

PLYMOUTH BRETHRENISM

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Plymouth Brethrenism by Elizabeth Jane Whately

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ELIZABETH JANE WHATELY

**PLYMOUTH
BRETHRENISM**

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BRETHRENISM.

BY

E. J. WHATELY,

AUTHOR OF 'LIFE OF ARCHBISHOP WHATELY,'
ETC. ETC.

Second Edition.



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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THIS little work was originally a reprint from two articles which appeared in the *Christian Observer* for November and December, 1876.

These papers were first drawn up to answer the inquiries of friends who wished for some short and simple account of the history and teaching of the Plymouth Brethren.

No attempt has been made to enter into the deeper and more intricate controversies connected with the doctrines held by those teachers; the object of the book being merely to give the principal points which those who meet with 'Brethren' are likely to hear dwelt on in their teaching, or to observe as influencing their practice.

I would desire to be understood, however, as speaking of these points *generally*, and making full allowance for exceptions as well as modifications and shades of difference in individuals.

There is no one point mentioned that I have not had personal opportunity of verifying by observation, reading, and conversation with reliable persons. Where no creeds or confessions of faith exist, greater accuracy is impossible to obtain. And we have some right to expect greater unity of views in those who have freely and deliberately given in their adhesion to a small voluntary community, than in the members of a National Church, many of whom are only such from the accident of birth. At the same time I take fully into account the varieties to be found even among the former of these classes.

To avoid misapprehension it should be added, that the main object of the work has been to treat of the 'Exclusive' Brethren, or 'Darbyites,' as they are sometimes called; and that the 'Open Brethren' are only alluded to in passing, and are not intended to be confounded with the others, for although many of their doctrines and practices are held in common, there are important points on which they widely differ.

I have taken great pains to revise every part of the book, and obtain the most accurate information, both as to facts and doctrines. I have always been thankful and ready to avail myself of any

Preface.

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reliable means of correcting any mistake into which I might have fallen; but I believe the statements to be mainly correct, the whole having been subjected to careful criticism from good authority.

E. J. WHATELY.

Lee, July 2nd, 1877.



Figure 1. The location of the study site in the study area.

The study site is located in the central part of the map, near the intersection of the main road and the river.

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CHAPTER I.

FIRST ORIGIN OF BRETHRENISM.

No task can well be undertaken by a Christian writer more painful than that of controversy with fellow-Christians. And the undertaking becomes doubly painful when the errors to be exposed are not those of a corrupt and persecuting dominant Church, but of a religious party which has numbered many of 'the excellent of the earth,' many whose piety and high qualities entitle them to personal respect and esteem.

But it cannot be walking in the steps of Him who has been named in His own Word 'THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE,' whose heavenly wisdom is '*first* pure' and '*then* peaceable,' to allow our love and respect for individuals, or our just desire for Christian union, to seal our lips where serious error is taught. We have only to glance at the pages of earlier Church history to see that some of the most dangerous heresies have been first