

Signatures of  
The Warrington Tubors.

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John Taylor

Joseph Prierley  
Forster

Gilbert Wakefield

John Aikin

W. Infield

J. Seddon

W. Clayton



## TRANSACTIONS.

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### A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF WARRINGTON ACADEMY.

*By Henry A. Bright, B.A.*

(READ 11TH NOVEMBER, 1858.)

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A few years ago a parcel of papers—some letters, some memoranda—which had belonged to the Rev. J. Seddon, the founder of the Warrington Academy, was rescued from the hands of a Liverpool cheesemonger, who was using them for the ordinary purposes of his shop. Among these papers were several letters of Priestley, of Kippis, and of Aikin. There were others of men of lesser note, which were, however, not without an interest, inasmuch as they threw a new light on the history of the Warrington Academy.

From these papers, then, at the request of the Council of the Historic Society, I have compiled this brief sketch. In addition to the Seddon papers I have made use of other materials from the following sources:—

I.—A volume of unpublished papers concerning the Academy, collected by Serjeant Heywood, who is not unknown as the author of the “Vindication of Fox’s History.”

II.—A series of articles in the “Monthly Repository” on the Academy, by the Rev. W. Turner.

III.—The Lives of Dr. Priestley, Dr. Aikin, and Gilbert Wakefield, and Dr. Kendrick’s “Warrington Worthies.”\*

IV.—Some interesting manuscript lectures of Mr. Marsh of Warrington.

V.—Information for which I am indebted to Mr. Beamont of Warrington, and Miss Lucy Aikin.

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\* It is owing to the great kindness of Dr. Kendrick that this paper is illustrated with the engravings of the Academy and the Tutors’ houses.

VI.—The original minute books of the Academy, which were lent to me by the Secretary of Manchester New College, the Rev. R. Brook Aspland.

If in the arrangement of this ample material I fail in exciting your interest, the fault, I feel, will rest with me. The history of the Warrington Academy must in itself always have a value for the literary man, for the theologian, and for him to whom the history of Lancashire has any interest. At Warrington Academy were collected some of the noblest literati of their day. Here the free thought of the English Presbyterians first began to crystallize into the Unitarian theology, which they have since maintained. Here for a time was the centre of the liberal politics, and the literary taste of the entire county. Am I exaggerating the importance of this Academy? I do not think so. But if so,—something, perhaps, may be excused to one who is descended from some of the earliest supporters of the Academy, and who owes many of his own highest views to the teaching, which his family first learnt from those old Warrington tutors.

In the year 1753 the failure or decay of the several Academies belonging to the English Presbyterian body at Findern and Kendal, and elsewhere, caused no inconsiderable anxiety to the more thoughtful and earnest among the liberal dissenters. Where were they to look for their future supply of ministers? Where could those ministers be educated in a theology unshackled by creed and doctrine? On none did these questions press with greater weight than on John Seddon, the young minister at Warrington. The idea of founding a new Academy took possession of him, and the idea once formed was never dropped until it had been carried out in action. Well might the Rev. Philip Holland in after years bear witness to “the concern which he had ever expressed for its support, “honour, success; the indefatigable pains which he took for this purpose; “the indifference which he shewed to fame or censure, to good or evil “report, so that he might serve the general designs of the institution.” Lying before me is a large mass of Mr. Seddon’s correspondence relative to the foundation of the Academy. How he worked, and wrote, and explained, and begged! He is never discouraged, though his discouragements are innumerable. He is never down-hearted, though his friends are always suggesting difficulties, and prophesying evil. Mr. Daniel Bayley

of Manchester thinks the design too large, and "should not London lay the foundation, and we be only supplemental," and "is not so populous, so pleasurable, so divided, and so dear a place as Manchester very unfit for a seat of the Muses." Mr. Peter Touchet, of Manchester, thinks that Warrington should not be mentioned as the site of the Academy. Mr. John Mort, of Chowbent,—to whom Mrs. Barbauld addressed some lines beginning "Happy old man!" and whom she characterises as "O rude of speech, yet rich in genuine worth,"—this Mr. Mort is afraid "our richer neighbours will not be over zealous in the affair." Mr. John Wilson, of Rivington, will subscribe the munificent sum of five guineas if necessary, but thinks it would be hardly proper to subscribe before Lord Willoughby. Lord Willoughby of Parham, who afterwards became first President of the Academy, was, I suppose, the most important personage among the English Presbyterians of this date, and it is amusing enough to notice how respectfully, (with one exception,) all Mr. Seddon's correspondents name him. "Pray my duty to Lord Willoughby, if you think proper," writes the Rev. R. Godwin, of Gateacre. The eminent Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, rejoices that "Lord Willoughby and so many of Harry Hoghton's family have come into the subscription."

But before Lord Willoughby had entered into the scheme—which important date appears to be October 11th, 1754—a long circular had been sent round in July of the same year, signed by Daniel Bayley, John Lees, afterwards Sir Caryll Worsley, and seven others. This circular gives as the subscriptions already promised—

Manchester . . . . .	£94	10	0
Liverpool . . . . .	46	4	0
Birmingham . . . . .	44	12	6
Warrington . . . . .	31	15	6

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£217 2 0

In the April of the next year the subscription mounts up. Lord Willoughby will give his ten guineas, Sir H. Hoghton's family "will encourage us," says Mr. Seddon, "so that our present subscription amounts to about £300 per annum." Dr. Taylor of Norwich promises subscriptions from his congregation, and Bristol and Exeter will probably aid the cause. Leeds, however, looks coldly upon the plan, and thinks "the Glasgow education" sufficient for their wants. Liverpool, too, as

may be guessed from the smallness of her contribution, is somewhat lukewarm. The fact was, that Liverpool regarded the whole affair as a Manchester scheme, and with that pleasing spirit of jealous rivalry which has always existed between the two towns, the Liverpool men insisted on the site of the Academy being Ormskirk instead of Warrington. And so a paper was drawn up at Liverpool, with seven excellent reasons for preferring Ormskirk. These reasons, however, do not bring conviction to the supporters of Warrington, and the Rev. R. Godwin, in a letter to Mr. Seddon, observes that "some of them are *false*, others *dubious*, and all, "whether true or not, *trifling* and *impertinent*."\* And then comes a rejoinder from "the gentlemen in Manchester," and then a printed letter from Sam. Angier, Benj. Heywood, Joseph Brooks, Wm. Lightbody, and other of "the gentlemen in Liverpool," and then "Remarks on a letter from the gentlemen in Manchester to the gentlemen in Liverpool, subscribers to the intended Academy. April 27th, 1757." This last letter shews, I regret to say, that "the gentlemen in Liverpool" finding that they are not powerful enough to carry their favourite, Ormskirk, lose their temper most completely. Every fourth word in this last letter is italicised; and after much cutting sarcasm they indignantly demand of their opponents, "are not such gentlemen more properly the authors of contention "and division?"

The 30th of June, 1757, was now approaching, when the first general meeting of the supporters of the Academy was to be held. A stormy meeting was evidently expected, and it was more than probable that the whole scheme might founder just as it was getting fairly under weigh. Some anonymous friend of the Academy thinks it well before the meeting to distribute some printed "Rules proposed to be observed for the better regulation of proceedings in the affairs of the Academy now depending." There are nine of these rules, referring chiefly to Proxies, and the necessity of a good understanding between the Trustees, and Rule VI. runs thus:— "To remove all ground of emulation between Liverpool and Manchester (where it is mostly feared) in the choice of persons to carry on the Academy, let Manchester have the nomination of one, and Liverpool another,

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\* In another letter, however, this same Mr. Godwin admits that "several are daily complaining that the people of Manchester are for managing everything relative to the Academy, independent of others; that Liverpool is ignorant of all their measures, and has not once been consulted upon any one occasion."

"&c.;" that "&c." expresses a good deal, and probably means (for these rules evidently emanate from Liverpool) that Liverpool may fix on the site of the Academy, and that Manchester, perhaps, may then be allowed to provide an architect.

