

**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 5 No. 8 May 1996

**CONTENTS**

Editorial and Notes .....	438
Gordon Esslemont by <i>Stephen Orchard, M.A., Ph.D.</i> .....	439
The Origins of the Missionary Society by <i>Stephen Orchard, M.A., Ph.D.</i> .....	440
Manliness and Mission: Frank Lenwood and the London Missionary Society by <i>Brian Stanley, M.A., Ph.D.</i> .....	458
Training for Hoxton and Highbury: Walter Scott of Rothwell and his Pupils by <i>Geoffrey F. Nuttall, F.B.A., M.A., D.D.</i> .....	477
Mr. Seymour and Dr. Reynolds by <i>Edwin Welch, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A.</i> .....	483
The Presbyterians in Liverpool. Part 3: A Survey 1900-1918 by <i>Alberta Jean Doodson, M.A., Ph.D.</i> .....	489
Review Article: Only Connect by <i>Stephen Orchard, M.A., Ph.D.</i> .....	495
Review Article: Mission and Ecclesiology? Some Gales of Change by <i>Brian Stanley, M.A., Ph.D.</i> .....	499
Short Reviews by <i>Daniel Jenkins and David M. Thompson</i>	503
Some Contemporaries by <i>Alan P.F. Sell, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.</i> .....	505

## EDITORIAL

There is a story that when Mrs. Walter Peppercorn gave birth to her eldest child her brother expressed the hope that the little peppercorn would never get into a pickle. This so infuriated Mr. Peppercorn that he changed their name to Lenwood: or so his wife's family liked to believe. They were prosperous Sheffielders whom he greatly surprised by leaving a considerable fortune; he had proved to be their equal in business. Walter Lenwood's pastorates were varied and bold, characterised by an intelligently extrovert Evangelicalism. When Dr. Duff of Yorkshire United Independent College laid the foundation stone of a new Free Christian Church in Doncaster (its minister had been a Congregationalist), Lenwood was one of fourteen Sheffield Congregational ministers who protested to the local Press. As he wrote on 26 April 1912: "Is the Deity of Christ an ordinary doctrine open at will to acceptance or rejection among us? I give an emphatic NO... [It] is the one most vital truth of all Scripture to me, and if you take that away all else in the Book loses its force". Eighteen years later Walter's son, Frank Lenwood, published a book, *Jesus - Lord or Leader?* (1930), which tried to take that truth away. Yet Frank Lenwood was one of the most attractive of early twentieth-century Congregationalism's missionary statesmen, and Brian Stanley made him the subject of our Society's Annual Lecture for 1995. Dr. Stanley lectures in Church History at Trinity College, Bristol. He is the historian of the Baptist Missionary Society and here he also reviews *Gales of Change*, the volume of essays in commemoration of the London Missionary Society's bicentenary. Stephen Orchard's paper was also delivered as a bicentenary lecture. His approach allowed him to consider Lady Huntingdon's concern for overseas mission and here he also reviews *Spiritual Pilgrim*, Edwin Welch's reassessment of the life of that extraordinary woman.

**Notes:** *Mme. E.R. Ramanandraibe* (30 rue Pasteur Rabary, Antananarivo, 101, Madagascar) is urgently seeking information about the Royal Chapel and neighbouring buildings which form one of the most important historic sites of the Malagasy capital. They were recently destroyed by fire and the intention is to rebuild them.

*Dr. Elaine Kaye* (31 Rowland Close, Wolvercote, Oxford, OX2 8PW), in collaboration with Janet Lees and as part of the project "Daughters of Dissent", is collecting reminiscences from retired women who have played a public role in Congregationalism, the United Reformed Church and its constituent traditions.

*The Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries* held its first occasional conference at Westhill College, Birmingham 8-30 July 1995. The convenor of the Association, Professor Alan P.F. Sell, Aberystwyth, presided. The objectives of the Association are to facilitate the exchange of information among members, and to encourage research into the several traditions, with special reference to projects which encompass more than one tradition.

The conference theme was "Protestant Nonconformists and the West Midlands

of England." Papers were presented by speakers nominated by member societies: John Briggs (Baptist Historical Society), Margaret Gayner (Friends' H.S.), Eifion Powell (Welsh Independents' H.S.), Alan Argent (Congregational History Circle), David Wykes (Unitarian H.S.), Dorothy Graham (Wesley H.S.) and David Thompson (United Reformed Church H.S.). Subjects included Baptist Church planting, Quaker organization, the Welsh diaspora, the Priestley Riots of 1791, and the Primitive Methodist foundation, Bourne College. In addition, the bicentenary of the London Missionary Society was marked in a paper on its regional pioneers, while in another lecture the centenary of the death of R.W. Dale of Carrs Lane Church, Birmingham, was recalled.

It is expected that the conference papers will be published in 1996.

The Annual Meeting of the Association was held at Dr. Williams's Library, London on Thursday 26 October 1995 at 2.00 p.m., when Alan Argent delivered a lecture on "Ruskin, Coventry Patmore and the Congregational Minister."

*The Revd. Dr. Stuart Mews* (Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education, PO Box 220, The Park, Cheltenham, GL50 2QF) writes: "A.W.W. Dale's life of R.W. Dale says (p.203) that allowing his beard to grow in the 1860s caused consternation and letters to the press. Can you help with this one? Which paper, and when precisely?"

### GORDON ESSLEMONT

Our vice-president and former secretary, Gordon Esslemont, died early in November 1995, after a long period of poor health, in a nursing home at Bury St. Edmunds. Mr. Esslemont was one of the two secretaries elected at the formation of the Society, having previously served the Presbyterian Historical Society of England. He was much involved in the transfer of the Library from what is now room 38 to its present site and put in many years of voluntary work, cataloguing, listing and answering queries. He worked for the Society well into his eighties, and older members may remember his enthusiastic presence at our Study Weekends, most recently and fittingly at Hengrave Hall. In his professional life he had been company secretary with Heinz and any sense of thoroughness to be found in our minutes is entirely due to his initial influence. He was a keen Scottish dancer and promoter of his national culture. With the late Fred Keay and John Watson he made up a powerful triumvirate of North London Presbytery elders, who not only served their local church faithfully but gave generous time to looking after our historic interests. It was entirely typical of him that, having spent much time on a register of English Presbyterian churches for the Library, he should, after 1972, embark on the more difficult task of making as complete a listing of English Congregational churches by county as could be managed. We have lost a genial friend as well as a tireless worker.

STEPHEN ORCHARD

## THE ORIGINS OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The origins of popular movements are notoriously difficult to trace, and this is no less the case when looking for the beginnings of the missionary enthusiasm which gripped Evangelical Christians in the 1750s. Certain factors may be seen as contributory. The idea of a missionary was as old as the Gospel itself; Evangelical Christians, by definition, took the Gospel seriously. The Roman Catholic Church had sponsored overseas missions through the Jesuits for two hundred years. Although Evangelical Christians regarded Catholics as prisoners of Antichrist they were made familiar with the notion that white European Christians might travel overseas for a religious purpose. More to the purpose the Moravians, with whom the early Evangelicals such as Wesley and the Countess of Huntingdon were closely associated, had an heroic missionary record. There was a Danish Protestant missionary society with which the British met in India. Not least, there were in Britain two societies with a missionary basis, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Therefore, the notion of missionaries was familiar to the Evangelicals. John Wesley and Benjamin Ingham went out from Oxford to Georgia as missionaries. Wesley's own grandfather, a Nonconformist, had been enthusiastic about overseas missions, and the need for them was only made more apparent by the growth of colonialism.<sup>1</sup> Wesley went on a mission to what were then termed the Red Indians, that is to say the native people of North America, and found the colonists in at least as great a need of his ministrations. More commonly clergy went overseas as chaplains to the white communities and were occasionally stirred to do something about those they saw as the heathen at their gate. The growth of Britain's colonial territories brought an awareness of the potential for overseas missions, which was deepened by the discoveries of Cook and other explorers. The English conscience was stirred by stories of the Juggernaut and of cannibalism. The idea of a morality based on natural law, which had seemed attractive in a Deist Europe, looked very suspect in the context of other cultures. In any case, Evangelical Christians were already unhappy with it. Only the Gospel, in a Protestant interpretation, could create a harmonious and prosperous society.

Looking back over half a century of Enthusiasm the *Evangelical Magazine* of 1795 traced the missionary fervour of that year to an "excellent little treatise" of the American divine, Jonathan Edwards, and the Scottish revival of 1744.

In October 1744, a number of ministers in Scotland taking into consideration the state both of the church of God in particular, and the world in general, were of the opinion that Providence did at that time loudly call on all such as were concerned for the welfare of Zion, to unite in extraordinary applications to the Lord by prayer, requesting that

---

1. A brief account of the Wesleys' interest in overseas missions is found in G.G. Findlay and W.W. Holdsworth, *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, 1921, p.29f.

he would appear in his glory, that he would favour his church with an abundant effusion of his Holy Spirit, and bless all nations of the earth with unspeakable benefits of the Redeemer's kingdom. Having first prayed for divine direction, they determined on the following as a plan, to which they would conform for the two years then next ensuing: namely, to set apart some time on Saturday evening and Sabbath morning every week, according as other duties would allow to each one respectively; and more solemnly, the first Tuesday of each quarter, (beginning with the first Tuesday in the following month of November) either the whole day, or some part thereof, as circumstances might admit; the time to be spent either in private praying societies, or in public meetings, or in private, as might be found most practicable and convenient. It was also agreed to invite others, by personal conversation, or private correspondence, to unite with them in this business. And this was attended with such success, that great numbers in Scotland and England, and some in North America, were readily united in the proposal.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, in North America Jonathan Edwards was inspired to write a tract entitled: "An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement and visible union of God's people, in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth, pursuant to scripture promises and prophecies concerning the Last Time,"<sup>3</sup> of which the *Evangelical Magazine* has this to say:

The first part of this treatise contains an account of what has been done in Great Britain in this matter, and a copy of the memorial sent from Scotland. The second part contains a variety of motives to compliance with what is proposed in the memorial; and these are urged with the becoming zeal of a man perfectly convinced of the importance of what he advances. He particularly offers to our consideration -

1. That it is certain that many things which are spoken in Scripture concerning a glorious time of the church's enlargement and prosperity in the latter days, have never yet been fulfilled: 2. That the time when these things shall have their accomplishment must be unspeakably happy and glorious: 3. That Christ prayed and laboured, and suffered much, with a view to the glory and happiness of that day: 4. That the whole creation is, in some sense, groaning and travailing for the

---

2. See *Evangelical Magazine*, vol. III, 1795, p.198f.

3. Jonathan Edwards, *An humble Attempt to promote explicit Agreement and visible Union of God's People, in extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion, and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture Promises and Prophecies concerning the Last Time*, 1747. See E.A. Payne, *The Prayer Call of 1784*, 1941, for an account of its impact in England and the editions.

manifestation of that glorious felicity: 5. That the word of God is full of precepts, encouragements and examples, tending to excite the people of God to be much in prayer for his mercy: 6. That the particular dispensations of divine Providence then taking place, did also excite the same duty: and, 7. That it would be beautiful, and of good tendency for multitudes of Christians, in various parts of the world, by *explicit agreement*, to unite in prayer as the memorial proposes. In the third part, the worthy author proceeds to show that the proposed concert is neither superstitious, whimsical, nor pharasaical; and then takes a view of sundry passages in the book of Revelation, namely, the slaying of the witnesses, the fall of Antichrist, and the pouring out of the sixth vial.<sup>4</sup>

The tract had a considerable vogue. Wesley took it under his wing until he began to be suspicious of its Calvinism.<sup>5</sup> A cheap edition was produced in England in 1789, and it continued to be published for the next twenty years. To the assumption that the latter days were upon the world, current in various circles, Edwards had added an important rider, that therefore we ought to be seeking in prayer to bring in Christ's kingdom. The prophecies themselves declared that by the prayers of the faithful that blessed time should come.

Most histories of the missionary movement describe how the prayer call voiced in Jonathan Edwards's pamphlet generated missionary enthusiasm.<sup>6</sup> Edwards credited the Scots for stirring him into action. Even before their initiative of 1744 Philip Doddridge, in 1742, expressed the hope at a meeting of ministers that foreign missions might be attempted. He recommended as a first step, the holding of quarterly prayer meetings to review "those promises which relate to the kingdom of Christ."<sup>7</sup> Fifty years later Evangelicals were translating their prayers and hopes into actions. At this point eschatological considerations arose. What might God's purpose for the world be and over what period of time will it be fulfilled?

## 2. From Doctrine to Action.

A long standing objection to overseas missions was an eschatological one and it was voiced by the septsics as the missionary societies were formed. Eschatology was expressed in European terms; Luther's identification of the Roman church as Babylon meant that the war between light and darkness was seen as one between Protestantism and Catholicism. There were few soldiers to spare for the benighted

4. *Evangelical Magazine*, *loc cit.*

5. *Journal of John Wesley* (1938 edition), vol.II, p.83f, for Wesley's first encounter with Edwards's work. By 1755 he was disaffected (vol.IV, p.23). See also his quotations from a letter of James Erskine vol.III, p.178.

6. see ch.1.

7. *Evangelical Magazine*, vol. V, 1797, p.376.

heathen.<sup>8</sup> They lay in a doctrinal limbo, ready to be called when the real battle was over, at the coming of the Lord, when Babylon (the Church of Rome) was finally overthrown; then the heathen would be converted *en masse*. That "the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in" remained an abstract millennial event. There is a fatalism about this attitude which became quite unacceptable to Evangelicals. Jonathan Edwards's tract gave expression to an optimism about Christianity which bordered on self-confidence. He assumed that progress in the spread of the faith could and would be made. He, in common with Doddridge and the Scots ministers, thought in terms of coming glory for the Church, the arrival of which could be speeded by the prayer of the faithful. The earth was to be the Lord's, and his glory was to fill it. This was the picture of the millennial kingdom he embraced, a thousand years of Christ's reign on earth with the saints. Only after that revelation of his splendour, which would draw all men to Him, would the final cataclysm take place. This is what is known as post-millennial adventism. The more fiery aspects of Judgement Day were removed to the end of that time. Meanwhile the preaching of the Gospel and the reformation of manners hastened in Christ's millennial kingdom.

It was in this setting of prayer and speculation about the coming thousand years of bliss that William Carey and the men of his generation struggled to translate missionary principles into action. The force of his famous motto becomes clear. "Expect great things from God" indeed, and Carey knew all too well the elevated discussion of Christian expectations. The essential movement of thought which he represents is "attempt great things for God". People began to think in terms of bringing in the millennium not only by prayer but by action. The optimism with which a handful of Evangelicals contemplated the task of world evangelism in their own time was generated by the conviction that they were co-operating with God in his declared and revealed purpose. Time and again the text was quoted "The earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord". This was seen as an eschatological pronouncement and taken to heart so completely that the achievement of it was made a contemporary task. It is a supreme example of a real eschatological conviction. The Evangelicals found in this metaphor the expression of God's purpose in their lives or, to put it another way, they found a motto in scripture for their own eagerness to convince as many people as possible of their own Evangelical convictions, at whatever personal cost. It summed up all that they thought to be important. Missionary exhortation followed two lines of argument. First, that the work of converting the heathen could be done; in this context appear

---

8. See J.A. Dorer, *History of Protestant Theology*, 2 vols, 1871, vol.II, pp.168-173, on the Reformers and eschatology. The reference is from E.A. Payne, *The Church Awakes*, 1942. Dr. Payne gives a good account of the influence of Jonathan Edwards on the formation of the missionary societies in this and other pamphlets, notably *Before the Start*, 1942. He also shows appreciation of the role of the Countess of Huntingdon. He regards the millennial speculations of the founders of the Missionary Society as "exceptions to the general attitude". *The Church Awakes*, p.75.

schemes and proposals for missionary societies. Secondly, that now is the time when it should be done. This latter consideration became more prominent in the light of the stirring events in Europe after the French Revolution.

### 3. The Countess of Huntingdon

John Wesley's missionary excursion to Georgia was, by his own account, a failure. The more significant impact on the North American continent was made by George Whitefield. Whitefield was the greatest preacher among the Evangelicals but his continual absences from England and his death in 1771, some twenty years before John Wesley, have made him a secondary figure in the eyes of many historians.<sup>9</sup> He did not leave any real corpus of sermons and writings, least of all a detailed Journal. His most important legacy at the time of his death was an orphanage in Savannah in Georgia and this he bequeathed to his friend and admirer Selina, Dowager Countess of Huntingdon.<sup>10</sup> At that time she was very much involved in establishing a college at Trefeca, near Talgarth, in South Wales, to supply ministers for her own various chapels. She had already shown interest in America and Whitefield's work there.<sup>11</sup> She now planned to form an American college in imitation of her Welsh one to provide evangelists among the colonists and Indians. Since the venture was cut off prematurely by the American War of Independence and the plans and papers of the mission have lain neglected ever since, this particular missionary venture has been ignored in recounting the history of missions.<sup>12</sup> Its significance lies in its independence of traditional missionary societies, the fact that a group of people were involved, and that they were based on a plantation and required to be self-supporting. It is a prototype of the much better known South Seas mission of the Missionary Society.<sup>13</sup> This is not

- 
9. These are matters of opinion. Whitefield travelled and preached incessantly in America in the same way that John Wesley did in England, e.g. John Gillies, *Memoirs of the life of the Reverend George Whitefield, 1772*, ch.IV, p.53f. The next chapter, (p.68f) recounts the cool reception Whitefield had on his return to England. He blamed his doctrinal disagreements with John Wesley on the Moravians. Wesley was much the better organiser.
  10. Gillies, *op cit*, p.348f, gives the text of Whitefield's will.
  11. The Countess contributed to the Presbyterian college in New Jersey (Princeton). Whitefield was her favourite among the Evangelicals. She followed his Calvinism at the cost of her friendship with John Wesley.
  12. The records of the mission came to light at Cheshunt College, Cambridge in 1965, having been unconsulted for almost two hundred years; see E. Welch *Spiritual Pilgrim* 1995, for the first modern account based on these records.
  13. The missionaries who sailed on *The Duff* were not ordained; neither were the Savannah students. The missionaries were required to fend for themselves. *The Duff* sailed on from Tahiti to pick up a cargo of tea so that the voyage would be a commercial proposition. Joseph Hardcastle, the Treasurer of the Missionary Society, was a merchant.



surprising when one realises that the prime mover of that mission in 1795 was Thomas Haweis, Rector of Aldwinckle, chaplain and friend of the Countess of Huntingdon. The connection between the Countess and the Missionary Society was of sufficient interest for biographers to record the story of her discussing a South Sea mission with Haweis from her death bed and the happy coincidence that her old coach, sold and used as a hackney after her death in 1791, conveyed some of the missionaries to *The Duff* for the first missionary voyage.<sup>14</sup>

It is therefore of interest to see that the Countess of Huntingdon and her missionaries took millennial considerations to heart, since there is so great a lapse of time between the first stirrings of the 1740s and the recognised beginnings of missionary societies in the 1790s. That the Countess accepted the kind of millennialism that Jonathan Edwards outlined is clear in a letter to her from David Vanhorne, writing from New York, 20 October 1772, which attempts to answer some of her queries on the topic.<sup>15</sup>

Lady Huntingdon was sufficiently moved by the Evangelical awakening itself to think that the millennium was about to break through. The evil times were merely another indication that the moment had come. Another correspondent at this time, C. Perronet, reinforces this opinion.

I believe we are in far more danger now than in ye time of ye Spanish armada. But I cant fear. Our Lord is so good as to keep me looking to him. I know yt these last times will have all sorts of distresses, and I think it is only yt He is completing the prophecies.<sup>16</sup>

The Countess was so far moved by these considerations as to subscribe towards

14. See A.C. Seymour, *Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon*, 1839, vol. 2, p.501. The coach story is apocryphal. Amongst other places it is to be found in A.H. New, *The Coronet and the Cross* 1857, p.410, following Seymour. See *Evangelical Magazine*, 1796, vol.IV, p.382, for an original account of the first missionaries sailing for Otaheite (Tahiti) in August 1796, not 1798 as stated by New. More important, the *Evangelical Magazine* account mentions that a hymn from the Countess of Huntingdon's Collection, "Jesu, at thy command we launch into the deep", was sung by the missionaries as they sailed. cf note 58.

15. Cheshunt A3/3/10

16. C. Perronet, 10 December 1770, to C. of H, Cheshunt G/2/1/27

the publication of Perronet's observations upon unfulfilled prophecies.<sup>17</sup>

Writing from the Bethesda college in August 1773 William Piercy, who led the mission, says:

I purpose first of all going to Augusta 150 miles from hence, and travel through all the back settlements, preaching the Gospel of Christ, and before I return, to visit the Chiroche Indians lying just upon those borders. The Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth! and I more than ever am assured the Lord has *great things in store for me, and mighty works to perform through us*.<sup>18</sup>

Or again, the following year, he writes:

The Lord, O the Lord will appear for and bless you more and more in his Work, and your Heart is so precious a Treasure to the Lord Jesus that he will not hide from you that Thing which he intends to do here. A glorious Aera is just at Hand when the King shall go forth in his Glory and ride prosperously among the Heathen and cause many of them to become his everlasting Inheritance and Possession. His work must prosper in your Hands - your Latter End must be most glorious - and even when you are taken to your Resting Place, the Glory will still increase and the Gospel Streams, issuing from the Sanctuary, flow far and wide to cover the Earth as the waters do the Seas.<sup>19</sup>

The same unrestrained tone is found in a letter from an old American minister in Boston, just before the new college opened:

Go on Seraphick soul, you Patroness of serious practical Godliness, until you assimilate that well adopted metaphor of St John's pointing to the Church; which he says he *saw a wounder in heaven, a woman*

17. J. Harmer, 6 October 1770, to C. of H, Cheshunt F1/105. An account of a visit to Perronet by a Russian general and his officers in consequence of a letter he sent to them about the prophecies and how they intend to have it translated. Perronet lived near Canterbury and the Russians were on board ship in the Downs. Harmer explains that Perronet wants to publish his own observations on the prophecies in penny or twopenny pamphlets; Lord Dartmouth has given a guinea to encourage the work, since Perronet cannot afford to lose on it. A further letter of 24 October 1770, Cheshunt F1/108, reveals that the Countess also gave support and subscribed to the Canterbury Journal, which was publishing some work of Perronet's:

The encouragement you are pleased to give Mr P's undertaking is very seasonable, and will be gratefully remembered. As fast as they are published they shall be sent as directed, and the Journal likewise.

