

avowing themselves either as Nonconformists or Wesleyans, though of course they frequently came into contact with John Wesley on the occasion of his annual visits to the town. Thus we may be pretty sure that it was in reference to one of them named Edward Baily that the following entry occurs in the Wesley Journal of 2 October, 1764, "Breakfasted at the Devizes with Mr. B——, a black swan, an honest lawyer."\* The principal director of the above society seems to have been a neighbouring clergyman of the Calvinistic school, named Richard Baddily, for some time curate of Hilperton near Trowbridge, and afterwards of Olveston near Bristol, one of the few clergy who acted in concert with John Wesley, though otherwise, his very pronounced Calvinism would rather point him out as the associate of George Whitefield. See *Wesley's Journal* under date 19 April, 1764.

Simultaneously with this movement in Devizes, a similar revival, and worked by a similar agency, was taking place at Trowbridge under the guidance of a cloth manufacturer named John Clark, in nominal though hardly in actual alliance with the Established Church. Its inauguration was sanctioned by a Bristol clergyman named Rouquet, who continued afterwards to conduct its anniversary meetings. From Mr. Clark's autobiography we learn that visits between the two societies of Devizes and Trowbridge were interchangeable, that his own ministerial services were from first to last independent of salary, and that in 1776 the like position in Devizes was sustained by Mr. Robert Sloper a corn-factor. See *Jay's Life of Clark*.

This body of believers, constituting, as they appear to have done, the nucleus of the congregation who built for Mr. Sloper the chapel in Northgate Street now known as the Independent Chapel, seem to have taken the place and become the virtual successors of the mixed congregation over whom Nathaniel Chauncey had presided for nearly half a century. (This remark has no reference to the Baptists, of whom there had long been two other bodies in the town, one of them enjoying the favour of Sir John Eyles.) If moreover the new chapel in Northgate Street occupied the

\* "*Rara avis in terris, nigroque  
simillima cygno.*"

Ovid's metaphor for a prodigy,  
or something unique.