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Editorial

We record the death in October 1978 of the Revd. R. G. Martin. In him were united several aspects of Congregationalism: as a Cambridge undergraduate he sat at the feet of Bernard Manning; as a minister he served first as Albert Peel's assistant at Clapton Park; from 1927 he was, for twenty years, Secretary of the Congregational Historical Society.

The Society's second summer school was held at Congregational College, Manchester, from September 8th to 10th, 1978. About forty members attended. The guest lecturer was a Methodist historian, Dr. Henry Rack of the University of Manchester. Papers were given on aspects of London philanthropy, the Congregational College at Rotherham, the Inghamites, and there were visits

to Victorian churches and to Ramsbottom. The success of the weekend ensures that there will be another summer school in 1980.

In this issue we are able to print reviews held over because of lack of space. We are glad to print three short communications from seasoned contributors. Our main article is also by a seasoned contributor. Professor Johnson teaches Church History at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. His important article is complementary to a study of Henry Rogers, by Dr. Alan Sell, which will appear in a forthcoming issue.

Note

A Congregational Historical Circle has been formed. It publishes a newsletter and is to hold its first annual meeting on 12th May, 1979 at St. George's Hall, Norwich, during the Congregational Federation Assembly. It seeks to promote interest in the history of churches in the Federation, the Evangelical Fellowship, and among unaffiliated Congregational churches. In this its concerns are a welcome complement to our own. Details may be obtained from John Bray, Shangri-la, 14 Pillar Crescent, Brixham, Torbay, TQ5 8LE.

THE END OF THE "EVIDENCES": A STUDY IN NONCONFORMIST THEOLOGICAL TRANSITION¹

The appeal to natural theology as a ground for religious certainty became particularly convincing to many in eighteenth-century England when Christianity was attacked by the arguments of deism or rationalism. Chief among the authorities cited late in the century and beyond was William Paley, whose works included *A View of Evidences of Christianity* (1794) and *Natural Theology, or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity Collected from the Appearances of Nature* (1802). Although the primary interest came initially from within the Anglican Church, in those parts of it that were unaffected by the spirit of the Evangelical Revival, several of the Nonconformist traditions also found natural theology to be a valuable tool in their articulation of the faith. The great contribution of natural theology was the confidence it gave to Christian affirmations of truth. Use of "Christian evidences" was not intended as a scientific demonstration of truth; rather, it was supportive evidence, providing a number of points which could produce a cumulative effect sufficient to compel belief. The primary "evidences" within the Bible for the truths of Christianity were miracles and the fulfilment of Biblical prophecies in Jesus; after Locke had used them in his argument for "the reasonableness of Christianity", they became a staple of later orthodox defences of Christianity. Resort to the arguments of natural religion enabled the orthodox to steal some of the thunder from the eighteenth-century critics.² Thanks are due to the Principal and the Librarian of Mansfield College, Oxford, Dr. Donald Sykes and Revd. G. Trowell, for kindness extended and for permission to use the papers included in this article. Research has been aided by grants from the Association of Theological Schools and the Vanderbilt Research Council.

of revealed religion; they sought to show that the truths of revealed religion were a necessary complement to what could be learned through observation of the natural world. They relied upon the traditional proofs for the existence of God and upon existing scientific knowledge of the structure of the eye and heart to argue for intelligent instead of random causation and for the necessity of revelation. This central affirmation of the reality of God was carried further through the process of "analogy" from nature and humanity by Bishop Butler and others to complete the intention of God with respect to creation. The very history of Christianity as a continuous movement and its contributions for good in the history of the world were also taken as "evidences" of its truth. The whole of Christian faith was thus caught in the enlarging web of religious certainty.

To appreciate the shock caused in religious circles by nineteenth-century intellectual changes, one must realise how much of the apologetic of the day had been built upon an eighteenth-century foundation. If Coleridge had been "weary" of "the evidences of Christianity" early in the century, it is clear that the bulk of his countrymen, both Anglican and Nonconformist, were not. The empirical strand in theology dominated the field of apologetics, grounding truth on arguments from reason and experience and on the objective "facts" of Scripture. It was the basis of the study of theology in the universities for much of the century and the foundation of the liberal Anglican tradition represented in the 1830s and 1840s by Whately and Hampden. While some of the eighteenth-century Evangelicals had disdained the arguments from Christian evidences as distinctly inferior to the experience of the heart, their successors who wrote foundational textbooks frequently used the evidences as the starting point for theological study.² But the challenge of new ways of thinking could not be lightly dismissed. When Leslie Stephen wrote his *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (1876), he noted that Paley's summary was still used as a text at Cambridge, "so that the students of that ancient university", he declared with some irony, "are still carefully prepared to meet the assaults of the deists so often pronounced to have been extinguished a century ago".³ In that new age the arguments of natural theology and the evidences of Christianity were not as convincing as they had once been; scepticism of the truths of Christianity was growing, fuelled by historical criticism of the Bible and the new science of evolution. While the withering critiques of Butler and Paley from such people outside the faith as Leslie Stephen may have had little impact on those within the churches, there was, nonetheless, a similar revaluation in some religious circles. Within Nonconformity one such shift occurred at Spring Hill College, the Congregational institution in Birmingham.

From the early days of Spring Hill College, founded in 1838, "the evidences of Christianity" were conspicuous. In the general outline of the plan

²Theological works by Richard Watson (Methodist), Joseph Angus (Baptist), and R. A. Redford (Congregationalist) are prominent illustrations of this approach.

³Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1876, p. 414.

of education to be followed, it was the basis for the study of theology: "Lectures will be delivered", the report stated, "on the *Christian Evidences* in a course, which, embodying also the principal facts and doctrines of *Natural Theology*, is intended to afford a comprehensive introduction to Revealed Theology."⁴ The first statement of the theological examiner in 1840 noted this subject as one of four sets of papers submitted to him. From the two papers set on "Evidences" by the theological tutor, Francis Watts, it is clear that students spent considerable time with the works of Paley, Whately, and Chalmers; to be able to answer the argument of a critic, they also read Hume. The examination question, "What is Hume's objection to miracles—what its principle—and what the course of argument whereby Paley answers it?", indicates the focus of the study.⁵ Some twenty years later the subjects reported in the course of theological study included Natural Theology and the Evidences of Christianity; Richard Alliott, the theology tutor, included in his report on the students' progress that Butler's *Analogy* was studied by the senior class and Paley's *Natural Theology* by the second class.⁶ Alliott was succeeded at his death in 1863 by George B. Bubier, later described by R. W. Dale as a representative of the younger theological thought in comparison with Alliott, who was of the older school.⁷ Bubier had been one of the more vocal defenders of Samuel Davidson in his trial and dismissal from the Lancashire Independent College at Manchester in 1857; as literary editor of the *Nonconformist* and minister of Downing Place, Cambridge, he had been in touch with a variety of religious and theological viewpoints.⁸ Still, under Bubier's teaching at Spring Hill, the reliance on "the evidences" continued, although not without recognition of some problems involved in the current theological appropriation of them. In his tutorial report for 1864-65, Bubier stated that in the junior class "the principal study has been Paley's 'Evidences', which it has been attempted somewhat to reorganise and to complete, with a view to the requirements of the more recent criticism and controversy on this subject."⁹ He also noted that the class was involved in a study of Butler's "Analogy". Apparently Bubier intended to defend the argument of natural theology against its critics by clarifying and refining it; the examiner for that year's papers declared that the students "have followed both Paley's argument and the Professor's

⁴*Report of the Committee of Management of Spring Hill College, Birmingham*, Birmingham, 1840, Appendix, p. 72. (Hereafter listed as *Report*, with the year of publication.)

⁵*Ibid.*, Appendix, p. 29. Henry Rogers, also a theologian, taught literature and philosophical subjects at Spring Hill. His writings during this period indicate an interest in refuting the deistic arguments and in opposing Romanism and Puseyism, the errors he thought most serious to Christianity from the left and the right. See his *The Eclipse of Faith*, London, 1852, and *Essays on Some Theological Controversies of the Time*, London, 1874.

⁶*Report*, 1862, p. 9.

⁷R. W. Dale, "The History of Spring Hill College", in *Mansfield College, Oxford: Its Origin and Opening*, London, 1890, p. 21.

⁸*The Autobiography and Diary of Samuel Davidson*, Edinburgh, 1899; chapter VI (by J. Allanson Pictou), pp. 62-64.

⁹*Report*, 1865, p. 6.

additional illustrations with intelligence and earnestness."¹⁰ The teaching of Paley was thus a regular part, and the foundation as well, of theological education from the college's beginning in 1838 to Bubier's death in 1869.

When David W. Simon was appointed to the theological chair at Spring Hill College in 1869, he brought with him a strikingly different approach to theology and the teaching of it. Not that the governing board of the college was entirely aware of the change that would come; still, there was enough known about Simon for it to be clear that the appointment was a bold one. For Simon had spent the previous seven years and three of the eight before that in Germany; most recently he had been the Agent for the British and Foreign Bible Society in Berlin, but he had also received his Ph.D. degree in theology (with a dissertation on "Dissenting Sects of Russia") at Tübingen and had studied at the universities of Halle and Heidelberg as well. His two attempts at pastorates in England had each run less than a year before his resignation; if not failures, they certainly suggested a lack of success. Further, he had been a student at Lancashire Independent College in the years of Samuel Davidson's teaching of Old Testament. Davidson himself had had many German contacts, and it was chiefly through his friendship and influence with Simon that the latter went to Germany in the first place, following what he later felt to be an insignificant period of theological study that ended in 1854. Davidson's dismissal, on the ground of challenging the claim of Biblical inspiration, had not touched Simon publicly, but it was certainly another occasion for those who wondered about Simon's orthodoxy to draw wider suspicions because of that association.