There are two thin old vellum-covered volumes, which contain the Minutes of the Warrington Academy. The second volume is only about one-half filled, for the hopes of the Trustees were but partially realized, and the Academy was closed in 1786, after a useful but precarious existence of nine-and-twenty years. It was on the 30th June, 1757, (as we find from these minutes) that the first meeting of Trustees was held, and Warrington was after all the place of meeting. Twenty-five Trustees were present. Two were from Birmingham, and eight from Manchester. The Ministers of Gateacre and Bolton, Mr. Mort of Chowbent, and from Liverpool, Arthur and Benjamin Heywood, Dr. Angier, Richard Savage, Thomas Wharton, Thomas Bentley and James Percival were also present. Warrington itself was represented by the indefatigable Mr. Seddon, Mr. Elias Bent (who now lies buried in the Cairo Street Chapel grave-yard) and three other laymen. After reading the "proposals for carrying into execution a plan for the liberal education of youth," a long list of resolutions were proposed and carried. Mr. Seddon, in whose handwriting the early minutes seem to be, appears, as well he might be, astonished at the unanimity which after all the meeting showed, and writes, "resolutions in *all* "which the whole assembly was perfectly unanimous." Perhaps, the gentlemen of the rival towns were tired of quarrelling; perhaps, they adopted the suggestion of dividing between them the patronage and appointments; perhaps, and most probably, the more important resolutions were modified at the time, so as to meet the wishes of all. Be this as it may, Lord Willoughby is appointed President, Mr. John Lees of Manchester, Vice-President, Mr. Arthur Heywood of Liverpool, Treasurer, and Mr. Seddon, Secretary. Local Treasurers in the large towns are then appointed. The subscription list is ascertained to amount to £469 5s., and the benefactions to £148 11s. Four Tutors are recognised as necessary to render the design complete, but at present it is more prudent to appoint three only. Dr. Taylor of Norwich is to be Tutor in Divinity; Mr. Holt of Kirkdale, to be Tutor in Natural Philosophy; and Mr. Dyer of London, to be Tutor in Languages and Polite Literature, and for the present in Moral Philosophy. Each of these tutors is to have £100 per annum from

the fund, and "with respect to dwelling-houses, are to be at their own expenses." Poor students are exempted from payment of fees, but richer ones must pay £2 2s. yearly to each of the tutors. And then comes the resolution over which Manchester and Liverpool had already quarrelled in anticipation, and which was evidently drawn up with the most diplomatic care:—"That for *the present, and as a temporary settlement*, Warrington "is the most convenient situation for the Academy, and that Messrs. Hart, Bent, Leigh, Turner and Seddon are hereby empowered to contract for "houses immediately." A managing committee is then appointed, certain regulations respecting their functions are passed, and it is declared that a general meeting of trustees must be held every year. And thus the new Academy was started.

On the 20th October, in this same year, a letter is sent by the Committee to the various subscribers. Houses suitable for the Academy have been engaged "for seven years only." Dr. Taylor and Mr. Holt are already settled at Warrington, and (as for some unexplained reason Mr. Dyer is not settled) they have promised to divide between them the Languages and Polite Literature, and Moral Philosophy. The \*Tutors will take boarders into their houses at £15 per annum for those who had two months' vacation, and £18 per annum for those who had no vacation; these terms, however, are exclusive of "tea, washing, fire and candles." Three students have already arrived.

The choice of a third tutor was matter of difficulty. Dr. Taylor recommended Mr. Scott of Norwich; Dr. Benson of London suggested the Rev. Mr. Priestley of Needham Market; others think Mr. Aikin of Kibworth would be the best man, and the Rev. Mr. Jenkins of Montgomeryshire has his supporters. At last the choice falls on Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Aikin, and a long, long letter from Mr. Seddon, dated March 11th, 1758, and preserved in the minutes of the Academy, informs him of the fact. I will not trouble you by the enumeration of Mr. Aikin's virtues, and the names of the trustees who recommended him, which take up a great part of this letter. One passage, however, is curious enough, as showing what travelling in England was just one hundred years ago.

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\* "They knew better than to usurp the title of *Professors*, as so many do in these "days from ignorance or presumption; only a chartered body can give Professorships."—*Letter from Miss Aikin.*

“ Mr. Holland has given us some reason to hope y<sup>t</sup> you will come over  
 “ to Warrington in the Easter week, in order to take a view of y<sup>r</sup> future  
 “ situation; if so give me leave to recommend y<sup>e</sup> following plan. I’ll  
 “ suppose you set out from Kibworth on Sunday afternoon; as you intend  
 “ travelling in post chaises, you’ll easily reach Loughborough or perhaps  
 “ Derby that night; y<sup>e</sup> next night you may come to Offerton w<sup>h</sup> is about a  
 “ mile short of Stockport, where I am with Mrs. Seddon, & will be ready  
 “ to receive you; and wait upon you to Warrington: you will do well to  
 “ come prepared for riding, for you will not meet with any carriages at  
 “ Stockport, nor are the roads to Warrington proper for them; when you  
 “ get to a place call’d Bullocks Smithy, about two miles short of Stockport,  
 “ enquire for Offerton, Mr. Roe late of Birmingham now lives there, and  
 “ we shall be glad to see you. If you’ll write to me time enough, & be  
 “ particular eno<sup>b</sup> in your time, I will endeavour to meet you with my own  
 “ chaise, or send a servant for that purpose.”

Dr. Aikin accepted the invitation, and another letter is inflicted upon him by Mr. Seddon relative to a house which he recommends him to take, which is “ handsomely sashed to the front, with a flight of five steps to “ the entrance.”

Of the three tutors now in residence, two were amongst the most eminent of the Dissenting Divines in England. Not many years ago it would be quite unnecessary to speak of the many and varied accomplishments of Taylor and of Aikin. It will draw me far from my subject if I say all I could wish to say of these great good men. But time has laid his hand upon their images, and something must be done,—some few words must be said,—to clear away the moss and rust and decay which hang around and corrode them.

Dr. Taylor of Norwich (whose descendants number among them the present Gresham Professor of Music, and many other accomplished and eminent men) was one of the first Arians who ministered to the English Presbyterians. His learning was so generally acknowledged, that in 1754 all the English and Welsh Bishops and Archbishops, with but four exceptions, were among the subscribers to his great Hebrew Concordance. His publications were so widely read, that even Robert Burns had read his Treatise on Original Sin, and in his Epistle to John Goudie says

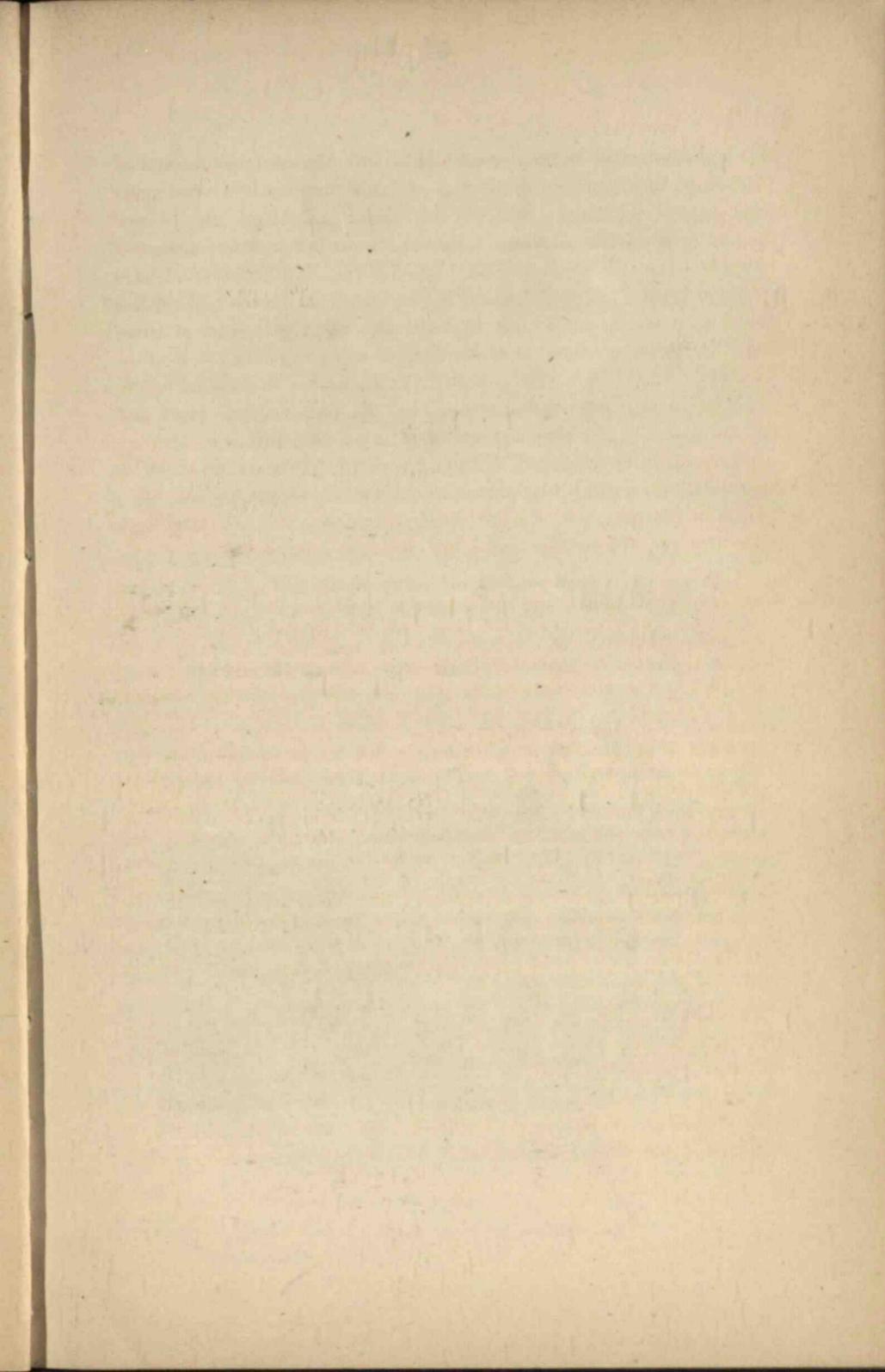
“ ’Tis you and Taylor are the chief  
 “ Wha are to blame for this mischief.”

