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incorporating the Transactions of the  
**BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**EDITORIAL**

**E**NTHUSIASM amongst Baptists for marking the tercentenary of 1662 can, at best, be designated as "patchy". Here and there we hear reports of successful and worthwhile meetings held and of well-organised occasions planned for the Autumn. But, by and large, Baptist church members still seem not to be clear as to what it is all about. This is a pity. For whether we feel that it is an occasion for "celebrating" or not, it is certainly an occasion for remembering and re-thinking.

By the Act of Uniformity, passed in the summer of 1662, all Clergy were required by August 24th—amongst other things—to accept and follow the *Book of Common Prayer*. For the staunch Independent to accede to such a demand was impossible. He held that the State had no right to interfere in things religious. Church and State belonged apart. And more than that the *Book of Common Prayer* did not represent true praying with the Spirit.

We may recall John Bunyan's description of his examination before the Justices in Bedford less than two years before St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662.

**JUSTICE KEELIN** : Do you come to church, you know what I mean, to the parish church to hear Divine Service?

**BUNYAN** : I answered, No, I did not.

**KEELIN** : He asked me, Why?

BUNYAN : I said, Because I did not find it commanded in the Word of God.

KEELIN : He said, We were commanded to pray.

BUNYAN : I said, But not by the Common Prayer-Book.

KEELIN : He said, How then?

BUNYAN : I said, With the Spirit. As the apostle saith, "I will pray with the Spirit and with the understanding." (I Cor. XIV 15.)

KEELIN : He said, We might pray with the Spirit, and with the understanding, and with the Common Prayer Book also.

BUNYAN : I said, The prayers in the Common Prayer Book were such as was made by other men, and not by the motions of the Holy Ghost, within our hearts; and as I said, the apostle saith, he will pray with the Spirit, and with the understanding; not with the Spirit and the Common Prayer-Book.

The expression of the record is in the language of the seventeenth century, but the principles of Bunyan's attitude to the *Book of Common Prayer* remain evident.

On August 24th, 1662, hundreds of clergy were driven out by the State's authority for their refusal to subscribe to the Prayer Book. This may not be a tercentenary occasion for celebration but it is surely one upon which all Baptists need to ask themselves two questions. Do I believe that Church and State ought to be separated? Do I believe that within any act of worship there should be freedom in the Spirit for prayer?

## Benjamin Evans, DD and The Radical Press, 1826—1871

WHEN, as a young minister, Benjamin Evans (1803-1871) arrived in Scarborough in 1826 "the nation was rising from the oppression under which it had groaned for a long season . . . The spirit of constitutional liberty was rising in her might and girding herself for a long and severe conflict. The Test and Corporation Acts were in full force. Municipal and Parliamentary reform was unknown; and church rates, the right to marry by Dissenters, and the Acts for registration of births and deaths had to be wrung from a dominant faction in the nation."<sup>1</sup> Evans, writing this in 1871 in *A Brief History of the First Baptist Church of Scarborough* (in 1826 it was known as Ebenezer Chapel) passes very quickly over his rôle as one of those leaders of Protestant non-conformity who "wrung" the concessions of religious freedom from the established order. He continues: "Time would fail to glance at the hostility we had to encounter on the slavery question, the Parliamentary and Municipal reform agitation, the Anti-Corn Law League, and other great measures in which (he) was forced to engage."<sup>2</sup>

With the possible exception of Dr. Thomas Price (editor of the *Eclectic Review* 1837-1850) Benjamin Evans was the most popular Baptist journalist of the mid-nineteenth century. He concentrated only a small portion of his boundless energy on the publishing of tracts and it would seem that the majority of those were merely reprints of speeches and sermons. His first venture into the editing and publishing end of journalism was with a monthly magazine for Sunday Schools and a young people's magazine *The Northern Baptist*.<sup>3</sup>

*The Northern Baptist* was begun in 1838 and continued until January, 1846, when it was merged with *The Church*. With a total of sixteen pages, *The Northern Baptist* contained news and articles designed to educate as well as amuse the young adult. Contributors to this small journal included William Brock, J. A. Cox, J. E. Giles, and John Henry Hinton. It is interesting to note that although Evans was passionately involved in the breaking up of disabilities imposed on nonconformity he did not use this young people's magazine as a sounding board for his political views. While maintaining the religious thrust of *The Northern Baptist* he advised strong support of Thomas Price and his *Eclectic Review*

because the *Review* was “. . . committed to the great principles of liberty and human rights and it must advance. Do our readers see it? Most of them should. It is worthy of their support, and it will benefit them always to peruse it. Half a dozen should unite and take it.”<sup>4</sup>

Faced with the failure to meet publication expenses consistently, Evans merged his journal with *The Church* (founded in 1844 by Giles, Clouse, Dowson and Pottinger). Regarding this merger, Evans announced through the pages of *The Northern Baptist*: “It is intended that *The Church* shall be the cheapest issue . . . Cordially and earnestly does the editor invite his readers to transfer their support to the united periodical.”<sup>5</sup> It was not with an idea to retirement that Evans decided to merge with the younger *Church*; one condition of the merger was his replacement of Giles as the chief editor.

The one penny eight-page *Church* was published by John Heaton of Leeds and Simpkin Marshall of London. The editorial policy of *The Church* closely paralleled that of the *Northern Baptist*; i.e., *The Church* actively invited the patronage of the *Eclectic Review* until 1850 when, upon the retirement of Dr. Price, it withdrew its support. At no time did it consider itself at cross purposes with the sixpenny *Baptist Magazine*. Attempting to reach its readers on the one penny level, *The Church* was sporadically entitled *The Baptist Penny Magazine*. The West Riding of the Yorkshire Baptist Association by a unanimous vote in June of 1845 gave *The Church* “. . . their cordial recommendation, so that, . . . it may be virtually regarded, as the organ of that powerful association.”<sup>6</sup>

This provincially supported journal was never provincial in its handling of the news and was in fact as cosmopolitan in its interests as one of the London journals like Price's *Eclectic*. Advertizing itself as the cheapest religious journal in the British Empire, *The Church* carried much solid material besides the usual records and comments on current affairs; e.g., travel, biography, history, book reviews, poetry, and a series of articles covering the gamut from famous Popes to famous Baptists, living and dead. The *Eclectic Review* and the *Baptist Magazine*, although filled with much excellent material, had limited circulations due to the fairly high subscription rates. The major difference between the above journals and *The Church* was that of cost. All three journals catered for men of education and intelligence, i.e., men who clearly had to be interested in serious matters and capable of pursuing argumentative articles. Chiefly, therefore, due to cost and content *The Church* definitely filled a marked gap in the literature of the denomination.

*The Church* frequently launched bitter attacks on the State Church; however Evans never allowed this objective to be an over-

riding consideration. *The Church* was not attempting to do the job of Edward Miall's *The Nonconformist* though it did give this contemporary publication unqualified support. The purposes of *The Church* was to speak out in eight areas of Christian concern. The objectives were: to exhibit the nature of that church which constitutes the kingdom of the Son of God; to strike a blow at all religious monopoly and especially at State Establishments of religion as anti-Christian and unjust; to diffuse those blessed truths which pertain to life and godliness, and to oppose the progress of error whether in the principles or practice of religion; to direct attention to public duties and events; to maintain Scriptural views of the ordinances of the Gospel; to furnish biographical notices of eminent Christians; to supply early intelligence with regard to home and foreign missionary proceedings; and to collect information relating to public religious services, Sunday Schools, deaths, etc. among church members.

There was, however, during 1844 and 1845 a journal published by J. Burton, Haymarket, Leicester, which gives the impression that its main reason for life was to fight the religious disabilities of nonconformity and the State establishment of religion. *The Baptist Examiner*, a monthly journal of religious literature, statistics and general information, was edited in almost complete anonymity during its short life. The only breach in this editorial veil occurred in March, 1845, when the editor added the initials B.E. to an editorial note.<sup>7</sup> Upon a close reading of the *Examiner* and subsequent comparison with the work of Evans I would like to suggest that this radical journal was the child of Evans although he himself never admitted any connection with it.

The general attitudes of the *Examiner* in its short two years of life are easily isolated: (1) the immediate end to all disabilities imposed on nonconformists, including church rates; (2) disestablishment of the State Church and complete support of the Anti-State-Church Association; (3) the support of Free Trade and the abolition of the Corn Laws; (4) the ending of the *regium donum*; (5) support of the *Eclectic Review*; (6) the retention of education in the hands of nonconformists and the rejection of schemes of public education favouring the establishment; (7) the ending of the establishment in Ireland and the consequent "freeing" of the Irish people; (8) vehement opposition to the Maynooth education grant for the education of Irish Roman Catholic priests; (9) and finally the continual urging of its readers to vote for liberal and radical Parliamentary candidates pledged to the above and the voluntary principle which was the political and religious catchword of militant nonconformity.

A summary of the *Examiner's* purpose was outlined in its prospectus of 1844, in which the editor declared that "... the religious literature of our day appeared . . . too *exclusively religious*. The spirit it breathed was that of religion in solitude . . . The aim of the *Examiner* has been to present its readers with the religion of life, of reality and of society; to show it, as it mixes itself with the hourly experience of our hearts and the daily toil of our hands; to deduce its results in the next world from its bearings in this; to lower the importance of profession and formality; to raise the standard of truth and principle; to oppose the reign of ignorance and superstition, and to advance the progress of knowledge and goodness."<sup>8</sup>

The historian with justification questions the actual numbers of people that such a journal as *The Church* represents. I would suggest that this can be sampled on the basis of its circulation, contributors, and finally the attitudes of the denomination as a whole. The circulation of *The Church* rose from several hundred copies to four thousand per month immediately after the merger with the *Northern Baptist* early in 1846; by 1849 the editors were claiming some 17,000 copies with something under a million readers.<sup>9</sup> The identification of contributors is made difficult by the literary practice of this period which favoured the use of initials and cryptic pen names instead of the author's name. Nevertheless we are able to find signed articles by Benjamin Evans, Baptist W. Noel (then an Evangelical), J. E. Giles, J. H. Hinton, John Birt, C. M. Birrell, John Jenkinson of Kettering, Jabez Burns, Cornelius Elven, J. J. Brown, Edward Steane, J. P. Chown, Francis Clowes, J. P. Mursell, Alexander MacLaren, Charles Spurgeon, J. Landels, and Arthur Mursell. This list of distinguished denominational leaders coupled with a respectable circulation indicates the important rôle the *Baptist Penny Magazine (The Church)* played within the political interests of the denomination.

The editorial position taken by *The Church* from 1846 on was so similar to that of the then defunct *Examiner* that one can conjecture that the readers of the *Examiner* rather easily and naturally transferred their allegiance from Leicester to Leeds. Although the *Examiner* was without question more radical than *The Church*, it was *The Church* that was looked upon with favour by the Chartists. *The Church* also contributed substantially to the reputation that Leeds enjoyed during the 1840's as a centre of the anti-Corn Law agitation. Evans, an avowed supporter of the Anti-Corn Law League saw that *The Church* also echoed these sentiments from its home in Leeds. He firmly believed there was a moral issue at stake; he saw the League's enemies as enemies of the voluntary principle.

This attitude was never any more clearly revealed than in the

election of 1841. Significantly the great post-election event was a conference of ministers summoned by Cobden at Manchester to discuss the subject of the Corn Laws. Cobden, drawing himself to his full oratorical height, called upon those present to declare that the Corn Law was "opposed to the law of God, was anti-Scriptural, and anti-Christian." Mr. G. Kitson Clark claims that it was "the only conference for which the thrifty Leeds Baptists are known to have paid the travelling expenses of their delegates."<sup>10</sup> The Leeds Baptists at least four years before the publication of *The Church* were convinced that the Corn Laws were a social evil and contrary to the word of God. This conviction turned many Baptist ministers like Thomas Price, Benjamin Evans, John Eustace Giles, Ebenezer Elliott<sup>11</sup> and F. A. Cox into virtual agents of the League in their areas. The Manchester meeting of the Anti-Corn Law (Free Trade) supporters drew 645 ministers of various denominations; of these the Independents led with 276 ministers and the Baptists had 182 representatives. Charging that the vested interest of the State Church was a factor in the existence of the Corn Laws, these dissenters were also able to train their spiritual artillery against the establishment through the Free Trade issue.<sup>12</sup>

Applying the voluntary principle with its usual vigour, *The Church*, speaking on the proposed Maynooth Grant in May of 1845 struck out in favour of ending State interference on both the level of religion and commerce. It said: "State patronage ruins commerce; they have not eyes to see that it is the death blow to religion."<sup>13</sup> *The Church* was never content with merely setting out the evils of those who impiously trod upon voluntarism; with every election it repeatedly called upon dissenters to vote for those who would protect the principles of nonconformity. A highly characteristic plea from April of 1847 reads:

ELECTORS! be prepared! Vote for no one who will not *pledge* himself against Government grants for Education and Religion . . . DISSENTERS! Come out for your principles! Aim your strokes at the root of the tree. A State-Church will wear you out in breaking off its ever growing shoots of mischief. Follow the League. Proclaim the truth *you* understand. Fill the ranks and the coffers of the Anti-State-Church Association. Invite its lecturers to your towns. If our governors *will* force on us National Education, let them lose in compensation—suffrage monopoly, church monopoly and hereditary legislation, and then the *worst* dangers, though not all, of Government education will be repelled.

