
A table of contents for *The Baptist Quarterly* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bq_01.php

The Task of a Baptist Historian*

CONSIDERABLY over a century ago the English minor poet, Robert Southey (1774-1843), wrote a piece entitled "The Battle of Blenheim". This was a somewhat double-edged celebration of what was perhaps the greatest of the victories won by the Duke of Marlborough. It ended with these lines:

"And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win."
"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin.
"Why that I cannot tell," said he,
"But 'twas a famous victory."

Whatever the temptation in days gone by to treat history, and even Church history, as promarily a roll call of the battle honours of "our" side nobody today could be satisfied by a mere tale of "famous victories". Yet, perhaps more than ever today, most of us would be tempted to find a place for the question, "But what good came of it at last?" After all the Church historian can no more avoid the nagging questions which have to be faced about the meaning of the past and its relevance for the present and for the future than can any other historian. On the other hand, whilst the denominational historian shares the same standards of objectivity, uses the same methods and is bound to ask many of the same questions as do others, there is certainly a need for him, and a place for him, if a lowly one, alongside other students of the past.

Whilst at this point we must postpone treatment of the obvious question, "Why bother with Baptist history anyway?" there are certain things which can be said at once: first, if Baptists do not investigate and care about Baptist history no-one else will. No-one else is likely to take the time or the interest to sift the diamonds from the dust of our denominational yesterday. No-one else will be prepared to attempt the reconstruction of that yesterday from our generous but annually diminishing early source materials. No-one else will have the same creative sympathy with that yesterday and understanding of the texture, the subtle overtones and undertones, of our denominational heritage in its national setting. To say this does not, of course, mean that non-Baptists should not be encouraged to write Baptist history or that Baptists from other lands should not touch English Baptist history. There is certainly always a sense in which the onlooker sees most of the game: a detached observer may well discern patterns and meanings which those too closely caught up in

*A paper read to the first Summer School of the Baptist Historical Society, 1968.

their own personal or partisan enthusiasms may miss. Nevertheless, when all this has been readily and cheerfully admitted, it remains true that if Baptists are to wait for others to do their fundamental research for them they will still be waiting, with a sense of growing disappointment, for a good many years to come.

On the whole Baptist historians have tended to conceive their task in fairly simple and straightforward terms. The most recent (1947) substantial attempt to outline the story of the English Baptists admirably exemplified this tradition. Dr. Underwood[1] explained his intention in the opening words of his preface: "In this book I have tried to present the story of the Baptists of England in orderly sequence, bringing out the things accomplished by them and the ideas which clothed themselves with power'. To this admirable intention to tell a plain tale plainly Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke's foreword added another motive when he commended the author because "he not only provides information but demonstrates that history is effective apologetic". As a matter of fact a rather defensive note has been a characteristic of English Baptist historiography from the beginning. Finally, Baptist historians seem long to have believed it to be their right, and may well have considered it to be their duty, to point out some of the lessons which they believed their narrative had to teach their generation. There can be no doubt in the mind of anyone who reads the latter pages of Dr. Underwood's work that his intention was to support a conservative attitude to such issues as those of Reunion and the autonomy of the local congregation and what he would evidently consider a more Biblical attitude to the theology of Baptism. His approach was less direct than that of some of his predecessors but his intention to influence denominational thinking, I venture to suggest, was quite as clear as theirs.

These, then, are the terms in which, traditionally, Baptist historians have conceived their task: first, to tell a plain tale plainly; secondly, to defend and explain the Baptist case; thirdly, to mould the thinking, even the policy, of their denomination. Before probing further into the task of a Baptist historian today we now turn to a brief survey of three classic interpretations of the Baptist historian's task.

The three writers to be examined are Thomas Crosby (1738-40), Adam Taylor (1818) and Joseph Ivimey (1811-30). They were the first to publish comprehensive histories of the English Baptists and it should soon become clear that they founded the tradition to which Dr. Underwood adhered.

i. Thomas Crosby[2] (1738-1740) wrote, explicitly, to correct what he considered to be the inaccurate accounts of the Baptists given by other writers and to put the Baptist case at three points in particular. First, he sought to show the rightness of Believer's Baptism by citing a number of arguments, both theological and historical, in its support. Secondly, he tried firmly to dissociate the English Baptists from the continental Anabaptists especially, of course, from those involved in the tragedy of Munster. Thirdly, by providing biographical sketches of early

Baptist leaders, he attempted to prove his conviction that[3] "men of the greatest learning and piety have neither been ashamed nor afraid in the worst of times to stand up in vindication of a principle so truly apostolic, though ever so much despised and hated". In short, it was, as he said himself, his intention[4] "to have these things set in a clear open light, to disabuse all those who may have been imposed upon by false or partial or defective history in this matter, and to remove, or prevent, or allay scandal or censure for time to come".

