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THE BAPTIST QUARTERLY

incorporating the Transactions of the
BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EDITORIAL

THE jubilee of the Baptist Historical Society was well and truly celebrated at the recent Baptist Union Assembly. We were well served indeed by our speakers. First, by Dr. Thomas Richards, who spoke at the Annual Meeting on "Some disregarded sources of Baptist History," and secondly by Professor E. G. Rupp who, on the Tuesday morning, addressed the whole Assembly, taking for his subject "The importance of Denominational History." Both these addresses were of the highest order and we record our thanks to these two distinguished church historians. Readers will find Dr. Rupp's address in this current issue and Dr. Richards's will follow in a subsequent number.

The one disappointing feature of the celebration was the fact that the business part of the meeting on the Monday afternoon was reduced to something of a farce by the inordinate length of the first Session of the Assembly. This is the second year in succession that this has happened and it is obvious that the officers of the Society will have to consider seriously whether this is the best time for the meeting. It was the more unfortunate this year in that, as we indicated in the editorial last quarter, certain matters concerning the purpose and functioning of the Society were due for discussion. In the event, there was no time to discuss, but agreement was given in principle to the initiating of necessary action. It is therefore proposed, in the near future, to begin work on the listing of material available for the writing of Baptist history.

The two addresses referred to above, each in their different ways, drew attention to the need for such work. Dr. Richards pointed us to many valuable sources of materials and, after suggesting the particular potentiality of records of Sessions, Registries and Somerset House, added: "Why should this Society not appoint a panel of competent researchers out of its own body to find out exactly how the situation lies in the several counties?" Why not indeed! Yet one feels that very probably there is much work to be done by such researchers first on materials *still in the hands of Baptists themselves.* Soon after writing the April editorial the editor visited a small Baptist church to look at its library. The books were very interesting, but still more interesting was the cupboard in the corner of the library. This cupboard yielded up some rare treasures, both manuscript and printed. The manuscripts consisted of eighteenth-century sermon notes and letters dating from both seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The printed matter was largely pamphlets on Baptism from the late seventeenth century. It is highly unlikely that this will prove an isolated case.

Dr. Rupp drew attention to the danger of the publications connected with denominational historical societies becoming too modern. By this is meant the filling up of such magazines as the *Baptist Quarterly* with articles dealing wholly with present-day theological issues to the exclusion of source material for, and the results of researches into, denominational history. This is a timely warning which we must heed. But we must find the matter for publication. We again invite readers to submit to the Editorial Board for possible publication any material concerning Baptist history, whether it be results of research such as E. P. Winter's article on "The Lord's Supper" published last quarter or a comment on manuscript material such as W. S. Davies's "An Early Sunday School Minute Book" in this issue.

In addition, there is a need, as Dr. Rupp also pointed out, to develop further research work by English Baptists on the Anabaptists. In this connection it is proposed to publish from time to time a substantial article on recent materials dealing with the Anabaptist movement many of which may not be readily available to the English reader. The first of these articles will probably appear next quarter. Amongst the recent publications which will be considered are biographies of Felix Manz, Pilgram Marbeck and Ludwig Hätzer, the writings of Hans Denck, and Professor Blanke's scholarly reconstruction of the beginnings of Zürich Anabaptism entitled *Brüder in Christo.* We would, however, take the opportunity of drawing the immediate attention of all those interested to the first part of a bibliographical survey "Studies in the Radical Reformation" by G. H. Williams published in the

American journal *Church History* for March of this year. This is of immense value to anyone desirous of making a serious study of the Anabaptist movement.

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The first two numbers of a new journal produced by the American Baptist Historical Society have recently reached us. This publication, called *Foundations,* replaces *The Chronicle.* It is an ambitious venture, being almost twice the size of its predecessor and having more than two dozen editors of one sort and another. Its purpose is to stimulate theological thought on Baptist practice and principles amongst American Baptists and to chronicle and examine Baptist history in this relevant context. We give this new journal a most hearty welcome and wish it great success. It is worthy of note that, amongst the book reviews in the April number of *Foundations,* there is an omnibus review of seven books by British Baptists under the general heading of "British Baptists Rethink Baptist Tradition." One somewhat surprising omission to the list, however, is Dr. Wheeler Robinson's *Baptist Principles* which, although brief, is very much to the point and is probably the best of all to put first into the hands of an intelligent enquirer after Baptist thought. It is very encouraging to read the generous reviews of the seven books (even if Dr. Leonard G. Champion is christened Lloyd G. Champion and the very much still with us Dr. Dakin is referred to as the "late Arthur Dakin"!!), and to discover that, although relatively small numerically, the denomination in this country may still be of assistance to the much vaster American Baptist Convention.

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From America too comes another publication which owes much to British Baptists, namely *Eleven Years of Bible Bibliography* edited by H. H. Rowley (The Falcon's Wing Press, Indian Hills, Colorado. $7.50). This is a volume of some 800 pages and is a collection of the book lists of the Society for Old Testament Study from 1946-56. To libraries and individuals not already in possession of the book lists this volume is of inestimable value. Every book of any worth on the Old Testament published during the last eleven years in English, German, French and the Scandinavian languages is mentioned. Dr. Rowley, in the Preface, explains the purpose of the lists. "The notices on the books included are deliberately kept as short as possible, and are designed to indicate to scholars the area with which the book deals and the quality of the book." In addition to Dr. Rowley the following British Baptists have contributed notices : The Rev. L. H. Brockington, Dr. G. Henton Davies (the Secretary of the Society for Old Testament Study), Professor A. S. Herbert, Dr. A. R. Johnson,

Dr. T. H. Robinson and the Rev. J. N. Schofield—truly remarkable evidence of the contribution made by British Baptists to the field of Old Testament study.

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We are grateful to Dr. R. H. Fischer for giving our series on "Baptists and the Ministry" such an excellent send-off with his thorough examination of Luther's thinking on the priesthood of all believers. He has done this journal the honour of producing an article of the highest scholarship. Professor Fischer has spent the last year at Mansfield College, Oxford, in charge of a group of Lutheran students now connected with that College and his presence in Oxford has also benefited our own Regent's Park College. Next quarter the series will be continued with an article by Dr. Champion on the Nature of the Christian Ministry.

