The major concern of the early English Separatists was with their particular theory of Church government but in their consideration of this some reference was made to the question of the education of the clergy. Opinions on this were divided: some favoured the clergy receiving a university education but others were opposed to such education. Chief among the latter were Robert Browne and Henry Barrow. The views of Barrow have received treatment elsewhere: in this article those of Browne will be noted and commented upon.

In his writings, Browne was critical of the education received by intending clergy while at university and of the use to which they put such education, seeing it more as a vehicle for self-advancement rather than one for the edification of their flock. He also expressed views on secular education, views which were sympathetic to it and contained the desire for its more widespread provision.

Browne's first comments on clerical education are to be found in *A Treatise upon the 23 of Matthew* (1582) which was intended to be a guide to the studying of the Scriptures and advice as to how to avoid false preachers. The work contains a strong attack upon the way in which the clergy used their learning to enhance their reputation irrespective of the needs of the people in their care and hearing. Such clergy appeared to be more concerned with the display of their academic knowledge than with the instruction of their flock in practical Christianity which, in Browne's opinion, was what was required. He argued, therefore, that learning can be detrimental to the Christian education of the people.

One section of the treatise is entitled "Against the abuse of Tongues in Preaching" and in it Browne attacks the use made by some clergy of Latin and Greek in their preaching, describing such as those whose sermons "must needes be sauced by vaunt of the tongues". He agreed that in I Corinthians 14. 5, St Paul expressed the wish "That they all could speake languages" and that in Acts 2.4 it is recorded that the Apostles spoke in other tongues as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance but, argued Browne, these were references to occasions when some knowledge of other languages was necessary to the preaching of the Gospel whereas the clergy used Latin when there was no need for it and, in any case, had culled "such stuffe from Ambrose or Chrysostome, or from some common place books of Doctorlie sentences". To such men the use of languages was merely for self-aggrandisement and to keep the ordinary people in awe of them, "Their Latin is phisik to make hole the sick, and their greeke and hebrewe will bless you from evill spirites". So, too, their academic attainments:

For so soone as they have stood up in famous places & shewed their universitie degrees, and how well they become their hooedes, or their skarlett gownes, and what standing in Cambridg, and reading they are of in the tongues and Doctors: There may then be none like them; then you must needes call them Rabbie, Maister Doctor, My Lords Chaplen, Maister Preacher, and our Divinitie lecturer. This Phisike will heale all Paules
Cross in one day. For so soone as they have shewed it and receyved a Dinner, and their honour and the hope of some preferment: all is made whole, and they goe away as if no bodie were sicke.  

Here Browne is not so much attacking learning as warning against its abuse and the points he makes are valid, that is, that the clergy should be more concerned with the spiritual needs of their flock than with personal advancement and that learning was to be used for the edification and benefit of all. In other words, he was stressing what he believed to be the true vocation of the clergy. In this, Browne was at one with those clergy of Puritan persuasion within the Church of England: indeed, some of his remarks could well have come from such Puritan sources. Thus in the Puritans' Second Admonition to Parliament of 1572 we find similar complaints: "But if they carye away the praise of the people for their learning, though the people have learned little or nothing at their hands... or for some mery tales they have tolde, or such like pageants to please itching eares withall, such a fellowe muste have the beneficies, the prebendes, the Archdeaconeries, and such like loiterers preferments...". Browne was prepared to acknowledge such support agreeing that there were those who, like him, "count it a fault in Pulpites, to recite Doctors sentences, or to speake straunge language" yet, even so, such men were often just as much at fault for their willingness to "descant upon the translation, and shewe what varietie there is, least their learning should be hidd. So because they will seeme to fetch nothing from the Doctours or other authors, they will picke out some matter from their owne fingers endes".

Having warned against what he considered to be the abuse of learning, Browne proceeded to criticise the university training received by the clergy. In this attack Browne may have been expressing his own dissatisfaction with the education he had received prior to entering the priesthood but it is noticeable that although he waxes eloquent in the denunciation of such education he has very little to offer in the way of constructive criticism.

