

CHAPTER XVIII ODDS AND ENDS

Bridgwater in the later days, by the Rev. A. H. Powell, 1908

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IT is inevitable that several notes and scraps of information should rise to the surface in dealing with the story of any place. It has been so in writing this book. They are such as do not come precisely within the subjects of any of the preceding chapters, and therefore they are written separately below. They range, it should be added, beyond the two hundred years covered by the preceding pages, and some few of them fall almost within the period of ancient days.

Church Bells, — A bond, executed by Wm. Purday, of Clothesworth, County Somerset, Bell-founder, to the Mayor of Bridgwater, in the sum of £20, to ensure that he will "*at his owne proper costes charges and expences well and suffyciently repaire mayntayne and keepe the third bell of the quire of bells now hanginge in the tower of Bridgwater within three monethes warning geven by the Wardens of the Towne.*" Dated 19th March, 1578.

Decay of Property. — Copy of an order of the Court of Wards and Liveries discharging the Bailiffs of the town of the sum of 103s. 4d. yearly overplus of a rent of £16 due to the Court, for property now much decayed. The decay is attributed to the dissolution of the monasteries of Athelney and Dunkeswell and the Grey Friars of Bridgwater. Dated 1537.

The Rectory of Bridgwater. — Bond by James Boyes, Mayor, Robert Watkins and John Gallington, al. Galhampton, Bailiffs, and the Burgesses of the town, to the Queen Elizabeth in £1000 to observe the covenants in the letters patent of the Queen granting for a term of years to the Mayor, etc., the Rectory and Parsonage of Bridgwater, viz., that they shall pay to the Crown the rents, etc., specified in the said letters and shall satisfy and pay a yearly stipend "*to a Mynyster and likewise to a scolemaster*" in the said town. Signed by James Boyse, Mayor ; Robt. Moleyns ; Geffre Shyrcum ; Wm. Gold ; John Edwards ; Ric. Hiatt ; Ric. Castleman ; Phyllype Holworthy ; and Robt. Watkins and John Galhampton, Bailiffs. Dated 1571.

A Ship Wrecked in the River Parret. — John Page and Richard Davy, of Bridgwater, grasyars, execute a bond to John Hamond, merchant, John Nicholas and John Dey, in £20, that they will, before St. Bartholomew's Day next, "*rydde or cause to be rydde as moche as is possible to be rydde by man's handes of the hulle of the Venycian shippe latelie perished in the ryver of Brydgewater befor Hunspill, owt and from the said ryver, and also save, kepe harmlesse, and dyscharge the Maier Bailiffes and Burgesses of Brydgewater aforesaid and theyr successors of and for the dew clensinge of the said ryver in that place where the said hulle now lyeth or where the said hulle shall happen hereafter to tarry, stycke, and abide within the same ryver.*" This wreck was evidently blocking the navigation of the port. The document bears date 1549.

Penalties imposed at the Court of the Manor. — This is a roll of three membranes containing extracts of presentments and fines (Borough of Bridgwater) imposed at the Court of the Manor with the view of the Frank-Pledge held thereat, Michaelmas Term, October 5, 1508. For Estover and Were ; Friars Minor Street ; St. Mary's Street ; Without West-Gate ; Orlow-Streete ; High Street, north-side ; and ditto, south-side. Offenders in any of the following misdemeanours in trade or habit were to be fined.

Those who give short weight in bread
Brewers who broke the assize of beer.
Those who sell putrid fish.
Victuallers who take exceeding profits.
Beer-sellers.

Sellers of bad leather.
Those who do not clean their dung-hills in Orlow-Strete.

Those who have not scoured their water-courses in Estover.

Those who throw garbage outside Northgate.
Innkeepers who take too much profit.

The Vicar's Service Book. — A note or memorandum, taken from a Bible or Service Book in the Parish Church of Bridgwater, desiring the prayers of those who read it "*for the soul of John Colswayne, Vicar of the Church,*" who bequeathed it, as a special memorial, to be kept by the Vicars for the benefit of the parishioners. This is a late fifteenth-century document.

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One wonders what eventually became of poor John Colswayne's book.

The Choosing of Sixteenth-century Members of Parliament. — An indented bill witnesseth "that Geffrye Shircombe, Mayor of Bridgwater, with consent of the Burgesses, has chosen Sir Thos. Dyer, Knight, and Robert Mullens, gentleman, to be Burgesses for the town at the next Parliament." Dated January 6, 1559. Note: both these names appear in the Members' List for that year.