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Baptists and the Ministry

LUTHER ON THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

Introduction

IN *The Apostolic Ministry* the late Bishop Kenneth E. Kirk described the Protestant doctrine of the "priesthood of all believers" as meaning that a Protestant refuses "to have any man standing between himself and God." This is gross nonsense. Unfortunately, one dare not label it so without admitting that many Protestants themselves understand the doctrine in this way —whereupon gross nonsense graduates to pernicious nonsense.

Like the hospitable demon who brought in seven other demons more evil than himself, this misapprehension usually plays host to several other pernicious notions about the nature of faith, the Church, the Ministry, and the relation of the Church and the common life. Consider, for example, how familiar are ideas such as these: that faith is an individual and private relation of man to God (over against the allegedly collectivistic impersonal way of Rome); that the visible Church is really just a sociological convenience (or embarrassment!), of minor consequence to the Christian if only he cultivates the ideal of the "essential," "invisible" Church with its "spiritual" unity (over against the alleged institutionalism of Rome); that Protestantism essentially discards all real distinction between clergy and laity (over against the sacerdotalism of Rome); that there is no real distinction between the spiritual and the temporal spheres, between the sacred and the secular, since "all of life is sacred" (over against the ecclesiasticism of Rome).

All of these notions are wrong, in the classical Protestant tradition. The fact that at one point or another they all come so near being right makes them not less but more dangerously, insidiously wrong. If they are all brother-demons to the distorted notion that the "priesthood of believers" means a claim that "every believer is to be his own priest,"[1] then it would appear that a clarification of this great Protestant doctrine is an urgent ecumenical task.

Reappraisal of the priesthood of believers principle should begin with a return to the man who first thought the matter through, in deep travail of soul and mind. Martin Luther had been trying, during the second decade of the 16th century, to teach the Gospel, the message of salvation found in the Word of God. Throughout his lifetime he derived strength from the fact

that it was the Church which had called and commissioned him to teach the Gospel. He became convinced that the Word taught justification by grace through faith, and therefore that some current practices and teachings were dubious, some downright incompatible with the fundamental Gospel. But churchmen in the name of the Church forthwith began accusing him of blasphemy and heresy. Faced with this charge, Luther had to ask questions he had never asked before: is this really the Church, if it condemns this teaching of the Gospel, which is not mine but Christ's?

This is the story down to 1519-20. It was at this time that Luther was driven to find a clear answer to the problem: what *is* the Church? Romanists had their own criteria for answering this question, and by them they inevitably and easily stamped Luther a heretic. But Luther's question then became: on what basis, and by what right, have they set up these criteria? Is this what the Gospel really teaches?

The showdown came in 1520. In his *Address to the German Nobility* and his *Babylonian Captivity of the Church,* Luther analyzed the foundations of the Roman Catholic position. The Romanists, he said, have created "three walls" behind which they have so entrenched themselves that no one has been able to reform them.[2] The first is their claim that "the spiritual is above the temporal power," whereby they have prevented any effective criticism by the laity. By the other two walls, the claims that the pope alone rules the interpretation of Scripture, and alone has the right to call a Council, they have prevented any correction from within the Church leadership itself. The first wall discloses the sacerdotalism of Rome, the second and third its hierarchicalism. Upon these premises Romanism has shaped God's revelation into a sacramental system, whereby an institution claims to be the divinely-established dispenser of God's grace and the rightful controller on earth of God's whole creation. As Luther reviewed the Roman Catholic sacramental system in *Babylonian Captivity of the Church,* he perceived that priestly ordination was the keystone of it all; if this sacrament were to fail, the papacy itself would scarcely survive.[3]

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

In the face of all this, Luther had to answer not simply the question, what shall we do about the Church? but also, what really is the Church? Behind the need for action stood the need for theology, and behind theology the very nature of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Luther gave his answer first in terms of the priesthood of all believers. It must be kept in mind that he developed this expression to meet a very definite historical problem: a priestly tyranny. He found the expression useful even later, in other situations also,

for presenting Scriptural truth. But we must not treat this expression, priesthood of all believers, as if it says *all* that he found needed to be said about the Church. It does not convey his *whole* doctrine of the Church. Nevertheless it is true to say that all he said about the Church bears an integral relation to it.

What then is the Church of Jesus Christ?

Eck, Alveld, and company asserted that it is the institution or people whose ruler by divine right as well as human right is the pope.[2] Luther retorted:

> The Scriptures speak of the Church (*Christenheit*) quite simply, and use the term in only one sense . . . , the Church is called the assembly of all the believers in Christ upon earth, just as we pray in the Creed: "I believe in the Holy Ghost, a communion of saints." This community or assembly consists of all those who live in true faith, hope and love; so that the essence, life and nature of the Church is not a bodily assembly, but an assembly of hearts in one faith, as St. Paul says, Eph. 4 : 5, "One baptism, one faith, one Lord."[5]

Accordingly, "The Church is a spiritual assembly of souls in one faith."[6]

What! Does this mean that the Church is not a palpable historical entity, but simply something invisible or ideal? Bishop Newbigin, in his *Household of God,* a book otherwise so excellent that it is required reading for my Lutheran theological students, trips headlong over this term, "spiritual assembly." He selects Luther as the spokesman for the Protestant view of the Church, and Luther's *Papacy at Rome* as the adequate expression of Luther's view; then he proceeds to misinterpret both the context and the words. In part Luther's emphasis on the word "spiritual" is meant to combat the Roman Catholic idea that "spiritual" applies almost exclusively to the clergy and its possessions; ordination therefore provides "the roots of that detestable tyranny of the clergy over the laity!"[7] But further, *Papacy at Rome* is a reply to Alveld, who was trying to silence Luther with this argument: Here, as anyone can see, is the Church; it is visible; a visible body must have one visible head; be silent and obey him. Against this kind of argument Luther protested. His protest did not assert that there is no palpability or historicity about the Church, any more than he suggested that souls normally live on earth without bodies; what he said was that "the Church is a spiritual community, which can *be classed with* a temporal community as little as spirits with bodies, or faith with temporal possessions."[8] By "temporal community" Luther meant one "which must of necessity *be bound* to localities and places."[9] The question here is the essence of the Church: what makes it what it is. What makes the Church essentially *different* from other social groups in the last analysis is something discernible on earth to faith, not to sight.

