

THE JOURNAL
of the
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY
(incorporating the Congregational Historical Society, founded in
1899, and the Presbyterian Historical Society of England,
founded in 1913).

EDITOR: Dr. CLYDE BINFIELD, M.A., F.S.A.

Volume 4 No. 4 June 1989

CONTENTS

Editorial and Notes
“*The Sun-Shine of Liberty*”: The Toleration Act and the Ministry.
by *Geoffrey F. Nuttall M.A., D.D.*,
The Dutch Influence on English Toleration
by *K.H.D. Haley M.A., B. Litt., F.B.A.*
Toleration Postponed: Attacks on Religious Freedom in late
Seventeenth-Century Europe
by *Linda M. Kirk B.A., Ph.D.*
Reviews by *R. Buick Knox, W.R. Ward, Deryck W. Lovegrove, Stephen Mayor*
.....
Some Contemporaries
by *Alan P.F. Sell M.A., B.D., Ph.D.*

EDITORIAL AND NOTES

The three articles in this issue are concerned with the Toleration Act of 1689 and its context. Those who seek denominational continuities will find what they need, although never quite as they might expect, in Dr. Nuttall’s “*The Sun-Shine of Liberty*”. Professor Haley’s account of the Dutch context for English toleration is a recasting of what we thought we knew and will serve most readers as discovery rather than rediscovery. Dr. Kirk extends the context to Bourbon and Habsburg Europe and beyond. The Tercentenary of 1688 proved to have embarrassed most bodies other than the National Trust (and this *Journal* did not refer directly to it). The Tercentenary of 1689 passes similarly unremarked. Professor Haley, Dr. Kirk and Dr. Nuttall remind us that chief among the historian’s roles is stewardship. Commemoration is stewardship. A generation which thrills to conviction politics - and which finds it hard to cope with *Satanic Verses* - needs to commemorate toleration.

Of our contributors, Professor Haley and Professor Ward (both Methodists) formerly held the Chairs of Modern History at Sheffield and Durham respectively. Dr. Kirk (an Anglican) and Dr. Lovegrove (a Baptist) lecture at the Universities of Sheffield and St. Andrews respectively.

Notes. The United Reformed Church History Society’s 1988 Study Weekend took place between 2nd and 4th September at Hengrave Hall, Suffolk. Chapels

were visited in Bury St. Edmunds, Clare, Cavendish, Walpole, Haverhill and Debenham. Papers were given on subjects which ranged from P.T. Forsyth to women ministers; from popular religion in the seventeenth century to Regent Square in Edward Irving's day; from the architecture of Suffolk's Dissent to "Continuity and Controversy; from Calvin and Sadoletto to Vatican II". The Society's Annual Lecture, by Dr. Margaret Spufford of Newnham College, Cambridge, was encased by such habitual lecturers for the society as Mr. Stell, Dr. Binfield, Dr. Buick Knox, Dr. Francis and Mr. Wollaston. The weekend was memorably captured and transformed by worship at Wickhambrook when Dr. Orchard preached from *Revelation*.

Walpole Old Chapel was among those visited by the Society. Although there is no longer regular worship at the chapel, and a church no longer meets there, its restoration demonstrates the difference between conservation and preservation. For life is breathed into the building by the determination of some of its neighbours and friends. 1988 saw a season of Summer Music at Walpole and there are plans to celebrate the building's tercentenary in 1989 with concerts, recitals and events fortnightly from 9 July to 24 September with tercentenary services on the weekend of 19/20 August. There is to be a performance of Purcell's Ode of 1689 to Queen Mary and it is hoped that a new work will be commissioned from a young composer on a theme of tolerance (religious, individual, political).

Those who do not know the building will find that from the outside it might pass as a Suffolk yeoman's house of c. 1600. But inside there is a "remarkable presence: box pews, the original galleries on three sides, a canopied double pulpit between two tall round-headed windows which overlook the Blyth valley". Those who discover it by going to its Summer Music will be supporting its restoration. They will also be restoring activity to a building which was intended for communal use. They will be helping "good young musicians at the start of their careers" and they will enjoy programmes which will be "interesting, stimulating, even surprising".

Information can be obtained from David Holmes, 5 Salters Lane, Walpole, Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 9BA [Bramfield (098 684) 412]. Please enclose a stamped and addressed envelope with any correspondence.

The Chapels Society. On 24 September 1988, spurred by the example of *Capel*, inspired by the determination of Christopher Stell, lately of the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, and fostered by the Council for British Archaeology, a society was formed for the promotion of public knowledge of the architectural and historical importance of chapels, meeting houses, and other non-Anglican places of worship. At the moment it is called *The Chapels Society*. Its threefold aim is to promote the survival of such buildings, to advise and assist their trustees and congregations, and to promote and publish original research.

The inaugural meeting was held at the Institute of Archaeology, Gordon Square, London. It was chaired by Alan Beith M.P., and it was addressed by Matthew Saunders (Secretary of the Ancient Monuments Society), Christopher

Stell, and Clyde Binfield.

Membership is £5 and further details may be obtained from Dr. Richard Morris, Council for British Archaeology, Northern Office, The King's Manor, York, YO1 2EP [0904.433925].

**“THE SUN-SHINE OF LIBERTY”:
THE TOLERATION ACT AND THE MINISTRY**

The first thing to say of the Toleration Act of 1689 is that it was a relief: a great, indeed an immeasurable relief. For not far short of thirty years the Protestant Dissenters and especially their ministers had laboured under every kind of vexation, frustration and restraint. With the passage of history the years close up: one generation passeth away, and another cometh; but at the same time they can seem long, and in the middle years of life a generation is a lifetime.

Philip Henry was ordained to his curacy at Worthenbury, in the detached portion of Flintshire, when he was 26: “Mee thoughts I saw much of God in the carrying on of the work of this day,” he wrote in his diary; “O how Good is the lord, hee is Good and hee doth Good”. In 1660-1 he was presented at the assizes for not reading the Common Prayer, received a prohibition and then his dismissal from the Bishop of Bangor, and preached a farewell sermon to his people. He was still only 30. By 1689 he was 58; only seven years yet remained to him. Nevertheless, such as it was, the Toleration Act came like life from the dead.

He had good reason for observing the date when the Act received the Royal Assent, as he had had for observing the date of the Act of Uniformity and its wording; for the date was not only the same in both cases, 24 May, it was also his own birthday; there had long been a double anniversary to keep. In 1663 “This day thirty-two yeares I was born, this day twelve-month I dyed”; in 1669 “now 7 yeares past, a full Apprenticeship of restraynt. lord, in thy time hasten our freedom”; in 1670 “The black day of min^{rs} restraynt, now eight yeares, how long lord!”; in 1682 “now twenty yeares since wee have been lamenting after y^e lord, in the want of publike liberty to preach X^{is} everlasting Gosp.”; and so on. But now, in 1689:

The condition of many ministers and people...hath been, in outward appearance, a dead condition. The words of the Act [of Uniformity] are, that they shall be as if naturally dead; but, blessed be God, there hath been a resurrection in some measure, a coming out of the grave again, of which, whoever was the instrument, the Lord Jesus himself hath been the

principal Agent.¹

It was still only “a resurrection in some measure”, to follow Henry in his use of a word beloved by Dissenters, who had learned not to be prone to hyperbole. “The new Act of Indulgence”, he wrote to his son Matthew on 1 June, reminded him of his schooldays at Westminster, when “wee us’d to say, when a whole play-day was expected & wee could have but an afternoon, est aliquid prodire tenus, si non datur ultra...til the Sacramental Test bee taken off, our Business is not done”. The old campaigner will often regard acceptance of what is on offer as a betrayal of standards; and experience had not taught Henry to be sanguine; nor had Scripture. Of James II’s recent Declaration of Indulgence “he used to observe, that the fall of Babylon followed upon the free and open preaching of the everlasting gospel, Revelation xiv. 6,7”, and he “could not choose but rejoice with trembling”, for “he apprehended this liberty likely to be of very short continuance, and to end in trouble”; and when William of Orange landed, “it was not without some Fear and Trembling” that “he received the Tidings”, “as being somewhat in the Dark concerning the Clearness of his Call, and dreading what might be the consequence of it”. By temperament not far from a sort of Dissenting Non-Juror, Henry was drawn by events into becoming something of a Vicar of Bray, first joining the local clergy in an Address of thanks to James II and then, when “a regular Course was taken to fill the Throne” with a new occupant, celebrating “the National Thanksgiving...with an excellent Sermon”. Whatever else he was, Henry was a Presbyterian: of the 1672 Declaration of Indulgence he wrote uncomfortably, “wee are put hereby to a Trilemma either to turn flat Independents, or to strike in with y^e conformists, or to sit down in former silence & sufferings, till the lord shall open a more effectual door”; though this did not prevent him from accepting a licence under the Declaration when, “unsought and unexpected”, it came.² So now in 1689 he would have preferred Comprehension within the Church of England to Indulgence outside it. He was also not happy with the Act’s requirement that ministers should subscribe most of the Articles: he thought them “in some th. Doubtful in many th. Defective”. “The 3. 8. & 16. have someth. in y^m which without a candid construction would somewhat scruple me”, he wrote to his son Matthew on 12 July; “so would the Bible its[elf]”, he added, “strictly taken & in the latter, in

-
1. *Diaries and Letters of Philip Henry*, ed. M.H. Lee, 1882 [hereafter *Diaries*], pp.39, 145, 216, 230, 316; Matthew Henry, *Life of...Philip Henry*, ed. J.B. Williams, 1825, Banner of Truth reprint 1974 [hereafter *Life*], p. 189. Each of these works contains much not in the other; passages common to both are printed more correctly in the former but are sometimes fuller in the latter. When on 24 August 1695 Henry made his will, he still recalled the date as that on which he was born and also, “by law”, died *Life*, p.340.
 2. *Diaries*, p.362; *Life*, p.171; *Diaries*, p.327; *Life*, p.171; *Dairies*, pp.327-9, 358, 250-1.

those places which seem contradictory”³

Oliver Heywood, the ejected Curate of Coley in the parish of Halifax, was perhaps better informed about events. The record he drew up of “the wonderful year”, “when all of a sudden a bright sun appeared out of the East, I mean the Prince of Orange” and “the whole face of things changed next to a miracle”, is a reminder that the Act of Toleration was but part of a wider revolution.

There have been of late the strangest appearances of divine providence in publick affaires as I think England ever saw in so short a time, for in the months Sept, Oct AD 1688 there was such a doleful prospect of affaires in the nation as astonisht all considering persons...all faces gathered blackness a dreadful consternation seized on the nation...though dissenters had liberty, yet we know it was not out of loue for us, but for another end, for we heard the K say he was forced to grant liberty for present to those that his soul abhored...

Then the P of O was coming agt him, no body could believe it but it proved true, we knew not wt it meant were the more startled, the prayers of gods people were awaked to great crys... Behold the P of Orange comes into Engl at Exmouth, Dartmouth in the west on Nov 5 1688...the K flys to London, to Rochester, leaves England...On Dec 30 88 the Pr comes to London...A Parliament chosen through the kingdom (at York Jan 14) to sit down Jan 22 Oh see wt god hath done in answer to prayer - this is Jan 15 1688 [9] Soli deo gloria.

Although eighteen months older than Henry, and ordained five years earlier, Oliver Heywood survived Henry by six years; but his ministry, which for him was his life, had been similarly maimed. In 1661 he was cited into the ecclesiastical court at York, and on 29 June 1662 “they have suspended me from the execution of mine office (as they say) tho they hold I am not in office, because I want their episcopal ordination”; excommunication followed later that year. He too suffered fines and imprisonment. Like Henry he kept a fast on “black Bartholomew-day”, “that fatal day” when he received “this fatal blow” to his liberty, “the killing day for al the nonconformist ministers”, when “we were all struck dead by that sad uniformity act”. Over the earlier Declarations of Indulgence he was more hopeful than Henry. In 1687 “good hath strangely bowed the heart of K James 2,” he wrote, “to favour us, and proclaim liberty to all prisoners, and take off fines for meetings”; “surely some-body hath laid hard siege at the throne of grace”. Earlier, the 1672 Declaration happened to coincide with his “restauration to my ancient habitation (after 12 yeares absence perforce)” and “I am apt to think there is something of god in it more than ordinary”. He was encouraged by reading Jeremiah xxxii, “that chapter of Jeremiahs purchase” -- “oh that we could groundedly say that this my purchase is a type of ministers restauration to a settlement in their respective places!...in

3. *Diaries*, pp.370, 384.

due time the lord will answer Amen. this writ March 6, 167½".⁴

The Act of Toleration was thus the fulfilment of much hoping against hope, a fulfilment so long delayed that, when it came, it hardly seemed credible. No one expressed this more movingly than John Flavell, who had been born in the same year as Heywood and ordained in 1650, and who in 1662 had been ejected from a Lectureship at Dartmouth. In June 1691, looking back over "the sad and silent Years that are past", he composed a sermon for delivery to an Assembly of his brethren. "This is the Day I have often wished for," he told them:

Multitudes of Faithful and Prudent Ministers have been swept into their Graves by Ejections, Banishments, Imprisonments, and Heart-breaking Silences... Many thought the Days of our Prosperity, and Opportunities of our Service, had been numbered and finished; and that God had no more Work (except Suffering-Work) for us.

I look upon you that are Aged Ministers, as seasoned Timber, that hath lain out near Thirty Years in the Weather, yet neither warped, rained, nor rotten. I confess in all that time, the Sun hath not much tried the force of his Influence upon us, tho' the Storms have. I suspect our greatest danger will be in the Sun-shine of Liberty.

For Flavell the unaccustomed sunshine was more than he could bear. On 23-4 June he had "presided as Moderator in an Assembly of the Nonconformist Ministers of Devonshire"; they were concerned with "an Union betwixt the Presbyterians and Independents, which Mr. Flavell was very Zealous to promote", and had "unanimously Voted him into the Chair". They "cheerfully and heartily" assented to "the Heads of Agreement consented to this year by the United Brethren in & about London", and asked Flavell to write to three ministers in London, Matthew Mead, John Howe, and Increase Mather, to tell them so, and to thank them for their pains. On 26 June Flavell wrote, or began to write, the letter to Mead, but it was too much for him: "that same Day...he died", "its said of a transport of joy". The sermon he had intended for the "United Brethren of Gloucester, Dorset, Somerset and Devonshire" at their General Meeting at Taunton in the following September was never delivered.⁵

-
4. Heywood was also encouraged by being presented by a friend at Christmas 1671 with the largest of three fresh red roses: "she presaged a spring of the gospel therefrom"; like Heywood in learning from Jeremiah (i.11), she "imagined those 3 roses to be yeares of liberty wch came to pass". Oliver Heywood, *Autobiography Diaries*, ed. J.H. Turner, Brighthouse 1882-5 [hereafter *Heywood*], iii.227, 234-5, iv.133-4; i.179-82; i.187, 190, 198, 271-2, ii.41, iii.162, 214; iv.124, iii.227; ii.182-4, 180.
 5. John Flavell, *Whole Works*, 1716, ii.749, 741, 750; "Life", ad fin., in vol.i; "rained" is Somerset and Devon dialect for "split" (by the sun). *The Exeter Assembly, the minutes of the assemblies of the United Brethren of Devon and Cornwall, 1691-1717*, ed. A. Brockett (Devon & Cornwall Record Soc., n.s., vi), Torquay 1693, p.4; Heywood, ii.179, records that Flavell's letter was to Mead.