Bishop Bathurst of Norwich used to say that if he understood St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, he owed it to Mr. Taylor’s volume on the subject.

One of his principal works was translated into German, and several of them found their way into the library of Schleiermacher and other great theologians of Germany. Such was the scholar and divine who became the first tutor in the Academy. He was a great loss to the congregation which he left at Norwich; and in leaving them for what was indeed a sphere of greater responsibility and higher usefulness, he was nevertheless sacrificing a dear home, pecuniary advantages, and the blessings of a free and independent position. And his sacrifice was greater than at the time he knew. Scarcely two years pass, and Dr. Taylor has learnt a sad lesson, which would have been spared to him, had he remained the loved and faithful pastor of a loving and affectionate people. But at first no one could have been better suited to his post than Dr. Taylor. The charge to his pupils, with which his lectures in Divinity were prefaced, has been often quoted in illustration of English Presbyterian principles, and is so truly noble, that you will perhaps forgive my quoting it once again:—

“ I do solemnly charge you, in the name of the God of Truth, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life, and before whose judgment-seat you must in no long time appear, that in all your studies and inquiries of a religious nature, present or future, you do constantly, carefully, impartially, and conscientiously attend to evidence as it lies in the Holy Scriptures, or in the nature of things and the dictates of reason, cautiously guarding the follies of imagination and the fallacy of ill-grounded conjecture. Second, that you admit, embrace or assent to no principle or sentiment by me taught or advanced, but only so far as it shall appear to you to be supported and justified by proper evidence from revelation or the reason of things. Third, that if, at any time hereafter, any principle or sentiment by me taught or advanced, or by you admitted and embraced, shall upon impartial and faithful examination appear to you to be dubious and false, you either suspect or totally reject such principle or sentiment. Fourth, that you keep your mind always open to evidence; that you labour to banish from your breast all prejudice, prepossession, and party zeal; that you study to live in peace and love with all your fellow-Christians; and that you steadily assert for yourself, and freely allow to others, the unalienable rights of judgment and conscience.”

The Rev. Dr. Aikin (who was father of the celebrated physician and of Mrs. Barbauld) had been a pupil of Dr. Doddridge. He was, says Gilbert Wakefield, “ a gentleman whose endowments as a man and as a scholar it is not easy to exaggerate by panegyric. \* \* \* His intellectual attainments were of a very superior quality indeed. His acquaintance with all true evidences of revelation, with morals, politics and metaphysics





THE WARRINGTON ACADEMY, 1757.

"Mark where its simple front you mansion rears,  
The nursey of men for future years!"

*Mr. Farquhar.*



THE WARRINGTON ACADEMY, 1762.

"Lo there, the seats where Science loved to dwell,  
Where Liberty her ardent spirit breathes!"

*Mr. Farquhar.*

"was most accurate and extensive. Every path of polite literature had been traversed by him and traversed with success. He understood the Hebrew and French languages to perfection, and had an intimacy with the best authors of Greece and Rome superior to what I have ever known in any Dissenting minister from my own experience." Mr. Wakefield's testimony is borne out by all—and they were many—of Dr. Aikin's friends. He was, if any can be,

*Integer vitæ scelerisque purus,*  
a man of strictest honour and most blameless life.

Of Mr. Holt, the mathematical tutor, I need say nothing. Miss Aikin calls him "a man whose whole soul was absorbed by his science;" and the writer in the *Monthly Repository*, who devotes some two pages to his character, seems utterly bewildered at finding any one so dull and dry and colourless.

Mr. Seddon, to whose exertions the Academy was owing, was a practical and useful man, full of energy and intelligence. He had many friends; and Dr. Percival, in an epitaph which is *not* on Mr. Seddon's grave, speaks of "his cheerful piety, universal benevolence, extensive knowledge, and temperate zeal for civil and religious liberty." I am afraid though, that, like Mr. Holt, Mr. Seddon must have been a dullish person. His letters are heavy and wearisome, and his only idea is to extol the Academy. Miss Aikin, in a letter which I received from her in 1856, tells me "Mr. Seddon did not scruple some stout puffing on behalf of the Academy. My aunt, (Mrs. Barbauld), on receiving at Palgrave one of his annual official statements, wrote to my father, 'Who hath believed our report?' My father, after being taken when a boy to hear Mr. Seddon, excused himself for not bringing his father the notes of the sermon which he was always required to make, because he said with all the attention he could pay he could not make out what it was about—'Nor I neither,' was the answer."

Not long since I had the pleasure of spending a day at Warrington in order to see for myself the old Academy, and the more pretentious buildings to which, in 1762, the Academy was transferred. The old Academy is that which Mrs. Barbauld immortalized in lines which every one knows from "Enfield's Speaker." She bids us

"Mark where its simple front yon mansion rears,  
"The nursery of men for future years,"

and tells us that the "Mersey"

"Reflects the ascending seats with conscious pride."

The Rev. W. Turner, too, speaks of "A range of buildings" with "a considerable extent of garden ground, and a handsome terrace walk on the banks of the Mersey, possessing altogether a respectable collegiate appearance." Perhaps it might have been wiser to take the old Academy on trust, and let fancy picture the building worthy of Mrs. Barbauld's poem and the energy of Mr. Seddon and the Warrington Committee. At least I should have supposed that the Academy faced the river, and that there was something to distinguish it from surrounding houses. This blissful ignorance, however, has been dissipated, and I know now that the very "simple front" of the ugly, mean, old brick house never fronted the river, and that a narrow, dingy side with six windows ranged in pairs along it, and a single attic window, surmounted by a weathercock, was all that the river, with all its "conscious pride," could manage by any possibility to reflect.

Such were the tutors, and such the buildings, of the Warrington Academy during the first years of its short life.

The summer of 1760 saw the beginning of a series of misunderstandings between Dr. Taylor and the Trustees, which were only terminated the following year by Dr. Taylor's death. Mr. John Taylor of Norwich, in his "History of the Octagon Chapel," says of his grandfather, "His own failing health, anxiety for the health of his wife, and disappointments and annoyances connected with the Academy, conspired to render Dr. Taylor's brief residence at Warrington entirely unhappy." In the minutes of the Academy, the whole story appears at length. Dr. Taylor had been complaining of "the uneasiness he is under in his present situation," and the Trustees write and ask him to specify his complaints. And then follows a long string of complaints from the Doctor, with the comments of the Committee upon each of them. Dr. Taylor does not approve of the situation of the Academy, and some books which he asked for had not been purchased,—Mr. Seddon has invaded his province of Moral Philosophy by giving a course of lectures,—the Committee have no right to interfere in the internal arrangements of the Academy. The Committee reply strongly and firmly to all these charges, but make a concession about the three books, and, with a slight touch of sarcasm perhaps, they send him the following resolution:—

"Agreed Nem. Con. This is the unanimous sense of this Committee.  
 "Agreed, that the following Books be immediately sent for at y<sup>e</sup> desire  
 "of Dr. Taylor, viz. :—

"Edwards, on Irresistibility of Divine Grace,

"Pilkington's Script. Criticisms,

"Grotius, on y<sup>e</sup> Truth of Religion."

We need not enter further into this unhappy quarrel. Traces of its ill effects appear in many of Mr. Seddon's letters, and it gave a blow to the Academy from which it never entirely recovered. The subscriptions from other places might be increased, but the Presbyterian body was no longer united. The friends of Dr. Taylor and many of his old congregation had lost confidence in the management of the Academy, and too often checked or thwarted the efforts of its supporters.\*

In 1761, Dr. Aikin was promoted to the Theological Tutorship, which was now vacant by Dr. Taylor's death. Mr. (afterwards the celebrated Dr.) Priestley was chosen to succeed Dr. Aikin as Tutor of Languages and Polite Literature. Of Dr. Priestley it must be unnecessary for me to speak. Eminent as a chemist, a philosopher, a politician and a theologian, he was one of the most remarkable men of his day. It is Coleridge who addresses him as "Patriot, and Saint, and Sage," and whether we agree with, or differ from, his views on Philosophy or Theology, we can have but one opinion of the vastness of his learning, and the purity of his life. He was the greatest of the many worthies of the Warrington Academy.