At his appointment to Spring Hill College, Simon indicated to the Board that he was excited about the prospects of returning to England; his letter of acceptance stated, "I have long yearned . . . to be taking an active part in the labours and struggles which engage the attention of the Christians in England; particularly as I have been bold enough to think that my experiences in Germany—that land of profoundest intellectual struggles—would stand me in good stead." In his German studies Simon had been attracted both to theology and to the way in which the mediating theologians there addressed the current issues. He had already assisted in translating a major work of Dörner's into English. So he was returning to England with a programme. He acknowledged his belief in the "cardinal points" of the faith and affirmed a double aim: "to stimulate the Students to, and aid them in the thorough pursuit of Theological science; and at the same time to impress upon them that their study of science will be in vain unless it helps to make them good ministers of the manifold grace of Jesus Christ."¹¹

Simon's appointment marked the end of the "evidences of Christianity" at Spring Hill. The older division of Natural and Revealed Theology, with the latter broken down into Biblical Dogmatics, Christian Ethics, and Comparative or Ecclesiastical Theology, was swept away. With the re-distribution of teaching responsibilities, Simon divided his work in theology into Dogmatics, Apologetics,

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹¹*Report*, 1869, pp. 15-16.

Practical Theology and Homiletics, and Church History and History of Christian Doctrine.¹² From his initial tutorial report the shift was apparent. One of the subjects studied was Simon's primary theological interest, "The main Doctrines of Redemption developed from the principle of Love", in which he used a manuscript translation from the German. Paley was not mentioned.¹³

The Report for 1872 indicated how far things had moved, both in subject and in spirit. Simon was using German works, again in manuscript translation, in a study of the Trinity, and he also employed the Danish theologian H. L. Martensen's *Dogmatics* on this topic. He reported that student papers had been presented on designated topics, including "The Modern Outcry against Dogma in favour of Life" and the couplet from Tennyson's "In Memoriam", "There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds".¹⁴ Simon's foundation for theological study was now offered as "the Prolegomena to Dogmatics", in which such questions as the relation of philosophy to theology, Catholicism and Protestantism, theology and the Scriptures, and the existence, nature and attributes of God were considered. For the latter Martensen's *Dogmatics* and Dorner's work on the unchangeableness of God, both of which he had helped to translate, were used as texts. Simon's sources came largely from the German mediating theologians, who sought to maintain a position between the claims of rigid supernaturalism and confessionalism on the one hand and rationalism on the other. Besides Dorner, Simon drew on the works of Tholuck and Schöberlein. They had objected to a single foundation for religious truth and relied instead on a combination of experience, Scripture, and the confessions. They had not given up the question of religious certainty, but recognised the need for more considered theological responses than simple orthodox repetition of dogmatic propositions. Facing the claims of Biblical and historical criticism they endeavoured to present a responsible Christian faith for their day. Simon's use of their writings and their approach to theological issues was thus not particularly radical; yet the fact that there had only been isolated examples within Nonconformity of such reflection meant that the shift was noticeable. Outside reviewers were lavish with their praise. William Pulsford of Glasgow, the examiner of student papers in 1871, declared in his summary: "It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the subject handled in these papers, not only in view of the requirements of Evangelical Theology for scientific self-consistency, but also in its bearing upon the opposite and prevailing tendencies of modern rationalism and superstition. I rejoice, therefore, that the real gain to Biblical Theology, by these invaluable Essays of Dorner, has been brought within the reach of the Students of the College. For I am persuaded that men who are well grounded in this and similar subjects will be at no loss, when they become Ministers of the Gospel, to know how to hold their own, nor how to defend the humble piety of their flock in the midst of the worldly scepticism of an easy and luxurious age."¹⁵ A year later

¹²Report, 1871, p. 10.

¹³Report, 1870, p. 10.

¹⁴Report, 1872, p. 15.

¹⁵Report, 1871, p. 12.

another examiner was similarly enthusiastic: "I have wished it had been my privilege," he affirmed, "to have such teaching and guidance in preparation for the battle of thought and faith, on which all true men sooner or later must enter. The value of a Theological course, in which the truth is so deeply and thoughtfully grounded, can scarcely be estimated—specially in a time like the present, when we are threatened on all sides by what will prove to be, as I believe, the most exhaustive and destructive scepticism the Christian Faith and the Christian Church have ever had to confront."¹⁶

When Simon did take up the themes of natural theology and the "evidences", it is clear that he approached them critically. His tutorial papers for 1878 and 1879 noted his use of the Anglican clergyman Stanley Gibson's *Religion and Science* (1875) as a textbook. That volume, while written with great care and sensitivity in recognising the pain that might be given to some Christians, was nonetheless forthright in its assertions of "the great need at the present day of answering sceptical arguments, and also the great need of manifest moderation and fairness, if our answers are to have a good effect."¹⁷ In the course of Gibson's analysis, all the arguments for belief in God or for knowledge of his attributes, or for proofs of the truths of Christianity on the basis of miracles, prophecy, or history, came up wanting on evidential grounds. "We cannot, like Paley, infer the Divine benevolence from the gambols of shrimps," he declared.¹⁸ In the face of modern evolutionary science, those arguments simply had lost their value. The design argument could not establish the infinitude of God, and the cooperation of general laws could not demonstrate either an intelligent or a moral author. Gibson's choice for a more suitable ground of religious truth was the human moral faculty, or the conscience; but even this positive ending was not enough to satisfy the examiner of the apologetics papers in 1879 on miracles and prophecy, who commented, "I should have been pleased to see a little less ready concurrence in some of the over-liberal admissions made by Gibson to the antagonists of the Christian position."¹⁹ Certainly, not everyone in the churches was so satisfied to see the "evidences of Christianity" dismissed as Simon and his students were.

The spirit with which Simon embraced theological issues and which he brought into his teaching at Spring Hill contrasted sharply with his own theological education at Lancashire Independent College in the early 1850s. Although he publicly expressed affection for the college, late in life he declared that "Lancashire College did very poorly for us"; his biographer suggests that his work there "served chiefly to teach him what to avoid when he became a tutor himself."²⁰ His journal entries as a theological student reflect the agonies of someone encouraged to affirm the truths of the faith before he was ready to do so. "I want spirituality, say people," he recorded anxiously in 1851; "and I do, for certain. But oh! How am I to have it? What can I do?"

¹⁶*Report*, 1872, p. 17.

¹⁷Stanley T. Gibson, *Religion and Science: Their Relations to Each Other at the Present Day*, London, 1875, p. vii.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁹*Report*, 1879, p. 18.

²⁰Frederick J. Powicke, *David Worthington Simon*, London, 1912, pp. 32, 31.

I have to proclaim as truth—and expound as felt applicable truth—the contents of that book as to whose true character and design I am yet undecided. How must I escape from the labyrinth and servitude of my position?" On another occasion he wrote, "What need is there for the external evidences of Christianity? Is there any? The Bible comes to a man—to a man who has a religious tendency—and says it will be our guide. What is our sensible duty? To examine it, of course; then judge of its fitness."²¹ At Spring Hill he had the opportunity to do for his students what had not been done for him, and an early report to the Board indicated the enthusiasm with which he took up the task. "One thing I have been specially thankful to remark," he stated, "namely, a growing resolve and effort in the students to look at things with their own eyes, and to report what they find in their own way. I say I am specially thankful for this, because my ambition is that this College may turn out, not half-hearted retailers of what this, that, or the other man may teach and like—but independent and thoroughly-convinced finders of, and enthusiastic witnesses to, the truth which God Himself is ever ready to reveal to us by His Word and Spirit."²² His biographer, also a student at Spring Hill in the 1870s, records in a very personal way that "those who came closest to him were men who could be described as honest doubters and seekers after light."²³ Simon treated doubt positively, as a necessary condition for growth. He critically engaged old forms of faith and risked the possibility of abandoning them. Such a posture was unusual in a theology tutor; and the students who responded to his style became known in the larger circle of the Congregational churches as "Simon's men", somewhat suspect for their openness as he was as a theologian.²⁴

Expressions of change brought by Simon are, fortunately, available as samples of student thought in his early years at Spring Hill. Two interesting manuscripts in the Mansfield College library (Spring Hill's successor when it was moved to Oxford in 1886), reflect the awareness of a new critical situation for theology and a sense that the old formulae made little contribution to the challenges posed by historical criticism, the new science, and growing scepticism in society concerning religious truth. A paper entitled "Doubt and Faith", appearing unsigned as did most of these articles, was included in the manuscript "College Magazine" for March, 1873, and was a student response to the subject posed for the theology class by Simon himself. Another entitled "Concerning 'the times'", undated, probably appeared in an earlier issue of the same journal. It is signed "JH", presumably John Hunter, a student at Spring Hill from 1868 to 1871, who later acknowledged the great influence which Simon had over his theological development. In these years Hunter was also introduced to the works of F. D. Maurice and other Broad Church figures, whose approach to intellectual issues of faith encouraged him away from dogmatism to openness in pursuit of truth. Throughout his ministry (1871-1913)

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 26, 29-30.

²²*Report*, 1872, p. 16.

²³Powicke, p. 89.