18. W. Piercy, Bethesda, 15 April 1773, to C. of H, Cheshunt A4/1/5.

19. W. Piercy, Bethesda, 25 February 1774, to C. of H, Cheshunt A4/1/14

*cloathed with the sun, with a crown of twelve stars on her head and ye Moon under her feet.*<sup>20</sup>

But even the apocalyptic enthusiasm which Lady Huntingdon aroused could not guarantee the success of the mission. Her direction of it was hampered by the distance between Wales and America, and the delays and losses to which the mails were susceptible. It seems that as the American situation worsened the Countess proposed to accompany Piercy to America and see in the Millennium there.

But I may return with you - as nothing but the voice of the Lord can be wanting, and that, and that, will be in a time of difficulty and danger.<sup>21</sup>

She and Piercy evidently agreed that the setbacks the mission encountered were signs of an eventual success and they corresponded on the likelihood of the Millennium's appearance.

Just before I left Charlestown I was much oppressed with those words you formerly wrote unto me 'Blood, and Fire, and vapours of smoak before that great and notable day of the Lord come.' And from the present appearance of God's Providences, it seems as if the Lord was now going to fulfil that former Token, which he gave you, in the world, and in the Church. A very trying Time will certainly soon come, a day of winnowing when many shall be tried with fire and I believe the scourge will fall very heavy upon the outward court-worshippers. But I dare not enlarge.<sup>22</sup>

Piercy at least demonstrated his sensitivity to the political situation; the "very trying time" very soon came in the shape of the War of Independence. The students at the new college took a gloomier view of affairs and regarded the various set-backs which they encountered as evidence that the Lord's hand was against their work.<sup>23</sup> It would appear that Piercy failed to keep the group together, or gain their confidence in his leadership. On his return to England, penniless, and with the Bethesda settlement destroyed by the war, the Countess was less than cordial.<sup>24</sup>

It seems doubtful if much preaching was done for the Indians. At least two of the students gathered their own independent congregations amongst the colonists. Piercy records preaching in various towns, in the steps of Whitefield, but his

20. J. Moorhead, Boston, 22 February 1773, to C. of H., Cheshunt A3/3/11

21. Draft letter of the C. of H, 11 August 1773, to William Piercy, Cheshunt A4/3/1

22. W. Piercy, Philadelphia, 13 June 1775, to C. of H, Cheshunt A4/1/20.

23. The students did not take this view at first. See a letter from Thomas Cook, 18 November 1773, to the C. of H, Cheshunt A3/6/5 for an expression of millennial expectations and optimism about the mission.

24. She held Piercy responsible for the loss of the estate and it was strongly represented to her that he had cheated her. There are several draft accounts and financial statements in respect of this in the Cheshunt archive.

references to the indigenous population are few. He certainly was unwilling to give up his preaching to the colonial congregations to work among the slaves and wrote to the Countess suggesting that auxiliaries might be sent to him for that work.<sup>25</sup>

Were there a few precious disinterested souls once thoroughly engaged in this most charitable and necessary business, I am fully persuaded we should see the most glorious things accomplished for the advancement of the dear Redeemer's Kingdom and Glory among those poor dark and benighted savages.<sup>26</sup>

Whatever other conclusions may be drawn from studying the Savannah mission it is evident that it was conducted in an atmosphere of millennial expectations; that these were derived in some ways from those of the 1740s; and that they were carried forward into the 1790s.

#### 4. The Missionary Agitation

The Missionary Society, founded in 1795, and soon to be distinguished from others as the London Missionary Society, was not the first to be formed, nor did it go on to become the greatest, but in its first years it was both Evangelical and interdenominational. The Society was promoted by the *Evangelical Magazine*, which was largely under the influence of Thomas Haweis. The first shot in the campaign was an article in October 1793, "Remarks on the prophecies and promises relating to the Glory of the Latter Day."<sup>27</sup> The writer, "Horatio", suggests that the prayer movement initiated by Edwards's tract be harnessed for missionary purposes. On the one hand the article is rooted in the orthodoxy of Richardson's parsons. "Christianity is a system of benevolence. Its principles expand the heart, and enoble the mind." But on the other hand it is fervently Evangelical. "Like his Divine Master he [the Christian] prays that the glorious Gospel may be known and enjoyed by every nation, kindred, people and tongue!" He is sure that there is: "...a time of peace, prosperity and purity awaiting all the nations of the earth" and hopes that it is not too distant. He sensed that he lived in a time of "crisis replete with great events." He relates contemporary and historical events to predictions in the book of Revelation, but believes the introduction of the "desirable day" will be gradual. Before the conversion of the heathen two obstacles must be removed: the divisions, impurities and cruelties of professing Christians, and the ignorance, rebellion and sensuality of the heathen themselves. These difficulties can be overcome in mission if the Spirit is poured into our hearts. In the prayer movement "Horatio" sees the beginnings of this work.

25. W. Piercy, New York, 13 September 1774, to C. of H, Cheshunt A4/1/18. In fairness to Piercy it appears that he worked hard without being assured of a favourable reception, even amongst the colonists.

26. W. Piercy, Charlestown, 28 November 1774, to C. of H, Cheshunt A4/1/19.

27. *Evangelical Magazine*, vol.1, 1793, p.157f.

This appears to be one of the strongest arguments to support the pleasing idea, that this season of prosperity awaiting the church of Christ, is now fast approaching: for with pleasure be it recorded, that a large number of churches in this Kingdom have (for some time past) engaged to set apart *one hour* in the evening of *the first Monday in every calendar month*, to join in fervent prayer to God for a blessing on the Gospel, and on those *missionaries*, who are now engaged in the arduous undertaking of preaching the Gospel, to the Indian nations. Would to God, that this pious custom more generally prevailed! 'The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much.'<sup>28</sup>

This was no idle cry. When, less than two years later, the society was formed the treasurer, Joseph Hardcastle, received £83 from G. Gill, a minister in Market Harborough, with this letter:

It is now more than *eleven years* since a *monthly* meeting was established in this place and which has been regularly attended to pray for a more general spread of the Gospel, and that the Lord would visit the Heathen world with this invaluable blessing. I cannot but think that *the formation of this society* is in fact an *answer to our prayers*, and that my people have far exceeded my expectation in their liberality; and some of them have gone almost beyond their ability in this matter.<sup>29</sup>

Regular prayer for the spread of Christian religion obviously prepared people to respond to an initiative in this direction. But would this initiative have been taken without the spur which the French Revolution gave to millennial expectation? An acknowledged cause of the formation of the Missionary Society is the publication of Melvill Horne's *Letters on Missions* in 1794.<sup>30</sup> Horne returned from a chaplaincy in Sierra Leone, defeated by the problems of mission amongst non-Europeans and anxious to make these problems, and the solving of them, a matter of public debate. Haweis and Samuel Greatheed made the foundation

---

28. *Evangelical Magazine*, vol.1, 1793, p.165, 166.

29. LMS archives Home Office extra Box I Jacket B, undated letter of G. Gill, presumably c1795, to J. Hardcastle.

30. Melvill Horne, *Letters on missions, addressed to the Protestant ministers of the British churches*, 1794.

subscriptions of the Missionary Society.<sup>31</sup> What is generally overlooked in Horne's Letters is his eschatological framework, since actual plans for a mission and exhortation to support it claim a more obvious place in the researcher's mind. The first page of the first letter has conventional references to the increase of immorality and the warming note sounded by events in France. However, it is the second letter which introduces the real eschatological issues and goes on to interpret the prophecies.

The genius and spirit of our religion, the characters ascribed to our Lord of the Second Adam, and of the Saviour of all people, with many others of similar significance; the various scriptures, which speak of the benefits of his death and intercession, of his kingdom and reign; the prophecies and promises, loudly declare the intention of God, that this last and most perfect dispensation of the everlasting Gospel should be the religion of every tribe, and kindred and tongue. Nay, we are repeatedly assured, in the most explicit language, that it shall be so - that the truth and mercy, the peace and righteousness of Messiah's kingdom, whatever temporary checks they may suffer, shall, in the end, overcome all opposition;...<sup>32</sup>

There follows that most Evangelical question, "How ought our minds to be affected by these prospects?" It seems that Horne regarded the "temporary checks" as almost over. He was striving to make these visionary hopes more immediate in their application. As we might expect he resorted to a consideration of the state of world affairs to support his contention.

The night is far spent, and the day is at hand. The latter ends of the world are fallen upon us, and we have many considerations to excite us,

31. Samuel Greatheed was a tutor of the Newport Pagnell Academy run by William Bull, the friend of Newton and Cowper in nearby Olney. His copy of *Sermons preached at the formation of the Missionary Society*, 1795, passed into the Cheshunt College library when the Newport Pagnell Academy was amalgamated with it in 1842. It contains notes in Greatheed's own hand. On page viii the final paragraph makes reference to promises of money made in the *Evangelical Magazine* for November 1794. Of these offers one was for £500, made by Haweis. It appears that the other, of £100, was made by Greatheed, and that both were made after reading Horne's letters. Greatheed's note on the paragraph reads: "This offer arose from the peculiar occurrence that Dr Haweis and myself were both employed in reviewing Mr Horne's Letters on Mission, at the same time, unknown to each other; and were stimulated, by the perusal of them, separately, to make these proposals. Dr. H had been intent on the object 6 years before. The great superiority of his offer removed some scruples which I felt respecting the publication of my own. S.G." The note also indicates that Haweis had been actively considering a society in 1788, i.e. three years before the death of the Countess of Huntingdon, at a time when he was her confidant, and lends more substance to the stories of her interest in the venture, which may have originated with Haweis; see note 10 above.

32. Horne, *Letters*, p.11.

if it were possible, to more than apostolick labours. The East, from which the day spring from on high first visited us, has long been lost to Christ; and the crescent of Mahomet still usurps the place where the cross once triumphed. In the West, the Roman Antichrist, accursed of God and Man, is sinking under the reiterated strokes of divine vengeance. The God of the Christians is baring his arm, and exposing the nakedness of the Scarlet Whore with whom the nations of the earth have committed spiritual fornication. The prayers of the spirits under the altar are heard; and a righteous God is avenging the blood of his saints, by giving her to drink of the blood of her children. Yet a little while, and we shall hear the cry, *Babylon the Great is fallen*; and see the Almighty burning her as with fire from heaven, by the very hands which erected and supported her hierarchy. The shouts of triumphant atheism, and the scoffs of a vain philosophy invade our ears. Unheard of prodigies meet our eyes, and suspend our souls with astonishment and horror. The same spirit and principles, which have regenerated one Christian nation to atheism, are working in others, and will, probably, produce the same effect. We shall soon see a kindling upon Spain, Portugal and Italy, and that conflagration, which nothing but the pure stream of the Reformation can extinguish.<sup>33</sup>

The founders of the Missionary Society proposed, in fact, not only to convert the heathen, but to pick up the broken pieces of Catholic Europe. "Is nothing to be done?" asked Horne, "for the millions who groan under the iron rod of the Antichrist?" or again;

And may we not believe, that God will take it well at our hands, before his judgements wholly overwhelm Babylon, if we give a loud and affectionate call to all who fear God, in any degree, among her sons, to flee from the evil to come, and to relinquish her Communion, before she sinks in avenging fire.<sup>34</sup>

Joseph Hardcastle, a solid City merchant, as Treasurer of the Missionary Society, was, in fact, its leader by virtue of that office. He shared Horne's excitement about the turn of events on the Continent and in 1793 even went so far as to anticipate that the third woe of the Apocalypse might be fulfilled in 1797, "as a prelude to the Seventh Trumpet and the happy, peaceful and much longed for kingdom of our Saviour, which shall have no end."<sup>35</sup> Unabashed by the continuing unrest and war after 1797 he urged upon other Directors of the Society in 1800 the importance and duty of taking the opportunity which Providence had so obviously given for circulating the scriptures in France. The fall of the Antichrist there, i.e. the

---

33. Horne, *Letters*, p.20f.

34. Horne, *Letters*, p.111.

35. *Memoirs of Joseph Hardcastle, Esq.*, n.d.

repression of the Catholic Church, was not a prelude to infidelity but an "introduction of the pure and endless kingdom of our Saviour." It is clear that the mission to Europe weighed as heavily with Hardcastle as the overseas mission when the Missionary Society was formed. Of his French project he wrote to the Directors:

They will not reject it on the ground of its being out of our constitutional limits, because it will be recollected that when our regulations were formed France was especially in our view, as a probable future object for the exertions of our Society.<sup>36</sup>

In fact, the Directors did reject the scheme and in the event the enthusiasm for this project was channelled into the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. It was Haweis's scheme for a South Seas mission which captured the imagination of the missionary minded and for a moment promised to unite a large cross-section of Evangelical opinion.

### **5. The Formation of the Missionary Society**

In January 1795 a Scottish minister in London, John Love, circulated "An Address to Christian Ministers and all other friends of Christianity, on the subject of Missions to the Heathen",<sup>37</sup> with the aim of encouraging the formation of a missionary society. One of the reasons he urged upon the ministers of London to whom it was sent was:

As yet, it is only a matter of prayer and contemplation - but if many hands set early to the work, who knows but before we ourselves are numbered with the dead, we may have cause to adopt that gratulatory, triumphant song of the Apostle - Now thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and by us maketh manifest the favour of his knowledge, in every place.

Yet a little while, and the latter day glory shall shine forth with a reviving splendour, when, according to the predictions of the infallible word, 'the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea; His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun; Men shall be blessed in him; and all nations shall call him blessed' - Amen!<sup>38</sup>

Confirmation of this view is found among the six sermons preached at the first

36. *Memoirs of Joseph Hardcastle, Esq*, n.d., p.160; pp.157-161, give the text of a letter he circulated to Directors of the Missionary Society in 1800.

37. *Evangelical Magazine*, 1795, vol.III, p.11f. and *Sermons preached in London at the formation of the Missionary Society*, 1795, p.viif.

38. *opera cit* p.14 and pp.ix-x respectively.



meeting of the Missionary Society in September 1795.<sup>39</sup> The fourth of these, by one of the real moving spirits behind the Society's formation, John Hey, is entitled, "The fulness of Times."<sup>40</sup> This is a classical exposition of Evangelical eschatology in relation to the missionary movement. It begins with a grand historical survey, showing how the events predicted in Revelation have been fulfilled in history. It moves from times of ignorance in the Old Testament, when all the Patriarchs were in gloom, through the luminous times of Jesus and the Apostles, to the times of error and defection from the primitive faith, the times of awful superstition, with "locusts issuing from the volcano of Rome", the times of tremendous persecution, when the Papal beast martyred the true Christian, to the times of glorious Reformation... a time of joy and prosperity to the church of God, and at last to the present fulness of times.

He goes on to tell us more of what he means by "that glorious work which will be accomplished during this wonderful dispensation."<sup>41</sup> It will be a time of unity, the disunion of the world is all too apparent in nature, in brutal tribes, in intellectual disagreements, and in war.

Nor is this all; the disagreement has reached even heaven itself. How has the divine majesty been insulted by the avowed rebellion of wicked and ungrateful men!<sup>42</sup>

The open state atheism in France was presumably in Hey's mind. It created many a trauma in Evangelical minds. Naturally enough, Hey's analysis is that sin is at the root of all this discord; Jehovah must conquer sin and gather all things together in, and through, Christ.

When the apostle asserts that God will gather together in one, all things in Christ, he means, That all things in creation, together with every

39. *Sermons preached in London at the formation of the Missionary Society 1795* published by the Directors. Published sermons are not necessarily a faithful reproduction of what was said, since they were often written up from notes by the preacher, when he got home afterwards, and rushed to the press so that they could be sold to those who attended the meeting before they left London. See Samuel Greatheed's copy mentioned in note 30, which contains his list of seventeen errata in the printed version and the comment:

The preceding discourse was delivered without any notes, or adequate preparation. It was written in extreme haste on my return home, chiefly from recollection; and the blotted sketch was sent immediately, to keep the Press from standing still; hence arose the numerous Errata, which I have prefixed; a copy of which has been sent to Mr Mortimer, the translator of these 6 Discourses into German. *op cit* p.70.

40. *op cit* p.71f. John Hey was minister of the Independent Church, Castle Green, Bristol, and an original Director of the Missionary Society. He was one of those who met in "the cradle of the Missionary Society"; see R. Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society*, 1899, p.5.

41. *op cit* p.78f.

42. *op cit* p.79.

event of divine providence and effect of sovereign grace, are, and will be, so connected, as to compose one grand system of universal economy; in which all the perfection of DEITY will shine forth with ineffable splendour and glory.<sup>43</sup>

This last sentiment must have been a reassuring thought for Hardcastle and the City merchants whose subscriptions boosted the Society. They could regard their money as invested in maintaining and demonstrating the proof of the existence of God. Not for the first time the completion of prophecy is linked with such a demonstration. In a world whose stability was threatened by revolutionaries, and whose faith was derided by them, an aggressive response in faith was proposed. The circulation of scriptures in France was one project. The other, curiously akin to Pitt's policy of defeating the French in their colonies, since he shrank from sending British soldiers into Europe, was to convert the heathen, especially in the recently discovered South Sea islands. The Evangelicals, dismayed by atheism and at war with France, looked to the prophecies and found there the promise of peace, unity, and God's kingdom on earth.

More than that, they found the Gospel dispensation was to be made possible by the sciences and skills which their age possessed. This is made plain in a magnificently prosaic interpretation by Hey of *Isaiah*, ch.11,v.6f, the passage about the wolf lying down with the lamb.

Is it improbable that the above cited passage may be literally fulfilled? As the gospel spreads, it will promote civilization, population, agriculture, and commerce: these will increase till every part of the habitable globe is cultivated and occupied. The result of this will be the extirpation of most of the noxious creatures, and may not those which remain, perhaps, be so far domesticated, as to herd with tamer animals, and even suffer children to play with them without injury.<sup>44</sup>

Hey saw that European culture must accompany the missionary and neither he nor his generation stopped to question whether beatific results would follow. It was presumed that only good could follow, since it was a matter of taking God at his word. The effect of overseas missions would be that:

In fine; regions which resembled the very antechamber of hell, where the prince of darkness reigned in uncontrolled tyranny, infolding his subjects in blackest wreaths of infernal gloom; these regions are happily emancipated from the most horrid slavery, and illuminated with celestial beams, whilst JESUS, the prince of peace, enthroned in the serenest glory, reigns over the nations with mildest grace and infinite love.<sup>45</sup>

43. *op cit* p.80.

44. *op cit* p.82.

45. *op cit* p.89.

The first missionaries sent by the Society to the South Seas found that they could not preach the Gospel in their own familiar terms to the culture in which they found themselves. What seemed so plausible in the heady atmosphere of London that September in 1795 was an infinite labour for those who reached the Pacific.

Hey's sermon is the richest, but not the only quarry, for eschatological material at this time. The other five sermons are by no means incompatible with his. In particular, Rowland Hill in the fifth sermon<sup>46</sup> indulges in a grand survey of history from Eden to his own times and David Bogue, in the sixth sermon,<sup>47</sup> "Objections against a mission to the Heathen stated and considered," took as his text the provocative words of *Haggai* ch1.v2, "The time is not come". Bogue, as we might expect, dismissed the argument that missionary work was not to be attempted since the fulfilment of prophecies about the Millennium would not take place for some hundred years. Whenever it was to be, said Bogue, we have little enough time to bring it about. Not a day must be lost. He too takes up the historical viewpoint to show that missionary work must be done in his generation because the Reformation is completed, the Protestant churches are well established, and they are co-operating with one another. The various exhortations of Bogue and his companions succeeded. The Missionary Society was well supported and launched that September on a wave of enthusiasm. As Haweis himself wrote:

Whoever expected, which of the most sanguine dared to hope they should ever see such days as the present, and the preceding? When was ever such an association of the ministers of Christ collected in this land? Every partition wall is broken down, and every heart big with expectation, that the time approaches, when the great Redeemer of lost souls will receive the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the world for his possession.<sup>48</sup>

## 6. Missionary Imperialism

In all this the self-consciousness of British Protestantism was particularly important. This dimension is most cogently set out in Linda Colley's recent book *Britons*<sup>49</sup> As long as the nation kept faith, then it could not be defeated, even when the fortunes of war seemed temporarily against it.

The BRITISH LION himself has been seen to shudder; but collecting his strength and joining himself to the *Lion of the tribe of Judah* 'he couches he lies down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up?'<sup>50</sup>

The example is a reminder that this conviction was in part a result of the Evangelical familiarity with the Bible, in particular the New Testament concept of

46. *op cit* p.91f.

47. *op cit* p.119f.

48. *op cit* p.161f and Thomas Haweis, *Memoirs on the most eligible part to begin a mission...* 1795.

49. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, 1992.

50. Thomas Pentycross, Vicar of St Mary's, Wallingford, in the second of *Four Sermons at the second general meetings of the Missionary Society*, 1796, p.58.

the new Israel. The nature of their Christian conviction demanded that they stress the providence of it, and the fact that God cared for each individual. The preaching they heard was Biblical, and it related the characters of ancient Israel, and their spiritual situation, to contemporary men and women. All these factors supported the unconscious assumption of the Evangelicals that they were God's peculiar people; certainly they consciously assumed the burden of world mission.

Does loyalty and love to an earthly prince require that we should endeavour to support and extend his dominions; and shall not we, the sworn subjects of the King of Kings, go forth to spread the conquests of his word, and extend the limits of his empire.<sup>51</sup>

The imperial idea is present in the very concept of missionary work. In practice that work was only possible when allied to the planting of the British flag. The world, peoples, cultures, wealth, sovereignties and all become, from such a viewpoint, well-intentioned as it was, so many ripe plums for the picking.

Without this triumphant faith in their own power to co-operate with God the Evangelicals might not have started the missionary task.

May we not reasonably hope that a well-planned and well-conducted mission to one or more of these [Pacific islands], seconded with the earnest prayers of thousands of British Christians, will be attended with the blessing of God, and issue in the conversion of many souls?<sup>52</sup>

It is not that the missionaries encouraged exploitation but they failed to realise the impact of that commerce which followed them inevitably, wherever they went, in Africa and the Pacific.<sup>53</sup>

On the other hand, the missionary enthusiasts did not envisage a long colonial occupation. Their talk is all of conquering the heathen in the name of the King of Kings and, after that task is finished, the coming of millennial bliss. Their eschatology took them no further than this. The stirring imagery in which they expressed themselves obscured a question which they would have regarded as

51. *Sermons preached in London...*, 1795, p.40. Part of George Burder's sermon, the second of the series, p.27f.

