



Yours very truly
E H Adamson

THE LATE REV. E. H. ADAMSON, M.A.
A Vice-President of the Society.

VI.—OBITUARY NOTICE OF THE REV. E. H. ADAMSON,
M.A., A VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

By RICHARD WELFORD, V.P.

[Read on the 30th November, 1898.]

While we were considering at our August meeting the services of one departed vice-president, Mr. John Philipson, another of our honoured colleagues—our oldest member, the rev. Edward Hussey Adamson—was preparing for the summons which, sooner or later, comes to us all. A fortnight afterwards, on the 16th September, Mr. Adamson died, leaving us, out of twelve vice-presidents living eight years ago, but three surviving.

Edward Hussey Adamson was the eldest son of John Adamson, of Newcastle, solicitor, a prominent and popular representative of the intellectual life that was lived upon Tyneside during the first half of the present century. A co-founder of this society, John Adamson, with the rev. John Hodgson and Dr. Charlton as colleagues, was for forty-two years our active and energetic secretary, and for some time our treasurer. He was a co-founder also of the Newcastle Typographical Society, the Natural History Society of Northumberland, Durham, and Newcastle, and the Newcastle Law Society; co-secretary for thirty years of the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society, and a famous Portuguese scholar, distinguished among his local contemporaries by the knightly honours of the Order of Christ and of the Tower and Sword of Portugal.

In sketches of two eminent vice-presidents, lost to us but lately, reference was made to the influence of parental example upon the development of literary taste in youth and the trend of literary aspiration in after life. Canon Raine and Mr. Longstaffe were the examples cited. To their honoured names may now be added that of our recently-departed colleague. He also, though avoiding for the most part the rugged roads of antiquarian discovery, plodded industriously along the by-paths of genealogical research, and thus, like them, 'walked in the ways of his father.'¹

¹ Other sons of John Adamson were men of mark among us. William, the second son, a member of this society, followed his father's calling, became honorary major in the Northumberland militia, and wrote down the achieve-

Born in Westgate street, Newcastle, on the 2nd of September, 1817, Mr. Adamson received his preliminary education at the Royal Free Grammar School of his native town, under the head-mastership of the rev. G. F. W. Mortimer, M.A., afterwards D.D. and prebendary of St. Paul's. While there, in 1831, he carried off the gold medal given to the school by the corporation of Newcastle for a Latin poem. His composition, remarkable for a lad so young, was afterwards printed as one of the Typographical Society's tracts, with the title *Imperii Caput et Rerum Pulcherrima Roma*. From the Grammar School he was sent to London to complete his preparatory studies, and from London he proceeded in due course to Oxford. On the 7th May, 1835, at the age of seventeen, he matriculated at University college in that city—a college founded by William of Durham for scholars born in or near the northern palatinate, and for centuries practically a north-country institution. Having, however, been elected to a Crewe exhibition at Lincoln college he, in due course, migrated thither. Unfortunately, his scholastic career was somewhat hindered by an affection of the eyes, from which he suffered more or less all his life; but, in spite of this drawback, he was able to secure a double third—classics and mathematics—in the honours list for 1839. Having in that year taken his bachelor's degree, he came north to study divinity at the newly-founded university of Durham, and prepare himself for holy orders.

Ordained to the curacy of Wallsend on the 6th December, 1840, Mr. Adamson proceeded M.A. at Lincoln college in 1841, and the year following received the same degree, *ad eundem*, at Durham. Meanwhile he had taken up his freedom of Newcastle, by birthright, as the son of John Adamson, 'master and mariner'—a title inherited from a seafaring ancestor, Blythman Adamson, younger brother of the Trinity House in the early part of last century.

ments of his corps in a little volume entitled *Notices of the Services of the 27th Northumberland Light Infantry Militia*. Charles Murray, the third son, also a solicitor, was the author of *Studies of Birds*, with fifty illustrations; *Another Book of Scraps, Principally Relating to Natural History*, with thirty-six pictures of bird life; *Some More Illustrations of Wild Birds, Showing their Natural Habits*, with twenty-four drawings; and one or two other *brochures* of a similar character. In the third generation we have our fellow-member, the rev. Cuthbert Edward Adamson (son of our deceased vice-president), who has contributed valuable papers to the society's publications; and lieutenant-col. Charles Henry Ellison Adamson (son of Charles Murray), late commissioner in Central Burmah—an ardent naturalist and the possessor of a unique collection of objects illustrating his special branch of study.

