

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](https://paypal.me/robbradshaw)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

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

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

Reviews

Elizabeth and the English Reformation, by William P. Haugaard.
Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. 1968. 392 pp. 80/-.

This important new book provides a fresh scholarly approach to the earliest years of the Elizabethan settlement of religion and finds its main centre of interest in the Canterbury Convocation of 1563. One effect of this series of meetings was to show, beyond any shadow of doubt, that the bishops, some of whom had themselves been quite radical reformers as recently as 1558 or 1559, would now normally side with the Queen's conservative policies and not with those of the more belligerently protestant lower clergy. At the convocation the militants sought three things: the purging of the remnants of Romish ceremonial from the worship of the English Church, the more adequate discipline of that Church's members and ministers and a more ample and more adequate exposition of their doctrinal position. The only practical result was the production of the Thirty-Nine Articles which were hardly likely to satisfy any extremists on either wing.

How had this all come about? Dr. Haugaard does not probe particularly deeply into motives and tends to give bishops the benefit of the doubt even when there is very little doubt possible about either their methods or their motives. What he does bring out, following the trend of some recent work of Elizabethan church policy, is the Queen's personal interest and concern for the policy pursued. When she chose her bishops and had to choose them from the Reformers she tended to choose the more cautious and these, devoted to her, concerned for national unity and, sometimes, no doubt, animated by the other pressures which act upon men in power who wish to remain there, tended to become more conservative too. The author argues, and seems to argue successfully, for the consistency of the Queen's religious policy during the early years of her reign and for her personal activity in its support. Indeed, he maintains that her own personal and preferred position stood close to that reflected by the Book of Common Prayer published in 1549.

Dr. Haugaard's work is greatly indebted, as he himself recognizes all studies of this period must be, to Sir John Neale's classic study of *Elizabeth and her Parliaments*, but he does not hesitate to correct that study where his special knowledge makes it possible. Nor is he unwilling to enter controversy with other scholars: for example, he claims that the 'limited available evidence' of Elizabeth's management of church revenues (p. 159) does not bear out Dr. J. E. C.

Hill's charge that the Queen was her Church's 'supreme plunderer.'

Whether or not all the author's detailed suggestions will be confirmed upon further scholarly examination there can be no doubt that every student of the period will be grateful to him for drawing attention to the significance of the Convocation of 1563 and to the indications which its scanty records provide that the main lines of radical criticism of the Elizabethan settlement were already drawn. Finally it must be said that all those interested in the roots of puritanism and separatism this book is an important contribution to a subject of almost inexhaustible interest.

B. R. WHITE.

The Believers' Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism, by Donald F. Durnbaugh. London and New York, the Macmillan Company, 1968. xii + 315pp. \$7.95.

As the sub-title indicates this is an ambitious book. Borrowing the term 'Believers' Church' from Max Weber and under the inspiration of two American study-conferences and the writings of Professor Franklin Littell and the late Gunnar Westin, the author—Professor of Church History at Bethany Theological Seminary, Oak Brook Illinois here offers brief connected descriptions of groups of Christians from the later Middle Ages to the present day who have sought a "community of personal believers of the reborn, and only these." In a relatively brief first part this concept is discussed. The historical narrative occupies 170 pages. The third part of 100 pages deals with the major emphases and common characteristics of the Churches and groups portrayed.

Professor Durnbaugh belongs to the Church of the Brethren, an American denomination springing early in the 18th century from a group of emigrants from the Palatinate. They were clearly influenced by Anabaptists and Mennonites. It would be interesting to discover whether there were any individual or family connections with the several parties who went to the Palatinate from England in the 1660's with the help of Thomas Tillam and Christopher Pooley. To the best of my knowledge the fate of this considerable exodus to the Continent from eastern England has never been investigated. The 'Brethren,' as they called themselves, were known in some circles as the 'New Baptists.' They have survived several splits and now number over 215,000 members. They belong to the World Council of Churches. Those who know anything of the relief work they have undertaken since World War II will rejoice to see that this volume is dedicated to 'M. R. Zigler, churchman and prophet.' Some years ago Professor Durnbaugh edited a book for the Brethren on their European origins. That from this and other Churches of similar character scholarly contributions to theology, ecclesiology and history

are now appearing and that they emphasize the ecumenical interest of these communities is much to be welcomed.