52. *Sermons preached in London...*, 1795, p.xvi, in a reprint of an address by George Burder, "to the serious and zealous Professors of the Gospel of every denomination", which was circulated in 1795, and was one of the chief inducements to the formation of the Missionary Society, p.xivf.

53. India and China are in a different category, since as far as Britain was concerned commercial interests preceded the missionaries. The British East India Company actively resisted the Evangelical missionaries; see K. Ingham, "English Evangelicals and the Pilgrim Tax in India," *JEH* III, 2, October 1952, and E.D. Potts, "Baptist Missionaries of Serampore and the Government of India, 1792-1813", *JEH* xv, 2, October 1964. Burder's address, (see note 51) has a more starry-eyed attitude to missions in India than the difficulties warranted. "Oh that we may soon hear of multitudes of Hindoos flying to Christ as doves to their windows, and uniting together in praising the Lamb." p.xvi.

atheistical in any case - "What are we going to do if the heathen do not respond, or if the millennium is delayed?" They were cool-headed enough in matters like provisioning their missionary ship *The Duff* and arranging its return with a cargo of tea from China, but in matters like the preaching of the Gospel they were, again in modern terms, existential. They did it because they were in God's hands. When Pentycross surveyed a war-torn Europe he turned to a prophecy of Haggai and concluded that the sooner the South Sea mission began the better. "At least, at the present, every thing should be tried, that they may extend the Redeemer's kingdom."<sup>54</sup> The same prophecy also guaranteed Britain's safety in the perilous 1790s, while she tackled the missionary task.

By the way, the abundance of the Gospel in our own country, and the vast number of the righteous found in it, both *in* the established Church and *out* of it, preclude the reason for a revolution *here*; and assure us, that the *holy seed shall be* the substance and perpetuity of our noble tree of liberty, bending with the fruits of domestic comfort, public and private wealth, order, law and religion.<sup>55</sup>

The reward of Britain's dedication is superbly vague.

But if you win, what do you win? Nothing less than ETERNAL GLORY, *for millions upon millions in the South Seas, till the coming of the Son of God.*<sup>56</sup>

Conviction and confidence are the key notes of the enterprise. That is, after all, how enthusiasm is generated and sustained.

## 7. Eschatological Response

With the formation of the Missionary Society and the other missionary societies of the 1790s the Evangelicals had translated their eschatological doctrines into practice. Hitherto, the prayers for the advancement of Christ's kingdom had found fulfilment only in the British and American revivals. Now the associated interpretations of the prophecies were put to a practical test. The spirit which had flared fitfully for the Countess of Huntingdon in Georgia now blazed amongst the Evangelicals, kindled by the French Revolution and the war. At the least their eschatological flights reveal a sense of occasion. But there is something deeper here; their vivid response to the Biblical prophecies was to trace their fulfilment in the history taking place around them and to take their part in the process. Their Biblical theology required it of them. Their civilisation and its skills made it seem possible for them. The interpretation of prophecy was now removed from the realms of theorising and made into a programme of action.

54. *Four sermons preached at....*, 1795, p.58.

55. *op cit* pp.58-59.

56. *op cit* p.68. These are his concluding words.

For the moment the Evangelicals looked forward confidently to the success of their missions.

From the specimens we have of discourses preached before the different Missionary Societies we venture to predict that in a few years much light will be thrown on the prophecies relating to the advancement of the kingdom of Christ; and the doctrine of Scripture on the subject will be better understood than it has ever yet been.<sup>57</sup>

They might have done better to shiver on the dockside as *The Duff* set sail with the voyaging missionaries singing from the Countess of Huntingdon's collection of hymns:

Jesu, at thy command  
I launch into the deep;  
And leave my native land,  
Where sin lulls all asleep;  
For Thee I fain would all resign,  
And sail to heav'n with Thee and Thine.<sup>58</sup>

STEPHEN ORCHARD

### MANLINESS AND MISSION: FRANK LENWOOD AND THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Early in the morning of 6 September 1934 Frank Lenwood, Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society from 1912 to 1925, and thereafter an Honorary Director of the Society, fell to his death in a climbing accident on the Aiguille d'Argentières in the French Alps. He was a month short of his sixtieth birthday. Two weeks later, on 19 September, W. Nelson Bitton, the Home Secretary of the LMS, began his tribute to his former colleague before the LMS Board of Directors with these words:

The thoughts and occasionally the eyes of many of you will have been turning, I am sure, this morning, to the cross benches there, in thought of the figure that we have been so used to see in his place at every meeting of the Board. We recall that fine, athletic figure, the figure of a man. For we recall one who was an all-round man, and manliness marked all his action.

In the best traditions of muscular Christianity, Bitton recalled how he had first met Lenwood on the football field in 1896, how they played hockey in Shanghai

57. *Evangelical Magazine*, vol.V, 1797, p.128.

58. *A Select Collection of Hymns universally sung in all the Countess of Huntingdon's chapels, collected by her Ladyship*, 1786, CLXXIX, p.272.

in 1907, and taken their last round of golf together on a British course in 1916. "Is it not fitting", asked Bitton, "that such a manhood should find a resting place on the mountain side?"<sup>1</sup> Bitton's awed tone was echoed by others. Lenwood's close friend, H.C. Carter of Cambridge, who had taken the funeral service at the French Protestant church at Argentières, reminded the Board that Lenwood was "a born leader, almost terribly strong". Strength of body was, if anything, surpassed by strength of will and personality. Carter, recalling that Lenwood had "pushed me with the pushing of love into almost everything good I have ever done in my life", commented that Lenwood was "always pushing people into things".<sup>2</sup> William Paton, speaking at the memorial service, held in G. Campbell Morgan's Westminster Chapel the following day, agreed that "No-one got near Frank without being made to do something". Paton, who owed to Lenwood his initiation into evangelical student work in Oxford, alluded to the spell which he had cast over members of the Student Christian Movement in the university in the first decade of the century, and pronounced that it "was almost like the dying of Queen Victoria when Frank Lenwood and his wife left Oxford".<sup>3</sup>

Even allowing for the convention that one should not speak evil of the dead, it is evident from these and other eulogies delivered in 1934 that Frank Lenwood was a man of quite exceptional force of character who made an enduring impression for good or ill on all who met him. Although his name may be scarcely remembered today, it seems appropriate in the bicentennial year of the founding of the London Missionary Society to focus attention on an LMS Foreign Secretary who, on assuming office in 1912, attracted a word of prophecy from R. Wardlaw Thompson that here were the "makings of a greater secretary than any the Society has yet seen".<sup>4</sup>

Frank Lenwood was born in Sheffield on 6 October 1874. His father, Walter Lenwood, minister of Nether Chapel, was in his first Congregational pastorate, having left the Baptist ministry in 1871 owing to a change of view on the question of eternal punishment. Brought up as an Anglican, Walter Lenwood had been baptized as a young man by C.H. Spurgeon, and trained for the Baptist ministry at Regent's Park College under Joseph Angus. Although his acceptance in 1871 of the doctrine of probation after death was accompanied by "a considerable broadening of his views", Walter Lenwood retained an evangelistic fervour and a passionate commitment to the London Missionary Society which he passed on to

- 
1. London, School of Oriental and African Studies, Council for World Mission archives [hereafter CWMA], Home Odds Box, 14, Folder 5. I am grateful to the Council for World Mission for permission to cite material from their archives.
  2. CWMA, Home Odds Box 14, Folder 5.
  3. *ibid*; see M. Sinclair, *William Paton*, 1949, 13-14; E.M. Jackson, *Red Tape and the Gospel: A Study of the Significance of the Ecumenical Missionary Struggle of William Paton* (1886-1943), Birmingham 1980, 21-22.
  4. N. Goodall, *A History of the London Missionary Society 1895-1945*, 1954, 558.

his son.<sup>5</sup> Walter Lenwood married one of his church members at Nether Chapel, Charlotte Pye-Smith, daughter of John William Pye-Smith, mayor of Sheffield, and niece of Sir Edward Baines, M.P. She was an orthodox evangelical whom her son remembers warning him of "Dr Horton and those dreadful 'new lights' who are tearing the Bible to pieces".<sup>6</sup>

Having married into the Congregational aristocracy, it is no surprise that Walter Lenwood should have given his children educational opportunities which few offspring of Free Church ministers of his day enjoyed, and which laid the foundations for a remarkable family record of missionary service. On the advice of J.L. Paton, Frank went to Rugby School, whence he won an open classical scholarship in 1893 to Corpus Christi College, Oxford.<sup>7</sup> His younger sister, Norah (b.1876), was educated at Newnham College, Cambridge, and the Edinburgh Medical College for Women, and from 1905 served as an LMS medical missionary in China.<sup>8</sup> A second sister, Maida (b.1881), studied at Somerville College, Oxford, and Sheffield University, and went to Madras with the LMS in 1908; she married a Methodist missionary, and later became a secretary for women's work in the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.<sup>9</sup> A third sister, Caroline [Carol], also served with the LMS in Beijing from 1927 to 1940.<sup>10</sup>

At Oxford Lenwood distinguished himself, gaining Firsts in Classical Moderations and Greats. At his memorial service, William Paton emphasized his friend's "terrific intellectual honesty". To encourage Paton when he in turn was reading for Greats, Lenwood had told him that "I got my first in Greats because I insisted in all my papers on the centrality of the fact of God"; Paton recalled that he had tried the same tactic, but without the same results.<sup>11</sup> Lenwood was also elected president of the Oxford Union, where he was known for strongly anti-militarist and teetotal views.<sup>12</sup> He became involved in the Universities' Camps for Public Schools (where boys were introduced to Christianity, "both muscular and intellectual"),<sup>13</sup> and in 1897 joined the Student Volunteer Missionary Union and the British College Christian Union (later the Student Christian Movement, or SCM). In such circles his spiritual experience developed along the expected

5. On Walter Lenwood see CWMA, Home Personal Box 7, Folder 1. Lenwood changed his name from Peppercorn in 1874, in order to deprive his opponents in controversy and the rougher element of his Sunday School of an easy target. He was minister of London Road Baptist Church, Lowestoft, from 1867 to 1871. His Congregational pastorates were at Nether Chapel, Sheffield (1872-85); West Clayton Street, Newcastle upon Tyne (1885-9); Wycliffe, Sheffield (1889-1905); and Meersbrook Park, Sheffield (1905-14).

6. F. Lenwood, *Jesus - Lord or Leader?*, 1930, 14.

7. R.C. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 1936, 17-19.

8. CWMA, *Annotated Register of LMS Missionaries 1796-1923*, ed. J. Sibree, No. 1186.

9. *ibid.*, No. 1255.

10. Goodall, *History of the LMS*, 202, 609.

11. CWMA, Home Odds Box 14, Folder 5.

12. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 21-2.

13. *ibid.*, 34.



Keswick lines: at the 1896 Universities' Camp he first trusted God "for a full deliverance from sin"; at the SVMU/BCCU conference the following year he gained "a fuller understanding and more reasonable expectation" of what it meant to be dead to sin.<sup>14</sup>

After taking his degree in 1897, Lenwood went to Mansfield College to train for the Congregational ministry: the sense of God's blessing on his camp and student work had convinced him that his calling lay within Oxford rather than on the mission field to which his aspirations had long been directed.<sup>15</sup> He was primarily responsible for drawing Mansfield into the life of the SCM, and in 1898 was elected chairman of the SCM theological committee. In that capacity he endeavoured (with only partial success) to allay the fears of the Anglican theological colleges about the apparent non-denominationalism of the SCM and its missionary wing.<sup>16</sup> Lenwood also became concerned for the spiritual nurture of the growing number of Nonconformist students at Oxford University, arguing the case for a Free Church Oxford pastorate along the lines of the existing Anglican and Roman Catholic pastorates. At the end of 1899 the principal of Mansfield, A.M. Fairbairn, invited Lenwood to assume just such a role, alongside the post of tutor in New Testament Greek at Mansfield. Lenwood's appointment by Mansfield College Council in January 1900 was on the understanding that he "should devote a large part of his time to religious work among undergraduates".<sup>17</sup> In fact at the end of the academic year he left Oxford for seven months to take a temporary pastorate at Queen Street Congregational Church, Wolverhampton, and only returned to his Oxford duties at Easter 1901.

From Easter 1901 to December 1906 Frank Lenwood fulfilled a pivotal role in the religious life of Oxford University, organizing Bible study groups and other SCM activities, and acting as chaplain to the Free Church students. At Mansfield itself, while remaining deeply influenced by A.M. Fairbairn's emphasis on the fatherhood of God, Lenwood was one of the advocates of the new Ritschlian theology, with its appeal to the authority of personal spiritual experience rather than reason: it was this appeal, argues Mark Johnson, that undergirded the participation of Mansfield students in the new ecumenism of the SCM.<sup>18</sup> Within

- 
14. CWMA, Home Personal Box 8, Folder 7, typescript "From F.L.'s Private Book begun Oct: 6 1893". Lenwood was so impressed by the Universities' Camps for Public Schools that he started a Free Church parallel, the Free Church Camps for School boys, in 1898. These ran for thirty years.
  15. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 75. Other factors in Lenwood's decision to devote himself to student work were George Adam Smith's *Life of Henry Drummond* and the personal advice of Donald Fraser.
  16. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 33-4; M.D. Johnson, *The Dissolution of Dissent, 1850-1928*, New York and London 1987, 278-82; cf. T. Tatlow, *The Story of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1933, 114-61.
  17. Oxford, Mansfield College archives, College Council minutes, 16 Jan. 1900. I owe thanks to Alma Jenner, Librarian of Mansfield College, for this reference.
  18. Johnson, *The Dissolution of Dissent*, 227, 268-92.

the national student movement, Lenwood acquired a reputation as an advocate of progressive methods in biblical study. *His Bible Studies on Isaiah I-XXXIX*, published by the BCCU in 1900, popularized the critical scholarship of George Adam Smith and was probably the first SCM publication to take a "modern" view on critical questions.<sup>19</sup> A firm commitment to the social application of the gospel was integral to this broader evangelicalism of which Lenwood was fast becoming a leading representative. He served as chairman of the famous SCM conference at Matlock in Easter 1909, which William Temple (who was a participant, but not, as is frequently asserted, the chairman) always looked back to as a primary source of the COPEC conference of 1924.<sup>20</sup> Lenwood published a pamphlet setting forth the conviction of the conference, in language owing an obvious debt to Fairbairn, that the call to social discipleship constituted "a new Puritanism which by God's grace will give the hardness and detachment from the world needful to those enlisted in a great spiritual campaign".<sup>21</sup> Lenwood was also the most enthusiastic early advocate of the need of the SCM for a permanent residential site for the movement's summer conferences, a need that was fulfilled through the purchase of The Hayes, Swanwick, in December 1910.<sup>22</sup>

At Easter 1903 Lenwood had married Gertrude (generally known as Gertie) Wilson from his native Sheffield. She was the daughter of Henry J. Wilson (1833-1914), Liberal Member of Parliament for the Yorkshire constituency of Holmfirth since 1885, proprietor of the firm of precious metal smelters, the Sheffield Smelting Company, and a leading force in Sheffield radical Nonconformist politics.<sup>23</sup> Gertie had been educated at Sheffield High School alongside Lenwood's sisters, went on to Girton College, Cambridge, and served subsequently as a SCM travelling secretary.<sup>24</sup> It was a marriage of obvious spiritual and intellectual affinity, and moreover one that sealed Lenwood's existing maternal connections with Yorkshire Nonconformist wealth. In January 1902 Wilson entrusted each of

19. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 59; Tatlow, *The Story of the SCM*, 220.
20. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 61-2; Tatlow, *The Story of the SCM*, 346-54. F.A. Iremonger, *William Temple Archbishop of Canterbury*, 1948, 333, and John Kent, *William Temple*, Cambridge 1992, 15, incorrectly describe Temple as chairman of the Matlock conference.
21. F. Lenwood, *Discipleship and the Social Problem: A New Call to the Student Christian Movement, Matlock, 1909*, n.d., 19. For Fairbairn's concept of a "new Puritanism" dedicated to the meeting of the spiritual and social need in the name of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, see his 1884 paper to the Congregational Union on "The Sacerdotal and the Puritan Idea" reprinted in A.M. Fairbairn, *Studies in Religion and Theology*, 1910, 109-41 (especially 136-7).
22. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 69; Tatlow, *The Story of the SCM*, 450-4.
23. On H.J. Wilson see W.S. Fowler, *A Study in Radicalism and Dissent: The Life and Times of Henry Joseph Wilson*, 1961; and *Biographical Dictionary of Modern British Radicals volume 3: 1870-1914*, eds. J.O. Baylen and N.J. Grossman, Hemel Hempstead 1988, 874-8.
24. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 44. Gertrude Lenwood survived till 27 Dec. 1971.

his four children with a substantial capital sum.<sup>25</sup> It was, very probably, this Wilson money that not merely freed the Lenwoods to give to the LMS on what Godfrey Phillips later termed “the grand scale”, but also enabled Frank never to draw a salary from the Society.<sup>26</sup> Independent financial means also made possible a journey to Asia in 1907-8 that set a new and lasting orientation for Frank Lenwood’s career. An invitation from the SCM to represent the movement at the World Student Christian Federation conference in Tokyo in April 1907, coupled with the chance to represent the LMS at the centenary conference on China missions in Shanghai in May, gave the Lenwoods the opportunity to fulfil a long-standing ambition to visit LMS stations in China and India.<sup>27</sup>

The Asia tour of 1907-8 implanted in Lenwood’s mind seeds that would germinate during his years as LMS Foreign Secretary. In China he was impressed both by the enormous potential of the indigenous church and by its need for missionaries bold enough to engage in critical theological reflection: “the Chinese will be only too glad to escape the unpleasant necessity of thought if it can be avoided, and orthodoxy will be the ruin of the Church”.<sup>28</sup> In Japan he was disturbed by the wordy irreverence and triumphalism of American missions, and reminded that, in contrast, “it is in suffering and failure that the Kingdom has always taken root”.<sup>29</sup> In India he was depressed by the seeming impossibility of true friendship between Indian and European and “the complete absence of any real standard of truth” within Hinduism; yet at the same time he discerned in the reformation of Hinduism the promise of “a great turning to Christ” and in the stirrings of Indian nationalism signs of preparation for the coming of the Kingdom.<sup>30</sup> The whole trip convinced him that the Student Volunteer Movement’s stirring Watchword of “the evangelization of the world in this generation” encouraged short-termism and indiscriminate preaching, rather than the patient building of independent native churches. A commitment to missionary consolidation rather than constant expansion was later to be a hallmark of Lenwood’s policy as LMS Foreign Secretary. He made his criticisms of the Watchword public in an article in *The Student Movement*: “...its whole theory is based upon a static Gospel, and it leaves out of account that the Gospel is something infinitely greater than our present understanding of it, something into

25. Sheffield archives, H.J. Wilson papers, MD 6028 H.J. Wilson to Helen Wilson, 1 Jan. 1902. This letter is annotated “same to Cedric, Helen and Gertie, slightly modified to Oliver”. I am grateful to Sheffield Libraries and Information Services for permission to cite this letter. Helen Wilson was the first woman G.P. to practise in Sheffield. I owe this information to Dr. Clyde Binfield.

26. *The Chronicle of the London Missionary* 42 (1934), 234.

27. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 76-7.

28. *ibid.*, 79.

29. *ibid.*, 81.

30. *ibid.*, 86-8; CWMA, Home Personal Box 7, Folder 6, Bulletin No 7 from Agra, 26 Feb. 1908

which we shall only enter with the aid of nations spiritually yet unborn".<sup>31</sup> Although Lenwood's strictures against the Watchword bore some similarities to those emanating from Gustav Warneck in Germany, to suggest that the Christian message was richer and broader than the current Western understanding of it was a rare note to sound within the Anglo-American missionary movement in the years before the First World War.<sup>32</sup>

Frank Lenwood's Asia tour brought him to the notice of senior figures in the LMS, and an invitation to join the London staff followed.<sup>33</sup> The Lenwoods themselves, however, convinced that God wanted them in India, promptly offered for service in Benares or Berhampur. After a brief period of Sanskrit study in Oxford, two years of missionary service in Benares followed from 1909 to 1911. The experience reinforced Frank's conviction that successful evangelism among Hindus must be friendship evangelism, based on a shared life. Involvement in the birth of a district union of the LMS churches also impressed upon him both the necessity and the pitfalls of a policy of devolution of responsibility to the Indian church.<sup>34</sup> On the broader political front, he was horrified by the attitudes of British officialdom to Indian political aspirations, declaring in a paper written in 1911 that the failure to provide for the political growth "of the people from whom we are trustees is treason in the same sense as the attitude of Charles I".<sup>35</sup>

Late in 1911 a bout of typhoid forced Lenwood to return home, accompanied by Gertie, who needed to see her father.<sup>36</sup> In December Dr Ralph Wardlaw Thompson, LMS Foreign Secretary for the past thirty years, informed the LMS Board of his intention to retire. The Board appointed a secretariat committee which recommended that Thompson be asked to stay for two more years. A Joint Foreign Secretary, George Currie Martin, had been in post since 1909, being groomed to take over when Thompson should step down. Martin, however, was not a success, and had asked to be relieved of his duties. The committee therefore recommended that two new appointments be made. The Lay Secretary, F.H. Hawkins, formerly a Wrexham solicitor, was an obvious choice.<sup>37</sup> The second

31. F. Lenwood, "Concerning the Watchword of the Student Volunteer Missionary Union", *The Student Movement* 9 (Dec. 1908), 57; Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 57-9; Tatlow, *The Story of the SCM*, 316-17.
32. For Warneck's criticisms see Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge 1994, 18-19.
33. *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* 42 (1934), 233.
34. Wilson *Frank Lenwood*, 91-9.
35. CWMA, Home Personal Box 7, Folder 10, paper by Lenwood on the British government of India. It appears to have been written for the "Context" group of Mansfield men, an annual discussion group formed in 1902 which comprised Lenwood, W.M. Barwell, H.C. Carter, T.H. Cooper, J.S. Griffith, P.N. Harrison, and Godfrey Phillips.
36. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 101-2
37. CWMA, Home Odds Box 14, Folder 1, *ad interim* report of LMS Secretariat Committee, April 1912.

recommendation proved more difficult, and was slower in coming. In July 1912 the committee interviewed Frank Lenwood. Thompson told Lenwood afterwards that there had been decided opposition to his name, which it took a sparkling performance on interview to dispel. Accordingly in December the Board appointed Lenwood Foreign Secretary with responsibility for India, the South Seas, Papua, and British Guiana, leaving Hawkins with China, Africa, and Madagascar. In Thompson's mind, the Lenwoods' Asia tour and Frank's illness all pointed to "the working of a Divine Hand" marking out Frank Lenwood as God's man for a new era in the history of the LMS.<sup>38</sup>

Wardlaw Thompson remained in office till 30 May 1914, and even thereafter appeared almost daily at the Mission House for two more years.<sup>39</sup> Given the continued formidable presence of "the Chief", as Thompson was known by his staff, it was not easy for Lenwood to make his mark in his first few years. He returned to India in 1913-14, accompanied by Gertie and W.H. Somervell of Kendal, to lead a deputation tour characterized by Lenwood's determination to ensure that devolution should anticipate rather than follow the demands of the indigenous church for greater responsibility.<sup>40</sup> Paradoxically, although himself too domineering a personality to be a good committee man, he "saw more clearly than most the far-reaching ill effects of any over-strong and domineering type of mission".<sup>41</sup> Lenwood, for whom lack of backbone was the unforgivable sin, took heart that "some of the men and women are building up an Indian Church with a backbone, in a country where backbones are as a rule of the nature of yielding gristle, and scarcely deserve the name".<sup>42</sup> Early twentieth-century Protestant missionary liberalism, for all of its readiness to believe the best of individual non-Western Christian leaders, tended to endorse uncritically the social Darwinist assumption of the day that the higher vertebrate forms of moral life were most naturally to be found in the Anglo-Saxon race.