In 1848 *The Church* received a notice from the Chartist journal *The Republican*. "With the religious contents of this periodical



. . . we have nothing whatever to do; but we are glad to say that its political tendency is towards Democracy. It is conducted in a most candid spirit and occasionally gives some good blows at that monstrous absurdity, a STATE CHURCH."<sup>14</sup> What was the relationship between the programme advocated by the Chartist movement and that of Evans and *The Church*? A programme of political and social reform was featured by *The Church* in the issues of April, May June and July of 1852. This eight-point programme was similar in several respects to the famous Six Points of the Charter. The Chartists demanded universal manhood suffrage, voting by ballot, equalization of constituencies, annual Parliaments, no qualifications for election to Parliament beyond the approval of the electors (i.e. no property qualifications) and finally payment for members of Parliament. *The Church*, on the other hand, advocated: universal suffrage; voting by ballot; the ending of all property qualifications for electors and candidates; the ending of the laws of primogeniture and entail; modification of the laws of partnership; repeal of the tax on knowledge (i.e. the newspaper tax and paper duty); removal of labour taxes in favour of property taxes; and lower taxation, thus ending the favoured position of "idle aristocracy and their offspring."<sup>15</sup>

Prof. H. U. Faulkner pointed out that of "all the nonconformist denominations, with the possible exception of the Unitarians, the Baptists probably showed the most sympathy toward the democratic schemes of the Chartists. This was partially due to the fact that the whole tone of the [denomination] was more radical than that, for instance, of the Congregational." He goes further to show that an ". . . overwhelming majority of the Baptists" were committed to the separation of church and state while among the Congregationalists only a small advanced party led by Edward Miall were in favour of an active political campaign." This radical nature of the Baptists is indicated in the London Conference of 1844 which gave birth to the Anti-State-Church Association. The Baptist Union was the only representative body to send delegates to the conference. This can be attributed primarily to the leadership of the Union co-secretary, John Henry Hinton.<sup>16</sup>

The London Conference was not Hinton's maiden voyage into politics. As a young minister he had taken an active part in the anti-slavery struggle; he was present in 1834 at Nottingham at the first general conference which called for the disestablishment of the Church of England. In 1836 he was a founder of the Church Rates Abolition Society and in 1839 of the Religious Freedom Society. Then just prior to the creation of the Anti-State-Church movement in 1842 he served Joseph Sturge's National Complete Suffrage Union as a lecturer.

Reviewing the political attitude of the denomination, a brief

glance at the *Eclectic Review* from 1837 to 1850 is revealing. During that period the *Review* was under the editorship of Dr. Thomas Price, former pastor of the Baptist chapel at Devonshire Square, Bishopsgate (1827-1837). The general policy of the monthly was highly favourable to the extension of suffrage as well as most political and religious reforms. The *Review* is seen usually as the literary representative of the Independent's radical wing and yet it had a Baptist editor-owner, and may be more accurately regarded during the 1840's as a Baptist organ.

The generally more conservative *Baptist Magazine*, while perhaps the preferred magazine for those who could afford the sixpenny price, continued to advocate policies similar to those articulated by the *Review* and *The Church*. The clearest difference between the old sixpenny journal and that which Evans edited at Leeds was the rather more moderate tones that prevailed in the editorials and general articles. The *Baptist Record*, a monthly begun in 1844, was not only similar to the *Eclectic Review* in style and content but in political attitudes as well.

*The Church's* pages were never overburdened in such a way as to make it essentially a political magazine. It always approached politics—whether in terms of political or religious reform—from the framework of Christian ethics as the editor understood them. The character thus never ceased to be religious from beginning to end. Despite *The Church's* low price its evangelism was not reaching many people. Therefore *The Appeal* was begun in 1848. This little halfpenny magazine published by Evans was designed to reach the unconverted "thousands" of England. *The Appeal* reached a circulation level of 34,000 per month in the first eight years of its life.

*The Church* cast its shadow on every major social, political and economic event from 1846 to 1855. The sarcastic pens of Evans and his writers probed the several ministries that had served the Crown during those nine years. It chided those magazines and newspapers that avoided the radical line. It attacked both Whig and Tory until in 1852 Evans threw his support to the People's Party which stood (unsuccessfully) for religion free from government and aristocratic domination. The editorials advocated popular education, shorter time in factories and in agriculture, further limiting of child labour, a form of profit sharing, an end to secret diplomacy, a law to legalize partnership with limited responsibility, national admission to national universities, a new reform bill and finally what was labelled the "taxes on knowledge." These taxes took the form of a newspaper stamp and a duty on paper which severely curtailed the number of papers published.

Sharp biting comments characterize the pages of *The Church* during the early years of the 1850's. The editor compared the

Methodist Conference under Jabez Bunting with the Council of Trent; and described nunneries as "a kind of religious Lunatic Asylums"<sup>17</sup> and the House of Bishops (Lords) as "the Golgotha of liberal measures."<sup>18</sup> It stated that "the sole stay of the Church of England [was] *one hundred and twenty thousand bayonets*"<sup>19</sup> and (in 1857 when the Queen's infant daughter was christened) "It is satisfactory to know that the little princess has been *well* baptized, for 'the ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishops of London and Chester, the Honourable and Reverend Gerald Wellesley, and the Honourable and Very Reverend the Dean of Windsor'."<sup>20</sup>

Evans's attention to the "tax on knowledge" was motivated by very practical considerations; by 1853 he had begun to take another step to advance the influence of *The Church's* radical position. Evans had prior to 1855 given complete support to Edward Miall and the *Nonconformist*. However a parting of the ways stimulated a move to found a liberal-radical-Baptist newspaper that would advocate the editorial policy of *The Church*.

This new Baptist newspaper, *The Freeman*, came to life with the repeal of the Stamp Tax on newspapers and the support of such denominational leaders as Chown and Acworth of Bradford, Burchell of Rochdale, Landels of Birmingham, Mursell of Leicester and, of course, Evans. The first issue of *The Freeman* under the editorship of Evans was published at Leicester and London on January 24th, 1855. It is quite evident that *The Freeman* was intended to devote itself to the gripping political issues of the day; with the appearance of this younger brother *The Church*, ceasing to be an active political agitator, turned to the spreading and deepening of the gospel.

*The Church*, in December of 1854, announced in a full-page advertisement that "IN POLITICS, *The Freeman* will be, what it could not but be, liberal and outspoken. It will hold fast to democratic principles, at the same time carefully eschewing the rudeness, empiricism, and vulgarity, with which those principles have been sometimes associated. ON SOCIAL TOPICS, *The Freeman* will be the strenuous advocate of progressional measures, though it will look for social remedies, not so much to any external interference, as to the gradual development of the intellectual, the moral, and the industrial capabilities of the people."<sup>21</sup> *The Freeman* sold for 4½d. a week and carried the banner "The LIBERTY wherewith Christ hath made us free."

*The Freeman's* popularity grew rapidly and at the end of the third year it boasted of a circulation of 30,000 subscribers who were then paying 4d. (5d. stamped). Evans was quick to realize the value of illustrations in his struggle to increase circulation and in 1858 featured steel engravings of Rippon, R. Hall, J. Foster, J.

Ryland, Kinghorn, Knibb and Burchell, Carey, Marshman and Ward. (These portraits, reduced in size, were later used by *The Church*.) In 1860 *The Freeman* offered portraits of twenty living Baptist ministers to new subscribers.

Arising in an era of liberalism *The Freeman* carried the same banner of radical politics that had been raised by its editor in 1846. The last bit of political news had disappeared from the parent *Church* in 1859. Within three years of its inception *The Freeman* with the recommendation of twenty-five Particular Baptist Associations, the General Baptist Association and the Baptist Union had become the newspaper of British Baptist opinion. Following the tradition of the *Church*, *The Freeman* merged in 1899 with the *Baptist Times* and continues as the *Baptist Times and Freeman*.

This has been essentially the story of Benjamin Evans, D.D., seen through the historical mirror of his sometimes vitriolic but at all times talented pen. It is indeed difficult to realize that from the time of his call to the pulpit at Scarborough until his retirement in 1864 he was an active pastor as well as a political reformer and editor. He was instrumental in the founding of the North and East Riding Association, the Scarborough Museum, and the Mechanics Institute. Although he resigned the editorship of *The Freeman* in its early years he continued as its writer of ecclesiastical articles and as a contributor on American affairs. He was also the English correspondent for an unnamed American periodical. Evans was especially proud of his work for the Baptist Missionary Society and claimed that he journeyed to London four and five times a year and had the distinction of having never missed a quarterly meeting of that society. Under the auspices of the missionary society at various times he visited Scotland, Ireland and Wales, claiming that he travelled two or three thousand miles every year on missionary work. He was elected to the chair of the Baptist Union in 1858.

One extremely important literary contribution made by Evans was his two-volume contribution to the Bunyan Library's *Early English Baptists* (1862-64). These volumes grew out of a series of *Freeman* articles entitled "Glimpses of the Past." Champlin Bursage in *Early English Dissenters* (1912) commended Evans as "much the ablest of the early English Baptist historical writers" with ". . . the mind of a true historian." Evans merited this praise as a result of his competent use of the early Mennonite archives at Amsterdam upon which he founded his articles.

During his thirty-eight years in the chapel at Scarborough, Evans "retired" four times due to ill-health; however, only the fourth resignation was accepted (1864). He refused to accept inactivity as the price of retirement yet found that others far younger

than he had moved to the fore in the proclamation of those principles for which he had fought since 1826. In a typical gesture he began his final journal, the quarterly *Baptist Record*, in the year of his death, 1871. Much of the life of this Baptist pastor-reformer is shrouded in obscurity and uncertainty. However, enough is visible of the man to mark him as an outstanding leader of militant nonconformity in the mid-nineteenth century.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> B. Evans, D.D., *A Brief History of the First Baptist Church, Scarborough*, London, 1871, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16. Although Evans never mentions it there is good reason to believe that he also had a hand in the publishing of *The Burgess* at Scarborough in 1836. This paper was published monthly from March, 1835 to February, 1836. Its backing was that of radical nonconformity with the express purpose of promoting the reforms proposed by the Scarborough Association for the Protection and Extension of Civil and Religious Liberty.

<sup>4</sup> *The Northern Baptist*, B. Evans, Scarborough, 1844, Vol. II, p. 181. The aim of Price was "... to win the mass of people by advocating their cause in relation to political rights" (John Waddington, *Congregational History, Continuation to 1850*, London, 1878, p. 578).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, ii, 1845.

<sup>6</sup> *The Church*, John Heaton, Leeds, Vol. I, p. 81. The publisher Heaton was a well known Leeds Baptist.

<sup>7</sup> *The Baptist Examiner*, J. Burton, Leicester, March, 1845, notes on p. 100.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, iii.

<sup>9</sup> *The Church*, Vol. II, p. 334.

<sup>10</sup> G. Kitson Clarke, "The Electorate and the Repeal of the Corn Laws." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1951.

<sup>11</sup> Carlile, *The Story of the English Baptists*, London, 1905, p. 231.

<sup>12</sup> R. G. Cowherd, *The Politics of Dissent*, London, Epworth, 1959, p. 135; cf. also N. McCord, *The Anti-Corn Law League, 1838-1846*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1958, p. 177.

<sup>13</sup> *The Church*, Vol. I, p. 77.

<sup>14</sup> *The Republican*, C. G. Harding, London, Watson, 1848, p. 140.

<sup>15</sup> *The Church*, Vol. VI, p. 177.

<sup>16</sup> E. A. Payne, *The Baptist Union*, Carey Kingsgate, London, 1958, p. 84. Payne also makes the point that the 182 Baptist ministers who met at Cobden's Manchester meeting were a far larger number than had so far attended a meeting of the Baptist Union (p. 70). The name of the Anti-State-Church Association was changed in 1854 to the less provocative Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control.

<sup>17</sup> *The Church* (1853), Vol. VII, p. 194.

<sup>18</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. IX, p. 167 (1854).

<sup>19</sup> *Op. cit.* (1848), Vol. II, p. 148.

<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.* (1857), Vol. XI, p. 104.

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.* (1854), Vol. VIII, p. 308.