A major feature of the education received at university by intending clergy was a training in Logic and Rhetoric. The aim of this was that through logic the student would learn to think precisely and relevantly and by rhetoric convey his thought to his hearers in such a manner as would persuade them of the rightness of his cause. Such aim, it might be thought, would have been considered by Browne to have been of great value in the education of men whose task it was to win others to the Christian faith. In fact, however, he considers the two subjects as inappropriate to the Christian ministry, advancing three reasons for this view. First, they were unnecessary for the understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures. He argued that Ezra, in the Old Testament, had been able to give the meaning of the Scriptures, and be understood by the people, without recourse to Syllogisms, Predictables and Predicaments and other "argumentes of Invention". Did he, asked Browne, "digge out such stuffe from Cambridge horned capps? Or because the light of the Scriptures was not
great enough, did he fetche the rest from under the earthe?"

Second, logic had been condemned as unnecessary by St Paul. Here Browne was referring to the Apostle's warning in Colossians 2.8, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ". Third, this "philosophy and vain deceit" was used by the adversaries of true Christianity, heretics and those who sought to prevent popular participation in Church matters:

... by that have all heretickes, and all the broode of Antichrist both troubled and spoiled us; for by it is the exercise of prophecie or mutuall edifyinge, also the right use of Synods or generall meetinges, of deter­mininge controversies, of discussing matters of communinge, disputing, and searchinge out the truth, cleane taken awaye. By that also the people which have not learned Logicke, are shutt out and discouraged from talking, pleading, and mutuall edifying in the churche meetinges...

The argument against Logic is then proceeded with in more detail. Browne declared that its use resulted in disputations and the "chopping and cutting of one another in vaine babblinges, brawlinges, and strife of wordes". It is true that Paul disputed, that even Christ disputed, but did they use Logic? Had Christ "suche Logicke and when he hered and posed the Doctours, did he shew anie such skill?" Furthermore, when Paul exhorted Timothy to keep the truth which he had taught him did this in­clude logic or doctrine? Not so, argued Browne, for the Apostle gave strict instructions to avoid disputations which were of no profit to anyone but tended to lead those listening away from the truth.

Browne would not accept the arguments of some scholars that Paul was not referring to logic here. He insisted that this was precisely what Paul had in mind, pointing out that the Apostle had said, "The servante of God must not strive, but must bee gentle towardes all men, and apte to teach". But, Browne continued:

when the Sylogisme cometh, then cometh babbling and contention: for the leafe will shake with the winde, & churlish words are sone moved, by such boisterous rea­soninges. Though you warne such disputers to beware of heat in disputinge, yet they are sooner in the fire, then you can tell howe it kindled. "If the serpent bite when it is not charmed no better are such babblers".

Logic, as far as Browne was concerned, was not conducive to a good Christian attitude, that is, its use would bring not har­mony but strife.

Nor would Browne accept the argument that logic was neces­sary in order to understand Cause and Effect:

When a Cause is given, must it be written up for Logicke? If a man shew an Effecte, could he no where fetche it but from their Logicke Tables? Is Logicke the Trumpet of Gods workes, for they are all effectes: or doth it shew his power and holines, as the causes thereof. Who
is ignorant that there are Causes? And will Logicke cause us to know the Causes, or can we sett the face thereof, or the eyes to looke them out for us? 12

Another reason for Browne's dislike of Logic was his belief that as it was practised it was the possession of a privileged class seeking to retain power in its hands, a principle diametrically opposed not only to the democratic nature of the "gathered" church of Browne and his followers, but also to Protestantism as a whole. The distinction between priest and people, with the former regarded as possessing certain powers and privileges, was one which the Reformers sought to abolish. The practice of logic seemed to Browne to be contrary to this principle of the Reformation. He noted that the terms used in logic were all in Latin so rendering them unintelligible to the common people. Logical disputation, therefore, presented the appearance of being part of the rites of a secret society and the possession of special knowledge by a privileged few whereas Browne believed it was something which the ordinary man could understand and appreciate. What would happen, he asked, if the logical terms were translated into English? The answer was simple, there was no need to go to a university (Cambridge, for example) in order to learn them. He continued:

Some things agree, say they, and partake togethier:
If you call not this a secrete, they will byte you or prepare themselves to battle. Some things also differ and can not well be joyned, as to saye, a good man is naught. To learne so harde a lesson is worth a Cambridge degree. When things doo differ, as being of another kinde, you must call them "Disparates", that is in English, the sortes of thinges which are sundrie, but you marre the game if you name not their owne worde, "Disparates". You take away their wisdome, if you speake so playne English... 13

For such as used logic, then, Browne could find no hope. He called them blind and foolish and was scornful of their argument that until they had mastered logic they were not qualified to study the Scriptures:
Ye have too long... doted about wordes, O ye vaine men, and weried yourselves with your Logick fopperies, and fedd your selves with the winde. Therefor shall the Wynde take you awaye, and vanitie shall pull you awaye. You cleanse your handes with Logick, you say, to handle the Scriptures purelie: nay rather you have swallowed up such filthy stuffe, and have cast the vanitie thereof upon the Scriptures. You have fedd also others with those of your berayinges,* therefor shall the Lord feede you with wormewood, and give you the water of gall to drinke. 14

In similar manner Browne deals with Rhetoric and the Logicians' Methods and Divisions, finding them of little or no use in the understanding of the Scriptures. His readers are informed that the way of salvation is through the sacred

* To 'beray' is to defile, disfigure, befoul, or abuse.
Scriptures and not through logic. Quoting Paul's words from II Timothy 3.16 in his support Browne argued that, for the believer, the Scriptures are sufficient to meet all his needs: no other helps are required.

This attack on the university training of the clergy put Browne at variance with those Puritans happy to remain within the Church of England who regarded the universities as the seedbed of the ministry and were happy with the training so roundly condemned by Browne. In a document entitled An Order to be used for the trayning upp and exercising of Students of Divinity (c.1575) emanating from such Puritans, the following "gifts" are required of such students: (a) a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew; (b) the art of Rhetoric which "teacheth trewly to dyscerne proper speeches from those that are tropi-call and figurative"; (c) Logic, the art of Reasoning; (d) Comparison of similar places of Scripture; (e) the study of learned commentators old and new, "not differing from them, but upon just occasion", and (f) knowledge of Greek and Latin History. But this does not mean that Browne's attack on the education received by the clergy was entirely original - there was at least one important centre of the Reformation where his views would have met with some acceptance. This was at Zürich, where the dominant influence was Zwinglian in character. Here, logical disputation and discourse had been replaced as the principal discipline for the training of future clergy by exercises in Biblical study. In classes not unlike those which were to become a part of English Puritanism (that is, "Prophesyings") ministers and divinity students met five mornings per week for systematic exegesis of the Scriptures using Hebrew, Latin, and Greek texts (the use of which would not, however, have met with Browne's approval). Browne does not acknowledge any Zürich influence but it is unlikely that he was unaware of the Zürich practice. He had made a visit to Holland where it is more than likely that he met the Men-nonites whose theology was Zwinglian in character and Zwinglian influence was not unknown amongst the English Puritans. Indeed, one writer distinguishes what he terms "a moderate Calvinism" in the tradition of Zwingli-Bullinger-Tyndale and so the possibility, if not the probability, of Browne's having been influenced by Zürich cannot be lightly dismissed.

Equally, Browne cannot, and does not, claim any originality for the declaration of the Scriptures alone being sufficient for salvation. This was a principle formulated long before the Reformation but which had been brought to the fore again by the Reformers. Even within the Church of England, so bitterly attacked by Browne, there could be found evidence of support for this view. John Jewel, for example, in his great work An Apologie of the Church of England (1560/1) wrote, "Seeing then the key, whereby the way and entry to the Kingdom of God is opened unto us, is the word of the Gospel and the expounding of the law and Scriptures, we say plainly, where the same word is not, there is not the key". Why, then, should Browne feel it necessary to make the point about the sufficiency of the Scriptures? Because he believed that the
Church of England was not always using Scripture as its sole authority. There were those within the established Church who distinguished between what they regarded as essentials and non-essentials in religion and this group, usually termed "Anglicans", "taught that in all 'indifferent' matters human reason and human authority had the power to advise and enforce policy". This was the cornerstone of Anglicanism, and in rejecting it Browne was at one with the Puritans who remained within the Church of England seeking to establish this principle.