We shall return later to Newbigin's analysis of Luther's view of the Church. But meanwhile, two thoughts should be placed upon our mental cookstoves and started simmering. (1) *Papacy at Rome,* by itself or with the *Treatise concerning the Ban,* 1520, is not a broad enough screen on which to read Luther's whole conception of the Church clearly. The issue in *Papacy at Rome* concerned chiefly the second and third "walls" of the Romanists: whether the pope's great power is of "divine right."[10] Luther replied: "It is clear that the Holy Church is not *bound* to Rome, but is as wide as the world, the assembly of those of one faith, a spiritual and not a bodily thing, for that which one believes is not bodily or visible"; the Church is in its essence an object of faith. But he went on:

> "The *external marks,* whereby one can *perceive where* this Church is on earth, are baptism, the Sacrament (i.e. Lord's Supper), and the Gospel (i.e. preaching of the Word); and not Rome, or this place, or that . . . Neither Rome nor the papal power is a mark of the Church, for that power cannot *make Christians,* as baptism and the Gospel do; and therefore it does not belong to the true Church and is but a human ordinance."[11] "The conclusion is inevitable, that just as being in the Roman unity does not make one a Christian, so being outside of that unity does not make one a heretic or unchristian."[12]

In this treatise, however, Luther was not yet ready to attack the "first wall" (the sacerdotal principle) head-on, but his major weapons were already being prepared and wheeled into place: the Church is the assembly of believers, and believing laymen "are truly spiritual," as well as the clergy (p. 356); the "Keys" have been given to the whole Church in common (pp. 376ff), not to the hierarchical clergy alone; the pope indeed has authority, but "it is of human and not of divine right" (p. 375)—even on earth, no one should be called "Head" of the Church but Christ (pp. 357ff). Remember, in addition to all this, that when "spiritualising" Protestants tried to seize and run off with the concept of a spiritual assembly, Luther vigorously opposed them; this battle does not yet appear in *Papacy at Rome.*

(2) No one who has really read Luther can imagine that "spiritual assembly" meant for him that "external membership" in the Church is "a merely external" thing which can be severed without ultimate spiritual harm.[13] Luther's labours as a practical churchman and his theological analysis of the sacraments are indications to the contrary. Still more explicity is his word against Murner: "When I called the Church a spiritual assembly, you mocked me, as if I would build a church like Plato's city, which could be found nowhere."[14] In reality, Luther did heroic service in rescuing the Biblical conception of spirit and flesh from the Greek-influenced conception of spirit as the antithesis of matter. Newbigin confused the issue when he interpreted Luther's view of

the ban as "substituting at this critical point for the true and biblical dialectic of holy and sinful, a false and unbiblical dialectic of outward and inward, visible and invisible." Actually, the issue is not the biblical dialectic of holy and sinful (which Luther brilliantly maintained in the bold paradox *simul peccator et justus*), but the biblical dialectic of spirit-and-flesh versus the unbiblical one of spirit-and-matter, while the dialectics of outward and inward, and visible and invisible, are not unbiblical at all: cf. *Eph.* iii. 16 and *Heb.* xi. 1, not to multiply references.

Luther's answer to entrenched sacerdotal Romanism came within a few months of the appearance of *Papacy at Rome,* in the great "Reformation manifestos." The answer was couched in Biblical terms which had contemporary relevance. The Church is the people of God: note, "people" is a singular, not a plural noun here! It is the fellowship or community of believers in Christ. Indeed, because of current unfortunate connotations in the normal word *Kirche,* Luther tried to emphasise this insight by replacing *Kirche* by *Christenheit* (not *Christentum,* by the way) and *Gemeinde* (fellowship or congregation) wherever possible.

Still more explicitly, what kind of people or fellowship is the Church? Luther answered, in attack against the "first wall": "All Christians are truly of the 'spiritual estate'." "Through baptism all of us are consecrated to the priesthood, as St. Peter says in I *Peter* ii. 9, 'Ye are a royal priesthood, a priestly kingdom,' and the book of *Revelation* says (v. 10), 'Thou hast made us by Thy blood to be priests and kings.'"[15] Here in the *Address to the Nobility* the theme of the priesthood of all believers comes to clear statement, and it resounds again and again in the treatises of 1520 and in subsequent years when the battle had widened to two fronts. The easiest way to locate the passages is to find all the citations of I *Peter* ii. 9 in the Scriptural indexes of the various volumes of Luther's works.

THE CHURCH AS A PRIESTHOOD

The Church *is* a priesthood. This is both more fundamental and more accurate than to say, the Church *has* a priesthood. But where does the accent then lie? On every Christian's "right" to approach God without any priestly intermediary? Not at all! Here Luther's *Treatise on Christian Liberty* is instructive. In this work, as is well known, Luther expounded the paradox that a Christian is perfectly free, subject to none, and at the same time perfectly a servant, subject to all. The first member of the paradox describes a Christian's faith, the second his love. But now look a little closer. We find a discussion of what "priest" means, and why therefore Christ is the one true priest, and in what sense then a Christian is a priest.