To write to Mead and Howe was a matter of course. The *Heads of Agreement* were “largely Howe’s work”, and it was Mead who preached the sermon *Two Sticks made One* when on 6 April 1691 they were adopted. A close association between the two men had begun when in 1686-7 they were in exile together in Utrecht. Mead had been earlier in the Netherlands, where his repute was such that, when in 1674 a meeting-house was opened for him in Stepney, the pillars supporting the roof were presented by the States of Holland. While Howe was in the Netherlands the “Prince of Orange did him the Honour to admit him several times into his presence, and discours’d with him with great Freedom. And...ever after retain’d a particular Respect for him”; and when on 2 January 1689 about a hundred Dissenting ministers presented the Prince with an address of welcome, Howe was at their head. This is the clue to the inclusion of Mather’s name here. Mather supported the “Happy Union”, but strictly speaking he was not a London minister; at this time he was in London as the accredited agent of Massachusetts, and on 9 January 1691 he had the first of a number of audiences with the Prince. What these men had was the ear of the new King. During this month of June Howe had an audience on the subject of Comprehension, and the King could see no reason why ordination by presbyters should not be permitted in the Church of England. Such a “Dutch-Dissenting victory” was not gained; but “the new King’s sympathies with the Dissenters were known”: “if William had done nothing else, he had forced through the Indulgence Bill, better known as the Toleration Act”. When the Dissenting ministers preached thanksgiving sermons on William’s account, it was for more than deliverance from popery. Had it not been for the King the Devon ministers would not have been holding their meeting.⁶

It is touching to see how, with as little delay as might be, these aged ministers (“Not one amongst a thousand liue to this age”, Heywood wrote in his diary on his sixtieth birthday in 1690)⁷ set about reconstituting the institutions they remembered from happier days. From the fulness of preservation of its minutes⁸ and from the fact that in shadowy fashion it still exists, the Exeter Assembly (as

-
6. *D.N.B.*, s.vv. Howe, Mead and Mather; the *Heads of Agreement* (1691) were reprinted in *Cheshire Classis Minutes 1691-1745*, ed. A. Gordon, 1919, pp.111-17, and in Congregational Historical Society *Transactions* [hereafter *C.H.S.T.*], viii.38-43. G.F. Nuttall, “English Dissenters in the Netherlands 1640-1689”, in *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, lix.37-54; R. Thomas, “Comprehension and Indulgence”, in *From Uniformity to Unity 1662-1962*, ed. G.F. Nuttall and Owen Chadwick, 1962, pp.247-53. “None declared more emphatically...for the elevation of the Prince of Orange to the throne” (*D.N.B.*) than Lord Wharton; it was on Wharton’s invitation that Howe had gone abroad in 1686, and it was Wharton who now introduced Mather to the Prince.
7. *Heywood*, iii.239.
8. cf. note 5 above.

it came to be called), over which Flavell had been presiding, is perhaps the best known; but it was not the first. At its first meeting, held at Tiverton in March 1691, "Delegates from the Western Division of Somerset" were present, and in Somerset initiatives for Association had begun eighteen months earlier, soon after the passing of the Toleration Act. During 1691 other Associations arose in quick succession in Hampshire, Gloucestershire, Lancashire, the West Riding of Yorkshire, where Heywood was the prime mover, and Cheshire, where in May 1691 "it was unanimously desir'd" that at the next meeting, at Chester in August, Philip Henry would "come and give us a sermon...But it pleas'd God in the mean time viz. June 24. 1696 to put out that burning and shining light by Death".⁹ Other Associations met in Cumberland, in Wiltshire, in Dorset, and probably elsewhere; while operating mainly on the Western side of the country, it was a national movement. The Associations were furthermore in touch with one another: the leaders corresponded, articles drawn up in one Association might be copied or adopted in the minutes of others, members of one Association could attend meetings of another.¹⁰

This contact and flexibility itself reflects the sense of liberation brought about by the Act of Toleration. It may also owe something to the fact that Congregational members were admitted to membership (several of the leaders, including Flavell, were Congregational), and perhaps more to the Associations' models; for these were not the geographically restricted Classes, with lay participation, established from above by Parliament forty years earlier but the Voluntary Associations of ministers only, which during the 1650s had sprung up independently and spread to many parts of the country. Henry, Heywood and Flavell had each been ordained by a Classis, in Shropshire, Lancashire and Wiltshire respectively;¹¹ but none of them had been a member of a Classis, for in

-
9. *Cheshire Classis Minutes*, p.21 (the term Classis was a misnomer for what was in fact an Association: see Gordon in *D.N.B.* s.v. A. Martindale); the Heads of Agreement were signed in Cheshire in May (*ib.*, pp.5-6) and in the West Riding in September (Joseph Hunter, *The Rise of the Old Dissent*, 1842, pp.374-5).
 10. For further discussion, see my "Assembly and Association in Dissent, 1689-1831", in *Councils and Assemblies*, ed. G. Cuming and D. Baker (Studies in Church History, 7), Cambridge 1971, pp.289-303.
 11. Henry was ordained by the Shropshire Fourth Classis at Prees, on 16 September 1657; Heywood by the Lancashire Second at Bury on 4 August 1652; Flavell by the Wiltshire First at Salisbury on 17 October 1650.

the counties where they ministered no Classis existed;¹² Henry had been a member of an Association in North Wales, which sometimes met at his house, and Flavell of the Devon Association (Second Division).¹³ Almost all the Exeter Assembly's "Rules for regulating our Meetings" were, in whole or in part, identical with those of the earlier Devon Association.

In Isaac Noble of Bristol, who was in correspondence with leaders in several parts of the country, the Somerset Association had a similar background. Noble was too young to remember the 1650s; but he was a native of Greystoke in Cumberland and had grown up under the inspiration of Richard Gilpin, whom his father John Noble (d. 1708) had served as a deacon; and Gilpin (d. 1700) had founded the Cumberland and Westmorland Association, the pioneer of the earlier Associations, as the Somerset Association was of the later.¹⁴

Like many of the Classes,¹⁵ some of these earlier Associations had engaged in

12. The assumption by T. Richards, *Religious Developments in Wales (1654-1662)*, 1923, p.164, that Henry was a member of the Shropshire Fourth Classis "by a process of co-optation" rests on no evidence and is inherently unlikely; the attribution of the classical system to the West Riding by W.A. Shaw, *History of the English Church...1640-1660*, 1900, ii.340, rests on the ordination of Nathan Denton in 1659 "by the Presbytery of the West-Riding" (Calamy), which A. Gordon, *Freedom after Ejection*, Manchester 1917, p.252, also treats as a classical ordination but, in the absence of other evidence, is more likely to have been by an *ad hoc* gathering of ministers; and to Devon by Shaw, ii.374, 447, on the ordination of Edmund Tucker on 24 May 1654, which was in fact by the London Fourth Classis.
13. *Life*, pp.53-5; Shaw, ii.449.
14. For John Noble as Gilpin's deacon, see *D.N.B.*, s.v. Gilpin; for Isaac Noble's parentage, see *Freedom after Ejection*, p.319, from Greystoke's parish register. Gilpin and Isaac Noble, again, were Congregational.
15. For ordination by Classes, see W.A. Shaw in Chetham Soc., n.s., 20, 22, 24, 36, 41 (1890-1, 1896-8) and C.E. Surman in *C.H.S.T.*, xv-xvi (1948-9), Harleian Soc., Register section, 82-3 (1953) and Unitarian Historical Soc. *Transactions*, x (1954), with further refs. For examples of ordination certificates, see Edmund Calamy, *Account*, pp.190-1 (Derbyshire First), 387 (London Sixth), 506 (Newcastle upon Tyne); id., *Continuation*, pp.82-3 (Lancashire Fourth), B. Dale, *Yorkshire Puritanism and Early Nonconformity*, Bradford [1910], pp.88-9 (Adel); *Life*, pp.36-7 (Shropshire Fourth, which ordained 63 ministers: p.30); A. Brockett, *Nonconformity in Exeter, 1650-1875*, Manchester 1962, app. C 1 a, p.240 (Wiltshire First).

ordaining other ministers:¹⁶ each of the Devon Association's four Divisions had done so, for instance; there was therefore good precedent. But quite apart from tradition, by 1689 the matter was urgent -- at least for Presbyterians. Congregational (and Baptist) churches were less under pressure, insofar as for them ordination was to a pastorate and tended to be a local and relatively quiet occasion, open to attack but no more so than any other occasion of worship;¹⁷ but Presbyterians were unhappy with the privacy and restricted character of such sectarian ordination. Also, because of the hope to which they clung of eventual comprehension within the Church of England, Presbyterians refrained so long as possible from engaging in schismatic ordination outside it. If they refrained much longer, however, the ministry would die out, and their churches with it.

They had not refrained altogether. From time to time a group of ministers had ventured on an ordination, though with no Classis or Association to authorize them. An ordination in Manchester in 1672, following the first Declaration of Indulgence, is sometimes described as the first after 1662. It was in fact only the first in the North: as many as five ministers, of whom Heywood was one, took part, but the service was held in private, in the house of one of them in Deansgate, for which he had taken out a license for worship; nor did the service do more than regularize the position of three younger men who had all suffered in one way or another in 1660-2 but at that time were not yet ordained.¹⁸ The same may be said of an ordination, also in 1672, in which Flavell and three other ministers took part,¹⁹ and of another held "privately" in Plymouth two years earlier in which six ministers were involved.²⁰ What appears to have been the first Presbyterian ordination after 1662 took place in Exeter in 1666, after a native of the city, George Trosse, had been urged by one of the ministers there, Robert Atkins, to seek ordination. At this time the other ministers in Devon were apparently unwilling to act, but eventually Trosse was ordained by Atkins, Joseph Alleine of Taunton and another Somerset minister, Ames Short of Lyme Regis and another Dorset minister, and one from London. Even so, on the

-
16. For Associations which ordained, see lists in *From Uniformity to Unity*, p.172, n.5, to which should be added Somerset and perhaps Dorset: for these, see John Norman, *Christ's Commission-Officer* (1656) and John Chetwind, *The Watch Charged* (1659); and W. Densham and J. Ogle, *Story of the Congregational Churches of Dorset*, 1899, pp.5-6, from Beaminister Poor Book. For examples of ordination certificates, see Calamy, *Continuation*, pp.228-9 (Cumberland), 343 (Devon, First Division).
 17. For ordination in Congregational churches, see *Christian Witness and Congregational Magazine*, 1869, 568-73, 615-16; 1870, 384-54; and my *Visible Saints: the Congregational Way 1640-1660*, Oxford 1957, ch.II.
 18. *Heywood*, iii.115-16.
 19. *Calamy Revised*, ed. A.G. Matthews, Oxford 1934, s.v. T. Palke.
 20. Calamy, *Account*, p.235.

certificate they issued they took care not to say that they had ordained Trosse but only that "upon our certain knowledge" he had been ordained.²¹ Likewise much later on, when on 24 December 1679 John Shower was ordained in London by five ministers in the city, "it was done privately", and the certificate was "in cautious and general terms" ("ordained minister of the gospel in our presence") "and without any place being mentioned".²²

During the 1680s, and especially in 1687, after James II's Declaration of Indulgence, Presbyterian ordinations became more frequent, though there were never many. On 18 May 1687 Robert Atkins's son Samuel and another young man were ordained by Trosse and two other Exeter ministers.²³ On 25 August eight ministers were ordained at "a Publick Meeting" in Lyme Regis by Ames Short and another Dorset minister, one from Devon and one from Somerset.²⁴ But the most notable, as well as the best documented, of the 1687 services, the ordination on 9 May of Philip Henry's son Matthew in London, by Richard Steele (who thirty years earlier had taken part in Philip Henry's own ordination) and five other ministers, was still held in private in Steele's house in Bartholomew Close, Smithfield, and some of the ministers are described as "very aged, and very cautious": as in the case of Trosse they would not do more than certify that they were "well assured" that Matthew Henry was "an ordained minister of the gospel". Only in 1702 did Henry prevail on the two of them then still alive to provide him with a fuller certificate which included the statement that the original certificate "was drawn up so short and so general, because of the difficulty of the times".²⁵ The case was the same when Joseph Hussey was ordained in London by Samuel Annesley and five other ministers. The service was held in Annesley's house, "in an upper chamber, Octob. 26th., 1688, even while the Prince of Orange, afterwards King William, was under sail for England", and once again Annesley and four of the ministers merely testified of Hussey that "upon our personal knowledge he is an ordained minister of the gospel": "the sixth man", Hussey writes, would not even go so far as this; he "was shy, because of the cloudiness of the times, and would neither subscribe nor be known to me".²⁶

-
21. For the certificate, see *Exeter Assembly*, p.130; for Trosse, see *D.N.B.* and the fine edition (1974) by A.W. Brink of his posthumous autobiography (1714).
 22. Walter Wilson, *History...of Dissenting Churches...in London*, 1808-14, ii.310, with certificate in note H; for Shower, who was in Utrecht with Howe and Mead, see *D.N.B.* and *W. Tong Memoirs* (1716).
 23. For the ordination certificate, see *Exeter Assembly*, p.123.
 24. Calamy, *Continuation*, p.419.
 25. J.B. Williams, *Memoirs of...Matthew Henry*, 1828, Banner of Truth reprint 1974, p.51, with note A on p.271.
 26. *Christian Witness*, 1870, p.353; for Hussey, see my "Cambridge Non-conformity 1660-1710: from Holcroft to Hussey", in this *JOURNAL*, i.241-58.

But now, with the Act of Toleration on the statute book, there was no more need for shyness or ambiguously worded certificates, and the number of ordinations quickly accelerated. Even before the Devon Association was formed, ordinations took place in Devon in April, August and December 1690.²⁷ At its meeting at Topsham in June 1691 the ministers recorded that two Devonians and one Cornishman "desire that they may be ordain'd" and "Resolv'd. That they be ordain'd at Exon" in the following August, after examination, preaching and speaking to a formal question in theology (still couched in Latin) on the previous day -- precisely as had been the practice in the Interregnum -- and appointed two of their number to preach and "give the Exhortation"; and at the following meeting in October, in Exeter, the Moderator signed a certificate encouraging another candidate "to preach for the exercising of his abilities in a subserviency to his ordination in due time".²⁸ In Cheshire in August 1692 the Association likewise consulted about "the Ordination of Severall Candidates" and made closely similar arrangements for six men to be ordained by six of their own number in the house of a member of the Knutsford congregation, Cicely Mill.²⁹

This was termed a "Publick Exercise", but about ordaining in public hesitation continued. In June 1694 doubt was still being expressed about such a course at Little Horton, near Bradford, by one of the ordaining ministers, who was accustomed to hold services only in his own home, Hopton Hall, outside Mirfield, and it took all Heywood's positive temper to persuade him that "it would be less dangerous in the chapel than in that unlicensed place, and it was practised elsewhere publickly and without offence".³⁰ The "first publick Ordination in the City", as Calamy called his own ordination, with that of six other young men, by Samuel Annesley, Matthew Sylvester, Daniel Williams and three other ministers took place later that June; it was held between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. "in the face of a public assembly" in Annesley's meeting-house in Little St. Helen's, and was a notable occasion. It came about, however, only after uncomfortable negotiations. Calamy, just returned from three years in Utrecht on the recommendation of John Howe, wanted Howe to take part in his ordination; Howe at first "appeared much pleased" but, so soon after the "Happy Union", wished his Congregational colleague Mead to be invited; Calamy had no desire for "any confinement to particular flocks, or any one

27. *Exeter Assembly*, pp.147, 140, 144.

