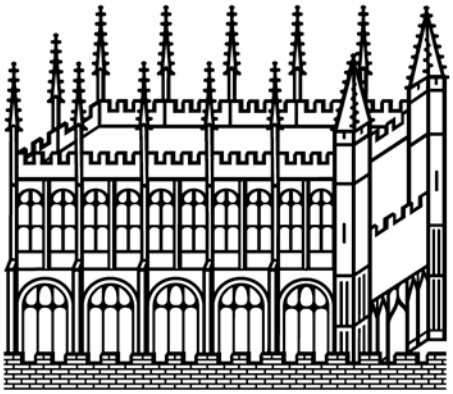

A

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. HENRY REYNOLDS, B.D.

FORMERLY FELLOW AND TUTOR OF JESUS COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

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HENRY REYNOLDS, the subject of this Memoir, was born at the Vicarage, Conway, June 5th, 1805. His father, the Rev. Owen Reynolds, had been educated at Jesus College, Oxford, and was then Vicar of Conway; but in the year 1819 he became Rector of Aber, a village about five miles from Bangor, on the Conway side, and well known to tourists from the beauty of its scenery. Aber, thus rather than Conway his birth-place, was the home of Henry Reynolds' early youth. His mother, by her maiden name Susanna Playford, a lady of great talents and accomplishments, was a daughter of H. Playford, Esq. of Northrepps, in the county of Norfolk.

Henry Reynolds received his school-teaching at the Friars, Bangor, then a flourishing and important provincial school, under the head-mastership of the Rev. Dr. Robert Williams.

His school-days gave him many of the friends of his later life, for his friendships were of remarkable tenacity; and it may be worth noticing, when a provincial school is alluded to, that he was one of three, who were together there as its *alumni,* and whose names appear in the Oxford Mathematical First Class. Those who shared this distinction were George Dawson, afterwards Fellow of Exeter, and now Rector of Woodleigh in Devonshire; and Eaton Davies Denton, at one time Mr. Reynolds' pupil, and afterwards his brother-in-law. Mr. Denton had also the distinction of being University Mathematical Scholar in the second year after the foundation of the Scholarship; but he was one of many highly gifted persons, who have been prevented by constitutional delicacy of organisation from doing any thing like justice to their great intellectual powers. He was confined to his couch for years by spinal malady, and died at a yet early period of life.

His brother-in-law, Henry Reynolds, was of the strongest and most vigorous constitution both of body and mind, hardy and indifferent to exposure, insensible of fatigue and careless

how much he walked, or swam, or rowed, and how long he read, or how difficult and trying were the hills over which he walked or the subjects which he studied.

He matriculated as Commoner at Jesus College, Oxford, at the end of Easter Term 1823, and in Michaelmas Term 1825 he was elected Scholar of his College. He took the degree of B.A. in Easter Term 1827, being placed by the Examiners in the Second Class in Classics, and in the First in Mathematics. But it was well known that his place in an alphabetically arranged First Class very inadequately expressed the extent and depth of his mathematical attainments. The branch of Mathematics generally called Algebraic Geometry had then only recently found English expositors. The earliest were, it is believed, Dr. Dionysius Lardner, of the University of Dublin, and Mr. Hamilton, a Cambridge Mathematician of great merit. The works of these distinguished persons were studied by Mr. Reynolds in his undergraduateship with the most indefatigable industry, and he offered for examination, or in technical language "took up," in addition to the ordinary books, that difficult and important subject to an

unprecedented extent, though he was not the first absolutely to introduce it into the Oxford Schools.

He was elected Fellow of his College in the Spring of 1831, and about that time he was ordained by the Bishop of Oxford, first Deacon and afterwards Priest. In 1832 he became Tutor of the College, an office which he retained as long as he held his Fellowship, and which he discharged the duties of with great ability. At the same time he had for his private pupils many candidates for Mathematical Honours, who have since been highly distinguished in Physical Science and in Mathematics.

One of the tastes that the habits of his early life had fostered was an intense love of mountain scenery. It was not an artist's love, for he was not a draughtsman; and it had nothing in common with that appreciation of natural beauty, which seems sometimes adopted and cultivated, like a taste for painting or the fine arts. In his College vacations he would traverse the mountains near his home, e.g. Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd Davydd, with his gun; and he was so hardy in his habits that he often slept in a sheltered nook

on the hill-side, when darkness overtook him in his rambles. In later life, on one occasion, he found still traceable a collection of stones that he had made perhaps forty years before as something of a protection for his sleep against wind and cold.