That we may look more deeply into that grace which our inward man has in Christ, we must consider that in the Old Testament God sanctified to Himself every first-born male, and the birth-right was highly prized, having a two-fold honour, that of priesthood, and that of kingship. For the first-born brother was priest and lord over all the others, and was a type of Christ, the true and only First-born of God the Father and of the Virgin Mary, and true King and Priest, not after the fashion of the flesh and of the world. For His kingdom is not of this world. He *reigns* in heavenly and spiritual things and consecrates them—such as righteousness, truth, wisdom, peace, salvation, etc. Not as if all things on earth and in hell were not also subject to Him—else how could He protect and save us from them?—but His Kingdom consists neither in them nor of them. Nor does His *priesthood* consist in the outward splendour of robes and postures, like that human priesthood of Aaron and of our present-day Church; but it consists in spiritual things, through which He by an unseen service intercedes for us in heaven before God, there offers Himself as a sacrifice and does all things that a priest should do, as Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews describes Him under the type of Melchizedek. Nor does He only pray and intercede for us, but within our soul He teaches us through the living teaching of His Spirit, thus performing the two real functions of a priest, of which the prayers and the preaching of human priests are visible types.

Now, just as Christ by His birthright obtained these two prerogatives, so He imparts them to and shares them with every one who believes on Him according to the law of the aforesaid marriage, by which the wife owns whatever belongs to the husband. Hence *we are all priests and kings in Christ*, as many as believe on Christ, as I Peter 2 : 9 says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood and priestly kingdom, that ye should show forth the virtues of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

The priesthood and kingship we explain as follows: First, as to the *kingship*, every Christian is by faith so exalted above all things that by a spiritual power he is lord of all things without exception, so that nothing can do him any harm whatever, nay, all things are made subject to him and compelled to serve him to his salvation . . . (Rom. 8 : 28, I Cor. 3 : 22f). Not as if every Christian were set over all things, to possess and control them by physcial power—a madness with which some churchmen are afflicted—for such power belongs to kings, princes and men on earth. . . . The power of which we speak is spiritual; it rules in the midst of enemies, and is mighty in the midst of oppression, which means nothing else than that strength is made perfect in weakness, and that in all things I can find profit unto salvation, so that the cross and death itself are compelled to serve me and to work together with me for my salvation. . . . Lo, this is the inestimable power and liberty of Christians.

Not only are we the freest of kings, we are also *priests* forever, which is far more excellent than being kings, because as priests we are *worthy to appear before God and to pray for others and to teach one another the things of God*. For these are the functions of priests, and cannot be granted to any unbeliever. Thus Christ has obtained for us, if we believe on Him, that we are not only His brethren, co-heirs and fellow-kings with him, but also fellow-priests with Him, who may boldly come into the presence of God in the spirit of faith and cry "Abba, Father!", pray for one another and do all things which we see done and prefigured in the outward and visible works of priests . . . Who then can comprehend the lofty dignity of the Christian? Through his *kingly* power he rules over all things, death, life and sin, and through his *priestly* glory is all powerful with God, because God does the things which he asks and desires . . . (Ps. 145 : 19). To this glory a man attains, surely not by any works of his, but by faith alone."[16]

Luther deals with the priesthood of believers principle, then, in terms of faith rather than love, because this principle indicates primarily what God does in making us believers, rather than what man does. This priesthood, indeed, becomes in those who receive it, a "right," but in a quite unusual sense. For "king" is the better word to emphasise the believer's *rights,*—and even these are construed as the power to undergo suffering victoriously; the word "priest" emphasises his privileged *responsibility,* toward God and hence toward all his neighbours, his divine calling into service rather than his human approach to God. "Priest" indicates the difference between interceding with God and cajoling God, and the difference between Christian love and even the most enlightened self-interest. It indicates the crucial connective between faith and the doctrine of Christian love, where we are told—astonishingly from one who had so high a Christology—that "each should become as it were a Christ to the other, that we may be Christs to one another and Christ may be the same in all; that is, that we may be truly Christians."[17] It indicates a crucial corrective to individualism, for this priesthood, in the first place, is no human performance, adding to or repeating Christ's sacrificial reconciling priesthood, but Christ's gift which he has obtained for us: Christ alone is the high priest;[18] secondly, it pertains to the Church corporately, not to any individual privately; thirdly, it is used only in service for others, never for oneself.

The Church is a royal priesthood; priesthood applies to all its members in common. Does this mean that the Church has no special, clerical priesthood? Luther was challenged by Jerome Emser, who admitted that there was indeed a sense in which all Christians constituted a "spiritual priesthood," but argued that the New Testament also established a "consecrated priesthood."[19] Luther had already set forth his positive position in 1520 before he wrote his long rebuttal against Emser. The Reformer asserted point-blank that the New Testament says not a word about a "spiritual estate" above the laity, marked with an "indelible character," equipped by divine right with power not only to dispense divine grace and offer expiatory sacrifices but also to rule the laity. Nevertheless, he insisted that an ordained ministry is necessary in the Church, not simply for human, sociological reasons but because it is an apostolic, Christ-established ministry. Here we come to grips with the problem of the authority of the Church, and authority within the Church.

THE NATURE AND ORDER OF THE MINISTRY

Is there a special priesthood within the Church? Yes, but it is derived from and responsible to the universal priesthood of believers.

Whoever comes out of the water of baptism can boast that he is already *consecrated* priest, bishop and pope, though it is not seemly that every one should *exercise the office.* Nay, just because we are all in like manner priests, no one must put himself forward and undertake, without our *consent and election,* to do what is in the power of all of us. For what is common to all, no one dare take upon himself without the will and command of the community (Gemeinde); and should it happen that one chosen for such an office were deposed for malfeasance, he would then be just what he was before he held office. Therefore a priest in Christendom is nothing else than an *office-holder.* While he is in office, he has precedence; when deposed, he is a peasant or a townsman like the rest. Beyond all doubt, then, a priest is no longer a priest when he is deposed . . .

There is really no difference between laymen and priests, princes and bishops, "spirituals" and "temporals", as they call them, except that of *office* and *works,* but not of "estate"; for they are all of the same estate, —true priests, bishops and popes—though they are not all engaged in the same work, just as all priests and monks have not the same work. This is the teaching of St. Paul in Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12 and of St. Peter in I Peter 2, as I have said above, viz., that we are all one body of Christ, the Head, all members one of another. Christ has not two different bodies, one "temporal", the other "spiritual." He is one Head, and He has one body.