28. *Ib.*, pp.6-7, 11.

29. *Cheshire Classis Minutes*, pp.10-14; for the ordination certificate of one of those ordained, a graduate of Leiden (it lacks the signature of one of those ordaining), see W. Urwick, *Historical Sketches of Nonconformity in the County Palatine of Chester*, 1864, p.168.

30. *Rise of the Old Dissent*, p.380; *Calamy Revised*, s.v. R. Thorpe; the rebuilt house at Little Horton had been certified under the Toleration Act (*ib.*, s.v. T. Sharp).

denomination, &c.”, but insisted on being ordained a minister “of the Catholic Church”; Mead, after first finding in himself “latitude enough to give us a sermon, and concur in ordaining us upon our bottom”, “chose to forbear”; and in the end, after consulting the King’s most confidential adviser, the future Lord Chancellor Somers, Howe himself withdrew unless there were no one “present, besides the ordainers and the ordained”.³¹ Just how much the Act of Toleration covered was evidently open to interpretation.

One thing the Act left untouched was the exclusion of Dissenters from the university education traditionally sought by Presbyterian candidates for the ministry and expected of them by those who ordained them. Not many could spend three years at Utrecht or at Leiden³² or even at a Scottish university. It was in order to mitigate the consequent deficiency that the Dissenting Academies (as they have come to be called) arose.

Of late considerable attention has been paid to the Academies’ contribution to modes and standards of education during the eighteenth century, but very much less to their heroic origins. A number of the ejected ministers gave some oversight to candidates for the ministry in their own homes; Flavell and Philip Henry were among these. Richard Frankland, who was ejected from the living of Bishop Auckland when he was 31, and who opened his home to pupils at Rathmell, near Giggleswick, in 1670, was probably the first to devote himself henceforward entirely to their training. To practical sense and a capacity for winning over kings and archbishops Frankland added a fine integrity and singlemindedness. Faced with opposition, excommunication, the enforcement of the Five Miles Act, he did not hesitate, not once but six times, to remove his Academy to a new location: to Westmorland, back to Yorkshire, to Westmorland again, over the Lancashire border, back to Yorkshire, and at last, in 1689, home to Rathmell. From the day of their arrival his pupils had to study with their loins girded and their staff in their hand; in 1685 two who had been with him suffered imprisonment; but still they came -- every year but one. It was on Frankland’s initiative that on 10 July 1678 the first ordination in Yorkshire was held at Pasture House, Horton-in-Craven, a place “almost entirely shut in by the surrounding hills”.³³ Of this occasion, in which both Heywood’s surviving sons and one of his nephews were ordained, the first ordination in a series in which Heywood took part as well as Frankland, Heywood wrote a detailed account:

-
31. Edmund Calamy, *Historical Account of my own Life*, ed. J.T. Rutt, 1829, i.340-4. Two of Mead’s sons had been with Calamy in Utrecht. For Somers, see *D.N.B.*: “he does not seem to have been particularly zealous even for the small measure of religious liberty secured by the Toleration Act”.
 32. The number of ejected ministers’ sons who matriculated at Leiden between 1660 and 1689 identifiable from *Album Studiosorum Academiae Lugduno-Batavae*, Hagae Com., 1875, is nevertheless appreciable.
 33. T. Whitehead, *History of the Dales Congregational Churches*, Keighley [1930], pp.114-20, with illustration.

two Congregational ministers were expected to share in the ceremony but in the event pleaded scruples and failed to appear. Ten years later, following James II's Declaration of Indulgence, Heywood wrote:

god hath raised up a great number of young ministers, I haue had a hand in setting apart 5 very hopeful young men this last year, and six were set apart publickly amongst a great Assembly in the meeting-place at W[arrington]: and others elsewhere...Aarons rod hath budded blossoms and Almonds: blessed be god:...³⁴

Altogether Frankland trained over 300 students, the vast majority for the Dissenting ministry: seven went on to Leiden to graduate (in medicine). Presbyterians first attended the Academy after the earlier Declaration of Indulgence in 1672; after James II's Declaration, pupils "flocked" to it, as many as twenty entering in the year; and after Toleration in 1689, in the nine years left to him before his death in 1698, almost as many passed through Frankland's hands as in the whole of the period 1670-89; "about 80 young men Boarded with him".³⁵ Even so, he was still subjected to episcopal interference, and was again prosecuted and excommunicated; now, however, he had the support of Lord Wharton and others at court, and at this juncture the King stepped in and "ordered his absolution", which was read publicly in Giggleswick parish church.

Frankland's was the only Academy in the North: so long as he lived, there was no need of any other; but there were not a few others in the rest of the country. In London the leading Presbyterian Academy was Thomas Doolittle's, in Islington, to which in 1680 Philip Henry took Matthew and a nephew -- "Mr. Baxter told mee," Henry writes, "I could not have plac'd him better"; but after only two months Henry's nephew had died, Matthew had come home "not well", and the Academy, a victim (like Frankland's) to migrations, which finally

-
34. Heywood, ii.194-7, 202-4, iv.126, iii.228. For the "publick" ordination at Warrington on 4 November 1687, see a letter of 25 November from Philip Henry, in *Life*, p.184; and another of 28 November to his son Matthew, in *Diaries*, p.360.
35. *Diary of James Clegg*, ed. V.S. Doe (Derbyshire Record Soc., II), Chesterfield 1981, iii.910. For a full account of Frankland and his Academy, with a biographical list of his pupils, and with portrait and illustrations of the buildings that housed the Academy and of the marble mural inscription to his memory in Giggleswick parish church, see F. Nicholson and E. Axon, *The Older Nonconformity in Kendal*, Kendal 1915, also *C.H.S.T.*, ii.422-7, with illustration; I have drawn on the excellent article by Gordon in *D.N.B.* For the Academies mentioned below (as also for Frankland's), see H. McLachlan, *English Education under the Test Acts*, Manchester 1931, also with illustrations.

destroyed it, was driven from Islington to Battersea.³⁶ In Somerset an Academy was opened in 1687 at Taunton (where at this time the “greatest part of the town” was reported to be Dissenters), and in the following year at Bridgwater, but there was still none in Devon. After Toleration, however, the number of Academies increased sharply, and in 1690 one was opened in Exeter by Joseph Hallett II, who had succeeded his father (d. 1689) as minister of the meeting-house opened in 1687 and appropriately named James’s Meeting (though at the end of 1688 it was the scene of some notorious preaching in the interest of the Prince of Orange, who was then in the city).³⁷

Hallett ardently supported the Exeter Assembly and was three times elected Moderator, but his Academy caused offence by the degree of heterodoxy permitted in it, and in 1719, on his refusal to subscribe to the Doctrine of the Trinity, he was excluded from the Assembly (and the meeting-house closed against him). This, however, was far from being the first sign of disruption. We saw earlier that in 1678 two Congregational ministers in Yorkshire had scruples which prevented them from joining in an ordination with Presbyterians, and from the other side that in London in 1694 the Presbyterian Calamy could not agree to a Congregational minister’s having a part in ordaining him. Feeling was no different in the South-West. In 1696 complaints were addressed to the Exeter Assembly by a wider company of ministers that, without authorization and at Bridport, which being in Dorset was beyond its jurisdiction, it had permitted “irregular ordination” by two of its members, both of them Congregational brethren. The Assembly had in fact agreed earlier “that no Candidate be ordain’d by any of the United Brethren of this County but by Order of the Assembly”, but it could not deny the charge. It called one of the offenders, a minister in Exeter, John Ashwood, to give an account of himself; but he only defended his action, “manifesting himself against an imposing spirit, & desiring to be left to his liberty in things of this nature, & not to be oblig’d to acquaint Associations with such matters”. The Assembly repeated their objection to “the practice of private ordination in a time of peace and liberty” as not only bringing discredit on themselves but also likely to open the door “for illiterate conceited persons to invade the sacred office”; but to no avail: Presbyterians and Independents interpreted liberty differently: “an intractable element of Congregational independence” remained. Acrimonious correspondence followed, with charges of “clubbing and caballing”: “why should we encourage others to

36. *Diaries*, pp.290-4; *Memoirs of...Matthew Henry*, pp.10-13. For Doolittle, see *D.N.B.*; *Calamy Revised*.

37. D.R. Lacey, *Dissent and Parliamentary Politics in England 1661-1689*, Rutgers University Press 1970, p.450; *D.N.B.*, s.v. Robert Ferguson. For Hallett, see *D.N.B.*

play their old game and teach them to undermine us?"³⁸

In truth it was an "old game". In a notable Hibbert Lecture Roger Thomas unravelled the issues behind "The Break-up of Nonconformity" in London in 1690: theological differences over the doctrine of grace and of the ministry and ordination to it, social differences over the need for preachers to be educated, differences in practice over evangelization and the authority requisite to undertake it. In the minutes of the Exeter Assembly this is confirmed at every point³⁹. In the South-West the break-up was a little later than in London (though in 1719 a little earlier),⁴⁰ but the issues engaging men's minds were the same. What a historian may observe is that the difference which in the sunshine of liberty quickly surfaced were the old divisions of forty years earlier. Then too it was "a time of peace and liberty", the "halcyon days" of Toleration under Cromwell's Instrument of Government. Then too good order was attempted in the Classes and in those Associations which the Fathers of 1689 idealized and sought to restore, but which had soon run aground on the reefs of authority, the shoals of illiteracy, the rocks of independency and antinomianism. The sermons by Tobias Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted*, which when they appeared in 1690 aroused a fierce controversy in which both Howe and Flavell took part, and were a prime factor in the disruption that soon followed, were not new; they were first published in the 1640s, when the Westminster Assembly had ordered them to be burned.⁴¹

Thematic reiteration, however, is not an index of continuity in personnel. Of the one hundred and thirty-three ministers who were members of the Devon Association of 1655-9, only Flavell and eight others reappear as members of the Association formed in 1691. As many as twenty-two members of the earlier Association are known to have conformed at the Restoration; a few had left the county; but the main reason for the difference in membership was the passage of

-
38. *Exeter Assembly*, pp.29, 18, 30-6, providing the date of the ordination of the Bridport minister, Samuel Baker (for whom see Densham and Ogle, p.49); the plea that the Presbyterian Pinney had been invited to take part in the ordination to which offence was taken was genuine (see the invitation, in *Letters of John Pinney 1679-1699*, ed. G.F. Nuttall, Oxford 1939, Letter 55), but in a sense compounded the offence, in that Pinney was a minister in Dorset and thus outside the Association's jurisdiction. Cf. *Cheshire Classis Minutes*, pp.103-4.
39. R. Thomas, in G.F. Nuttall et al., *The Beginnings of Nonconformity*, 1964, ch.2; Richard Davis (*ib.*, pp.42-6) is mentioned in the minutes of the *Exeter Assembly*, p.31.
40. See R. Thomas, "The Non-Subscription Controversy amongst Dissenters in 1719", in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, iv.178: "the Exeter controversy had been following its own course quite independently".
41. A. Gordon, *Freedom after Ejection*, Manchester 1917, pp.184-7; R. Thomas (as in n.39), pp.41-2.

time, in that by 1689 at least thirty-six of the ministers had died (after Flavell's sudden death in 1691, all but two of the eight who remained from the earlier Association were gone before 1700). If the small group of those originated by the earlier Association be examined, the outcome is similar; only one reappears in the later Association, one had left the county (of the six ministers who ordained him, four had conformed), and by 1689 the others were all dead. Though in both generations a few of these ministers, including some of their leaders, were Congregational, the great majority were Presbyterians -- what may be called Association Presbyterians as distinct from the earlier Classical Presbyterians. Analysis of the Classical movement throughout the country indicates that, whilst a number of the ministers engaged in it were ejected in 1660-2 and some were leaders in the later movement, very many more either conformed or disappear from view -- causing a discontinuity which is one reason, apart from the changed circumstances, why no attempt was made in 1689 to revive the earlier Classes.⁴²

Yet continuity there was: though death intervened and among the survivors old divisions recurred, tradition also was preserved. What made this possible was the fact that the newly ordained were often the sons of the fathers: Edmund Calamy ("Edm. Fil. & Nepos")⁴³ and Matthew Henry most notably, but also John Ashwood and Joseph Hallett II, Heywood's sons John and Eliezer, and Robert Atkins's son Samuel. All these men save Calamy were old enough to have witnessed something of the "savage renewal of persecution" in 1673 after the withdrawal of the first Declaration of Indulgence.⁴⁴ Admiration for their fathers' temper and bearing will have had more than a little to do with their

-
42. In the London Fourth Classis, for instance, of the seventeen ministers who at one time or another took part in ordinations only five were ejected in 1660-2, while of the eighty-two ministers ordained by them only twenty-nine were ejected and twenty-five conformed. On the volatile nature of the ministers nominated to the Essex Classes, see my "The Essex Classes (1648)", in this JOURNAL, iii.197. Of the fifty ministers ordained by the Derbyshire First Classis, only twenty-six were ejected; and of the thirty-eight ordained by the Lancashire First, only eight were ejected, while at least thirteen conformed. Probably from the scattered nature of the sources, the discontinuity at this point between the Classes and subsequent Dissent seems largely to have escaped notice.
43. See the reproduction of the title page of Calamy's *Abridgment of Mr. Baxter's History*, 1702, in *Calamy Revised*, p.xxix.
44. See A. Brockett, "The Attack on Nonconformists in Exeter after the withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence", in *C.H.S.T.*, xviii.89-93; the situation documented here for Essex may be presumed to have obtained elsewhere also. Frankland's sons all died young, but Doolittle, Hallett and Ames Short each trained up a son to be a minister in the next generation.

sense of calling and their willingness to bear suffering themselves.