Mr. Reynolds with these tastes and habits naturally gave his long vacations to excursions in mountain-districts, and he often visited Switzerland and afterwards Norway as a pedestrian tourist. He was an excellent shot and fisherman; but his sporting tastes never included the hunting field. He found in Norway abundant employment for his rod and gun, and a very melancholy event that took place in 1830 always saddened his recollections of Switzerland. An undergraduate of his College, Joseph Martin, afterwards High Sheriff for Glamorganshire, was the companion of his autumnal excursion.

The pair of pedestrians fell in with and to a certain extent joined forces with two English gentlemen, one a Clergyman and not very long a widower, to whom a tour in Switzerland had been suggested as beneficial after the deep sorrow

[illegible] the brother of [illegible] like Martin, [illegible]

[illegible] contemplated walking on [illegible] Courmayeur to St. [illegible] [illegible] employing [illegible] part. They started at [illegible] having been preceded by a party of sixteen persons [illegible] who started a little before them. When the English party arrived at the [illegible] of the edge of the snow at which they were to breakfast, they found that they must wait till provisions could be fetched from Courmayeur, and they could not resume their walk till half-past eleven. Snow had fallen, and was then falling, but they anticipated nothing worse than a tiresome and disagreeable walk, and they set out, the weather being then comparatively mild. They met soon afterwards a herd of oxen that had been driven over the Col, and the guide performed that the track of the oxen would be a help to them. But snow fell more and more heavily, and obliterated the track: the wind rose, and the cold became intense. The idea of returning, which to a reader or hearer of the sad

narrative appears to have been the natural course, does not seem to have been suggested, till it was too late to act upon it; and they went on through the deep snow, entirely unable to see or otherwise to know the nature of the ground on which their footing was to be made, and, in the driving snow-storm, with scarcely any clue as to the direction in which they were walking. When things thus seemed at the worst, the weather cleared for a while, and the guide recognised a sign-post which told him where they were. He bade his party be of good cheer, for an hour and a half's walking would bring them in to a chalet in or near the valley. But soon after this the widowed Clergyman, who had been long despond-ing, sunk down and was unable to proceed. The party was exhausted by fatigue, exposure, and cold; for with the exception of the guide they were all very thinly clad. They had also been long without food. The two undergraduates were too weak to help. Mr. Reynolds and the guide supported at first the unfortunate gentleman between them, and as his power of moving got less and less almost carried him, a work of the greatest difficulty in the deep snow, and in the

uncertainty of what footing they would find at each step beneath it. This task they continued with unabated devotion and heroism, while there was a ray of hope that they might save him. But when night approached, it was apparent that he could not be rescued, and that if the effort were longer continued, the whole party must perish. Yielding to necessity, they wrapped him in the only cloak which they had among them, placed him in as sheltered a spot as was possible, and made for the chalet that the guide had told them of with what speed they were capable of. But before they reached it, the Clergyman's brother-in-law said that he could walk no further. They begged him to make a short last effort, as the chalet was now very near. He said it was impossible, and urged them not to lose their lives by staying uselessly with him.

They seated him on his knapsack, promising speedy help, and he seemed cheerful and hopeful, and they hurried to the chalet. The guide immediately returned with some men, whom they found in the chalet, and they carried the unfortunate young gentleman to his companions. But when he came he was cold, and the action of the

heart was not perceptible: they did what experience dictated to recover him, but in vain. After some deep sighs or groans, he died about a quarter of an hour after he had been brought to the chalet.

Mr. Martin was much exhausted, but after a while recovered. The reader will easily believe that the widowed Clergyman, who was the first to fail, was quite dead when he was found.

Mr. Reynolds suffered little or not at all from the cold and exposure of the day that he had gone through; but the tragical fate of two of his companions bequeathed him a degree of dejection and sorrow, that from his reticent and somewhat reserved character only his most intimate friends could fully appreciate.

The events of this remarkable and disastrous day could not but be narrated at length. It will not be expected that the ordinary life of a College Fellow and Tutor, and afterwards a Parish Priest, should supply much to be narrated. Mr. Reynolds as an eminent Mathematician naturally filled occasionally the office of Public Examiner in Mathematics, and in later life he acted for two years as Examiner in the comparatively recent School

of Physical Science. He was also a member of the Ashmolean Club, which then, as before and afterwards, comprised the names of many of the most distinguished Philosophers and Mathematicians at Oxford. But he did not put himself forward in University politics, and, though his opinion was always a matter of interest and curiosity to those who knew his extreme shrewdness and sagacity, he was commonly content to vote according to his own ideas, with little wish to influence the votes or opinions of others.