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

Hunter was regarded as a spokesman for liberal Christianity within the Congregational churches. In a report to his first church in York in 1873, he noted the ambiguity of this position. "It is as difficult, if not more difficult, to be honest in the ministry nowadays than it is to be honest in trade, and the temptations are more subtle," he said. "If every minister in York were to speak out all that he really thinks, the pulpit at Salem Chapel would be not the only pulpit branded for heresy."²⁵ Others of his group did not survive as successfully in the ministry as he did. When a friend was forced to resign his charge in 1885, Hunter wrote: "There is no real need for creating antagonism between the new theology and the old. What is called heresy often proves to be nothing more than the needful resistance to conventional definitions and phrases that have lost all living significance. The inevitable changes in the theological thought need not, if we are wise, come by way of conflict and catastrophe, but by the Diviner way of growth and evolution."²⁶ Hunter's career in the ministry was an extended commentary on his essay at Spring Hill, aware of the challenges, yet neither flinching from them nor embracing an "unevangelical" Christianity by way of accommodating to them.

These student papers were preoccupied by two points which challenged the convictions of the older orthodoxy: the particular crisis of the current age and the historical understanding of the faith which, they thought, could respond to this crisis. The prevailing sceptical spirit is quite different from that of the previous century, they noted, for it comes as much from within as from outside the faith. The paper on "Doubt and Faith" was an extended commentary on Tennyson's couplet. Following Tennyson, doubt and faith are not opposed, as the orthodox party would think, but are rather intertwined in modern experience. "Honest doubt" is not unspiritual or flippant, but rather motivated by a desire "for the truth's sake to look for an intelligent reasonable ground of belief." Persons with this perspective probably had once held truth on the strength of a traditional faith, based on the authority of early teachers. But further inquiry, prompted by the spirit of the present age, would have led them to the many-sidedness of truth as well as to a critical estimate of all creeds or formulations that attempt to give definitive form to spiritual truth. Yet, rather than resist these developments in the larger society as well as in the Church, they should be embraced. "We need not be shocked or suspicious at the pushing and determined spirit of science, or at any of the strange theories a Darwin or Huxley may propound," Hunter wrote; "Christianity will still assert its divinity by asserting and adapting itself to all reasonable and settled scientific discoveries." Put simply, for Hunter, "if Christianity cannot bear the strictest scrutiny it is worth nothing."

Although these concerns were not raised in specific relation to the status of the "evidences of Christianity", the attention to issues of religious authority and the foundations of the faith called all previous orthodox and evangelical understandings of certitude, including those of "the evidences", into question. Their focus was on contemporary Christian responses to the ancient creeds and

²⁵Leslie Stannard Hunter, *John Hunter, D.D.*, 2nd ed., London, 1922, p. 39.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 73.

articles of faith. The orthodox answer was to say that if the foundations were questioned, the entire structure of belief was destroyed. But these student authors and others of their generation thought they could use an historical understanding to assess the contribution and place of creeds, thus relating contemporary methods to the traditional Christian quest for truth. The result was to distinguish truth from human formulations of truth and, further, to shift the Christian stance from defence to reconstruction. For, as one of them wrote, seeing truth in its own light is usually followed "by a painful sense of the inadequacy of creeds—as these too often are employed—to portray the truth with its several phases in proper harmonious setting and freshness." While the orthodox party perceived this to be a rejection of the truth embodied by the creeds, the reconstructionalists thought that the analogy with modern scientific discoveries gave, instead, greater prospect of truth unfolding. Not only were creeds meant to change because they are the scientific forms in which truth is embodied and are thus imperfect and shifting; but just as there are depths of reality into which science has yet to explore, so there are depths of divine truth which no theology has yet penetrated. The critical side led to a reassessment of such traditional doctrines as the eternal punishment of unbelievers (a major topic from the mid-to-late nineteenth century), while the perspective of openness led to a reconsideration of the nature of revelation itself. This was not, they hastened to add, a rejection of creeds, only of the questionable use to which they were too often applied.

One thing was clear to these writers: the spirit of critical thinking would not go away. A dogmatic posture would never be able to address those thinking persons whom the progress of science was separating from the accepted teachings of Scripture and the Church. In such a situation, they said, modern preachers should address the realities of religious and mental unrest and not continue to reiterate stereotyped opinions about worn-out issues. It meant, said Hunter, preaching to people of the nineteenth century and not to people of the age of the Commonwealth. It meant being open to the positive dimensions of religious doubt. There was to be no compromise with error or withdrawal into latitudinarianism or indifference; still, out of this engagement there may emerge a new foundation whereby Christianity might meet the sceptic. On this, Hunter thought that the common ground of morality would be an appropriate foundation. It was a direction pursued later in different ways by R. W. Dale and A. M. Fairbairn, Congregational theologians who were also actively connected with the progress of Spring Hill College. These students could not see where the process of reconstruction would lead, but they participated in a gradual transformation of religious consciousness which required the task of reconstruction to be engaged.

That such openness to historical criticism and flexibility regarding the historic dogmas of evangelical faith could lead to perspectives quite at variance with Simon's own theological interests and method was soon apparent. During the Autumn meetings of the Congregational Union at Leicester in 1877 a group of ministers, including former students like John Hunter and an old friend from Lancashire College, J. Allanson Picton, issued an invitation to all "who value

spiritual religion, and who are in sympathy with the principle that religious communion is not dependent on agreement in theological, critical, or historical opinions" to attend a conference.²⁷ This conference caused a furor in the churches, and its departure from evangelical "standards" was sharply rebuffed in the journals and at the 1878 Assembly of the Congregational Union. Simon's approach to theological issues might have been thought to lend support to the conference leaders, but he made it clear at the outset that it did not. The main problem for him was that the Conference's emphasis, as stated in Picton's address on "The Relations of Theology to Religion", was to separate completely religious feeling from theology and, as a consequence, to make theology a matter of indifference. That was, thought Simon, to do precisely what the rationalists had done in Germany. It also destroyed his very careful efforts to maintain a mediating position in theology.

In his public statement on the issue Simon turned his critique of Picton and the others into a positive argument. He recognised that religious comprehension was a theme that was being raised in every section of Christendom and that its emphasis varied greatly from church to church. Rejecting one-sided comprehension (as in Catholic or Episcopalian circles), state-sponsored comprehension (as in Germany), and the non-theological comprehension represented in the Leicester Conference, he nonetheless embraced the enterprise of doctrinal comprehension and saw it as a task uniquely suited to Congregationalists. It was not because Congregationalism, "owing to the absence of creeds, means perfect liberty of inquiry and speech in its preachers and teachers"; that view he regarded as either a mistake or a misrepresentation. "Our negations," he argued, "are rooted in [positives], not the reverse."²⁸ Rather, it was because Congregationalism should insist exclusively on essentials, since there was recognition of variety in the early church. Having established the principle of private judgment in practical matters, Congregationalists could go on to a larger task. "We have no traditions of any consequence to hamper us," he declared; "our Churches are prepared to allow liberty in doubtful or non-essential matters. Be it ours then consciously to face this problem, and endeavour to determine within what limits deviations amongst us may be not only winked at, but openly recognised; and thus to hasten on the day when the Christian Churches shall again form a whole, constituted by the union of sections once regarded as mutually exclusive and incompatible, but then seen to be mutually supplementary."²⁹ That would come about by looking at the issues in the light of the nature and mission of the church and through the affirmation of Christ as the centre of its faith and the basis of its proclamation. "With vagueness, as long as it is positive, we should be very patient: vagueness that helps itself out with contradiction and controversy, has no right in the pulpit of a Christian Church."³⁰ That was the basis of his theological teaching and his positive legacy to prospective ministers in a new age.

²⁷D. W. Simon, "Comprehension", *British Quarterly Review*, LXVII, January, 1878, p. 160.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 162. The original reads "positions", surely a misprint.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 172.

Thus Simon's modest shift in favour of the theological interests of the German mediating theologians was in fact a major change on the English Nonconformist theological scene, much more significant in method and direction than were the more controversial public attempts at change at the Leicester Conference and in the "New Theology" movement which followed thirty years later. To dispense with the apologists of the eighteenth century meant that the nineteenth century's issues had to be faced squarely, with the new tools that were available. It was, of course, not a once-for-all victory, not even at Spring Hill. For when Simon resigned in 1883 to accept a position in Edinburgh, the college retained the services of R. A. Redford of New College, London. Redford had been a student at Spring Hill from 1847 to 1853 and had obviously drunk deeply from the well of natural theology. His work of apologetics (1881) had given up none of the old defences; in fact, it was part of a counter-reaction, being written at the request of the Christian Evidence Society, which had sponsored other publications as well. In Redford's tutorial report he indicated that in Apologetics his students had worked on several subjects, including the History of the Defence of Christianity from the earliest times to the present day, the Nature and Necessity of Revelation, and the Argument for the truth of Christianity from the history of the Christian Church, all classic "evidential" themes.³¹ But Redford's position was only temporary, and the "evidences" could not be restored for very long; he was succeeded after a year by Fairbairn, whose interests were more philosophical than Simon's but whose commitment to addressing theological issues in contemporary terms was equally strong. Fairbairn also had experienced a "theological awakening" through a short period of study in Germany, where he had been similarly influenced by Dorner. Thus what Simon had ended was not restored and what he had begun was continued, all of which was part of an era of theological activity within Congregationalism such as had not been seen for some time.

A few years later, in 1892, the principal of the United Independent College in Bradford opened that institution's academic year with an address on "The Christian Ministry and Modern Thought". In this he made reference to the recent change in apologetic stance, particularly with regard to the evidential literature of the past. If in the college they no longer used as texts the works by Gardner, Locke, Butler, and Paley, he said, it was not because they had ceased to be sound and true, but because they had served their purpose and served it well.³² In this remark he was rather gentle; but whatever the case he, too, buried "the evidences" as a foundation for theology. The efforts of Simon had caught on in other Nonconformist colleges too, and this resource could finally cease to be apologetics and become a part of history.