In the event they did not have to bear it, or not for long. After 1689 the old sufferings were at an end. While the ministers' steadfastness and powers of endurance had shown that, in the words of a modern historian, they "could not be suppressed and must therefore be given freedom",⁴⁵ ninety-three lay Dissenters willing to pass "the Sacramental Test", twelve of them from Devon and nearly all of them Presbyterians, had been working no less steadily in Parliament for freedom to worship according to conscience. In June 1688 they realized that their hour had come. Richard and John Hampden, Philip, Paul and Thomas Foley, Sir Edmund and Robert Harley and a dozen others were all early and open supporters of the Prince of Orange. In the Lords Wharton was playing his part, along with Lord Paget, who was a brother-in-law of both Richard Hampden and Philip Foley.⁴⁶ Over agreement with the Commons that James had abdicated (or had been made to abdicate), there was "a long wrangle", but on 6 February 1689 the Lords gave way.⁴⁷ Two days earlier a minister of the older generation who had suffered ejection in 1662 entered in his private papers "I, Roger Morrice,...until Monday, February 4... have scarce ever walked one turn in that [Westminster] Hall without fear since anno 1662, until the day aforesaid when I walked with true liberty and freedom", and boldly wrote over this the words SINE METU.⁴⁸

Toleration, at least for worship freely and in public, was won. In July 1689 Oliver Heywood certified the house he had opened for worship a year earlier,⁴⁹ and in the remaining years of the century well over two thousand buildings were licensed for public worship all over the country.⁵⁰

The extent and continuation of certification can be studied in Urwick's *Nonconformity in Herts.* (1884). Analysis quickly discloses a cat's-cradle of families who persisted in certifying not only meeting-houses but their own, one another's and other people's homes for Dissenting worship. None was more faithful than the Field family. In 1693 John Field, of Paul's Walden, joined Edward Webster of Langley and others in certifying Webster's home, and in 1694 he joined first Daniel Brown and others in certifying Brown's home (Hitchwood House), also at Langley, and later Daniel Young of King's Walden

45. Owen Chadwick, in *From Uniformity to Unity*, p. 10.

46. See D.R. Lacey, op.cit., and my article in review, "Nonconformists in Parliament, 1661-1689", in *C.H.S.T.*, xx.334-40.

47. R. Thomas, in *From Uniformity to Unity*, p.242.

48. Morrice MSS. (Dr. Williams's Library), Q 458 cit. by Lacey, p.225; for Morrice, see *Calamy Revised*.

49. *Nonconformist Register*, ed. J.H. Turner, Brighthouse 1881, p.142, in the course of a long list of certifications in the locality.

50. The figure is calculated as 2418 by W.B. Selbie. *Nonconformity*, [1912], p.144; as 2212 in "Nonconformist Places of Worship Licensed under the Toleration Act", in *C.H.S.T.*, vi.205.

and others in certifying Young's home (Coldhams); in 1703, with the minister of Back Street Congregational church, Hitchin, Thomas Scott, and others, he became a trustee for the meeting-house. In 1697 Daniel Field, of Hemel Hempstead, with the minister of Box Lane, Bovington, Joshua Bayes (one of Calamy's companions in the London ordination service held three years earlier), and others, likewise accepted trusteeship of the "lately erected" meeting-house, and in 1706 joined first John Gates of Hemel Hempstead and others in certifying Gates's home (Crouchfield) and later Gates, John Boyd and others in certifying Boyd's home, also in Hemel Hempstead. Also in 1706 Thomas, William and Stephen Field joined John Grunnell of Lilley and others in certifying Grunnell's home (Mungrave).⁵¹

To go on listing such activity over the years, even a single family's share in it in a single county, would seem tedious and antiquarian; but of such droplets was the multitudinous sea of Dissent composed. In a paper concerned largely with the winning of Toleration for the ministry it is proper not to forget the part played by others in providing places where they could minister.

Several substantial meeting-houses were erected. Among those remaining, that at Macclesfield (now Unitarian) was actually opened on the unforgettable anniversary, 24 August; the year-date 1690 may still be seen on a lead spout.⁵²

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL

THE DUTCH INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH TOLERATION

In the justifiable commemoration of the Toleration Act of 1689 we shall no doubt be reminded that the preamble to the Act contains no solemn affirmation of the principle of toleration, no declaration that freedom of worship, let alone religious equality, is a basic human right. Instead, it opens simply "Forasmuch as some ease to scrupulous consciences in the exercise of religion may be an effectual means to unite their Majesties' Protestant subjects in interest and affection, be it enacted..." The implication is that it was a matter of practical politics, of rewarding Dissenters for not actively supporting the indulgence given them by the Popish régime of James II, and of securing their co-operation

-
51. W. Urwick, *Nonconformity in Herts.*, 1884, pp.643, 668, 649, n.1, 389, n.2, 438, 659. Mungrave (now Mangrove), later the home of John Field (d. 1766), who left £20 to the poor of Tilehouse Street Congregational (later Baptist) church, Hitchin (1647), was perhaps always part of the family property, for it is adjacent to Cocker(n)hoe, their home for many generations: see *D.N.B.*, s.v. Henry Field, son of John Field (b. 1719) and of a great-granddaughter of Cromwell, and progenitor of numerous Fields included in *D.N.B.*
52. See Graham Hague, *The Unitarian Hague: an architectural survey*, Sheffield [1988], p.36, with illustrations.

against the possibility of a Jacobite restoration.

There is obviously much in this, and it might be thought that any "Dutch influence" was simply that of William III's Dutch army which had induced James to flee the country. Yet men's attitudes were also profoundly conditioned by the fact that across the North Sea there was, instead of an oppressive religious conformity, a régime in which people enjoyed a measure of toleration such as existed in no other important European state with which Englishmen came into close contact. In France the Huguenots had enjoyed the grudging concessions given by the Edict of Nantes between 1598 and 1685, but these concessions had been given only to members of the official Reformed Church. In the Dutch Republic, on the other hand, indulgence was given (without any treaty or Edict) to a plurality of sects, to Jews, and (in practice) to Catholics, and in the observations of English visitors this was a prime characteristic on which they all commented.

This toleration was not absolute. In 1619 the Synod of Dort had driven the Remonstrants, or followers of Arminius, from their cures in the official church and from their university chairs, and had in effect confronted them with a choice between recantation and exile. Most of the major figures chose exile. But within a decade they had been permitted to return (though the greatest of them, Grotius, did not again reside in his native country); in 1630 they were allowed to found a Remonstrant church in Amsterdam, and two years later this was followed by the Remonstrant school, which eventually developed into the university of Amsterdam, and the attendant theological seminary. After 1632 Remonstrants remained resentful of the persecution from which they had briefly suffered, and wary of their orthodox Calvinist opponents in positions of authority, but in practice they were allowed to exist as a sect like any other. Thereafter there were other vehement theological disputes within the Reformed church: the growth of Cartesian ideas was bitterly contested, and the quarrels between the more rigidly orthodox followers of Voetius, "the pope of Utrecht" (1589-1676), and those of the more liberal Cocceius (1603-69) at Leiden even led to incidents which produced firm intervention by the stadholder William III, but they never seemed likely to result in the kind of armed religious conflict to suppress an opposing party which took place elsewhere.

More directly relevant to our purpose is the fact that, even when Calvinist orthodoxy seemed to be at its strictest at the time of the Synod of Dort, it did not result in any attempt by the official church to crush sects outside it. Mennonites, Lutherans and a variety of others enjoyed freedom of conscience and freedom of worship. They did not enjoy complete religious equality, in the sense that all holders of political and civic offices were supposed to belong to the official church, but in fact Remonstrants particularly from important families in the towns were to be found in municipal and other posts. In any case no-one was fined for non-attendance at the parish church, and no-one was called upon to pay tithes. Provincial synods might pass hostile resolutions as they certainly did of Papists, but everyone, including many of those who voted for them, knew that they were not likely to be followed by action from the political authorities. One

group only suffered for a short time. When English Quakers went to Holland and Zeeland at the end of the 1650s their opposition to a paid ministry, the kind of preaching which they favoured and the disturbances to which it gave rise in churches, and the usual refusal to remove hats in respect to magistrates, created hostility which was not lessened when stories reached Holland of James Nayler's Messianic entry into Bristol riding an ass. William Caton and his assistant and interpreter, a young man who rejoiced in the name of Humble Thatcher, were both imprisoned; Christopher Birkland was sent for two years to the house of correction at Middelburg, and William Ames the Quaker was not only imprisoned but sent to Bedlam at Rotterdam. But when the magistrates had ceased in a few years to regard them as a danger to the established order, they were left unmolested, and by 1677 William Penn, on a visit to Holland, spoke of well attended meetings, "some of them being of the considerablest out of that city (Rotterdam)", with no hint of persecution.¹

Freedom of conscience and of worship was accompanied by a wide measure of freedom of the press in the state in which more books were published than in any other state in Europe -- it was even said, more books than in all the other states together. There was no preliminary censorship to which these works had to be submitted before publication. It is not in fact altogether the case that the more extreme were free from risk of suppression afterwards by the secular authorities, under pressure from the orthodox ecclesiastical ones: the works of Hobbes and Spinoza, together with some reflecting the more outrageous views on the Trinity, were banned.² But Hobbes and Spinoza were certainly read, perhaps the more as a result of the effort to suppress them; and if authors and printers of banned books were theoretically liable to fines, the maximum amount was paltry in comparison with the profits to be made, and the decentralised system of government made it easy for them to escape punishment by moving from one city or province to another. Above all, the magistrates on the town councils, following a long tradition of tolerance, were prepared to satisfy pressure by going through the motions of taking action rather than by positive measures. In 1691 Balthazar Bekker, the author of the notorious book, *De Betoverde Wereld*, denying the existence of evil spirits which could influence human affairs, lost his ministry as a result, and the correspondence of Philippus van Limborch and John Locke contains useful

-
1. W.C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 2nd ed. 1955, pp. 406-13; W.I. Hull, *Benjamin Furley and Quakerism in Rotterdam*, Swarthmore, 1941, passim; W. Penn, *An account of W. Penn's Travels in Holland and Germany, Anno MCDCLXXVII*, 1694, pp. 4-6, 160.
 2. W.P.C. Knuttel, *Verboden Boeken in de Republiek der Vereenigde Nederlanden and Balthazar Bekker, de bestrijder van het bijgeloof*, The Hague 1906; S. Groenveld, paper on Censorship in the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century, read to the Ninth Anglo-Dutch conference of Historians (forthcoming).

comments on illiberal elements in the Reformed church; but Bekker's book was not actually prohibited, and the city of Amsterdam went on paying his salary.

This relatively tolerant society had an impact upon the development of English toleration in two different ways. Dutch and English scholars exchanged ideas in their books, by correspondence and (in the case of John Locke) through friendships formed in the course of a stay in the Netherlands. And secondly (and probably with more practical effect) English observers of the Dutch Republic saw it as a state in which toleration worked, associated not with discord, instability and confusion as in the England of the 1640s and 1650s, but with religious peace and consequently with economic prosperity.

The most distinguished Dutch scholars who influenced their English contemporaries in the direction of toleration were Remonstrants. Their sufferings at the time of the Synod of Dort had led them to consider the problems of the relations of church and state and of those who differed from the established church authorities, and their leader at that time, Uytenbogaert (1557-1644), had argued, not exactly for toleration in the fullest sense, but that Christian magistrates "beside that [Protestant] religion which they hold to be the only true religion, and maintain as that which they have made choice of to be theirs, do permit and tolerate in their dominions other kinds of religion, by way of connivancy; looking upon them, as it were, through the fingers." This Dutch idiom, corresponding to our expression "winking at" or "turning a blind eye", reflected the practice generally current in the United Provinces rather than advancing an argument of right. Uytenbogaert's main concern was with the position of a minority within the official Calvinist church, and with the state's maintenance of good order in a church where there were disputes, but he added "I speak this peculiarly of the external worship of God; for as touching the internal worship of God, I do refer that wholly unto God himself: who is the only king of the conscience, and the searcher of the heart and minds."³

From such attitudes, deriving ultimately from a long Erasmian tradition, sectaries might profit as well as the unorthodox within the Church. Simon Bisschop (1583-1643), or Episcopius to use his Latinised scholar's name, who after being driven out of the church by the Synod of Dort in 1619 eventually became Professor of Theology at the Remonstrant seminary founded in Amsterdam, went further in the direction of a theology which recognised not only freedom of individual conscience, but the rights of separate churches. Whereas Truth would not be damaged by toleration, intolerance stifled liberty of conscience, prevented reform and encouraged hypocrisy. Freedom of private opinions implied the right to spread them in speech or writing, provided this

3. J. Uytenbogaert, *Tract van 't Ampt ende Authoriteyt eener hogher Christelijker Overheydt in Kerckelycke Saecken...* 1610, 3rd edn. Rotterdam 1647, as cited from a manuscript English translation in the British Library in D. Nobbs, *Theocracy and Toleration*, 1938, pp. 34-5.

was done by peaceful means and the consequence was the liberty of sects free from coercion by the magistrate.⁴

Episcopius excluded blasphemy from his toleration, and his niece's husband, Philippus van Limborch, also a Remonstrant pastor and later Professor of Theology at the Amsterdam seminary (1633-1712), another advocate of toleration, argued that it was "to be extended to those only who dissent from an established Church in mere externals and modes of worship, whereas it does not seem allowable to such as worship God in an idolatrous manner, and hold doctrine contrary to, and destructive of the very fundamentals of religion".⁵ These could obviously be very considerable loopholes in any system of toleration - what were "blasphemy" or "an idolatrous manner", and what was the position of anti-Trinitarian ideas? - but in practice they were in the nature of token concessions to satisfy the orthodox. Limborch in fact had many friends among the Amsterdam sectaries and Jewish rabbis, and more characteristic of him were his contention that the magistrate was to "give those who dissent from him a free toleration to serve God in their own way, which they think to be best, in their private houses", and his intense literary activity, including the *Historia Inquisitionis* (1692), in criticism of oppressive authority in religious affairs, whether Catholic or Calvinist.

Episcopius's Latin works, like those written by a great Dutch Arminian, Grotius, in Paris, were certainly read in England in the seventeenth century, and particularly, according to Burnet, by Latitudinarians, though translations of Episcopius and also Limborch came only after the Toleration Act had been passed. A second edition of his Latin *Opera Theologica* appeared in London eleven years earlier, in 1678. Limborch was much more influential through the considerable correspondence which he kept up with Cambridge Platonists (Henry More and Ralph Cudworth) and with an array of Latitudinarian clergy and scholars from Burnet to Tillotson. His letters chimed in with the tendency of a party within the Church of England to adopt more liberal, more reasonable, and more charitable attitudes to dissent from the Church, and thus contributed to the change of atmosphere which made the Toleration Act at least reluctantly possible for many Anglicans in 1689. But Limborch's greatest friend and correspondent, and the best-known defender of toleration was John Locke, whose *Epistola de Toleranti* was first dedicated to Limborch and published anonymously at Gouda in 1689 before being translated into English. But his views were formed before their friendship began and influenced people after, rather than before, the Toleration Act was passed.⁶

4. Nobbs, pp. 102-4.

5. Limborch, *A Compleat System or Body of Divinity*, ed. W. Jones, 1713, ii. 711, cit. R.L. Colie, *Light and Enlightenment. A Study of the Cambridge Platonists and the Dutch Arminians*, 1957, p. 43.

6. Colie, esp. ch.iii.; J. Locke, *Epistola de Tolerantia. A Letter on Toleration*, ed. R. Klibansky with introduction by J.W. Gough, 1968.

Probably more important than those intellectual links was the opportunity to observe that toleration worked successfully in the Dutch Republic, while attempts at coercion had led to religious wars elsewhere, and to the Civil War and Commonwealth in England. It has been pointed out "that for a variety of reasons, economic, religious and political, all the people of English extraction scattered over the rest of the continent hardly compared in number with the English permanently resident in the Low Countries",⁷ and to these must be added the many merchants, soldiers, students and even religious refugees who eventually returned to their native country across the North Sea. The example of Dutch freedom of worship and an established church not based on tithes or compulsory attendance at the parish church was not something vaguely known to exist in a distant land with which Englishmen had few connections.

