

**THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF
NONCONFORMITY IN BOLTON. AN
HISTORICAL SKETCH OF A CONGREGATION
OF PROTESTANT DISSENTERS, ASSEMBLING
FIRST IN DEANSGATE, AND AFTERWARDS IN
BANK STREET. IN FOUR LECTURES, DELIVERED
AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1853**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649694006

The Rise and Progress of Nonconformity in Bolton. An Historical Sketch of a Congregation of Protestant Dissenters, Assembling First in Deansgate, and Afterwards in Bank Street. In Four Lectures, Delivered at the Close of the Year 1853 by Franklin Baker

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

FRANKLIN BAKER

**THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF
NONCONFORMITY IN BOLTON. AN
HISTORICAL SKETCH OF A CONGREGATION
OF PROTESTANT DISSENTERS, ASSEMBLING
FIRST IN DEANSGATE, AND AFTERWARDS IN
BANK STREET. IN FOUR LECTURES, DELIVERED
AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1853**

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF NONCONFORMITY
IN BOLTON.

THE
RISE AND PROGRESS OF NONCONFORMITY
IN BOLTON.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF A
CONGREGATION OF PROTESTANT DISSENTERS,

ASSEMBLING FIRST IN DRANSOATE, AND AFTERWARDS IN BANK STREET.

IN
FOUR LECTURES,
DELIVERED AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1853.

BY
FRANKLIN BAKER, M.A.
MINISTER OF THE CHAPEL.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."—Psalm cxxxvii.

LONDON:
E. T. WHITFIELD, 178, STRAND.
1854.

110. b. 14. 107.

MINISTERS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHAPEL,
BOLTON.

	A.D.	A.D.
Richard Goodwin, M.A. Emanuel College, Cambridge	1672	1685
John Lever. Brazen Nose College, Oxford	1685	1692
Robert Seddon, M.A. Christ's College, Cambridge	1692	1695
Samuel Bourn. Emanuel College, Cambridge	1695	1719
Thomas Dixon, M.D. Rev. James Coningham and Scotland	1719	1729
John Buck. (Not ascertained.)	1729	1750
Thomas Dixon, fil. Dr. Caleb Rotheram	1752	1754
Philip Holland, Dr. Doddridge	1755	1789
William Hawkes, (assistant) Rev. Thos. Robins and Dr. Aikin	1785	1789
John Holland. Rev. Thomas Belsham	1789	1820
Noah Jones. Wymondley	1821	1822
Franklin Baker, M.A. University of Glasgow	1823	

TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE UNITARIAN CONGREGATION,
BOLTON.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I cannot hesitate about the propriety of dedicating these Lectures to you. To you they were addressed from the pulpit. At your earnest request they are now published. The subject of them is one in which both you and I feel a deep interest. Holding our respective positions in the congregation as the successors of men who through many generations have had to maintain almost a ceaseless struggle for the common rights of Christians, great is the responsibility devolved upon us.

It has been my design to state briefly the facts of our history as a congregation, to exhibit the different phases of our religious opinions, and to trace the gradual relaxation and removal of those bonds under which our very existence as a Christian society has been maintained.

I am deeply sensible that in the manner of executing this design there is great imperfection, much disproportion, and a want of lucid arrangement. The time allowed me for the

preparation of the Lectures precluded the possibility of an elaborate disposition of the materials. Nor did I wish to forget that their object was to bring before a promiscuous audience matters of local interest, as well as to develop principles of a more important and general character.

If I have so far succeeded in my plan, I shall consider myself as having accomplished all that I proposed to myself. For the rest I have only to hope that, in discussing points in which there may be diversity of opinion, I have not departed from the spirit of Christian charity, nor unnecessarily given offence.

While attached to my own views of scriptural truth, it is my desire to respect the feelings of others, and to live in harmony and friendship with the conscientious and good of all sects and parties.

With fervent wishes for your Christian usefulness and happiness,

I am,

My dear friends,

Your faithful and affectionate Pastor,

FRANKLIN BAKER.

Boston, March 1st, 1854.

CONTENTS.



Roll of Ministers.	Page iii.
----------------------------	-----------

LECTURE I.