He was also very much aware of the deep divisions which separated the General Baptists from the Particulars at the time he wrote and it was his firm conviction that the two groups should unite. Indeed, he wrote,[5] "I am fully persuaded, and clearly of opinion, that this difference in opinion is not a sufficient or reasonable ground of renouncing Christian Communion with one another, and therefore have not in the course of this history, lean'd either to one side or to the other, but have taken facts as they came to my hands, without regarding to which of the parties they were peculiar." Not only did Crosby here betray a not untypical Baptist impatience with the niceties of theology and refuse even to label the party allegiance of most of his heroes but he also, towards the end of his work, directly urged the two groups to seek a common union.

ii. Adam Taylor (1818), writing eighty years after Crosby and as the historian of the General Baptists, regretted his predecessor's confusion of the two groups because he felt that the part played by the early General Baptists had, in consequence, tended to be underestimated. Hence he made it a major purpose in his own work to give the Arminians what he believed to be their due and sought to assign them[6] "their due share in the religious transactions of the Seventeenth century". His second explicit motive in writing was to do justice to the doctrinal orthodoxy of the early General Baptists since, as he said, so many of their more recent successors had "widely departed from the faith and doctrine of their predecessors".[17] This had caused the doctrinal position of the New Connexion of General Baptists (founded in 1770) to be widely misunderstood by other Christians.

In his second volume Taylor dealt largely with the history of the congregations who had united in the new body and with their leaders. He mentioned that he took care to give some account of their faults and failures as well as of their achievements. Such narratives of the darker side of the story would, he hoped,[8] "excite every reader, but especially every minister, to be more earnest and constant in praying for grace to preserve him from giving any occasion to the enemies of the truth to blaspheme, and doubly vigilant in shunning every appearance of evil".

iii. Joseph Ivimey (1811-1830), in the first volume of his work, set out to prove first,[9] "that the English Baptists held the genuine principles of the Reformation, and pursued them to their legitimate consequences. Believing that the bible alone contains the religion of

Protestants, they rejected everything in the worship of God which was not found in the sacred oracles". Secondly, he claimed to show that "Infant-baptism in England owes its origin to Popery" and, thirdly, that the "English Baptists were the first persons who understood the important doctrine of Christian liberty, and who zealously opposed all persecution for the sake of conscience".

Since Ivimey's volumes were published with intervals of several years between each one and the next it is hardly surprising that changing interests were reflected within them as the work developed. His second volume was especially dedicated, according to its preface, to demonstrating the worth of those who had in the past been Baptist ministers and to awakening[10] "the attention of Baptist ministers and churches to imitate the piety, simplicity and zeal, of their progenitors". His third volume had the aim, amongst others, of answering those who thought that the Baptists were,[11] "the most sectarian of sects, the most entrenched and fortified in the narrow circle of its communion". In the preface of his last volume, however, Ivimey turned his attention again to his own denomination to discuss some of the strengths and to rebuke some of the weaknesses such as[12] open communion, ignorant ministers, tyrannical deacons and, more generally, disobedience to Christ, of contemporary Particular Baptists.

Having established the threefold aims of traditional Baptist historiography: to tell a plain unvarnished tale, to vindicate Baptists from criticisms of non-Baptists and to use the past as a text for preaching to their own contemporary co-religionists it is now necessary to consider the case for the study of Baptist history today, to discuss, in fact, the relevance of "tradition" for Baptists.

The idea of "tradition" used to be far less acceptable among Baptists in the past than it has become in recent years. Not so long ago, among Baptists, the word was almost invariably used of ecclesiastically binding, but extra-biblical doctrines or practices conceived of as opposed to the Scriptural norm. In recent years, however, Baptists have become prepared to use both the word and the idea of "tradition" in a more positive sense of their own heritage of doctrine, of practice and of institutions. Whilst it must be admitted that those who have so spoken have sometimes tended to be rather selective of the section of the tradition they desired to canonise[13] it does seem clear that Baptists holding quite different views about what constitutes the most relevant part of their "tradition" have tacitly agreed to use the term.