In the following year, 1762, Mr. Seddon visited London and other towns, in order to beat up new subscribers, and in this he was partially successful. At any rate it was now thought desirable to leave the old Academy, and erect more suitable buildings in another part of the town. The Academy Place, as it is called, which opens out of the Butter Market Street, is to this day a quiet and secluded court. In front stands the Academy, an old brick building, with stone copings, and a clock and bell turret in the centre. It cannot pretend to architectural beauty, but it is not displeasing with its quaint old-world look, and was certainly a great improvement on the house by the "classic tide" of the Mersey. This second Academy building was also celebrated in verse by Mrs. Barbauld :

"Lo! there the seat where science loved to dwell,

"Where liberty her ardent spirit breathed."

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\* "There had been an unhappy difference between Dr. Taylor and the Trustees, in consequence of which all his friends, who were numerous, were our enemies."—*Dr. Priestley's Life*, p. 55.

The lower room of the building is now the printing office of the "Warrington Guardian;" and the upper room is appropriated as the "Warrington Church Institute." I wonder if the printers ever hear among the clang and clatter of their presses "the learned echoes talk"; or if the Warrington clergy, in their discussions, ever give a kindly thought or word to Aikin, Priestley, Enfield and the other true-hearted men who once tenanted those rooms!

From 1762 to 1780 was the golden age of the Academy; and of these years the earlier ones to 1767 (when Dr. Priestley removed to Leeds) were the brightest and the happiest. The life of the tutors was of course, in some degree, an anxious one, but there was much of pleasure in their hours of social enjoyment. "The tutors in my time," says Dr. Priestley, "lived in the most perfect harmony. We drank tea together every Saturday, and our conversation was equally instructive and pleasing. I often thought it not a little extraordinary that four persons, who had no previous knowledge of each other, should have been brought to unite in conducting such a scheme as this, and be all zealous *necessarians* as we were. We were all, likewise, Arians; and the only subject of much consequence on which we differed respected the doctrine of atonement, concerning which Dr. Aikin held some obscure notions. The only Socinian in the neighbourhood was Mr. Seddon of Manchester, and we all wondered at him."

But there were other attractions in the Warrington circle besides the tutors and their philosophy. "We have a knot of lasses just after your own heart," writes Mrs. Barbauld (then Miss Aikin) in 1772 to her friend Miss Belsham; "as merry, blithe and gay as you would wish them, and very smart and clever—two of them are the Miss Rigbys. We have a West Indian family too that I think you would like, a young couple who seem intended by nature for nothing but mirth, frolic and gaiety." It was a sad day for Warrington when Miss Lizzy Rigby became Mrs. Bunny, and Miss Sally Rigby was wooed and wedded by Dr. Parry of Bath—it was sadder still when Mr. Edwards, the lively West Indian, had to slip away from his creditors and leave Warrington for ever—saddest of all was it when "our poetess" herself, after winning the hearts of half the students, some one or two of whom for her sake lived (I am informed) "sighing and single"—when she too followed the Miss Rigbys'

unfortunate example, and was carried off to Palgrave by that queer little man, whom henceforth she was to "honour and obey." But these catastrophes were not yet. And then, besides the Rigbys, the Aikins, and, a little later on, the Enfields—were the Priestleys and the Seddons. Of Dr. Priestley's wife—every one, and especially her husband (who ought to know) speaks most highly. Mrs. Seddon was a lady of fortune and position. She was daughter to a Mr. Hoskins, who had been equerry to Frederick Prince of Wales. I have no doubt she was a very fine lady at Warrington. I know that she was an affectionate wife, and spelt abominably. Among the Seddon papers\* is a letter which her husband wrote to her during a short absence in 1766. On the back of his letter Mrs. Seddon prepares a rough draft of an answer to her truant husband. The word which puzzles her most is "adieu," and she has to spell it over three times before she can determine whether the "e" comes before the "i" or the "i" before the "e." The knotty point is at last settled and the fair copy written out; and this too, her careful husband put away and preserved among his papers. I cannot resist quoting the last paragraph of this most charming but laborious letter. "Let me hear of you as often as you can; for it does me more good, and has a much stronger affect upon my spirits than either eather or salvolatiley. Adieu my dear, *except* the sincerest and best wishes for your health and happiness, of one whose greatest pleasure in this world is in subscribing herself your truly affectionate wife,—J. Seddon.

"P.S. I shall want cash before you return; what must I doe? Pray put me in a way how to replenish. Remember me properly to every body."

No wonder this excellent wife, who in 1770 became a widow, should have received in 1773 a letter from a certain Mr. Richard Meanley, which commences thus—"Madm.—There is a gentleman of my acquaintance, a widower, who has such a high opinion of the happiness of the

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\* Let me here add a note about Mr. Seddon's correspondents. Among them were Dr. Priestley (sixteen of whose letters I have discovered), Dr. Kippis, David Williams (who founded the Literary Fund), Dr. Percival, Thomas Bentley of Liverpool (whom we know from Mr. Boardman's "Bentleiana"), Rev. W. Turner of Wakefield, and Dr. Aikin. The most amusing letters, however, are those of R. Griffiths, the bookseller, and publisher of the "Monthly Review,"—a man, the unfavourable side of whose character is freely, though not quite fairly perhaps, given to us in Mr. Forster's life of Goldsmith.

“ married state that he is desirous of entering into it again ; if you have “ the same, and are disengaged, he proposes, by your permission, to pay “ you a visit.”

I can find no rough draft of Mrs. Seddon's answer to this letter.

Of Mrs. Barbauld (though I have often quoted her), and of her brother John Aikin, the scholarly physician, I have said nothing, nor was it needed. The memoir which his daughter wrote is the best monument of the one. The other is dear to the memory of every child who learns the “ hymns in prose ;” and but the other day Lord Brougham paid an eloquent tribute to her memory in the course of a debate in the House of Lords.

Here is a pleasant little sketch of Warrington society, from an unpublished letter of Miss Lucy Aikin's. “ Both ‘ bouts rimés,’ and ‘ vers “ de société’ were in fashion with the set. Once it was their custom to slip “ anonymous pieces into Mrs. Priestley's work-bag. One ‘ copy of verses,’ “ a very eloquent one, puzzled all guessers a long time ; at length it was “ traced to Dr. Priestley's self.\* Somebody was bold enough to talk of “ getting up private theatricals. This was a dreadful business ! All the “ wise and grave, the whole tutorhood, cried out, it must not be ! The “ students, the Rigbys, and, I must add, my aunt, took the prohibition “ very sulkily ; and my aunt's Ode to Wisdom was the result.”

And then, besides the residents, there were distinguished strangers who came to Warrington to consult the Tutors, or to visit the students. Howard the philanthropist came, in order that the younger Aikin might revise his MSS. and correct his proofs. Roscoe of Liverpool came, and first learned to care for botany from his visits to the Warrington Botanical Gardens. Pennant, the Naturalist ; Currie, the biographer of Burns ; and many a Presbyterian Minister, eminent then, though now forgotten,—were also among the visitors to that Athens of our county.

Warrington was then an enviable place, and I for one agree with Miss Lucy Aikin, when she says in a letter now before me, “ I have often “ thought with envy of that society. Neither Oxford nor Cambridge could

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\* Dr. Priestley says in his memoirs, “ Mrs. Barbauld has told me, that it was the “ perusal of some verses of mine that first induced her to write anything in verse ; so “ that this country is in some measure indebted to me for one of the best poets it can “ boast of.” p. 49.

“boast of brighter names in literature or science than several of those dissenting tutors, — humbly content in an obscure town, and on a scanty pittance, to cultivate in themselves, and communicate to a rising generation, those mental acquirements and moral habits which are their own exceeding great reward. They and theirs lived together like one large family, and in the facility of their intercourse they found large compensation for its deficiency in luxury and splendour.”

In 1767 the Academy lost the services of Dr. Priestley, and in 1770 the no less valuable services of Mr. Seddon. Dr. Priestley resigned, he tells us, partly on account of his wife, and partly because the salary of £100 per annum with a house, and £15 a year for boarders, was insufficient for the maintenance of his family.