To say that this book does not entirely fulfil its promise is no condemnation. The task was a difficult one. The succession it traces and tries to unify begins with the Waldenses and the followers of Peter Chelcicky (the Baptists of Czechoslovakia at one time cherished and used the name of this 15th century leader, though this is not here mentioned). There are then some thirty pages on the Radical Reformers of the 16th century, which owe a good deal to Professor George Hunston Williams and Mennonite scholars. Thereafter one moves rapidly by way of the Baptists and Quakers, to the Brethren, the Methodists, the Disciples and the Plymouth Brethren and finally to a chapter on 'Contemporary Expressions,' which includes references to the German Confessing Church, the Church of the Saviour in Washington, the East Harlem Protestant Parish and what are called 'underground churches' within Roman Catholicism.

Inevitably the result is something of a rag-bag, at times rather superficial in treatment and with a number of inaccuracies. Primary sources easily accessible are too often quoted at second-hand. To some extent the author disarms criticism by admitting he might have chosen other instances for his purpose and that he has aimed at "a course between Littell's book with its topical treatment and Westin's with its narrative coverage." But any reprinting should correct errors like the following. "The Glorious Revolution of 1689 . . . restored the Church of England to power;" the dating of the Free Church Federal Council in 1896; an unfortunate mistake of a century on page 95; the ascription to Joseph Butler of a work called the *Apology*; a confusion of the two Baptist Rylands; the mis-spelling of Cradock and J. R. Green; and the suggestion that the Evangelical Alliance was "the creation of free churches on the Continent and their opposite numbers among the Nonconformists in Great Britain" (Sir Culling Eardley, Edward Bickersteth, the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird and others would have repudiated this as vigorously as would Bishop Knox and many later Anglicans).

Some sentences from Luther's 1526 preface to his vernacular Mass provide the main points which, Professor Durnbaugh urges, characterize the succession he has in mind: voluntary membership, rejection of a 'mixed assembly' and state control, mutual discipline with a high standard, mutual aid and, in regard to church practices, "neither complete formalism nor complete spontaneity," and submission to "the Word given in the Scriptures and apprehended through the Holy Spirit." Luther later moved in other directions. It cannot be claimed that those referred to in this book have been true always to these principles.

Exasperation and admiration are the feelings of any rate one reader on finishing this interesting book.

Protest and Politics edited by Richard G. Clouse, Robert D. Linder and Richard V. Pierard. Greenwood, S. Carolina. The Attic Press Inc. 1968. pp. 271. \$5.95.

This is a symposium of eleven essays on aspects of Christian responsibility in contemporary affairs, all written by American students of society with special reference to the American scene. The editors are younger lay scholars: Clouse and Pierard are associate professors of history at Indiana State University and Linder holds a similar post in Kansas.

It is interesting and somewhat comforting to find first, that many of the social and international problems which exercise the minds and consciences of thoughtful Christians in this country are the same as those perplexing American Churches: the role of the church in a welfare community, world population explosion, the Israeli-Arab conflict, the continuing bloodshed in Vietnam which one essay roundly condemns, the Christian/Communist dialogue, the future of public (English translation, "private") school education and how Christians can exert political influence. In one sense it is equally reassuring, though in another disquieting, to discover the same measure of embarrassed disagreement among and within denominations on almost every conceivable issue in American society as in our own. The choices that Churches and governments are required to make are not clear ones between absolute right and wrong, and further, all the consequences of the choices that are made cannot be fully discerned. The alleviation of one social need seems to aggravate or breed another. As in Britain denominational allegiance is in no way reflected in party political sentiment, and indeed in many of the areas of public life in which Christians are called to share in responsible decision making there are no distinctively denominational contributions to be made.

Some British readers may feel that frequent biblical references and rather "churchy" language tend to cloud rather than clarify the argument, yet there is a refreshing candour throughout, and all the issues chosen for discussion are urgent and real. The introduction rightly makes the point that "although a large number of religious activists have been identified with ecclesiastical bodies that are basically theologically liberal in nature, the interest in political and social problems by people associated with the 'evangelical' wing of Protestant Christianity has not been conspicuous." This symposium should help to enrich the important contribution evangelicals have to make in this field.

J. E. T. HOUGH