Hence Dr. A. Dakin was able, some years ago, to write of the Baptists that in[14] "their tradition they have ideals of independency and freedom, insisting on the full autonomy of the local church, and rejecting every form of state interference or patronage". The word had a very similar meaning when used shortly afterwards by Dr. E. A. Payne in a book written from a rather different point of view when he said that[15] "Baptists have probably . . . departed as widely as any from the tradition of their fathers." In 1959 Dr. L. G. Champion

published an article[16] in which he sought to draw his fellow Baptists to a sympathetic consideration of the traditions of other Christian communions than their own. Whilst it is hardly surprising that he rejected the view that such traditions have an authority equal to that of Scripture he nevertheless pleaded that such a denial should not lead his readers "to ignore altogether what is clearly of value". It is clear that whilst he thought the relevant traditions of other Christians should not dominate Baptist decision-making they should be allowed to inform it. Whilst accepting this view it is also surely fair to argue that if such an attitude to the traditions of others is right then such an attitude should at least equally characterise Baptist attitudes to their own tradition.

Indeed Baptists can far less easily ignore their own history, their own heritage, than they can that of other Christians. To slam the door, as it were, upon their yesterday would be, first, to lose their identity and most of their understanding of why they stand where they do and, secondly, to limit all their insights into the Word and the Will of God to the narrow vision of the present generation and even, on some occasions, to that of the local congregation. On the other hand Baptists dare not allow their yesterday to dominate their today for two other reasons: first, because their own past does not speak with one voice; there is, for them, no golden age of an "undivided church" where all the Fathers spoke with a single unanimous voice. The second reason why Baptists cannot allow their past to have the last word is that to do so would be to bolt and bar another door: that against the continuing, contemporary, guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

Whilst the case for using Baptist tradition to inform contemporary decision-making is probably a strong one there are, nevertheless, certain problems about its use which have already been hinted at and now must be examined in rather more detail.

First, there is the problem of the *canon*. Once it is admitted that Baptist tradition does not speak with one united voice the problem of the canon at once arises. It arises because of the frequent unexamined assumption that the true main-stream, orthodox and authoritative Baptist tradition is clearly separable from the remainder of the total Baptist heritage. Such an assumption must surely be resisted by students of Baptist history on two grounds. First, historically, because Baptist history has by no means been sufficiently fully studied and recorded to allow confident pronouncements easily to be made. Secondly, theologically, because Baptists should never forget that they have no central authority able to canonise true tradition and to repudiate the unwise, the undesirable, or the irrelevant aspects of our yesterday. Furthermore, Baptists, of all people, dare not accept the view, without most careful qualification, that, were it possible to establish what most Baptists in most places at most times have thought, that the views of such a majority should be determinative. God does not necessarily speak through majorities, as Baptists, from

their own history, have the best and most painful reasons for knowing.

Secondly, there is the problem posed by the nature of the *tradition*. If the "tradition" be understood as the "*total* heritage of doctrine, practice and institutions" rather than the "*canonised* or selected heritage of doctrine, practice and institutions" which compose the Baptist yesterday difficulties still arise. First, as must be clear to everyone, tradition *may err*. To assert this is to say that whilst the Fathers sincerely believed that they had rightly discerned the Will of God in their situation they could have been mistaken. Secondly, the record of the tradition may err. This, in its turn, means that even if the Fathers were right in their interpretation of the Will of God in their situation either the contemporary records which explain and embalm their tradition may be inadequate or the reconstruction effected by later Baptists (down to and including ourselves) may be fallacious. More also needs to be said about what would constitute an adequate record of the tradition. If today's theological reflection and decision is to be adequately informed by tradition the historian must also have reconstructed the context in which a particular doctrinal emphasis was formulated or a particular decision taken. It is not enough to know "what" happened: it is far more important to know how and why—if only to ensure that the contemporary decision should not be misinformed by a false analogy. Hence the need for much more investigation *in depth* by Baptist historians of their total heritage. Baptist tradition then, like the wider ecumenical tradition, has a part to play in contemporary decision making. Its part is to inform the present about what was believed and done in somewhat similar circumstances yesterday as a guide to decision-making for tomorrow.