# Roger Williams: Delinquent Saint

The Religious Odyssey of the Providence Prophet

## INTRODUCTION

FEW colonial figures have won more laurels in the past century than Roger Williams. No doubt he has deserved more glowing tributes than his own generation of writers were inclined to offer since they treated him "as a fanatical heresiarch in religion and a factious disturber of the State."<sup>1</sup> But by the nineteenth century the "new look" antiquated such a portrait and the founder of Rhode Island came into his own as the "pioneer of modern individualism and modern federalism" and modern theology heralded him as one of "the foremost liberals of his day."<sup>2</sup>

With the new accent of the times on democracy and secularism Roger Williams was readily labelled as a political thinker and "social architect" of an age that could not appreciate his advanced views. In the eyes of "moderns" he appeared as a rational statesman in an irrational age. "The gods it would seem, were pleased to have their jest with Roger Williams by sending him to earth before his time."<sup>3</sup> When his "time" finally arrived and his ideas won popular acclaim it became a simple matter to idealize the colonial forerunner of such modern views.

The following monograph is an attempt to analyse Williams' caste of mind within the theological framework of his day and not as a "prototype" or "symbol" of things to come. What metamorphosis, if any, occurred in his religious views? What does Williams, himself, say on the big issues—the issues of church and State; freedom and authority; the sovereignty of God and the freedom of man?

## I

### ENGLISH ROOTS

Little is known of Roger Williams' early life to indicate the religious faith and experience of his childhood. The date and place of his birth are not even authoritatively recorded since the parish records of St. Sepulchre, along with St. Sepulchre, went up in smoke in the Great Fire of London in 1666. Recent scholarship considers London, 1603, as the most probable place and date

of his arrival into the home of James Williams, a merchant tailor.<sup>4</sup> Williams himself is uncharacteristically silent on his childhood. The lone comment that he makes in his writings on the religious life of his family was a letter written to Governor John Winthrop in which he lamented the fact that he had been "persecuted even in and out of my father's home these 20 years."<sup>5</sup>

Under the patronage of Sir Edward Coke, another member of St. Sepulchre's parish, Williams was sent to Charterhouse School in 1621 and from there to Pembroke College, Cambridge, the alma mater of his patron. Here Williams began the study of law—his patron's profession—before shifting to theology. In 1627 he subscribed to the three articles of orthodoxy demanded by the king of all candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts and took the orders of the Church of England.<sup>6</sup> After two years of graduate study in theology he accepted the position of chaplain in the household of Sir William Masham in Essex. Here he made many significant contacts with the great Puritan families and preachers of the area and before the year was out his religious convictions swung heavily to the Puritan point of view and its criticism of the established form of service. While riding to Sempringham with two fellow-ministers, John Cotton and Thomas Hooker, he "presented his arguments from Scripture, why he durst not join with them in their use of the Common Prayer."<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile Archbishop Laud and Thomas Wentworth were making life miserable for the Puritans in an attempt either to bring them to heel or to harry them out of the land. Williams, however, was not to be intimidated and he refused to relinquish his separatist teachings and conform to the High Church format of worship. His refusal meant turning down two remunerative appointments at a time when his recent marriage made earthly rewards particularly appealing. "God knows," he declared, "what gain and preferments I have refused in universities, city, country, and court, in Old England . . . to keep my soul undefiled on this point."<sup>8</sup>

Although never summoned to appear before Laud or his court, Williams considered it only a matter of time before he would be silenced. He later wrote the daughter of Sir Edward Coke that "it was as bitter as death to me when Bishop Laud pursued me out of this land, and my conscience was persuaded against the national church and ceremonies."<sup>9</sup> On December 1st, 1630, Williams and his wife sailed from Bristol for New England and its Puritan haven. Here he anticipated that his convictions on separation from the national church would bear fruit unmolested and he would be able to minister to a separated people.

## II

## THE MASSACHUSETTS INTERLUDE

(1) *New England Orthodoxy*

When Williams landed at Boston he found a church and community somewhat different to that portrayed in the Puritan travel folders in England. He observed in Massachusetts Bay that "an English opposition had become a New England oligarchy"<sup>10</sup> and the Lords Bishops of Old England merely had been exchanged for the Lord Brethren who regulated the life of Massachusetts Bay in the same way that their hated counterparts did in the old country. When the Puritans claimed that they were governed by the "consent of the people" they actually meant the consent of those of like ideas and faith.<sup>11</sup> One still had to be right to have rights. This Puritan community and church polity was based on two distinctive features—the Covenant and the Communion of Saints. The first feature was the resurrection of the Old Testament covenant between God and the people of Israel. This covenant did not die with the Israelites of the Old Testament, but continued as the contract between God and His people in Massachusetts Bay.<sup>12</sup>

The second cornerstone of the New England ecclesiastical polity disturbed Williams as much as the first when he observed that the Puritans failed to practise what they preached. The postulate of a "community of saints" would be a "true church" of the elect with "only persons giving evidence that they were redeemed by Christ unto holiness" qualifying for membership.<sup>13</sup> No longer could a geographical parish prove satisfactory. No longer could the tares be ingrained with the wheat, and yet in practice the Puritans in New England appeared far more anxious to preserve the unity of the universal church than to limit church membership to proven saints. Hooker openly affirmed this view "that the faithful Congregation in England are true Churches: and therefore it is sinful to separate from them as no Churches."<sup>14</sup>

Massachusetts saw several strategic reasons for not legally living up to its dictum of separation. To avoid interference from the mother country and its Anglican Church, New England Puritans found a nominal loyalty to the Anglican communion a convenient rebuttal to any charges of disloyalty. As a result an "elaborate casuistry" developed in the colony although congregationalism was the ultimate goal of its church members.<sup>15</sup> Nor did the Puritans want to do away with the idea of a state church. Although they were a protesting minority in England, they gave full allegi-



ance to the principle under which the Church and State cooperated with one another in England. Such a system was transplanted across the Atlantic and found ample nourishment in the religious climate of Massachusetts.

On February 5th, 1631, Governor Winthrop welcomed Roger Williams as a distinguished addition to the budding settlement on Massachusetts Bay and the warm personality of Williams readily attracted friends and respect. The Governor of Plymouth Plantation considered him "very unsettled in judgment" but "godly and zealous" in his manner of life.<sup>16</sup> Even those from whom he differed esteemed his friendship for "he was most likeable—sincere to the core, and of a rich, glowing, peculiarly affectionate nature."<sup>17</sup>

Lacking ministers the Boston church unanimously chose Williams as their teacher, but he refused the honour when he discovered that the Boston church was still in communion with the Church of England and supported the practice of permitting magistrates to punish any breach of the First Table (the duties of man to God). Apparently Williams' separatist views had not been dampened by the Atlantic crossing and his disappointment over the Boston relationship made his stay in Boston of short duration. "I conscientiously refused their offer," declared Williams, "and withdrew to Plymouth because I durst not officiate to an un-separated people."<sup>18</sup>

## (2) *Dissent and Dissension*

After a few months in Salem as assistant to Mr. Skelton, the minister, he moved to Plymouth where separation was professed by the Pilgrims. Here Williams anticipated finding a religious climate close to his own convictions. During his stay in Plymouth Williams made no protest over the Pilgrims' lack of tolerance for those outside the fold although separation of church and state was no more advocated in Plymouth than in Massachusetts Bay; he was far more concerned with separation from the Church of England. "His teaching was well approved," Governor Bradford remarked in 1633, "until he began to fall into some strange opinions and from opinions to practice."<sup>19</sup> These opinions appear to be his condemnation of their sporadic application of separatism. Williams was greatly distressed to observe that, although they professed separation, they communicated with Old England parishes whenever convenient.<sup>20</sup>

In the autumn of 1633 he left Plymouth and a lively dispute behind him to return to the church at Salem. Brewster, the elder at Plymouth, was happy to see the "disputer" leave lest he should

"run the same course of rigid separation and Anabaptistry which Mr. [John] Smith, the Se-Baptist, at Amsterdam, had done."<sup>21</sup> Williams received a warm welcome upon his return to Salem and on August 2nd, 1634, he became teacher of the church "shortly after the death of the minister Skelton."<sup>22</sup>

At Salem Williams made his most determined effort to enforce a rigid separation by his members. He broke off communion not only with the English Church, but with the Bay churches as well and "neither admitted, nor permitted any church members but such as rejected all communion with the parish assemblies."<sup>23</sup> In this venture he was a leader without a following for his church members were not particularly anxious to cut off all fellowship with other churches. When this attempt failed Williams withdrew from communion with his own church and with even his own wife for their laxity in avoiding the "ways of the world," although he continued to preach to a few members who gathered in his home.<sup>24</sup> This separation was by no means the prelude to religious latitudinarianism or subjectivism. With John Robinson he, too, condemned "separation from their True church . . . and whosoever separates from the body, the church, separates from the head, Christ."<sup>25</sup> Convinced that his views were right Williams did not spare his criticism of different views and practices. His sermon on September 27th, 1634, on the eleven public sins of the Bay would hardly be cited for its tone of moderation and tolerance.

In observing Williams' rigid separatism and the theological context of his thinking any efforts to equate his views with those of Jefferson's seem out of character. Whereas the latter considered theology incidental Williams "was pious with a fervour and passion" far beyond his contemporaries.<sup>26</sup> At Salem he refused to permit his conception of spiritual purity to be diluted with earthly compromise. In failing to accept an accommodation to worldly realities as permissible, and in censoring those who did, Williams soon found himself "separated" from Massachusetts in a way that he had not fully anticipated.

When Williams could not exact the degree of separation from his church that he anticipated he separated from its fellowship and claimed the right to serve God beyond the pale of an "unseparated company."<sup>27</sup> Such opinions as Williams now held so strongly were bound to conflict with the church-state relationship of the Colony and the Bay leaders were not long in taking action to protect their political system and vested interests. On December 27th, 1635, Governor Winthrop's *Journal* recorded the three charges brought against Williams, but not one charge bothered to question his essential orthodoxy.<sup>28</sup> When the impetuous temperament and zeal of Williams failed to keep its peace on the areas charged the court summoned him again on May 8th, 1635. Again the court

considered him in error and he and the Salem church were warned "to consider these things till the next general court, or else expect the sentence."<sup>29</sup> The sentence was soon to follow.

The banishment of Roger Williams has been subject to numerous interpretations and diagnoses. Yet when one examines the grounds given by the major figures involved in the banishment the degree of agreement is striking. Williams claimed he was banished for publicly declaring that (1) the Patent, or royal charter, from the king was not valid because the Indians were the true owners of the land and therefore the king had no right to give away their land, (2) a wicked person had no Christian right to take an oath before a magistrate, (3) it was not lawful for a Christian to hear any of the ministers of the Church of England, and (4) the power of the civil magistrate extended only to the bodies and goods and outward state of men and not to his inner beliefs.<sup>30</sup>

In Cotton's *Answer to Roger Williams* only two grounds for banishment are mentioned—"his violent and tumultuous carriage against the Patent" and his "vehement opposition to the Oath of Fidelity."<sup>31</sup> Both men mention the Patent as the foremost grievance and neither plays up religious heresy or the view on the magistracy as the major issue. Actually Williams placed no special stress on the rôle of the magistracy throughout his whole discussion of the banishment.<sup>32</sup> Conversely, Cotton explicitly stated in his *Answer to Roger Williams* that the exile was not banished for his theological doctrines. "I did not alledge that place of Scriptures, as a ground upon which the court proceeded to his Banishment," he wrote, although he adds puckishly that it may well have been "a reason which provoked the Lord to move the Court to proceed against Mr. Williams."<sup>33</sup>

In October the final verdict of the court was pronounced after neither the Court nor the Puritan divine, Thomas Hooker, found it possible "to reduce him from his errors."<sup>34</sup> No doubt the preaching of Williams against the validity of their title to the land touched a sensitive spot among the lay and clerical elite of the Bay who had "added 57,214 acres to their holdings by special grant."<sup>35</sup> Coupled with this was a demand for religious separation from England that the Puritan leaders considered politically unfeasible. Lacking John Cotton's flexibility between principle and practice Williams carried his Puritan "communion of saints" to its ultimate conclusion in every phase of life—from not giving oaths to the unregenerate to refusing to eat with an unseparated person, even though a member of his own family. Such a position appeared to be too literal and rigid to the Puritan leaders, and yet it also may have been the logical and consistent deduction from the Puritans' own principle of the "communion of saints."<sup>36</sup>

## III

## THE PROVIDENCE PROPHET

(1) *The Anabaptist Vision*

The verdict of the Bay court was deportation to England. Only by fleeing into the wilderness and living among his friends, the Indians, did Williams escape the decree. A year later (1636) his banishment resulted in the founding of Providence Plantations. No covenant or civil code preceded Williams in this new settlement; here free rein could be given to the religious and political ideals that demanded his hasty flight from Salem. And yet, in his first years at Providence, no church was formally established. Williams makes no attempt to explain this situation. Whether there were too many diverse opinions in the colony to agree on a church, too few settlers, or lack of time and interest in the new community remains an unanswered question. Williams did hold religious meetings in private homes, but the first church was not formed until an influx of Anabaptists arrived in 1638.

