

Julia Stewart Werner, *The Primitive Methodist Connexion: Its Background and Early History*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1984.

It is now nearly eighty years since H. B. Kendall published his two-volume history of the Primitive Methodist Connexion. Although it relies, as do most works by denominational historians, on the 'providential' (and therefore inevitable) genesis of Primitive Methodism, it nevertheless stands as an impressive document of working-class experience. Consequently it has received in that eighty years no adequate competition. However, Julia Stewart Werner in her new and rather short work (of which only 120 of the 185 pages is devoted to Primitive Methodism specifically) offers both a more mature and convincing account of Primitive Methodist origins.

Werner gives her aim as 'explaining the rise of Primitive Methodism in relation to its Wesleyan Methodist background, and to the social circumstances of its time and locales'. The overarching theme in the book is the sense of opportunity missed by Wesleyan Methodism and of one exploited by Primitive Methodism. That Primitive Methodism and not Wesleyan Methodism took advantage of the social dislocations of the time lay in her view with Wesleyan inadequacies and misdemeanours, with the localism and lay initiative of Primitive Methodism in contrast to the connexionalism and clericalism of Wesleyan Methodism, among other things.

Although Werner does give some sense of the fashioning of and the early sweep of Primitive Methodism up to 1819, as she meticulously traces the spread into the mining communities and rural villages of the East Midlands and up through Yorkshire, she is more concerned with inter-connexional wrangling. With the emphasis on lay initiative, it would have been better for Werner to go beyond the administrative and geographical 'institutional' progress of Primitive Methodism and discover what beliefs motivated the everyday behaviour of Primitive Methodist members and adherents. Only in the final chapter is this partly achieved. Perhaps, as Werner herself suggests, this has much to do with the scarcity of sources. A study of the footnotes reveals that, with the exception of a few local histories, Werner has used relatively few new sources (perhaps an indication that there are none). However, despite the paucity of material, because Werner also asks traditional questions, she arrives at no new answers. Hence the book is not a radical departure from (indeed, it largely endorses) the lines of thought set down by Ward, Gilbert and others.

Moreover, there is very little evidence to support the view that the work is social history, as the initial blurb suggests. By definition, works of social history have one of two analytic prerequisites: the use of quantitative and statistical evidence, and the adoption of a concept of social theory. Werner incorporates neither. Indeed, this is very much traditional narrative history. However, despite these weaknesses, the book does have value. Although Werner does not make as significant a contribution to Methodist historiography as Deborah Valenze's creative efforts to demonstrate the importance of the role of women and cottage religion in *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, it is nevertheless a concise, thoughtful and modern retelling of early Primitive Methodist history, and a welcome alternative to the dated and often laudatory accounts provided by denominational historians of nineteenth-century religion.

WAYNE JOHNSON, *University of Keele*

Paul H. Ballard, *Towards a Contemporary Theology of Work*, HOLI 3.
 Paul H. Ballard, *The Foundations of Pastoral Studies and Practical Theology*, HOLI 4, £4-50. Both from the Faculty of Theology, University College Cardiff.

These are part of a series of occasional publications from Cardiff. The first is a 'discussion paper' arising out of some work with the Industrial Committee of the Council of Churches in Wales, but is the responsible thought of the author. He reviews the socio-economic changes in Western society from the Middle Ages and attitudes to work from Aquinas to developments since the second world war, and goes on to add some Biblical Perspectives. He then evolves an attempt at a systematic theology of work, to enable us to live in an age of ambivalence, where there is a dichotomy between working with the poor and underprivileged, and at the same time relating to man's strength in technological progress etc. This is a very valuable summary and contribution to the present debate on the theology of work.

The second book edited by Paul Ballard contains a series of contributions from members of a working party and others concerned. It traces the rise of pastoral studies since its inauguration by Gordon Davies in Birmingham. The contributors see the relationship between pastoral studies and what has always been known as 'practical theology', and also with other modern disciplines, behavioural studies, sociology, psychology, and psychiatry. From this base they offer an introduction to the practice of pastoral theology, and finally look to the future development of the subject, which depends on how it contributes to the life and mission of the Church. Again this appears to be a valuable discussion paper contributing to a contemporary theological problem.

We are all in Paul Ballard's debt for bringing both these papers to publication.

THORNTON ELWYN

Continued from page 259

- 6 E. A. Payne, op.cit. pp.205-6, where two other inter-war controversies are alluded to, and H. G. Wood, *T. R. Glover: A Biography*, 1953, pp.158-63.
- 7 W. M. S. West, *To Be A Pilgrim*, 1983, pp.73-6.
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp.172-4.
- 9 The Union was particularly pleased to welcome the Home Counties (now Surrey and N. E. Hampshire) Association into membership for this was the Association which the Metropolitan Tabernacle and a number of the churches sympathetic to Spurgeon joined in 1890. The Metropolitan Tabernacle rejoined the London Baptist Association in 1943 and the Baptist Union in 1955 but subsequently withdrew from both, Payne op.cit. pp.204-5 and Hayden, op.cit., pp.47, 90-91.
- 10 On which see P. S. Fiddes et al., *Bound to Love: The Covenant Basis of Baptist Life and Mission*, Baptist Union, 1985.

Menna Prestwich, ed., *International Calvinism 1541-1715*, pp.x, 403. 1985. £35.00.

This volume will provide a most welcome set of studies for those readers of the *Baptist Quarterly* who are interested in the political impact of Calvinism in Europe and America during the period 1541-1715. While it does not attempt to define 'Calvinism' and so uses the term fairly loosely, its main purpose is to examine the way Calvinism shaped and was shaped by the societies in which it took root as a movement. While it is not really adequate to treat 'Calvinism' as a political movement of considerable dynamic without taking rather careful account of its embodiment of a particular set of convictions about the sovereignty of God and the nature of the church, these studies which review much modern research and provide notes for further reading at the close of each essay are a useful introduction to the task which needs to be done.

The one quite extraordinary omission is a study of Calvinism in England 1640-1715. This, after all, was the period when it had an immense impact on English society and politics and took on varied theological shapes within the Church of England, the Presbyterians, the Independents and, of course, the Baptists. If such a study were made, even keeping rather strictly to the political implications of Calvinism, it should be possible to produce an interesting and valuable contribution. To trace the other developments of Calvinism in England during the period would be too much to ask for in a single book let alone a single essay.

But the story is an important one and has excitements all its own: this book is well worth reading.

B. R. WHITE

G. R. Breed, *My Ancestors Were Baptists*, Society of Genealogists, 14 Charterhouse Buildings, London EC1H 7BA, 1986. 35pp. £2-20.

Mr Breed's pamphlet, though heavily priced, is a useful, down-to-earth tool of the trade with only minor blemishes in its historical introduction (e.g. not all Churches of Christ joined the United Reformed Church: a rump Churches of Christ organization continues in existence). Appendixed to Mr Breed's introduction are complete lists of Baptist Registers and Records in the Public Record Office and at the Library of the Society of Genealogists, the latter compiled by L. W. Lawson Edwards, interesting not only for their own sakes but also for the interesting geographical distribution of records indicated.

J. H. Y. BRIGGS