The death of Mr. Seddon, who was seized with apoplexy when on horseback, was a sudden and a fearful blow. To him was owing the very existence of the Academy; as secretary, he had been from the beginning its most energetic supporter; as “Rector Academiæ,” he had been for the last few years the adviser of the tutors and the guide and instructor of the students. His lectures on oratory and grammar were prepared with care, and were considered powerful and effective. Several of his MSS. are still in the library of Manchester New College, and one small MS. volume of lectures is preserved in the library of Renshaw Street Chapel, Liverpool. Dr. Priestley was succeeded by Mr. John Reinhold Forster, a German scholar and naturalist. This eminent man, who afterwards accompanied Captain Cook in his second voyage round the world, and who was one of the best of living botanists, undertook to fill the chairs of Natural History and Modern Languages, in addition to which he took the junior classes in Latin and in Greek. Mr. Forster, however, remained at Warrington but a short time; his irritable temper, and the entire want of economy which he displayed in all his arrangements, made him out of place in a situation where mutual forbearance and courtesy were so much required, and where, among the tutors at least, extravagance was unknown.

Mr. Enfield was chosen to fill the place of Mr. Seddon, and to him, who remained a tutor in the Academy to the last, was entrusted the double charge of the tutorship of the Belles Lettres, and the office of \* Rector

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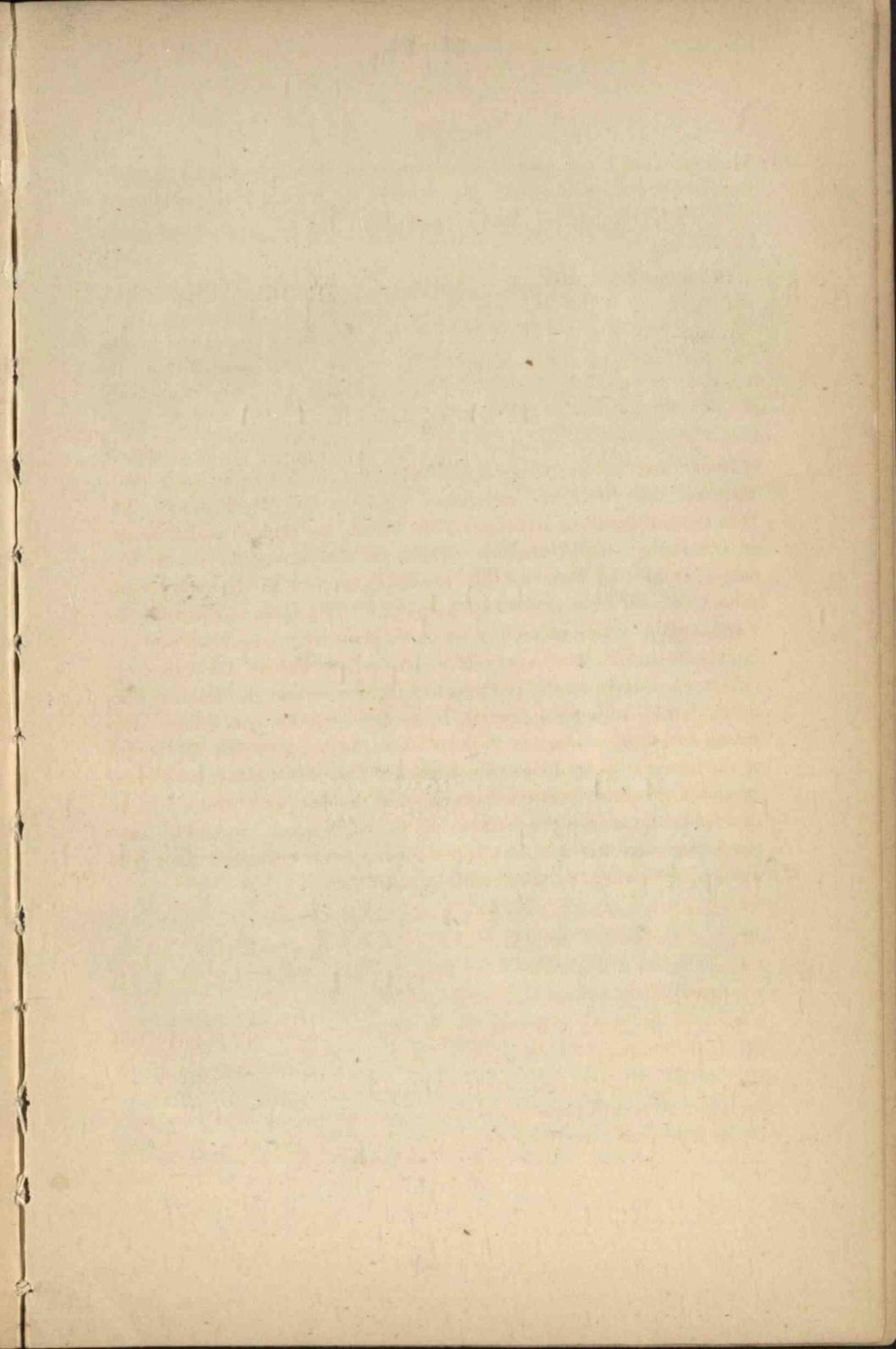
\* Perhaps I should have stated that the origin of this office was the necessity of having some responsible person to superintend the morals of the students, who in 1767 were collected together in a range of new apartments built on the collegiate principle,—formerly they had been boarded in separate private houses.

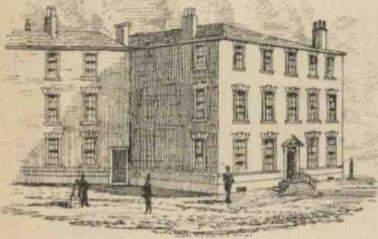
Academiae, which last post is about equivalent to a deanship in the colleges of the older universities. Dr. Enfield was a good and accomplished man, and his compilation called "The Speaker" is still an authority in its humble way.

Before me lies a little quarto pamphlet of seven pages, entitled "Report of the State of the Warrington Academy, by the Trustees, at their Annual Meeting, June 28th, 1770." The Trustees inform the public that the design of the Academy is the "liberal education of youth in general." They prepare students for commerce or the law, for physic or the ministry; they are anxious about discipline and good order, industry and virtuous behaviour, and they wish the terms of the education to be as "easy" as the nature of the design and circumstances will permit. They say that Dr. Aikin undertakes the Latin and Greek classes, Mr. Holt the Mathematical department, Mr. Enfield the lectures on Language, on Commerce, and on History. There are also tutors for modern languages, (a Mr. La Tour was Mr. Forster's successor in this department) and a teacher of drawing and book-keeping. "To prepare students for the ministry, a course of studies which employs five years is appointed." For these students there were courses on Logic, Ontology, Pneumatology, Ethics, Jurisprudence, the Evidences of Revelation and its peculiar Doctrines, Jewish Antiquities, Church History and the Pastoral Office. The annual fees to each tutor are £3 3s., and £1 1s. must be paid for the use of the library. There follows an admission that the students have given ground of complaint as to the "exactness of the discipline," and a promise that for the future new regulations shall be put in force. Several of these regulations are referred to,—an appeal for support is made, and the report winds up with a list of the committee and officials.

This report was needed, for the Academy was not gaining in the confidence of the public, and £1700 (for which the trustees held themselves responsible on a mortgage of the premises) had just been spent in the erection of the new range of students' lodging rooms.

In 1772, the death of Mr. Holt, who had been mathematical tutor from the very beginning, caused another vacancy. He was succeeded by the Rev. George Walker. Mr. Walker was a learned and a most excellent man, and Gilbert Wakefield and Miss Lucy Aikin, both bear witness to the affection and regard which he inspired in all who knew him. His





The House of Dr. Enfield,  
ACADEMY COURT.



The House of Dr. Priestley,  
ACADEMY COURT.



The House of Dr. Aikin,  
BUTTERMARKET ST.



The House of Gilbert Wakefield,  
BEWSEY ST.

residence in Warrington, however, was of barely two years' duration;—the salary which could be afforded to him was too small for his necessities, and he was compelled to resign his post. “In fact,” as Miss Aikin says, “the *alma mater* of Warrington was ever a niggardly recompence of the “distinguished abilities and virtues which were enlisted in her service.”

After Mr. Walker's departure Dr. Enfield undertook the mathematical department in addition to his own laborious courses: and in consequence of Mr. Rigby (father, I suppose, of the two beauties) resigning his situation as “*provider of the commons*,” Dr. Enfield good-naturedly also added the commissariat to his other duties. Dr. Aikin in his turn relieved his colleague from the logic; and Mr. Aikin, afterwards the eminent surgeon, who had now settled in Warrington, lectured on chemistry and anatomy to those who chose to attend him.

The business of the Academy went on from 1774 to 1778, under the sole management of the two tutors, Aikin and Enfield, who were really performing the same work which had hitherto been divided among three.