Bridge Profits. — An indented lease, dated 1655, records that the Mayor leased to Thos. Turner, for £45, "the profits of the duty called Pontage, arising by the passing of Boats under the Bridge, for seven years." This seems to be a moderate sum, but money had an immensely greater relative value in Queen Elizabeth's days.

Bridgwater Free School in 1682. — The Mayor and others appoint Samuel Hill, clerk, to be Schoolmaster of the Free School in Bridgwater, and seek the Bishop's confirmation of the appointment. This is one of the earliest records of school appointments.

The Town Water-supply. — A counterpart exists of a lease granted by the Mayor, Aldermen, etc., to Richard Lowbridge, of Sturbridge, County Worcester, of liberty to cut and bore timber, open pavements so as to lay pipes to supply water, and provide a cistern, etc., within the Borough, for 1000 years at the yearly rent of one shilling, with condition, etc., by undertaking to pay the lessee £100 on bringing water as aforesaid into the town. Dated 1694. Note : this lease was afterwards annulled.

Quay Duties, Pontage, and Cranage. — A lease is recorded, granted by the Mayor and Aldermen to Thomas Quarrell, *al* Quarle, grocer, of the key-duties, pontage and cranage, belonging to Bridgwater, for three years, at a yearly rent of £40. Dated February, 1722. Coal was excepted from this agreement, which seems to be an advance upon the earlier leasing of the pontage in 1655. The importing of coal was evidently very considerable, and of course implied constant use of the crane. Hence the town officials keep that duty and privilege to their own use.

The Famous Conjuror Baker. — The

publication *Vox Stellarum* for 1830 gives a curious account of this strange man.

"Richard Baker, of Westleigh, in the Parish of Burliscombe, Somerset, a small farmer, died in 1819, full of years and iniquities, being 70 years old, and having during the far greater part of his life practised the gainful tactics of the Black Art." For fifty years, the account states Baker had been daily and hourly employed in alternately counting the wages of his villainies and in laughing at the follies of a cheated multitude. But his life "is too much clogged with the heaviness of a guilty account to allow one redeeming ray to qualify the lurid aspect of his moral reckoning. It may surprise the distant reader, whose ears have never been afflicted with the doleful superstitions of the Western Counties, to be informed that such was the fame of the deceased Wizard that the educated as well as the uninstructed, of all classes, were in the habit of resorting to him from all parts, for the exercise of his cabalistic skill. On a Sunday, which was the day for his high orgies, vehicles of superior as well as of lowly descriptions were found to bring him an eager throng of votaries. His reputation was universal, and his gains proportionate."

Bad crops, lost cattle, lost treasure, and lost hearts brought their respective sufferers in ceaseless crowds to his door. They were all overlooked, he said. He foretold to the Southcottians the Shiloh would not come. The tenant of a sterile land was advised, after a careful inspection of his presiding star, to provide a certain quantity of manure, which being spread over his grounds in the form of ram's horns at twelve o'clock precisely on the full moon night, would infallibly secure a good crop. This astonishing prediction has been repeatedly verified ! "Strayed stock and mislaid property have been strangely recovered, by only being well looked after, provided the wise man had once taken the matter in hand ; and many a relenting Phyllis who had parted with her Strephon in a huff has been heard to exclaim, on finding him return at the very hour calculated by the conjuror, that sure ' Baker and the Devil were in partnership. ' "

His most serious misdemeanours were, however, when he led the victims of disease to rely upon his pretended skill. "Charmed powders and mystic lotions were

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confided in ; and the death of the old and young has been the consequent penalty of such deplorable imbecility." A poor child died at Wellington, a martyr thus to her mother's credulity. *"She consulted the heartless villain, and was assured that the infant was "overlooked". Some powders were given to her, accompanied with the slang verbosity of his craft, which the little sufferer was compelled to swallow, notwithstanding that the mother declared that it made her heart bleed to see the agonies of her child while taking the dose."* The writer of the account describes this as *"a cold-blooded murder, to be added to the atrocities which marked the career of this miscreant through life."* Conjuror Baker is said to have amassed money, as indeed he easily may have done. His career is a sufficient proof of the marvellous credulity of people in those days.

