relation of his patron, a widow of the name of Leveson.

Returning to Mr. Fox, he continued in the duke of Norfolk's house till that ill-fated nobleman entangled himself in the affairs of Mary queen of Scots. The duke's personal attachment to the unhappy queen is generally undoubted. On no other supposition can

[13] This was done, we believe, when Puritan ascendancy deprived his son of the fellowship he held in Magdalen college.

[14] Anthony Wood (1632-1695) was an English antiquarian who wrote extensively on the history of Oxford and its university, including his biographical dictionary, *Athenae Oxonienses* (1691-1692). – WHG

we account for the excess of his romantic zeal in her cause, and his willingness to sacrifice life rather than become indifferent to her fate. His gallantry brought him to the scaffold in the year 1572. Both Mr. Fox and his friend Nowell, then dean of St. Paul's, attended him on that melancholy occasion, and we may imagine (much easier than describe) the feelings of the former on witnessing the execution of one to whom he had supplied the place of father, and whom he had held in the highest esteem, both as pupil and patron. This event put the fidelity and prudence of Mr. Fox to the severest test. The tendency of the duke to the religion of his fathers, notwithstanding his Protestant education, met with no indulgence from his tutor. Otherwise, the latter would not have enjoyed as he did the smiles of government, and a respect from the queen which amounted to avowed filial reverence. On the other hand, Fox's inflexible Protestantism did not extinguish or abate his sympathy with the duke, amidst the perils of his courtly life and the calamities of his early death. It is due both to Mr. Fox and the duke, to remark that the latter died professing Protestant principles.

Mr. Fox now took up his abode in the famous Grub-street, then the resort of authors of slender substance and laborious habits. In addition to unwearied study and toil through the week, he preached generally twice on the Lord's day, and was seldom recompensed except by the consciousness of labouring for the public good, and often hearing that he had actually promoted it. His popularity was such as to create the warm desire of the bishops that he would be sufficiently decided and comprehensive in his subscription, to allow him to take a place on the episcopal bench. As it was, he received from Secretary Cecil a prebend in Salisbury cathedral, which he retained throughout his life. It is said, also, that he was once summoned by archbishop Parker to subscribe, "that the reputation of his piety might give greater countenance to conformity." But instead of complying, he drew from his pocket the New Testament in Greek, and said emphatically, "To *this* I will subscribe." When reminded that he was already a dignitary of the church, a post which required subscription to the canon law, he mildly answered, "I have nothing in the church but a prebend (stipend) at Salisbury, and if you take that from me much good may it do you." From this answer we infer that he had somehow lost his vicarage of Cripplegate, and that the report of his having been a prebendary of Durham is incorrect.

Although he preached more sermons at this period than any other London divine, very few have ever been published. The most remarkable among them was delivered at St. Paul's cross in the year 1570, and was printed soon after by John Daye. The following year it was translated into Latin, and obtained a wide circulation in both languages. It was productive of much benefit to the Protestant cause. The English edition, as it was preached, is printed in a fine black letter, and is preceded by the following quaint notice:

> "Faults excepted in the printing, which I pray you good reader first to correct, and then read." The faults are only four. The text of this sermon is the last two verses of the fifth chapter of St. Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians — which he thus translates:
>
> > "For Christ therefore, or in Christ's name, we come to you as messengers, even as God himself desiring you, we pray you for Christ's stead that you will be reconciled unto God. For him who knew no sin, God has made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The sermon contains much that we should be glad to extract. The following passage is too good to be omitted.

> "I remember, about the beginning of queen Mary's reign, there was a certain message sent, not from heaven, but from Rome — not from God, but from the pope — not by any apostle, but by a certain cardinal Pole, a legate of the pope's own white side. And what was the message? Truly, that the realm of England should be reconciled to the pope!"

After such an introduction, the reader may imagine the sort of sermon John Fox would deliver. On such a background, everyone will look for a bright and beautiful picture of evangelical truth, and no one will be disappointed. The sermon is followed by an admirable prayer, and by a "Postscript to papists." Some of his letters mention this sermon, or rather the effect of preaching it, in terms which imply that, as it was the first he had delivered at St. Paul's cross, so he wished it to be the last. No mention is made of his preaching on that remarkable spot a second time.

As no order of time is observed in any of the lists of Mr. Fox's works, and as several of them are without date or clue as to the year in which they were published, the chief of those which have not been mentioned may be introduced here. He wrote treatises on the Eucharist, on the Apocalypse, on the doctrine of Election, and on Free Justification in Christ. The latter drew forth harsh criticisms from Jerome Osorio, author of several theological works, whom he answered by a second treatise on the subject, entitled *Contra Osorium de Justitia*. He also published "A new year's gift concerning the deliverance of certain Christians from Turkish galleys," and an ingenious essay on the restoration of backsliders, which he entitles "*De lapsis per errorem in Ecclesiam restituendis*." (*trans*. "On restoring into the Church those who have fallen into error.") In addition to these and some other original productions, he undertook an edition of the Saxon gospels, at the request, or rather the command of archbishop Parker. He also edited the works of Tindal (Tyndale), Frith, and Barnes. His prefaces and letters were innumerable. And as Daye obtained the name of "the reformed printer," so Fox was called "the author and *editor* of the reformation."