Early Nonconformity—Luther—English Reformation—First appearance of sects—Parts of the Continent embrace Protestantism—Religious liberty under the first Stuarts—Ripens during the Commonwealth—Presbyterianism in the ascendant—The Independents hostile to it—South Lancashire favourable to Presbyterianism—Declaration of Charles II.—Violated—Act of Uniformity—Two thousand ejected ministers—Persecution—The Five Mile Act—The Sacramental Test, and Corporation Acts—Puritan objections to the Liturgy—Provincial Meeting—Rev. Richard Goodwin licenses a Meeting Place in Deansgate—The first Nonconformist minister—Oliver Heywood's visits to Bolton—Rev. Robert Park—Rev. John Lever—Names of early Puritan families—Rev. Robert Seddon—His gift of land for a new chapel—Close of first period of Protestant Dissent in Bolton	Page 1—24
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------

LECTURE II.

Religious persecution fosters Nonconformity—Puritan Divines—Their discipline—Mr. Nathaniel Hulton's Lecture—The Revolution—Toleration Act—Dissent legal—Nonconformist places of Worship—Attempted union between Presbyterians and Independents—Failed—Presbyterian discipline revived—Rev. Samuel Bourn—New Chapel in Bank Street—License—Mr. Bourn's character—Style of Preaching—Death—Controversy about the Trinity—Hallet and Peirce expelled from their pulpits at Exeter for Arianism—Rev. Thomas Dixon, M.D.—Rev. John Buck—Extract from his last sermon—His death—Close of the second period of Nonconformity in Bolton.	Page 25—48
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------

viii.

LECTURE III.

Progress of religious liberty—The sects open meeting-houses—Religion not preached to the people—The Presbyterians had a more learned ministry than the Baptists and Independents—Whitfield and Wesley—Effects of their preaching—Methodism a national benefit—Rev. Thomas Dixon, fil.—His Ordination—Preaches Unitarianism—Secession—Seceders build Duke's Alley Chapel—Rev. Philip Holland—His style of preaching—Chapel enlarged—His school—Rev. William Hawkes, his assistant—Rev. John Holland—His Ordination—Warmly advocates Unitarianism—Vestry Library—Sunday-school established—His plans for the improvement of the young—Undergoes persecution—Changes during the past century—Organ—Penal Statutes repealed—Mr. Holland's death—Sewing-school—Separation of a portion of the society—Rev. Noah Jones—Rev. Franklin Baker, M.A.—His Ordination—Two societies re-united—Review—The present position of Unitarian Dissenters . . . Page 49—75

LECTURE IV.

The power of old associations—Remembrances of the past—The last year reviewed—Christian blessings—Rejoice with trembling—Reflections on leaving the House of our fathers—A farewell . . . Page 76—87

NOTES.

Unitarian Martyrs—Robert Brown—Presbyterianism—Penal Statutes—The itinerant preachings of the "silenced" ministers—Walsley Chapel—Rev. John Tildesley—Directory for Public Worship—Rev. Richard Goodwin—The founders of Nonconformity in Bolton—John Okey's epitaph—Rev. John Lever's epitaph—Rev. Robert Seddon's Ordination—Rev. Robert Seddon's Imprisonments—His epitaph in Ringley church—Mr. Nathaniel Hulton's Trustees—The Provincial Assembly—Rev. Robert Seddon's Deed of Gift—Rev. Samuel Bourn's Sermons—Three Inscriptions for Mr. Bourn and his family—The Rebels in 1715—The Trinitarian Controversy—Dr. Dixon's ancestry—Inscription on a Mural Tablet to Dr. Dixon and his Son, Rev. Thomas Dixon—Rev. John Buck—Rev. Samuel Bourn to Rev. Joshua Dobson—Rev. Thomas Dixon—Rev. John Seddon of Manchester—Rev. John Seddon of Warrington—Rev. Philip Holland's published works—Inscription on Rev. Philip Holland's Monument—Rev. William Hawkes—Inscription on Rev. John Holland's Monument—Rev. John Holland's publications—The Separation—Further legislative enactments in favour of religious freedom . . . Page 88—116