

summer of 1655, we find him settled as co-pastor with Mr. George Newton, of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, in the town of TAUNTON,—a name redolent of Puritan memories, both in the old world and the new. In October, he was married to “Mistress Theodosia,” daughter of that reverend man, “Mr. Richard Alleine, kinsman of Joseph, and Parson of Batcombe.” She was “a religious woman,” and proved a faithful helper and solace to her husband during his toilsome, self-sacrificing, and in many respects, suffering life.

Co-pastorates are not always happy and effective, but this one seems to have been peculiarly so. No jealousy sprung up between the ministers,—no partizanship among the people. Alleine addressed himself to his work with great singleness of purpose, and earnestness of heart. His sermons from the beginning, breathed the spirit of deep concern for the unconverted, which is so conspicuous in the “Alarm.” He did not preach simply for the comfort of “God’s dear people,” but as his venerable associate tells us, was “infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls, wherein he had no small success in the time of his ministry; and to this end, he poured out his very heart in prayer and in preaching; he imparted not the gospel only but his own soul.” He regarded every man as a free and responsible agent, having life and death set before him. Though a Calvinist, his views of Divine sovereignty in no way obstructed the address of free gospel invitations to all. On this point, Mr. Stanford remarks, “although even the most rigid followers of the Genevese reformer preached the “glad tidings” to the unconverted, they often did so in strains made so cold and mysterious by subtleties of qualification, and led the people round to the waters of life through such a tangled brake of logical refinements, that their invitations seemed hardly to be given in good faith; and they sometimes even seemed afraid, lest through their own mismanagement, some of the wrong persons might get saved after all.” Are there not preachers in the present day who may take to themselves the piquant rebuke of the passage just quoted, and learn much from the example of Alleine, who, “on the other hand, feeling no embarrassment, and no reserve, and shackled by no theoretic misgivings,—with shouting voice, flashing eye, and a soul on fire with love, proclaimed a completed and gratuitous salvation to all who were willing to accept it?” “The Spirit of God gave his message great effect, and multitudes, through all the days of heaven, will remember Taunton Magdalene as the place where they first beheld that great sight—“the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world!”

Alleine was very laborious in pastoral visitation, and took great pains in juvenile catechizing. Not only did he perform this last-mentioned duty from house to house, but he had a custom with which we do not remember to have met in the record of any other Puritan pastor’s labours, that namely of catechizing the young publicly on each Lord’s day afternoon, and sometimes in the evening also,—taking as the basis of these exercises, the morning sermon, the assembly’s catechism, and sometimes written questions given out the previous week. “Some called him a legalist, because, with young and old, high and low, he was severely practical, both as a preacher of righteousness, and a fearless reprove of sin. When any person had been detected or suspected of promise-breaking, deceitful trading, or of not being diligent in his calling, he would be sure to hear of it from his minister whatever the event might be. “The failings of professors touched him to the very quick, and brought him