Prominent among these Anabaptist exiles from Massachusetts were Ezekiel Halliman and Mrs. Richard Scott—a sister-in-law of Anne Hutchinson, another of the victims of Puritan banishment. Beyond Williams' conviction that women must be veiled in church<sup>37</sup> he had not previously advocated any distinctive Anabaptist views. His views on separation from the national church were held by the Anabaptists, but not only by the Anabaptists. Attracted to the sect in Providence he was publicly baptized by Halliman in 1639 and then, in turn, he baptized Halliman and ten other adults by immersion.<sup>38</sup> This event is commonly claimed to be the formation of the first Baptist church in America and such a claim may be defended theologically, and even historically, even if Williams was certainly unaware of any such plan or purpose at the time. But some American Baptist apologists have not been content to stop here and Williams was soon wrapped in a Baptist mantle to become their patron saint of colonial history, who lifted the "Baptist standard in the chain of Baptists from John the Baptist to the present."<sup>39</sup> Such sweeping claims for Williams appear somewhat tarnished by Williams' voluntary abdication of his Baptist throne only three or four months after his "election." Although no rejection of such basic doctrines as salvation, the deity of Christ, original sin, or the final judgment appear, Williams began to question his rebaptism. Not because his adherence to "any creed restricted his individualism in matters of belief" as one writer suggests,<sup>40</sup> but because he had "satisfaction neither in the authority by which it [baptism] is done, nor in the manner [mode]" even though he admitted that the Anabaptist practice "comes nearer the first practice of our great Founder Christ Jesus,

than other practices of religion do."<sup>41</sup> Williams felt that he could not derive authority for his rebaptism except through apostolic succession, and this was no longer possible, he believed, as the ministers of England, being apostate, were incapable of continuing the authority of the apostles.<sup>42</sup>

## (2) *The Delinquent Saint*

With the shift from "close communion to preaching and praying with all"<sup>43</sup> Williams' spiritual pilgrimage reached its final stage; but in rejecting the Baptist mantle he did not thereby become "the John the Baptist of New England Transcendentalism" as Ernst would have us believe.<sup>44</sup> The final stage of Williams' spiritual quest is commonly defined as that of "seekerism." In this way, Richman claimed, Williams "came as near as his age would permit . . . to being an agnostic"—a believer in the certainty of uncertainty.<sup>45</sup> The verdict could not be more wrong.

In the sense of anticipating "the Church of the Future" Williams was a Seeker,<sup>46</sup> but the term is a misnomer, if, by the term "Seeker," one suggests a tolerance of all routes to heaven, a forerunner of transcendentalism,<sup>47</sup> a religious liberal or a rejection of "orthodox" doctrine such as that for which Seeker Legate was burned at the stake.<sup>48</sup> Nor did the majority of the "political left" in England espouse this spiritual Crusoe as a champion of their cause. Certainly Straus' claim that Williams brought "into the confusion of the [English] Civil War a complete political programme and a theory of State and rights of men that won immediate support of the Independents and Sectaries"<sup>49</sup> is wishful thinking indeed—to Williams and his contemporaries at least.

Although the insistence upon an uncorrupted apostolic succession and separation from all church groups made it literally impossible for him to identify himself with any "visible Church," he had few quarrels with institution of the Church. He admitted to George Fox "that if my soul could find rest in joining unto any of the Churches professing Christ Jesus now extant, I would readily and gladly do it."<sup>50</sup>

In his religious odyssey through Anabaptism to "voluntaryism" Williams' separatism and fundamental orthodoxy remained constant from Bristol to Providence. He merely became more, rather than less, dogmatic and single-minded in his convictions. By 1645 his writings indicate that pessimism of human nature coupled with a vibrant confidence in God explain his concept of the temporality of this life. All life is as grass, observed Williams, for "we spring up in our turn and speedily wither."<sup>51</sup> While both the Puritans and Williams anticipated the establishment of Christ's Kingdom, the Puritans thought that the magistrate could help the cause along by regulating morals until Christ returned. To Williams this civil

community was too worldly to even consider applying a Christian veneer. From such a premise stem the by-products of his political and religious liberty.

### (3) *Roger Williams — A Reappraisal*

In his writings—usually dashed off in a white heat—Williams' theological framework is readily observed. Nowhere does he offer a systematic framework to provide us with a simple picture of his theology for his religious ideas were not simple to grasp in all their typological allegories. He talked in Biblical terms and parables, but his premises were clear. The principle of Christian "separation" from the "world" remained constant although the application altered at Providence. It was still "absolutely necessary" for a Christian to come out from the false church and ministry before "he can be united to the true Israel"—the Church of Christ.<sup>51b</sup> But no longer did Williams preach a literal, physical separation from the worldly churches since he deemed it humanly impossible to discern the "wheat" from the "tares." Human nature in New England, he observed, was no better than human nature in Old England. How can Mr. Cotton believe, he asks, that the "coming out of Babel is local and material?" Is New England the parallel of Judea and Canaan, and Old England a "type" of "Sodom and Egypt?"<sup>52</sup> The very same question might have been asked of Williams when he had lived at Salem and had preached such a doctrine himself.

Thus, to Williams, Massachusetts had misinterpreted its separation as geographical rather than spiritual and was therefore really no better than the church in England. Nor is any tone of moderation to be found in his indictment of their errors. Williams asserted that he felt like "Lot among the Sodomites" while at Salem for "amongst all the people of God, wherefore scattered about Babel's banks, either in Rome or England your case [Massachusetts] is the worse by far."<sup>53</sup> Actually, said Williams, Christians were "mingled amongst the Babylonians" and were to be found in every society; otherwise thousands of Christians would not have a chance of salvation :

If Mr. Cotton maintain the true church of Christ to consist of the true matter of holy persons called out from the world and that also neither national, provincial nor diocesan churches are of Christ's institution: how many thousands of God's people of all sorts, clergy and laity, will they find . . . captivated in such national, provincial, and diocesan churches." . . . [for] . . . "until of late years how many of God's people knew any other church than the diocesan church of dead stones or timber?"<sup>54</sup>

In revising his earlier literalist stand Williams regretted that the New England ministry (as well as he, himself, in earlier days) attacked the Book of Common Prayers. He reminded Cotton that the latter had supported the prayers when they were together in England. At that time Williams had chided Cotton and Hooker for their support of the Prayer Book. Now he lamented the fact that they had followed his example in attacking the Book. The fundamental thing was not the Prayer Book, he wrote, but to see that one did not sin against their conscience or persecute for the "sake of conscience."<sup>55</sup> Throughout *The Bloody Tenent* religious persecution is vigorously condemned since persecution liquidated both erroneous and true consciences and only God was able to separate the one from the other. The Christian was not to mount the judgment seat of Pilate for the follower of Christ was promised only a "cross" and not a sceptre and the grace of God was not evidenced when the persecuted became the persecutors.<sup>56</sup>

From such religious premises stemmed the postulates of religious and political freedom. The former was considered an ethic of Christ's and the latter was an incidental by-product of his pre-occupation with the former. "To Williams the State was purely a civil and not a divine institution, external in its administration, internal in the minds of men, and wholly unconcerned with spiritual affairs."<sup>57</sup> In his rejection of the divine origin of government and the dual rôle of the magistrate in enforcing both tablets of the law Williams was in obvious disagreement with Massachusetts. He lamented the intermixing of the magistrates' rôle with Christ's in the efforts of the Puritans to manufacture saints for he firmly believed that the Church and State revolved in two distinct orbits. But in New England he observed that they were "like Hippocrates twins, they are born together, grow up together, laugh together, weep together, sicken and die together."<sup>58</sup> Williams did not oppose the office of the magistracy; he was no Antimonian, but he considered the rôle of the magistrate to be limited to its "proper" sphere—preserving "civil peace and order."<sup>59</sup>

His position on the magistracy and the true church was the outcome of his passionate religious conviction that refused to equate the Christian church with that of any visible institution. For Williams the Puritan "covenant" with God was dead. No country, he argued, could claim preferential treatment from God with the corollary of spiritual interference in political affairs as Israel did in the Old Testament. The National Church "explicit as in Old England, or implicit as in New"<sup>60</sup> was therefore an anachronism that no amount of religious resuscitation could restore. Such a view of the State was strongly suspect in the seventeenth century and in this, as in his spiritual separation from the world, he was indeed a lonely prophet, but a Biblical "Jeremiah" more than a

prophet of the modern age or a forerunner of the Enlightenment. He believed that the New Testament repudiated and undid the Old Testament covenant between "Yahweh" and Israel for "Moses' shadows vanished at the coming of the Lord Jesus" and with His coming vanished Israel—the "only Holy Nation."<sup>61</sup> The Puritans were in error, he disclaimed, because they were trying to force the "type" of the Old Testament to fit their society and such an accommodation was purely of man and not of God. Holiness was no longer a national, but a personal affair.

Williams arrived at the conclusion that all existing churches derived their authority from earlier ministries each hopelessly corrupt for "there were no churches since those founded by the apostles and the evangelists, nor could there be any, nor any pastors ordained, nor seals administered but by such." The true church, he prophesied, would only be restored when "new apostles" in a new age "recover and restore all ordinances and churches of Christ out of the ruins of the Anti-Christian apostate."<sup>62</sup> In the meantime the only ministry that counted was that of prophecy. The prophetic ministers were not to dwell in solitude but were to fellowship with those who believe "in but one God, one Lord, one Spirit, one Baptism, one Body, etc."<sup>63</sup> In awaiting the true church and in expecting a new and apostolic ministry Williams was perhaps a seeker, but there was no latitude offered as to what beliefs were essential to true seeking; these were spelled out in detail.

Prophecy and typology abound in Williams' view of the Church and reading of history far beyond that considered proper in Puritan circles. Not only did he use a theological context to explain all religious views, but he also couched his every-day greetings and problems in Biblical forms and allegories. Frequently he ended his numerous Biblical quotations with "etc." which points up the religious orientation of the age when even the Governor was expected to be able to finish any Bible verse by memory. Throughout his writings life is viewed as but the vestibule to the grand finale of history—the imminent second coming of Christ—when the Church shall be taken up to glory and three and a half years of tribulation (the "reign of the Beast") shall ensue before Satan is finally vanquished.<sup>64</sup>

All too frequently fringe differences between Williams and the Puritans blurred their essential agreement in theology. When writing John Cotton or John Winthrop Williams would pass over the large area of religious agreement to major on a minor difference. But when the roots of his theology were questioned by the Quakers he rose up in holy horror to declaim his essential orthodoxy in *George Fox Digg'd Out of his Burrowes*. Such a defence prompted Cotton Mather to admit that "against the Quakers he afterwards maintained the main principles of the Protestant re-



ligion with much vigour" and may well have the "root of the matter" in him.<sup>65</sup> Actually Williams' most readable and delightful work, *Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health*, could easily have been mistaken for the writings of Cotton Mather or Thomas Hooker as far as the devotional nature and religious orthodoxy of the work is concerned.

Not until 1644 did Williams explicitly state the doctrines he deemed necessary to profess a "belief in Jesus Christ." The very fact that he failed to do so at an earlier date would suggest that his doctrinal position was not seriously questioned in Massachusetts Bay. In *The Bloody Tenent* the doctrines of repentance, faith in God, Baptism, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the soul and body, and eternal judgment are proposed as basic "spiritual foundations."<sup>66</sup> Few Puritans would have found any bones of contention in such doctrines.

With a lack of charity typical of the polemic writings of his time Williams classed the Quakers, along with the Manicheans and Roman Catholics, as "Antichrists"<sup>67</sup> fallen away from the faith. He condemned Fox for denying "any visible Church of Christ" adding that, in addition to the ministration of angels and spirits, God also expected Christians "to sit still and listen to immediate Teachings"<sup>68</sup>—something that Williams himself had trouble following.