Of greater significance in the history of the Society was a second deputation tour to the South Seas and Papua in 1915-16. With A.J. Viner, secretary of the Lancashire Congregational Union, Lenwood travelled an incredible distance of 41,044 miles in 358 days from June 1915 to June 1916. They were joined for much of the tour by an Australian Congregational Minister, G.J. Williams, and his wife. Lenwood's official deputation report extends to 314 printed pages.<sup>43</sup> In addition,

38. CWMA, Home Odds Box 14, Folder 1, final report of LMS Secretariat Committee, adopted by LMS Board on 10 Dec. 1912; Home Personal Box 7, Folder 10, Thompson to Lenwood, 16 July 1912. The grounds of the opposition to Lenwood are not disclosed.
39. B. Mathews, *Dr Ralph Wardlaw Thompson*, 1917, 161. Mathews dates Thompson's retirement at 1 April 1914, but Lenwood, in a letter of 31 May 1914 in CWMA, Home Personal Box 7, Folder 10, writes of the previous day as being Thompson's last in office.
40. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 107-8, 111.
41. *Ibid.*, 107.
42. CWMA, Home Personal Box 7, Folder 10, Lenwood to friends, 31 May 1914.
43. London Missionary Society: *Report of Revs. A.J. Viner, G.J. Williams, and Rev. Frank Lenwood. Deputation to the South Seas and Papua... June, 1915-June 1916*, 1916.

he wrote a travel book for the general public, *Pastels from the Pacific*, published by Oxford University Press in 1917, which he illustrated with his own pastels of no mean quality. This marathon ocean journey gave ample opportunity for both the exercise and the observation of Christian manliness. Lenwood expressed his fascination with the seamanship of the Cook Islanders who made up the crew of the *John Williams IV* in terms that again combined unstinting admiration for particular individuals with an underlying acceptance of race as a category of human classification.

No white crew could be more expert or fearless. It is splendid to see them manage a whale-boat in a high sea off the reef, John Wycliffe the bo'sun standing firm in the stern with an iron grip on the steering oar, and every man alert to hold her, or dash for it when John says the favourable wave has come. Nor would the same discipline and sobriety - shame upon us that it must be said! - be possible with a white crew.<sup>44</sup>

Here the new Puritanism of liberal evangelicalism found its ideal muscular embodiment amidst the islands of the South Pacific.

Lenwood, however, was very far from viewing the Pacific through rose-tinted spectacles. In places he was deeply concerned. Worst of all were the Cook Islands themselves, scene of some of the Society's earliest and most heroic labours. There the deputation encountered a fatal combination of self-centred independency, magnified by the physical isolation of each island, and the *de facto* episcopacy of an apostolic succession of LMS missionary patriarchs. There was little distinction between church and community, and hence the islands exhibited "most of the troubles which attach to the State establishment of religion".<sup>45</sup> Those who had repudiated Christian moral standards had not, as in Britain, thereby deserted the church, but remained within the Christian community, even on the church membership roll. Thus an inert nominal majority exercised a constant drag on the few who sought a higher spiritual standard. As a first step towards devolution, the deputation recommended the creation of church councils on islands which had three or more churches.<sup>46</sup> The problems of establishment Congregationalism were in fact endemic throughout the South Seas field. In Samoa, the deputation was puzzled to find pastors being chosen by the whole village community rather than by the church meeting, and was uncomfortably reminded of Constantinian or medieval Christendom.<sup>47</sup> Lenwood, who saw the exercise of manly personal responsibility as constituting the essence of Christian maturity, found that the experience raised some perplexing questions. In such circumstances, the priority

44. F. Lenwood, *Pastels from the Pacific*, 1917, 22.

45. London Missionary Society: *Report of Revs. A.J. Viner, G.J. Williams, and Rev. Frank Lenwood*, 35.

46. *Ibid.*, 38; Lenwood, *Pastels from the Pacific*, 43-4.

47. London Missionary Society; *Report of Revs. A.J. Viner, G.J. Williams, and Rev. Frank Lenwood*, 77-8; see Goodall, *History of the LMS*, 366-7.

for a mission such as the Samoa mission was not an immediate devolution of control - in the judgment of the deputation, that would be fatally premature - but rather the inculcation in the churches of a sense of financial responsibility for the support of the missionaries who were for the time being essential to their pastoral care. At the same time a greater *share* for the church in decision-making should be strongly encouraged - a step which the Samoan church was reluctant to take in 1916, but whose wisdom would within a few years be vindicated.<sup>48</sup>

Frank Lenwood's missionary principles had been forged amidst the more sophisticated civilizations of India or China. In the Pacific a different scale of values for church-mission relations seemed appropriate. This was most obviously true in Papua New Guinea, where only fifteen years had passed since the killing of James Chalmers and Oliver Tomkins at Dopima. Lenwood confessed that he arrived in Papua expecting to find "a barrier between the natives and myself, and even positive repulsion, in exact proportion to the difference between the Indian and the Papuan in the scale of civilization". In fact, he was astonished to find the "barrier of race" no higher than it was between Indian and Englishman, and to discover that friendship on the basis of common humanity was possible: "In theory I believed in the brotherhood of man before: I know it now by an experiment, which, if not the ultimate test, comes very near it".<sup>49</sup> The Papuan was part of the human family united under the fatherhood of God, but he was undoubtedly a younger brother within that family: "he is loyal and true, with a boylike capacity for simple spiritual ideas - one of the younger brothers of the human race with every right to take his place amongst the rest. ... There is a fine childlikeness about the trained Papuan which should fit him for a high place in the kingdom of God."<sup>50</sup> In this still infant mission field full devolution was a distant prospect. The immediate need was to teach the rudiments of self-support, and to enhance the authority of the South Sea teachers, who formed the bulk of the missionary force, to a level comparable with their European brethren.<sup>51</sup>

The members of the deputation recorded in their report with some amazement that they had been "able to travel back and forth across the Pacific as safely as if the name of war had never been heard".<sup>52</sup> Over the next few years, however, issues associated with the war occupied much of Lenwood's attention. Financial shortages during the war years confronted the LMS for the first time with hard budgetary choices on a major scale, and Lenwood more than once complained to F.H. Hawkins that "his" fields, India above all, were having to bear a

48. London Missionary Society: *Report of Revs. A.J. Viner, G.J. Williams, and Rev. Frank Lenwood*, 81-6; see Goodall, *History of the LMS*, 369-72.

49. Lenwood, *Pastels from the Pacific*, 188-9.

50. London Missionary Society: *Report of Revs. A.J. Viner, G.J. Williams, and Rev. Frank Lenwood*, 179f

51. *ibid.*, 201-4.

52. *ibid.* 1.

disproportionate share of the cuts.<sup>53</sup> He was also intimately involved in endeavours to maintain international links between the Protestant churches both during and after the war. Only after the most intense heart-searching had Frank and Gertie come to accept the necessity of the war.<sup>54</sup> With the pacifist Henry Hodgkin Lenwood was active through the British Council for Promoting an International Christian Meeting in applying pressure on John R. Mott to support Archbishop Söderblom's project of an international Christian conference to be held even before the war had ended.<sup>55</sup> In June 1919 Lenwood protested strongly to J.H. Oldham - who was a personal friend - when that normally stalwart champion of Christian internationalism prevented the Conference of British Missionary Societies from voicing any public protest against the British government's continued exclusion of German missions from British overseas territories. Lenwood felt that Oldham's resolve had wavered under pressure, at a time when Christians should have been unequivocal in their defence of international Christian brotherhood.<sup>56</sup>

Lenwood's vision of Christian brotherhood, although vivid, had so far allowed little place to African Christians, of whom he knew almost nothing. Like the Papuans, they were assumed to occupy a lowly rung on the ladder of civilization. In October 1921, however, he attended the founding meeting of the International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, in the United States. His report of the meeting, published in the *International Review of Missions*, made particular reference to the impression made upon him by the six Asian representatives and the two black Christian leaders - James Aggrey (a native of the Gold Coast, then teaching in North Carolina) and Robert Moton (of Alabama, not even an African) - whom Lenwood, along with others, regarded as representing the African continent by virtue of their colour: "To my thinking, and, I admit, to my surprise, the contribution reached its climax in the negroes, the poorest in spirit, the meekest of the races on this little, noisy earth". They communicated spiritual wisdom with a simple directness that went deeper than the sophisticated reasoning of the Western delegates. "In God's family", Lenwood concluded, "we cannot do without the child races. They see Him more clearly, more cleverly, more deeply

---

53. CWMA, South Seas Odds Box 8, Folder 3, Lenwood to Hawkins, 15 Dec. 1915, 18 Dec. 1915, and 26 Jan. 1916.

54. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 144-8.

55. Yale Divinity School Library, Special Collections, Record Group 45, Mott Papers, Lenwood to Mott, 15 May 1918. On the British Council for Promoting an International Christian Meeting, formed in July 1917, see *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, eds. R. Rouse and S.C. Neill, 1954, 523, 528.

56. London, School of Oriental and African Studies, Conference of British Missionary Society archives, "Co-operative Action" fiche box 1, C/IMC/3/16, Lenwood to Oldham, 21 June 1919. See also Jackson, *Red Tape and the Gospel*, 124-5; Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 118-20.



than the rest of us.”<sup>57</sup> Once again, shared Christian experience was beginning to dispel prejudice, but stopped short of overturning the crude racial categories which still shaped Lenwood’s understanding of spiritual development and maturity.

By late 1921 Lenwood was having to turn his attention to questions of a more theological nature that had arisen within the LMS constituency. The LMS, along with other major British missionary societies, notably the CMS and the BMS, had come under attack from a fundamentalist organization, the Bible League, which was endeavouring to obtain assurances that the societies would not send out candidates who denied the full verbal inspiration of the Bible.<sup>58</sup> In the case of the LMS, the main focus of controversy became a decision by its missionaries in Bangalore, working in schools whose pupils were overwhelmingly Hindu or Muslim, to issue prayer books containing prayers that did not mention the name of Christ.<sup>59</sup> At the LMS Board meeting in June 1921, a small group of directors moved an amendment deploring the exclusion of the name of Christ from daily worship in the Society’s schools. The amendment was decisively rejected, and a substantive motion defending the freedom of the Bangalore missionaries overwhelmingly passed. However, during the autumn of 1921 charges multiplied in the Christian press that the LMS was becoming disloyal to Jesus Christ. At the December meeting of the Board, it was agreed to institute an inquiry into methods of Christian worship in the Indian schools, and in the meantime to suspend the operation of the June resolution.<sup>60</sup> Despite this concession, orchestrated attacks on the Society continued to appear in the press. In February 1922, some of the most distinguished names in Congregationalism issued a statement which regretted the attacks and affirmed that directors and missionaries of the LMS were “as loyal as

57. F. Lenwood, “The International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, October 1921”, *International Review of Missions* XI, 41 (Jan. 1922), 41; see W.R. Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations: A History of the International Missionary Council and its Nineteenth Century Background*, New York 1952, 203.
58. See D.W. Bebbington, “Baptists and fundamentalism in inter-war Britain” in *Protestant Evangelicalism: Britain, Ireland, Germany and America, c.1750-c.1950*, ed. K. Robbins (*Studies in Church History Subsidia* 7), Oxford 1990, 297-326; G. Hewitt, *The Problems of Success: A History of the Church Missionary Society 1910-1942*, 2 vols., 1971, 1, 461-73; B. Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society 1792-1992*, Edinburgh 1992, 377-81. For an early identification of the Bible League as the original source of the attacks on the LMS see CWMA, Home Odds Box 16, Folder 3, W. Nelson Bitton to W.H. Hounsom, 20 July 1921.
59. Goodall, *History of the LMS*, 535-6. Two further items of complaint were the commendation in the LMS Chronicle of A.S. Peake’s *Commentary on the Bible* (and its sale in the Livingstone House bookshop), and a theologically revisionist essay by Bernard Lucas in a volume of essays, *The Mandate: A Vision of Service*, which the LMS issued in 1920 for circulation among ministers.
60. The fullest account of the controversy to Jan. 1922 from an LMS perspective is in CWMA, Home Personal Box 8, Folder 4, circular letter from LMS secretaries, 5 Jan. 1922.

we ourselves to the Person of Jesus Christ. ... All the work of the Board is conducted under a full belief in the Divine Sonship and Saviourhood of Christ our Lord."<sup>61</sup>

The inquiry into the appropriate methods of school worship in India was added to the tasks of a deputation to India, which the Society had already planned for 1922-3. Frank Lenwood was to head the deputation. Its primary brief was to report on the progress of self-government within the Indian church, the implications for the church of the growth of Indian nationalism, the development of the church union negotiations in South India, and to make recommendations on how the Society's limited resources could most profitably be concentrated, particularly in educational work, in the years ahead.<sup>62</sup>

Leading this deputation was always going to be a demanding assignment for Lenwood. It became immeasurably more of a strain for reasons that were wholly personal to him. One day in August 1922, less than two months before he was due to depart for India, while the Lenwoods were cycling along a Welsh lane on holiday, Frank confided to Gertie that "he had rather suddenly realised that he could no longer recognise the Lordship of Jesus Christ".<sup>63</sup> He had been accustomed to modern biblical studies from his first term at Mansfield, and had endeavoured to keep up his New Testament studies ever since. Now, quite unexpectedly, "an accumulation of small discoveries and unrelated facts of criticism which I had accepted one by one, had organized themselves into a conclusion entirely new to me... I found that for all his uniqueness I believed Jesus to be divine only in the sense in which it is possible to use the word of any other good and great man".<sup>64</sup>

What was Lenwood to do? At the very time when his denomination had just been given categorical assurance of the Christological orthodoxy of all servants of the LMS, he, its senior secretary, had lost faith in the central Christian credal statement. We have little first-hand evidence of how he himself saw the issue at the time. According to Roger Wilson, his nephew and admiring biographer, Lenwood decided to "suppress any theological utterances for the present" for fear of wrecking this deputation: "Had he told of this change, even to his colleagues of the Deputation, there would have been danger of complete misunderstanding by the public of the whole situation regarding the Bangalore Controversy". In Wilson's account, Lenwood realized that resignation would be necessary in due course, yet even to do so immediately on returning from India, with so much

61. CWMA, Home Odds Box 16, Folder 3, "A statement concerning the London Missionary Society", Feb. 1922, by A.E. Garvie, R.F. Horton, J.D. Jones, J.H. Jowett, H. Elvet Lewis, W.B. Selbie, H. Arnold Thomas, Thomas Yates, and A.J. Viner.

62. CWMA, India Odds Box 11, Instructions to LMS India deputation from LMS Board, 30 Sept. 1922. The other members of the deputation were P.M. Bright, J.P., W.H. Somervell, J.P., Revd. David Walters and Mrs Irene Parker Crane.

63. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 161. The deputation sailed for India from Marseilles on 5 Oct. 1922.

64. Lenwood, *Jesus-Lord or Leader?*, 3-4.

unfinished business from the deputation to process, "would be neither manly nor fair to the LMS".<sup>65</sup> The only surviving evidence from Lenwood himself in 1922 is a letter to Gertie written from Coimbatore in south India on 27 November.

For me things get no easier. But I am abundantly clear that the thing that lies behind ordinary Christian preaching is a terrific and life-giving reality. The message of Xtianity [sic] mayn't be what we thought it was in the past, but there's no doubt that it's the power of God unto salvation. I believe in Foreign Missions more than ever, though it may be impossible for me to keep on serving them in this form. If other people could let me do it, I could go on serving and backing up the most orthodox type that we're ever likely to get in the LMS.<sup>66</sup>

Thus the same Ritschlian appeal to the compelling unitive force of evangelical experience which Lenwood had espoused in the cause of student ecumenism in Oxford in the late 1890s was invoked twenty-five years later in the hope of bridging the theological gulf that had opened up between him and the Society he loved and served. Whether Lenwood ever seriously believed that it might be possible for him to remain in office indefinitely is hard to tell. Wilson is clear that he did not. Certainly before August 1923 Lenwood had reached the conclusion that he should resign at some point. Writing to his old Mansfield friend, J.S. Griffith, Lenwood explained his decision to resign (of which he had already informed Griffith privately) as occasioned, not by the continuing attacks on the LMS over the Bangalore controversy, but by his own conclusion that he was not

orthodox enough to be a safe or conscientious Secretary of the LMS. I believe in Missions as much as ever, though the exclusiveness of some of them jars on me more than of old, but the doctrinal basis in the divinity of Christ, is my trouble. ... I never quite realised what it meant to me to reject the 4th Gospel, though I've done that pretty decisively any time this last 7, or I should say, 12 years, but quietly the implications have come home, and I see what it means. ... I'm not worried, or thinking of hasty movement, or expression, or likely to land into any folly of prominence - unless some orthodox ass has a spasm of cleverness and challenges me to state my faith. I don't think I shall serve truth by resigning in a hurry and giving the public my reasons. But there are obvious limits to the length of time for which one may dare to use this temporary economy. And then what the ultimate result will be I do not know.<sup>67</sup>

---

65. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 114-15, 162.

66. CWMA, Home Personal Box 8, Folder 4, Lenwood to his wife, 27 Nov 1922.

67. CWMA, Home Personal Box 8, Folder 7, Lenwood to Griffith, 7 Aug. 1923.

True to his word, Lenwood did not resign in a hurry. It was 7 October 1924, over two years after his change of theological position, before he wrote to V.A. Barradale, the LMS chairman, giving notice of his resignation as from 31 March 1925, on account of "certain personal reasons quite unrelated to the Society".<sup>68</sup> Most Christian people would have found such a delay intolerable. Lenwood clearly found his anomalous position bearable, although something of its pain is indicated in a letter written by Gertie in 1930, in reply to a letter from the Baptist Amelia Angus, who had written to Mrs Lenwood assuring her of her sympathy in the time of controversy occasioned by the publication of her husband's book, *Jesus - Lord or Leader?* "We are not suffering as you think", Gertie assured Miss Angus, "the hard time was when Frank first discovered that his views had changed". She added significantly " - and I found that in the main I agreed with him, (though in some details I do not go as far as he does)".<sup>69</sup>

The Indian deputation tour of 1922-3 thus continued as planned with Lenwood's companions quite unaware of his inner turmoil. The central recommendation of the deputation's report was that the LMS should radically concentrate its resources in India. Most seriously, this principle implied a recommendation that the Society should withdraw from almost all of its work in the United Provinces, including the Benares district where Lenwood himself had served, in order to free resources for the south. Lenwood stoutly defended his recommendation through to its implementation by the Board in 1924, despite the regret it gave him personally.<sup>70</sup> The principle of concentration was also applied to education, where Lenwood argued that the Society's efforts had been far too diffuse; a smaller number of schools staffed by genuinely Christian teachers offered the only hope of authentically Christian education. For Lenwood, the Bangalore prayer book question was of minor significance in comparison with this broader strategic priority.<sup>71</sup> On the Bangalore question itself, the deputation was divided, with Lenwood, Irene Parker Crane, and W.H. Somervell arguing that the Board should permit its India missionaries to use non-Christological prayers in school worship with non-Christian pupils, whilst David Walters, minister of Redland Park Congregational Church in Bristol (who represented the Congregational Union of England and Wales), and P.M. Bright, J.P., asked the Board to express its disapproval of the Bangalore method of worship as a general practice.<sup>72</sup> On the deputation's return, the Board passed a compromise resolution which, while

68. CWMA, Home Personal Box 8, Folder 7, Lenwood to Barradale, 7 Oct. 1924.

69. London, Dr Williams's Library, [hereafter DWL] MS 24.164 (6), Grace [Gertrude] M. Lenwood to A.G. Angus, 18 Dec. 1930. I wish to thank Mr John Creasey, Librarian of Dr Williams's Library, London, for drawing my attention to the Lenwood correspondence.

70. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 111-12; Goodall, *History of the LMS*, 29-30.