It would be a mistake to imagine that even for Puritans the Dutch Republic was simply a place where fugitives from Archbishop Laud's oppression in the 1630s or from the Conventicle Acts after the Great Ejection could find a welcome from like-minded co-religionaries in a Calvinist official Church. It was a place where Presbyterians, Independents, Lutherans, Mennonite Baptists, Arminians, Quakers, Jews, Roman Catholics and followers of idiosyncratic leaders like Labadia and Rothe⁸ could co-exist and worship in their separate congregations. There were those, including even Marvell in Cromwell's entourage, who (in time of war) ridiculed the variety of sects they saw there;⁹ but it is unnecessary to labour the point that most Puritans who had personal experience of Holland, even those who had originally wanted primarily a reformed Church of England, were impressed by the pluralist society they found. Amongst these was John Lilburne, whose *Agreement of the People*, imitating Dutch practice, declared "that matters of religion and the ways of God's worship are not at all entrusted by us to any human power, because therein we cannot remit or exceed a little of what our consciences dictate to be the mind of God without wilful sin; nevertheless the public way of instructing the nation (so it be not compulsive) is referred to their discretion";¹⁰ Philip Nye and John Goodwin returned from the Netherlands to defend Independency against attempts to impose Presbyterian conformity at the Westminster Assembly; advocates of toleration like Richard Overton and Henry Robinson, who observed that "in Holland all men have the opportunity to learn truth for themselves without let or hindrance" had experience of Dutch conditions. After the reimposition of Anglican conformity in 1662 it was natural for many (at least if they could not secure comprehension within the national church) to aspire to securing the same indulgence for their congregations as they had seen, or knew to exist, across the North Sea.

7. J.W. Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604-1667*, 1952, p. 240.

8. L. Kolakowski, *Chrétiens sans Eglise*, Paris, 1969, pp. 719-97.

9. A. Marvell, *Poems and Letters*, ed. H.M. Margoliouth, 1927, i.97.

10. S.R. Gardiner, *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625-1660*, 3rd edn. 1906, p. 334.

Nevertheless, Nonconformists could not hope to secure this indulgence without the assistance of nonconformists who had abandoned the belief that the toleration of more than one church within a state spelled confusion, and that, in the words of one member of Parliament in 1668, he “never knew a Toleration, without an army [like Cromwell’s] to keep all quiet.”¹¹ For this it was important that not only Nonconformists but other Englishmen travelled in the Netherlands and had an opportunity to appraise the situation there. Foremost among these were Charles II and James II themselves. When the Declaration of Indulgence of 1672 agreed that “sad experience” had shown that “inforcible courses” had borne very little fruit, Charles must also have had in mind his experience of 1648-50 in exile in the Dutch Republic where “forcible courses” were not used, even though political considerations and the desire to do something for his Catholic friends predominated over a genuine sympathy for Dissenters in his policies. Some might speak derisively of the toleration they found, seeing it as a sign of indifference or irreligion. One view is that of John Hall, who said of Amsterdam: “you may be what devil you will there, so you be but peaceable: for Amsterdam is an university of all religions, which grow there (like stocks in a nursery) without either order or pruning. If you be unsettled in your religion, you may here try all, and take at last what you like best. If you fancy more, you have a pattern to follow of them that would be church to themselves: it’s the fair of all the sects, where all the pedlars of religion have leave to vend their toys, their ribbands and phanatique rattles; their republic is more to them than heaven, and God may be more safely offended there than the States-General.”¹² Others did not like the possibility that “a man may live there all his life-time, and be of no congregation, with impunity.”¹³ But they could not deny that this toleration made for peace and order, while in Britain attempts to impose conformity had produced civil war. This was what attracted Sir William Temple, who, after living through the Civil War in early manhood, went to The Hague as ambassador in 1668. “It is hardly to be imagined,” he wrote, “how all the violence and sharpness, which accompanies the differences of religion in other countries, seems to be appeased or softened here, by the general freedom which all men enjoy, either by allowance or connivance...religion may possibly do more good in other places, but it does less hurt here; and wherever the invisible effects of it are greatest and most advantageous, I am sure the visible are so in this country, by the continual and undisturbed civil peace of their government for so long a course of years...”¹⁴

Temple’s picture of Dutch toleration appeared in an influential book, *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, which had two editions

-
11. A. Grey, *Debates in the House of Commons, from the Year 1667 to the Year 1694*, 1763, i.110.
 12. J. Hall, *Grace leading unto Glory*, 1651.
 13. *The Politia of the United Provinces in Somers Tracts*, 1809-15, iii.634.
 14. Sir W. Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, ed. G.N. Clark, 2nd edn, 1972, pp. 106-7.

in 1673 and three more by 1690, as well as others afterwards. It represented the point of view of a man who conformed to the Church of England after the Restoration but was not passionately or dogmatically religious, and who was attracted by the practical benefits which the Dutch system brought. But when Burnet, a clergyman later to become a bishop, went to The Hague he also wrote: "I became likewise much in love with toleration by what I saw in Holland, for there was only a difference of opinion among them, but no heat nor anger raised by it, everyone enjoying his own conscience, without disturbance; and this has ever since given me a great bias for toleration, for real arguments are to be much stronger than speculative motions [?notions] can be."¹⁵

Among the "real arguments" imbibed from Holland was not only the idea that it brought religious peace, but the view that prosperity also came with it. The argument that toleration was good for trade was characteristic of the post-Restoration period, and it sprang directly from Dutch commercial success. Along with it was the perception that the Dutch Republic had benefited from the immigration of people seeking to enjoy its freedom of worship; whereas England itself, as well as France and Spain, suffered from the emigration of industrious people to avoid religious persecution. As an example of the belief that toleration, trade, and the prevention of the loss of people through emigration were connected, we may refer to a well-known unsigned letter in the Shaftesbury Papers (not, I have argued, Shaftesbury's own)¹⁶; but James II's Declaration of Indulgence of 1687 also adopted the current argument that the use of force in matters of pure religion was harmful to national interests "by spoiling trade, depopulating countries and discouraging strangers."¹⁷ The connection with Holland was explicitly made by John Hampden in the debates on the Toleration Bill in 1689, when he argued that "the Dutch were at first ruined by severity in religion; and the Spaniards lost Holland by it, but since they [the Dutch] have had indulgence, they have prospered" and he received no contradiction.¹⁸

As soon as memories of the political activities of Dissenters in the years 1678-83 began to exercise less sway over the minds of Anglicans than fears of the danger from a Catholic monarchy under James II, such considerations as these helped them to agree, not to a comprehension of Nonconformists within the established church, or to a toleration based on principle, but to a practical freedom of worship similar to that which existed in the Dutch Republic. In one respect English toleration was better than Dutch, because it rested on a statute and not on connivance, and Protestants were officially allowed (and required) to register their places of worship. In another respect matters worked out much

15. *A Supplement to Burnet's History of My Own Time*, ed. H.C. Foxcroft, 1902, pp. 93-4.

16. K.H.D. Haley, *First Earl of Shaftesbury*, 1968, pp. 257-8.

17. *English Historical Documents 1660-1714*, ed. A. Browning, 1953, p. 396.

18. Grey, ix, 252-3.

the same after a few years: the English censorship of publications, which was logically incompatible with toleration, persisted after the passage of the Toleration Act in 1689, but was allowed to lapse in 1695. It is reasonable to suppose that the absence of censorship in the Dutch Republic without adverse consequences made the lapsing of it more acceptable. In some cases English toleration was worse on paper, though there was scarcely any difference in practice: the Toleration Act required those benefiting from it to make a trinitarian profession. In the Dutch Republic provincial synods passed resolutions against Socinians, but Socinians were rarely hindered by magistrates. In England too there came to be little practical distinction.

In neither country did the toleration given amount to the religious equality which modern opinion would consider to be its natural accompaniment. In some respects the position was worse in England than in Holland, for whereas tithes were not required of people in the Netherlands, the Toleration Act in England specified that no-one was to be exempt "from paying of tithes or other parochial duties, or any other duties to the church or minister"; on this the Dutch example was of no avail. Much more controversial at the end of the seventeenth century was the requirement in both countries that office-holders, local and national, should belong to the established church. As Tory critics of the practice of "occasional conformity" did not tire of pointing out in the reigns of William and Anne, the principle was supposed to apply in both countries, but in the Dutch Republic there was no statutory requirement that office-holders should present a certificate of attendance at parish communion similar to that required by the Test and Corporation Acts; Remonstrants particularly are to be found serving on Dutch town councils. William's Dutch experience had taught him to make use of servants from every type of Christian (and Jew); and during the 1689 debates on religion he made a speech from the throne expressing the hope that "all Protestants, that are willing and able to serve" might be eligible for preferment.¹⁹ But all the arguments for toleration, whether influenced by the Dutch example or not, did not lead the Anglican majority to extend it to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts which this statement would have implied; and a similar practical position to the Dutch one was only obtained by means of occasional conformity and the passing of annual acts of indemnity.

There remains to be considered the position of the Catholics, whose numbers in England were considerably smaller than those of the Dissenters, and for whom the Revolution settlement provided a smaller degree of toleration than the prerogative Declaration of Indulgence of James II had done. Here the Dutch example also was of less avail than William III would have liked.

It is curious that English visitors to the Dutch Republic had comparatively little to say of the position of Catholics. Travellers visited the synagogue and were fascinated by it and by the degree of toleration given to Jews; and the synagogue of Bevis Marks was founded partly for Jewish financiers and

19. *Journals of the House of Commons*, x, 51.

contractors who were employed by William III and followed him to London. But there were far more Dutch Catholics, forming a much higher proportion of the population than in England; and even though many of them were south of the Rhine, in the portions of the provinces of Brabant and Limburg reconquered from Spain earlier in the century, they were to be found in appreciable numbers in other towns and villages as well. They were not allowed to worship in public, but everyone knew where the *schuilkerken* or hidden churches in which they worshipped behind closed doors were to be found. Calvinist synods passed resolutions against them from time to time, but magistrates took little action against them (though it has also to be said that in many places, such as Gouda, they expected payment for their connivance). When the English church in the Begijnhof at Amsterdam complained that Catholic worshippers emerging from their service almost opposite, which had started earlier, were making too much noise, the municipal authorities simply told the Catholics to change the time of the service. Thus they could in practice attend Mass without serious hindrance; they could take no part in political life, but there were Catholic officers in William III's armies and Catholic students could take degrees at Leiden university without the qualifications of conformity to the established church which existed at Oxford and Cambridge. There was not religious equality, but there was not the persecution which one might superficially have expected after the long struggle for independence from Spain. As a result they were a peaceable and loyal minority, and the Dutch Republic was not riven by bitter religious tensions, though there were problems from time to time, as when the armies of Louis XIV restored Catholic worship to the great Dom cathedral at Utrecht in the French invasion of 1672, and then had to withdraw in the following year.

This remarkable situation did not receive the attention from English pamphleteers which one might expect, whether or not because they found it irrelevant to English conditions or could not dream of copying it. Sir William Temple did make a brief comment, perhaps because his residence in Ireland for seven years had given him an interest in the problem of relations between a Protestant government and a Catholic people, and because he wrote at a time when Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence of 1672, permitting Catholic worship in private only as in Holland, made the subject particularly topical. His experience as an ambassador at the Hague satisfied him that, as a result of connivance, though Catholics were "not admitted to any public charges; yet they seem to be a sound piece of the state, and fast joined in with the rest; and have neither given any disturbance to the government, nor expressed any inclination to a change, or to any foreign power".²⁰ His approval is implicit; and it is not impossible that a similar situation might have evolved in England had Catholics remained unobtrusive. But the very royal support which at first sight seemed to offer better prospects to Catholics, in fact made them appear more

20. Temple, p. 104 (as amended, p. 142).

dangerous, and as a result Temple's comments found no echoes.

In late 1687, in a letter designed to be printed, a close ally of William III, the Dutch Pensionary Fagel, stated that the Prince favoured the Dutch system under which Catholics could worship freely but were not admitted to public office, so that the consequences would be that the Test and Corporation Acts would not be repealed as James II wanted, but William felt that Englishmen must be left to settle this question themselves. He had strong Calvinist convictions but he was no bigot, and though he had to pay attention to the susceptibilities of his Catholic allies in Europe there is no reason to doubt the genuineness of his willingness to accept something like the Dutch system in England. But in an age when Englishmen identified Catholicism with James II and even an apostle of toleration like John Locke was prepared to exclude Catholics from it, there was no hope of concessions for them (far less in Ireland). Catholics received neither freedom of worship nor freedom from their numerous disabilities, and although for some time the former was offset by their ability to worship privately in aristocratic households and ambassadorial chapels, and many of their disabilities (such as the exclusion from the Universities) were shared with Dissenters, the greatest disadvantage of Catholic landowners was that the land tax of 1693, which (not for the first time) required Catholics uniquely to pay taxes at a double rate, evolved into a regular annual levy and not an occasional imposition.

This brings us back in conclusion to the familiar point that the toleration granted in 1689 was partial and pragmatic rather than something willingly embraced as the result of devotion to a principle. In that pragmatism the Dutch example may have had some part in addition to the domestic English need for Protestant unity against Catholicism and Jacobitism, for it showed that the existence of different faiths side by side was not only compatible with internal peace and prosperity but actually encouraged it. In the Age of the Enlightenment it became possible for this to develop into a discussion of the abstract merits of toleration as a human right, and ultimately into the view that greater religious equality was the necessary corollary.

K.H.D. HALEY

TOLERATION POSTPONED: ATTACKS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN LATE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE

The 1680s, to the English, are the decade which saw the linked threats of absolutism and enforced Roman Catholicism both posed and eliminated. It was not just Anglicanism which was safeguarded, but, in the event, the rights of Dissent. In celebration of this we have the publication in 1689 of John Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration*, a founding text for the view which has become a commonplace in our culture and a blasphemous error according to most others. Locke asserts that religious belief is a private matter, that the state has no reason and no right to coerce its members into one or another form of it. We know that

in practice the established Church of England retained important power long after 1700, and that various religious disabilities survive to this day, but there is not much wrong with a general view which supposes an England launched towards full and formal toleration by the events of 1689.

For continental Europe on the other hand, the 1680s are the decade of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a rapidly worsening witch-craze¹ in Hapsburg lands, the siege of Vienna and the reconquest of Hungary. The connection between heresy and treason seemed in vast areas of Europe too obvious to need proof, and John Locke's vision of innocent dissidence fitted few rulers' understanding of politics. It is the purpose of this essay to demonstrate that the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 by no means represented the end of Europe's religious wars; that well into the eighteenth century violence was used to enforce religious uniformity and that outside England and the Netherlands the values of the Revolution Settlement found few sympathisers.

The most obvious reason for the distinctive experience of our north-western corner of Europe is that here Islam was too far away to be threatening; there was no call for the confident, authoritative mode of catholic christianity appropriate to the Spanish Reconquest in the fifteenth century, and in some measure reborn when eastern Europe underwent the same experience. Explanations more complicated than this are required to account for the intensification of official pressure on French Huguenots to conform to their state's church, but the problem is not solely where and why Roman Catholics proscribed religious freedom. In 1681 Henry Capel warned the English House of Commons of a "universal design against the Protestant Party"², but plotting papists were not the only intransigents.