No free will crept into Williams' theology to discredit his Calvinistic orthodoxy. The claim that the founder of Rhode Island was also "the Arminius of New England Orthodoxy" would have angered the man who castigated the "Arminian Popish doctrine of Freewill" as a "whorish" doctrine.<sup>69</sup> For him "God's sheep are safe . . . [for] none fall into the ditch on the blind Pharisee's back but such as were ordained to that condemnation."<sup>70</sup> Coupled with his predestination was a belief in original sin that grew stronger as the years passed and as he anticipated leaving this evil world—this habitation of "Belial."<sup>70b</sup>

Williams' faith in the Bible and the literal truth of its message never wavered. For him the Scriptures were the "Pens of Heaven writing" in the same way that God's own fingers had penned the law on Mount Sinai. Such a mountain-top experience had never been duplicated in the theocracy of New England; therefore the New England government could claim no holy contract.<sup>71</sup> Nor were any sceptic's views expressed in 1680 when "the blazing herald from heaven (a comet) prompted Williams to proclaim the dire judgment it was prophesying. The only escape was to make one's peace with God before it was too late for this was a sign of the times."<sup>72</sup>

The civic and political life of Rhode Island was indeed richer because of Roger Williams' contribution to its development, but

one needs to exercise caution before carrying the torch of his "democratic" and "levelling" influence too far.<sup>73</sup> Williams bluntly objected to George Fox's idea that women could be preachers since public leadership was not their God-given rôle.<sup>74</sup> Nor did he even discuss the possibility of religious equality between church members for that would restrict God's grace in the granting of gifts and limit His election—a substantial inequality in itself. So "if we are searching for sources of influence upon Williams' political thought, we must look for some other source of inspiration."<sup>74b</sup>

In many a dispute "animosities frequently are greatest where differences are least"<sup>75</sup> and Williams' writings would indicate that he agreed more than he disagreed with the fundamentals of Puritan theology. Differences existed to be sure and his unorthodox application of the principles were sharply disputed so that if he was a true "saint" he was also a troublesome one to the Puritans, but these differences appear incidental to a "larger community of outlook and identity of aim."<sup>76</sup>

Daniel Neal points out that if Williams "had never dabbled in Divinity" he may well have been "esteemed a great and useful man" by the very Puritan society which was infuriated by his "eccentricity."<sup>77</sup> But Williams could not help dabbling for this was the centre of life to him and any other purpose in life but to "know Christ" he desired only "to count as loss."<sup>78</sup> In his religious odyssey from Anglican to Puritan to Separatist to Baptist to Seeker there were certain constants that varied little. As early as 1629 Williams had taken his stand on separation based on a Puritan theology. Although this form of separation varied and the prophetic element bordered on the eccentric his essential Biblicism was never questioned by his contemporaries. It is out of this religious conservatism that his political liberalism followed as a consequence for his frames of reference and motivation were always religious. Ernst reverses this order to claim that "his theory of religious liberty came . . . out of his unique theory of the individual and the State."<sup>79</sup>

Actually his "unique theory" of the State was not too complimentary to democracy for "he did not look forward to a free society as the goal of human endeavour; instead he looked down on it, in pity and sorrow, seeing in freedom only a preliminary requirement for the Christian pilgrimage."<sup>80</sup> A free church in a free society was therefore merely a means to an end, an end that would produce the environment most conducive to the goal of his life—the quest for God unencumbered by man's coercion of the soul. In a political sense the "Providence prophet" was indeed ahead of his times, but in his motivation and goal he was very much bound to the theological temper and orientation of his age.

In keeping with his age whatever Williams believed, he believed absolutely. There was no place for compromise or moderation in the realm of theology for each religious doctrine was considered by its followers, or follower, to have a corner on the truth. Williams was no exception. What he believed he preached with no quarter given. His impetuous and fiery nature only aggravated his flair for disputes and when he touched a sensitive Puritan nerve more heat than light was usually generated in the ensuing polemics. In such heated controversies Cotton Mather's observation that Williams was like a "windmill . . . whirling around with extraordinary violence" indicated why he had little trouble setting "a whole town on fire" with his ideas.<sup>81</sup>

And yet, no doubt, he would have considered himself a failure if he had not suffered for his views for his strict observance of Biblical writings also included the command "if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."<sup>82</sup> For Williams the dictum of Luther still held true—"Suffering, Suffering, Cross, Cross, is the Christian Right—that and nothing else."<sup>83</sup> In many ways Williams was a most other-worldly New Englander—a pilgrim on a pilgrimage and this firm cornerstone of spirituality determined his political ideals and practices. As he viewed the encroaching world of the "antichrist" he saw it only as the dark before the dawn—a fleeting prelude to eternity—when the shadow of life would vanish and the dream would be finished.<sup>84</sup> His New Jerusalem was not in Rhode Island for this life could not compare with his eternal destiny.

In his own words Williams poignantly penned his disillusionment with this world and his anticipation of the world to come :

What are these leaves and flowers and smoke and shadows of earthly things, about which we poor fools and children disquiet ourselves in vain? Alas, what is all the scuffling of this world for, but come will you smoke it? What are all the contentions and wars of the world about, generally, but for greater dishes and bowls of porridge? . . . All these are but sublunaries, temporaries and trivials. Eternity, O Eternity! is our business.<sup>85</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> James Davis Knowles, *Memoir of Roger Williams the founder of the state of Rhode Island* (Boston, 1834), p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> James Ernst, *The Political Thought of Roger Williams* (Seattle, 1929), pp. 205, 207.

<sup>3</sup> Vernon Louis Parrington, *The Colonial Mind 1620-1800* (3 volume series: *Main Currents of American Thought*; New York, 1927), I, p. 62. Note Samuel Brockunier, *The Irrepressible Democrat Roger Williams* (New

York, 1940), pp. 284-289, for additional modern ideals that Williams "foreshadowed."

<sup>4</sup> Brockunier, *The Irrepressible Democrat*, p. 4. This work is the best-documented presentation of the early life of Williams. Oscar S. Straus, *Roger Williams, The Pioneer of Religious Liberty* (New York, 1899), p. 346, and Emily Easton, *Roger Williams* (Boston, 1930), p. 14, agree with Brockunier's evidence; while other writers such as H. F. Udden, *The New England Theocracy* (Boston, 1858), p. 85, and David Masson, *Life of John Milton* (6 volumes; London, 1870), II, p. 560, support Wales as the place of his birth and the year 1599 and 1606 respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Plymouth, 1632, *The Letters of Roger Williams, 1632-1682*, edited by James R. Bartlett (6 volumes; Narragansett Club Publications, Providence, 1874), VI, p. 2. Hereafter cited as *N.C.P.*

<sup>6</sup> The three articles declared that (1) the king is the supreme governor of the realm in both things spiritual and things temporal, (2) the Book of Common Prayer may be lawfully used, and (3) the 39 Articles are agreeable to the Word of God, Easton, *Roger Williams*, p. 108.

<sup>7</sup> Roger Williams, *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody*, *N.C.P.*, IV, p. 12.

<sup>8</sup> Roger Williams to John Winthrop, Jr., March 25th, 1671, *Letters, N.C.P.*, VI, p. 239.

<sup>9</sup> Roger Williams to Mrs. Sadler, London, 1652, *ibid.*, VI, p. 239.

<sup>10</sup> Brockunier, *Irrepressible Democrat*, p. 53.

<sup>11</sup> Charles M. Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History* (4 volumes; New Haven, 1936), II, p. 106.

<sup>12</sup> Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 55.

<sup>13</sup> Williston Walker, *A History of the Congregational Churches in the United States* (New York, 1894), p. 19.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Hooker, *The Way of the Churches of New England* (Old South Leaflets, Boston, n.d.), No. 55, pp. 8-9.

<sup>15</sup> Winthrop Hudson in the introduction to Roger Williams' *Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health* (Philadelphia, 19??), p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation, 1620-1647*, edited by Samuel E. Morison (New York, 1952), p. 257.

<sup>17</sup> Masson, *Life of Milton*, II, p. 561.

<sup>18</sup> Roger Williams to John Cotton, March 25th, 1671, *Letters, N.C.P.*, VI, p. 356.

<sup>19</sup> Wm. Bradford, *Plymouth Plantation*, p. 257.

<sup>20</sup> Roger Williams to John Cotton, March 25th, 1671, *Letters, N.C.P.*, VI, p. 356.

<sup>21</sup> John Cotton, *John Cotton's Answer to Roger Williams, N.C.P.*, II, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Knowles, *Memoir of Roger Williams*, p. 61.

<sup>23</sup> John Cotton, *Answer to Roger Williams, N.C.P.*, II, p. 64.

<sup>24</sup> Roger Williams, *Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health*, p. 16.

<sup>25</sup> John Robinson, *Works of John Robinson*, edited by Robert Ashton (3 volumes; Boston, 1851), II, p. 259.

<sup>26</sup> Perry Miller and Thomas Johnson, *The Puritans* (New York, 1938), p. 186. Both Brockunier and Knowles suggest that Williams foreshadows Jefferson in his views on religious liberty.

<sup>27</sup> Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (2 volumes; Hartford, 1852), II, p. 497, and John Winthrop, *The History of New England from 1630 to 1649; Journal*, edited by James Savage (2 volumes; Boston, 1825), I, p. 166.

<sup>28</sup> Winthrop's *Journal*, I, p. 122.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 151, 162. Udden gives July 8th as the date of the second trial.

<sup>30</sup> Roger Williams, *Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered, N.C.P.*, I, pp. 4-5.

- <sup>31</sup> *N.C.P.*, II, pp. 27-29.
- <sup>32</sup> See *N.C.P.*, Vol. I.
- <sup>33</sup> *N.C.P.*, II, p. 75.
- <sup>34</sup> Roger Williams, *Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined*, *N.C.P.*, I, p. 5. Note also Henry Martyn Dexter, *As to Roger Williams and his banishment from Massachusetts Plantation* (Boston, 1876), pp. 45-54, and Winthrop's *Journal*, I, pp. 122-171, for an analysis and description of the trial.
- <sup>35</sup> Brockunier, *Irrepressible Democrat*, pp. 53-54.
- <sup>36</sup> See Daniel Neal, *The History of New England* (2 volumes; London, 1720), I, p. 141, and Winthrop's *Journal*, I, p. 162, for comments on his "singular notions."
- <sup>37</sup> Thomas William Bicknell, *The History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* (4 volumes; New York, 1920), I, p. 136.
- <sup>38</sup> Winthrop's *Journal*, I, p. 293.
- <sup>39</sup> D. C. Haynes, *The Baptist Denomination* (New York, 1856), pp. 300-306. Note also Daniel C. Eddy, *Roger Williams and the Baptists* (Boston, 1861), p. 87, and J. M. Cramp, *Baptist History* (Philadelphia, 18??), pp. 46-62 for the extensive claims made for Williams in Baptist history.
- <sup>40</sup> Straus, *Roger Williams*, p. 107.
- <sup>41</sup> Roger Williams to John Winthrop, December 10th, 1649, *Letters*, *N.C.P.*, VI, p. 188.
- <sup>42</sup> Winthrop's *Journal*, I, pp. 639 and 302. See also George Fox, *New England Firebrand Quenched* (Philadelphia, 1831), p. 247.
- <sup>43</sup> Winthrop's *Journal*, I, p. 307.
- <sup>44</sup> James Ernst, *Roger Williams—New England Firebrand* (New York, 1832), p. 207.
- <sup>45</sup> Irving Berdine Richman, *Rhode Island, Its Making and its Meaning* (2 volumes; New York, 1908), I, p. 111.
- <sup>46</sup> Masson, *Life of Milton*, III, p. 153.
- <sup>47</sup> Ernst, *Roger Williams*, p. 491.
- <sup>48</sup> Easton, *Roger Williams*, pp. 24-25.
- <sup>49</sup> *Roger Williams*, pp. 278-279. Note Robert Baillie, *Letters and Journals*, edited by Robert Aiken (2 volumes; Edinburgh, 1775), II, p. 24.
- <sup>50</sup> Roger Williams, *George Fox Digged Out of his burrowes*, *N.C.P.*, V, p. 103.
- <sup>51</sup> Roger Williams, "Christening Make Not Christians," *Rhode Island Historical Tracts*, No. 14 (Providence, 1880), p. 59.
- <sup>51b</sup> Roger Williams, *Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered*, 1644, edited by Edward Underhill (London, 1848), pp. 402 and 375.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 406.
- <sup>53</sup> Roger Williams to John Winthrop, 1636 or 1637 (Old South Leaflets, No. 54, Boston, n.d.), pp. 5-6.
- <sup>54</sup> Roger Williams, *The Bloody Tenent*, 1644, edited by Edward Underhill (London, 1848), pp. 40-41.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-66, and 160.
- <sup>57</sup> Andrews, *The Colonial Period in American History*, II, p. 20.
- <sup>58</sup> Roger Williams, *Bloody Tenent*, p. 286.
- <sup>59</sup> Roger Williams, *Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered*, *N.C.P.*, I, p. 5.
- <sup>60</sup> Roger Williams, *Bloody Tenent*, p. 169.
- <sup>61</sup> Roger Williams, *Queries Propounded to the five Holland ministers and the Scotch Commissioners*, *N.C.P.*, II, p. 35.
- <sup>62</sup> Roger Williams, *Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health*, p. 17.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.
- <sup>64</sup> Roger Williams, *N.C.P.*, IV, pp. 44-48.
- <sup>65</sup> Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, II, p. 499. Note also

Winthrop's *Journal*, I, p. 255.

<sup>66</sup> p. 40.

<sup>67</sup> Roger Williams, *George Fox Dugged Out of his burrowes, N.C.P.*, V, pp. 414, 177.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 101-102, 291.