71. CWMA, Home Personal Box 8, Folder 4, F. Lenwood circular letter on Indian deputation, 1922-3, dated 14 Jan. 1923.

72. London Missionary Society; *Report of the Deputation to India... October, 1922-March, 1923*, 1923, 137-57.

stating that the Board did not adopt the Bangalore method of prayer as its policy for the conduct of worship in LMS schools, affirmed the freedom of those responsible for school worship in each case to make their own arrangements for prayer. More poignantly for Lenwood, the Board also ringingly reaffirmed its loyalty to “the Supreme and Divine Lord our Saviour Jesus Christ”, and rejoiced in the “unanimous assurance given by the Deputation of this same loyalty on the part of its missionaries on the field”.<sup>73</sup>

Once back in Britain, Lenwood continued in his duties at the Mission House, and in his contributions to the wider church. At the request of the SCM, he wrote a book for students during 1924 on the application of Christian principles to social and international problems, *Forces of the Spirit: The Seed and the Nations*. Its central theme was the same as that of the COPEC conference held earlier that year: that the teaching of Jesus on the fatherhood of God was the only adequate basis for human brotherhood and a doctrine of human worth. The book referred to Jesus as “our Lord”, although its Christological statements were phrased with careful ambiguity: “as men saw Jesus, they realised that they now had the guarantee and earnest of God. God was like that; He really was like that!”<sup>74</sup>

Lenwood’s letter of resignation was presented to the consultative and finance committee of the LMS on 21 October 1924. Members of the committee attempted without success to persuade him to change his mind, although he indicated his willingness to remain in office if desired till 30 June 1925, an offer which turned out not to be necessary.<sup>75</sup> Neither in the committee nor in the Board meeting of 17 December 1924 was any indication given of the nature of Lenwood’s “personal reasons” for resigning. Both Lenwood’s letter of resignation, and the Board resolution accepting it, were printed in full in the *LMS Chronicle*.<sup>76</sup> At the Board meeting on 22 April 1925, the last which he attended as Foreign Secretary, he was elected an Honorary Director of the Society.<sup>77</sup> With the known exception of J.S. Griffith, even Lenwood’s closest friends seem to have been kept in the dark about the reasons for his resignation until Easter 1926, when he unburdened his soul to the “Context” discussion group of former Mansfield men, of which he had been a member since its formation in 1902.<sup>78</sup> A decade later, when K.L. Parry reviewed Roger Wilson’s biography of Lenwood for the *LMS Chronicle*, he wryly observed that “it will be a surprise to many that the views expressed in *Jesus, Lord or Leader* were adopted so early.”<sup>79</sup> Lenwood’s secret, which could have been so damaging to the LMS in the controversial atmosphere of the early 1920s, had been kept to perfection.

73. Goodall, *History of the LMS*, 536; LMS Board minutes, Box 55, pp. 333-4, minutes of 27 June 1923.

74. F. Lenwood, *Forces of the Spirit: The Seed and the Nations*, 1925, 96, 102.

75. CWMA, LMS Board minutes, Box 55, pp. 427, 430, minutes of 17 Dec. 1924.

76. *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* 33 (Jan. 1925), 14-15.

77. CWMA, LMS Board minutes, Box 56, p. 10, minutes of 22 April 1925.

78. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 163; see above, n. 35.

79. *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* 44 (Nov. 1936), 266.

After his resignation from the LMS, Lenwood approached R.J. Evans of the London Congregational Union seeking a pastorate. Evans suggested Greengate Congregational Church, Plaistow, in East London. It was a declining cause, with between twenty and twenty-five worshipping in the morning, and sixty in the evening congregation. For twenty years they had had no full-time minister until a short-lived experiment with a fundamentalist pastor "with leanings to faith healing" ended in disaster. Lenwood was embraced on the rebound. When in November 1926, "with much trembling", he disclosed his theological position to the congregation, he received a favourable response, with only one exception.<sup>80</sup> He remained minister of Greengate until his death.

The Greengate pastorate, though demanding in its social context, gave Lenwood time both to indulge his passion for Alpine climbing (on six occasions during his final ten years) and to write the theological apologia which he felt he owed himself and his friends. *Jesus - Lord or Leader?* was published by Constable in 1930. It was a sustained exposition of the modernist theme that a radical revision of doctrinal orthodoxy need entail neither a repudiation of the religious experience that had undergirded orthodoxy nor any diminution of the missionary imperative. Jesus is to be preached as "a human figure who trod the path we tread and helped his followers to see what God was like." But the Church must point beyond Jesus to "God the Father, more perfect and more tender to His children than even Jesus could be. Have we lost anything?"<sup>81</sup> Christianity, although not in its present form the final religion, provides "by far the completest and the most convincing revelation of God".<sup>82</sup> The Christian message offers the only hope, both for the ancient Eastern faiths giving way under the strain of contact with the secularism of the West and for the "primitive" or "child races" threatened on every side by the impact of white civilization.<sup>83</sup> A missionary religion admittedly runs the risk of exclusiveness, but to abandon the missionary imperative would be to reduce Christianity to the status of a tribal religion for Westerners: "Better a propagandist Christianity that is exclusive than a Christianity that is merely tribal".<sup>84</sup>

Lenwood was better at climbing mountains than at theology. Although the manuscript for *Jesus - Lord or Leader?* was read and commented on in draft by such eminent persons as C.H. Dodd, H.G. Wood, J.H. Oldham and William Paton, even Roger Wilson had to admit that *Jesus - Lord or Leader?* was not a good book.<sup>85</sup>

80 CWMA, Home Personal Box 8, Folder 6, Lenwood to family and friends. The previous pastor was S.H. Sebiré.

81. Lenwood, *Jesus - Lord or Leader?*, 313.

82. *ibid.*, 317, 322.

83. *ibid.*, 326-7.

84. *ibid.*, 331.

85. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 167; Lenwood, *Jesus - Lord or Leader?*, viii; DWL, MS 24.164 (52)-(53).

Lenwood expected it to cause a storm, but the squall was relatively modest. Wilson gives two reasons. The book was not good enough to become popular; and Lenwood “was so obviously a practising Christian that nobody cared to make a great fuss about what he said he believed”.<sup>86</sup> This second point had already been made by Nathaniel Micklem, commenting as “Ilico” in *The British Weekly* in 1933 on the anomaly that an avowed Unitarian in theology could remain on the official ministerial list of the Congregational Union: “Whatever Mr Lenwood may say, everybody knows that at heart he is truly a Christian, and that in spite of all his heresies he is doing the work of a Christian minister. However gravely his fellow-ministers regret his teaching, there is, and there will be, no movement to turn him out”.<sup>87</sup> The *LMS Chronicle* discreetly took no notice of the book. Lenwood remained an active member of the LMS Board, and was repeatedly nominated for chairman, but diplomatically declined to stand for election.<sup>88</sup>

Within the Society and the Congregational denomination as a whole there were few who declared themselves openly in support of Lenwood’s views, yet even fewer who were prepared to deny his right to hold them. His former secretary at the Mission House, Hilda Bishop, was an unqualified disciple, and assisted Lenwood with the manuscript of his book while remaining on the LMS staff. She claimed that Lenwood’s successor as Foreign Secretary, Godfrey Phillips, leaned towards a modernist interpretation of Christology while at the same time somehow managing to hold on to orthodox formulations: to her mind, Phillips was “sitting on the fence in a fog”.<sup>89</sup> Irene Parker Crane, the first woman to be a full secretary of the LMS, who in 1930 had just joined the staff of the Selly Oak Colleges, wrote Lenwood a warm letter on receiving a copy of the book from him, and expressed the hope that the reviews would be as generous and Christian in spirit as the volume itself.<sup>90</sup> Nelson Bitton, Lenwood’s colleague as Home Secretary, defended his right to his views “within the freedom we have inherited in the LMS”, but was astute enough to suggest to Lenwood that his denial of the divine sonship of Jesus imperilled the very doctrine of the fatherhood of God which was so central to the modernist position.<sup>91</sup> W.H. Somervell, Lenwood’s companion on the two LMS deputations to India, and treasurer of the Society from 1918 to 1930, similarly gently chided Lenwood for setting up an image of God as a weak and inadequate father for whom discipline and judgment were out of the question, which Somervell found ironic when “I know no man who disciplines *himself* more rigorously than you do.”<sup>92</sup>

86. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 182-3.

87. “Scottish heretics and English” by “Ilico”, *The British Weekly*, 9 Nov. 1933, 26.

88. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 179; CWMA, Home Odds Box 14, Folder 5, tribute by W. Nelson Bitton.

89. DWL, MS 24.164 (13), Hilda M. Bishop to Lenwood, 7 Jan. 1931.

90. DWL, MS 24.164 (19), Crane to Lenwood, 26 Oct. 1930.

91. DWL, MS 24.164 (14), Bitton to Lenwood, 26 Dec. 1931.

92. DWL, MS 24.164 (83), Somervell to Lenwood, 1 Feb. 1931. The Lenwoods had no children of their own, but did much to bring up their three nephews and a niece.

Lenwood's high estimation of moral discipline and vigour yoked to a socialist perspective on social problems in fact gave him some qualified sympathy in his final years for the Nazi political programme in Germany. In March 1934 he wrote to J.W. Hauer, formerly a missionary in India with the Basel Mission, and since 1927 Professor of Indian Studies and Comparative Religion at Tübingen. Lenwood had been a friend of Hauer's ever since they met on board ship *en route* for the Orient in 1907. By 1934 Hauer was at the centre of the attempt to create a neo-pagan "German Faith" for the Third Reich. In his letter to Hauer, Lenwood strongly criticised the German Faith and German Christian movements on theological grounds, but expressed admiration for the Nazi attempt to replace class and regional barriers in society by a spirit of brotherhood, and commented "You are creating a discipline which would be of great value to us in this country".<sup>93</sup>

It was as a man of uncommon strength and self-discipline that Frank Lenwood was remembered by family, friends, and colleagues. Roger Wilson, writing to Gertie Lenwood in 1934 just a few days after his uncle's fatal climbing accident, confessed that it was

Uncle Frank who helped one to know that it was God's world, and that virility and a capacity to laugh at most things were very much a part of the Kingdom of heaven. ... It takes people like Uncle Frank, spiritually and physically unafraid, to give backbone to Christian standards, and I am certain that his skill and joy in climbing have made an immense difference to his power.<sup>94</sup>

Yet the central paradox of Frank Lenwood's life and theology is, perhaps, that he had combined a Jesus who was no more than the ideal of Christian manliness with a Father whose love could brook no judgment, and had thus deprived God of the very virtues of moral responsibility and discipline which Lenwood so much admired in his fellow human beings. Lenwood himself, however, never saw Jesus as Leader as a less exacting figure to follow than Jesus as Lord. Scribbled on the reverse of his member's ticket for his last Congregational Union Assembly in 1934 were the words:

For 47 years I have followed him, he has changed to me, but he dominates me more completely, and when I am doubtful of God I can say There is Jesus. That he stands there, that he could live the life he did, is my guarantee of God.<sup>95</sup>

---

93. CWMA, Home Personal Box 7, Folder 10, Lenwood to J.W. Hauer, 15 March 1943; Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 77. On Hauer see K. Scholder, *The Churches and the Third Reich*, 2 vols, 1987-8, I, 451-3; II, 98-101.

94. CWMA, Home Personal Box 7, Folder 10, Wilson to G. Lenwood, 10 Sept. 1934. This letter is annotated by Mrs. Lenwood: "This is the letter that made me ask him to do the life".

95. Wilson, *Frank Lenwood*, 161.



Lenwood thus grew exasperated with orthodox critics who decried talk of following Jesus as if that were some bare minimum, a lowest common denominator of faith. Writing in 1933 to Florrie Mole, an LMS missionary from the Greengate church serving in Madagascar, Lenwood told the story of that redoubtable modernist, Arthur Pringle of Purley, who had died just two months earlier. Somebody had asked Pringle what it meant to be a Christian. Pringle had replied that he thought it meant following Jesus. "Is that all?" queried his interrogator. Pringle said "In God's name, man, isn't that enough for you?"<sup>96</sup> For Frank Lenwood, it was enough.

BRIAN STANLEY

### TRAINING FOR HOXTON AND HIGHBURY: WALTER SCOTT OF ROTHWELL AND HIS PUPILS

The practice of sending prospective students of Hoxton Academy for preparatory training with Walter Scott, the minister of the Congregational church at Rothwell, Northamptonshire, is of interest on several counts. At first sight it is surprising that an Academy springing from the Evangelical Revival which made no secret of the fact that its aim was to train preachers, not scholars, should regard preparatory training as necessary, even for the less well equipped. Were there standards below which it would not fall? or was it scraping the barrel? On the other hand, changes were in the air. In 1826 the Academy left the modest large house at Hoxton for the purpose-built and quite grand buildings of Highbury College. From this angle the institution of preparatory training may be seen as an accompaniment of the sociological transformation of the eighteenth-century Dissenting Academy into the nineteenth-century Theological College. But at Hoxton the change in buildings was preceded by a change in Principals, when Robert Simpson, who told the students "Were you to represent me as a scholar, the public would not believe you", was succeeded by William Harris, who came from Cambridge, where since 1806 he had been minister of the church worshipping in Downing Street (now Emmanuel).<sup>1</sup> This change took place in 1818, and it was in that year, it seems, that students were first sent to Rowell (as the name was then commonly written).<sup>2</sup>

---

96. CWMA, Home Personal Box 8, Folder 1, Lenwood to Mole, 22 March 1933. On Pringle see C. Binfield, "The Purley way for children", in *The Church and Childhood*, ed. D. Wood (*Studies in Church History* 31), Oxford 1994, 464-6.

---

1. For Simpson, see my *New College, London, and its Library* (1977), pp.15-17, with footnotes, esp. n.38a; for Harris, *D.N.B.*  
 2. Scott had been ordained at Rowell five years earlier: see T. Coleman, *Memorials of the Independent Churches in Northamptonshire* (1853), p.76.

Preliminary training might thus be reasonably associated with the change in Principals; but it was not in fact a new policy. In 1806 Thomas Spencer<sup>3</sup> and in 1808 R.S. McAll<sup>4</sup> had been sent for preparatory training to the minister at Harwich, William Hordle;<sup>5</sup> and from 1810<sup>6</sup> to the minister at Billericay, Essex, John Thornton.<sup>7</sup> In all cases<sup>8</sup> the policy may be attributed to the devoted and increasing control of affairs by Thomas Wilson, Treasurer of Hoxton Academy from 1794 till his death half a century later, who in 1825 laid the first stone of Highbury College and became a foundation member of the Council of London University.<sup>9</sup> Scott's correspondence is with Wilson, not with Harris or later

3. For Spencer, see *D.N.B.* Wilson was responsible for introducing Spencer to Hoxton: for a letter of 1806 from Spencer to Wilson written from Harwich, see New College, London, MSS. (Dr. Williams's Library), L7/4; in 1811, after Spencer's death from drowning at the age of twenty, Wilson's high opinion of William Harris was already such that he recommended Harris as Spencer's biographer (MS. L7/83; in the event Spencer's *Memoirs* were written by Thomas Raffles).
4. For McAll, see *D.N.B.*
5. For Hordle, see *Congregational Year Book* for 1850. For Wilson's interest in "the almost expiring cause of Christ at Harwich" and proceeding to the erection of a new building, largely at his own expense, see a letter from Hordle to Joshua Wilson in the latter's *Memoirs of ... Thomas Wilson* (1846), pp.216-17 (cf. also p.235); and for Hordle's high opinion of Spencer, p.360.
6. In 1810 "at the request of Thomas Wilson Esq., the devoted friend and munificent treasurer of Hoxton Academy", Thornton "commenced his services as preparatory tutor to that institution, and more than forty theological students were under his care": *Evangelical Magazine* for 1841, p.353. Thornton continued to act in this capacity after Scott first received pupils at Rowell. The New College MSS. contain recommendations by him of his pupils.
7. John Thornton (1771-1841) was not of the family of the philanthropists John Thornton (1720-94) and his better known son Henry Thornton (1760-1815), for whom see *DNB*. He applied to Hoxton in 1797 (cf. MS.418/7), with the support of John Clayton senior, and was ordained at Billericay on 27 November 1800, when Simpson was one of those who took part: *Evangelical Magazine*, *loc. cit.*
8. "My father also afforded liberal aid to the preparatory instruction of many students who, not being sufficiently advanced in classical and general knowledge, were placed for some time under the care and instruction of a minister in the country.... The ministers who undertook this important service were Rev. William Hordle, of Harwich, the late Rev. John Thornton, of Billericay, Rev. Walter Scott, of Rowell..., Rev. Alexander Stewart, of Barnet, Rev. John Jukes, of Yeovil (now of Bedford), and occasionally others": *Memoir*, p.411. For Stewart, see *CYB* for 1875 and *Congregational Historical Society Transactions*, xv; for Jukes, *CYB* for 1867 and H.G. Tibbutt, *Bunyan Meeting Bedford 1650-1950* ([1950]), ch. v ("Jukes"). For one of the "others" (for calling my attention to whom I have to thank Mr. John Creasey), William Legge, of Fakenham, Norfolk, see *CYB*. for 1860, *CHST*, viii, and *United Reformed Church History Society Journal*, 2. Stewart's work, like Thornton's, was contemporaneous with Scott's, but Jukes's and Legge's was later. The New College MSS. contain recommendations of their pupils to Highbury by all three.
9. For Wilson, see *DNB*.

Principals. To all intents and purposes Hoxton was Wilson's College, much as Trevecca had been the Countess of Huntingdon's.

Scott's reports to Wilson about his pupils are the main source of information, but are not the only means of discovering them. Sometimes a prospective student writes from Rowell, sometimes he provides a statement from Scott in support of his candidature - the two categories overlap but are not one and the same. Obituaries in the *Congregational Year Book* mention Rowell on occasion. Scott also entered in the Rowell church book the names of those who came into membership while they were his pupils.<sup>10</sup> The number of those known to have been with him is about seventy.

In becoming his pupils' minister as well as their tutor Scott underlines the pastoral nature of his relationship with them. This was something that had obtained in the older Academies: circumstances then made it inevitable, but it was also consonant with Congregational principles. Nor was it likely to meet with anything but approval from those now affected by the Revival; in 1800 Thomas Wilson had seen to the erection of the Hoxton Academy Chapel to house a church in which Simpson would minister.<sup>11</sup> By becoming church members Scott's pupils who went out preaching might also be regarded by any concerned with such niceties as having their position regularized. Yet a church's sending out its "gifted brethren" and the coming into membership of those already engaged in preaching are not quite on all fours. The Revival's interest was in evangelism, not in ecclesial correctness; and commitment to evangelism was liable to be weakened by attachment to a particular congregation, as Lady Huntingdon had perceived. There was a difference here in priorities of emphasis, which was never quite resolved.<sup>12</sup>

The qualities and qualifications Scott looked for in his pupils appear from words he used frequently in his reports to Thomas Wilson to have been their "temper", their abilities and gifts, and their piety.<sup>13</sup> In his last report, despatched in December 1833, when he was on the point of leaving Rothwell for Bradford and ventured to suggest possible successors to himself at Rothwell,<sup>14</sup> he wrote of one pupil, Jonah

10. For these names I am indebted to Mr. G.T. Streater, of Rothwell.

11. For Hoxton Academy chapel, see *Memoir*, pp.210-12, and my *The Significance of Trevecca College 1768-91* (1969), p.21, n.43. Later, at Bradford, one of Scott's first priorities was the erection of a chapel attached to Airedale College to house the church to which he ministered till within a year of his retirement as Principal: see J.G. Miall, *Congregationalism in Yorkshire* (1863), p.237.

12. The last Principal of New College, London, sensibly wished his students to be grounded in association with a local church, and discouraged what he regarded as too frequent preaching by them. Thereby he unwittingly injured several small churches which had rarely, if ever, had a minister of their own and since time out of mind had looked to the College to send a student at least monthly on Sacrament Sunday.

13. This was what Wilson expected: in a letter of 1825 Wilson writes that he is determined not to recommend anyone "bad tempered, of doubtful piety, or deficient in ability" (*Memoir*, p.404).

14. In the event no successor was found till 1836, when an Airedale student was ordained at Rowell by Scott and others: see Coleman, p.78.

Reeve, that his temper was good, apart from a little positiveness when opposed; of another, Joseph Field, that he appeared very teachable and thankful for instruction, but "his temper is rather reserved"; and of a third, David Hewitt, that he was intelligent and amiable. Reeve had made good progress, and seemed to be devoted to study; Field laboured under considerable disadvantages "as regards the languages etc.", but was studious and sensible of the necessity and advantages of learning; Hewitt possessed superior abilities. Reeve had a very respectable capacity for public speaking, Field spoke well, "with great and indeed wonderful propriety", and both of them were acceptable preachers; Hewitt had an impediment in his speech, but this would be put right.<sup>15</sup> Reeve appeared to be truly pious, Field's conduct was such as to indicate true piety, and Hewitt had given every evidence of true piety. Each of the three Scott recommended for entrance to Highbury, from which in due course each went on into the ministry, at Brighton, Diss (Norfolk) and Exeter respectively.<sup>16</sup>

Scott perhaps wished to end his time at Rothwell on a high note, but he did not think that all his geese were swans or return only favourable reports. "I lie under considerable disadvantage in judging the temper of the young men under my care,"<sup>17</sup> he wrote, but this did not inhibit him from passing severe judgments. One pupil when he arrived had "far too high an opinion of himself and far too much *dash* and confidence. He perhaps thought he was making some degree of sacrifice by becoming a dissenter. He has, however, considerably improved,"<sup>18</sup> Scott adds. Another's piety was considerably injured or tarnished by an ambitious, and rather a selfish spirit; he also had too high an opinion of himself, "but he has improved,"<sup>19</sup> Scott again adds. Another pupil had but a weak mind, and was unsettled and wavering; he had told two lies, claiming as his own work what was found almost verbatim in *The Pulpit Assistant*, and the sincerity of his repentance was doubtful; after telling another lie he had left Rowell, expressing a preference for Methodism and averring that he was always a Methodist at heart: "I very much question his piety".<sup>20</sup> It is not without interest that this pupil, Nehemiah Curnock, entered the Wesleyan Methodist ministry a few years later and was the father of the well-known minister with the same name who edited the Standard Edition of Wesley's *Journal*.<sup>21</sup>

15. To this impediment Scott would be sympathetic, since he had a defect in speech himself (K.W. Wadsworth, *Yorkshire United Independent College* (1954), p.112) and his voice was "husky and monotonous" (*CYB* for 1859, p.219).

16. For Reeve, perhaps Scott's last surviving student, see *CYB* for 1899, with photograph; for Field *CYB*. for 1881; for Hewitt, *CYB* for 1877.

