

Ted A. Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A study of European religious life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries*, Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991, 218pp. \$29.95.

While granting the diversity of types and cultural backgrounds, an assistant professor of Church History at Duke Divinity School here seeks to demonstrate that a recognizable 'religion of the heart' developed in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. Those who embraced one or another of the Christian manifestations of this multi-faceted phenomenon were as disenchanted by the scholasticisms into which large portions of the Reformation heritage had degenerated, as by Enlightenment rationalism and religious moralism. At the same time, the 'religion of the heart' was indebted to Locke's grounding of knowledge in reflection upon experience. Catholic devotion - notably that centring in the Sacred Heart, Protestant pietism and Hasidism are all, we are assured, in their several ways, indicative of widespread dissatisfaction with the purely cerebral on the one hand, and the irresponsibly mystical on the other. To both of these the response was affective devotion. The inducements towards such devotion were not exclusively religious: the Thirty Years' War and the English Revolution were prominent hinterland factors in fostering a yearning for reality in religion above and beyond the secular and religious (and *quasi*-religious) struggles of the period.

So to 'Catholic religious movements of the Baroque age': the Jansenists, Quietists and Eudists; thence to the affective piety of English Puritanism, to Scots-Irish revivalism, the Quakers, religious toleration, the Cambridge Platonists, Richard Baxter, Reformed pietism, Labadism, Lutheran pietism and the Moravians; the Welsh revival, the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion and the Wesleys; and, for good measure, Eastern Christian piety and Hasidic Judaism. It is a vast terrain!

In his conclusion, Campbell exemplifies the sectarianism to which 'the religion of the heart' could descend by referring to Joanna Southcott and others; he tells of the institutionalisation of affective religion in modern missions and social reform; and he shows that the several expressions of affective religion did not presuppose consensus concerning 'ultimate or religious values'.

The text is illustrated by good reproductions of the main actors in the story. There is a bibliography which, while it helpfully contains some relevant dissertations, omits certain standard works in English of prime importance, and is less than satisfactory where original sources from continental Europe are concerned. The index would have been more useful had it been fuller.

For whom is this book intended? Any attempt to surmount the often artificial barriers between religious phenomena of similar types is in principle to be welcomed. Its inadequate apparatus, some errors of fact, and such lacunae as the state-church environment of some of the European groups and the social conscience of many of them, will, however, temper the praise of scholars. The 'intelligent layperson' will find much of interest in the biographical portions of the work, but may well be discomfited by the sudden introduction, unexplained, of 'nominalism', 'enthusiasm', and the 'etcetera oath'; and by such highly compressed paragraphs as

those concerning Locke's epistemology, the struggle of the Puritans against the Anglicans (as if some Anglicans were not Puritans), the importance of Thomas Cartwright, the vexed question of the relations between the Mennonites and the English Baptists, and Socinianism and Deism.

Most serious of all is lingering uneasiness with the suggestion that the 'religion of the heart' constitutes a third way between older orthodoxies on the one hand and Enlightenment rationalism on the other. It is not that Professor Campbell fails to see the diversity among the movements he reviews. It is rather that he does not show that we do not in fact have a continuum of religious expressions rather than three (even blurred-edged) categories. Espousers of older orthodoxies and rational divines alike had their affective moments.

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**Peter Naylor**, *Picking up a Pin for the Lord: English Particular Baptists from 1688 to the Early Nineteenth Century*, Grace Publications (distributed by Evangelical Press, Darlington), 1992, 286pp, £9-95.

Utterly persuaded that God had ordained believers' baptism by immersion as the sole mode of entry to the Church, William Buttfild declared, in words which our author finds moving, 'If, therefore, the Lord command me to pick up a pin, it is as much my duty to comply, as it is to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God'. So much for the title of this book. Of course, one person's picking-up-of-a-pin is another person's straining-at-a-gnat - hence the tangled doctrinal thickets through which the minister of Tabernacle Baptist Church, Wellingborough, competently conducts us, making the following points as he goes:

1. From their inception the Particular (Calvinistic) Baptists regarded themselves as a group distinct from the General (Arminian) Baptists.
2. The term 'Strict Baptist' was applied (pejoratively) to Baptists by paedobaptists in the late 1600s, and was thus current some eighty years earlier than has generally been thought.
3. Calvinists were not alone in restricting communion to immersed believers.
4. No fresh arguments for or against restricted communion were advanced during the period under review.