<sup>69</sup> Roger Williams, *The Bloudy Tenent, N.C.P.*, III, p. 258. Wilbur Kitchener Jordan makes the Arminian claim for Williams in *The Development of Religious Toleration in England* (3 volumes; Cambridge, Mass., 1938), III, p. 477.

<sup>70</sup> Roger Williams, *The Bloudy Tenent, N.C.P.*, III, p. 97. See also pp. 115 and 298.

<sup>70b</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 331, 165.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 358.

<sup>72</sup> Roger Williams to Daniel Abbott, January 15th, 1680, *N.C.P.*, VI, p. 403.

<sup>73</sup> See Brockunier, *Irrepressible Democrat*, p. 282, for a eulogy on Williams' "modern" contributions.

<sup>74</sup> Roger Williams, *N.C.P.*, V, pp. 361 and 134.

<sup>74b</sup> Mauro Calamandrei, "Neglected Aspects of Roger Williams' Thought," *Church History*, Vol. XXI (Chicago, 1952), p. 246.

<sup>75</sup> Henry Scougal, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* (Charleston, 1811), p. 31.

<sup>76</sup> Winthrop Hudson, foreword to *Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health*, p. 20.

<sup>77</sup> *The History of New England*, p. 144.

<sup>78</sup> Roger Williams to John Winthrop, 1636, *Old South Leaflets*, No. 54, p. 4.

<sup>79</sup> Ernst, *The Political Thought of Roger Williams*, p. 25.

<sup>80</sup> Perry Miller, *Roger Williams: his contribution to the American tradition* (Indianapolis, 1953), p. 28.

<sup>81</sup> *Magnalia Christi Americana*, II, p. 475.

<sup>82</sup> John 15: 20, Williams, *N.C.P.*, III, p. 167.

<sup>83</sup> Cited in Walter Hobhouse, *The Church and the World in Idea and History* (London, 1910), p. 15.

<sup>84</sup> Roger Williams, *Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health*, p. 12.

<sup>85</sup> Roger Williams to John Winthrop, *N.C.P.*, VI, p. 388.

HAROLD J. SCHULTZ

## Reflections upon the present Curriculum of Theological Colleges

MUCH attention is being given today to the curricula of the theological colleges. Changing patterns of human society in which the church is bearing its witness, new realms of human knowledge exposing some limitations of Christian doctrine, the renewing of non-Christian religions exerting pressure upon the Christian minorities in their midst, the decline of church attendance in Britain necessitating a fresh appraisal of the formulation of our message and of the methods of its proclamation—these are some of the reasons for the continuing consideration of the training of ministers.

In the United States a detailed and careful survey of the varying theological seminaries was made by a group of workers under the leadership of Dr. H. Richard Niebuhr; their conclusions were published in 1956-57 in a series of volumes. All these volumes are important; the most stimulating and the more universal in its application is the volume about the purpose of the church and its ministry. To its thought I acknowledge my debt.

Reflections about the curricula of theological colleges are of little value when they derive from considerations of expediency or are limited to the immediate and rapidly changing situation of the present. We must proceed rather from the following basic considerations:

1. The nature of the curriculum in a theological college is to be determined by the purpose for which the church exists.

This statement at once suggests the distinction of a college from a university. In its proper conception a university is a community of people engaged in the pursuit of learning by methods of free enquiry without the necessity of personal commitment to any conclusions that may be reached. But the members of a theological college are committed persons who have already accepted certain conclusions about the nature and meaning of life. On this ground I have heard a University professor argue that theology is not a proper subject within a university syllabus. I should not accept that judgment but it does focus sharply the difference between a university and a theological college.

Again, a theological college is distinct from the normal conception of a Bible school or a training institute, where courses of in-

struction may be offered reflecting strongly a dogmatic point of view and unrelated to specific Christian tasks or communities. A theological college exists within the life and fellowship of a particular section of the church. It is related to the witness of that section of the church, serves some of its needs and probably exercises some kind of leadership within it.

A theological college has neither the unrestricted and uncommitted freedom of a university nor the unrelated dogmatism of other institutions preparing people for full-time Christian service. Its ultimate purpose is the same as the ultimate purpose of the church whose life and fellowship it shares.

2. In this context the word church has the three meanings of the local congregation, the denomination, the whole fellowship of Christians.

We have to note these three meanings because the work of a theological college is related to them. It is obvious that the college with its function of preparing people for the Christian ministry must be closely related to local congregations and must continually bear in mind the needs of such congregations. Yet the function of the college is not to be restricted to the needs of local congregations. The college shares the life and witness of a denomination so that it must reflect the traditions of its community and at the same time subject these traditions to continual review so that it may exercise leadership in the thinking of its community.

Yet again, the theological college must not be limited to a denominational position. It can rightly claim to share the total Christian heritage in all its richness; indeed, it should continually enrich the life of its own community by imparting the treasures of Christian devotion, knowledge and service in whatever community they have been gathered. To do this, it must keep all its work in the context of the whole worshipping and witnessing church.

3. The purpose of the church in all forms of its life may be defined as the increase of love of God and of man.

This phrase is taken from the book *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry* in which Dr. Niebuhr writes: "No substitute can be found for the definition of the goal of the church as the increase among men of the love of God and neighbour." (p. 31.)

Limitations of space and theme prevent any consideration of this definition. It is offered here to underline the assertion that in any consideration of the theological curricula the purpose for which the church exists must be clearly conceived since it is a primary and determinative factor. Other definitions are possible; this one has the merit of being comprehensive and of expressing the purpose in terms of personal relationships. Both are essential elements in any valid definition of the purpose of the church.



4. The function of the ministry is that of leading the church in the fulfilment of this purpose.

If the whole church exists to minister according to the pattern of the Son of Man who came to minister and to give His life a ransom for many, as T. W. Manson so cogently argues in his book on the church's ministry, then the function of ministers is that of the spiritual leadership which enables the whole church to fulfil its ministry. This is the conception of ministry which appears in the letter to the Ephesians where 4.11.12 in the New English Bible read, "And these were his gifts: some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip God's people for work in his service, to the building up of the body of Christ." The ministry exists for the life of the church so that the church may exercise its ministry of love to God and man.

We have now to move from these basic considerations to the immediate purposes of a college curriculum, asking the question: What are the implications of these considerations in terms of the life and work of a college? Three implications suggest themselves.

(a) The college must prepare spiritual leaders.

The chief concern of the college is with persons; it has to be concerned with curricula largely in terms of persons. The growth of the Christian person as a potential leader in the ministry of the church is what matters above all else.

Here some searching questions must be faced by all engaged in the work of the college. Are we giving too much attention to courses and insufficient attention to students? Are we thinking too much about imparting knowledge and not enough about growth in wisdom? Are we tending to train men for jobs rather than enabling them to develop capacity for spiritual leadership?

This concern about persons must provoke much thought concerning two aspects of the life of a college:

- (i) there must be concern about the daily motives, attitudes and relationships which prevail in the college, and about the activities in which these are expressed, for it is just this element of college life which is so influential in the persons of those who belong to the college community.
- (ii) there must be concern about the motives, attitudes and relationships which the colleges, as corporate bodies, manifest in the life of the denomination with the activities in which they are expressed for this, too, shapes the thought and attitude of a student.

The total environment in which a student lives matters more than the courses of study which he pursues; this must be clearly per-

ceived and firmly accepted if a college is to prepare spiritual leaders.

(b) The college must prepare leaders suited to the churches.

This may appear to be an intolerable limitation to the work of a college; in fact, it is a wise acceptance of the conditions in which so many human activities have to be conducted. A college is not really serving the purpose of the church if it sends out leaders whose thoughts and views are far removed from those of the church. Leadership ceases to be leadership if real contact with the followers is lost.

This point seems to have been in Spurgeon's mind when in 1856 he established his Pastors College. He stated that "no college appeared to me to be suitable for the class of men that the providence and grace of God drew around me." He wanted "ministers suitable for the masses" and he thought that they were more likely to be found "in an institution where preaching and divinity would be the main object and not degrees and other insignia of human learning." These judgments would not meet with universal agreement, but they do present clearly the important point that the colleges, though they must represent the best in the life of a denomination and must lead the churches, yet they must not lose close contact with the churches.

Thus again, questions present themselves. Are the colleges sufficiently involved in the life of the churches? Is the curriculum related closely enough to the needs of the churches? Are students prepared to be leaders in the actual situations in which they will exercise their ministry?

(c) The college must prepare men who will lead the churches in their true ministry.

According to this judgment we have to declare two types of men as inadequate for the work of the ministry. There is the man who is so competent in everything that he cannot allow others to share the ministry of the church at all. There is the man who is so absorbed in maintaining religious organisation that he is unaware of the secular society in which the church is set to minister.

The true minister is the man who is constantly bringing the members of the church into a proper sharing of the ministry of the church. He leads his people in worship, in prayer and in understanding of God's ways; he helps them to go out into the world, both individually and corporately, for witness and service. The minister, therefore, must combine growing insight into eternal and divine purposes with growing knowledge of temporal and human situations and needs. This seems to have been in the minds of those who formed in 1770 the Bristol Education Society when they wrote: "The principal design of this society is to supply destitute congregations with a succession of able and evan-

gical ministers." The minister is one in whom is developed a capacity for knowing both God and the world; so he will be able to lead a church in its true ministry.

When we try to work out these implications in terms of the curriculum of a theological college, we seem to be led to three conclusions.

- (i) The spiritual leadership of the churches must be theologically competent. Ministers need to possess a sound knowledge and manifest a personal acceptance of the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. This clearly involves the study of certain basic subjects which must include the background and content of the Bible and the development of the life and thought of the church.

Within this general statement there is room for discussion but a few more detailed comments may be made here. In Biblical studies the emphasis needs to fall upon the content of Scripture. Such study is made more accurate by means of a knowledge of the Biblical languages, but this does not mean that all theological students should learn both Hebrew and Greek. The majority ought to have some understanding of Greek but probably Hebrew should be studied only by those who are likely to pursue academic work.

In the field of doctrine there is need for a systematic study in addition to the historical studies. A student who is familiar only with the historical development of Christian doctrine may lack a balanced understanding of the faith and may have made no attempt to integrate his knowledge of Christian truth with other forms of knowledge. The reflection of the Christian mind upon the facts and experiences of the gospel is a continuing process. Neither the Patristic nor the Reformation period exhausted all possible insights; consequently a more adequate knowledge of 19th and 20th century thought seems desirable. The student who knows something of Augustine and Aquinas, Luther and Calvin, might also read with profit in Brunner, Barth or Tillich.

The development of philosophical thought is perhaps a more specialist field, yet it seems desirable that within the category of theological competence we should include at least an introduction to philosophical problems and the main attempts to answer them.

- (ii) The spiritual leadership of the churches needs to be responsive to contemporary needs, challenges and opportunities. The theological competence needs to be linked with a conscious and informed awareness of the society in which the ministry of the church is exercised.

Here it seems clear that an introduction to general psychology and to methods of psychiatric work will promote a more sensitive awareness of personal needs. This study can well be included in the normal curriculum of a college, though the introduction to the specialised field of psychiatry might call for short special courses to be undertaken during vacations.

The awareness of social needs might be awakened by special lectures or by a particular kind of field work, but I am inclined to the judgment that knowledge of the way in which to deal with these needs is more properly gained when a man is at work in a particular situation. A trained mind can acquire much information for itself! And much information is meaningful and interesting only as a situation in which a man is involved, calls for it.

The same judgment cannot apply to the relationship of the Christian faith to some modern challenges. This is the realm of apologetics and to this more attention needs to be given. Many theological students begin their ministries and some ministers seem to continue all their days without any apprehension that the scientific interpretation of the origin and nature of the universe, or the psychological account of the nature of man, or the communist understanding of history, present serious and fundamental challenges to the Christian faith.

- (iii) The spiritual leadership of the church needs to include variety of skill and knowledge. We have been tempted, perhaps, to develop too uniform a pattern of ministry. We need men in the ministry who will possess different skills and experiences so that some are qualified in youth educational work, some in meeting the problems of industrial society, some in the work of mental and spiritual healing, some in answering social challenges and opportunities, some in matters pertaining to the ecumenical movement.

On the foundation of the basic studies therefore, the colleges need to erect a structure of studies affording considerable variety. This may be achieved by the development of more short courses in special subjects as well as by increased opportunities of field work; but what must be avoided is the danger of all students wanting to take all the courses. The result would be a collection of men knowing a little about many subjects without being really educated.

The Christian Church, like the society in which it is set, is entering into a new era of human life in which radical changes are taking place and will continue to occur. The Church may have to exercise its ministry in different forms and with different

methods. Yet the patterns and methods of the Church's ministry cannot be imposed upon it by secular society; that would mean that the Church was being conformed to the world. The Church must also consider the patterns of ministry which derive from the nature of the gospel and which express the gospel. This inevitable tension of the eternal and the temporal is always the tension felt by a living church.