17. MS. 326/30.

18. *Ibid.*

19. MS. 326/29.

20. MS. 297/53; *The Pulpit Assistant containing three hundred outlines or skeletons of sermons* was published in 1819.

21. For information about Curnock père (1810-69), though without mention of his original interest in Hoxton or his brief sojourn at Rowell, see John Wesley, *Journal*, viii (1916). 349. "Curnock was only about 5 weeks with me...." Scott writes: "his parents are poor and have a large family" (MS. 382/59).

Of one pupil, "a member of our church", who was desirous of becoming a missionary, Scott could not speak very positively about his ability for learning languages, but he was acceptable as a preacher, with a good gift in prayer and a good voice, and he had an amiable temper.<sup>22</sup> Another Scott again could not recommend without hesitation as regards ability for learning but he had left a situation where he was comfortable and useful, so deserved some indulgence; his preaching talents were generally very acceptable, especially among the poor, and he was "sure to make a preacher".<sup>23</sup> Another "was always fonder of preaching than of study. Latin or Greek or Algebra will much sooner give him the headache, than pulpit exercises"; "however," Scott adds in this case also, "he is a good young man, and I hope will be useful".<sup>24</sup> Yet another, while his temper was good and his progress in his studies tolerable, would never make a preacher, since his greatest deficiency was in that in which a preacher ought to excel - an ability to express his ideas in a clear and forcible manner; his prayers also were very poor: "he hardly ever forms or utters a complete idea, but thinks and speaks in the midst of mist and confusion".<sup>25</sup>

On what his pupils were supposed to be studying Scott says virtually nothing: this was not information Wilson needed. The would-be missionary was "engaged in learning the English Grammar",<sup>26</sup> in which, as in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, he would continue to receive instruction at Hoxton.<sup>27</sup> Little other information is to be gleaned, but one pupil "is able to read in Horace"<sup>28</sup> and another "is reading Eutropius".<sup>29</sup> Eutropius, who was also in the syllabus at Rotherham and at Bristol Baptist College,<sup>30</sup> is no longer required reading, but the tradition long persisted that the theologically literate must be acquainted with Roman History:<sup>31</sup> in London in the 1940s a degree in divinity was still open to none but those who had passed a preliminary examination in it, and the church historian at New College was expected to teach the subject.

One would not expect Scott's pupils to reach positions of eminence. Two who attained inclusion in the *Dictionary of National Biography* are W.B. Clulow, who joined Scott as a tutor at Airedale, and R.S. Bayley, minister at Louth and author

22. MS. 321/10.

23. MS. 325/21.

24. MS. 350/4.

25. MS. 326/30.

26. MS. 321/10.

27. See H. McLachlan, *English Education under the Test Acts* (Manchester, 1931), pp.201, 95.

28. MS. 326/30.

29. MSS. 326/30. 326/29.

30. See McLachlan, p.239.

31. The eminent editor of the *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (1842), Sir William Smith (1813-93), taught from 1839 to 1843 at Highbury, a position later combined with one at Homerton, and from its foundation at New College, London. None of this is recorded in the article on him in *DNB*.

of its history, *Notitiae Ludae* (1834). One who did not is David Thomas, who became minister of Highbury Chapel, Bristol, and Chairman of the Congregational Union, and who was followed in both positions by his better known son Arnold Thomas.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps the most mercurial figure among them was Jerome Clapp (later Jerome), father of Jerome K. Jerome,<sup>33</sup> and the most surprising James Lyon who, while attending a medical school at St. Petersburg, had been living in the family of Richard Knill, the representative of the London Missionary Society in that city; Knill urged Wilson to take Lyon into his home.<sup>34</sup> Alas! a year later Lyon had left Rowell: he "has cruelly disappointed the hopes that we entertained respecting him... I should not wonder if he makes some attempts to blacken my character."<sup>35</sup>

So not all Scott's pupils stayed the course. At least one died during it. One, we saw, joined the Wesleyan Methodists, and at that time two others left Rowell and did not return. Another became a minister in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. One seems to have become a Baptist, another a Unitarian. One who conformed eventually became Vicar of Wymondham and an honorary Canon of Norwich.<sup>36</sup>

Most of these defections took place while Scott's pupils were still at Rowell, but some after a period in college. Neither the weeding out nor all Scott's care could prevent a few pupils from falling prey later to the moral and disciplinary strains endemic to collegiate education, especially when under authority and strictly celibate.<sup>37</sup> Ideally they were under pastoral care and being trained in the constituency and concentration of a life lived under authority which might inspire confidence in them when they came to exercise pastoral responsibility themselves; but the young men did not always see things in this light. The mid-1820s were a difficult period at Hoxton.<sup>38</sup> One of Scott's pupils got into trouble at college for a friendship with another student which led to misconduct. Some who had been at

32. For David and Arnold Thomas, see Albert Peel, *A Hundred Eminent Congregationalists 1530-1924* (1927); David Thomas was also the uncle of David Alfred Thomas, Viscount Rhondda, and the great-uncle of Viscountess Rhondda, editor of *Time and Tide*. For a letter of January 1834 requesting "the favour of an exhibition in the University of Glasgow" (where in the event he had only "a short stay") from the trustees of Dr. John Ward's Trust for David Thomas, written by Thomas Wilson "with the full approbation" of the Principal and Classical Tutor of Highbury, see E.J. Tongue, *Dr. John Ward's Trust* (1951), pp.21-2.
33. Another pupil, Clement Dukes (*CYB* for 1877), of whom Scott wrote "I think he needs further instruction. He know very little Hebrew" (MS. 353/4), was the grandfather of Ashley Dukes, husband of Dame Marie Rambert.
34. MSS. 332/3, 341/28; for Knill, see *D.N.B.*
35. MS. 336/49.
36. T.T. Smith (1798-1852), for whom see *D.N.B.*, where he is said (probably under a misapprehension) to have been "originally a presbyterian".
37. In 1831 a pupil wrote from Rowell to ask if in view of his engagement he would be accepted at Highbury (MS. 230/35).
38. Cf *Memoir*, p.357, and MSS. 292 and 294.

Rowell were required to leave or were expelled. One apologised for his behaviour but subsequently withdrew. Of course these were the exceptions. The majority of those who were at Rowell went to Hoxton or Highbury, and most of these entered the ministry and are commemorated in successive volumes of the *Congregational Year Book*.

During these years Scott built up a reputation in Northamptonshire, where he is to be found frequently taking part in the ordination of ministers, not all of whom had been under his care, and in other services.<sup>39</sup> His obituarist goes so far as to describe him as "a kind of theological cynosure - a pyramid whose height and massiveness surpassed most of his contemporaries", and adds "His name is still a proverb in the villages for mental and moral power".<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, while Scott was training his pupils, he was also being trained himself: when in 1833 he left Rothwell to become Principal of Airedale Independent College, Bradford, his experience of students and their problems will have provided him with an advantage most new Principals do not have. He remained in Bradford, establishing the College in what was then a new building. He also established a sort of dynasty, for his son Caleb Scott, after a pastorate at Newland, Lincoln, became Principal of Lancashire Independent College, Manchester; and on "old Caleb", as my grandmother called him, I may be allowed a final sentence, as in private duty bound, since in a manner of speaking I owe my existence to him. My grandmother's grandfather, Charles Williams,<sup>41</sup> had been a pupil of Walter Scott at Rothwell, and while in Lincoln Caleb Scott was friendly with her parents, who were members at Newland; in 1877 he invited her to pay a visit to Manchester; here she met his Church History colleague, J.M. Hodgson, and in 1879 they were married.

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL

### MR. SEYMOUR AND DR. REYNOLDS

While writing the life of Lady Huntingdon I was principally concerned with the reliability of statements made by A.C.H. Seymour in his *Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon* (London, 1839), and in an appendix to *Spiritual Pilgrim* listed the reasons why I considered that work completely unreliable. I made little attempt to identify the sources of his information, and did not assign the blame for his mistakes to any person. Since then I have been able to collect more information about Seymour's later life from the minutes and correspondence in the Cheshunt

---

39. See Coleman. pp.43-4. 141-2. 143. 184. 313. 341.

40. *CYB* for 1859, p.219.

41. For Williams, see *DNB* s.v. his son F.S. Williams; and my "Family Memorials" in *Baptist Quarterly*, xxviii. 184-90, "The Rise of Independency in Lincolnshire" (using his correspondence with Wilson) in this *Journal*, 4.48-9, and *New College, London and its Library*, pp.5-6.

College archives, but am still unable to say for certain whether Seymour was misled by others, or was responsible for the errors in his book. However Seymour's life would clearly be worth exploring further.

Aaron Crossley Hobart Seymour (1789-1870) was the son of an Irish clergyman. If his memory can be trusted he was living in Dublin before 1808. Lady Moira, Lady Huntingdon's daughter, whom he claims to have met there, died in that year. Before 1820 he was probably living in Bath where he claims to have met Thomas Haweis since Haweis was living there until his death in 1820. However since he attributed to them both statements which they cannot possibly have made, the evidence is flimsy.<sup>1</sup> In his early years Seymour had some success in getting his books printed. In 1810 he published at Dublin *Vital Christianity* which consisted of a series of letters "addressed to young persons" and a number of hymns which he had composed. A second edition appeared in 1819. In 1811 he published an edition of John Gillies's *Memoirs of George Whitefield*, from which he removed an entire chapter while claiming to have made "large additions and improvements." In 1816 he provided a memoir of Charlotte Brooke for her *Reliques of Ancient Irish Poetry*. He published nothing further until the *Life and Times*, which went into a second edition in 1844.<sup>2</sup> He disappears from sight after the first edition appeared. Julian states that he went to Italy circa 1839, which is confirmed by the statement in the preface to *Life and Times* that circumstances "prevented the author from personally superintending the publication of this work." However Julian goes on to say that he lived in Naples until 1847 and then returned to live at Bristol. *The Dictionary of National Biography* claims that he lived in Italy from about 1850 until 1869. Evidence drawn from the Cheshunt records and the Methodist Archives at Manchester shows that he had returned to England and was living in Bristol at the end of 1868.

After 1839 he published almost nothing, but in 1868 he prepared an edition of John Fletcher's letters which he hoped would be published in Bristol. The original manuscript, now in the Methodist Archives at John Rylands University Library, is entitled

Twenty Five Letters from the Rev. John Fletcher, Vicar of Madeley, Shropshire, To the Right Honourable The Countess of Huntingdon. With copious notes Biographical and Explanatory, by A: Crossley Hobart Seymour, Esqre, Member of the Italian Literary and Scientific Congress, &c. Bristol, 1868.

Ten of the letters were published in whole or in part in the *Life and Times*. Seventeen appear in a volume of transcripts of letters to Lady Huntingdon in the records of her Connexion, which was copied from the same source as Seymour's

- 
1. He claimed that Lady Moira took a strong interest in Cheshunt College, and he completely confused the story of Haweis's presentation to Aldwinkle.
  2. The factual information in this paragraph comes from the accounts of Seymour in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*.



compilation. Five letters appear in neither work. As we shall see this was not the only attempt that he made to produce more articles in the last two years of his life.

Seymour's links with the Countess's College at Cheshunt in 1839 were sufficiently good to persuade the then Resident Tutor, Jacob Kirkman Foster, to write an introduction to the *Life and Times*, but by 1868 all communication between the College and Seymour in Italy had ended long ago. On his return to England Seymour went to live with his daughter, Elizabeth Kane, and her husband at 11 Berkeley Square. On 15 July 1869 the President of Cheshunt College, H.R. Reynolds, was visiting Bristol and was introduced to Seymour. Reynolds wrote to the College Secretary, J.T. Beighton

I had a talk yesterday with the Author of the *Life and Times* of the Countess of Huntingdon and found he took the broad and catholic view of the College. He knew Dr Haweis well - but I found him not very clear about a multitude of points. He is a very old man, but has really produced a favourable impression.<sup>3</sup>

A few days later Reynolds wrote again from his holiday home in North Devon, saying that Mr Seymour

is very anxious to see our last report. Will you send him two or three copies, with my kind respects. He thinks he could give some valuable information about the students educated at Trevecca, correcting our list for the next report. I wish he could be persuaded to bequeath to the College his MSS. and pictures and Books that have reference to the old College. We might easily in the New Building devote a Committee Room to their preservation and call it the Hobart Seymour Museum. Please send him with the report any documents recently published (apart from the recent squabbles) which might stimulate his mind. I have a great mind to suggest the matter to his perusal.<sup>4</sup>

Reynolds began his correspondence with Seymour in a letter of 22 July and, as Seymour did not reply, wrote again on 19 October. On 23 October Seymour apologised for not replying earlier as he was ill. He said he was unable to give the names of Presidents of Trefeca College after Fletcher left, but supplied extra information about five students, and the names of five others, and suggested that the College should publish a memoir of Mr Henderson about whom he possessed "a good deal of information."<sup>5</sup> This was John Henderson (1757-88), educated at

- 
3. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/63/, 2. Reynolds was referring to the debate between Connexion and College about its purpose.
  4. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/63, 3. The "new building" was erected at Cheshunt as part of the centenary celebrations. The College was established at Trefeca near Brecon by Lady Huntingdon in 1768, and moved after her death to Cheshunt.
  5. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/63, 6. Only the information about one student, Robert Ellis, is confirmed by Dr Nuttall's list ("The Students of Trevecca College", *Trans. Cymmrodorion Soc.*, 1967, 249-277).

Kingswood School near Bristol, who is said to have taught Latin and Greek at Trefeca under John Fletcher. As Fletcher was President from 1768 to 1771 - when Henderson was only fourteen - Seymour's claim seems dubious and it is not supported by much evidence.<sup>6</sup> It was in this letter that Seymour also stated that he was patronised by Lady Moira, "who offered to support my application for admission to Cheshunt. But my path through life lay in another direction and I never had any occupation." He was later to contradict this in a letter to Reynolds.

The College governors met on 20 December and cautiously accepted Seymour's offer to compile a life of Henderson. On 18 January Seymour now wrote saying that the "task will be no easy one from the meagre materials that remained to me" - *Gentleman's Magazine*, *European Magazine*, Mr Wesley's Journals, and Benson's *Life of Fletcher* - where he found "next to nothing."<sup>7</sup> The "sketch" which he enclosed with a portrait of Henderson was presumably found inadequate by Reynolds, because Seymour wrote again on 2 February regretting his inability to obtain further information, as he had no contact with Pembroke College, Oxford (from which institution Henderson later graduated). In this letter he casts further light on his career by saying "my connection was confined to Old Trinity College in the Sister Kingdom."<sup>8</sup> Despite this lack of information Roberts offered the sketch to Dr Spence for the *Evangelical Magazine* and, when he rejected it, to the *Christian Witness* (which probably also rejected it). Seymour acknowledged this information in a letter of 16 March 1870, and added that the latter magazine had published his article on "Dissent in Bath."<sup>9</sup>

In pursuit of Seymour's materials about the College and Lady Huntingdon, Reynolds now invited Seymour to attend the College Anniversary in June where the foundation stone of the new building was to be laid by Lord Shaftesbury. Seymour cried off at the last minute saying that "neither would my children or medical attendant permit it were I disposed to undertake the journey."<sup>10</sup> In this letter he gives a different version of his relationship with Lady Moira. After saying that he almost became a student at Cheshunt "between sixty and seventy years ago" he continued

But my early patroness the old Countess of Moira seemed to have other prospects in view for me and discouraged my project. She was a woman of masculine understanding and a great political character, and to her Ladyship I was indebted for a vast amount of information relative to the proceedings of her great and noble Mother the Countess of Huntingdon.

- 
6. This apparently first appeared in print in Luke Tyerman's life of Fletcher (1882). According to A.G. Ives (*Kingswood School*, London, 1970 p.67n.) Tyerman originally said the teacher was Joseph Easterbrook, and then decided it was Henderson. I have found no contemporary source which mentions Henderson - only Easterbrook.
  7. Cheshunt archives, C1/12, 144; C9/6/63, 7 & 8.
  8. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/63. He refers to Trinity College Dublin.
  9. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/63, 13.
  10. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/63, 23.

A month later, on 13 July, Seymour wrote again offering at Reynolds's suggestion all his materials relating to the Countess and the College. He explained that the pictures, all in antique frames collected by himself in Tuscany and Naples, had been bequeathed to his children "with the strictest injunctions" that they should not be scattered. He had now told his executors, his son-in-law and his nephew, that he wished them to go to the College. He then promised that

I shall carefully collect every manuscript, original letters [*sic*], and documents connected with the movement, and the books, pamphlets, &c. relating to the controversies of 1768 and 1771 and all that throws any light on the history of that remarkable period, all of which are now so scarce as rarely to be met with, and send them in a box to the College.<sup>11</sup>

Reynolds duly reported this decision to the College governors when they met on 13 September, but Seymour died on 22 October without ever sending the "valuable collection" to Cheshunt.<sup>12</sup> A representative of the College visited Mr Kane, Seymour's son-in-law, at Bristol on 5 January 1871 and was told that the items were not destined for Cheshunt College. Six days later Reynolds wrote a tactful letter to Kane reminding him of the promised gift and the arrangements which could be made to appropriate a room to their display.<sup>13</sup> Kane, writing both as an executor and a trustee, rejected Reynolds's "claim on the part of Cheshunt College" because Seymour had put them in trust for two of Kane's children.<sup>14</sup>

This decision was reported to the College governors on 20 March and it was resolved to ask the Secretary to examine a copy of Seymour's will at Doctors' Commons.<sup>15</sup> Beighton did so on 13 April (presumably the date at which it became available) and submitted a note of its contents to Reynolds.<sup>16</sup> The will, which Seymour made at Bristol on 17 December 1868, is an interesting document. In it he gives his name as Aaron Crossley Seymour, omitting the Hobart which he normally used. He appointed his daughter, Catherine Elizabeth Frances Seymour Kane and his son-in-law, Joseph Seymour Kane as his executors, and expressed a wish to be buried on the Nonconformist side of the Bristol Cemetery. After a legacy of £100 to his servants, Salvatore Strazzullo and his wife Lucia, he left the contents of the house (with certain exceptions) to his daughter. To his son-in-law and his nephew, John Wright Seymour of Dublin, he bequeathed

all the Pictures in my Drawing Room (as a collection unique of its kind),  
also all presentation Copies of Works sent to me by their respective

11. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/63, 26. 1768 was the year of the expulsion of the six students from St Edmund Hall, and 1771 of the controversy with John Wesley.
12. Cheshunt archives, C1/12. 193.
13. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/64, 1.
14. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/64, 2. The two children were probably Seymour's granddaughters, Anne Frances and Mary Josephine Catherine Kane.
15. Cheshunt archives, C1/13. 41 & C9/6/64. 5.
16. Cheshunt archives, C9/6/64, 17. For the purpose of this article I have used a copy from the Probate Registry.

Authors, together with the Bible presented to me on my Birthday by eight young Men belonging to the Tabernacle, also such as my Collection of Books as to my Trustees may seem expedient (particularly all Biographical and Historical Works), and also all my Silver Plate and plated Articles whether the same bear my Crest or be without it<sup>17</sup>

in trust for the use of his daughter and son-in-law during their lifetime and afterwards to be divided equally between his grandchildren. He then disposed of all his property in Ireland, whether freehold, leasehold or personal, and money invested in "French Rentes" to his trustees for the use of his descendants. On 15 June 1870 Seymour signed a codicil making provision for his watch to go to his grand-daughter, Anne Frances Kane on his daughter's death, and bequeathing his Irish property to his grand-son, John Seymour Kane. When the will and codicil were proved by his executors on 10 December it was noted that there were no leaseholds and his effects were worth less than one thousand pounds. No further action was taken by Reynolds and the only manuscript used by Seymour which has reached Cheshunt College is a manuscript account of Benjamin Ingham in Professor Victor Murray's collection.<sup>18</sup>

All this information helps to confirm my original impression that the greater part of Seymour's material for the *Life and Times* was drawn from the *Peerage*, *Baronetage* and other works of reference, and from letters printed in the early nineteenth-century evangelical magazines. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there was a fashion for copying letters which provided religious edification. Because this was their purpose it was usual to reduce the names of recipients to initials (Lady H. or Rev. Mr W.), to omit passages which did not contribute to the piety of the letter, and to improve the grammar, spelling and even wording for the same reason. Since some of the recipients were easily identified, mistakes can arise with more ambiguous letters. Copies of the edition of Whitefield's letters are sometimes marked to give the wrong name. The letter which was written by John Berridge acknowledging the gift of money to clothe his lay preachers has been attributed in print to both Lady Margaret Ingham and Lady Huntingdon.<sup>19</sup> Seymour used such sources, but not the earlier evangelical magazines, such as *The Christian History*, which usually gave names. Dr Nuttall has illustrated how Philip Doddridge's correspondence was abbreviated by his great-grandson, but even more drastic was T.S. Jones's editing of Lady

- 
17. I have added punctuation to the extract to make it more easily read. I acknowledge the permission of the Stationery Office for reproducing it.
  18. Cheshunt archives, G2/4. Attached to it are a number of notes by Seymour. One says that Dr Haweis told him that he introduced John Newton to Lord Dartmouth: another that he had a copy of a letter from Warwick to Lady Huntingdon.
  19. The letter is printed in Berridge's *Works* (1838, p.366), but Cheshunt archives, G2/6 contains a copy attributed to Lady Huntingdon and printed in a work entitled *Chearful Piety*, which I have not been able to identify.

Glenorchy's diaries.<sup>20</sup> For the first few years he copied out the extracts which contain her religious opinions and destroyed the originals. For the later years he obliterated all that he thought unsuitable in the originals. For an example of the excessive improvement of originals there is the copy of a letter from Lady Huntingdon to Lady Hertford which was not printed until 1900.<sup>21</sup> As it is now it could not have been written by Lady Huntingdon, but the subject matter and the misreading of the year make it probable that there was once a genuine letter which has been heavily edited.

Given Seymour's uncritical approach to such sources and his failure to check the information which he found, it is not surprising that the *Life and Times* contains so many mistakes. By checking the *Gentleman's Magazine* he might easily have discovered that Lady Margaret Hastings's marriage did not take place in London. By reading the pamphlets published about the Aldwinkle affair and Dr Haweis he could have printed a correct account.<sup>22</sup> The suspect letters of the Duchess of Marlborough and Miss Hester Gibbon, if he found them in manuscript copies, would have aroused no doubts in his mind. Similar letters attacking Lady Huntingdon's Methodism can be found. About 1740 her sister wrote one which is equal to the suspect letters in virulence.<sup>23</sup> The Duchess of Marlborough's well-known sharp tongue would make it easy to ascribe such a letter to her. The Gibbon letter, on the other hand, has probably only been heavily edited by some hand because that is the principal reason Canon Overton gives for rejecting it.<sup>24</sup> The new evidence which has come to light in the Cheshunt archives makes it more probable that Seymour was deceived by his sources rather than a fabricator of them. But the *Life and Times* remains a most unreliable book, and A.C.H. Seymour a subject for future study.