Browne has nothing further to say about education in the ministry and his other remarks on the subject are concerned with its more general aspect. We learn that for some time after leaving Cambridge he was a schoolmaster meeting with, at least in his opinion, some success. He was deeply concerned at the state of the religious life of the country and noted that "nether the parents could long rejoice [i.e., rejoice] in their children, nor the children profit so much in religion, as that other studies and learning might be blessed thereby". In attempting to put matters right, Browne fell foul of the authorities and he was "discharged of his schole by the grudge of his enimies".

What exactly Browne did in this respect is not clear: he merely records that "What so ever thinges he ffound belonging to the church & to his calling as a member off the church, he did put it in practis. For even little children are off the Church & kingdom off God yea off such saith Christ, doth his kingdom consist: & therefore both in his schole he laboured that the kingdom off God might appeare L and also in those of the towne with whom he kept companie". All that we can assume is that in his endeavours to put Christianity into practice, Browne adopted attitudes which were too critical of those in authority.

It is in his work *A Booke which sheweth the life and manners of All true Christians and howe unlike they are unto Turkes and Papistes and Heathen Folk* (1582) that we find Browne's more general comments on education. Each page is divided into four columns: (1) The State of Christians; (2) The State of Heathen; (3) Definitions; and (4) Divisions, and in the Preface Browne explains why this is so, using the occasion to have another tilt at the learned clergy:

I set it foorth for all sortes of menne, and applyed myselfe both to the learned and the unlearned. If any require plaines [i.e., plainness] let them reade onely the first questions and aunsweres, which are under this title, "The State of Christians" & so let them reade the first halfe page, throughout the Booke... As for the learned, which seeke deepnes, and stand on their methodes and curious divisions, we have for their cause, taken some paines. Not that we tye Religion or Divinitie unto such Divisions, or Definitions, or Logicall demonstrations, or condemne all which bring no such learning: But we have them without excuse, which refuse the trueth, except it be hidden with curious art, and
handled after the maner of their Scholes... This I have done, because they stand so much on Demonstrations, and Syllogisticall reasoninges, for that is their deepness... For such peevish troubles have I troubled myselfe if it might be to beate them with their own weapons, & have given them in the other page, which doeth answere to the questions, the Definitions which they call for. 26

The book contains a number of sections dealing with parents, children, teachers, and studies indicating the considerable value attached by Browne to education and his desire that it should be well regulated. In sections 117 to 120 he deals with the relationships between parents and children, teachers and scholars, relationships which he sees as based upon an agreement. That between parents and children "is of naturall desert and dutie betwenee them" which means that parents are authorised to rule over their children "by naturall desert of begettting and bringing them up". Between teacher and pupil "there must be triall & judgment of each others meetnes for their likinge and callinge... also there must be a due covenaut betweene them". This covenant gives the teacher his authority over the pupil and entitles him "to have maintenance or benefitte" by his pupil in return for the learning which he bestows upon the pupil. 27

Browne, in common with others of his day, conceived of a good education as being primarily a religious education and in section 124 he lays down the principles on which such education is to be given. Children must be taught "the groundes of religioun" and the meaning of the Scriptures; teachers are to "exhort and dehort" for the pupil's conversion and to "require thinges againe which are taught, by particular applying and trying their guift". By "the groundes of religioun" Browne means "the pronounced, written or knoune lawes and doctrine of God" which provide the essential truths of Christianity, denial of which will result in the "overthrowe of al religion, & of our whole redemption". No further details of these laws are given but we can safely assume that Browne meant by this only those laws and rules which could be found in Scripture. This would be in line with general Protestant thought and is borne out by his remarks on "Applying" which he sees as an examination of men's lives by the "trueth of Gods word, to make known the secretes of their heartes unto them, and their just deseretes for the good or evill that is in them, or pro­ceedeth from them". By "dehorting", Browne meant "an edifying by sharpe and blaming wordes with threatenings of judgment" so as to turn the child against vice and error. 28