DALE A. JOHNSON

³¹*Report*, 1885, p. 14.

³²F. J. Falding, *The Christian Ministry and Modern Thought*, Bradford, 1892, p. 12.

A PRECURSOR TO DR. W. E. ORCHARD'S DIVINE SERVICE?

The *Divine Service* prepared by Dr. W. E. Orchard for use at the King's Weigh House church is reasonably well known to students of Free Church liturgical history. First appearing in 1919, Orchard's work was a rich liturgical compilation drawing on many sources, and arranged with some respect for the classical liturgical traditions of both East and West. An abridged version was published in 1921, and a revised edition in 1926. Seen as comparative liturgy these nominally "Congregational" services were far superior to those contained in the Congregational Union's *Book of Congregational Worship*, 1920, but the emphasis on the divine presence and the concept of sacrifice in the main eucharistic rite, together with the Western Catholic ceremonial with which Orchard clothed his services, effectively disqualified the work from serious consideration by Congregationalists.

However, the *Divine Service* was not Orchard's first liturgical composition. In his autobiography, *From Faith to Faith*, Orchard recorded that when minister of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Enfield, he compiled some liturgical forms for use by the congregation:

I introduced some simple liturgical forms, which were printed and circulated to the congregation, and these were gradually improved and increased, as experiment proved which were the most suitable, and what the congregation could most readily adopt. I think ours must have been one of the first liturgies, actually placed in the hands of the people, to be used in a Presbyterian Church; for strong traditional prejudices had to be overcome on that score, enshrined as they were in the story of Jenny Geddes in St. Giles Cathedral, though I have heard it affirmed that that story is quite legendary.¹

Orchard also provided a liturgical form for the communion service.²

These liturgical compilations may perhaps be identified with *Service Book*, Presbyterian Church of England, St. Paul's, Enfield. The book has no date of printing (it was for private circulation only), and no author is given. It may be divided into three parts, of which the first consists of orders for Morning Prayer and Holy Communion. There are six orders for Morning Prayer, each with a similar structure of Introit, Prayer of Invocation, General Confession (or Thanksgiving, Supplication, etc.), the Collect, the Lord's Prayer, a versicle with response, Psalm or Canticle, the Morning Lesson, Hymn, and a Litany or similar (e.g. Beatitudes) with a concluding prayer. The Communion Service comprises opening sentences, Collect of Purity, a form of *Kyrie*, reception of new members, the Institution Narrative, the Prayer of Thanksgiving (*Sursum corda*, preface and *Sanctus*), the Prayer of Consecration, the Distribution of the Bread, Silent Prayer, the Distribution of the Wine, Silent Prayer, the Prayer for the Church Catholic, and Benediction.

The second and third parts of the *Service Book* consist of a collection of psalms numbered 785-795, and a collection of hymns numbered 796-840.

¹W. E. Orchard, *From Faith to Faith*, 1933, p. 104.

²*Ibid.*, p. 105.

In 1975 the Church Secretary at St. Paul's, Enfield, Mr. D. McNair, supplied the present writer with a copy of *Service Book*. Mr. McNair wrote: To the best of my knowledge the enclosed booklet contains the only specifically "Dr. Orchard" services used at St. Paul's and it includes a Communion service. It is many years since these services were used—I have been a member for about 20 years and they have not been used in that time.

In the British Museum Catalogue the same *Service Book* is listed as Presbyterian Church of England, and the date is given as c. 1920. If this date is correct, then it would be unlikely that the composition could be attributed to Orchard who became minister of the King's Weigh House (Congregational) church in October 1914. However, the date given in the Catalogue may relate more to the date of acquisition than to a presumed knowledge of the date of printing. A copy of *Service Book* is also to be found among the papers relating to St. Paul's Enfield at the United Reformed Church History Society Library at Tavistock Place. It was donated to the Presbyterian Historical Society in 1922 by the widow of the Reverend E. B. H. Macpherson, and neither this copy nor the St. Paul's papers shed any further light on the date and authorship.

For several internal reasons, however, the present writer is inclined, despite the lack of direct evidence, to identify *Service Book* as the work of Orchard.

First, inside the cover of the copy supplied by Mr. McNair was a printed leaflet for "A Service of Contrition", the title page of which included a quotation from Julian of Norwich. This leaflet is similar to those which Orchard produced for special services at the King's Weigh House,³ and Julian of Norwich was amongst his favourite spiritual writers.⁴ This in itself points to little, for even if the leaflet were the work of Orchard, it may have nothing to do with the book. However, the service outlined in the leaflet is identical in structure to the six orders for Morning Prayer in *Service Book*, and this points to common authorship.

Secondly, in the third order for Morning Prayer "A General Supplication" is provided for minister and people; it is in fact based upon Psalm 51. In his autobiography Orchard commented:

Even in my eclectic and tolerant congregation, however, I found there was some objection to saying together the fifty-first Psalm as a general confession, while yet there was none to singing it to a chant; the principle no doubt being, that, although prayers ought not to be provided, praise has to be.⁵

The third reason concerns the communion service which Orchard drew up for St. Paul's Enfield; he states that it had "a definite consecration prayer".⁶ The *Service Book* communion service has this "definite consecration prayer":

³Ms 209, Dr. Williams's Library. Scrap Book. This remark refers to the format rather than the order of service.

⁴*From Faith to Faith*, pp. 101-102.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 105.

Minister. Most merciful and mighty Father: grant unto us at this hour the gift of thy Holy Spirit, that we may make a full and acceptable offering of ourselves unto thee; and that, as now we consecrate these common elements of bread and wine to their sacred use, we may so feed on Christ in our hearts, that we shall be made members of his Body, and so drink of his Cup that we shall be cleansed in his most precious Blood, and ever more dwell in him and he in us. Amen.

It might also be added that in the communion service of *Service Book*, "The Prayer for the Church Catholic" (this is a heading; no text is given) comes after the administration, corresponding to the position of "The Commemoration of the Living, the Saints, and the Departed" in the principal Eucharist of the *Divine Service*.

The precise date of the compilation must remain a matter for conjecture. The acknowledgements at the back of *Service Book* include this note:

The REV. JOHN HUNTER, D.D., has graciously given permission for the Litanies on pages 7, 11, 13 to be taken from his 'Devotional Services'.

This suggests that at the time of compilation Hunter was still alive and had personally granted permission for the use of material from *Devotional Services*. If this inference is correct, then the book must pre-date Hunter's death in 1917. If, as we have suggested, the work is that of Orchard, then it must pre-date October 1914 when he became minister at the King's Weigh House. Since Orchard's interest in spiritual writers and liturgy followed his period of association with the "New Theology" which came to the fore in 1907, we suggest a date c. 1908-1910.

Although the evidence is slender, nevertheless there is some justification for attributing this work to Orchard. Our suggestion is that *Service Book* forms an important liturgical landmark in Orchard's pilgrimage from faith to faith, and that it was a precursor to his celebrated *Divine Service*.⁷

B. D. SPINKS

⁷Since this was written, Professor R. Buick Knox has drawn my attention to a review of *Service Book*, regarding Orchard as the compiler, and describing it as "recently issued". This might suggest 1912 as the year of publication. *The Presbyterian Messenger*, January 1913, p. 15.

THE PROTESTANT UNION: A BRIEF SKETCH ¹

The latter part of the eighteenth century was a period of considerable economic hardship in England. According to Thorold Rogers "the cost of maintaining a household at the beginning of the last quarter of the eighteenth century was, by comparison of prices, more than trebled at the close of the period." A succession of wars had drained the resources of the country. A number of bad harvests and, more importantly, a rapid rise in the population had meant that for the first time agricultural produce had to be imported rather than exported.

¹The chief source for this sketch is F. Smith, *The Origin and Growth of the Protestant Union*, 1911.

Though there is little statistical evidence as to the ordinary salaries received by ministers during this period, there cannot be any doubt but that they did not match the increasing cost of living. In October 1797 a letter over the signature "Benevolus" appeared in *The Evangelical Magazine*. It stated: "Many of our ministers are wholly dependent upon their salaries; and these, at a time when every article of life is raised to an extravagant price, are often barely sufficient for the homely support of their families." A few issues later a letter from "Barnabas" personalised this generalisation thus: "I have an affectionate wife and seven dear children. . . . What sensations of pain must I and others in like circumstances endure, when for these, our other selves, we cannot procure the common necessities of life, such as food and raiment; but a scanty allowance, just enough to keep them in misery."

"Benevolus", however, went on: "But their distress does not arise so much from their present contracted circumstances, as from the consideration that their wives, should they survive them, may be cast upon the precarious charity of the very people who deal so sparingly with them, under all the ties of a connection which will then be dissolved." He then put forward a grandiose scheme whereby a fund of £10,000 might be raised by the gifts of a thousand ministers, a thousand congregations, and five hundred laymen. To this fund the ministers would then contribute annually one guinea. After two years "from this fund every minister's widow, possessing no independence, should receive £30 to £50 a year, in proportion to the number of her children. . . ."

This letter seems to have started the movement which led to the formation of what was called The Protestant Union. Meetings were held of "several well known characters" who put forward proposals which formed the basis of the constitution afterwards accepted. The Society was formed on 27th June 1798 and formally constituted on 1st January 1799. The Rev. W. F. Platt of Holywell Mount was appointed Secretary and Mr. T. Preston of Miles Lane Treasurer.