Vox Stellarum. — This almanack added to its attractiveness for the people of Bridgwater, and others, by its dark hints as to the future. The author, in a fine burst of confidence, justifies the use and the value of hieroglyphics, thus: *"If the Hindoos represent beginnings of events by heads of men and animals, bold beginnings by horns, endings by legs and feet, and feeble endings by an old man lying prostrate : if a serpent with a baboon's head and a goat's feet has a meaning which always pays for deciphering, and serpents denote either subtilty, or poison, or immense duration, or creeping policy, or what not ; why are they to be despised who aim by their accompaniments to explore their signification ? "*

"Why," asks the learned author, *"should not inquirers rather imitate the patient zeal of the learned author of Palibothra, who, in his elaborate work on the tenets of the Boodhists, devotes more than forty pages to serpent worship? But want of room forbids my discussing these points fully. I therefore present my annual hieroglyphic. Its interpretation is in the womb of Time."*

Certainly the interpretation of the hieroglyphic — a most villainously printed picture descriptive of nothing at all — leaves nearly everything *"in the womb of Time."* The seer, however, unbends so far as to allow himself to launch out into some prophetic

utterances. Thus, *"the times still seem pregnant with matters of great moment, especially in the German and Ecclesiastical States."* In a bold statement the prophet declares that *"the minds of men will be much occupied with mundane affairs."* The measures of conciliation to the Roman Catholics *"will give uneasiness to some scrupulous consciences."* Others think that *"It will give to Ireland that peaceful repose to which she has been a stranger for ages."* The student of the future then plunges boldly. *"Unless,"* he writes, *"I swerve from the rules of Art, I must declare that the affairs of most nations incline as yet to a pacific disposition."*

Next, he foretells that *"persons in honourable posts shall augment their fortunes, while the commonalty will have less cause to complain than they have had."* Again, *"there are likely to be many notable marriages this Quarter ; and private weddings, though closely celebrated, will be much talked of."*

For the autumn quarter of the year our prophet is more full. *"I have long been in possession,"* says he, *"of the predictions of J. Adam Müller, called in Baden the Maisbach prophet, and find them in many respects as interesting and complete as those of Nostradamus."* This is probably true ; the one set of predictions is most likely as valueless as the other. One of these announcements is this : *"That in the East of Europe there will be a struggle between two monstrous females, one a heathen Christian (sic), the other a Turk ; that each shall conquer the other, and that then they shall unite in bearing a large book scented with the richest perfumes and surmounted with a massy golden crown ; that this book shall be universally read, when Britain knows and keeps her true place, and after a year of universal opposition."*

It seems almost incredible that such poor stuff as this should have been published and eagerly read in the West, and no doubt in our own town, as recently as in the year 1830. Yet it was. The *Vox Stellarum*, it is said, was a most popular publication.

The Almanack. — At the head of each month in the *Vox Stellarum Almanack* is a verse, faintly suggestive of prophecy, and sometimes quite alarming. Two specimens only of these remarkable

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effusions need be quoted. They are respectively for June and August.

I

See how the Time prevails ; how it comes on ;
'Tis always gay and glorious here to some.
Let Heaven add, add to adorn this stage,
Peace to its Glory, vigour to its Age.
But hold ! methinks I'm interrupted here,
And bid for some unwelcome News prepare.

II

The grand presages of this month do call
Some great ones to be mindful of their fall ;
Heaven will no bribes receive, but what is just.
Give man reward according to his trust.
Mark who the Traitor is, behold his fate !
Under his Prince's wrath, the People's hate.

Thus there was provided a thrill —
more or less exciting — for every month.
It may have been a relief, possibly, for the
quieter lives of a hundred years ago.

The Bull and Butcher Inn. — On page
177 two interpretations are given of the
possible origin of this name. It may, of
course, have only the plain meaning
which it bears, and may possess no
hidden derivation. There was, however, a
hundred years ago, the most intense
terror of Napoleon Buonaparte. It was
feared that he would invade England, The
following rhyme, it is said, used to be
sung by mothers to their babies, while
rocking them to sleep, and hoping that
they might be kept safe. Many ignorant
folk regarded the great Corsican soldier as
a sort of giant, who would devour people.
This was the lullaby.