Therefore, just as those who are now called "spiritual"—priests, bishops or popes—are neither different from other Christians nor superior to them, except that they are charged with the administration of the Word of God and the sacraments, which is their work and office, so it is with the temporal authorities—they bear sword and rod with which to punish the evil and to protect the good.[20]

To be more explicit about the nature of this office:

We are all priests, as many of us are Christians. But the priests, as we call them, are *ministers,* chosen from among us, who do all that they do in our name. And the priesthood is nothing but a ministry, as we learn from I Cor. 4 : 1, "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."[21]

Against Emser, Luther insisted:

The Holy Scriptures, particularly in the New Testament, where types are at an end, speak only of one, *a spiritual priesthood,* just as I said when discussing the papacy that the Scriptures speak only of one, a spiritual church. . . . And I hereby make this challenge: If Emser will bring forward a single letter of Scripture in which his churchy (Kirchisch) priesthood is called a priesthood, I will give in to him. But he will not take the challenge.

The Scriptures make us all priests alike, as I have said, but the churchy priesthood which is now universally distinguished from the laity and alone called a priesthood, in the Scriptures is called *ministerium, servitus, dispensatio, episcopatus, presbyterium, and at no place sacerdotium or spiritualis.* I must translate that. The Scriptures, I say, call the spiritual estate and priestly office a ministry, a service, an office, an eldership, a fostering, a guardianship, a preaching office, shepherds.[22]

When Luther calls the ministry nothing but an "office," does he depreciate it? Does he ignore its unique holiness, and reduce the ministry to a purely utilitarian conception? No, decidedly not. This may be what we post-Enlightenment moderns see in the

expression, but it is not the conception of Luther, for whom the Church was a spiritual fellowship with Jesus Christ as its Head. When Luther suggested dropping the name "priest" for "those who are in charge of Word and sacrament among the people,"[23] he did so not because he wanted to eliminate the word from Christendom, but because he wanted to exalt it and protect it from sacerdotal misuse. Actually, "there is no greater name or honour before God and men than to be a priest."[24]

When Luther said that, because the Christian community should not and cannot be without the Word of God, "it follows therefore logically that it must have teachers and preachers to administer this Word,"[25] he was not reducing the ministry to a rational postulate. The nature of the Christian ministry is determined by Jesus Christ the Head of the Church, and by the Word, the Gospel of redemption, which He has committed to it. The ministry (reverting to the traditional term, in 1530, Luther calls it the "spiritual estate"!)

> has been established and instituted by God, not with gold or silver, but with the precious blood and the bitter death of His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. From His wounds flow the Sacraments . . . , and He earned it dearly that in the whole world men should have this office of preaching, baptizing, loosing, binding, giving the Sacrament, comforting, warning, exhorting with God's Word, and whatever else belongs to the pastoral office. This office not only helps to further and maintain this temporal life and all the worldly classes, but it also delivers from sin and death, which is its proper and chief work. Indeed, the world stands and abides only because of the spiritual estate; if it were not for this estate, it would long since have gone to destruction.[26]

This is an office through which Christ does his work; it may even be said, the minister actually does Christ's work.

> So many souls are daily taught by him, converted, baptized and brought to Christ and saved, redeemed from sins, death, hell, and the devil, and through him come to everlasting righteousness, to everlasting life and heaven. . . .

The minister does "great miracles," perhaps in a bodily way, but most certainly "spiritually in the soul, where the miracles are even greater."

Luther adds, significally:

> Not that he does this as a *man*! It is his *office,* ordained by God for this purpose, that does it, that and the *Word* of God which he teaches; *he is the instrument for this.*[27]

This is to say that if one must distinguish between the person of the minister and the office of his ministry, so must one distinguish between the *office,* committed to the minister and the "success" of the minister's service. When Luther calls the clerical office a "service" or "ministry," he is thinking primarily of the objective rather than the subjective aspect. Ruben Josefson points out that

the human service and the divinely instituted office are not to be identified. In reaction to Roman sacerdotalism, Protestants have sometimes tried to protect the holiness of the ministerial office by basing it

on the pietistical idea that the priest's sacrifice is the offering of his own heart to God, and his primary function is to lead others into the kind of spiritual life he himself lives. The priest represents the congregation before God. By such reasoning he is easily made into a religious virtuoso, who, in what is almost a substitutionary way, offers his heart and soul to God. . . . It is in the sacrifice which God Himself makes that the ministry of the Christian Church finds, and must find, its basis. . . . In another context Luther says, "The office of preaching is a ministry which proceeds from Christ, not to Christ; and it comes to us, not from us." (W.A. 10 : 1 : 2, 122) . . . [28]

Thus, "the ministry has its foundation in God's redemptive work in Christ, and is, so to say, the fulcrum by which that work exercises its continuing effectiveness. The ministry as a God-given order is one of the church's constitutive factors."[29] This is the apostolicity of the Christian ministry. It is not simply a human contrivance to assure the continuity of the Church.

According to this sociological view, the office is secondary to the church; and the church is secondary to the faith and the persons sharing it. Such a concept cannot be harmonized with the theological view of the nature of the church, as it is found in Luther, for instance. "The office of the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments has been instituted that we may come to this faith," the Augsburg Confession says. That is in effect to say that the office is antecedent to the faith.[30]

Now, since Christians are essentially and radically equal in dignity within the Church, there is no room for the notion that the clergy "rules" the laity (as rulership is usually understood), or that the clergy is necessarily graded internally for purposes of rule. Has Luther, then, as Roman Catholics and some Anglicans have supposed, abandoned the "apostolic," "three-fold" ministry? By what rules does one establish what is "apostolic,"—mark well, not in the sense of just anything that happened during apostolic times, but that which is necessary and constitutive in the abiding apostolic fellowship to which the apostolic faith was committed?

Luther insists that the apostolic ministry, according to the New Testament, is in essence *one order,* the priesthood which belongs equally and commonly to all believers, and which hence is assigned in a special way, for the sake of "decency and good order," I *Cor.* xiv. 40, to special "ministers chosen from among us, who do all that they do in our name."[31] This is the "ministry of the Word and sacraments," or one may say more briefly, "ministry of the Word," not in the sense simply of custody of the Bible, but the office of "stewards of the mysteries of God."