During his curacy at Wallsend proposals were made to him to take charge of a new ecclesiastical district at Windy Nook, in the parish of Heworth. Whereupon, preaching a farewell sermon, which was afterwards published with the title of *The Parochial System*, he resigned his charge on the north side of the Tyne, and transferred his services across the water. On the 25th August, 1842, the chapel of St. Alban, Heworth, was consecrated by bishop Maltby, and Mr. Adamson entered into his new sphere of action, although it was not until August 30th, 1843, that he was formally licensed to the living.

Clerical duty in a newly-founded chapelry naturally absorbed most of the young clergyman's time and attention during the early part of his ministry. Sympathizing with those who desired more frequent opportunities for public worship, and imbued with a high sense of the responsibilities of his office, he imposed upon himself duties which the majority of the clergy did not at that time consider necessary. Yet he found sufficient leisure in the beginning of the year 1846 to publish *A Plea for the Church of England*, and in September following to issue the first instalment of the work by which he is best known—his *Scholae Novocastrensis Alumni*. Dedicated to William Burrell, esq., of Broom park, who had been one of the *alumni*, and printed by Moses Aaron Richardson, compiler of the *Local Historian's Table Book*, this little volume contained short biographies of thirty eminent men, who, like himself, had been educated at the Grammar School, beginning with John Lilburn, a turbulent hero of the Commonwealth, and ending with sir Leonard Greenwell, a distinguished officer in the Peninsular war. The same month that gave birth to his biographies witnessed his marriage. On the 9th September, 1846, he was united to Anne, daughter of Matthew Potts, of a Bedlington family. The following year, under the inspiration of his wife, to whom the booklet is dedicated, he published *Catechetical Exercises upon the Saints' Days of the English Church*.

Mr. Adamson's connection with our society commenced on the 4th of April, 1843. Our records do not enable us to estimate the services which he rendered to the society during this mid-period of its existence. That he was a useful member, enjoying the confidence of his fellows, is sufficiently shown by the fact that in 1849, only six years after his admission, he was elected one of the council. The

honour which such an appointment conferred may be judged when it is remembered that the other members of the council were John Clayton, sir Cuthbert Sharp, John Collingwood Bruce, William Sidney Gibson, John Fenwick, Thomas Bell, Moses Aaron Richardson, Robert Ormston, Henry Ingledew, William Kell, and R. R. Dees—most of them his seniors in years and in experience of antiquarian pursuits.

Towards the close of that same year, 1849, under the editorship of W. J. Thoms, secretary of the Camden Society, appeared the first number of a publication, known to all of us as a lordly treasure-house of antiquarian lore—that admirable weekly, *Notes and Queries*. It is a curious circumstance that, in the twenty-second issue of the new paper, George Bouchier Richardson, announcing that he was engaged upon *The Life and Correspondence of Robt. Thomlinson, D.D., founder of the Library that bears his name*, solicited information concerning the doctor, his family and ancestry—a subject which Mr. Adamson himself was destined in after years to elucidate. But this by the way. In No. 43 of *Notes and Queries*, issued August 24th, 1850, Mr. Adamson's initials 'E. H. A.' make their first appearance, attached to a contribution on north-country folk lore.² Succeeding volumes contain many repetitions of these initials down to last year (August 14th, 1897), when they are appended to a column of biographical matter concerning John and George Smith, editors of the Cambridge edition of Bede. Thus, during forty-seven years, our friend helped to build up that wonderful collection of matters pertaining to the past which is comprised in the ninety-eight volumes of *Notes and Queries*.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and in *Willis's Current Notes*, Mr. Adamson wrote upon the subjects that lay nearest to his heart. Indeed, his pen was constantly employed, then and after, in preparing useful biographical notes for magazines and newspapers, many of which cannot now be traced. Such of them as can be recognised appear in the lists at the end of this paper.

² 'Baptismal Superstition.' In the north of England, when several children are brought to be baptized at the same time, great anxiety is shown by the people lest the girls should take the precedence of the boys; in which case it is believed the latter, when arrived at man's estate, would be beardless.—E. H. A. *Notes and Queries*, 1st series, vol. ii. p. 197.

Between the years 1850³ and 1870 Mr. Adamson issued memoirs of two famous vicars of Newcastle—the rev. John March and Dr. Nathaniel Ellison—published biographical sketches of the rev. Hugh Salvin, the rev. William Smith of Melsonby, and of John Adamson, his father, and printed a sermon on the advantages of a parish church.⁴ In the last-named year he brought out *Additional Notices of Old Scholars of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Newcastle*, being a second part of the *Scholae Novocastrensis Alumni*. The dedication is to his old schoolmaster, the rev. Mr. Mortimer, and it is followed by thirty more biographies, belonging, some to the earlier period covered by the first issue, and the rest to scholars who had died in the interval.