Thirdly, there is the problem of deciding the balance between the guidance given by tradition horizontally and the guidance given in the present by the Holy Spirit vertically. This is not in any way made easier because, like the Fathers of our tradition, it is also possible for us to be mistaken in our interpretation of the guidance afforded us by the Spirit. Normally, it seems reasonable to argue, the known tradition of yesterday should carry sufficient weight to ensure that no contemporary decision should be taken which is in conflict with it on major matters without good reason. On the other hand there is one thing upon which both Baptist tradition and the Scriptures insist: there may come a time when, having weighed the demands of the present in the light of the past, Christians may be required by the Holy Spirit to cut loose from their yesterdays. Such radical decisions are, of course, required less often, and must of necessity always prove far less complete, than some revolutionaries may wish to admit. Nonetheless the possibility that this may be demanded must always be taken into account when major decisions are taken.

Such a view of the nature and relevance of Baptist tradition, if accepted, has obviously certain implications for the task of the Baptist historian. First, he must beware of accepting *a priori* judgments

about which is byepath meadow and which is the King's Highway in the manifold Baptist heritage. Secondly, as already mentioned, he will want to reconstruct the Baptist past in depth recording not only what decisions were arrived at but also how and why they were arrived at. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, he must seek always to avoid producing what will appear like a static panorama of the past to his readers and attempt far more a three dimensional reconstruction of ideas and people in tension with the circumstances of their day, moving and developing their share of a continuing debate. Baptist historiography is always in danger of domination by a spirit of historical fundamentalism according to which the past becomes a chunk of dead rock from which anachronistic but superficially relevant proof-texts are chiselled to the required shape.

Such a lack of feeling for an historical situation is demonstrated by the chapter entitled "An approach to Baptist history" in R. G. Torbet's well-known textbook.[17] It is worthwhile to refer to this book specifically because it has already become for many the most readily available first primer on worldwide Baptist history and is most unlikely, in view of the comprehensiveness of its range, to be quickly replaced by a better one volume survey. For the present purpose also of probing the task of a Baptist historian such a chapter in a widely used textbook deserves some examination.

His first paragraph, which serves as an introduction to the whole, unfortunately sets the tone for the chapter. Its final section, which is not only rather misleading and ambiguous but also fundamentally anachronistic, reads,[18] "Baptists historically have stressed the necessity of a Christian experience for church membership, the subordination of organisation to a secondary position, a democratic expression of church life, a single standard of Christian living which is radical in its ethical demands, and the principle of voluntarism in church support as opposed to state support." Leaving on one side the ambiguities implicit in such a phrase as "Baptists historically have stressed" it is worth noting that of the five statements which followed, the first was probably (but not certainly) always true; the second, historically speaking, was almost the exact reverse of the truth; the third was an anachronistic and secularised re-statement of a truth; the fourth would need careful explanation to avoid being dismissed as the product of the imagination of an idealist liberal; the fifth was certainly warmly disputed on this side of the Atlantic during the crucial early years.

The first main section of the chapter was headed, "Theories concerning the origin of Baptists". Three were mentioned: the "successionist" theory, a Baptist distortion of the doctrine of Apostolic Succession; the "Anabaptist spiritual kinship" theory which, as described here, has nothing to say about Baptist origins; finally, he dealt with the view he himself favoured, "the English Separatist descent" theory. This third "theory", it should at once be said, hardly fell into the same category as the others since it was, and is, the only one capable of clear historical demonstration and proof. Furthermore

this proof has been abundantly produced on a number of occasions. The chief remaining question about English Baptist origins is not whether they and their leaders were deeply influenced by the English Separatist tradition but whether any other *additional* influence played a significant part. It would probably have been better to have given some of the evidence for Baptist descent from the Separatists than to include such a dubious claim as Henry Vedder's that[19] "from about the year 1641, at the latest, Baptist doctrine and practice have been the same in all essential features that they are today". A contemporary Baptist historian would surely have been justified in asking, at the very least, just what R. G. Torbet thought Vedder meant by that question-begging phrase "all essential features". But he was apparently content to quote it without explanation.

