

took place after an interval of only three months. Calvinistic Puritanism which, except among the Wesleyans, was the prevailing medium through which religious character was coloured in those days, must in his case have received considerable impulse from his marriage with a descendant of one of the old Nonconformist families of Newbury in Berkshire. This lady was Sarah, second daughter of John Willis, then resident at Rowde, though previously a banker and bookseller in Newbury. Her own maternal ancestry, bearing the name of Pearce, were living in Newbury at the time of the great Civil War; and those who know what was the influence wielded in that town by the renowned Dr. William Twisse, will easily credit the tradition handed down by the Pearce family, that they, together with the mass of their fellow-townsmen, on the eve of one of the battles fought there, signalized their attachment to the Parliament's cause by spending the whole night in cooking provisions for the army (Essex's army, in all probability). By those modern inhabitants of Newbury who cherish as an inheritance the memories of the past, it must surely be felt that the reputation which their town so long enjoyed as one of the Protestant strongholds of the country, has been in a manner violated by the hostile influences which recently expressed themselves in a monument erected on the neighbouring field of battle to the memory of a Royalist.

But Puritan legends and a library of Puritan literature were not the whole of the Willis dowry; her personal worth it was which eclipsed all other considerations. An incident which forcibly stamped itself on her youthful memory, was as follows: When her father's family was for a brief period resident at Taunton, she one day watched [from a window over the old castle gateway?] a vast crowd surging up the main thoroughfare, the central object of which was John Wesley, walking bare-headed, his white locks flowing over his shoulders. He had come to Taunton in the course of one of his habitual annual perambulations through the country, and a reference to his diary shows this occasion to have been in September, 1789, when he was eighty-five years of age, Taunton had witnessed the labours of Joseph Alleine, the Devizes Confessor of Charles the Second's time. Consequently, the entry in Mr. Wesley's