EDWIN WELCH

### THE PRESBYTERIANS IN LIVERPOOL PART 3: A SURVEY - 1900-1918

Until 1920, the number of Presbyterian churches in the Liverpool area continued to rise and so did the number of members. In 1910 there were thirty-five churches with a total of 11,140 members, an average of 318. By 1920 there were thirty-six churches with a total of 12,329 members, an average of 343. Of course, there were

- 
20. G.F. Nuttall (ed.), *Calendar of the Correspondence of Philip Doddridge* (London, 1979), pp.369-371. T.S. Jones, *The Life of... Viscountess Glenorchy* (Edinburgh, 1822). Lady Glenorchy's Diaries are at the Scottish Record Office (CH22/129/25).
  21. *Hist. MSS. Comm. Report 52. Frankland Russell Astley* (1900), p.209. The original manuscript has since disappeared.
  22. For these two mistakes see my *Spiritual Pilgrim* (Cardiff, 1995).
  23. Huntington Library, HA 9557.
  24. For the Marlborough Letters see F. Harris, *A Passion for Government* (London, 1991), p.344, and for the Gibbon letter J.H. Overton, *William Law* (London, 1881), p.369

more people around, for the population of Merseyside was still growing. The population of Liverpool in 1901 was 684,947, and by 1921 had risen to 802,940. In 1901, the population of Birkenhead was 110,915, and by 1921 it had risen to 147,577. But even during this period of expansion, there were signs of incipient decline as the members of down-town churches left to join the new churches in the suburbs. The number of new Church Extension causes decreased: between 1900 and 1914 there were only three new churches - at Meols, New Brighton and Wavertree. Meols was started by West Kirby as a "Branch Church" in 1902; it is still a flourishing congregation in a pleasant sea-side district. New Brighton was started by the Church Extension Committee of the Liverpool Presbytery in 1903 in a rapidly-growing district of Wallasey, which was too far from either Egremont or Wallasey Village for people to attend those churches. This congregation closed soon after the formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972, and joined with the local Methodist Church. Wavertree. This cause was founded by Islington Church in 1914 when their situation became impossible: the congregation had moved out of the area and the Roman Catholics had moved in. They chose Wavertree because it was a developing area. This congregation is still in existence.

Other long established churches were having a difficult time too. At St. Peter's the congregation had declined, until in 1911, with only sixty members left, the church was closed and the congregation dissolved.

Although they did not find the situation as acute as Islington and St. Peter's, more of the city churches were facing problems because of changing neighbourhoods. They too were becoming down-town churches. Mount Pleasant had been a notable congregation which had sent forth four "Daughter Churches". The minister's stipend had to be reduced and, when the building was found to be in need of repair, there was not the money to do the repairs. Canning Street too, was finding its membership decreasing, and could only afford a decreasing stipend. Myrtle Street's membership had declined so much that the Presbytery put the building up for sale. When it was found that it was to be sold to the Roman Catholics, there was an outcry. A petition was handed to the Presbytery containing 1,410 signatures and, when the Charity Commissioners would not sanction the sale, a lively discussion ensued in the Presbytery. Although the membership was only fifty, a stay of execution was granted for five years. A great effort was made with a "forward movement" and the building was repaired and redecorated. It was a temporary reprieve. In 1939 the congregation moved to Maghull.

Most of the churches had at least one mission. Rock Ferry's was unusual; it had a medical dispensary. At St. Peter's mission, in a particularly poor area, an agent was appointed by the Presbytery's Home Mission Committee to do "aggressive" missionary work around the church. His job was to visit the houses and public-houses, and in one period of 111 days he visited 1,684 places - an average of fifteen each day. The houses were of the cellar and back-to-back types. Their occupants were suffering from the increased poverty and sickness consequent on commercial depression. Many said that they could not attend the mission because they had no decent clothes; others, who would have liked to progress from the

mission to the church, felt that their clothes were not good enough for church. The sectarian riots of these years caused considerable unrest and with the constant fear of physical danger it was difficult to keep up mission attendances.

Vauxhall Road was in a similar area. It appealed to the Presbytery for help in evangelistic work among the "ignorant and vicious classes" in the surrounding district. The Presbytery's Home Mission Committee started "aggressive work" in one of the most densely populated parts of the city. This type of work was known as "Special Mission Work in the spiritually destitute districts of the City".

Within a few years there were agents in four areas. Besides St. Peter's and Vauxhall Road, they were working in the Christian Street mission and Walton areas. The agent's chief work was to visit homes for five hours each day, except Saturday, and to keep a "Visitation Record Book". Each home had to be visited frequently to urge people to come to the church. Each agent had to report weekly to his minister, and monthly to the Presbytery Committee on Special Mission Work. The salary was £80 per annum, paid monthly in advance, with three weeks' annual holiday. It was a difficult job in surroundings where sin was cloaked by no conventions.

Over the water in Birkenhead, Grange Road Church too was faced with a falling roll as families moved out. To make matters worse, although the congregation was barely fifty years old, it was found that structural repairs were needed. They decided to move to another site and put the building up for sale, but when, a few years later, it was still unsold they withdrew the offer of sale, and decided to repair the building instead.

Further out, in Cloughton, Trinity was a growing church with a difficult problem. The managers were worried that visitors would find no seats, as there were no unlet pews: indeed people were sitting in the aisles and on the pulpit steps. Their mission, Brassey Street Institute, had its own problems: the population had grown so much that only a small proportion of the children could be fitted in the Sunday school. There was no other church except a small Welsh Chapel in Laird Street. The mission needed bigger premises, and after three of the mission Sunday school teachers had spoken about the need at the Annual Meeting of Trinity congregation in 1909, a new building was opened in the following year, free of debt.

Across the Dock Estate, in Egremont, the congregation was also expanding rapidly. In the first four years of the new century, they had a net increase of 250 members. They also had 300 mission members - 100 more than any other mission in the denomination. By 1909, however, the district round the church was deteriorating. But Egremont had foresight and money. The church was too small, so they built a very large one a few hundred yards away but in a more eligible area. It was called the "Cathedral" of the Presbyterians. Seacombe, too, built a new church just before the War.

In Bootle decline had started. In 1908, at Trinity, one of the largest congregations in the Presbyterian Church of England, the membership had dropped below 600 for the first time for twenty years. People were moving from

the district and the vacant houses were left untenanted. St. Paul's, Peel Road, was also facing difficulties. The minister was not well; his stipend had still not been paid in full; a young assistant minister was appointed but there was not the money to pay him; men would not stand for the office of elder; and the acoustics were so bad that the minister could not be heard. (They put a sounding board over the pulpit and then were frightened lest it fall while the minister was preaching.) Yet they could spend £100 on installing a pipe organ which they had been given. Income dropped still further; now they could not meet the minister's stipend, let alone pay off the debt which was still owing on the building. They could not get a grant from the denomination, since they were, it seemed, rich enough to install an organ. Matters went from bad to worse. Income, membership and attendances dropped. The minister wanted to retire, but the session would not let him, as they could neither afford the arrears of stipend due to him, nor give him a pension; and when he did retire, because of ill health, he voluntarily agreed both to forego all arrears due to him and do without a pension.

Over the years the congregations acquired distinctive characteristics. For instance, Trinity, Cloughton, was notably mission conscious. Within less than ten years eight members sailed for the mission field. The congregation also paid the salary of three missionaries. Sefton Park, on the other hand, was noted for the number from the congregation who went into public life. Dr. Watson made frequent pulpit appeals about civic responsibility, and this started a tradition in the congregation. At one time six ex-lord mayors of Liverpool were members. At Derby Road, Bootle, there were maritime connections. A number of sea captains were members, and others had addresses at the docks. This tradition continued when the congregation moved to Trinity. At one time the place of death of members who had died in the previous year was recorded in the Annual Report; a significant number, obviously seafarers or merchants, had died abroad.

Most congregations had two Sunday services. At most churches the larger attendance was at the morning one, but at Earle Road it was at the evening one - only 100 in the morning, but 500 to 600 in the evening. They said this was mainly because of the working-class character of the congregation.

This was also a time of very large Sunday schools. Earle Road, with 1,050 scholars on its roll in 1910, was the largest Sunday school in the Presbytery. The percentage of Sunday school scholars joining the church was 3.6%. It was after the First World War that Sunday school attendance showed a decline.

Until the War, the churches kept to the weeknight organisations that they had had in the previous century. Not all these "agencies", as they called them, were for their own people. Some were for social work. Trinity, Bootle, ran a Dorcas Society where the ladies of the church made about a hundred garments a year. These were given to women who, because of their work, did not have the time to make clothes for themselves or their children; to the sick; or to people who needed garments which would make them comfortable or respectable for their work. The minister at Heswall established a reading room in his vestry, which he opened two evenings a week, so that the youths of the district could meet there. This kept them away



from the public houses which was the only other attraction in a country place.

A great number of people, mainly from the east coast of Scotland and Northern Ireland, passed through Liverpool to emigrate to Canada. They travelled by the Canadian Pacific and Allan Steamship Companies and, while they were waiting for the boat, T.G. Molyneux of Vauxhall Road Church acted as chaplain. In two years he reckoned that he had spoken to 1,317 Presbyterians before they departed for Canada.

\*\*\*    \*\*\*    \*\*\*    \*\*\*

The First World War had a profound impact on Merseyside's Presbyterian Churches. The majority of the able-bodied men served in the Forces, and many were killed. There was, therefore, a marked effect on male attendance at church and mission services. In the latter it was in some cases down by more than a half. There were corresponding changes in the churches for those who were left at home. To take Trinity, Bootle, as an example. The evening service, in winter, was changed to 4 p.m. because of lighting restrictions. This was felt to be inconvenient, but less so than walking along unlit streets in the dark. The Sunday School had no "Treat", but entertained wounded soldiers instead, while the Women's Missionary Association had no meetings, for the members were too busy working for the Forces. A hundred and forty young men from the Trinity Church and Mission joined the Forces, and twenty-five were killed. Most of the leaders of the organisations were away, and most of the church activities were to provide for the men in the Forces. The Bootle Education Committee used both church halls for a day school, because Balliol Road Council Schools were handed over to the military authorities for use as a temporary barracks for the Territorial recruits, who would otherwise have been billeted on householders in the district. Any new "aggressive work" during the war time was limited to helping the men who were training.

The story was the same at Peel Road. Since many men teachers in the Sunday school were away, fourteen women took over their jobs: two members were lost when the *Lusitania* was sunk; ninety-four followed the King's example and signed the "Pledge of Total Abstinence"; extra prayer meetings were held; there were restrictions in lighting because of air raids, so in the lecture hall the windows were darkened; there were food restrictions too.

At Trinity, Claughton, too, the young men of the congregation offered themselves for military service in such numbers that scarcely an eligible man was left. By the end of 1914, seventy-nine from Trinity and ninety-four from Brassey Street Mission had joined the Forces. From Trinity thirty-one were killed and ten from Brassey Street. Many helped at Brassey Street Mission with money and time, where refreshments, amusement and relaxation were provided for the troops in the area, every night for over three years without a break. They also helped with relief work among the families of the men in the Forces. One member gave his house, rent free, as a convalescent home for sixteen wounded soldiers from the Borough

Hospital. Another gave a newly decorated house as a nurses' home for the duration of the War, while over £1,000 was subscribed by the congregation to help refugees from Belgium. The minister's Sunday evening addresses were published, and a copy was sent to each member serving as a nurse. A special prayer meeting was held every Friday evening to pray for the country and armed Forces. The congregation was sometimes joined for this by members of Christ Church and Palm Grove Methodist Church. (After the United Reformed Church came into being in 1972, Palm Grove Methodist Church closed, and the members joined to form Trinity with Palm Grove.) Although so many men were away, the congregation reported that the Sunday school had out-grown its rooms, they had increased the stipendiary supplement to the minister, the amount raised for foreign missions had increased, and more members had gone abroad as missionaries. They also raised money to buy, erect and equip two Y.M.C.A. huts at the Front.

From Wallasey Village, fifty-nine members of the congregation served in the Forces and six were killed. It was estimated that over 1,200 men joined the Forces from churches within the bounds of the Presbytery.

The congregation of Waterloo took an interest in the Presbyterians among the troops who were doing their three months' training at the nearby Seaforth Barracks; often as many as sixty soldiers attended worship.

Some ministers from the Presbytery went on War Service with the Y.M.C.A. The ministers of Shaw Street, Everton Valley, Peel Road and Meols Churches were among them, working as "Hut helpers" usually for a period of four months with the troops abroad. They were not all away together, but it was felt that their absence disrupted the work in their churches and in the Presbytery. There were financial implications too, for though the Y.M.C.A. made an allowance of £1 per Sunday towards pulpit supply, each church would have the extra expense of at least another £1 each week, perhaps for four months.

The newly ordained minister of Trinity, Bootle, also went abroad to France in 1917 to do Hut work; he met with an accident which incapacitated him for many months. When he returned to Trinity he found the work too much for him, and accepted a call to a smaller church.

The minister of Fairfield was chaplain to Fazakerley Military Hospital. Most of the patients were from Scotland, some from the Outer Hebrides, and pleased to have a visit from a Presbyterian Chaplain. Through the generosity of his congregation, the chaplain was able to give them little luxuries. He visited most of the men every week and the serious cases daily. In 1917 he was appointed Superintendent of Hospital Visitation for non-episcopal troops and was commissioned as a Captain. For the term of this appointment he was given leave of absence from his church. At one time the minister of Trinity, Belvidere Road, was engaged in "munition work" each week, so could do no work for the Presbytery.

In 1916, the Presbytery asked that the Lay Agent of Walton Church, who was of military age, should be exempted from military service, as he was a salaried missionary giving all his time to religious work and was indispensable if the work

were to be continued. In the same year, the Revd. Charles Rankin of Earle Road and the Revd. Henry Martin of New Brighton attested under Lord Derby's Group Scheme, and though the Presbytery congratulated them upon the step they had taken in the crisis of the War, it reserved the right, if they were "called up", to appeal to the tribunal to have them exempted, if it felt they were needed for the work of their congregations and the wider Church. When they were called up the Presbytery appealed because there was no-one to take their places. Rankin received a call from another church, but the Presbytery would not let him go. He was, however, allowed to go to France as a Hut helper. (While he was there he became interested in medical work and in 1925 gained his MRCS and his LRCP and resigned from Earle Road to become a Consultant.)

The War thus interrupted the progress of all the churches. Most families had men in the Forces, and many lost at least one. Three ministers lost a son on active service.

At the beginning of the War, the Presbytery's Soldiers and Sailors Committee issued a hymn book, with prayers and scripture readings, for soldiers. In two months 5,000 were issued.

All buildings work was stopped during the War. Green Lane wanted a new church, but were unable to start building. Hamilton Memorial wanted to move because they felt that they were suffering from their proximity to Brassey Street Mission; they had to wait.

It was in 1917 that Vauxhall Road finally closed. By then, most of its members had moved away, and the church was surrounded by warehouses and factories. When the minister died it was felt that the time had come to close, and the members joined other Presbyterian Churches.

With the War's end came war memorials, each church with its tablet on which were inscribed the names of all those (almost always men) connected with the congregation who had died on active service. This was the first time that war had been congregationally commemorated in this way in the Free Churches.

Note: for a bibliography see JURCHS, Vol. 5, No. 6, May 1995, pp.368-9.

ALBERTA JEAN DOODSON

## REVIEW ARTICLE; ONLY CONNECT

*Spiritual Pilgrim: A Reassessment of the Life of the Countess of Huntingdon.* By Edwin Welch. Pp. XII, 233. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. 1995. £30.00 ISBN 0-7983-1280-2.

Dr Welch has succeeded in overcoming the many difficulties which lay in the way of producing a modern biography of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon (1701-1791). All the others are ultimately derivative from A.C.H. Seymour's two-volume work of 1839. The Countess herself forbade the writing of a biography. Those closest to her respected her wishes and Seymour started with a cold trail. Dr

Welch contends, with supporting evidence, that Seymour was cavalier with his sources. A modern biography was needed, if only to draw on the dispersed archive of the Countess, and the Shirley and Hastings families, all around the world. That Dr Welch should have succeeded in bringing together the scattered fragments from his base in the centre of Canada comes as no surprise to those of us who know his terrier-like pursuit of original sources.

For the first time we have a continuous account of the Bethesda College at Savannah from the point of view of the Countess's papers, neglected at Trevecca, Cheshunt and Cambridge for almost two hundred years. Dr Welch brings us the domestic life of the Countess and her husband. He gives a cogent account of when she became a Methodist. He unravels some of the ecclesiastical fights in which the Countess was involved with new clarity. Above all, he gives a chronology of her life which will bear examination and is considerably more accessible than the Seymour one, with which we have wrestled for so long. It is a pity he is so poorly served by the wretched design of the book jacket, which offers a cut-out from the portrait of the Countess by J. Russell, now in Savannah. It is an ill printed version of an unflattering portrait, whose only virtue is its symbolism, most of which is omitted, though it is to be found in full on an inside page.

The picture of the Countess's married life comes as a surprise to those familiar with the portraits of her in old age. The Van Dyke style family portrait of the Earl and Countess with two of their children, part of the Cheshunt College collection, is reproduced in monochrome in the book. What seemed unconnected with the other relics of her life now becomes a testimony to the affection which bound Theophilus and Selina together. Although her family had the rank for a match with his, Selina brought no real fortune with her. Theophilus Hastings married his young Shirley neighbour for love. Dr Welch also demonstrates a convincing case for its being the influence of Theophilus's aunt, Lady Betty Hastings, which brought Selina to her "Methodism". Other parts of her religious life are brought into focus, for instance, her interest in French Pietism, as represented by Madame Guyon, and her attempts to form some kind of religious community in Bristol.

Dr Welch is a meticulous archivist. He has given us an excellent portrait within the limits set by the publishers. But is the book "a reassessment"? Having heard Dr Welch speak about the Countess one might feel that he has not given us in print all of that reassessment which he has made. Like the photographic reproductions, which are accurate so far as the process allows, is there not still room for a reassessment which offers some bold colour? Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, was a larger than life person. Whatever the shortcomings of the Seymour biography, and they are many, it is not possible to read it without realising that it is giving an account of an outstanding woman.

One could read this text and come away with the impression that the Countess of Huntingdon was some sort of mediating influence in the various quarrels which characterised the Methodist movement. To say that she was a friend of Charles Wesley is to acknowledge his gift for friendship more than hers. It is true to say that she retained a life-long concern for the welfare of John Wesley, but some of

their exchanges of correspondence are glacial. He felt she was over-bearing, not a trait he could handle in women, and she believed him to be in error. Being himself a charitable person, Dr Welch takes a more sanguine view of the Calvinist-Arminian controversy of 1770 than other commentators. He interprets her attitude in 1771 as conciliatory and blames Wesley for stirring up trouble between the Countess and John Fletcher, who wrote an apologia for Wesley's views which led to Fletcher's resignation from the Trevecca College. It seems just as likely that the Countess demanded statements of support for her own position from Fletcher, the tutor Joseph Benson, and the students and that this precipitated the breach.

These quarrels were signs of the vitality and earnestness of the Methodists. Among the Cheshunt College papers is a draft of heads of agreement for patching up another difference, this time between the Countess, the Rodborough connexion of churches and Daniel Rowland's Calvinist congregations in south Wales. She took these matters with great seriousness, dissociating herself from those who seemed to her to be in error. One of the reasons her draft letters often lose their syntax must surely be the passion with which they were written. They reveal someone who had the capacity to be conciliatory, persuasive and charming but whose strong-mindedness could break out in imperious prose. In an undated draft letter of around the 1770s (A1/13/27 in the Cheshunt collection) she moves between a panegyric to a Mr Jones of Langan, who had defied his bishop in order to serve Gospel truth, and vituperation of a Mr Ireland, who had, in her judgement, deserted it. Of Mr Jones she writes:

I shall not forebear going to see him when he has received his dismission. I wish I may bring him to Bristol if but for a few days to make glad the hearts of the truly faithfull souls. I hope I shall not honour him too much - but O! he will have the Hundredfold & true living Joy to all eternity - O: What a Ballance this is against that most contemptable man Ireland. The Lord God will not soon pass by *with him* the greivous evils each day springs forth from his accursed policy & wicked deceitfullness & poor thoughtless G pays for it from all sides.

The gesture towards Jones, whose homeless family will need housing rather more than he will need a trip to Bristol, and the contemptuous dismissal of Ireland, which is reflected in other letters in the series, testifies to a woman of strong opinions. It is hard to see this same woman as an ecclesiastical diplomat. This is the same strong sensibility that Dr Welch reveals in her relationship with her husband.

"Mr Ireland" commands no entry in Dr Welch's index, nor in many other reference books on Methodism. James Ireland (1724-1814), merchant and banker of Brislington Hall, Bristol, was an intimate friend of many Methodist leaders, including the Wesleys and John Fletcher. His wife, Francis Godde (1734-1805), was sister to Henry Godde, a frequent correspondent of the Countess and married to one of her former companions. Therefore the strong views of the Countess on James Ireland might repay further study and cast more light on the breach of 1771.

The strength of Dr Welch's account is in the interplay of ideas and personalities. There is not sufficient space in the present volume to take up all the many controversies of the Countess's life. However, we might have benefited from more examples of her testiness as well as her graciousness. The greatness of some people does not lie in their gift of emollience.

The split with Wesley and Fletcher, combined with the death of Whitefield left the Countess without the companionship and stimulation of the best minds of the Methodist movement. Her answer was to take more responsibility on herself. It is entirely typical of her that she should, as Dr Welch explains, take personal charge of her college at Trevecca. Quite late in her life she was searching for a more convenient place for the college to take account of this. The Jernigan correspondence of 1787, which Dr Welch alludes to in relation to the Swansea chapel, is also concerned with a house which might serve as a residence for her and students.