Luther lists and expounds seven functions of a priest, i.e. of the corporate Christian priesthood: (1) to teach, to preach and

proclaim the Word of God, (2) to baptise, (3) to consecrate and administer the Eucharist, (4) to bind and loose sins (the Keys), (5) to pray for others (intercession), (6) to sacrifice (i.e. ourselves, *Rom.* xii. 1, I *Peter* ii. 5), and (7) to judge of all doctrine and spirits. . . .

> But the first and foremost of all on which everything else depends, is the teaching (in such contexts this word for Luther is virtually interchangeable with preaching) of the Word of God. For we teach with the Word, we consecrate with the Word, we bind and absolve sins by the Word, we baptize with the Word, we sacrifice with the Word, we judge all things by the Word. Therefore when we grant the Word to anyone, we cannot deny anything to him pertaining to the exercise of his priesthood.[32]

Luther objects that Roman Catholic ordination is not grounded on this constitutive factor, the proclamation of the Word; "not one" of the Roman Catholic priests preaches the Word "by virtue of his office, unless called to do so by another and a different call besides his sacramental ordination."[33]

Because the Gospel of Jesus Christ is what it is, the ministry must be one order, and must belong to all Christians in common. Ordination is a "rite whereby one is called to the ministry of the Church."[34] "Ordination does not make a priest, but a servant of priests. . . .; . . . a servant and an officer of the common priesthood. . . .; . . . the representative of the whole Church."[35]

Is the ministry therefore not a three-fold order? It may well be, according to very ancient custom, but one dare not call the three-fold distinction a necessity for the Church, so far as the New Testament is concerned. Luther is perfectly willing to recognise functional distinctions of rank such as bishop, and even pope, so long as it is admitted that our arrangement of these ranks is man-made, not a divine changeless ordinance.[36] He recognises that the terms deacon, presbyter, and bishop are Scriptural, though he insists that "presbyter" and "bishop" were originally interchangeable. He also acknowledges that the Church may arrange these ranks as it finds most useful, according to the twin principles of what "edifies (i.e. builds up) the Church," and "decency and good order" (i.e. taking care that the whole Church's will is heeded). But men's rules about clerical ranks dare not be proclaimed as divine necessity. Arrangements of men, however wise, however sensibly *erected upon* God's commands *are not* essentials of faith, commands of God. The Gospel itself shows that even the leaders among the redeemed dare not be placed beyond mutual criticism, for they too stand under judgment and in need of redemption. Here is an instructive case study for Luther's understanding of the authority of Scripture. Modern Biblical scholarship may not find Luther's New Testament exegesis in this case final by any means, but no stretch of the imagination makes the Roman Catholic—high Anglican exegesis more convincing; whereupon Luther's

criterion needs to be reiterated; if their hierarchical principles cannot be clearly established as commanded by the Word, we dare not allow them to be made an "article of faith," i.e. of the essence of the Church!

THE AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTRY

What kind of authority then does the ministry have? Luther can say that it is authority to *serve*, not to rule.[37] It is an *office*, not a privilege: "All their (the Romanists') boasts of an authority which dare not be opposed amount to nothing at all. No one in Christendom has authority to do injury, or to forbid the resisting of injury. There is no authority in the Church save *for edification.*"[38] This edification is effected through, and under responsibility to, the Gospel: priests, bishops or popes "are neither different from other Christians nor superior to them, except that they are charged with the administration of the Word of God and the sacraments, which is their work and office."[39] "If Christ Himself and all the apostles had no other power than to *help* souls, and have left behind them no other power in the Church," then tyranny in the Church must be resisted.[40]

An insight into the nature and limits of the Church's authority is found in terms of the Keys, which "were not ordained for doctrine or government, but only for the binding and loosing of sin."[41] This fact eliminates the pope's other "stolen" keys,—his "lock-picking tools,"[42]—such as ruling power and legislative power.[43] The Keys for the binding and loosing of sin, as Luther expounds at length in a mature treatise, are Gods keys; God's keys are not "different keys in heaven above from those we have below on earth." Yet "they are *heaven's keys* and not those *of* the earth. You shall have my keys (he says), and no others. And you shall have them here on earth."[44]

On the other hand, when the whole Church commits responsibility—even limitedly—for these keys to its ministers, who will say that they have no authority? Theirs is a tremendous authority! We have quoted a few of Luther's countless words on the exalted nature of the ministerial calling. In a right Christian sense it *is* an authority "to govern and teach the people of Christ,"[45] a "right to rule over us,"[46] a "power" to administer Word and sacraments which "no individual may arrogate to himself, unless he be called."[47] But in all these quotations, which also could be multiplied, the accent is equally upon the reality of the divinely instituted authority and the necessity of protection against abuse—upon the minister's abiding responsibility to the whole body, whose "consent" to his authority is abidingly necessary. The "right and power" belong to the "Christian congregation' or community.

Ways must be found so that the wholeness of the Church may be effectively realised, and so that the whole Church may retain

its "right to judge" the public proclamation of the Gospel in and to the world, which is the Church's fundamental business. The Church may not permanently delegate this responsibility to any automatically guaranteed leadership, either in a Hobbesian or in some mystical fashion. "Bishops, popes, theologians, and everyone else "have the power to *teach;* but Christ "takes from the bishops, theologians and councils both the right and the power to *judge* doctrine," and commits them to the Christian community."[48] What this means is that even councils are not infallible or unlimited in authority; nevertheless, if they are true councils, they may be most useful in a faithful exercise of faith's responsibility. If papal pretentions for guaranteeing the presence and proper operation of the Church *ex opere operato* are short-circuitings of faith, "peeks into the back of one's arithmetic book for the right answers," so also may an Anglican "succession" or a comfortably vague appeal to "tradition,' or a Lutheran "confession," or various kinds of Free Church "inspiration" or "freedom" come to circumvent the necessary venture of faith, and become an *ex opere operato* guarantee which can only be an idol set up in place of Christ.