Rather than fall into the modern error of supposing that protestants are by temperament and tradition inclined to tolerate one another, we need also to record such straws in a bleak wind as the hard-line predestinarian *Confessio Helveticarum* of 1675, which sought to eliminate varieties of view amongst the Swiss reformed churches about sin, grace and salvation. We should note that in 1696 the Scots hanged Thomas Akenhead for blasphemy - apparently in response to student light-heartedness at the expense of some passages in the Old Testament - and, remember that, upon inspection, Hamburg's celebrated openness towards religious minorities amounted before 1785 to little more than granting legal status to their commercial contracts, while allowing them neither citizenship nor religious liberties. The Lutheran clergy of the city vehemently

-
1. Witchcraft cannot be in any simple sense be considered a form of religious heterodoxy. The treatment of those deemed to be witches has, however, tended to be worse in societies unwilling to allow any variety of religious belief and the styles and motives of the persecutors are similar enough for aspects of the European witch-craze to deserve mention in this essay.
 2. *Debates in the House of Commons, from the year 1667 to the year 1694, collected by the Hon. A. Grey Esq. who was Thirty Years Member for the Town of Derby etc.*, 10 vols, 1763, viii, 328.

opposed leniency not only to Jews and Roman Catholics but to Calvinists too.³ It is claimed that protestants founded or fled to the North American colonies "in pursuit of religious freedom", but often they proved as convinced as any European, once they had fashioned a church to their own design, that it should be established and imposed by penal laws.

Why rulers found religious nonconformists threatening is well worth exploring, but first we need to establish that the process by which persecution for religious beliefs came to seem wrong was no steadily flowing tide, hesitant at first, pausing to eddy round obstacles, irresistible and irreversible. In the seventeenth century in particular we have clear evidence of new rigour, of lost rights, of the destruction of congregations and buildings, of dissidents choosing or being forced into exile. It is not that those who persecuted knew no better: in many cases they were deliberately rejecting a co-existence of faiths (however guarded and grudging) that they had tried and experienced. Although a tide had seemed to have begun to flow, it proved possible to turn it. Many states in continental Europe took this course: this paper will consider events and issues in five of them. In each case it is Roman Catholicism on the attack, continuing counter-reformation policies, but the circumstances and principles examined should shed light on the fragility of religious toleration throughout late seventeenth-century Europe.

Poland

It is useful to start by considering the case of Poland, whose sixteenth-century history is celebrated as that of a "state without stakes". There many kinds of protestant -- including those who could not accept the Trinity -- at least two sorts of Orthodox, as well as Armenians, Tartars, Jews and Roman Catholics, all lived under considerable freedoms. Some were protected by powerful nobles; some were powerful nobles; many Lutherans were safe behind the legal immunities of German-speaking towns and the 1573 Declaration of the Confederation of Warsaw asserted that "we who differ in matters of religion will keep the peace among ourselves, and neither shed blood on account of differences of Faith, or kinds of church, nor punish one another by confiscation of goods, deprivation of honour, imprisonment, or exile..."⁴ For some Roman Catholics this represented no more than a recognition of political weakness, which they hoped would prove temporary. From roughly 1550 to 1580 neither the king nor the Sejm (Diet) would back counter-reformation militancy; but during the reign of Sigismund III (1587-1632) catholic recovery moved fast with official support. In 1581, for instance, an attempt to build a protestant church in Warsaw was

-
3. Joachim Whalley, "Religious Toleration in Germany", a paper given at the Annual Conference of the British Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, January, 1986.
 4. Quoted in Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, 2 vols, Oxford, 1981, i, 160.

thwarted by direct action: a mob pulled down what had been built and made sure the work was not restarted. The king exercised his rights of patronage and preferment so as to reward those who converted to catholicism. The Polish senate had some eighty-five senators; in 1586 almost half of them were protestant; by 1632 only six protestants remained.

This shift is generally associated with the expansion of the Jesuits, who were introduced into Poland in 1564. Norman Davies points out, however, that even at their height they controlled no more than seventy of the 1200 monastic and religious houses: many other orders, old and new, continued to preach and to educate the republic's leaders.⁵ In early seventeenth-century Poland protestants were being squeezed out of positions of political power, but they remained secure in possession of their lands and lives. There was no Inquisition, the Index proved unenforceable, as late as 1645 an interconfessional colloquium was held in Thorn and a Spanish diplomat passing through the city in 1674 noted that Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism were both practised: "although the number of Lutherans is far greater than that of the Catholics, nevertheless all live in great harmony with one another and without disputes or arguments on questions of belief -- which is the best way to preserve peace; the priests and friars also go openly through the streets in their particular habits...".⁶

It was the anti-trinitarians who had no European heartland, no foreign protectors and the most to gain from Poland's tradition of religious toleration: their writings -- for instance the *Vindiciae pro religionis libertate*, 1637⁷ -- were amongst the earliest to represent such a policy as intrinsically good, and not an unfortunate occasional necessity. Most trinitarian protestants longed to deal with their pernicious heresies, but Polish Roman Catholics refused to cooperate, on the ground that nobody could show them a single accepted document defining "correct" protestant doctrine, and the very existence of such a group revealed the truth about the slippery slope of heresy. A change in policy, which protestants endorsed, culminated in 1658. Anti-trinitarians were then required to convert or be expelled from the country, after being excluded from the Diet in 1649 and losing their schools and print shops in 1647.

Jews had enjoyed considerable autonomy in their own religious, judicial and tax affairs since 1551, and although some towns (especially Warsaw) never made them welcome, their numbers had grown from some fifty thousand around 1500 to about half a million in 1650, chiefly through immigration.⁸ It was the Cossack rebellion of 1648-1654 which destroyed their frail security: thousands were

5. Davies, *God's Playground*, i, 168-170.

6. C. Scott, "A Spanish Diplomat's View of Poland (1674)", *Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, xl, 1962, 497-517.

7. By Jan Crell, this tract had enough contemporary resonance to be printed in a French translation in 1769.

8. William Monter, *Ritual, Myth and Magic in Early Modern Europe*, Brighton, 1983, 160-161.

massacred. It was true, but would have been small consolation, that there had been no change in official policy towards them. Tartars had been increasingly subjected to hostile regulation since a 1616 decree forbidding mixed marriages. But even during the period of John Sobieski's heroic struggle against the Turks in the second half of the seventeenth century, Tartars were not expelled and were not subjected to forced conversion. As late as the 1930s seventeen Tartar mosques remained in Poland.

Lutherans and Calvinists suffered even less and later; their numbers fell, but not through state persecution. Many suffered at the hands of the Cossacks: the number of active protestant communities went down from 140 to 45 during the rebellion.⁹ The spectacular late eighteenth-century decline was primarily due to the partitions, which turned the bulk of Poland's Lutherans into Prussians. It was not till 1716 that new protestant churches were forbidden, and 1718 that protestants were excluded from the Diet. The Tumult of Thorn in 1724 passed into legend as evidence of the Poles' catholic ferocity, but it was an isolated incident which in their propaganda the protestant powers turned to full advantage.¹⁰

The actions and reactions in Thorn followed a pattern which had been established soon after the Swedish invasion of 1655. When Charles X of Sweden first arrived, Roman Catholic and protestant Poles alike were happy to switch their allegiance from John Casimir, but quite soon the burdens of occupation and the Swedes' partisan support for their fellow-Lutherans gave Casimir the opportunity to present his cause as that of Polish patriotism, true catholicism and even of the Virgin Mary herself: in 1656 he pronounced her the Queen of the Polish Crown. When a fortified shrine fought off repeated Swedish attacks his claims seem vindicated.¹¹ In the Cossack revolt Orthodox rebels spelt out their beliefs in the blood of catholics, protestants and Jews, and Poland lost vast territories to the Czar; during the Swedish invasion it became increasingly clear that the only true Pole was a catholic; by the end of the seventeenth century Prussia manifestly fanned the grievances of Lutherans in northern towns as a means of acquiring political leverage within Poland, while encouraging the Russians to back the claims of the Orthodox for their own reasons. Revolt, civil war and war had taught Poles that whatever the benefits religious diversity had

9. Davies, *God's Playground*, i, 198.

10. A riot followed the attempt of some Jesuit students to force Lutheran bystanders to respect their procession in honour of the Virgin. The city was found collectively guilty of profanation and sedition; the burgomaster and eighteen others were sentenced to unpleasant deaths. (One escaped by converting and one was pardoned by the king). Many more suffered fines and confiscations. A Lutheran school, chapel and printing press were expropriated.

11. Wiktor Weintraub, "Toleration and Intolerance in Old Poland", *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, xiii, 1971, 27.

brought their country, the price was now too high. This change in official conviction had however only limited impact on those who accepted political exclusion as the cost of remaining non-catholic; the machinery of the state was too weak to impose a programme of forced conversion.

Ironically this same weakness of central institutions played a part in the late and ferocious wave of witch-trials which swept across Poland. Most such cases were heard in municipal courts, despite formal insistence from both the church (1543 and 1669) and the crown (1672 and 1713) that they did not possess the powers they were using. Unrestricted torture, and procedures which condemned the defendant in advance, led to what may have been as many as 10,000 legal executions, most of which took place in the northern areas more directly subject to German influence.¹² The causes of witch-hunting in general are too complicated to examine here, but it is worth asking why Poland should take to it with such gusto after 1650, when in most western European countries such prosecutions were almost over. At least part of the explanation seems to lie in the same suffering and loss through war and rebellion as destroyed Poland's tradition of religious toleration. Scapegoats were needed, and thousands of unfortunates were made to confess that through an alliance with the devil they had harmed their neighbours and, through them, the whole of Christendom.

Austria

Looking at events linked with the Holy Roman Empire after the accession of Leopold I in 1658 requires consideration at the least of the discrete stories of Austria,¹³ Hungary and Transylvania, (The forced re-ordering of Bohemia's churches, government, and landowning nobility had been quite thoroughly accomplished within the decade which followed the protestants' defeat at the White Mountain in 1620). The Habsburgs' attempt to impose a Roman Catholic absolutist system on the entire Empire had indeed been thwarted in the Thirty Years' War, but there had been no significant change of heart. It suited the purposes of opinion-formers in England and the Netherlands to play down the religious policies of Leopold: Louis XIV's aggression was a nearer threat; territories were at stake. It was simpler to label the French king the persecutor, to caricature him as a hooded agent of the Inquisition and thus by implication

-
12. Brian P. Levack, *Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, Harlow, 1986, 195: this figure is offered by the author with some scepticism. His volume is a useful work of synthesis, in this instance drawing on work published in Polish in 1952 by Bohdan Baranowski, which the present author has been unable to consult.
 13. "Austria" is a useful shorthand for the non-Bohemian and non-Hungarian lands ruled in this period by the Habsburgs in direct sovereignty. It covers for the present purpose, Upper and Lower Austria; Styria, Carinthia and Carniola ("Inner Austria"); the Tyrol and some disconnected fragments mostly in Swabia.

level no overt charges against an important ally, than to expose even-handedly the policies of both Louis and Leopold.

Leopold's intentions were quite straightforward. Himself a devout Roman Catholic, he wanted all his subjects to share his beliefs. "Reformation Commissions" made up of both priests and officials, and accompanied by soldiers, toured the country exhorting people to declare their submission to the church. In just two years in the 1650s over 22,000 conversions had been recorded in the north-western part of Lower Austria. In the 1660s and 1670s Moravia and Silesia were subjected to the same treatment. Assurances given in the Peace of Westphalia turned out to be no protection: by 1700 only some two hundred and twenty Silesian protestant churches remained open, of over fifteen hundred functioning in 1600.¹⁴ Fines and dragonnades were imposed, preachers were banished, protestant marriage and burial were forbidden. Protestantism did not die, but it was cowed and badly damaged; the state which intended its destruction was under-funded and over-stretched, but it managed to be effective in this area.

Leopold's devotion to the Roman Catholic Church did not extend to allowing it to run itself: he made or influenced as many appointments as possible; he contested claims to land and revenues; he ordered prayers and fast days, oversaw censorship and gave degrees on his own authority. This is not to say that his religious ambitions were no more than a decent veil for Habsburg dynasticism, but it suggests that he had more than one ground for mistrusting protestants' habit of running their own affairs. They were not only heretics but people apt to resist authoritarian men and measures.

A similar mixture of motives lay behind the expulsion of the Jews from Vienna. The city's Jewish quarter had long been the property of the emperor, a device designed to protect Jews and their possessions from the greed and potential violence of their Christian neighbours. In 1670 Leopold struck a deal with his capital, selling the Jewish quarter to Vienna for 100,000 Gulden. In return for the right to expel the Jews, whom they termed "blasphemers, murderers of God's son, hateful to all Christians and cursed by God and themselves", the city council promised to underwrite their debts up to 10,000 Gulden and build a church where the synagogue had stood.¹⁵ Exemptions were later granted (the Court Jew Samuel Oppenheimer remained a key figure in financing Austria's wars), and little in Leopold's correspondence suggests that he had a precise vision of Jews as defilement or as fifth-columnists, but this particular money-making stratagem fits the pattern of imposing monolithic Roman Catholicism and destroying previous rights of toleration.

14. R.J.W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy*, Oxford, 1979, 119-20.

15. John P. Spielman, *Leopold I of Austria*, London, 1977, 75-76.

Hungary

The money Leopold needed so urgently was primarily being spent on war. There was nothing new in this, but the variation on the traditional theme was that new attacks from the Turks occasioned a long series of counter-attacks whose success was to lead by 1718 to a doubling of the land area held by the Habsburgs in south eastern Europe. This meant that the "Hungary" under Austrian control was re-inflated from what was chiefly a strip little more than fifty miles beyond the border of the Holy Roman Empire, which was all that had survived the near-disastrous siege of Vienna of 1529 and the inconclusive struggles between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans of the 1530s and 40s. An early victory in 1664 was not followed up, and in 1683 the Turks were again at the gates of Vienna, but once that siege was broken, a prolonged rout rolled Ottoman power rapidly back and left "liberated" Magyars at the mercy of the Emperor's religious policies. It would have been hard to disentangle the territorial rights of over 150 years ago, but Leopold had good reason not even to try: many Magyar gentry and nobles were and had been protestant. A policy of distributing recovered lands to German-speaking Roman Catholic families was meant both to reward and to elicit loyalty.

A serious revolt in "Austrian" Hungary in 1670 had given Leopold evidence to back his prejudices: mass arrests and executions increasingly seemed to bear out the connection between treason and protestantism, although the initial leaders of the revolt had been catholics. By the summer of 1672 the Emperor had ordered all protestant pastors out of Hungary, and was threatening to quarter troops on those of their flock who would not convert. Catholic magnates who had no affection for the system of government which Leopold sought to impose were tempted to join in a campaign against protestants in the hope of receiving confiscated estates as their reward. Some three hundred and thirty protestant pastors were tried for treason in Pressburg in 1674: they were found guilty and forced to choose between death and conversion. The ninety-three who stood firm had their sentences commuted, but the following year some forty of them were sent to the galleys in Naples.¹⁶ The need to pull out troops to fight France, and the need for allies like the Dutch republic, Brandenburg and Saxony, forced Leopold to soften his position and leave Hungary unreconstructed.

