

TOWARDS A CRABTREE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arthur Brown

1955

Scientific bibliography is scarcely yet removed from infancy, and as far as Crabtree is concerned it is, if I may be permitted to extend the metaphor, still in a pre-natal condition, or has been until this evening, and the birth pangs are likely to be long and arduous. The story I have to relate of the search for an occasional discovery of items which we may legitimately suppose to have come from the pen of Joseph Crabtree is far from being one of unqualified success. Bitter disappointments there have been, as for example in the now almost inevitable rejection from the canon of the hitherto uncritically accepted *Ode to a Coral Insect*, a unique copy of which exists in the Morgan Library; for, as my friend John Crow has pointed out with his customary acumen, the imprint, *Printed by Amos White, S.J., Whimajoes St., East Romishwold. 1837*, is open to the gravest suspicion, since both *Amos White, S.J.*, and *Whimajoes St.* are in fact anagrams of Thomas J. Wise, and, still more sinister, *East Romishwold* an anagram of Thomas Lord Wise. Into what delusions of grandeur this unhappy man was led when he added Crabtree to his list of victims! We can ill afford to lose this work from the canon, yet the hard facts must be faced. My predecessor spoke with feeling of the conspiracy of silence which seemed to have surrounded hitherto the facts of Crabtree's life; I will add that as far as his bibliography is concerned, the conspiracy seems to have been not only one of silence, but also one of deliberate fraud, forgery, deception and downright theft, and I hope to be able to show this evening that in this particular aspect of Crabtree studies, as in