Thus the preparing of men for spiritual leadership in the Church's ministry must also share the tension. Changes in the curricula and methods of a theological college are to be determined neither by considerations of what has proved of value for generations nor by demands of a rapidly changing situation in themselves. Both elements must be given their full value. But changes there must be if the Church in the later part of the 20th century is to bear effective witness to the eternal gospel. We have to prepare now for the position of the Christian Church in the opening decades of a new millenium.

L. G. CHAMPION

# The Baptist Hymn Book

**B**APTISTS now have a new hymnal. What are we to make of the labours of this editorial committee whose degrees roll down like a mighty stream? Inevitably some judgments will be wide of the mark; for the critic who is stranger to the prolonged process of argument and discussion that led the committee to its final conclusion lacks some of the material necessary for accurate assessment. Nevertheless, with that warning given and leaving the experts to fire the measured salvos and initiate the precision shooting, we may venture some initial reactions.

Many will surely regret that the possibility of producing a Free Church Hymnal has once more receded into the distance. A committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Hugh Martin must have considered the challenge, but decided presumably that "the time was not ripe." I wonder whether it ever will be, if we all go on like this. It is interesting to notice that<sup>1</sup> RBCH, CP, and MH have in common 331 hymns and 293 tunes, while BH, CP, and MH have in common 351 and 342. In terms of the most recent Free Church productions—BH and CP have in common 482 hymns and 477 tunes (as against RBCH and CP in common 420 and 350). Clearly common ground is steadily increasing, and it is evident that the problem of divergent traditions in hymnody is no longer insuperable. If the difficulties lie in other directions, let them be dragged out into the light of day that we may know them and grapple with them. It is increasingly odd to find oneself dealing with hymnals that are catholic in content but denominational in name.

However, we must reckon with what is rather than with what might have been. We are offered 777 hymns as against the 786 of RBCH. A comparison with other hymnals *in the order shown* yields the following information. Of the total of 777 there are found in RBCH 490. Of the remaining 287 there are found in CP 126. Of the remaining 161 there are found in MH 48. Of the

<sup>1</sup> Throughout, BH = Baptist Hymn Book, RBCH = Revised Baptist Church Hymnal, CP = Congregational Praise, MH = Methodist Hymn Book, BBCH = B.B.C. Hymn Book, PH = Pilgrim Hymnal (U.S.A. 1959), ChP = Christian Praise, SSP = Sunday School Praise, SP = Songs of Praise, GB = Golden Bells, EH = English Hymnal. Though the statistics given are dependable, their final accuracy cannot be guaranteed, since the same hymns sometimes appear in different books in various forms, and some tunes have more than one title. So Goss (RBCH) becomes Oxford (MH) and Humility (CP).

remaining 113 there are found in BBCH 31. Reference to SP, GB, PH, ChP, SSP, EH, A & M, will bring the total remainder down from 82 to 49, and the consultation of more esoteric publications would surely reduce it still further. But the significance of the mathematical exercise lies in the content of the residual hymns most difficult to trace. They are concerned mainly with sacraments, social concerns, and special occasions; and this is a fair indication of the places at which it was felt a special effort must be made to strengthen the existing common fund of material. One of them, indeed, is referred to by Dr. Martin, in his article in the *Baptist Times* (10.8.61) as "perhaps the earliest Christian hymn outside the New Testament." It is "Shepherd of eager youth" by Clement of Alexandria, and it is good to see it here. But Psalms and Hymns found a place for it long ago. We are not always wiser than our fathers!

All compilers must discard or omit a good deal of what is available to them, and careful scrutiny at this point is essential. We may usefully test BH by reference to five hymnals which may broadly be classified as non-Anglican—CP, RBCH, MH, BBCH, and PH. These contain 125 hymns in common. BH omits one: "Jerusalem, my happy home"; and for my own part I shed no tears. The deletion of PH raises the common ground; and at this point BH drops 6. I would not go to the stake for any of them, though some may think that "O Love who formedst me to wear" is a marginal case. With the removal of BBCH we are left with CP, RBCH, and MH. These have 331 in common, of which BH includes 300—having dropped another 24. Again the surgery is salutary, though some may query the disappearance of "Hark! the song of jubilee." Finally, the deletion of MH leaves CP and RBCH sharing 420 hymns, of which BH contains 356. This involves the omission of a further 33, and at this point battle must be joined. It is farewell to "One holy church of God appears," "Songs of praise the angels sang," "My soul awake," "Made lowly wise"; and we are much the poorer for their going. Above all, what can have possessed the compilers to axe "And now the wants are told"—one of the few closing hymns that says what ought to be said? This is really unforgivable.

Nine out of ten to the committee then, thus far, with one heavy rap on the knuckles. But this concerns solely the discards from the common pack; and there are also omissions that must be noted. From CP there might fruitfully have been taken: "God is love, by him upholden," "Forth rode the knights of old," "Let all our brethren join in one," "Lord of good life, the hosts of the undying," and "We sing of life"; from BBCH: "Eternal God whose power upholds," "Hark what a sound, and too divine for hearing," "Lo, round the throne, a glorious band," "O crucified redeemer," and

“Ye watchers and ye holy ones”; while PH would have provided: “Father eternal, ruler of creation,” “Hail the glorious golden city,” “Hope of the world,” and “Joyful, joyful, we adore thee.” Beyond this, everyone will have his own complaint about the sifting of RBCH. There are 25 omissions that I would myself both question and regret, and 8 among them about which I would be prepared to offer prolonged argument. These are: “We love thee Lord, yet not alone,” “Our day of praise is done,” “O praise the Lord our God,” “And didst thou Lord our sorrows take,” “O’er the hills and by the valleys,” “Be still my heart, be still my mind,” “I said it on the meadow path,” “Lord thou hast all my frailty made.” Perhaps there will be rumblings from the Missionary Auxiliaries when they fail to find “There’s a light upon the mountains.” I think I can guess some of the reasons that led the compilers to jettison this. And I think they may well have been wrong.

Thus far I have defended specific additions to the hymnal to the number of 27. I should wish to raise the score slightly, partly by an even more merciless plundering of A. F. Bayly, partly by other choices that will presently appear. But it should now be obvious that the criticism though significant is still marginal, and that the commendation, if back-handed, is nevertheless real. To the immediate objections the committee might tender a threefold defence and reply. They might demand an argued case for the inclusion of each of my 27 or so candidates; this would be fair, but space forbids. They might stand by their total number, and ask for a similar list of 27 hymns now included that should be omitted. I would be prepared to supply it. They might claim that what I have proposed would alter the balance of the whole collection. I would concur and would defend that result also. All of which suggests that a closer look at the progression and divisions of the new hymnal may help us.

What then is the purpose of a denominational hymn book? CP states boldly: “The primary purpose of a hymn-book is for use in public worship.” BH apparently agrees: “. . . the primary purpose has of course been to provide hymns for singing in congregational worship.” Yet all hymnals seem to be mesmerised by a traditional division of contents that is singularly unhelpful to this dominating purpose. With slight modifications, the procedure is unvarying. We slice up the Trinity, “compartmentalise” the church, attempt some classification of our feelings and experience, move to our social responsibilities, and end with the specialities that will not fit in. Let it be agreed that a section for special occasions will be necessary. For the rest, should we not be boldly consistent and offer three major divisions?

1. The Approach to Worship—including adoration, confession, assurance of forgiveness.



2. The Gospel in Word and Sacrament—including invocation, scriptures, sacraments, gospel call, credal hymns (among them, those that proclaim the events of biblical and saving history, e.g. many usually classified under "God the Son").
3. The Response of the People to God—including thanksgiving, offering, prayer, presentation of infants, witness, mission, social concern, repentance, trust, commitment, growth. . . .

Such a pattern does not solve all problems, and is not, in any case, intended to be complete in detail or sub-section. But it raises no greater difficulties than the present arrangement with its multitude of cross-references; and it surely has theological strength. What, after all, is the point of having specific sections on the Holy Trinity and the Holy Spirit—unless to encourage the unwary to wallow in them on Whit Sunday and Trinity Sunday and cultivate liturgical unbalance for the rest of the year? Let the reader examine them and judge what real unity of theme or emphasis they possess.

This question of structure is not academic. Biblical and liturgical understanding are in issue. Indeed, I suspect that the confusion here has far-reaching implications. Did the committee really grasp the theological distinction between adoration and thanksgiving, and the theological connection between thanksgiving and offering. Of course hymns are not written to suit our tidy minds. Of course they mix up our neat categories. Of course there are borderline cases. But the omnibus heading of Section I: Worship and Praise, does not help us to keep our sights clear; and several of its hymns belong unquestionably to "thanksgiving." Let us get the liturgical drama right, and not confuse prologue and epilogue and bring the curtain down when it has just risen. Adoration is basically that hymning of God that holds the ineffable vision of Him before our wondering eyes, and it belongs primarily (though not solely) to the opening of worship. Thanksgiving is the basic liturgical form of responsive offering, and belongs essentially to the closing part of worship. This is not pedantry. It is concern for the health of the People of God.

From this perspective a good many committee decisions become suspect. Of the material grouped under Section II: The Holy Trinity, and Section III: God the Father, a considerable proportion belongs to Adoration, some to Confession, and some to Thanksgiving. "Great is Thy faithfulness" should not be under "Trust in God"; it concerns not our faith but His faithfulness. Similarly, in this section, "How firm a foundation," "Not what I am, O Lord," "Thou hidden source of calm repose," and "Through all the changing scenes of life," are all misplaced. The Baptismal section has clearly received special attention, but the result is discouraging. The predominant emphasis remains upon human vow rather than divine action. "Around thy grave, Lord Jesus" (in

RBCH) is lamentably discarded; while William Robinson's magnificent "Praise to God" shines the brighter because of its disappointing surroundings. Much stronger is the material for the Lord's Supper. But where, O where are Turton's "O Thou, who at Thy Eucharist didst pray," and Robinson's "Thee we praise, high priest and victim"? Why could we not have had Elizabeth Charles' "Around a table not a tomb" instead of Montgomery's "According to thy gracious Word," which for all its biblical basis suggests nothing quite so much as a spiritual Armistice Sunday?

So the carping critic will continue. Do we really want "I love to tell the story" as well as "Tell me the old, old story"? (A little of Arabella Hankey goes a mighty long way!). Did we have to endure Hood's insult to children "God who hath made the daisies" and Jemima Luke's effusion "I think, when I read that sweet story of old," when we already have Stopford Brooke's satisfying "It fell upon a summer day" that covers the same ground? Must we still accord a welcome to "O the bitter shame and sorrow" with its bad psychology and worse theology? If Faber's "Souls of men!" was to be altered, could we not have been spared being asked to sing "... There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given"?<sup>2</sup> But these are blemishes which obtrude because of the very excellence of the total offering. Six per cent of the hymns are pre-Reformation; six per cent are 16th and 17th century; seventeen per cent are 18th century; fifty-four per cent are Victoriana; fifteen per cent are 20th century in composition or in spirit.<sup>3</sup> It is a well balanced collection.

How do the 818 tunes provided measure up to this generally high standard. Not badly. Again, a comparison with other hymnals *in the order shown* gives the following result. Of the total of 818 there are found in RBCH 433. Of the remaining 385 there are found in CP 169. Of the remaining 216 there are found in MH 60. Of the remaining 156 there are found in BBCH 40. Reference to SP, GB, PH, ChP, SSP, EH, A & M will bring the total remainder down to 69. These are by no means all of recent composition, nor all of special merit; and they include what I would judge to be far too high a proportion of tunes of Welsh origin. The happiest choices among this 69 are those that have been set to new hymns. Here A. E. Rusbridge does us well with Horfield, and others maintain the level. It is also good to find two of Beaumont's earlier and more sober productions.

We may usefully proceed to test BH by reference to CP, RBCH, MH, BBCH, and PH. These five have 98 tunes in common, of which BH omits Abbey, York, and Les commandemens de Dieu.

<sup>2</sup> Other hymns I would wish to delete forthwith as sub-standard or unbiblical include 144, 566, 570, 584, 615, 739, 749, 759.

<sup>3</sup> The remaining 2% are unclassifiable.

I will argue for the first two in a moment. The third was presumably omitted because St. Clement holds the field for "The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended"; but whether there was then much case for providing Michaelmas as an alternative I beg leave to doubt. The deletion of PH raises common ground to 164, and at this point BH drops 2. The one is Manchester (to which I will recur); the other is Love Divine whose departure we would hail with a cheer were it not that Blaenwern is offered as substitute. With the removal of BBCH we are left with CP, RBCH, and MH. These have 293 in common, of which BH presents 266—having shed another 22. The pruning is justified in all but two cases. I would defend the retention of Dublin (of which more anon). And why did the committee throw out Savannah whilst leaving us with the unspeakable St. Bees? Finally, the deletion of MH leaves CP and RBCH sharing 350 tunes, of which BH contains 308. This involves the omission of a further 15. Of these, Treves, St. Marguerite, and St. Brannock might well have been preserved, and Longwood certainly should have been. It is an odd estimate of Joseph Barnby that ejects Longwood but leaves us with The Golden Chain.