Between 1676 and 1681 civil war continued. Many protestants fled with their grievances and numbers of followers into Turkish Hungary; many then raided back across the border. That they felt safer among infidels confirmed again Leopold's doubts about their claim to be as Christian as he was. A Diet called in 1681 represented the Emperor's admission that peace could only be secured through the re-establishment of constitutional process, but still he clung to his claim that religious affairs were "private", in that they were governed by his conscience; they could not be considered part of the political agenda, or capable of resolution by discussion and compromise. What forced his hand was the

16. Spielman, *Leopold I*, 70-72.

French capture of Strasbourg, after which he restored complete confessional freedom to the towns of Hungary: something which left the conflict in the countryside untouched, and angered those of his Roman Catholic followers who had been making great advances in the towns with official, and armed, support. The Turkish invasion of 1683, and the siege of Vienna from July to September, showed Leopold's government at its weakest: without the intervention of John Sobieski of Poland, it is doubtful whether the imperial capital would have survived.¹⁷ Once the city was safe the authorities blocked its one last loophole of religious freedom. Protestant services in foreign embassies were made out of bounds to Austrian subjects.

Church money kept the victorious campaign against the Turks successful. By 1688 Belgrade had fallen. Whenever and wherever Leopold felt free to, he subjected this recovered Hungarian territory to the full rigour of his policies: the nadir was perhaps a series of trials held in "special" courts under Caraffa in 1687. The procedure echoed significantly that used in witch-hunting. A chain reaction of torture, denunciation and flight provided all the evidence necessary to confirm the interconnection of protestantism and treason. Late in the same year, the Emperor had his son Joseph crowned hereditary ruler of Hungary. Much of the ancient constitution was confirmed, but since there had been no role in it for a hereditary ruling house this concession yielded only limited reassurance. Before Leopold's death in 1705 this same bundle of grievances had led to the outbreak of the Rákóczi rebellion, which was to last for the whole of Joseph's reign: he tackled it with a mixture of concessions and conquest, always aware that not only did his enemy, Louis XIV, profit from sending assistance to the rebels, but that his British and Dutch allies likewise interested themselves in the Hungarian rebellion on behalf of their co-religionists. What made this impertinence particularly tiresome was Joseph I's well-founded conviction that no such representations on behalf of the catholic Irish would be acceded to. Nonetheless the eventual settlement with the Magyars, confirmed at the diet of 1712-15, not only abandoned the autocratic programme but recognised particular, narrow protestant rights: Joseph I was a different man from his father. He had in fact signalled as much immediately after Leopold's funeral, when he ordered the expulsion of the Jesuit who had delivered an oration specifically praising the dead emperor's zeal against protestants. Two thousand copies of the sermon had been prepared for distribution: Joseph had them suppressed.¹⁸

The emperor's early death led to another reversal in policy: in 1731 it was made a crime to convert from catholicism; protestants had to observe catholic holy days and found themselves effectively debarred from public office by the obligation to take oaths in a form their consciences forbade, to the Virgin Mary,

17. See John Stoye, *The Siege of Vienna*, London, 1964, especially 240-242.

18. Charles W. Ingrao, *In Quest and Crisis: Emperor Joseph I and the Habsburg Monarchy*, West Lafayette, Indiana, 1979, 15.

for instance. By 1786, according to Joseph II's religious census, around fifteen per cent of Hungary's population remained protestant, a figure which is perhaps a fair reflection of the intransigence of both sides.¹⁹

Transylvania

This province had been obliged to pay tribute to the Sultan since the sixteenth-century Turkish advances into eastern Europe: in return it had kept a strong Diet, an elected prince and a colourful mixture of nationalities and faiths which at least matched that of Poland. New forms of deviation were not permitted, so sects current around 1600 defined the limits of what was possible, but here again one found anti-trinitarians as well as more conventional styles of protestant: as in Hungary, Calvinism was dominant, while Lutheranism was especially important in towns. Magyar refugees from the policies of Leopold I settled from the 1660s onwards and many of those content with this haven found it hard to rejoice in the Empire's successes against the Turks after 1683. Negotiators attempted to reach an understanding with Leopold about the way in which Transylvania could mediate between him and the Turks: it quickly became apparent that on the contrary, his expectation was of annexing the province to the Austrian crown. Prince Michael Apafy mistakenly supposed that Austria's gains would prove temporary, and that in rebuffing Leopold he would be safe enough in appealing for help from both John Sobieski of Poland and the Turks.

In 1687 Apafy was forced to surrender most of his control over the principality, and subscribe generously to the costs of the Austrian army; in May 1688 the Diet of Transylvania accepted Leopold as the hereditary King of Hungary and their protector. The remnants of Roman Catholicism in Transylvania had not been persecuted out of existence and now basked in new-found royal approval. Leopold also oversaw the establishment of another Uniate church (the first modern one had dated from 1596); about half Transylvania's inhabitants were Orthodox Wallachians with few rights and little status. They were persuaded to accept the authority of the Pope and one or two other Roman Catholic touches, and assured that doing so would enhance their prospects in the new Transylvanian dispensation. Armenian Orthodox in Transylvania made the same choice. Confusingly, at the same time, Orthodox Serbs who had begun similar negotiations before it became clear that the Turks were not to lose their grip on their lands were allowed to escape and settle in reconquered Hungary without being required to make any such concessions.²⁰

In Transylvania it was Leopold, in spite of enthusiastic support for his co-religionists, who had to make concessions: he guaranteed religious liberty to those groups previously entitled to it. It was not that his convictions had changed, but that the realities of the situation had to be recognised: the

19. Monter, *Ritual, Myth and Magic*, 143.

20. Spielman, *Leopold I*, 160.

Habsburgs were far from secure in their possession of the principality. Control was lost in 1690 when the sultan named Thököly (since 1678 the Hungarians' Calvinist rebel leader) as prince of Transylvania on Apafy's death; by October 1691 he had been accepted by all except the German minority in the principality. Before the year was out he had been toppled into exile, but his stepson Rákóczi held most of Transylvania for some three years during his Hungarian revolt. This temporary triumph sprang in large measure from the fears of protestants.

Witch-hunting in Austria, Hungary and Transylvania

These three territories may usefully be considered together, but in this order. Their record was less bloodstained than that of Poland. Austrian witch-finding got off to a brisk start in the 1480s, but then petered out. Not until after 1600 did the pace pick up: after 1650 there were twenty major outbreaks in forty years in Inner Austria but the total of executions probably reached only some 1500.²¹ One reason advanced for this is that the system of government gave less power to local courts. Hungary, like England, dealt with witchcraft before ordinary courts, and until about 1650 had relatively few trials with a high rate of acquittal. Thereafter torture was increasingly used, and as many as thirty-four witches were executed in Szegedin in 1734. The total number of people tried before the craze abruptly died away in the 1750s is thought to have been no more than 900, of whom only some 400 were executed. One specifically Hungarian witch-belief is of the devil as commander-in-chief of a military formation of witches. This has been seen as analogous to the claims of the nightflying *benandanti* of Friuli, but a simpler parallel is probably that with the groups of armed rebels who sustained Hungary's civil wars.

Transylvanian witch-trials were conducted on an accusatorial rather than inquisitorial system until 1725; those who made false accusations therefore risked counter-charges. Torture was little used (that is if one views the water ordeal as a different mode of procedure). Not surprisingly, fewer than fifty people appear to have been executed for witch-craft in the principality, which thus in this as in other respects combines a "western" characteristic (leniency) with an "eastern" (lateness in coming to, and abandoning, witch-trials).²²

France

The story here is well-known: the Edict of Nantes in 1598, marking the exhausted final truce of the French religious wars, did not give France religious toleration. It restored to Roman Catholicism the entire parish system, the tithes and its confiscated property, but gave the Huguenots little more than the right to profess their faith and hold a number of fortified towns. (The French had no right to follow any third belief until the annexation of Alsace allowed a space to

21. Evans, *Making of the Habsburg Monarchy*, 402-417.

22. Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, 198-199.

Lutheranism). Once Henri IV was dead the Edict was living on borrowed time. In 1617 it was extended to Navarre, which actually marked a step backward for the protestants who had abolished all public evidence of catholicism in the principality. The scope of the "mixed" law courts, where at least one reformed judge would sit, was sharply narrowed in 1662. Once the bitterness of the first generation had died away, the two churches of France came to recognise each other as Christian, and capable of administering valid baptism. Ironically this came to make the Huguenots' position seem increasingly perverse: if so little separated them from the main faith of their countrymen, why would they not yield gracefully?

A stream of *Arrêts du Conseil*, usually issued in response to the complaint of a good catholic, imposed limitations on reformed church buildings, preaching in named areas, singing psalms in public, reformed funerals, dying without being visited by a curé and exercising certain professions. Even though many of these remained unenforced, and unenforceable, Huguenots correctly felt themselves less and less secure. Their local colloquies were forbidden in 1657; in 1660 provincial synods had to hold their discussions in the presence of royal officials. A *Déclaration* of 1666 showed Louis XIV firmly committed to his clergy's view of the Huguenots as a problem in need of a solution. Another of 1669 used a softer tone, primarily because foreign affairs required that notice be taken of pressure from England and Brandenburg. The attacks began again after 1679 at the end of the war with the Dutch. In 1680 it became illegal to convert to protestantism; in 1681 the dragonnades began; by March 1685 all the Academies of the reformed faith were closed. In October the last step was taken with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.²³

Two points need emphasising: only pastors were offered the choice of conversion or emigration (lay people broke the law if they left) and the right to hold reformed beliefs in private amounted to nothing. This was harsher than the terms available to inhabitants of the Empire under the Peace of Westphalia if they fell foul of their prince's religious convictions.

Huguenots were associated with the dangerous doctrines of the English Revolution; kings were meant to secure justice and the tranquil exercise of religion to their subjects; St. Augustine had deemed legitimate the use of force to extirpate heresy; many generous offers had brought into the fold all but the last few obdurate heretics. Many arguments pointed one way; hardly a voice defended toleration on principle before the exiled Pierre Bayle, whose pastor brother died in a French prison, took up the cause from the Netherlands.²⁴

The hunt for witches in France fell off sharply after Louis XIV pardoned twelve people who had been convicted in Rouen in 1669, and almost stopped

23. Elisabeth Labrousse, *Une foi, une loi, un roi? La Révocation de L'Edit de Nantes*, Geneva, 1985 offers a detailed dispassionate and harrowing account in this tercentennial study.

24. For a recent examination of Bayle's work on toleration see John Kilcullen, *Sincerity and Truth: Essays on Arnauld, Bayle, and Toleration*, Oxford, 1988.

after a spectacular poisoning-and-satanism case provoked him into issuing an edict in 1682 which effectively struck witchcraft from the scope of the criminal law. There had probably been no more than four thousand cases in all, most of them in the areas less directly controlled by royal authority.²⁵ In a pattern neatly reversing that of Poland it can be seen that strong central government protected this deluded, indeed supposititious, type of religious deviant while posing an ever more serious threat to the heretic.

The attack on toleration

The cases considered here have furnished evidence for a model which describes, if not explains, the pressures which led to the destruction of religious liberties. The most obvious single factor is the conviction of the ruler: from Ferdinand of Styria onwards the Austrian Habsburgs took seriously their divine calling, and supposed that at a fundamental level non-Roman Catholics could not be full members of a political community. Such a conviction on its own should be seen as a necessary rather than sufficient condition; Leopold could not impose his on Transylvania, and encountered small success in Hungary; while from Stefan Batory's reign, most Polish kings would have been eager to emphasise the claims of Roman Catholicism with their royal authority, but they possessed too little power to do so.

The model, then, requires in addition effective machinery of state. The crudest example is the case of reluctant Huguenots' not only being frog-marched to Mass, but physically forced by soldiers to eat the Host.²⁶ Weak institutions, or institutions manned by those who saw no need to be thorough in implementing official policy, could leave a king or emperor beating the air. As in Leopold I's "Reformation Commissions", one needed an appropriate combination of priests, state officials and soldiers to rearrange the confessional pattern of a province, let alone a whole country. Sometimes a campaign of compulsory conversion could be self-financing: fines, confiscations and the quartering of troops could make recalcitrants pay for what was done to them. Mostly such procedures balanced their books only briefly. They had the net effect on a community of extracting accumulated capital from one of its sections to be spent as a windfall gain by the rest. More often campaigns included carrots as well as sticks: new converts might be offered tax reliefs, and would certainly stop paying whatever fines had been imposed on them before they changed their faith.

So the model requires money which can be diverted temporarily at least from ordinary uses. It also requires acquiescence, or -- better -- active co-operation from those sections of public opinion that count. Usually in the late seventeenth century it is safe to presume that politics are the preserve of the few, and that fewer than ten per cent of the adult males in any population have, or feel entitled

25. Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, 167, 181.

26. Labrousse, *Une foi, une loi, un roi?* 204.

to have, any voice in how they are governed. But imposing religious conformity exposes decisions and their consequences to the scrutiny of much wider groups. Sometimes, as when the Jews of Vienna were vilified by their fellow-Viennese, public opinion shaped what was done. Sometimes, as when Huguenots were protected by sympathetic Catholics as they fled France, it obstructed official policy. As a rough rule one could argue that it was seldom possible, physically or financially, to eliminate a minority view which was shared by more than a third of any given population.

Populations were of course stratified, linked by kinship and land-holding, and often entrenched in structures and institutions which had nothing overtly religious about them, but which became the catacombs capable of sheltering the persecuted until a brief flurry of official energy died down. Leopold's attack on the institutions of Hungary, and especially on the Magyar nobles' claims to tax-exemption, meant that his protestant subjects found even more support than their numbers alone would lead us to expect. So a successful campaign against a religious minority would be one which isolated its members first, casting them as alien. This fits well with the treatment of both Jews and witches.

War played a complicated part in the story. One way in which it fits the model is by narrowing and focussing patriotism, so that unless a group shares the full package of beliefs favoured by those in power, its loyalty becomes suspect. Fifth-columnists were a constant fear. Philip II of Spain suspected the Moriscoes of being better Moors than Spaniards; Polish Lutherans could be shown to have much to gain from the success of Swedish invasions. War on the other hand absorbed money and troops which could otherwise have been used to bully dissidents into conformity: Louis XIV's great final crusade against the Huguenots was not possible until the Truce of Ratisbon freed his hands, and it slackened in ferocity when the Nine Years' War broke out.

A third strand to the skein entangling war with state religious persecution had to do with the dynastic conflict between the Bourbons and the Habsburgs. Both were Roman Catholic houses, both laid special claim to the sanctity of their cause, but seventeenth-century wars were seldom fought without allies, and allies often stipulated concessions to their co-religionists as part of the price of support. Sweden, Prussia, England and the Dutch republic all leant on Emperor Joseph I, especially on behalf of Silesian protestants, during the protracted Spanish Succession War: even his father Leopold had to repent hastily of sending the forty protestant pastors to the Neapolitan galleys. Commentators who have read into alliances across confessional divides a dwindling attachment to religious loyalties are only half right. Within and under the negotiations about troops, territories and money, religious issues remain important: it took a positive effort from Marlborough, for instance, to try to postpone pressing the case of the Silesian protestants in 1707.²⁷

27. Ingraio, *Quest and Crisis*, 58.

The final necessary, though not sufficient, element in the model is the certainty nursed by religious believers that God in fact wants the worship of one true Church: erroneous statements about Him and His work of salvation are not in the same category as misperceptions or miscalculations, dangerous but fundamentally innocent, they are blasphemies to which toleration is a grotesquely inadequate response. Only those few who could somehow picture themselves as outside or beyond the confessional framework into which Christendom was divided could in conscience respect their neighbour's "error". Before 1700 very few, mostly anti-trinitarian protestants, saw the world in this way. The great majority tolerated when they did so out of weakness, weariness or fear. The resurgence of persecution, then, requires little explanation: things were going back to normal as changing circumstances made it possible. Gloomier observers have argued that toleration in our modern sense is no more than a by-product of indifference and unbelief.