Minutes of the early meetings have not survived and the first of the printed reports (now deposited in Dr. Williams's Library) is for the year 1813. From *The Evangelical Magazine*, however, we know that the original members included one Baptist (Dr. John Rippon), one probable Methodist (Dr. James Hamilton), two Presbyterians (Dr. John Blythe and Dr. Alexander Waugh) and a number of Congregationalists (Dr. David Bogue and Greville Ewing, Robert McAll, Edward Parsons, William Roby and Matthew Wilks). In the list of donations there is one of £10 from Rowland Hill.

The final constitution was based on some hope of donations. Initially, however, these amounted to only £260.7s, and never reached a total of £2,000, ceasing altogether in 1821. Membership was in respect of annual premiums of five, four or three guineas (irrespective of age at joining). These payments, ceasing only with death, secured for the widow annuities of £25, £20 and £16 respectively. By 1826, however, when it was plain that there would be no further outside supplementation, premiums were graduated according to age.

That the society met a need is evidenced from the fact that by 1802, after only three years, there were 93 members. By 1813 the Protestant Union had £10,000 "in the five per cents", was supporting fifteen widows, and had made

some grants in respect of widows. In five more years it held £13,500 in the same stock and was already actuarially sound. The only check to its financial progress came in 1856 when there was a deficiency of £700, but this was readily met by a temporary increase of premiums.

The membership topped 200 by 1864, fell back to that figure in 1910, and then rose to a maximum of 273 in 1964. The invested assets reached more than £100,000 nominal by 1910, which represented a surplus of over £40,000 to the actuarial needs of the fund. From the following year, therefore, premiums were required for only 25 years, thus setting free 69 policies immediately. Other benefits were added later—quinquennial premium reductions, larger benefits to children, the recognition of adopted children and later of nominee beneficiaries. Most important of all, steady improvements were made and continue to be made in the value of annuities. At the present time a widow may expect from a fully paid policy up to four times the original purchase (for which reduced premiums would doubtless have been paid). This has proved most beneficial as the value of money has declined.

By the 1960s it had become plain that State and Church compulsory insurance schemes were making this kind of society unnecessary. New members were coming almost only from those able to obtain charitable grants for their premiums. It was, therefore, decided in 1973 not to issue any new policies.

It remains to add that though the intention expressed in the title was that the society should be open to all Protestant ministers, the great majority have been Congregationalists. There is now only one Anglican member (who joined in 1916), and thirteen Baptists.

Begun in the period of the Evangelical Revival which prompted so many societies and organisations for the furtherance of the Gospel by assistance to ministers, the Protestant Union should complete two hundred years of providing, as good Christians are required to do, "for widows in their affliction".

RALPH F. G. CALDER

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION MEETINGS OF 1898

Members of the United Reformed Church who are concerned about Provincial Synods, and their future usefulness and fellowship, may find it interesting to consider the 106th Annual Assembly of the Kent Congregational Association which met at Beckenham Congregational Church in April, 1898. The source is the May issue of the Monthly Calendar deposited with the Greater London Council, at County Hall, London.

The meetings ran from the Reception at 6.30 p.m. on Monday, 25th April, when the delegates met their hosts and hostesses, until the final rally on Wednesday evening, 27th. More than 120 delegates were present, at least for some of the time. However, the Beckenham minister, T. Eynon Davies, was

proud to say that there was room for more, so generous was the response to the appeal for hospitality.

Each day began with worship (well attended) at 7.30 a.m. Two large and long luncheons took place at the hungry hour of 2.30 p.m. There was also tea. Holy Communion was on Tuesday evening and there was a rally on the Wednesday night. The skeleton programme makes plain the immense appetite of some Victorians for sermons and addresses and papers.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
7.30		W + 1 S	W + 1 S
11.00		C + 1 P	B
12.00			C + 1 P
Lunch		3 T	11 T
4.00 (?)		B	
Tea			
7.30	W + 3 A	W + 1 S	W + 6 A

(Key: A = address; B = business session; C = conference; P = paper; S = sermon; T = toast or reply; W = worship.)

Substantial ministerial dominance of the meetings, apart from the luncheons, was apparent, for only one of the twelve speeches in Assembly was given by a layman (Percy Bunting, the Wesleyan editor of *The Contemporary Review*).

Of the two conference sessions, Tuesday's, led by T. R. Archer of Maidstone, was on Village Work, and Wednesday's, by R. Fotheringham of Blackheath, was on "The New Evangelism, or the Revival of Evangelicalism in the Free Church Pulpits." The report to the press displays the patronising attitude of wealthier ministers to their brethren: "It was remarkable to see how well qualified were some of our village ministers to take part."

The names of those taking part are mostly of forgotten men: there are no women. Albert Spicer presided at a luncheon and G. Lyon Turner was among those who responded to a toast. Ossian Davies of Paddington gave the final message. Morgan Gibbon of Stamford Hill and J. G. Greenhough of Leicester took part in the Monday evening service which seems to have been mounted jointly by the Association and the local Free Church Council. The proceedings were far from dull however, for J. J. Northam, minister at Lenham, the third speaker at the Wednesday evening meeting, gave "a vivid and humorous picture of life in the Village Churches", while W. Justin Evans's Tuesday evening sermon on the words, "And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work", was described by Eynon Davies as "one of the raciest addresses we ever listened to".

If the meetings reached any conclusions, what they were the writer does not say. Doubtless the delegates went in search of inspiration, not decisions. Yes, they were called delegates and no one raised an eye-brow; they had no powers delegated to them by anyone.

JOHN H. TAYLOR

RICHARD NORMAN SHAW: A FURTHER NOTE

If Shaw's building contractors included John Grover, an active Congregationalist, his clients included a family of lapsed Congregationalists. In 1894-95 he designed All Saints' Church, Swanscombe, Kent, for Frederick, Leedham and John Bazley White, the Portland Cement Manufacturers whose extensive works were nearby. Thirteen years later, in 1908, he designed their London headquarters, Portland House, Lloyd's Avenue. His most interesting White commission, however, had been in 1888-90, when he designed Frederick White's town house, 170 Queen's Gate. The only one of four Norman Shavian houses in Queen's Gate to remain reasonably intact, it is among the most important of his neo-Queen Anne buildings.

White was Shaw's close friend as well as client, a cultivated and active Anglican no doubt, but his origins, though cultivated, were not Anglican. From 1853 to 1856 he had been educated at Mill Hill School, as had his father and uncles before him. His father, George Frederick White (1817-98), was a pillar of Guinness Rogers's Church at Grafton Square, Clapham, and later of Alexander Raleigh's Kensington Chapel; his uncle, Edward White (1819-98), the proponent of Conditional Immortality, sustained a notable ministry at Hawley Road, Kentish Town, from 1851 to 1888, and was Chairman of the Congregational Union in 1886; his Presbyterian aunt, Ellen Ranyard (d. 1879), was no less notable for her Bible-women's Mission; H. M. Bompas, the Baptist lawyer and politician, was a first cousin. The founder of the family's fortunes had been John Bazley White (d. 1867), a prominent layman associated with George Clayton's York Road Church, Walworth. Architectural patronage has some unexpected recesses.¹

CLYDE BINFIELD

¹For Shaw and John Grover see *J.U.R.C.H.S.*, Vol. 1, No. 10, p. 285. For the Whites and Shaw see A. Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw*, Yale Univ. Press, 1976, *passim*. For the Whites and Mill Hill School see E. Hampden Cook, *Register of Mill Hill School, London, 1807-1926*, priv., 1926, *passim*.

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LONGER REVIEWS

The Politics of Electoral Pressure: A Study in the History of Victorian Reform Agitations. By D. A. Hamer, Pp. x, 386, The Harvester Press Ltd., Hassocks 1977, £10.50.

This book will not be read for fun. Most likely it will become a quarry, yielding improbable facts and rare connexions to diligent workers. It is not strictly original, since its concerns have been those of several recent historians, although not to such a concentrated degree. Yet it is more significant than so relentless a compilation of fact and example might appear. Professor Hamer sees it as a pendant to his *Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery* (Oxford, 1972) but it is better seen in tandem with Derek Fraser's *Urban Politics in Victorian England* (Leicester, 1976). Hamer and Fraser are intent on revealing the thorough politicisation of all levels of Victorian society. The bias of their concern is towards the classes which produced "faddists", and since the core of crotcheteers was so frequently Dissenting their relevance for this journal is manifest.

If both authors describe "a Victorian political sub-culture, a world . . . in some respects more democratic, more open to popular participation and influence" than our own, Hamer's particular theme is to show how this world (of "pressure from without", to use the title of another useful recent text on the subject) impinged on the grander world of Liberal parliamentary politics.

He begins with the Anti-Corn Law League and Cobden (one of the age's "greatest electoral strategists") as hero, contemplating the prospect that operatives might replace the landed interest in the control even of county elections, finding therein "a hope, promise, and incitement of the most desirable and elevating description" and dismissing the aristocracy as men "afraid of nothing but systematic organisation and step-by-step progress. They know that the only advantage we of the stirring class have over them is in habits of persevering labour". Cobden's vision outstripped reality, but it was part of that remarkable British process by which the domination of the landed classes was broken and the enfranchisement of the working man was painlessly ensured.

With the Liberation Society and the National Education League "we of the stirring class" came into our own with Miall and then Chamberlain emerging as electoral strategists in what had become a great, if now easily forgettable, succession. The result of their pressure and the experience which it entailed was the growing integration of such politics into the structures of an apparently democratised Liberal party, but the process, like Hamer's charting of it, was seldom straightforward. Each year circumstances altered cases, and in some years the rules of the game so laboriously learned were transformed. This happened with Parliamentary Reform in 1867, for while it may have been Dissenting shopkeepers and workingmen who were most strikingly brought within the political classes and while this contributed to the bracing militancy of Chamberlain and the briefer militancy of R. W. Dale (Hamer has a delicious if disturbing account of how Dale once bamboozled the Birmingham

temperance lobby), such Nonconformist power as was released passed steadily from pressure group hands.