He's as tall as Rouen steeple,
He's not made like you or I,
He could kill a hundred people.
Hush ! my baby, do not cry.
O if he should chance to see you,
Lying thus upon my lap,
O he'd eat you, eat you, eat you ;
Gobble you, gobble you ; snap, snap, snap !

The fear of invasion was less acute in
the West Country, perhaps, than further
eastward in England. In Kent and Sussex
it was very real, and great preparations
were made for the Napoleonic invasion,
which never came.

The Bridgwater Treatises. — These once
famous treatises have no connection with
the town save through the title of their

founder. This was Francis Henry Egerton,
Earl of Bridgwater, grand nephew of the
first Duke of Bridgwater. He was a
clergyman, born in 1758, succeeding as
eighth Earl in 1823. He died in 1829, and
the title became extinct. By his will he left
the sum of £8000 to be awarded to the
author of the best treatise "*On the power,
wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested
in the Creation.*" This was to be set forth by
such arguments as the variety and forma-
tion of God's creatures in the animal,
vegetable, and mineral kingdoms ; the
effect of digestion ; the formation of the
human hand ; also of many ancient or
modern discoveries in art, science, or
literature. By the advice of the trustees
(the President of the Royal Society, the
Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of
London, and another) it was decided that
eight awards of £1000 each should be
given to the writers of eight treatises
dealing with the subjects indicated by the
testator.

The treatises, naturally, had a wide
circulation and much influence in their
day. They were all published between
1833 and 1840. The following are the
writers and subjects.

1. *The Adaptation of External Nature to
the Moral and Intellectual Constitution of
Man*, by the famous Dr. Thomas
Chalmers.

2. *Chemistry, Meteorology, and Digestion*,
by William Proutt, M.D.

3. *The History, Habits, and Instincts of
Animals*, by Mr. Kirby.

4. *Geology and Mineralogy* : some very
interesting work by Dean Buckland

5. *The Hand, as evincing Design*, by Sir
Charles Bell.

6. *The Adaption of External Nature to the
Physical Condition of Man*, by Dr. J. Kidd.

7. *Astronomy and General Physics*, by the
famous Dr. Whewell.

8. *Animal and Vegetable Physiology*, by P.
M. Roget, M.D.

These treatises, of course, are written
from the scientific standpoint of seventy
years ago. Thus they are useful as
landmarks, and as showing the best
thought of the time, before the doctrine of
evolution had been presented to men's

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minds. Theologically, also, they bear the impress of early nineteenth-century thought.

Notes of the Town made in the Year 1835. — Samuel Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of England*, 1835, gives a few interesting notes of that date. "*In a short time the streets will be lighted with gas, under an Act obtained in 1834. A new road from Bristol to this town is about to be formed, whereby the distance will be shortened five miles. Coal is brought free of duty from Monmouthshire and Wales, and is conveyed into the interior of the county by a canal to Taunton.*" The custom-house duties in 1833 amounted to £8019. The government of the town was then vested in a Mayor, Recorder, two Aldermen, two Bailiffs or Sheriffs, and eighteen Burgesses, assisted by a Town Clerk, three Serjeants-at-mace, and subordinate officers. The Mayor and Bailiffs were chosen annually, but the rest usually held their offices during life, the Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen being Justices of the Peace within the Borough and Parish. The freedom was inherited by the eldest sons of freemen, and acquired by servitude and gift. Among the privileges which it conveyed was the freedom of all ports in England and Ireland, except those of London and Dublin. Two Members were then returned to Parliament. The right of election was formerly vested in the inhabitants resident within the Borough properly so called (which comprised 158 acres) paying Scot and Lot, the number being about 400. But this number was extended by the Act of 2 William IV, cap. 45, to the householders of an enlarged district, containing 742 acres, which, by the Act of 2 and 3 William IV, cap 64, was made to constitute the new Borough. The number of votes registered at the first general election under the Reform Act was 484, of whom 132 were Scot and Lot votes. [Note as to Scot and Lot. The old legal phrase Scot and Lot embraced all parochial assessments for the poor, the church, lighting, cleansing, and watching. Previous to the Reform Act the right of voting for Members of Parliament and for municipal officers was, in various English boroughs, exclusively vested in payers of Scot and Lot. Scot is derived from the

Anglo-Saxon *skeat*, pay.]