But prominence came to him for a brief period without his seeking it, and he had to take part in a transaction that concentrated the attention of the whole Church of England.

This portion of his history must also be narrated at some length.

In the year 1835 the Proctorship came, according to the old cycle, to Jesus and Pembroke Colleges. Robert Evans, M.A. Fellow and Tutor of Jesus College, afterwards Head Master of the Grammar School, Bristol, was elected for Jesus College; the Rev. Edmund Goodenough Bayley, M.A. for Pembroke. Mr. Bayley was the senior of these two gentlemen, and was accordingly Senior

Proctor. Mr. Evans married in the Long Vacation of 1835, and ceased to reside at Oxford, and the College elected Mr. Reynolds into the place which Mr. Evans resigned. His half-year of office proved far more conspicuous and far less peaceful than the ordinary course of the Proctorship. Early in February 1836, it was understood that Lord Melbourne, then Prime Minister, had selected Dr. Hampden as Regius Professor of Divinity, and successor to Dr. Edward Burton. The alarm produced among the Clergy by the appointment was wide-spread. It would not be true to say that it was universal, for it was not shared by many, whose opinions, from their ample learning and their intellectual power and acuteness, were entitled to the highest consideration. Still the alarm was very general. Dr. Hampden had preached the Bampton Lectures in 1832; the subject was, "The Scholastic Philosophy considered in its relation to Christian Theology." The subject was difficult: the treatment far from easy or popular. In the learned and acute author's analysis or history of the terms by which the great doctrines of the Christian faith had been expressed through long centuries, and again of those which the School-

men had used to convey their theories of grace or of sacramental efficacy, the less learned reader might perhaps be pardoned, if the doctrines themselves seemed to be slipping away from his grasp. Nor can there be much surprise felt that many should think Dr. Hampden absolutely heterodox; that others should think him, if not heterodox, at least rash and unduly speculative; and others that, if orthodox himself, he was still likely to lead others into doubt and scepticism. Those who shared these views wished the appointment, as it could not be hindered, (for Lord Melbourne was as little disposed as Lord Russell afterwards, or Mr. Gladstone recently, to yield to the outcry of Churchmen,) to be at least marked by some University censure, and the form which that wish ultimately assumed was a Statute depriving Dr. Hampden as Regius Professor of a place in the Board for the appointment of Select Preachers. The Proctors however jointly have the power of preventing the passing of any University Statute by their *Non placet*, and in this case both Mr. Bayley and Mr. Reynolds were of opinion that Dr. Hampden's book was misinterpreted and misconceived; that he was innocent of the heterodoxy

imputed to him; and that the censure, which it was intended to pass upon him, was essentially unjust. To take part in an act that he deemed unjust, and intended to crush an unpopular individual, was an impossibility for Mr. Reynolds. The law of the University gave him and his colleague the power of arresting it, and, amid however much of obloquy and misconstruction, that power must be exercised. Masters of Arts by the hundreds had streamed to Oxford to help in clearing the Church and the University of heresy: the journey was not in 1836 as rapid and inexpensive as railways have since made it. In the front ranks of those who summoned them were the zealous and impetuous disciples of a new School of Theology, who were soon to learn that jealousy, distrust, and suspicion might be called up by other subtleties than Hampden's, and that well-meaning country divines might quit their parsonages to condemn those who they thought believed too much, as well as those who seemed to believe too little.

"Nonne Ad te post paulo ventura pericula sentis?" may possibly have occured to some minds, but was not a general feeling. The scene of in-

tense excitement in the Theatre is, after the lapse of more than thirty years, still fresh in the memory of hundreds. The Proctors performed their task, and interposed their *Non placet.* The Convocation was instantly dissolved, and the Proctors had to follow the Vice-Chancellor through the angry looks and words and other utterances, and the fierce gestures of the academic crowd, whose labour, trouble, expense, and zeal their vote for the time had neutralized. The whole transaction was to Mr. Reynolds a most severe trial. To act against the opinion of those among whom he lived in friendship, and in mutual respect and confidence, was any thing but congenial to him. The ordinary platitudes of pseudo-liberalism in religious matters had no power over his clear and masculine understanding. But in this case, he would, according to his idea, have been accessory to an act of injustice against an unpopular Scholar and Divine, had he not acted as he did. The path of duty was clear, and he trod it. The same, however, or a similar Statute, passed soon after, the Proctors of the ensuing year not taking the same view of the question as their predecessors; and the excitement gradually

died away, though Dr. Hampden probably never ceased to feel very painfully the slur thrown upon him by the censure of the University.