In 1778, however, Dr. Aikin began to fail, and he was obliged to obtain the assistance of a former pupil, Mr. Houghton. The following year Mr. Gilbert Wakefield was chosen a regular third tutor, and a few months after Dr. Aikin died. For twenty years had he been tutor at the Academy, and his death was to it an irreparable loss. A noble man! nor undeserving of the words which Gilbert Wakefield inscribed upon his tomb:—

Comis, Benevolus, Pius,  
Et Hominis et Christiani munera  
Cumulatissime explevit.

Dr. Nicholas Clayton of Liverpool, was now (1781) appointed tutor in theology, and he, Dr. Enfield and Mr. Wakefield remained tutors till the Academy's dissolution in 1786.

I must now say some few words respecting the two new tutors, who were henceforth Dr. Enfield's colleagues

Dr. Clayton had been minister to the Octagon Chapel in Liverpool, where an attempt had been made for the first time to introduce a Liturgy among Protestant Dissenters. The attempt failed, and Dr. Clayton, after ministering for a few years to the Benn's Garden congregation, received the invitation to Warrington. His sermons were noticeable for the beauty of their style, and the originality of their thought. He was so modest,

however, that his friends could never persuade him to publish; and, dearly loved as he was, his name will soon be forgotten, except as the last tutor of the Academy. He died in Liverpool, in the year 1797.

It is a remarkable proof of the liberality of opinion which was so marked a characteristic of the Academy, that Gilbert Wakefield should have feared that his secession from the Church of England would be an impediment to his appointment as tutor. Certain it is that, when he applied for the post, the Trustees (every one of whom was a Presbyterian) were anxiously looking for some Clergyman of the Church to whom they might entrust it. Whether they trusted to conciliate further support by this mode; whether they thought that a University man might help in maintaining the relaxed discipline; whether they believed some fresh system of study would probably be introduced; or, whether they were actuated by a hope that theological differences would thus be broken down, I cannot tell. By Mr. Wakefield's appointment, two at least of these objects would be secured; and the strong testimonials of Dr. Jebb and others gained him the tutorship.

Mr. Wakefield will hereafter be remembered as the editor of *Lucretius*. A learned and ingenious, though a somewhat careless, scholar, he claims his rank among the foremost of Cambridge men who have thrown light on the pages of the ancient classics. His conscientious integrity was shown by his resignation of his position in the Church of England. His zealous ardour was evinced in later years by a political pamphlet, which cost him a two years' imprisonment. His controversial writings may well be allowed to die. He was irritable and intemperate, and few causes but would have suffered from his injudicious advocacy. His autobiography seems to me one of the most disagreeable and pretentious books I ever read. A vein of insufferable conceit runs through it. Quotations and classical allusions, and italicised sentences bristle on every page. If he burns a letter, he consigns it, so he says, to "the limping deity of Lemnos." He has an illness, and he announces it in three not very relevant lines of Virgil, to which he kindly furnishes a translation. He recalls the great men who have been educated at Cambridge, and as he thinks of them, we learn that "an awful complacency breathed over my spirit." Very justly may we neglect Gilbert Wakefield's other writings, but his *Lucretius* will probably be remembered so long as in England *Lucretius* itself is studied.

There is one question more in connexion with the tutors of the Academy which is too curious to overlook, though I am not enabled to throw much fresh light upon it. The Rev. W. Turner says, in one of his papers in the Monthly Repository, that among the foreigners who from time to time were engaged to fill Mr. Reinhold Forster's place, as teachers of modern languages, was a M. le Maitre, alias Mara, and this he believes was probably the infamous Marat of the French Revolution. He links together the following chain of evidence on the point. "Mara, as his name is spelt in the minutes of the Academy, very soon left Warrington, whence he went to Oxford, robbed the Ashmolean Museum, escaped to Ireland, was apprehended in Dublin, tried and convicted in Oxford under the name of Le Maitre, and sentenced to the hulks at Woolwich. Here one of his old pupils at Warrington, a native of Bristol, saw him. He was afterwards a bookseller in Bristol, and failed, was confined in the gaol of that city, but released by the society there for the relief of prisoners confined for small sums. One of that society, who had personally relieved him in Bristol gaol, afterwards saw him in the National Assembly in Paris in 1792." Add to this, that Marat was certainly in England at or about this time, and had just published a philosophical essay on the connexion between the body and soul of man. There is also the fact that a certain walk in Warrington still goes, so I am informed, by the name of "Marat's Walk."

Still I fear the testimony on the negative side is stronger. In the first place Mr. Turner is, I believe, in error about the name of Mara appearing on the minutes of the Academy. I have searched them through, and employed the assistance of another for the same purpose, and the name of neither Mara nor Le Maitre could be found by us. In the eight or ten Academy reports before me I find a M. Fantin la Tour, but here, too, the name of Mara or La Maitre is absent. Lastly, Miss Aikin, to whom I applied, informs me, "there was an *alarm* about Marat, but investigation set the matter at rest: they were certainly different men."

Even were not some account of the students and student life in itself an important page in the history of the Academy, it would still be necessary to refer to it, as the conduct of the students was one of the chief causes which led to the Academy's dissolution.

A complete list of the students may be found in the Monthly Repository

of 1814, and I have another list in manuscript, drawn up by Serjeant Heywood, but not including the last three years. There are some slight discrepancies as regards dates and christian names, but the lists are substantially the same, and either of them is sufficiently correct. During the whole time of the Academy's existence (that is from 1757 to 1786) there were 393 students, and the average number of entries was, therefore, about fourteen each year. This average remains steady throughout, and indeed during the last years there is rather an increase than a falling off. The first student who entered the Academy was one of the most distinguished in after life. The name of Dr. Percival, the physician and moralist, still claims its place among the worthies, not of Warrington alone, but of the whole of Lancashire. The vast majority of the students became either Unitarian ministers, or wealthy merchants, or were afterwards lost sight of altogether: here and there, however, we may find some name, which is or ought to be familiar to us, and you will allow me to draw them out from these long catalogues of the forgotten. Of Dr. Aikin, the physician, I have already spoken; he entered the Academy in the second year of its establishment. Dr. Rigby, of Norwich, also a physician,—Dr. Estlin, of Bristol, a well known scholar and divine,—Serjeant Heywood, author of the "Vindication of Mr. Fox's History," and a Welsh judge,—Archibald Hamilton Rowan, the Irish rebel,—and Malthus, the political economist,—such is a short and somewhat incongruous list of the best known among the students. But there were many others who were noted in their day, and who achieved success and fortune in their several callings, conspicuous among whom I find Lord Ennismore, Sir James Carnegie, of Southesk, Mr. Henry Beaufoy, Rev. Pendlebury Houghton and Dr. Crompton.

In looking over the students' names, I cannot but notice how many of their descendants are still the staunch supporters of the liberal Dissent, which was the distinguishing characteristic of the Academy. Some families, like the Willoughbys of Parham, whose last lord was educated at Warrington, have now died out: others, like the Aldersons of Norwich, of which family the late judge was a member, have seceded to the Church of England. But we still find united the lineal and the theological successors of the Academy's students, in the Rigbys, the Martineaus and the Taylors of Norwich, the Heywoods and the Yateses of Liverpool, the Potters of Manchester, the Gaskells of Wakefield, the Brights of Bristol,

the Shores of Sheffield, the Hibberts of Hyde and the Wedgewoods of Etruria.

But among the students were many, who could not but cause great anxiety to those who had charge of the Academy, and, most trying of all, there seem to have been some hot-blooded young Irishmen, and some still more hot-blooded young West Indians, sons of planters in Jamaica, St. Kitts and Antigua. Indeed the tutors seem to have admitted any one who chose to apply for admission, and Archibald Hamilton Rowan, in his memoirs, only alludes to the Academy as being the place "where I spent "a year of my rustication" from Cambridge.

Certainly the Rev. William Turner (himself a student at the Academy) gives a terrible picture of the insults to which that kindly and gentle Dr. Enfield was exposed as Rector Academiæ, "by the dissipated and "inflamed West Indian, whose pastime it had been from his youth to "sport with human sufferings; by the profligate outcast of our great "public schools, who had learned all the evil without any of the good of "those establishments, and was sent hither as a *dernier ressort*; and by the "pampered pet of large fortune, who, from the treatment he had seen "given, and been allowed himself to give, to his private tutor at home, "had learned to consider every tutor as a sort of upper servant." And unfortunately there was no sufficient discipline to restrain the evil or punish the offenders. Expulsion was the worst penalty that could be inflicted; and expulsion was a penalty for which the offender would not care, and for which the Academy itself might suffer. Plan after plan was tried, and plan after plan failed. Did the students lodge, as at first, in the tutors' houses?—they fell in love with the young ladies, and studied anything rather than the divinity, and belles lettres, and logic, and rhetoric, which were the supposed attractions of the place. Did they live all together, as afterwards they did live, in a range of college rooms?—they got into debt, they played mad pranks in the town, and cost Mr. Seddon and then Dr. Enfield, their Rectors, many a long hour of anxiety and wretchedness. When I speak, as I soon must do, of the discussions respecting the dissolution of the Academy, I shall have to speak more at large of Dr. Enfield's feelings on this subject.