Although a fairly regular attender at our meetings, it was not until 1883 that Mr. Adamson contributed to our literature. Inspired by some biographical notes which had been sent to us by Mr. William Shand, he wrote *Some Further Notices of Dr. Thomlinson, the Founder of the Thomlinson Library*, a paper which was printed in due course in the tenth volume of our *Archaeologia*. Having thus whetted his pen, so to speak, in our interest, he gave us a most valuable memoir of *Henry Bourne, the Historian of Newcastle*, about whom, considering that he lived down to nearly the middle of last century, singularly little was previously known. His next paper was *An Attempt to trace the Delavals from the time of the Norman Conquest to the Present Day*, which he followed up by a genial obituary notice of vice-president alderman Richard Cail, and, in March last year, a charming sketch of sir Charles Brown, an old Newcastle Grammar School boy. It was shortly after he had contributed his paper on the Delavals—in January, 1887—that he was elected one of our vice-presidents in the place of sir Charles Edward Trevelyan.

Other local organizations devoted to research with which Mr. Adamson identified himself were the Surtees Society, the Berwick-

³ On New Year's Day, 1854, he preached the university sermon at St. Mary's, Oxford.

⁴ This sermon was issued, without author's name, shortly after its delivery. A local clergyman purchased a copy, and having to preach the following Sunday at Mr. Adamson's church, thought it a most suitable discourse for the occasion. Vicar and congregation were naturally amused at hearing this familiar sermon preached by the clerical visitor as his own, and Mr. Adamson quietly commemorated the event by issuing a new edition, with the two dates of delivery on the title-page. (See list appended, No. 11.)

shire Naturalists' Club, and the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland. He joined the Surtees Society in 1860, and at the instigation of his friend canon Raine, the secretary, undertook the editorship of one of the society's volumes, to be entitled *The Diaries, or Biographical Notices of Archbishops Matthew and Neile, and Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham*. It is understood that he collected valuable material for this work, more particularly for that portion of it which related to lord Crewe. From a Crewe exhibitioner no less could have been expected. Yet for some reason or other the book never saw the light, although down to 1895, the announcement of its intended publication appeared regularly in the society's reports. For the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club he wrote a memoir of his friend and clerical helper, the rev. Robert Hopper Williamson. In the Architectural and Archaeological Society he was, from 1889, one of the committee of management.

Mr. Adamson's ecclesiastical aptitudes and activities do not properly come under review in this rapid sketch of his long and useful career. He was a member of the convocation of the University of Durham, and acted for some years as secretary, in Chester Deanery, of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and these, so far as is known, were the only clerical honours that he accepted. Combining much originality of mind with strong individuality of character he was content to live among his own people; and had few ambitions beyond the sphere in which their interest and welfare met. They in turn regarded him with that trust and affection which years of devoted service invariably bring. On the 25th of August, 1892, they celebrated the consecration of his church and the jubilee of his ministry⁵ by presenting him with his portrait and an illuminated address.

The courtesy of our colleague, the rev. C. E. Adamson, presents us with the following list of publications which emanated from his father's pen during a prolonged and laborious life:—

⁵ The consecration of St. Alban's in 1842, and the celebration of the jubilee in 1892 are the subject of an interesting brochure written by Mrs. Plummer (wife of the former vicar of Heworth, the Rev. Matthew Plummer, by whom Mr. Adamson was presented to the living) under the title of *A Day's Pleasure of Fifty Years Ago; with its Sequel*. Newcastle: Mawson, Swan, & Morgan, 1893.

BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, ETC.

1. 'Imperii Caput et Rerum Pulcherrima Roma. Carmen Latinum apud Scholam Novocastrensem aureo numismate donatum. Auctore E. H. Adamson.' 1831.

2. 'The Parochial System. A Sermon.' Newcastle: M. A. Richardson, 44, Grey Street, 1844.

3. 'A Plea for the Church of England, our Dear and Holy Mother; Being Extracts from the Writings of some of the most honoured of her Sons.' Newcastle-upon-Tyne: M. A. Richardson, 44, Grey Street, 1846.

4. 'Scholae Novocastrensis Alumni; Brief Notices of Eminent Men, Educated at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, collected by Edward Hussey Adamson, M.A., of Lincoln College, Oxford; Perpetual Curate of S. Alban's, Heworth, in the Diocese of Durham.' Newcastle-upon-Tyne: M. A. Richardson, 44, Grey Street, 1846. Dedication: 'To William Burrell, Esq., M.A., F.S.A., of Broom Park, Northumberland, sometime Fellow of University College, Oxford.'