A characteristic summary of the minister's authority and limit of authority is stated briefly in Luther's Large Catechism. Expounding (what for him is) the Fourth Commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother," he speaks simply and movingly about the honour due to one's minister as one's "spiritual father."

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE MINISTRY

How shall the Church secure its ministers? It calls them out of its own numbers. How? In the early days of the Reformation Luther stated the principle:

> A Christian not only has the *right and power* to teach God's Word, but is in *duty* bound to teach it on pain of losing his salvation and forfeiting God's favour.
>
> Now you will say: "But, unless he has been called to do this, he dare not preach, as you yourself have repeatedly taught!" I reply: Here you must consider the Christian from a *double point* of view. On the one hand, when he is in a place where there are no Christians, he needs no other call than the fact that he is a Christian, inwardly called and anointed by God; he is bound by the *duty* of brotherly love to preach to the erring heathens or non-christians and to teach them the Gospel, even though no one call him to this work. . . . (Stephen, Philip, and Apollos are cited.) . . . In such circumstances the Christian looks, in brotherly love, upon the needs of poor perishing souls, and waits for no commission or letter from pope or bishop. For necessity breaks every law and knows no law; moreover, love is bound to help when there is no one else to help. But on the other hand, when the Christian is in a place where there are Christians, who have the same power and right as he, he should not thrust himself forward, but should rather let himself be called and drawn forth to preach and teach in the stead and by the commission of the rest. Indeed, a Christian has such power that he may and should arise and teach, even among Christians, without being called of men, in case he finds the teacher in that place in error, provided

that this be done in a becoming and decent manner. . . . (I Cor. 14 : 30). . . . How much more does an entire Christian congregation have the right to call a man to this office whenever it becomes necessary! (I Cor. 14 : 39-40). Take this passage as a most sure basis, which gives more than sufficient authority to the Christian congregation to preach, to permit men to preach, and to call preachers. Especially in case of necessity, this passage calls every one in particular, without any call of men; so that we might have no doubt that the congregation which has the Gospel may and should choose and call, out of its number, one who is to teach the Word in its stead.[49]

This right of the congregation Luther affirmed not only in the emergency where tyrannical bishops refused to commission a pastor; even where "the right sort of bishops" were in authority, they "could not and should not do this (i.e. appoint a pastor) without the consent, choice and call of the congregation; except in cases of necessity, in order that souls might not be lost for lack of God's Word."[50]

THE RETREAT FROM THE THEORY

Unfortunately this position, though based upon some good principles, was both powerless to cope with the actual Church situation of the day, and ambiguous in its statement of Luther's thought. He found it necessary to reject Lambert's proposed territorial church order for Hesse based on this pure congregational polity, and as more and more Left-Wing Christians formed their own congregations he tried to clarify his thought on order, even at the price of becoming harsh, e.g. in the tract on *Infiltrating and Clandestine Preachers,* 1532.[51]

Luther was very much concerned about the oneness of the Church. John T. McNeill has gathered a great body of proof for this statement in his book, *Unitive Protestantism.* Here I shall refer only to the Large Catechism passage on the phrase of the Creed, "one holy Church," and the Preface to the Augsburg Confession. He thought hard and fought hard against the tendency to religious individualism or subjectivism. Part of the trouble in this situation was that Luther never successfully clarified the relation between *Gemeinde* as a single local congregation and *Gemeinde* as the one holy Christian community on earth.

Disheartening as the battle was against religious subjectivism, however, and much as Luther felt the necessity to retreat from the idealized congregational pattern he at first espoused, his basic principles of church order still give helpful guidance. Church orders are under the Gospel, and may not be hardened into autonomous systems. The Christian community as a whole must make the decisions how church order is to be organised and administered: the principle is "decency and good order." This is not only a right but a *duty* under God, for leadership must be provided for the Church even in emergencies.

Where Church authorities could not solve an emergency by themselves, Luther thought, "decency and good order" could best

be maintained if secular authorities took the initiative to rectify the situation. This was the point of Luther's appeal *To the Nobility*. In the terrible confusion of 16th century Germany the secular authorities thus became increasingly the executors of the common duty to provide leadership in the Church. But Luther never intended the development of the "State Church." His hope and ideal was rather a *Volkskirche*, a Church of the people. When he appealed to the princes and town councils to meet the Church emergency, at any rate, it was an appeal not to right but to responsibility.[52] As "leading members of the Church," i.e. recognised leaders of the community, they were the persons who had power to lead in effective action without causing anarchy. "No one can do this (i.e. bring about a truly free council) so well as the temporal authorities, especially since now they also are fellow-Christians, fellow-priests, "fellow-spirituals," fellow-lords over all things, and whenever it is needful or profitable, they should give free course to the office and work in which God has put them above every man." The analogies Luther mentions in the same paragraph to support this idea are those of a fire devastating a city, and an enemy attack, indicating "the *duty* of every citizen to arouse and call the rest." Note, too that this paragraph is preceded by: "Every member is commanded to *care for* every other," and followed by: "There is no authority in the Church save for *edification.*" If Luther's appeal to the authorities resulted in the "emergency bishop" conception and ultimately the State Church system, there remains at least in Luther's principle the basic correctives to that system, which have helped to sustain territorial Church Lutheranism in Germany, national Church Lutheranism in Scandinavia and the Baltic states, and Free Church Lutheranism in the western hemisphere and Australia and the "mission lands."

CONCLUSION

How shall we judge Luther's conception of the Church in terms of the priesthood of believers? Though giving Luther generous credit for heroic pioneering and profound insight, Bishop Newbigin submits that there are two basic weaknesses in the Protestant conception of the Church, and that Luther is responsible for them: (1) The content of "faith" became intellectualised; by an isolation of "Word and sacraments" from the continuing fellowship, doctrinal agreement became the one essential of the Christian Gospel and the unity of the Church. (2) The idea of the Church as a visible unity virtually disappeared, which inevitably led to impoverishment of the Christian fellowship. Newbigin criticises Barth's emphasis on "event" at the expense of continuity, and Schlink's effort to develop continuity in terms of "doctrine." Protestantism's "defect in the fundamental doctrine of the Church," the bishop says, lies in its persistence in emphasising the

Church defined simply as that which is constituted by the event of the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, at the expense of the emphasis on the Church as a continuing historical society, constituted and sent forth once for all by Jesus Christ.