The moral is painstakingly hammered home by way of the United Kingdom Alliance, "the most systematic attempt made by any nineteenth-century reform movement to mobilise and employ electoral pressure in pursuit of its goals." Certainly Local Option (local popular control of the traffic in drink, with Prohibition as the ultimate objective) became a clear Liberal policy in the 1890s, and seriously affected the result of at least one general election, yet here too the story is the same. Here too the game's laboriously learned rules were changed at a stroke, first by Parliamentary Reform in 1884-5 (for all that some saw the new electorate as containing "thousands belonging to no party but the party of Sobriety") and then by Irish Home Rule in 1886: the one issue which really did polarise politics as Liberationists and Teetotalers had dreamed politics might be polarised, but along lines which caught them out as much as the next man.

Hamer's themes are clear, his exposition less so. Some of his most telling points are easily passed by. It is enjoyable and salutary to be told of the problems posed by Liberal brewer M.P.s (what was to be done when their name was Bonham-Carter?) or by the unlikely candidate for West Staffordshire in 1898 who was both a Primitive Methodist *and* acceptable to The Trade: and we might remind ourselves that Schnadhorst, the organising genius of the National Liberal Federation, was the brother of a Congregational minister. It is yet more useful to appreciate the particular *tactical* rôle played by by-elections, which were fruitful manoeuvring times for pressure groups, or the cliff-hanging value in pre-ballot days of *blocs* of voters, cannily mobilised at the last moment, or, in those days of a propertied electorate, of the possibilities of shrewd strategies for registering voters in the most unprepossessing places.

Yet where did it all get us? The stirring classes mobilised Liberalism; sometimes they disrupted it. The surprising measure of their success was also the measure of their inevitable failure, for the Liberals happened also to be the natural party of government and therefore the party of the Pallisers and the Grand Whiggery. Even when it appeared to become the party of the People's William it was still at Westminster the party of a restricted ruling class, no matter how talented and attractive. One has only to read the *Diary of Lady Frederick Cavendish* or *The Amberley Papers* to realise how slantwise pressure politics impinged on even the brightest and best of these grandees, and although Hamer underplays the wider abilities and influence of such pressure politicians as Wilfrid Lawson, W. S. Caine and (perhaps) Alfred Illingworth, the fact remains that their sort were at the mercy of political leaders whose assumptions were different, Gladstone not least among them. Hamer sums it up well: "too late the disestablishers and the prohibitionists became aware that beyond the political plateau to which they had so triumphantly ascended, that of the convictions and commitments of ordinary M.P.s, lay a further and much more difficult barrier, namely the power of the party leaders." From our own side there was a certain conniving at such a weakness,

for Dissenters who had so long been excluded from the political classes easily saw a continuously cussed political separatism as irresponsible; accommodation had its positive aspects.

It was not all in vain. Hamer's careful work reveals a pile of bricks rather than a building, and too much of his startling evidence turns out to be inconclusive, like the *unnamed* Scottish constituency whose majority of 2 was controlled by 57 pledged temperance votes; but the pile is of bricks, not rubble. For although the Liberation Society and National Education League no doubt aimed at the reorganising of all politics, and not just Liberal politics, they knew as everybody knew that their real power was as the "threat of the realisation of an alleged potential". And by 1900 (Hamer is quite right in this) even this had been blown.

For pressure movements thrive best in days of widening but still restricted electorates; those days were inevitably numbered. Their unique contribution lay in the long and cumulative political apprenticeship which they offered, first in local and then in national affairs. In the course of this the apprentices learned the vital truth that if no man is an island neither is any issue. That "faddism" merged into Liberalism was a sign of Nonconformist maturity, rather than decline. What happened to Liberalism thereafter is, perhaps, another matter.

CLYDE BINFIELD

The Church in late Victorian Scotland, 1874-1900. By Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch. Pp. 342, The Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1978, £10.50.

This book provides a much needed, contemporary and reliable guide to an important and complicated period in Scottish ecclesiastical life. As with the previous volumes, *The Scottish Church, 1688-1843*, and *The Church in Victorian Scotland, 1843-1874*, this account is based upon wide reading, but unlike them it is more specialised. Dr. Bulloch points out in the Foreword that it is restricted to the three main Presbyterian Churches, and it does not deal with such subjects as foreign missions and worship. But, as with the earlier volumes, the Church is placed firmly in the context of the society of the time, and theological developments are given a substantial and appropriate treatment.

The year 1874 marked several changes in the Scottish Churches. It was the year of Moody and Sankey, whose evangelistic campaign helped to shatter the remaining hold of Calvinistic theology upon the popular mind. Patronage ended in the Church of Scotland thereby raising the possibility of a reunion with the Free Church, but one which was not realised immediately. Rivalry continued to be a feature in communities throughout Scotland. The Free Church was dominated by the powerful figure of Principal Robert Rainy of New College (whose biography by Carnegie Simpson is here very critically assessed), a new breed of ecclesiastical leader who could dominate the General Assembly and the growing bureaucracy of the Church. Rainy played a prominent part in the trial of William Robertson Smith, which indicated the growing influence of biblical criticism in the Free Church, and in the espousal of the disestablishment cause, which indicated how far the Free Church was moving from its original adherence to the establishment principle. Both issues

showed that increasing gulf between the highlanders and the rest of the Church which was to have such disastrous results following 1900.

The two largest chapters in the book, both over eighty pages long, deal with "Church and Community", and "The Mind of the Church". Scotland was reaching a peak of industrial expansion and urban growth, and the ideal of a socially adhesive parish on the rural model was no longer practicable. The class divisions within which the Churches operated are well illustrated by the plans for a new Crematorium for the city of Glasgow:—

"On the high level a Chapel for the very rich; the second or better class Chapel being on the ground level; the third or working class Chapel to the right; and a Chapel for the pauper classes to the left of the receiving room or mortuary." (p. 130).

Such divisions were perpetuated in the Churches which increasingly failed to provide a meeting place for people of different backgrounds. There was a gap, too, between the piety of many of the captains of industry and the appalling working conditions in their factories. The gulf between the Church's preaching and practice was due, in part, to the high regard still held for Dr. Chalmers's views on social issues—he had sought to deal with the problems of poverty in the city with the methods appropriate to a rural community. Criticism tended to be made of the incidental rather than the fundamental social and economic problems of the day. A full treatment is given of how the Church fared in different parts of Scotland. And the impression that the "Auld Kirk" in this period was cold in doctrine and lax in practice is corrected by citing the work of Professor Charteris at the national level and of John Macleod of Govan at the local level.

Great changes also took place in the realm of theology. The traditional Calvinism of Scotland finally broke up, except in the highlands, under the impact of German thought. The influence of idealism was seen particularly in John and Edward Caird, but it was all pervasive for a time. It seemed to offer a ready-made apologetic in the face of evolution, and a counter to the materialistic outlook of the day. But by being linked to a current trend in philosophy such an apologetic soon became outdated. Much more lasting work was done in the field of biblical scholarship in the Free Church by men such as A. B. Bruce and Marcus Dods, who were not without their problems in the courts of the Church. Being concerned with the historical nature of revelation, and with the person of Christ, they were much closer to contemporary Anglican scholars, such as the *Lux Mundi* essayists, than were the Caird brothers. It is a pity that reference is not made to those in the Church of Scotland who were a parallel to the Anglo-Catholics in seeking to relate the Catholic faith to modern problems and who reacted to the growing liberalism in theology. William Milligan, the New Testament scholar, supplemented the nineteenth century emphasis on the incarnation with books on the resurrection and the ascension of Christ. He was followed by other "high" churchmen who stressed the transcendence as well as the immanence of God. Idealism for them was simply a tool; their theology was based on what they considered to be the "fundamental doctrines" of the faith. And unlike James Denney, who also

reacted in a biblical direction, they gave a much needed emphasis on the Church as a divine institution, and upon the place of the Sacraments in worship.

Yet it was the German liberal theologians Ritschl and Harnack who had the greatest impact upon popular thought in Scotland. The importance of their influence is well brought out by the authors. For a long time thereafter the common conception of the Christian faith in Scotland would be of a practical rather than a doctrinal religion, teaching such simple truths as the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. A rigid doctrinaire system was no longer acceptable to most within the Churches, and the United Presbyterians and the Free Church modified their adherence to the Westminster Confession. The union of 1900 between these two Churches indicated that divisions within Scottish Presbyterianism were also becoming of less relevance, except to a highland minority.

The authors are to be congratulated above all for giving us a "feel" of Church life in this period. There are many apt and colourful illustrations drawn from the lives of the people who either shaped the course of events or who were affected by them. These anecdotes make this book a lively as well as a substantial contribution to understanding the Church in late Victorian Scotland.

DOUGLAS M. MURRAY

SHORT REVIEWS

Calvin. By Emanuel Stickelberger. Pp. 174, James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1977, £3.15.