The landmarks in the development of the Particular Baptists as a distinct denomination are noted - among them the Ejectment (1662), the Toleration Act (1689), the London Fund (1717), the Salters' Hall controversy (1719), and the Protestant Dissenting Deputies (1732). We then proceed to the doctrinal issues, which are fairly and accurately presented. John Bunyan appears as the most prominent among those who refused to make baptism by immersion a term of communion, a position to which the erstwhile 'Strict' Benjamin Beddome inclined

in his later years. The point is made that whereas in Bunyan's day 'mixed communion' referred to communion services attended by 'wheat and tares' alike, it subsequently came to indicate services in which those who had been baptized by immersion and those who had not shared equally.

With the passage of the years the protagonists in the debate over restricted communion came and went - Robert Hall, Jr., and Joseph Kinghorn among them - but the arguments remained substantially the same. New disputes arose, however, in connection with the hyper-Calvinism of Gill, Skepp and Brine, and these are set against the 'free offer' position of Andrew Fuller and his sympathisers. Mr Naylor concludes that, while Gill went too far in denying the responsibility of those who hear the Gospel to turn to Christ, Fuller erred in advocating the universal sufficiency of the cross.

When Particular Baptists sought a change from sacramental debate they could turn to church discipline: 'For more than fifty years the church [at Arnesby] automatically excommunicated both those members who married unbelievers and those who married in the parish church'. Or, like the founders of the church at Maze Pond, they could secede in order to avoid the singing of hymns in worship.

Mr Naylor does not hide his own views. He thinks that 'the people of God' should thoroughly train their ministers without any reliance upon the state, and that they should not 'look to seminaries which are Reformed but not explicitly Baptist'. Elsewhere he declares (inserting an ominous parenthetical remark) that 'Baptists who take the New Testament seriously (and not all do, as some who have had dealings with the Baptist Union, for example, have found) will inevitably have problems about free communion, which says in effect that baptism is optional'. All of which suggests the ecumenical importance of this book. Does the Gospel take precedence over church order? Or is church order given in and with the Gospel - as Roman Catholics affirm, and as at least some Strict Baptists seem at least to imply? Remark upon the traditional lack of intimate fellowship between immersed Calvinists and Arminians, Mr Naylor writes, 'Because, historically, men have always been dominated by the theological systems in which they have placed themselves, we ask if it could be otherwise now?' Perhaps it could if, by an act of lateral thinking, they were to allow the Gospel to relativize their systems which, as Mr Naylor says in the next sentence concerning confessions of faith, 'always reflect a sort of built-in obsolescence, and this is because they were the products of their age.' The firmness of Mr Naylor's views will challenge any who may be tempted to think that ecumenism is simply a matter of cordiality towards those with whom we have little difficulty in agreeing.

Eighteen illustrations, endnotes, a fairly full bibliography and an index assist the reader of Mr Naylor's well-intentioned and properly provocative book.

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**Grant Gordon, *From Slavery to Freedom: The Life of David George, Pioneer Black Baptist Minister*** Baptist Heritage in Atlantic Canada, vol. 14, Lancelot Press Ltd, 1992, xxviii, 356pp. ISBN 0-88999-506-8. From Lancelot Press, PO Box 425, Hantsport, Nova Scotia, BOP 1X0.

In 1992 and 1993 Baptists around the globe celebrated with great fervour the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society and its sending of William Carey (1761-1834) to India in 1793. With good reason Baptists recall with gratitude the ways in which God fired Carey and his close friends with concern for the lost and zeal for God's glory but, as this recent biography of David George (1743-1810) rightly reminds us, they were not the only ones in the eighteenth century to be gripped in this way. Dr Grant Gordon, Director of Field Education and lecturer in Baptist history at Ontario Theological Seminary, has given us a compelling account of George's life from his early days as a slave in the American South to his experience as a Calvinistic Baptist church planter and pastor in the Maritimes and Sierra Leone.

The key resource document is an account of his life which George gave in 1792 to two of Carey's English Baptist colleagues and friends, Samuel Pearce (1766-1799) and John Rippon (1750-1836), and which Rippon subsequently published in his *Baptist Annual Register* (reproduced by Gordon as an appendix, pp.168-83). Without this account George's early life would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to relate. With it as a substantial foundation for the first forty-nine years, Gordon has, on the basis of obviously painstaking research, told the exciting story.