The Town Hall Tapestry. — In the council chamber now hangs a piece of tapestry work representing a scene in the history of Philip of Macedon and Alexander his son. It was the gift of Mr. Chapman, of Hamp House, and was originally purchased from Enmore Castle. The following explanation of the scene is now inserted by request. It is taken from Rollin's History. "*An accidental occurrence made Philip entertain a very advantageous opinion of Alexander. There had been sent from Thessaly to Philip a war horse ; a noble, fiery, generous beast, called Bucephalus. The owner offered to sell him for 13 talents, about £1900 sterling. The king went into the plains, attended by his courtiers, in order to make trial of this horse ; but he appeared so very fierce, and reared so when any one came near him, that no one dared to mount him.*

"*Philip, being angry that so furious and unmanageable a creature had been sent him, ordered him back again. Alexander, who was present, cried out ' What a noble horse they are going to lose for want of address and boldness to back him ! ' Philip, at first, considered these words as the effect of folly and rashness, so common to young men ; but as Alexander insisted still more upon what he had said, and was much vexed to see so noble a creature sent home again, his father gave him leave to try what he could do. The young prince, overjoyed at the permission, goes up to Bucephalus, takes hold of his bridle, and turns his head to the sun ; having observed that what frightened him was his own shadow, he seeing it dance about or sink down in proportion as he moved. He therefore first stroked him gently with his hand and soothed him with his voice; then seeing his fierceness abate, and artfully taking his opportunity, he let fall his cloak, and springing quickly upon his back, first slackened the rein, without once striking or vexing him, and when he perceived that his fire was cooled, that he was no longer furious and violent, and wanted only to move forward, he gave him the rein, and spurring him with vigour, animated him with his voice to his full speed.*

"*While this was doing, Philip and his whole court trembled for fear, and did not once open their lips ; but when the prince, after having run his first heat, returned with joy*

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and pride at having overcome a horse which was judged absolutely ungovernable, all the courtiers endeavoured to outvie each other in their applause and congratulations ; and, we are told, Philip shed tears of joy on the occasion. Embracing Alexander after he had alighted, and kissing his head, he said to him, ' My son, seek a kingdom more worthy of thee, for Macedon is below thy merit ! ' "

A Coaching Accident; Jemmy Bradley. — A correspondent, one Viator, wrote to a Bridgwater local paper in September, 1833, the following account of an accident which he witnessed : "*When" The Age*" coach, on its way from London to Bristol, on Saturday the 7th inst., and proceeding at the rate of about seven or eight miles an hour, had almost reached the World's End, a public-house at Tilehouse — the night dark, the coach lamps lighted, and the hour near ten — the coachmen and a gentleman on the box thought they discerned — suddenly — between the leaders' heads, something red waving in the air that disappeared the moment it was observed. The coachman instantly called out, drew his startled horses aside, and as quickly as possible stopped them, convinced that injury or death had happened by the trampling of the horses, or by the wheels of the coach, if the object over which they seemed to pass should prove a human being. Attended by some of the passengers, the coachman hastily descended. Some seven or eight yards from the coach, and near the centre of the road, was found an aged man in ragged attire, prostrate on his face ; a basket containing matches and a roll of tracts, with a long staff and a sort of iron paddle by his side, and near him a military cocked hat with flowers and pieces of red cloth rudely stitched together. They raised him quickly from the ground ; his face was bruised, bleeding, and covered with dirt ; his beard long, filled with dirt, and clotted. He was quite insensible, no word fell from his lips, a groan was all that escaped him. I felt his pulse, and it beat slowly. He was conveyed to the World's End. I procured some water and washed his face : his head seemed much bruised — his face was wounded, but bled little after washing ; his pulse beat slower and fainter, and in about ten minutes from the time we raised him he breathed his last. On examination it appeared that the wheels of the coach had passed over his head and down the middle of his body. A coroner's inquest was

held on the body on the 9th inst., and a verdict of accidental death returned ; for it appeared that Old Jemmy had been drunk all day, and in that state was walking in the road. Thus perished in the seventy-second year of his age that Prince of Mendicants, Jemmy Bradley, of whom many singular stories are recounted, and whose life, if tainted by vices, was not without some virtues to adorn it. He was generally attended in his vagrant excursions by some unfortunate poor, and frequently orphan boy, who shared with him the fruits of mendicancy and astrology, until he could improve his situation, which was often done by means of the character given him by his eccentric master. And here it should be remarked that old Jemmy would keep no boy in his service who, being ignorant of, would not be taught the Lord's Prayer; or who, being instructed, omitted his prayers night and morning. In every town and village of many counties in England was Jemmy Bradley known ; in the houses of the rich and the cottages of the poor was Jemmy hospitably entertained, and to most a welcome visitor, and his hapless death will cause many a regret."