The next section in this chapter dealt with "Baptists and the Reformation heritage". In the course of it the author spoke of the first English Baptists and their rise from[20] "non-Separatist Independency" in a way which made it quite plain that he did not realise that the closed-communion Particular Baptists also developed from this group and soon become more numerous, more effectively organised and more decisive for the future than those who were, in his phrase, "more ecumenical in spirit". The section ended with a blinding glimpse into the obvious[21]: "Not only had Lutheran and Calvinistic teaching spread from the Continent, but Anabaptist ideas as well. They were part of the heritage of the Reformation which influenced the English Separatists from whom the early English Baptists emerged." Such a sentence falls easily upon the ear and, at first hearing, its emptiness may not, perhaps, strike home. In fact the author would be hard put to it to suggest one feature in the life of the English Separatists which they owed, even in an indirect way, to the Anabaptists. Yet without such features it was rather pointless to speak of the Separatists being "influenced".

A cursory survey of "Anabaptists in England" which was rather more inadequate than the space available made necessary was followed by the last section, "Baptists and the Free Church principle" in which an attempt was made to set out some of their distinctive emphases. This omitted completely to state the fundamental conviction which impelled the early English Baptists and which would be made clear by the briefest reading of some primary source documents. They believed, rightly or wrongly, that there was one divinely given pattern for the church's life in every generation and that that pattern was to be found exemplified by the Apostolic Church as recorded in the New Testament. They further believed that it was an essential part of their obedience to God to reconstruct that apostolic pattern. However much the English Separatist tradition provided the spectacles through which the early Baptists read the New Testament it should never be overlooked that it was to the Scriptures that they sought to go.

One last warning was provided by this chapter for the Baptist

historian. He should seek to avoid the use of such words and phrases, without great care for their meaning, as "origin", "spiritual kinship", "historical connection", "influence", "spiritual descendants", and "the Free Church tradition to which Baptists belong".

Sufficient has been said, perhaps, to suggest that such an approach to Baptist History will not do: it is necessary to rely on secondary sources on occasion, it is also necessary to use them intelligently so that they do not mislead you as well as your readers.

Over the years there have appeared surprisingly few articles in the *Baptist Quarterly* bearing on the task of a denominational historian.

One, many years ago, was provided by Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson from an address he had given to the Congregational Historical Society[22] on "The value of denominational history". This was built around the study of the Churchbook of a London Baptist congregation during the last years of the Seventeenth century and the first years of the Eighteenth. It affords a useful reminder of the need for detailed local studies and it is probable that, in this country, the next big step forward will come from the comparative study of local congregational records.

In his address Dr. Robinson made only passing reference to three uses of denominational history derived from a Churchbook: such studies could correct generalisations which had too easily been accepted, they could make a contribution to the social history of their age and they might provide examples of[23] "the way in which some incident of the past becomes a symbol and apt expression of a permanent truth, like John Robinson's famous word about more light and truth from the Bible".

The values, however, upon which he laid more stress in the study of the records of a single congregation were four. Here, he said, denominational principles, instead of appearing as abstract statements, were embodied in[24] "a picture of real life, with men and women acting under the stress of living convictions". Secondly, he believed that such a study would help the student to discern between the transient and the permanent in denominational practice and convictions. As the once heated controversy over hymnsinging showed, the past[25] "is strewn with the ashes of controversies where the fires of passion once burned fiercely". Thirdly, he saw illustrated in such records as these the ever-present tension between the Holy Spirit and the outward forms with which the Spirit is clothed in the visible church. The record of the past consequences of such tensions should, said Dr. Robinson,[26] "remind us of the need for patience and an open mind as to methods in the tasks of the present". Finally, beyond and beneath all else he saw in such a document as this evidence for[27] "what human nature is, by showing us its actions and reaction under the power of great emotions and intense convictions".

Such was the view of the value of denominational history taken by one of the finest Baptist scholars of the last generation. Throughout it showed the concerns of one who was at once a scholar, a minister

and an ecclesiastical statesman.

About a generation later Principal Gordon Rupp, as he now is, addressed the annual meeting of the Baptist Historical Society on "The importance of denominational history". His contribution, as a distinguished Methodist historian, was very different from that of Dr. Wheeler Robinson. Whilst he valued denominational history he set it against the wider backcloth of the history of the universal Church and spoke of the "mistletoe" and the "oak tree" views of denominational history. The "mistletoe" view, he said,[28] "would dissolve the history of the Church into isolated pockets of purely spiritual religion, to a pedigree picked out rather choosily" from the sectaries in Christian history. The "oak tree" approach would see the Church as "always rooted in earthly and often very earthy history, often nearly submerged by secular pressures, here on earth always wearing . . . ambiguous garments, the form of a servant".