Let me now gather, as best I can, some stray illustrations of the wild life of the wilder of the Academy students. Of the quiet and respectable

set, who afterwards reflected credit on their "alma-mater," I can discover very little. I suppose there is nothing much to discover, however. They attended the tutors' lectures, and took walks into the country with young Dr. Aikin, and listened to sermons in Cairo street Chapel, and otherwise prepared themselves for a calm future of happy usefulness.

Meanwhile the West Indians were bewailing their native islands, and shocking the tutors by declaring that the earliest request of a planter's child was always for a "young nigger to kick." And then there was the love-making in the tutors' houses. The beautiful Miss Rigbys made wild work with the students' hearts; and the trustees had to insist that they must be removed from the house if any students stayed there. And so for a time they were; but Mrs. Rigby's health fortunately broke down, and the young ladies were brought back again. Rousseau's "Héloïse," too, had much to answer for, and at its appearance (so Miss Aikin tells me), "every body instantly fell in love with every body;" and then it was that Mr. Barbauld won his bride.

Then the politics of the students were no less inconvenient than their flirtations. Strong Whigs, and something more, as the tutors themselves were, they were alarmed and terrified at the anti-English zeal, which, during the American war, was displayed by several of the students. One of them, who boarded at Dr. Enfield's, insisted on his right to illuminate *his own* windows for an American victory; but this the Doctor declined to allow, as it committed himself, the master of the house.

Many are the stories told of the practical jokes which these wicked students played.

One morning the landlords of the different inns in Warrington might have been seen with bewildered looks gazing up to the sign-boards which swung above their hospitable doors. Well might they be bewildered! In a single night the "Red Lion" had become the "Roebuck," the "Nag's Head" was the "Golden Horse Shoe," the "Royal Oak" had changed places with the "Griffin," and the "George and the Dragon" appeared now as the "Eagle and Child." Another story is told of a most respectable lady who was coming from a ball. Her carriage stops the way—she is stepping towards it. But—what and how is this? The footmen are devils' imps, with torches in their hands—the coachman grins down with a demon's face from the box; and from the carriage comes

forth to escort the lady home a terrible figure, but one easy to be recognised—with horns, and tail, and cloven foot. One student procured a black ox-skin, and haunted Bank street night after night, till houses were deserted, and Bank street was half ruined. Another student put on a bear's skin, and frightened an old nut-woman who believed it was the devil.

Perhaps the wicked Miss Rigbys were the inspirers of these wicked pranks. Certainly they knew how to play them. On one occasion they had asked some of the students to supper. Hams, and trifles, and potted beef and other luxuries were placed before them, and the students were asked to help the ladies. But the hams were made of wood, and the trifles were plates of soap-suds, and the potted beef was potted sawdust, and the other luxuries were equally tempting and equally tantalizing.

There are other traditions of this kind still current in Warrington; but it would be unnecessary to quote more in order to shew how relaxed was the discipline and how wild the students. Among the Seddon papers however there are letters relating to two of Mr. Seddon's pupils, which throw light on the way in which the Rector Academiæ dealt with particular cases, and which are not uninteresting in other respects.

In the August of 1768, Mr. Seddon received a letter from Mr. Samuel Vaughan, of Bristol, complaining bitterly of the disappointment he has felt as regards the Academy, and the "too great latitude allowed the students." He thus expostulates:—

"My Son Ben's expenses during ten months absence amounts to £112, and Billy's to £59 12s.; this (should nearly suffice for the University, and) of its self, would to many be a sufficient objection, but in my opinion, the consequence of the expence is abundantly more pernicious, as it naturally leads to Levity, a love of pleasure, dissipation, and affectation of smartness; diverts the attention, and prevents the necessary application to serious thought and Study. When I sent my Sons so great a distance, it was with a view to preserve them from the reigning contagion of a dissipated age, to imbibe good Morals, acquire knowledge, and to obtain a manly and solid way of thinking and acting, but they are returned with high Ideas of modern refinements, of dress and external accomplishments, which if ever necessary, yet resumed by them much too soon. As one instance—they think it a Sight to appear without having their hair Frissened, and this must be done by a dresser, even upon the Sabbath. No person can more wish for, and encourage an open and Liberal way of thinking and acting than my self, yet do I

“think that day should be kept with Ancient Solemnity, for to say the least, the reverse gives offence to many serious good People, and exhibits an ill example at a time when Religion is at so low an ebb, as to stand in need of every tie and prop (whether real or imaginary) for its support, therefore any relaxation or Innovation under sanction of such a seminary as yours, may have the most pernicious tendency, for when restraints even in unessentials are removed they are frequently a clue or gradation, to the fashionable levity of the Age and Irreligion.”

But the same post brought Mr. Seddon a second letter. The accused Ben Vaughan (who afterwards became a useful member of society, and a member of Parliament also,) wrote to Mr. Seddon, expressing his contrition for the past, and promising penitence in the future. He is afraid his conduct may have acted injuriously on the Academy,—he has encroached on Mr. Seddon’s goodness and forbearance,—ill-natured people will say ill-natured things.

“They say we are gay and idle, business gives way to pleasure, and instead of receiving improvement we are taught how to live idly. This has been said in my hearing. But tho’ I am certain that none of us have been vicious, but only gay, this has been laid to our charge. Our Recreations have been innocent tho’ expensive—but they imagine that they cannot be expensive without being criminal. I believe that none of us have received any injury from y<sup>e</sup> Liberty allowed us, but others may make a bad use of it.”

And then, having finished his confession, Mr. Benjamin Vaughan confides to Mr. Seddon that Mr. Wilkes will probably get a pardon from the crown, and that he (Mr. Vaughan) does not believe that Mr. Wilkes ever wrote the “North Briton.—No. 45.”

But Benjamin Vaughan’s contrition was not very fruitful. Next year he has again to write to Mr. Seddon, to confess that he cannot show his accounts to his father, and to sign himself, “your affectionate but distressed pupil.” He compares too so badly with his brother, who has only spent £60—but here is an extract from his letter—

“My father, last year, was extremely angry at an acct. I gave him of £112, spent at Warrington—the present sum is £179. Bill disclaims all share in the expenses above £60. I then have £119 to answer for; I who promised such strict amendment, and who had as many excuses last year as at present I had more journies, more music, and yet, according to his knowledge, have spent £7 more in my present year of pennance, repentance, &c.”

Another series of letters refers to the notorious Archibald Hamilton

Rowan. He will be remembered by every student of Irish history as the friend of Napper Tandy, and as having been tried for sedition in 1792. But he will be remembered by many more as the prisoner, in whose defence Curran uttered his noble and famous eulogium on British law—that law “which proclaims even to the stranger and the sojourner the moment he sets his foot on British earth, that the ground on which he treads is holy and consecrated by the genius of universal emancipation.”

In 1769 this Hamilton Rowan (whom, by the way\* Mrs. Schimmelpenninck in her late Memoirs appears to confound with “Fighting Fitzgerald,” who never was at Warrington,) this future rebel, having been rusticated from Cambridge, came to pass his year of banishment under the care of Mr. Seddon. The experiment was not a hopeful one: it proved signally unsuccessful.

In the Biography of Hamilton Rowan, which was afterwards written, his residence at Warrington was scarcely alluded to,—and except a casual allusion to his early admiration for Mrs. Barbauld, as a girl, nothing had been recorded of this period of his life. The letters of Mr. Seddon help to fill up the gap.

Mr. Hamilton, the father, writes on the 1st of June, to announce the coming of his son, who is “to have any sum not exceeding one hundred pounds a year.” Two months only pass and Mr. Seddon has to send the following letter to Archibald Hamilton Rowan, Esq., at the Swan with two necks, Lad Lane, London.

“HEREFORD, August 2nd, 1769.

“SIR,

“From the clandestine manner in which you left Warrington, and withdrew your self from our protection, I did not expect to hear from you any more: though when I consider the indecent and shameful manner in which you behaved at Liverpool, I do not wonder at it: be assured, Sir, that such conduct will not be permitted at Warrington, and I hope you will not return there any more. You were told very plainly and freely on what Terms your continuance there depended: you promised to comply with them; but you have acted contrary to them in every instance: there is no dependence to be had on your resolutions and promises; and therefore I beg to repeat to you, what has several Times

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\* Indeed, almost every statement made by Mrs. Schimmelpenninck respecting the Academy is incorrect.