Lighting the Town with Gas, 1833. — July of this year a meeting was held in Bridgwater to take into consideration the propriety of lighting the town with gas. It was well attended, and was presided over by Mr. Richard Anstice, the Mayor. The following resolutions were passed.

" 1. That the introduction of Gas Light to the town of Bridgwater would be attended with considerable public and private advantage to the inhabitants, and that it is desirable to adopt measures to promote so beneficial an object.

" 2. That for the purpose of promoting the aforesaid object, it is expedient to form a Joint Stock Company, under the title of the Bridgwater Gas and Coke Company.

" 3. That the present capital of the Company be ; £4000, and that it be raised in transferable shares of £20 each, in such instalments and at such times as shall be determined on at a future meeting of the Subscribers, or by a Committee by them appointed.

" 4. That a book for the purpose of receiving the names of subscribers be now opened, and left at Mr. George Awbrey's Library.

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" 5. That in order to afford as large a number as may be of the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood the opportunity of becoming shareholders, no individual or company shall be allowed to take more than five shares from the present time to the 31st of August next ; but if at the end of that time, the whole of the shares be not disposed of, those remaining may then be taken in any larger number by the other subscribers in proportion to their existing shares.

"6. That whereas the Trustees of the Market- House possess certain powers under their local Act of Parliament, a Meeting of the Subscribers to the Company shall be held on the 19th inst., at the Town Hall, at ten o'clock in the morning, who shall appoint a Committee to confer and treat with the said Trustees, for permission to lay down the pipes of the projected Gas Works, and to enter into such other stipulations with them as circumstances may require.

" The number of shares taken up to Saturday last was 104."

Mr. C. J. K. Tynte and the Reform Bill. — At a meeting held on Michaelmas Day, 1832, Mr. Tynte was rather twitted with his change of opinion over the Reform Bill. Mr. Escott had spoken, and Mr. Tynte's speech is worth recording, since it explains the position which he took up. He said : " I do not deny that I, at one time, held opinions contrary to those which I now hold. I did suppose that the Reform Bill would be injurious to my country, because I supposed it would be of too sweeping a nature, but when I went among the electors of this county, when I found that a feeling did prevail over all England, I allow that I changed my mind, and was possessed of all the incapacity which has been attributed to me ; I will go further, and will say, when I saw Mr. Escott at Bridgwater I did say to him, ' Why don't you come forward for the county, and I will support you?' But I will state that a considerable time elapsed between the last election and the present one, if it may be so called. I have from that time been on the continent, and mingled with all ranks and classes of society. I found there was a spirit abroad in favour of Reform, and having been abroad for some time, I did not know so much of this country as I ought to have done ; I believe, and I solemnly say it, it has prevented

a revolution in this country. I do say, publicly, that I changed my opinion; I stated that certain Reform was necessary, though I did not intend to go on until I knew how far that measure would go. I have stated at public meetings — I have stated on every possible occasion — though I confess I now stand before you certainly in the most painful situation. I do not consider it is the custom for one candidate to catechise another, exactly in the manner which Mr. Escott has very properly done ; and, that gentleman coming into this meeting with almost the functions of a judge upon him ; I say it is difficult for me to express my opinion under the embarrassment under which I now labour. I believe there may be at this hour some who object to me who did not object to me before. I did, I say it from the bottom of my soul, believe that this would occur to me on the change of my opinion, but I assure you I felt a conviction from the bottom of my heart, that I ought to change my opinion. I saw a paragraph in *The Age* newspaper a few weeks since, which said that Mr. Bickham Escott intended to dissect me ; I confess he has dissected me, but, gentlemen, there are a very few instances of resuscitation after dissection. I am one of those instances, but I own that, standing under the weight of that accusation, which I feel in a very great degree, I can only do, as I have always done in soliciting your votes, that in all instances where I have been requested to state my opinions, I have always most honestly and openly confessed having changed my opinion, and given a reason for that change."

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