Later he mentioned a weakness he felt in modern Mennonite research into the Anabaptists of the Reformation period when he remarked,[29] "if it is true, as Dr. Payne says, that the Anabaptists produced more martyrs than all the other Protestant bodies, it is also true that they were associated with more genuine fanatics, more really wild men than any other body. . . . One of the sad things about the *Mennonite Encyclopaedia* is the way in which, in one article after another, the eccentricities and aberrations of many of the radicals are toned down".

Characteristically also he warned lest an interest in denominational history should re-open old wounds[30]: "Church history is the Church remembering . . . there are some things that we might all agree to forget and others about which we must be penitent in the presence of God. The rest is a living witness to the communion of saints, the path along which God has led us".

In saying these things Dr. Rupp threw light on the Baptist historian's task even if only negatively: it is not the denominational historian's task to be a partisan, he must always be aware of the greater army marching the same way to the left and right of him; he must resist the temptation to rub the rough edges off history in the interests of a later respectability and he dare not forget that whilst Baptists have often been brave they have even more often been bigoted. It is not the Church historian's task to whitewash anyone, least of all his own side.

More recently still the Master of Balliol, Dr. J. E. C. Hill, gave an address at the Regent's reunion the substance of which later appeared in the *Quarterly*. His subject was "History and denominational history" and, as a modern secular historian with a special interest in puritanism, he emphasised the wider national background in the development of the various denominations.

Having begun by regretting that the principal headache of the Seventeenth century specialist is not "too few documents but too many predecessors" he went on to speak of the confusion caused[31]

" by historians, great historians in some cases, writing the history of their own sect, looking for its origins, and so tending to draw dividing lines more sharply than contemporaries would have done ". Another of his remarks might come as a shock to some modern students of Baptist history for he said,[32] " Before 1662, at earliest, most of those whom we call Presbyterians and Independents, and some of those whom we call Baptists, still believed in a national Church, and their ministers were prepared to accept its livings and its tithes." In short this article was primarily a warning, enforced by a multiplicity of examples, that people in Church history[33] " must be studied as they were, warts and all, in relation to the society in which they lived ".

In short it may fairly be said that the time is long past when an attempt to record Church history without regard to the additional dimensions provided by the political, social and economic historians should invite anything but ridicule. We do no honour to our forefathers by turning a blind eye to nine-tenths of the situation in which they had to work out their obedience to God. But what about that plain, unvarnished tale garnished with some moralising upon the contemporary situation of the denomination found in classic Baptist historiography? One thing should now be entirely plain: whilst the basic ingredients may remain the same, there is a great deal more involved in telling that plain, unvarnished tale adequately than perhaps some of our predecessors ever realised.

NOTES

[1] A. C. Underwood, *A History of the English Baptists*, London, 1947. 7, 9.
[2] See my articles on Crosby in the *Baptist Quarterly*, vol. XXI which provide an account of his life and of the processes through which his *History* passed.
[3] T. Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, London 1738, volume I. 265.
[4] *ibid.*, " To the Reader ".
[5] *ibid.*, 173f.
[6] A. Taylor, *A History of the English General Baptists*, London 1818, volume I, v.
[7] *ibid.*
[8] *ibid.*, volume II, iv.
[9] J. Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, London 1811, volume I, v, vi.
[10] *ibid.*, volume II (1814), x.
[11] *ibid.*, volume III (1823), vii.
[12] *ibid.*, volume IV (1830), iv-vii.
[13] The authors of *Liberty in the Lord*, 1964, suggest (29) that Dr. E. A. Payne has done this in *The Fellowship of Believers*, and show signs of the same fault. Selectivity, without clearly defined criteria, is inevitable in the present state of our knowledge.
[14] A. Dakin, *The Baptist view of the Church and Ministry*, London 1944, 19.
[15] E. A. Payne, *The Fellowship of Believers*, London. Revised Edition 1952, 12.
[16] L. G. Champion, " The Baptist doctrine of the Church in relation to Scripture, Tradition and the Holy Spirit ", *Foundations*, volume II, 1959.
[17] R. G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, Valley Forge USA (Revised Edition 1963).

(*Concluded on p.* 428)