I have mentioned St. Marguerite and Treves, and I indicated further comment on Abbey, York, Manchester, and Dublin. These omissions have one thing in common. They are all common metre tunes of some merit. And this raises a curious issue. For it is immediately noticeable that the proportion of such tunes provided by BH is smaller than is usually offered. Was this deliberate policy or was it the unplanned result of hymn selection? It would be interesting to know. But whatever the answer be, it cannot be claimed that there was no room for some at least of these well-known tunes. For with them to hand, what need was there to search for the unfamiliar Storl, or the dubious Abergele, or the facile St. Agnes?

Eight out of ten then in this department so far as discards from the common pool of hymnody are concerned, and a possible bonus mark to come as we turn to consider omissions. So far as RBCH is concerned, the attitude of the compilers is generous and satisfying. I find no tunes that merit inclusion overlooked; and if I linger for a moment over St. Denys, Dona Lucem, and Woodland, it is not with tremendous enthusiasm. The situation is quite different, however, when we turn to CP. I look expectantly but in vain for Beeding, Benedicite, Drake's Boughton, Edmonsham, Hero, Komm Seele, Lyle Road, Mahon, Sawyers, Eastwood, Venice, and Westbury. Why not Thiman's "Beeding" (or even Stanton's "Saintbury") instead of Havergal's "Samos"? Why not Steiner's "Benedicite" instead of that runaway tank "Windermere"? (Thanks be to God that at least we have Thalben-Ball's "Llanherne"). Why

not Elgar's "Drake's Boughton" instead of the incredible "St. Oswald"? Why not Loring's "Edmonsham" instead of "Cherry Tree," Carter's "Hero" instead of "Woodlands" (already properly used elsewhere), Finlay's "Lyle Road" if necessary instead of "Kingdom of God"? Why not Knowles' "Mahon" instead of Thorne's atrocity "St. Andrew"? Why not Shaw's "Sawyer" instead of Maker's "Rest"? Why not "Westbury" in place of one of the two uses of "Pilgrimage"?

Other omissions from various hymnals are to be regretted. Would that a place could have been found for Thalben-Ball's "Sirius," even though we are well served by Walford Davies' "Firmament." Would that we were given Goss' "Arthur's Seat" and Hunt's "Shrewsbury." Winn's "Midhurst" would have provided the welcome substitute for the superficial "Dismissal." Allen's "Ewhurst" would have been a sensitive replacement for "Greenwell." Most tragic of all—why, having given us the hymn "Come, labour on!", did the compilers completely miss their cue and fail to set to it Tertius Noble's "Ora Labora," a tune which should make any red-blooded Englishman gird up his loins?

This is not just a plea for the inclusion of certain tunes. It is, in part at least, a basic criticism of policy. The inclusion of inferior material may perhaps be justified when alternatives are provided, and we may therefore forgive boring "Rivaulx" for the sake of "Anglorum Apostolus," sentimental "Gottlieb" for the sake of "All Souls," debilitating "St. Margaret" for the sake of "Matheson," trivial "Penlan" for the sake of "Nyland." But the situation is far more serious when the committee all too often leave us with but a single tune of doubtful status. We have already noticed "Dismissal" and "St. Bees." But there are others; and if we had to have them, alternatives should have been appended. We are asked to sing the hymn "God of the living" to "St. Chrysostom"—as if Barnby was adequate to the glory of the Christian hope! We are (inevitably) given "Evening Hymn" to "Father in high heaven dwelling"—without even being offered the escape of "Alles Is An Gottes Segen." And when we reach the long metres, the crisis of confidence becomes acute. We are shut up with "Arizona" for "What purpose burns within our hearts," with "Rimington" for "Give to our God immortal praise," with "St. Petersburg" for "Lord, in this blest and hallowed hour," and with "Ombersley" for "Send forth the Gospel!"—even though sturdy "Cannock" lay close to hand.

These are regrets. They must be voiced because this book is worth criticism. Unquestionably it will be compared with Congregational Praise, and not necessarily to its disadvantage. In musical approach CP seems to me to betray a certain austerity which, at the time, was surely justified. BH is more generous, more hospitable.

able. Such a policy involves risk; but it has my vote. Only in two directions is restriction apparent. There is little of the characteristic idiom associated with SP. (Even exuberant "Northrop" is not selected), and little of the special ethos of A & M (Revised). The gulf between the Church of England and the Free Churches remains to be bridged.

BH offers 69 canticles and psalms to be chanted with reference to pointing on the basis of speech-rhythm and to tunes that are in general traditional. It provides 38 short passages of Scripture that may be used by minister and congregation for alternate reading. It attempts to set hymn tunes at the appropriate pitch for congregational singing, and is on the whole successful. Two and a half cheers then for the compilers, who have at long last given to the denomination a worthy hymnal for the 20th century.

N. CLARK

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Reviews by: D. D. BLACK, A. GILMORE, HUGH MARTIN.

## Reviews

Hugh Martin (ed.), *The Baptist Hymn Book Companion*. 465 pp. 27s. 6d. The Psalms and Hymns Trust.

Elsewhere in this issue there is full review of the *The Baptist Hymn Book*.<sup>1</sup> This *Companion* appeared at the same time, consisting of 43 pages of introductory material and 427 pages of notes on the hymns and tunes.

The editor writes on the making of the hymn book, listing the reasons why one third of the hymns from the present book have been omitted. The reasons seem good though much of their force is taken away by the admission in the following paragraph that God can use poor hymns as he can use poor sermons and therefore some of these "poor" hymns have been retained; one wonders then on what grounds the good reasons laid down were sometimes ignored! A further set of reasons is then given for the addition of new hymns. The fact that they have included more evangelistic hymns will please some; that they have included more metrical psalms will please others; that they have included more objective and doctrinal hymns, and more translations of the ancient hymns of the Church is surely a good move whether it pleases anybody or not.

Stephen F. Winward's contribution, "How to Make the Best Use of the Hymn Book," and A. Ewart Rusbridge's "Congregational Singing" are the most practical and generally useful of the remaining chapters. Both could profitably be printed as off-prints and distributed to every member of every congregation. The first contains words of wisdom for congregations, for those who conduct worship and for those who wish to use the book for private devotion; the second has some useful points on congregational hymn singing and some even more useful ones on psalm singing. It is to be hoped that the words of encouragement on the latter point will bear fruit. The other chapters deal with "Hymnody in the Christian Church" (J. Ithel Jones), "Baptists and their Hymns" (E. A. Payne) and a list of Baptist authors, translators and composers represented in the *Hymn Book*.

The Notes give a biographical sketch of the author the first time one of his hymns is used, a comment on variations and versions together with reasons for the particular one selected, and a note on the tune, its composer and where the tune first appeared. All this is a most useful compendium of information and material, though how much it will be used will depend on the extent to which people want to dig behind the hymns they sing. It is a pity that the sections of the *Hymn Book* are not more clearly discernible in the *Companion*.

A. GILMORE

<sup>1</sup> See pages 277-284.

Normal Goodall, *The Ecumenical Movement*. 240 pp. 18s. Oxford University Press.

The literature about the ecumenical movement is growing fast, as is natural, but there is a distinct place for this book, written in the light of long and intimate knowledge, including sixteen years on the staff of organizations involved. A highly informative and perceptive survey, it is written, as the author says, "for the growing number of men and women who have heard a little about these things and want to know more, and for those who may have had some contact with one part of the movement but would like to see the part within the whole." It is a factual, meaty and documented work, but none the less very readable, with many flashes of wit and insight.

Perhaps the meaning of the ecumenical movement cannot be better summed up than in a couple of sentences drawn from a notable statement, quoted here, presented to the Willingen conference of the International Missionary Council in 1952 by the delegates from "the younger churches." "Division in the Church distorts its witness, frustrates its mission and contradicts its own nature. . . . We believe that in the ecumenical movement God has provided a way of co-operation in witness and service, and also a means for the removal of much that mars such witness and service."

Goodall gives us an outline of the history, sketches of some of the leading personalities, a survey of its far-reaching concerns, an account of its structure, and a frank appraisal of its difficulties, problems and opponents. The implications of the newly accomplished integration of the International Missionary Council with the World Council of Churches are examined. The Faith and Order movement and the baffling problems of Christian unity are discussed, with a clear statement of what is and is not the function of the W.C.C. in this field, not a super-church, not a propagandist for any scheme of reunion, only an instrument ready to hand for the churches to use as they themselves determine. The stirring story of Christian Aid is told again. The possible effects of the admission of the Russian Orthodox Church are discussed, and there is a frank examination of the nature of the "evangelical," so-called, opposition to the movement, including the activities of the egregious Carl McIntyre. A valuable feature is the reprint of certain key documents, like the statement quoted above and the moving 'Affirmation' of the Edinburgh Conference of 1937. It is a book both for reading and for reference.

I would commend it cordially, not least to critics in our own midst who still cherish misgivings. It will remove many misconceptions and reveal the ecumenical movement by its fruits as a notable stirring of the Spirit of God in the Church of our generation. I like the quotation from the diary of High Church Archbishop

Garbett: "These meetings are changing my outlook in regard to the Free Churches. I forget we belong to different churches and I am conscious only of our common Christianity." Many a Free Churchman could say the same thing, the other way round.

Coming from its author this is inevitably up-to-date and accurately informed. I have noted only one error. Lucy Gardner, the remarkable woman who was secretary of the great COPEC Conference of 1924, was a Quaker, not an Anglican.

HUGH MARTIN

Ten pamphlets on Faith and Christian Living. 3s. each.  
Independent Press.

In writing the epistle to the Romans Paul talks about the "renewal of the mind." This epistle was obviously written to believers, so that in Paul's opinion the transformation of the mind is not something that automatically follows conversion. We can imagine people in the Church at Rome having been transformed in heart for some time but as yet still showing little evidence of being different in their thinking from those who were round about them.

If that was true in Paul's day it is by no means confined to his day. Today we are called upon to use our minds to harmonise our thoughts with the Gospel and our conduct with our faith. We are slowly beginning to realise that it is through the renewing of the mind that we shall be able to discern the will of God more clearly. What a blessing it is that we have books to aid us in the use of our intellect!

Just such a series has recently been published by the Youth and Education Department of the Congregational Church.

Six of the booklets have the title *What we Believe*. The headings are; "The Christian Doctrine of God"; "Worship"; "The Bible"; "The Church in History"; "Belonging to the Church"; and "The Sacraments."

They are intended to help not only the young people themselves but the leaders of youth groups.

The Committee are to be congratulated for they have realised that the questions which puzzle young people are mostly matters of theology.

In "The Christian Doctrine of God," Principal John Huxtable reminds us in the "Foreword" that there is a point beyond which the theologian would distort his subject by further simplification and he calls upon his readers to accept the "obligation to make an effort to think." What he has said of this booklet could well be said of the whole series.

No. 4 in this series deserves special mention, "The Church in



History." This is a brilliant piece of writing. Here we have a panoramic view of the History of the Church from the end of New Testament times to the World Council of Churches in 1948. The writer will convince all who read this book on two important issues; first, that the history of the Church is a fascinating story; second, that some knowledge of it is vital to an appreciation of the present situation.

Not all the booklets reach the same height. The one on "Worship" is by far the most disappointing in the series. The impression is given that worship is something that we initiate rather than something in which it is our privilege to join.

A second series is entitled *The Christian Way*, two of which are to hand "Life is a Trust," dealing with Stewardship, and "Christian Discrimination." These are more obviously written for young people. One wonders why the publishers did not see fit to extend the "What We Believe" series so that these two aspects of the Christian Life were dealt with from the theological point of view. The other two titles in preparation are "Saying Our Prayers" and "Reading the Bible."

These booklets invite a comparison with the Ter-Jubilee Booklets published by the Baptist Union, which have the same aim in view.

The Ter-Jubilee booklets are much more attractively produced. In an age when the covers of all the books which young people read are colourful and impressive, when commercial artists are being commissioned to design the fly-leaves of theological works this is important. The Independent Press has shown singular lack of imagination.

But it is not the covers but the material that is vital. Dr. Champion has "observed that a denomination which neglects its theology was like a man who neglects his house"; we live, he suggests, in "a theological slum." So many of the Ter-Jubilee booklets are concerned with techniques (of evangelism; of men's work; or women's work; of advertising and finance) and not with essential theology. In this respect the leaders of youth groups, indeed Church discussion groups will find the Congregational series much more valuable.

D. D. BLACK