The known intention of the Proctors to interpose their *Non placet* had naturally led to discussion and negotiation, in which Mr. (now Dr.) Sewell, Fellow of Exeter, acted for those who deprecated the proceeding of the Proctors. Mr. Sewell exchanged letters and had interviews with Mr. Reynolds, with the view of inducing him to forego his opposition to the general feeling of the Masters. An extract from Mr. Sewell's last letter may fitly close this portion of the narrative: "My dear Reynolds, I communicated your conjoined ultimatum this morning to a meeting at Corpus, and though you will not be surprised to hear that we all think you are under an error of judgment, I am sure your conduct is attributed by all right-thinking men to a conscientious wish of doing justice to Dr. Hampden. And not a word passed at the meeting, which could give either you or Bayley the slightest pain. Pray let us keep friends together, even when we are brought so directly into collision."

Early in the year 1848 the College Rectory

of Rotherfield Peppard in the County of Oxford, about three or four miles distant from Henley-on-Thames, became vacant, and it was taken by Mr. Reynolds. In October in the same year he married Judith Elizabeth, only daughter of John Denton, Esq. of Plâs-draw in Denbighshire, and sister to E. D. Denton who has been already mentioned as University Mathematical Scholar at Oxford. It cannot be improper to say of a lady, who has been long deceased, that she was in all mental and intellectual gifts and qualities admirably suited to be the partner and associate of a man of Mr. Reynolds' great powers and attainments. Her early education included the usual range of feminine accomplishments; but in her case it was supplemented by the culture that could not but be derived from the constant companionship of her most gifted eldest brother during the protracted illness, which made general society an impossibility to him, but which in no wise lessened his interest in current events, or in any subjects of science and literature. No one could have conversed with her on these or on any topics, without feeling that he was in the presence of one of the most perfectly feminine

refinement and grace, and of attainments and mental power that fall to the lot of few. The marriage did not take place till after her brother's death; but by that time she was herself in a most delicate, or even critical, condition of health. Change of climate and what else seemed to promise a hope of recovery was tried, but she died in April 1851, having in the meantime become the mother of a girl and afterwards of a boy. The writer remembers the deep pathos of the letter, in which her husband said he knew not how he "could sustain his irreparable loss:" common-place words except to those who know that as mere common-place or conventional words they would have never passed from his lips or his pen.

For the last eighteen years of his life Mr. Reynolds resided constantly at his Rectory, visiting occasionally his friends at Oxford, where he was always most welcome, in and out of College, and also commonly spending about two months of the Autumn at the sea-side for the sake of his children's health. On these occasions he often visited and stayed at Rhyl, from whence he himself made frequent excursions into the northern

mountains of the Snowdon range, for which he retained through life the intense fondness acquired in boyhood. On one occasion at Rhyl, the writer is unable to fix the year, there was a cry that two ladies were drowning: the advancing tide, running up channels or grooves in the sand deeper than that on which they stood while bathing, had intercepted their return to land. Mr. Reynolds immediately threw off his coat and waistcoat, leaving his watch in the pocket, and swam out, returning soon with one of the ladies, and early enough for her life to be saved. He swam out again, and brought in the other lady, but she was either not then alive, or she sunk under all that she went through, and died immediately. His exertions, and the danger that he incurred in his effort to save the lives of these two ladies, were often mentioned among his friends, never without reference to the further fact, that while he was thus heroically and benevolently employed in the water, a knave on the shore took the opportunity of stealing his watch, which never again came into its owner's possession.

In 1869, Mr. Reynolds and his children went

to Rhyl for the Autumn months, as in previous years; and he and his son joined a shooting party that were to go in quest of grouse on the 12th of August, on the hills near Denbigh. Mr. Price Morris, a solicitor of Denbigh, and a much valued friend of Mr. Reynolds, took the father and son to the ground in a dog-cart, and was to have taken them back to Denbigh. But on their return the horse became wild and unmanageable, and ran away down a hill near Nant-glyn. Eventually the party in the dog-cart were thrown out with great violence. Mr. Morris survived the accident only some few hours; Mr. Reynolds was reduced to a state of almost complete unconsciousness for more than thirty hours: John Reynolds suffered, but to appearance not severely. His father recovered consciousness after a while, and the rapidity with which the cuts and contusions that he had received were healed, seemed to indicate that he had taken no great hurt. But he was never afterwards what he had been before, though on the first look it was not easy to say what the change was. Even afterwards, except that his eyes had lost their usual firm and concentrated

expression, you were rather conscious of a change than able to define it. After about ten weeks he returned from Rhyl to Peppard, staying on the way a couple of days, with his friend Mr. Bertram, at Oxford.