Important though a sound religious education was to Browne, he was not unmindful of the wider aspects of education. Section 175 of the book poses the question, "How are we to gett and increase thinges?" and the answer is made, "By our callinges in studies of learning. By workes of bodie in sciences and craftes...". Here Browne shows that he conceives of education as having a practical application. "Studies of learning" are exercises which will provide the mind with knowledge and wisdom "the better to governe and reforme us in all dueties", and
"Trades & sciences" are manual crafts and skills by which "to make or do somewhat for living and maintenance". These studies and trades are regarded as a means by which the believer may obey the will of God and so serve Him, that is, they are part of the believer's knowledge of God. In this, Browne was repeating what others had said before him. Calvin had declared that the manual arts were proof of a universal reason and intelligence which ought to lead the individual to acknowledge such arts as special gifts of God. Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575) in the Second Helvetia Confession of 1566 stated similar views and regarded the cultivation of such arts as a duty to God: "God commands us to cultivate our natural talents, and meanwhile adds both gifts and success. And it is obvious that we make no progress in all the arts without God's blessing. In any case, Scripture refers all the arts to God; and, indeed, the heathen trace the origin of the arts to the gods who invented them.

Bullinger belonged to Zürich, the centre of Zwinglianism, the possible influence of which we have already noted in Browne's views on the education of the clergy. As then, we cannot say that this influence was decisive in Browne's position, all that we can do is to note it and to acknowledge the possibility of its having helped shape Browne's attitudes.

The final reference to education found in Browne's writings is in a letter written by him to Lord Burghley (Lord High Treasurer and a distant relation) on 15 April 1590. In this, Browne expresses his love of learning and his desire to reform it. He wants the universities reformed so that "in one yeare schollers may well learne together those arts, which scarcely in ten yeares they untowardly learne in the universities". What this reformation is and how it is to be carried out, Browne does not say but he is certain that if he "were autho­rised to read publique lectures & make profession according" he would bring many thousands to his point of view and so improve their studies. If "Plato, Aristotle, Sokrates & Pythagoras made manie thousands schollers, & that without anie publique maintenance & charge, & in verie few yeares" says Browne, without any diffidence, "so much rather in the arts & points of religion more truelie handled, & utterly differing from them all, I would hope by your Lordships good countenance onely to performe much rather the like...".

In these remarks on education in general, Browne's theme is that of "utility" and in this respect it is worthy of note that Browne was a contemporary of Francis Bacon (1561-1626) who is regarded as the pioneer of educational thought in the seventeenth century. If we accept the judgment that Bacon's was the dominant influence of the period, an influence which reflected his utilitarian concept of education, his desire for better training in "modern" subjects such as history, modern languages, and politics, his dislike of the rigid, classic curriculum and its Aristotelianism, his belief that logic and rhetoric should not be studied by students in the early part of their course, then it would seem that Browne held views which, in some respects, were not dissimilar to those advanced by Bacon, indeed in some ways anticipated him.
It must be remembered that Browne's writings preceded those of Bacon by some twenty years so that he could not be said to have been aware of the latter's educational thought. On the other hand, Bacon was probably familiar with Browne's views. In his Advancement of Learning there could well be a reference to Browne's writings on the question of education and the clergy. In the section dealing with the discreditors of learning, Bacon refers to "the zeal and jealousy of divines" who argue "that knowledge hath in it somewhat of the Serpent, and therefore where it entereth into a man it makes him swell" and "that experience demonstrates how learned men have been arch-heretics... and how the contemplation of second causes doth derogate from our dependence upon God, who is the first cause" points which could certainly be illustrated from the works of Browne. Bacon also devotes some space to a consideration of the Pauline injunction against being "seduced by vain philosophy" which we have already noted as figuring prominently in the argument of Browne. He endeavours to show that Paul did not mean this as an attack upon learning but rather as defining the limitations of human knowledge. We must be wary, however, of exaggerating the possible link between Bacon and Browne (and other early Separatists who also wrote on education) but it does seem reasonable to see the latter as contributing to a stream of educational thought of which Bacon was the greatest exponent.