This biography of John Calvin first appeared in 1959 and has now been reissued. The style is stilted, but the picture of the reformer which the book presents is stimulating to thought and challenging to the preconceived ideas which still abound. The author deliberately sets out to give an extremely sympathetic view of Calvin. The traditional view of him as harsh, arrogant and intolerant is strongly denied and quotations from his personal letters as well as his books and treatises are used to show him as a gentle, shy, self-doubting man. Like Jeremiah, he would have preferred to avoid the position of leadership and responsibility to which he was, as he believed, divinely called. His amazing capacity for work, his patience and persistence in the face of opposition and his constant struggle with ill health are all clearly pictured. The course of the reform in Geneva and the establishment and subsequent influence of the Geneva Church are inseparably linked with Calvin, whose character came to maturity through his involvement with the city over the period of twenty eight years.

Special attention is paid to the two major sources of the criticism which is usually levelled at the "man of Geneva", namely his teaching on predestination and his involvement in the execution of Servetus.

His doctrine of election is defended against the accusation that it is a "terrible" dogma giving rise to fatalism and affirmed, instead, as a doctrine that "kills neither the ambition to work, nor pure morals, nor hope" as proved

by Calvin's own life and by history. Its position at the end of the third book of the *Institutes* indicates, says Stickelberger, that it is not central to Calvin's thought as his opponents assert.

The incident of Michael Servetus is recounted in detail and it is pointed out that in an intolerant age Calvin was intolerant only of blasphemy and the determined destruction of the faith and that he pleaded for the mitigation of the sentence from the cruel death by burning to the swifter execution by the sword.

The biography is brief but well supplied with notes and references to Calvin's own writings and to contemporary and later biographers.

SHEILA F. MASSEY

The Triumph of the Saints. By Murray Tolmie. Pp. xii, 249, C.U.P., 1977, £9.

This is a work on the separate churches of London, 1616-49; it contains a great deal of material which has not hitherto been conveniently available and it gives many valuable insights into the seething religious ferment which took place in London during the period. Tolmie takes issue with most of the authorities on the period and it is certain that his survey will not be the last word on the subject. He draws remarkably confident conclusions from what he himself admits is very imprecise evidence.

R.B.K.

The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living. By Jeremy Taylor, D.D., abridged with a preface by Anne Lamb. Pp. 173, The Langford Press, Romford, 1970, £1.50.

Assuming that it is better to have half a loaf than none, one is glad to have a half-size edition of this famous spiritual classic. "Nothing essential to the whole has been lost", says Henry Chadwick in the Foreword, and indeed, by skilful surgery Anne Lamb has removed a good deal of seventeenth-century verbiage, numerous biblical and classical allusions, and still kept the character of the work. The many prayers, in particular, draw my admiration, though Edmund Gosse in his biography can find nothing much to say in favour of *Holy Living*. But two points need to be made to readers of *The Journal*, neither of which will cause surprise. Jeremy Taylor's approach to spirituality is poles apart from Nonconformist tradition, from say, Bunyan or Baxter. Secondly, no historian could feel happy using a book like this for reference. A very large number of sentences have been streamlined, not always in a consistent way. The problem for the editor is always where to stop meddling. She makes a readable book for our generation but Jeremy Taylor gets knocked about more than one realises until one compares this edition with an old, full one.

JOHN H. TAYLOR

Life and Story in The Pilgrim's Progress. By Roger Sharrock. Pp. 26. Dr. Williams's Trust. 1978, 60p.

Professor Sharrock has an established reputation as an authority on the life and works of John Bunyan. This lecture is his contribution to the array of tercentenary assessments of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. He seeks to explain why

a work so steeped in "Bunyan's Calvinist Christianity" has had so widespread an appeal. He sees the answer in the resolute naturalness with which Bunyan treats the issues in the imperfect human struggle. R.B.K.

C. H. Dodd: Interpreter of the New Testament. By F. W. Dillistone. Pp. 255, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1977, £5.95.

If a scholar devotes his whole life to academic work, it might seem that a biography could add little to the record already contained in his own bibliography. Certainly a historian with access to the full corpus of Dodd's published works could reconstruct from them a fascinating chapter in the history of biblical criticism. But that opportunity will remain. What Dillistone has brilliantly achieved is a much harder task and one which needed to be done at once. By an alchemy of insight and affection he has brought to life for us a great man and his world, a world now largely beyond the memory of most of his readers. In this he was greatly assisted by Dodd's lifelong practice of keeping a diary (even if some of the daily entries chronicled no more than the weather and the route of his daily walk), and also by an unpublished manuscript, *The Vanished Order*, in which Dodd recalled the social and religious life of Wrexham in his childhood. But in addition Dillistone has been an indefatigable traveller, going up and down the country to collect information from anyone still living who had recollections of Dodd at any point in his long career.

The result of this research is a beautifully written book, of compelling interest. It treats with great understanding each of the settings in which Dodd lived, together with the institutions he served and the colleagues who contributed to his intellectual accomplishment. We are invited to visit in turn the school and chapel in Wrexham where he grew up, the Congregational Church at Warwick of which he was minister, his three colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, Manchester University, and above all Mansfield College with which in one capacity or another he was associated for seventy years.

The portrait of Dodd which emerges is likely to satisfy even those who knew and loved him best. He combined an immense and precise erudition with a wide range of other interests, including music, drama, languages and archaeology. His devotion to free and unfettered enquiry was never in conflict with his passionate concern for the Gospel, but was rather dictated by it. He was too good a classical historian to be troubled by that modern bugbear of the radical theologian, the myth of the culture gap. His clarity and infectious enthusiasm made him to the end of his days a popular preacher, lecturer and broadcaster. He was also a deeply sensitive man, a beloved son, husband, father, grandfather and friend. When his other works have slipped into the history of biblical scholarship, he will still be remembered for his work on the *New English Bible*, which occupied the twenty years after his retirement, and in which by his firm direction and by inspiring his colleagues with his own dedication and high standards he put the whole English-speaking world in his debt. And Dillistone has put us in his debt by so splendidly perpetuating Dodd's memory.

GEORGE B. CAIRD

Monument to Faith: A History of the United Reformed Church, Aston Tirrold, Oxfordshire. By Frances McDonald. Pp. 56. Obtainable from Tavistock Bookshop.

Aston Tirrold Church has had a remarkable history. It traces its story back to the days of the ejection in the seventeenth century and this well-produced booklet gives a good account of its varied fortunes and relates the story to the educational, social, technological and ecclesiastical trends on the national scene. Its buildings are of much interest and its eventual place in the Presbyterian Church of England and then in the United Reformed Church is an intriguing story.

R.B.K.

The History of Cliff Town Congregational Church, Southend-on-Sea, 1799-1972. By John R. Hodgkins. Pp. 42 & appendices. Clifton Books, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, £1.

The preaching of the Rev. Henry Austin, living at Leigh, and of the Rev. John Clayton and his sons contributed to the gathering of a Congregational Church at the South End of the Essex village of Prittlewell at the end of the eighteenth century. Its growth—humanly speaking—was due to three main factors: Southend's popularity as a place for resort and retirement; the organising ability of its early ministers; and the support of local tradesmen and benefactors. Among the latter was Thomas Dowsett (1837-1906) who began as a barber and died a builder worth over £250,000.

Mr. Hodgkins tells his history in an undecieved but affectionate tone: clock tower and organ; financial crises and opportunities; controversy over the calls to new ministers; soup kitchens and the advent of non-alcoholic wine; the 1902 Education Act and the distraint of goods; conscientious objection; relief work in the East Coast floods.

This booklet is a delight to read and is handsomely produced. There are eight pages of illustrations and detailed notes of sources.

PETER JUPP

Belper Congregational Church. By Ian Gregory. Pp. 12. Obtainable from the author.

To outsiders Belper, in Derbyshire, is best known as the company town of those pioneer Unitarian industrialists, the Strutts. Its Congregational Church was formed in 1790, helped inevitably by that Derbyshire Londoner, Thomas Wilson. Today, Congregational still, it is represented by a handsome Victorian structure, too expensive for current needs. This history has been written by the present pastor.

J.C.G.B.

Lyndhurst Road Church, Hampstead: A Thanksgiving for its life and Work, 1880-1978. Pp. 20.

This Church held its closing services on 1 April 1978. With Alfred Waterhouse to design its buildings and R. F. Horton to define its life, it was marked for a distinction which it retained through the striking changes of a relatively

short existence. Its archives have been deposited at Dr. Williams's Library and this booklet surveys its history and includes a section by Mrs. Horton. J.C.G.B.

Politics and Christianity in Malawi 1875-1940: The Impact of the Livingstonia Mission in the Northern Province. By John McCracken. Pp. xv, 324, Cambridge Commonwealth Series, Cambridge University Press, 1977, £12.

Some participants in the current debates about Southern Africa make it sound as if the churches there had little or nothing to do with politics until the inception of the World Council of Churches' Programme to Combat Racism. This detailed study by the Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Stirling shows how wide of the mark such views are. From David Livingstone's own policy of supporting a cash-crop economy dealing with European traders as one means of uprooting the slave trade, through the varied association between the Presbyterian missions at Blantyre and Livingstonia and the nascent Protectorate government, to the first signs of a political independence movement, the stories of church and state in Malawi are closely intertwined, in terms both of economics and politics.

Particularly interesting are the accounts of the different attitudes on political issues of the Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland and their agents, David Scott of Blantyre and Robert Laws of Livingstonia (ch. 7, Church and State, 1891-1914). It was partly from contradictions between and within their policies that the pressures were created that led both to breakaway movements in the church and demands for political change. Both in an earlier phase dominated by Watch Tower and Seventh Day Baptist movements (called here independent churches but still linked with American missions) and in the more truly independent churches of the late 1920s, like the African National Church, there were factors appealing to suspended members of the Presbyterian churches (e.g. defence of polygamy) and also allied with the political Associations which paved the way for political parties.