“been said to you, that you had better retire from the Academy at Warrington, and not expose y<sup>r</sup> self to the disgrace of being dismissed in another manner. I do not think my self at Liberty to send you a Dft. on Messrs. Allen’s and Marlar, they are proper Judges of what is proper and necessary, and to them I refer you. I have written to them this post, and I beg you will wait on them immediately on the receipt of this, and follow the advice they give you.

“I was very much disposed to be your friend, and to have led you into such a plan of Study and course of behaviour as would have been useful to you, but this is a pleasure you have absolutely refused to

“S<sup>r</sup>

“Y<sup>r</sup> most humb. Srv<sup>t</sup>

“J. SEDDON.

And then follows a letter from Mr. Hamilton Rowan respecting his debts.

“Nook, Sat. Eve. 1769.

“S<sup>R</sup>,

“I have, according to your desire, recollected as much as I was able, the manner in which the £40 was expended; the receipts, which I send you, I think amount to £16 17s. 6d. which together with 2 Guineas which I reckon for washing, mending, &c., 5 Guineas which I borrowed from you, and the Trifle due to the Academy, bring the amount to £27 5s. 6d. £6 or £7 to Mr. Jones, and £4 4s. for one month’s Lodging here, I paid out of £15 5s, rec<sup>d</sup> from Mr. Jones. Mr. Wainwright’s bill remains unpaid, which I think is the only bill, except Jones his, I owe in Warrington. 5 Guineas will be sufficient for the journey; but I shall have one month’s Lodging to pay here, before I go; if I can sell my Horse, I shall not want so much money; I expect to sell her for eleven Guineas, and unless I can gett that sum for her, I shall not part with her, from this S<sup>r</sup> you may judge of y<sup>e</sup> Situation of

“Your Obliged Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>

ARCH<sup>d</sup> HAMILTON ROWAN.

Lastly, we have five agonizing letters from Mr. Rowan’s London agents, Messrs. Allen, Marlar, & Co. :—they sympathise with Mr. Seddon in his troubles, they “make no doubt of his good disposition towards this young gentleman,” in whose “capacity, politeness, and goodness of heart” they have still great hopes, they condemn Mr. Rowan’s “imprudence,” but think his desire to pay his debts at Warrington, “redounds to his reputation” :—and then reminding Mr. Seddon that his refractory pupil is heir to a good fortune, they express their anxiety to arrange matters so that all may still be right.

But Mr. Hamilton Rowan had nevertheless to leave Warrington. His next appearance in public brought him into other companionship than quiet Mr. Seddon, or apologetic Messrs. Allen and Marlar.

It is but right, however to add, that there are among this Seddon correspondence letters of quite another tone. I find one letter from young George Willoughby, afterwards seventeenth and last Lord Willoughby of Parham, \* and last of the old Presbyterian nobility of England; he, being away for the vacation, writes to Mr. Seddon "I am at a loss for words to express myself in that affectionate manner that you do to me, but you know I mean it." And he goes on to assure him that it is "with a great deal of pleasure" that he will once more return to Warrington.

One more letter I cannot but refer to, as showing a curious tinge of intolerance in even the Warrington Academy and its supporters. A worthy correspondent of Mr. Seddon is astonished to hear that a student in whom he took interest had a "Methodist" turn, and the correspondent is quite surprised, and very much scandalized. He had no idea of such a thing. Had he had such an idea, he would never have taken any trouble or care about the young man. So even the Warrington Academy and its supporters,—all liberal, and all tolerant, had their little prejudices, their favourite aversions.

But the history of the Academy is now coming to an end. In 1782, the difficulties arising from the insubordination of the students on the one hand, and a pressure of debt for building expenses on the other, were becoming formidable. To meet the latter evil a subscription was entered upon, headed by Sir Henry Hoghton, Mr. Tayleur of Shrewsbury, Mr. Hardman of Allerton, Mr. Bright of Bristol, and Mr. Newton of Norton, who each contributed £100, and a total amount of about £2500 is raised.

But the difficulties are still great, and the Academy is still declining.—Dr. Enfield seems to have felt that the house was falling, and was the first to raise the alarm. In December, 1782, he writes to Mr. (afterwards Serjeant) Heywood, and says that he sees "much reason for despondency.

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\* It is of these Willoughbys of Parham that that beautiful "Lady Willoughby's Diary" tells us;—it is a strange mistake, however, in the accomplished authoress, to represent the Willoughbys as an Episcopalian family, especially since her own sympathies lie in the Presbyterian direction.

“Our number of students is only 17; of these only 8 are expected to return next session. After the experience of many years, I find myself confirmed in the opinion that it is impracticable in such a place as ours, where youths from 14 to 18 years of age are placed in college apartments, without any superior resident amongst them, and free from all domestic restraints. Irregularities have from time to time unavoidably arisen, which have at last, I am afraid, led the public to form a decided judgment against the Academy.” He goes on to state that students have lately been coming from those places only where the Academy is little known. Liverpool and Manchester supply very few and one only of the trustees would send a son of his to the Academy. Enfield concludes by a suggestion that a “domestic plan of education” might be substituted, and implies that he would willingly undertake it. In January, 1783, Dr. Enfield repeated his distrust and his discomfort, in a memorial addressed to the trustees. He speaks of the hopes they had entertained, and of the disappointment which had resulted. The tutors, he says, had done every thing that could be done; but “an idle waste of time, a coarse and vulgar familiarity, a disposition towards riot and mischief, intemperance, and in some instances gaming, profaneness and licentious manners, have found their way into a seminary intended to train up youth in habits of sobriety and virtue.” And then he repeats “his plan of a domestic education.”

I find another memorial from Mr. Wakefield, which bears out in a great measure Dr. Enfield’s complaints. The students are too young, and too ill-educated when they come,—they are thrown together in a large sequestered house,—there is no sufficient power of enforcing discipline,—the Academy is neither school nor college; it is without the supervision exercised in the one, and it wants the influence and authority of the other,—the students are treated as men, while they are but a set of wild and reckless boys.

In these statements there may have been some little exaggeration, but the evils were certainly great, and the applications from students very few. It is decided at a meeting of the trustees, that the Academy should be closed. For some months there seems to have been much discussion, and some warm discussion, with regard to the Academy. Some of the subscribers wish an amalgamation with Daventry. Others do not wish it closed at

all, and in the September of 1785, they manage to carry resolutions that "the Academy shall not be dissolved," but that henceforth "the students "be required to lodge in the houses of the tutors." But no resolution could revive the Academy. The students still dropped off, and the tutors had no heart left.

On 29th June, 1786, there was another full meeting of trustees, Thos. B. Bayley, Esq., in the chair, and a resolution, passed by a majority of 54 votes, for the last time decided the fate of the Warrington Academy.

It would now be of little interest to any one were I to unravel the tangle of conflicting interests, and contradictory schemes, which for nearly a year confused and divided the supporters of the Academy. A college at Manchester was at last established, and to this the Warrington trustees resolved to transfer their library and half the clear produce of the sale of the Academy buildings. The latter part of the gift was of no great value. The books still remain, and are still perhaps the finest part of the noble theological library of the Manchester college. Of that college itself—differ from its principles as, and how we like,—I need only say, that for seventy years it has continued with varying success to train up pious and enlightened ministers for that body of Christians, who founded the Warrington Academy. Established at Manchester, it then removed to York; it returned again to Manchester, and has now removed to London. Whatever may be its failings, it still retains the old Warrington characteristics of a freedom quite unshackled, a fearless daring in the search of truth, and a clear and penetrating glance into the deepest problems of theology.

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NOTE.—As a sequel to the history of the Academy, I add the advertisement that appeared, when all was over, and nothing was left but to sell the deserted buildings :—

#### WARRINGTON ACADEMY.

**T**O BE SOLD BY AUCTION, upon the premises, on Wednesday, the 28th of February next, between the hours of three and five in the afternoon, subject to such conditions of sale as shall then and there be produced, together or in lots, if not sooner disposed of by private contract, of which timely notice will be given,

All the Buildings, together with the vacant Lands, belonging to the late Academy at Warrington, in the county palatine of

Lancaster, containing in the whole 4280 square yards or upwards. The buildings are large and commodious, in good repair, and are most excellently adapted for an academy or school for young ladies or gentlemen.—They consist of,

First, Two very good dwelling-houses, neatly fitted up, each 12 yards in front, three stories high, four rooms on a floor, cellared under, with convenient kitchens, yards and out-offices.

Second, A building, lately occupied for students' rooms, three stories high, about 23 yards in front, and 12 yards in depth.

Third, A building, three stories high, lately occupied as a common hall and library, with rooms over, in front 22 yards and a half.

There are two plots of vacant ground, the one containing 600, the other 1900 square yards.

For particulars enquire of Ellis Bent, Esq., and James Leyland, builder, in Warrington, with the latter of whom a plan is left, and who will shew the premises.

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