A longer reassessment might also include a fuller account of the Countess's religious views and their development. A strong outline is provided in this text; perhaps Dr Welch or someone else will go on to expand it. A powerful theme in the Savannah correspondence, not elaborated here, is a sense of the immanence of God, even a feeling of millenarianism. At one point the Countess thought of going to Savannah, not merely to give her personal supervision to the work there, but to be ready for the Lord's appearance. Dr Welch enumerates the religious influences upon the Countess and some of her reading. She was eclectic in her tastes, an intelligent rather than a scholarly reader, with a preference for a powerful sermon over a good book. Much of her religious education must have come in conversation, which is difficult to chronicle. Was it something in her temperament or her education or the influence of Lady Betty Hastings which drove her ultimately to side with Whitefield's Calvinism rather than Wesley's Arminianism? What led her to support ordination outside the Church of England? Why was she committed to foreign missions? There are answers to these questions in Dr Welch's text but one could wish for further elucidation.

The Countess of Huntingdon attracted a great deal of affection and respect. Whatever has been said about her temperament she was not an isolated misfit. Perhaps it was her enormous capacity for work which earned that admiration. Whether it was the Shirley family problems, her husband's or her son's estate management, the colleges at Trevecca or Savannah, the Connexion, or a hundred other matters, hers was the guiding and directing hand which turned aspirations into action. She was a formidable organiser. It might be argued that she was too good at organisation herself and had a limited gift for delegation. John Wesley was another formidable organiser; he created a structure over which he could preside. Although he had a gift for detail, and gave time to the most mundane concerns of the societies he visited, he also knew how to leave people to work to plan. It has been said that the Countess was something of a meddler, concerning herself with details which could have been left to others, whether it was horses for preachers or beer for the college. It is also evident from Dr Welch's account that she was

either no good at finding talented people to carry through her projects or that, having found them, she then failed to trust them. There is a distinction here between friends like Thomas Haweis, who supported her work from a position of independence, and people like William Piercy, whom she entrusted with charge of the Savannah mission.

It is this unwillingness of the Countess to let go which dictates the moving ending to Dr Welch's book. His picture of the eighty-four-year-old woman fretting on her death bed about the preaching arrangements for the Connexion is sparingly but effectively written. This vignette, based on the little that Haweis and Best allowed themselves to write without defying her wishes on the subject of a biography, testifies to her single-mindedness and practicality. Having waited for so many years for a modern and accurate biography of the Countess of Huntingdon I read this book twice through immediately, but the closing paragraphs are lines to which I have returned on many occasions since.

STEPHEN ORCHARD

## REVIEW ARTICLE; MISSION AND ECCLESIOLOGY? SOME GALES OF CHANGE

*Gales of Change: Responding to a Shifting Missionary Context. The Story of the London Missionary Society 1945-1977.* Edited by Bernard Thorogood. Pp. viii, 345. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1994.

In 1945 every British schoolboy knew what Christian mission was. It was all about agencies from the supposedly Christian nations of the Western developed world sending personnel, called "missionaries", to the non-Christian nations of the tropical, underdeveloped world, with the primary commission of converting their peoples to Christianity. In Anglo-American Protestantism, most of those agencies were not official church bodies but voluntary societies, formed by groups of evangelical enthusiasts at a time when national denominational structures were non-existent, weak or indifferent to the claims of mission. The London Missionary Society, founded two hundred years ago in 1795 with the disarmingly simple title of "The Missionary Society", was one of the earliest of these voluntary agencies.

By 1977, it was no longer quite so plain to every British Christian, let alone schoolboy, just what Christian mission meant. The realization was dawning that the formerly non-Christian nations to which missionaries had previously been dispatched were in many cases more Christian than the nations which had sent them. The boundaries between Christendom and heathendom were no longer lines to be drawn on a map containing generous chunks of imperial pink. Mission was now a multi-directional process, flowing, as the ecumenical jargon put it, from all six continents to all six continents. What's more, a diminishing proportion of this movement was in the hands of the voluntary missionary societies. The ecumenical movement had stressed that "the church is mission", and in 1961 the International Missionary Council, representing the historic missionary societies, had been

absorbed into the World Council of Churches. The younger churches of the Two-Thirds World were no longer willing to play the role of passive recipients of the largesse of autonomous Western agencies, but instead wished to relate as equal partners to Western churches. Whether it was imperative or even appropriate to seek to convert adherents of other faiths to Christianity was now widely questioned. Increasing stress was placed on participation in global development, material aid, and political emancipation as integral to Christian mission. All this posed the question of whether mission was now to be understood simply as inter-church relations, in which each church acted in partnership with sister churches to enable each to fulfil its missionary task in its own patch.

The story of the London Missionary Society between 1945 and 1977 encapsulates this remarkable transformation in the context and understanding of Christian mission. The evolution of the LMS into first the Congregational Council for World Mission in 1966, and then the Council for World Mission in 1977, represents one of the most radical responses that any of the historic missionary societies has made to the shifting missionary context of the second half of the twentieth century. The rapidity of the transformation should not be underestimated. Bernard Thorogood recalls the concluding words of the church constitution in the Cook Islands where he began his missionary career in 1952: "Notwithstanding anything written in this constitution it is accepted by all the churches that the word of the missionary appointed by the LMS to serve in the Cook Islands is supreme". Even allowing for the fact that the pace of devolution from mission to church was slower in the Pacific than in Asia or Africa, the quotation highlights how much had to change before the total relinquishing of Western missionary power represented by the constitution of the CWM in 1977 could become a reality.

*Gales of Change* stands in an eminent succession of histories of the LMS as a sequel to Richard Lovett's two volumes on the first century of the society and Norman Goodall's *A History of the London Missionary Society 1895-1945* (OUP, 1954). The book is admirably produced, and contains some splendidly clear maps. Necessarily much briefer than either of its predecessors, it exhibits the usual characteristics of a collection of essays by different authors. Some are solid pieces of academic research, buttressed by impressive arrays of footnotes; others partake more of the character of brief autobiographical reflections by former missionaries. Within the denominational family represented by CWM, different readers will inevitably be drawn to different chapters, according to their own interests and experience. Those beyond that family (like this reviewer) may find particularly illuminating John Garrett's chapter on the Pacific. For here LMS missionaries from the gathered church tradition of British Congregationalism, accustomed to the tightness of faith and discipline of a Dissenting minority, often found themselves in the midst of a majority religious culture: up to eighty per cent of the population of the Cook Islands owed at least nominal allegiance to Congregationalism in the 1960s. Missionaries found the moral flexibility which quasi-established status encouraged in their congregations hard to cope with.



Moreover, since Christianity in the Pacific islands became a vehicle for conserving indigenous culture, missionaries found themselves unable to reproduce British patterns of congregational ecclesiology as faithfully as appears to have been the norm elsewhere (notwithstanding the idealism of the LMS Fundamental Principle). In Samoa, for example, authority in the church resided as much in the *matai*, the elected heads of extended families, as in the imported pattern of pastor, deacons, and church meeting. Candidates for the ministry were offered and supported by their extended families, who in return expected the right to dispose of their services after ordination - an expectation that cut clean across missionary assumptions. In the Pacific above all, but also more generally, LMS missionaries sometimes struggled to become accustomed to patterns of church order that were more presbyterian than congregational in accordance with the role preserved for the elders in traditional tribal societies. How far, if at all, such mission experience interacted with the growing sympathies for connexional church order within English Congregationalism in the post-war period is one of the intriguing questions which the authors of *Gales of Change* leave unasked and unanswered.

It is in fact a criticism that could validly be made of these essays as a whole that they only rarely draw the connections between developments on the mission field and church life in Britain. As a voluntary society, the LMS could not outpace the theological evolution of its own constituency without imperilling its financial existence. There were times in this period when the society had a great deal of explaining to do in order to assuage the fears of its supporters, as George Hood's excellent account of the LMS withdrawal from China in 1951 emphasizes. It would be interesting to learn how the LMS set about this task, and with what degree of success. There were possibly also times when falling levels of giving from home supporters (for reasons that may have had little to do with missions) supplied much of the motive power driving the process of devolution in the fields: one suspects that this was true of the unbroken sequence of deficits from 1946-7 to 1953-4 recorded by Robert Latham, but the implications for overseas policy of the domestic trend are not taken up.

Perhaps the most important facet of the interaction between domestic and overseas contexts that could have been explored more fully is the role of theological development in the transformation experienced by the LMS between 1945 and 1977. Bernard Thorogood's introductory chapter on "The Gales of Change" provides a masterly overview of the implications for Christian mission of the changing global context, but devotes only one page out of eighteen specifically to theology. Theology makes more of an appearance in Thorogood's concluding chapter, where he argues that the essential theological character of the LMS as a pioneering, evangelical and ecumenical society remained fundamentally unchanged throughout its history. Thorogood's contention appears to be that, while the gales of change have blown long and hard over the oceans of the world, the ship of the LMS has steered a steady course through these turbulent seas, even though the ship of 1977 looks as radically different in rigging and superstructure from the ship of 1795 as the *John Williams VII* (and last) of the 1960s looked from

the first *John Williams* vessel 120 years earlier.

Now there is no doubt that the impact of the secular political context on mission thinking in the twentieth century has been profound, even traumatic, and *Gales of Change* constitutes a valuable addition to what is still a fairly small body of published literature on this crucial theme. Nevertheless, the suspicion remains in the mind of this reviewer, at least, that there is more to be said about the gales that have blown up within the churches themselves. Was there any connection between theological position and stances adopted on the field to issues of politics and church-mission relationships? In what ways, for instance, did A.J. Haile's theological education at Mansfield College in the years before the First World War (as a fellow student of both C.J. Cadoux and Nathaniel Micklem) shape his remarkable career as principal for thirty years of the Tiger Kloof institution in South Africa, and then as representative of the LMS Board in Africa? How much support remained in the society in the 1940s or later for the advanced liberalism espoused by Frank Lenwood in the 1920s, and expounded most notoriously in *Jesus - Lord or Leader?* in 1930? In what ways did the neo-orthodox reaction within English Congregationalism that produced the Genevan revival of the 1930s and 1940s affect the LMS? John Garrett hints at an answer in his comment that Stuart Craig's secretarial reports in the 1950s and 1960s always spelt "the Faith" with a capital in a way that symbolized the affirmation of a central core of credal orthodoxy in reaction to the liberalism of the pre-war period. Similarly, Robert Latham's account of the progression from LMS to CWM hints at the ecclesiological tensions that sometimes arose, but the question of how these tensions related to the fault-line in English Congregationalism dividing the liberal separatism of Albert Peel and his heirs from the reformed connexionalism of Nathaniel Micklem and the Genevan school is not raised. Bernard Thorogood points out that the LMS Fundamental Principle was based on the assumption typical of historical evangelicalism that the faith could be neatly separated from questions of church order: that assumption did not fit so comfortably with the ecclesiological priorities of the Genevan revival, and one wonders to what extent the Principle came to be openly questioned in these years.

To formulate answers to all these questions would have required a larger and very different book from the one which CWM decided to publish. Such answers might, however, throw light on the intriguing contrast between the story of the LMS and that of its immediate predecessor and closest relative, the Baptist Missionary Society, which has retained its autonomy as a voluntary society in a denomination whose theological course in the twentieth century has been significantly different from that of Congregationalism. Institutions which boast a long and distinguished evangelical heritage face a temptation in evaluating their history to downplay the degree of change that has taken place, not only in their environment, but also in their objectives and even convictions. That tendency springs from a proper concern to be seen to be faithful to the traditions of the evangelical ancestors. Just occasionally *Gales of Change* seems reluctant to admit that the gales have been inside the vessel, as well as outside it, and that the ship

has actually changed course as a result. If the missionary task of the church is indeed now to be understood as a calling to each church to witness "primarily within their own location", then it is hard to see how the tendency for world mission to become a form of inter-church aid, a tendency which Stuart Craig sought to combat, can ultimately be resisted. The fact that this book has raised these important questions, even if only by implication, suggests that the Reformed churches of the CWM family, and the wider body of the world church, have every cause to be grateful for *Gales of Change*.

BRIAN STANLEY

### SHORT REVIEWS

*Sainthood Revisioned: Studies in Hagiography and Biography*. Edited by Clyde Binfield. Pp. 143. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. 1995. £25. ISBN 1-85075-289-3.

This series of papers, delivered at History seminars at the University of Sheffield, has more significance than the modesty of their presentation might initially suggest. The wide variety of the subjects dealt with and the relaxed cheerfulness of their treatment is almost defiantly different from the increasingly severe and narrow specialisation of most professional historical study, especially as conducted by young historians anxious to establish their reputations. We are given brief discussions, all set in a broad historical context, of early Irish saints, the Czech Reformer Comenius, Daniel Defoe, Rousseau, Stephen Chivers the Cambridge Baptist jam-maker, the spirituality of a small group of Wesleyan lady cousins, a Scottish missionary to Manchuria and Korea and, in an even more surprising concluding section, Oswald Mosley as a hagiographic example and the biographies of quite recently deceased Anglican prelates.

What gives a measure of unity to all this is the freshness of spirit and the confident independence of judgement displayed throughout, which obviously reveals the pervasive influence of the editor. This is particularly evident in the choice of some of the subjects, especially Stephen Chivers and those Wesleyan cousins dealt with by Binfield himself. It is present also in the treatment of more familiar themes such as Patrick and Defoe and Rousseau, all of whom we are invited to consider in a new and illuminating light. The only two papers which do not quite fit, although both are interesting in themselves, are the concluding ones, perhaps because they deal with people and events which are still too close to us.

The last paper does, however, have the value of exploring attitudes and assumptions which biographers themselves bring to their subjects. This is done frequently enough in relation to works of general biography but not so often in dealing with ecclesiastical biography, where the hagiographic tendency and a proper reluctance not to speak ill of the dead can sometimes mislead. True as that may be, attitudes and assumptions shared by biographers, their own critics and those whom they hope to be their readers can be even more misleading because

they ignore or dismiss with disparaging clichés people and events which do not fit in with their preconceptions. No one realises this more, or has already done more to help set the record straight in relation to neglected areas of church and wider social life in Britain, than the editor of this series.

DANIEL JENKINS

*Dissenting Thought and the Life of the Churches: Studies in an English Tradition.* By Alan P.F. Sell. Pp. ix + 713. San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press. 1990. \$119.95. ISBN 0-7734-9931-8.

It is useful to have this collection of 22 papers by Professor Sell, published over the last twenty years (seven of them in this Journal), between one set of covers, though the price is inevitably high. In period they range from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, and they cover most strands of the English dissenting tradition apart from the Society of Friends. The emphasis is predominantly theological, though several are concerned with local chapel life, illustrating how theological questions more often discussed in general terms were worked out in particular places.

One of the longest pieces, "Confessing the Faith in English Congregationalism", is also one of the most valuable, because it illustrates the variety of ways in which Congregationalists have confessed their faith, from church covenants, through the statements expected by church meetings from candidates for membership, to hymnody. The caution about credal subscription is also carefully explained and set in this wider context. Two other lengthy pieces are comparisons of three divines: Bourn, Taylor and Towgood in the eighteenth century, and Pope, Robert Watts and Fairbairn in the nineteenth. Professor Sell has often brought neglected figures to light: in these cases there is not only advantage in comparing rather different people, but also in illustrating the inter-relationship between different strands in theology. These papers also offer one of the first sustained treatments of eighteenth-century presbyterian theology written by a non-unitarian. Professor Sell shows that Congregational individuals were no less likely to become unitarian than Presbyterians, but that Congregational churches were much less likely to change. His argument that Independent ecclesiology was more corporate than that in minister-dominated Presbyterianism and that this helped to sustain orthodoxy is one which must be taken seriously. There are also interesting pieces on later unitarians such as Joseph Priestley and three nineteenth-century Walsall unitarian ministers. The two papers on Henry Rogers might serve as an epitaph for the use of the eighteenth-century philosophical tradition in Congregationalism.

The last three papers reflect different themes. Two of them concern the Reformed-Mennonite and Reformed-Methodist international dialogues, transpositions on to an international scale of some of the theological themes touched on earlier in the volume. The last concerns the witness of the English Free Churches against establishment. Carefully distinguishing between the national establishment and the national recognition of religion, Professor Sell argues that

“the freedom of the Free Churches is not a freedom to think and believe as they please. It is not in the first place freedom from the State. It is freedom by grace to be the Church of the living God.” That this is illustrated from the Savoy Declaration demonstrates the thread which runs through these collected papers. This is the English tradition, the voice of which Professor Sell is rightly concerned to preserve in ecumenical conversation at the end of the twentieth century.

DAVID M. THOMPSON

### SOME CONTEMPORARIES

*Archaeologia Cantiana*, (CXII, 1993)

G. Draper, “The first hundred years of Quakerism in Kent”.

*The Baptist Quarterly* (XXXV, nos. 5-8, 1994)

No. 5: F.L. Maudlin, “Truth, heritage and eighteenth-century English Baptists”; J.Y. Holyer, “Continuity and discontinuity between the medieval mystics and the spirituals of the Radical Reformation”; B.M. Doyle, “Business, liberalism and Dissent in Norwich 1900-1930”; P. Shepherd, “The Baptist Ministers’ Journal 1946-1992”. No. 6: M. Hopkins, “The Down Grade controversy: new evidence”; S. Copson, “Advocate of the Reformed Protestant Religion: the writings (1645-58) of William Kaye, Yorkshire Puritan”; G.A. Catherall, “Bristol College and the Jamaican Mission: a Caribbean contribution”; G.R. Breed, “‘Non-authenticated’ registers before 1837”; No. 7: R. Brown, “Bedfordshire Nonconformist devotion”; D. Parkin-Speer, “John Bunyan’s legal ideas and the legal trials in his allegories”; L.M. Wildman, “Changes in membership and social composition in ten rural Old Dissent churches in the south-east Midlands”; J.G. Randall, “Against the backdrop of eternity: narrative and the negative casuistry of John Bunyan’s *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*”. No. 8: N.G. Wright’s “‘Koinonia’ and Baptist ecclesiology: self-critical reflections from historical and systematic perspectives”; G.R. Breed, “The London Association of Strict Baptist Ministers and Churches”; I. Randall, “Incarnating the Gospel: Melbourne Hall, Leicester, in the 1890s as a model for holistic ministry”; B.G. Owens, “An early letter from the church at Netherton, Gloucestershire, to the church at Hay-on-Wye, Powys, 20 December 1650”.

*Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* (LXXVI, no. 2, 1994)

G. Lloyd, “The papers of Dr. Thomas Coke: a catalogue”.

*Calvin Theological Journal* (XXIX, April 1994)

Contains nine papers on aspects of covenant theology.

*Congregational History Circle Magazine* (III no. 2, Spring 1994)

I. Sellers, "The Threapwood story"; D. Watson, "Rev. Muriel Olympia Paulden, MA (1892-1975). Her life and work in Toxteth, Liverpool"; T. Watts, "Job Orton, the friend and biographer of Philip Doddridge; some background notes".

*Cylchgrawn Hanes* (XVIII, 1994)

E. Evans, "The sources and scope of Daniel Rowlands' sermons".

*Enlightenment and Dissent* (XII, 1993)

R.D. Cornwall, "Advocacy of the independence of the Church from the state in eighteenth-century England: a comparison of a Nonjuror and a Nonconformist view"; G.M. Ditchfield, "Public and Parliamentary support for the Unitarian Petition of 1792".

*The Expository Times* (CV, no. 5, February 1994)

J. David, "'Under-developed and over-exposed': R.J. Campbell".

*Evangelical Quarterly* (LXVI, no. 2, April 1994)

M. Jenkins, "Elements of federal theology in the religious thought of John Locke".

*Furniture History* (XXXIX, 1993)

L. Boynton, "The Moravian Brotherhood and the migration of furniture makers in the 18th century".

*The Georgian Group Journal* (1992)

D. Whitehead, "Job Marston's chapel".

*Journal of the Ecclesiastical History Society* (XLV no. 1, January 1994)

D.L. Wykes, "Friends, Parliament and the Toleration Act"; S.J. Brown, "'A solemn purification by fire': responses to the Great War in the Scottish Presbyterian churches, 1914-19".

*The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society* (LVII, no. 1)

C.D. Gilbert, "Some incidents in early Worcester Quakerism"; M.A. Ellison, "Further thoughts on Leeds Friends and the Beaconite Controversy"; E.H. Milligan, "'The ancient way': the Conservative tradition in nineteenth-century British Quakerism".

*Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* (XLIX, pts. 4-6)

Pt. 4: D.H. Tripp, "Clement of Alexandria and the Wesley brothers"; C.C. Short, "William Udy Bassett and the 1902 Education Act." Pt. 5: C.H. Goodwin, "James Caughey's challenge to Wesleyan concepts of ministry and church growth: 1841-1846". Pt. 6: D.N. Hempton, "Motives, methods and margins in Methodism's age of expansion"; G.E. Milburn, "A Methodist artist rediscovered. H.E. Tidmarsh 1855-1939".

*Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* (XII, no. 1, Spring 1994)

G.J. Keddie, "The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the Disruption of 1863. II: The long decline (1900-Present)".

*The Strict Baptist Historical Society Bulletin* (XXI, 1994)

R. Sheehan, "C.H. Spurgeon: the prince of preachers"; R. Hayden, "A sprightly tune! Eighteenth-century baptist hymnody and evangelical experience".

*Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (XXXVIII, 1994)

C. Stell, "Wesley's Chapel, City Road, Islington".

*Transactions of the Association for Studies in the Conservation of Historic Buildings* (XVIII, 1993)

H. Stafford, A. Lowe and K. Brown, "Rook Lane Chapel, Frome, Somerset: its history and repair".

*Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1993)

J.G. Jones, "John Penry: government, order and the 'perishing souls' of Wales".

*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (6th series, III, 1993)

C. Rose, "Providence, Protestant union and godly reformation in the 1690s".

*Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society* (XX, no. 4, 1994)

Articles by A. Long, A. Ruston and P.N. Tindall on the sesquicentenary of the Dissenters' Chapels Act; P.N. Tindall, "Roman Catholics and Unitarians: an account of reciprocal help and comfort, Part II"; R.S. Roper and A. Ruston, "The Rochdale Pioneers - 150th anniversary"; L. Smith, "Unitarians and the second phase of Co-operation"; L. Smith, "A failed Utopia: H.V. Mills and the Westmorland Commune".

ALAN P.F. SELL