This is a complex story, not always easy to follow in its many themes and sub-themes, but a valuable contribution to the rethinking both of missionary history and of the Church's mission today.

MARTIN H. CRESSEY

Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture 1780-1850. By Thomas Laqueur. Pp. xv, 293, Yale University Press, London, 1976, £10.50.

"Let our Sunday schools become the UNIVERSITIES OF THE POOR", said the Swedenborgian Rowland Detrosier in 1831, soon after the founding of Stinkomalee, as some called University College London. Twenty years later the Sunday school population was two million, 14 per cent of them in Congregational and Presbyterian schools, fifty years later it was over five million, or 19 per cent of the population of England and Wales.

Their success was phenomenal, and there appears to be precious little

rhyme or reason for it. Vast Sunday schools were not peculiar to cities because pre-industrial Wales had plenty; and in 1851 rural Bedfordshire had 19 per cent of its population enrolled in Sunday schools while Surrey and Middlesex trailed with under 7 per cent. The relationship between church attendance and school popularity was oddly random; indeed there was often no clear relationship "to any obvious social or economic determinants".

Nonetheless Sunday schools tended to be part more of Dissenting than of Anglican life and to flourish where they could provide educational and recreational (as well as religious) services not otherwise available, or where socially isolated Dissenters found in them a focus for religious and cultural self expression. And where working-class religion was concerned, they often replaced the churches.

Here we come to the theme of this most interesting book: the Sunday school "attended entirely by the working classes, staffed largely by former students and their parents, often managed and financed by the community which it served . . . was a part of, and not an imposition on to, popular culture". This may not surprise readers of this Journal, though they will like to be reminded that the S.S.U.'s *Youth's Magazine* (1805) was probably the first successful children's periodical; that Sunday schools "provided the only institutions designed, even in part, for the pleasure of the young"; that "three to five hours of instruction each week for an average of four years, using specialized textbooks in small classes graded according to scholastic ability, had a significant impact on the creation of mass literacy"; that Sunday schools were not part of bourgeois moral imperialism's "assault on the pre-industrial personality", but that "working-class politics was largely the creation of people steeped in religion and the Bible".

These are not startling judgments, for us at least; though perhaps Professor Laqueur too carefully defines his brief—his partial exclusion of the subtle, vexed relationships between school and church is a damaging one, for here he could have juxtaposed studies of the school's *two* communities, "working" class and "middle" class. My guess, at least where it concerns Congregationalists and Presbyterians, is that Sunday schools were rather more at the frontiers of social class and that Sunday school teachers, frontiersmen *par excellence*, were less uniformly working class than Laqueur implies. These relationships would enrich his argument, for our churches sought harmony when their very existence expressed disharmony. And the political implications of that bear pondering.

This book will be profoundly irritating to some, however unexceptionable it may seem to us. It began as yet another attempt to confirm E. P. Thompson's view that religion was a bourgeois weapon in the remoulding of working-class life. This is not how it has ended, for which the author thanks a remarkable quartet—Lawrence Stone, Max Hartwell, Brian Harrison and John Walsh. With such academic godfathers Sunday school history has come into its own.

J.C.G.B.

Robert Mackintosh: Theologian of Integrity. By Alan P. F. Sell. Pp. 107. Peter Lang, Bern, 1977. sFr. 26.

The name of Robert Mackintosh will be familiar only to some of the elderly among us, to specialists in the history of theology and to those acquainted with the story of Lancashire Independent College. A Presbyterian Scot of the Free Church, trained in New College, Edinburgh, he found it impossible to live and work in peace of mind under the shadow of the Westminster Confession of Faith and, after a time of severe struggle, turned to Congregationalism. From 1894 to 1930 he served with distinction as a Professor in the Lancashire College. He died in 1933, leaving behind him a sizeable legacy of theological writing consisting of thirteen books and a considerable number of articles.

In Dr. Sell's clearly written and balanced study Mackintosh emerges as a middle-of-the-road theologian rather stronger in critical than in constructive power but rooted firmly in the Gospel. "Christian theology", he wrote, "is not a speculative Theism; it is a doctrine of redemption". While Christian truth could not be ratiocinated, it was not against reason. The faith did and must commend itself to both mind and heart. Thus he told theological students that "they must always have an edge on their intellect and spirit". To his own counsel he was consistently true. He represented an open, enquiring, modest yet lively evangelicalism which Dr. Sell believes has still some power to speak to our condition. "Theologian of integrity" is a not inapt description of the man if integrity be taken to include not only honesty but soundness, in the best sense of that sometimes misused word, and the desire for if not the achievement of wholeness. His near-contemporary, P. T. Forsyth, maintained that there is an integrity of the soul that goes deeper than integrity of mind. Although he was often meticulous it was that larger integrity that Mackintosh sought.

A Presbyterian who became a Congregationalist for conscience's sake but was never a narrow denominationalist has a claim on the interest of members of the United Reformed Church, in which assuredly he would have been at home. Dr. Sell's neatly executed study raises issues which are still alive.

CHARLES S. DUTHIE

Westminster College, Cambridge: Its Background and History. By R. Buick Knox. Pp. 60. 1979. £1 from Tavistock Bookshop, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1 or (post free) from the College.

This booklet by the Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Westminster College is practically all that could be desired as a short account of this distinguished college. It is readable, accurate, well researched and well documented. It is prefaced by a good account of presbyterianism in England from the seventeenth century. It contains useful sketches of the professors and the kind of teaching they gave, and a full (sometimes amusing) account of the controversy leading up to the decision of 1895 to move the college from London to Cambridge. There is much interesting detail about distinguished individuals;

more might have been said about the life of the College and its curriculum; Principal Elmslie's booklet of 1949 gave fuller treatment to the work of the Board of Studies, but otherwise it is superseded by the present publication. Buildings and finance are fully dealt with, and there is a useful index.

J. M. ROSS

Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism. By John Kent. Pp. 381, Epworth Press, London, 1978, £9.50.

It is curious that historians of the nineteenth century have for so long neglected Victorian revivalism and the part played by the professional American revivalist within English evangelicalism. In 1966 John Kent hinted at the importance of the subject at a Past and Present conference on popular religion; in this new book—a series of invigorating essays rather than a comprehensive and detailed history—he considers the character and significance of revivalism during a period when the churches strove unsuccessfully to hold the fort against secularisation and the challenge of urbanisation.

After two introductory chapters on the American and English revival traditions—the first discussing the emergence of the professional revivalist in America, the second focussing on Primitive Methodism and the influence of Lorenzo Dow—Professor Kent turns to the largely unsuccessful attempts in England in 1859 to stimulate a revival like those recently experienced in America and the Celtic fringe. His next three chapters consider the impact of Moody and Sankey, particularly during their most successful visit, from 1873 to 1875. Here Kent makes two major contributions: he argues persuasively that although Moody's preaching may have dropped the references to devils, fire and torture found in earlier revivalist sermons, it nonetheless often cruelly exploited a residual fear of hell and incited a formidable fear of God; he also provides a wickedly trenchant and entertaining analysis of Sankey's sentimental and reassuring songs with their cast-list of prodigal or dying children and suffering parents. For the author "perhaps the most important result which revivalism helped to bring about in the whole of the nineteenth century" was to make secure the position of the Anglo-Catholic movement within the Church of England, and in many ways his chapter on ritualist revivalism, which drew on an independent Roman Catholic tradition of parish missions and was focussed on auricular confession, provides the most interesting section of the book. An essay on holiness revivalism, tracing the influence of the mid-century lay revivalist Phoebe Palmer on the Salvation Army, the Brighton Convention and Keswick, precedes some concluding reflections on the political and religious significance of the revivalist tradition.

There is much to admire and enjoy in this stimulating, lively and often witty book. It is frequently provocative, never dull. Of course, in a study of this kind there will inevitably be judgments worth challenging: for example, can English Evangelical Pietism really be said (p. 12) to have been declining between 1800 and 1830? Moreover there are obvious gaps: readers of this journal may feel that Kent has given insufficient attention to the impact of

American revivalism on Calvinist churches in the years before 1859. And while he is right to criticise American historians for overestimating Charles Finney's influence in the United States, he is perhaps too dismissive of Finney's impact in England where his writings did much to galvanise the hyper-evangelicals of Congregational and Baptist churches. But we must thank Professor Kent for a highly readable, generally persuasive treatment of this important subject.

RICHARD CARWARDINE

The Dream of an Ideal City: Westbourne Park, 1877-1977. By H. Edgar Bonsall and Edwin H. Robertson. Pp. vii, 247, 1978. Obtainable from its publisher, Westbourne Park Baptist Church, Porchester Road, London W2 5DX. £3.00.

John Clifford's fame far exceeded Baptist bounds: my Methodist headmaster was named after him; the first Congregationalist to welcome me to Sheffield had shared a platform with him, and so one might continue. Hence his relevance for this Journal. This book, compiled by a former stalwart of "Clifford's Church", in collaboration with its present minister, is clearly a labour of love, produced with a style rare for these typewritten, limp-covered days. It is full of pertinent quotations and affectionate details. Yet, because opportunities for writing spaciouly about famous churches are so rare, it has to be said that the present opportunity was not best taken. The book is a compilation rather than a history; the reader is left to make his own analysis. There may be good educational precedent for that, but it is a pity nonetheless.

J.C.G.B.

The Christman File. By W. J. Christman. The St. Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1978. Pp. 191, £1.90.

This is the story of an American minister who became minister of an Edinburgh parish in an area due for redevelopment. He tells of his frequent trials and occasional triumphs, of his despair and of his hope. The whole account will prove to be a valuable source for future social historians as well as a moving record for present readers.

R.B.K.