Born into slavery in Virginia, George ran away from his master in the early 1760s, and was subsequently taken captive by a North American native named Blue Salt, an important leader of the Creek Nation. After living several months among the Creek Indians, George passed through a couple more masters till he ended up in the hands of George Galphin (ca.1711-1782). During the time that Galphin was his master, George was converted and became a member of Silver Bluff Baptist Church in Georgia, the first all-Black Baptist congregation in America. When Galphin left his slaves to fend for themselves during the American Revolution, George and his family fled to British-held Savannah where he was given his freedom. As the fighting between the British and the Americans drew to a close, and a British defeat was imminent, George and his family left the American South once and for all in 1782, and joined the exodus of British loyalists to Nova Scotia. They spent ten years, from 1782 to 1792, in Shelburne, Nova Scotia. Here he lost little time in planting a Calvinistic Baptist church. As knowledge of his preaching abilities spread throughout Nova Scotia and then New Brunswick, he began to receive invitations to preach further and further afield. To this day George 'has remained a rallying point for the black Baptists of Nova Scotia for his pioneering work, and for his strenuous efforts to overcome many odds' [Bridglal Pachai, cited p.71]. In 1792, however, George, his family and much of his congregation left the Maritimes to settle in West Africa. A company had been founded in England a few years earlier to establish a settlement in Sierra Leone, to meet 'the needs of . . . unemployed blacks in London', introduce European culture and Christianity to Africa, and be a place 'where whites and blacks would live as equals' [pp.88-9]. As in Nova Scotia, George played a vital role in the establishment of a Calvinistic Baptist witness in this colony, which was

called Freetown. Unfortunately the Sierra Leonean Baptists did not develop after George's death in 1810, and in 1980 numbered only 825 in eleven congregations [p.158].

The very year in which George landed in Sierra Leone he undertook an important trip to England, where he landed on 10 February 1793. Here he made the acquaintance of John Newton (1725-1807), once the captain of a slave ship who had sailed in the waters off Sierra Leone. As Newton had matured in Christ, he had grown increasingly convinced that slavery was a vile and wicked institution, that had to be eliminated from the British Empire. He was especially able to use his own experience to aid those fighting against the slave trade and slavery. Newton was undoubtedly pleased to meet George, but sad that he saw so little of him once the black pastor became something of a celebrity among the English Baptists. In recounting this period of George's life, Gordon draws extensively on an important series of letters between Newton and John Ryland, Jr (1753-1825), the pastor of Broadmead Baptist Church in Bristol and principal of the Bristol Baptist Academy. 'When David George first arrived,' Newton wrote to Ryland in May 1793, 'he was often with me. But since he has been published as pastor of a Baptist church, I have lost him' [cited p.121]. It was on this trip that George shared his testimony with Samuel Pearce and John Rippon. Rippon's subsequent publication of it played a vital role in the evangelical fight against slavery and 'no doubt alerted many Christians to the evils of racial prejudice and slavery' [p.125].

Our most extensive insight into George's theology comes from this final period of his life. The governor of Freetown, Zachary Macaulay of the Clapham Sect (1768-1838) wrote in his journal a lengthy account of a twelve-hour conversation he had with George in 1797, clearly revealing that George espoused Calvinism, though, as far as Macaulay was concerned, a Calvinism tinged with antinomianism which bordered on High Calvinism [pp.142-50]. He even likens George's views to those of William Huntington (1745-1813), the well-known High Calvinist and doctrinal antinomian. Gordon postulates that 'the antinomian leanings in George's thinking may have resulted from his earlier contact with the Separate Baptists in South Carolina' and with the churches influenced by Henry Alline (1748-1784) in Nova Scotia [p.146]. Important as this journal entry is for determining George's theological convictions, it is not by George himself, but delivered through Macaulay, who was extremely wary of anything that smacked of 'enthusiasm'. Moreover, if George's theology had prominent antinomian tendencies, none of his English Baptist acquaintances like Ryland and Rippon, for whom antinomianism was a bugbear, appear to have noticed.

Gordon's judicious use of the correspondence between Newton and Ryland (hitherto unpublished and which Gordon is preparing for publication) to shed light on George's career is typical of the extensive research which undergirds this biography. The reproduction of a number of key documents as appendices further enhances the usefulness of the book for the scholar and historian. Yet the scholarly excellence of the work in no way detracts from its readability, which powerfully communicates the radiant witness of David George's life to the manifold grace of God in a tumultuous period of war, revolutionary upheaval, and religious revival.

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