Anecdotal Exaggerations

We now come to a point concerning Mr. Fox, which has been magnified into a prophetic and miraculous character. The boldness of his speech often led his unthinking admirers to attribute to his superior mind a prescience more than human or Christian. The first remarkable instance of this was when he avowed his conviction that Mary I would soon die, before he could possibly know of her decline and danger. This was "soon ascribed to a prophetic acquaintance with the will of Heaven, imparted for the comfort of the banished English. Aylmer, afterwards bishop of London, who was then at Basle, is appealed to in support of this extravagant conclusion. It is also confidently asserted (and on authority quite as good all that of the credulous bishop) that Fox predicted the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The good man's reputation receives neither support nor adorning from such an attribute, and had he assumed it, that reputation would not have stood so high as it does. No supernatural prescience was requisite in a sanguine Protestant like him to foretell the defeat of the Spanish Armada; and the delight and heat of hope frequently rise high enough to assure us of the speedy fall of those by whom we are unrighteously coerced and persecuted.

Between prophecy and miracle there is but a slender partition. Prophecy is the miraculous in word, and miracle is the prophetic in deed. Hence the enthusiasm which made Mr. Fox a prophet, had no difficulty in announcing that his words had produced miraculous effects. He is said to have assured Lady Anne Heneage that she would not die of a mortal sickness; and contrary to the verdict of her physicians, she recovered! On a visit to the earl of Arundel, they were walking together towards the river, when Mr. Fox, wishing to depart, was exhorted by the earl to remain because the river, which he had to cross, was greatly agitated by a boisterous wind. Mr. Fox persisted in going, and said, "So let these waters deal with me, as I have in truth delivered to you all that I have spoken." He then stepped into the boat, when the wind ceased and there was a perfect calm! A Mrs. Honiwood, hopeless of life and even longing for death, sent for Mr. Fox, who assured her that she would recover and live to a great age. She is said to have thrown a small glass she had in her hand against the wall, asserting her recovery to be as impossible as that the glass should not be broken. The glass did not break, nor did she die till she had seen ninety winters, and reckoned as many descendants as there are days in the year.

Traits of Character

Giving full credit to these statements without feeling the least necessity of drawing prophetic or miraculous inferences from them, we refer with greater pleasure to the high moral 9ualities by which Mr. Fox was distinguished. His charity was conspicuous. Coming on one occasion from the palace of Aylmer, bishop of London, he saw some miserable beggars at the gate. He found his own pockets empty, but stepped back to the bishop and requested the loan of five shillings, which he obtained. On passing the gate again, he distributed the whole among the astonished and grateful mendicants. Some time after, the bishop reminded him of the debt and requested that it might be paid. "My lord," answered Fox, **"**I laid it out for you, and soon you will be paid with ample interest." He was a man of remarkable discretion: his motto was, "Give none offence." A gentleman with whom he was dining in a large party freely canvassed the character of the earl of Leicester. Mr. Fox felt it an imperious duty to rebuke the offender, and ordered a certain cup to be brought to him. Drinking to the gentleman's health he added, "This cup was given to me by the earl of Leicester."

His disinterestedness might be traced through every step of a long life. Although his scruples prevented his promotion, he discovered that Elizabeth had consented to the advancement of some who were as averse to complete conformity as himself. He had courage enough even to rebuke the queen; but he preferred congratulating her on doing justice to others, and wrote an admirable Latin panegyric on her conduct towards them, without a syllable of complaint about his own case. His characteristic compassion was often manifested, especially in interceding for the anabaptists, whose extravagance and suspected treason had drawn down upon them the vengeance of the court and council. He gave himself no rest till he had obtained pardon for the greater number of them, and bitterly lamented the fate of two, natives of Holland, who suffered the sentence of death. To these testimonies in his favour we add one specimen of his wit. A young man in his presence remarked that he saw no reason why old authors should be so greatly admired. "No marvel indeed," answered Mr. Fox, "for if you *could* conceive the reason, you would admire them yourself."

We come to the closing scene of this life of distinguished honour and usefulness. For some time Mr. Fox knew his departure to be at hand, a knowledge to be accounted for without ascribing it, as some have done, to inspired and prophetic discernment. Incessant and untiring exertion had reduced a frame that was naturally vigorous and robust, to almost the weakness of infancy. He was left, however, as were his wishes and prayers, in the full possession of reason and enjoyment of religion to the last moment. He died at his lodging in the city on the 20th of April 1587, and was buried in the church at Cripplegate, of which he had been vicar some short time after his return to England. A monument in the chancel marks the spot of his interment. It is on the south side of the communion table, and it contains a Latin inscription, partly concealed by woodwork which was subsequently raised. In the register of burials stands this plain record:

"April 20th, 1587 — John Fox, householder and preacher."