5. 'Catechetical Exercises upon the Saints' Days of the English Church.' London: J. Russell Smith, 4, Old Compton Street, Soho. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: M. A. Richardson, 44, Grey Street, 1847. Dedication: 'To Her who first suggested it, this little Catechism is most affectionately inscribed.'

6. 'Brief Memoir of the Rev. Hugh Salvin, B.A., sometime Vicar of Alston, Cumberland. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Imprinted by G. Bouchier Richardson, at the Sign of the River-God Tyne, Clayton Street West, Printer to the Society of Antiquaries and to the Typographical Society, Both of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.' 1852.

7. 'The Rev. William Smith of Melsonby.' Reprinted from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, August, 1853.

8. 'A Former Vicar of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.' [Rev. John March.] n.d. (1853?).

9. 'Memoir of Nathaniel Ellison, D.D., Vicar of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.' Newcastle-upon-Tyne: G. B. Richardson, n.d. (1853?).

10. 'Obituary Notice of the Late John Adamson, Esq., K.C. and K.T.S. of Portugal, F.L.S., F.R.G.S.' Reprinted from the *Gentleman's Magazine* for December, 1855. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Thomas and James Pigg, Clayton Street, 1856.

11. 'The Parish Church: A Sermon Preached in the Diocese of Durham, September, 1864, and October, 1865. Printed chiefly for Distribution in the Author's Parish.' Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Robert Robinson, 38, Pilgrim Street, 1866.

12. 'Scholae Novocastrensis Alumni. Additional Notices of Old Scholars of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.' Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Stevenson and Dryden, 13, St. Nicholas's Church Yard, 1870. Dedication: 'To the Rev. G. F. W. Mortimer, D.D., Prebendary of St. Paul's, sometime Head Master of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; afterwards of the City of London School.'

13. 'Church Music: A Sermon Preached at Evensong, on Easter Day, 1868, on the Occasion of Inaugurating a Surpliced Choir. Printed chiefly for Distribution in the Author's Parish.' Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Robert Robinson, 38, Pilgrim Street, 1871.

14. 'The Three Creeds: A Sermon Preached in the Diocese of Durham, April and May, 1872.' Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Robert Robinson, 38, Pilgrim Street, 1872.

15. 'The Feast of Ingathering; A Sermon For Harvest Tide, 1878.' Newcastle-upon-Tyne: R. Robinson, 38, Pilgrim Street. Dedication: 'To the Rev. John Reed, M.A., Vicar of Newburn, and Lecturer of St. Nicholas's, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.'

PAPERS IN THE *Archaeologia Aeliana*:

Vol. x. p. 80. Some Further Notices of Dr. Thomlinson, the Founder of the Thomlinson Library.

Vol. xi. p. 147. Henry Bourne, the Historian of Newcastle.

Vol. xii. p. 215. An Attempt to trace the Delavals from the time of the Norman Conquest to the Present Day. With an etching of Delaval Hall and two cuts by C. J. Spence.

Vol. xix. p. 133. Sir Charles Brown. With Portrait.

IN THE *Proceedings* OF THIS SOCIETY.

Vol. vi. p. 96. Obituary Notice of Alderman Richard Cail. With Portrait.

IN THE *Transactions of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club*.

Vol. xiv. p. 157. Memoir of the Rev. R. H. Williamson, M.A.

IN THE *Gentleman's Magazine*.

Memoirs of the Rev. Jonathan Walton, D.D.; Rev. W. N. Darnell; John Adamson, K.C. and K.T.S.; Rev. J. B. P. Dennis, B.A., F.R.G.S.; Rev. Wm. Smith of Melsonby; Raleigh Trevelyan; Capt. West, R.N., and others.

IN THE *Newcastle Diocesan Magazine*.

Biographies of Local Worthies—Richard Holdsworth, D.D.; Thomas Jackson, D.D.; Bishop Butler; Nicholas Ridley, Bp. of London; Isaac Basire, D.D.; Rev. Hugh Moises, Headmaster of Newcastle Grammar School, and others.

IN VARIOUS MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS.

Memoirs of Thomas Baker (the 'Coll. Jo. socius ejectus'), founder of the Baker Exhibition for Durham Scholars at St. John's College, Cambridge; Rev. John Collinson, M.A.; Rev. Edward Moises; Rev. Henry Wardell; Rev. W. P. Philp; Rev. Canon Humble; Archdeacon Coxe; Rev. John Besley, D.C.L.; Canon Ornsby; Rev. John Reed, B.A.; Rev. F. R. Simpson, B.A., *cum multis aliis*.