In so far as the education of the clergy was concerned, Browne showed himself desirous of a reformation both of institutions and curricula. Unfortunately he says little, if anything, as to what form such reformation should take and it would appear that he had not thought this out very fully. Perhaps the real significance of his views is that in their expressions of dissatisfaction with the learned clergy and their learning, Browne was preparing the ground for future controversy within Separatist and Baptist ranks over the question of the necessity, or even desirability, of an educated ministry. As far as Baptists are concerned, this controversy occupied them during the second half of the seventeenth century and lingered on into the eighteenth. The actual controversy formed the basis for the work on which this article is based and is well summarised in Education for Ministry, by N. S. Moon (1979) which traces the history of the Bristol Baptist College.

NOTES

This article is based on the author's unpublished Ph.D. thesis, "The Early Separatists, the Baptists, and Education 1580-1780 (with special reference to the education of the clergy)", Leeds, 1976.


2 R. Browne, A Treatise upon the 23 of Matthew (1582), p.D3 recto.

3 Ibid., D3 verso.
ROBERT BROWNE AND EDUCATION

5 R. Browne, op.cit., D3 recto - D3 verso. 'Doctors sentences' are the works of learned Divines and commentators.
7 R. Browne, op.cit., D3 recto-D3 verso.
9 Browne mentions the Ancient Fathers and Calvin and Beza at this point but does not quote from any of their works to support his argument.
10 II Timothy 2.24.
11 R. Browne, op.cit., D4 verso.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., D4 verso - E1 recto.
14 Ibid., E2 recto - E2 verso.
15 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness". (AV).
16 R. Browne, op.cit., F2 verso.
20 Ibid., p.30.
23 P. Collinson, op.cit., p.27.
24 R. Browne, *A True and Short Declaration* (1583), Al recto.
25 Ibid., Al recto - Al verso.
26 R. Browne, *A Booke which Sheweth...* (1582), D1 recto - D1 verso.
27 Ibid., K1 recto - K3 verso.
28 Ibid., K4 recto.
29 Ibid., O2 recto.
BAPTISTS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

A volume of eight papers given at the 1982 Summer School of the Baptist Historical Paper is to be published in April 1983. Baptists in the Twentieth Century will comprise:

'Reflections on Baptist Church Life' - L. G. Champion
'Still at the Cross Roads? J. H. Shakespeare and Ecumenism' - R. Hayden
'Baptists and the Faith and Order Movement' - W. M. S. West
'British Baptists and Politics since 1914' - D. W. Bebbington
'Baptist Worship in the Twentieth Century' - M. J. Walker
'A Question of Freedom? British Baptists and the German Church Struggle' - K. W. Clements
'Baptists in Glasgow - The Twentieth Century Challenge of Urban Growth and Decline' - D. Watts
'Baptist Arts and Crafts' - C. Binfield

It is hoped that copies will be on sale at the Annual Meeting of the Society at Nottingham.

ANNUAL MEETING 1983: LUTHER ANNIVERSARY

The Annual Meeting of the Baptist Historical Society will be held during the Baptist Union Assembly at Nottingham, on 18th April at 4.30 p.m. The speaker will be Professor A. G. Dickens, C.M.G., F.B.A., who will give a paper on "Why should we remember Martin Luther?". It is hoped that this paper and others dealing with Luther will be published in the October 1983 issue of the Quarterly, to mark the five-hundredth anniversary of Luther's birth.

BAPTISTS IN CANADA: CORRECTION

In our last issue, Vol.XXIX No.8 (October 1982), p.381, the author of Baptists in Canada: Search for Identity Amidst Diversity, J. K. Zeman, was incorrectly given as J. K. Zelman. We apologize for this error.