LINDA KIRK

REVIEWS

The Transcendent Lord: The Spirit and the Church in Calvinist and Cappadocian. By Colin Gunton. Pp. 20. The 1988 Congregational Lecture. £1.00

Colin Gunton is the Professor of Christian Doctrine in the University of London and a minister of the United Reformed Church. His writings are distinguished essays in relating the two disciplines of theology and philosophy and in relating both of them to the worship and practice of the Church. Dr. Newbigin, introducing Professor Gunton's recent book, *Enlightenment and Alienation* (Eerdmans, 1985), describes it as "absorbing", but if any intending readers think they are about to embark upon easy bed-time reading let them be warned: it will require diligent reading and even re-reading to gain illumination, but there is, as Dr. Newbigin also says, illumination. So it is with this lecture.

Professor Gunton holds that the Holy Spirit is the transcendent Spirit of God and not an immanent light inherent in human nature. The Holy Spirit brings home to the Christian community the glory of the Father and the redeeming work of the Son. The transcendent life of the Trinity is echoed in the life of the Church. Dr. Gunton works this out by referring to the teaching of John Owen and of Basil of Caesarea and he then moves on to consider the relation of community and freedom within the church.

Professor Gunton follows Barth in interpreting the Calvinist doctrine of election as "all gospel, good news" and he gives a fine definition of election as "the source of our salvation". There are many passages in Calvin's works which have this message but it is probable that Calvin would not agree that the stern strands in his teaching can be so comfortably softened as they are in this exposition of his teaching.

This lecture is indeed a stimulating study. The reader may be baffled by the sentence that "in so far as anything is *merely* historically given it is the vehicle of

'nature' and so inimical to freedom". The reader may also be surprised by the imprecise phrase "and the rest" which occurs twice.

There is one sentence which by itself makes the lecture worthwhile and ought to be in the mind and thought of all who attempt to lead the worship of God:

When true worship takes place, there is a sharing in the worship of heaven and an anticipation of the life of the age to come.

R. BUICK KNOX

Established Church, Sectarian People. Itinerancy and the transformation of English Dissent, 1780-1830. By Deryck W. Lovegrove. Pp. xii, 254. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1988. £27.50.

This valuable book derives its cryptic title from the fears of conservative Anglicans in the early nineteenth century that the rapid expansion of Dissent would leave the country with a formal establishment confronted by a sectarian people, a result actually arrived at, as Dr. Lovegrove does not note, not in England but in Wales and Ulster. A major factor in the process was an enormous wave of itinerant preaching which set in in the late 1790s and continued for about a generation, an activity which, at any rate quantitatively speaking, was as foreign to the traditional order of Dissent as it was to that of the Church. This much has long been known. What Dr. Lovegrove does is to put as much local flesh on the national bones as he can, and to show that a principal ingredient in the transformation was provided by a new generation of Dissenting academies. Keen on preaching practice and wedded to a missionary ideal, the colleges exploited the academic lectures of their alumni, to send an endless succession of energetic young men on itinerant rounds until permanent congregations were created. In this contest, an Anglican ministry which at its worst might be tired, served by deputy, or absent altogether, fared ill, and put up vociferous cries of unfair competition; and it was undeniable that the Toleration Act had never been intended to cover anything of the sort. It is unlikely that new material of serious general importance will ever be added to Dr. Lovegrove's account, and his dispassionate treatment will serve historians well for as far ahead as can be seen. What is unfortunate is that the author's virtues of personal modesty and scholarly caution injure as well as serve his cause. In a time when tempers ran high he flattens his story by emphasising divisions of opinion among Dissenters and the amount of sympathy for itinerant preaching among Anglicans; his style, overweighted by nouns and underpowered by verbs, is occasionally a caricature of itself; and mindful of the limitations of his manuscript base he eschews the wider questions his story throws up. Was it simply defects of organisational theory which led congregations and colleges which had done much for itinerant evangelism to become obsessed with the Frankenstein they had created within a generation? He makes clear that evangelism could not bring the British public within the covenant any more than it could be brought within the Methodist class-meeting. Was this because these models of religious belonging with their strenuous implications were less

suited to mass religious-belonging than those of Catholic provenance? Or was it the case that past efforts to prevent the unthinkable being thought (particularly in the matter of relations between pastor and people) had led Dissent, like Methodism, to bring so much Catholic baggage with it that it could not take the opportunity which offered? It is up to readers to generate their own excitements from Dr. Lovegrove's admirable material.

W.R. WARD

Defending and Declaring the Faith. Some Scottish Examples 1860-1920. By Alan P.F. Sell. Pp. 280. Paternoster Press, 1987. £8.95 paperback.

For the emergence of the modern Church the importance of the period covered by this book is beyond doubt. Yet, while the significance of German scholars has long been recognized, and a number of studies have indicated the contribution of English writers to the realm of theology and apologetics, almost total silence has brooded over the Scottish scene. This dearth of attention is the more remarkable when the theological richness of the Scottish Church at the close of the Victorian era is contrasted with the lack of interest in that area exhibited by its celebrated eighteenth-century predecessor. Here, therefore, is a work to be set alongside Professor Cheyne's recent historical appraisal of the Kirk in what was a crucial period of adjustment to the modern world.

The author has selected a cross-section of the most significant theological writers between the mid nineteenth-century crisis of faith and the end of the First World War, examining in particular changing attitudes to the Bible, confessionalism, Christology and the grounds of faith. His survey takes the reader from the traditional Calvinism of John Kennedy of Dingwall by way of John Caird's appropriation of Hegelian idealism and A.B. Bruce's quest for the historical Jesus, to the redefined evangelicalism of James Denney. Using their extensive writings Dr. Sell has displayed the range of responses elicited by the onslaught of ethical, biblical and scientific criticism, and shaped by the tensions between the older orthodoxy and the prevalent philosophical forces of idealism and naturalism.

If Kennedy and his younger contemporary, Robert Flint, depended upon approaches to theology which owed their substance to an earlier age, more progressive trends were also at work. By examining in turn John Caird's concern to connect the human with the divine, A.B. Bruce's determination to found genuine belief upon a reliable knowledge of the person of Christ, James Iverach's conviction that evolutionary science in spite of its dangers could be used to support the faith, and D.W. Forrest's interest in the incarnation and the ideas of kenosis, the author illustrates the manner in which Scottish Christian thought responded to contemporary challenges. The study concludes with the rehabilitation of orthodox theology and preaching undertaken by James Orr and Principal Denney.

While this book does not offer a general introduction to the issues engaging Christian theology at the end of the nineteenth century -- indeed in many places it presupposes considerable knowledge -- it is commendably clear in its

discussion of ideas. In spite of its preoccupation with conceptual change, the judicious use of source material stimulates the reader's interest and helps to demonstrate the continuing importance of many of the matters raised. The principal weakness of the book lies in its approach. The eight biographical studies convey a feeling of repetitiveness; an impression merely reinforced by textual cross-references. Important themes are lost to view as discussion becomes fragmented. The author might with greater profit have reversed the overall focus, treating the area thematically and drawing upon the individuals selected for the purpose of illustration rather than the subjects themselves.

In the light of the title it is surprising to discover the relative paucity of historical reference within the text. Since Christian theology in the Victorian period found it essential to adopt an apologetic posture, responding to an insistent series of external challenges, this omission is all the more obvious. While a general chronological progression is evident within the overlapping careers of the theologians examined, the book lacks a firm historical framework. Its value is less, therefore, than would have been the case if the theological discussion had been related more explicitly to contemporary developments affecting Church and society.

Despite these reservations the usefulness of this work is readily apparent. It brings to prominence an important group of Scottish theologians, and through their ideas deals with issues which in many cases continue to be of moment for the modern Church. For those who wish to understand better the difficult transition between confessionalism and secular society, this study illuminates the process in one important part of the English-speaking world.

DERYCK W. LOVEGROVE

Trinity Congregational Church, Swinton. By Ian H. Wallace. (obtainable from the author at 32 Cecil Road, Eccles, M30 OFZ, price £2.75).

Ian Wallace, long-time minister at Patricroft, has added to his contributions to local church history with an account of Trinity, Swinton, a now-defunct neighbouring church. The story is clearly told, but cannot be said to be inspiring. "In its day", says the author, "the church had a vital influence upon the life of the community it existed to serve". But he has provided an honest and forthright account which seems to consist in discouragingly large measure of dissension, decline and problems with the property. The notable ministries the church enjoyed included a ten-year pastorate from 1917 to 1927 by Thomas Wigley, centre later of the Blackheath Group and founder of the Union of Modern Free Churchmen. Some may be tempted to see a positive relationship between liberal theology and terminal decline; but the truth must be more complicated than that. Why a well-served church went downhill so rapidly is difficult to say. But Mr. Wallace has given us a sample of an experience pretty widely shared in the period he covers.

STEPHEN MAYOR

SOME CONTEMPORARIES

The Baptist Quarterly (XXXII, 5-8, 1988)

No. 5: M. Walker, "The presidency of the Lord's Supper among nineteenth-century English Baptists"; D.D. Morgan, "Smoke, fire and light: Baptists and the revitalisation of Welsh Dissent". No. 6: M. Nicholls, "The Downgrade Controversy: a neglected protagonist"; M.T.E. Hopkins, "Spurgeon's opponents in the Downgrade Controversy"; P. Brewer, "British Baptist missionaries and Baptist work in the Bahamas". No. 7: D.T. Priestley, "Canadian Baptists in national perspective: a narrative attempt"; S.D. Henry, "Baptist church growth in Fife from 1750 to the present". No. 8: R.L. Greaves, "The Spirit and the sword: Bunyan and the Stuart State"; N.H. Keeble, "'Here is her glory, even to be under him': the feminine in the thought and work of John Bunyan"; R. Pooley, "Spiritual experience and spiritual autobiography; some contexts for Grace Abounding"; R. Hayden, "The Particular Baptist Confession 1689 and Baptists today".

Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, LIX no. 140, 1986.

S.K. Roberts, "Public or private? : revenge and recovery at the restoration of Charles II".

Calvin Theological Journal

XXII no. 2, 1987: L.D. Bierma, "Covenant or covenants in the theology of Olevianus?". XXIII no. 2, 1988: J.A. Templin, "The individual and society in the thought of Calvin".

Church History, LVII, 1988, Supplement.

J.T. McNeill, "Calvin as an ecumenical churchman".

Ecumenical Review, XL, nos. 3/4, Jly-Oct. 1988.

Special issue: "40 years of the World Council of Churches".

Enlightenment and Dissent, VI, 1987.

G.A. Cole, "Doctrine, Dissent and the decline of Paley's reputation 1805-1825"; F.K. Donnelly, "Joseph Towers and the collapse of rational Dissent".

Evangelical Quarterly, LX no. 4, Oct. 1988.

A.P.F. Sell, "The message of the Erskines for today".

History, LXXIII, Oct. 1988.

J. Childs, "1688".

The Irish Theological Quarterly, LIV, no. 1, 1988.

A.P.F. Sell, "God, grace and the Bible in Scottish Reformed theology: a review article".

Journal of Ecclesiastical History

XXXVII, no. 4, 1986: C.J. Burchill, "On the consolation of a Christian scholar: Zacharias Ursinus (1534-83) and the Reformation in Heidelberg";

A. Zakai, "The gospel of reformation: the origins of the great Puritan migration". XXXVIII, no. 1, 1987: A.J. Fletcher, "New light on religion and the English Civil War".

The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society

IV no. 5, 1987: K.L. Carroll, "Humphrey Norton's 1656 visit to Ireland". No. 6, 1988: J. Tual, "Sexual equality and conjugal harmony: the way to celestial bliss. A view of early Quaker matrimony"; G.F. Nuttall, "A letter by James Nayler appropriated to George Fox"; D.M. Butler, "Friends sufferings 1650-88: a comparative summary".

King's Theological Review, XI, no. 1, 1988.

M. Walker, "Baptists and the Tractarian Eucharist: a study in opposites".

Mid-Stream, XXVII, no. 2, April 1988

Papers and addresses from the International Dialogue between Disciples of Christ and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

Missionalia, XVI, no. 2, August 1988

J. Du Preez, "John Calvin's contribution to a *Theologia Religionum*"; L. Newbigin, "The significance of Tambaram - fifty years after".

The New Mercersburg Review, no. 4, 1988

L. Josselyn, "The comparative eucharistic view of John Wesley and John Nevin".

Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society XLVI, 3-6, 1987-8

No. 3: H.D. Rack, "Early Methodist visions of the Trinity". No. 5: C.J. Podmore, "The Fetter Lane Society". No. 6: J.M. Turner, "Victorian values - or whatever happened to John Wesley's Scriptural holiness?".

Records of Scottish Church History Society, XXIII, pt. 1, 1987

A.I. MacInnes, "Catholic recusancy and the Penal Laws, 1603-1707"; A.P.F. Sell, "John Locke's Highland critic".

Recusant History, XIX no. 2, Oct. 1988

S.H. Mayor, "The *Nonconformist* and the Roman Catholic Church".

The Reformed World

XXXIX, no. 5, 1987: J.K.S. Reid, "Reformed responses to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*". No. 8: "Reformed dialogues with Disciples and Methodists". XL, no. 2, 1988: G. Wainwright, "Perfect salvation in the teaching of Wesley and Calvin"; J. Pasztor, "Calvin and the renewal of the worship of the church".

Scottish Journal of Theology, XLI, 1988

No. 1: R.B. Knox, "A Scottish chapter in the history of toleration". No. 3: C. Gunton, "Two dogmas revisited: Edward Irving's Christology".

Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, CCCVII, 1987

G.E. Aylmer, "Collective mentalities in mid-seventeenth-century England: II Royalist attitudes".

SOME CONTEMPORARIES

Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, XIX no. 2, April 1988

L.A. Garrard, "The Unitarian contribution to New Testament study in the 20th century"; A.M. Hill, "Channing and British Unitarianism: sowing the seeds"; A. Ruston, "The omnibus radical: Rev. Henry Solly"; D.E. Davies, "Education and radical Dissent in Wales in the 18th and 19th centuries"; D. Wykes, "Dissenting academy or Unitarian seminary? Manchester College at York (1803-1840)"; J. McLachlan, "The Scott Collection: letters of T. Lindsey and others to Russell Scott"; "Bibliography of the historical works of Rev. Dr. H.J. McLachlan".

Touchstone, IV, no. 2, May 1988

E. Hart, "Susanna Annesley Wesley - an able divine"; A.M. Watts, "John and Charles Wesley: radical reactionaries?"; V. Shepherd, "That we may perfectly love Thee: John Wesley and sanctification".

A.P.F. SELL