But he scarcely undertook any clerical duty afterwards. However, nothing like immediate alarm was felt about him, till on Monday, December 20, he became decidedly ill, and on Tuesday erysipelas shewed itself in the face and head. Still there was no sense of imminent danger, till illness and fever increasing rapidly he became delirious, and he died on Christmas-day about 10 p.m. His children kneeled round his bed, while the Clergyman who had come to take his church-duty for that day, and the following, which was Sunday, offered up the Commendatory Prayer for the Dying.

The sorrow of the house was not to end here. It had been thought that his son, John Reynolds, had also been somewhat changed by that disastrous accident. Whether this was so or not, at the time of his father's death, symptoms of most rapid consumption shewed themselves, and the poor youth got worse and worse. Mr. Reynolds'

funeral took place on New Year's Day: it was felt that the son could not survive the night. He was aware that death was very near, and he looked forward to it with the simple, gentle piety and resignation belonging in the happiest instances to his early years. He and his sister had received the Holy Communion from the hands of a neighbouring Clergyman, when his danger became apparent. He died in the night that followed his father's funeral.

Henry Reynolds was tall and correspondingly large in his frame generally, built more for strength than activity, with ample chest and well-knit limbs, equal to almost any amount of exertion or fatigue, but even in early life somewhat slow and deliberate in his movements. In later life he became very stout, but not to such a degree as to interfere with his long but leisurely mountain walks. His large well-developed forehead and remarkably fine eyes almost marked him as a very superior man; but a fever that he had, when a boy, removed every thing like bloom or ruddiness from his face.

His mental constitution answered to his phy-

sical. In the movements of neither mind nor body was there ever any approach to hurry, or any eagerness to do any thing in the least time possible. Every thing on the contrary was marked by firmness, decision, unexpressed energy, and the quietness of conscious strength. His memory was remarkably tenacious, and his attainments in departments of learning not very often combined unusually diversified and extensive. As a young man and through life he was an earnest student of Classical Literature, though as life went on he seemed to care less for its minuter elegancies and delicacies; and he grudged to Latin and Greek Verse the time that he would have preferred to see given to Mathematics or Physical Science. But he was himself, as an Undergraduate, an accomplished writer of Latin Prose, as well as an exact and accurate scholar generally. There is a passage of Plato, translated somewhere in the *Spectator*, which he put into Latin for his Private Tutor. The same passage is also found translated in Cicero's Tusculan Questions. His Tutor, who was himself an extremely good scholar, compared the two versions, and said, "I thought in reading them that

Reynolds' was the better Latin: no doubt I am wrong, and I cannot really suppose that Reynolds writes as good Latin as Cicero. It shews that we have no perfect knowledge of the language."

Mr. Reynolds had studied at different times of his life and was intimately acquainted with almost all departments of Physical Science. In his later years he seemed to care most for Geology, and the traces that he found in his mountain walks of Glaciers or other facts of long distant periods of time made his favourite hills yet dearer to him.

He was a student too of Theology in its more recondite and less familiar, as well as in its more popular phases, and he considered no reading or thought too much for the composition of many of his Sermons. If, as is likely, a selection from them is printed, his friends will learn his views on many subjects on which they probably often wished him to be less reticent.

It has been natural to say as much as this, and more might easily be said, about his acquirements as such: but perhaps his most remarkable mental feature was the sagacity and the power

of insight with which he saw all questions of human nature, all current events, and all businesses great and small with which he had to do. This insight, and the terseness and vigour that marked his phraseology and his illustrations, gave his more familiar conversation a charm and freshness that none who have witnessed can forget. In his early life he was extremely shy, but as he went on in years his humour and wit, and the variety and extent of his mental resources, seldom failed to assert themselves. Occasionally indeed he expressed himself with a half-joking cynicism on things in general, which was in odd contrast with the extreme kindness and indulgence with which he viewed the conduct, or even the faults and frailties of his friends, and the tenderness which he shewed to all when sickness or sorrow called for it.

More might easily be added: but there is a time for silence, as well as for speech, and perhaps that time has been reached.

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