It may be replied that Newbigin's analysis might have been considerably different if he had not chosen his material from Luther's pioneering tracts, written when Luther was hardly past the threshold on his way into the Church struggle. Over against *Papacy at Rome* should have been set *On the Councils and Churches,* and over against the *Treatise concerning the Ban* should have been set *The Keys.* Particularly since the publication of Pauck's *Heritage of the Reformation,* 1950, with its superb essay on "Luther's Conception of the Church," not to mention the various writings of Gordon Rupp, Philip Watson, Thomas Torrance and Regin Prenter in this field, it is no longer excusable to say in English that Luther's doctrine of the Church tends to allow the Church as a visible unity to disappear. Pauck (who, by the way, does criticise Luther's tendency toward intellectualising the faith) ought to be required reading for any Anglo-Saxon who proposes to write something about Luther.

Next it may be urged that Luther's conception of the Church as a "spiritual assembly," a priesthood of believers, can be said to suffer from a fundamental defect only if (1) his conception does not also carry within itself the fundamental corrective for defects that may emerge, and (2) it does not protect against other serious defects found in other conceptions. I should want to maintain that Luther's conception of the creative Word contains the corrective for the admittedly prevalent "intellectualised Word." Bishop Heinrich Meyer of Luebeck, for example, reminds Lutherans that the Lutheran confessions claim to place Christ in their centre, therefore the confessions dare not place themselves at their centre without displacing Christ. Meanwhile, we may some day find that "doctrine" is not necessarily the equivalent of "intellectualised Word." I should want to maintain secondly that Luther's conception of the marks of the Church and the means of grace contain an effectual corrective for tendencies toward complacency with mere routine churchmanship or with a volatilised idea of Church unity. A recovery and development of Luther's dynamic understanding of "Spirit" would make possible a new breadth and profundity in Christendom's conception of the Church. Let one example suffice here : at the end of his treatment of the ministry as an "object of faith," Ruben Josefson insists :

> Theological discussion of the ministry ought to concern itself with the ministry as it actually exists and manifestly carries on its work. How can it be said to be only an object of faith, when it occupies a manifest, visible

place in an institution in society? Against such an objection it is enough to reply that it is precisely about this actual, manifest and visibly functioning office that we have been speaking throughout. This is precisely the office which the evangelical concept couples with faith. The distinction visible-invisible is no more relevant here than the juxtaposition of subjective-objective or the distinction between outer and inner.[54]

Luther left unsolved a whole series of fundamental problems concerning the Church. It may be asked, however, to what extent they have been fundamentally solved since his time! We still are concerned how to relate the eternal truth of the Gospel to the need for flexibility and freedom in the Church, on the one hand, and to the need for real unity in the Church, on the other; how to relate the free and sovereign Holy Spirit to the given means of grace and the definite marks of the Church; how to relate the local Christian community to the one holy community of the Una Sancta; how to develop a proper "theology concerning the laity" as well as a theology concerning the ministry—and beyond all this, how to put all these hard-won insights into practical effect!

I think it is fair to say, meanwhile, that Luther has made several seminal contributions of precious value to our Protestant heritage, which we need to recover and build upon. Luther's clarification of the relation of Christian responsibility and Christian freedom in the Church, in his insistence that if Jesus Christ is the sole Head of the Church, all human arrangements and actions must be provided with checks-and-balances, is a major contribution to the question of Church authority. Luther tried to steer a middle course to avoid both ecclesiastical tyranny and mere secularised rationalism or opportunism. The modern world owes an incalculable debt to Luther for his expounding of the realisation that no men, even the most powerful, even the most "religious," ought to be entrusted with unlimited, uncorrected authority. This is true not only in the ecclesiastical but also in the political realm. Niebuhr's dictum on democracy applies both in the political and the ecclesiastical realm: man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, man's tendency toward injustice makes democracy necessary. Luther's Christian anthropology, with which his priesthood of believers principle is closely related, was one of the ancestors of that insight, and to this day this principle helps to counteract the perversions of the non-Christian rationalism which is another of its ancestors. Luther's realisation that while Faith and Church Order are *both* divinely given, the arrangements Christians make of them are an ongoing, living challenge, and dare not be hardened into rigid forms, is still a major contribution to the question of Christian responsibility, both locally and globally. Luther's understanding of the position of the Christian laity as holding active responsibility in the Church; and his conception of the minister as a "spiritual father," not a sacerdotal authority on

the one hand, or a spiritual virtuoso or a mere nondescript chairman of a religious committee on the other—these views are still a major contribution to present problems of the active life of the Church. In all these contributions, Luther's conception of the priesthood of believers has played a fruitful part.

ROBERT H. FISCHER

NOTES

[1] Wilhelm Pauck's critical description, in his essay, "Luther's Conception of the Church," in *Heritage of the Reformation*, 1950, p. 153.

[2] "Address to the Nobility." *Works of Martin Luther*, Philadelphia Edition, II, 65. This work, like some of the following cited, is also to be found translated in Wace & Buchheim, *Primary Works of Martin Luther*, and B. L. Woolf, *Reformation Writings*, and is forthcoming in the large new American Edition of *Luther's Works*.

[3] Phila. Ed., ii, 284.

[4] *Papacy at Rome*, ibid., i, 340.

[5] Phila. Ed., i, 349.

[6] *Ibid.*, i, 353.

[7] *Babylonian Captivity*, ii, 278.

[8] *Papacy at Rome*, i, 353, cf. 355f.

[9] *Ibid.*, i, 350.

[10] *Ibid.*, i, 341, 340.

[11] *Ibid.*, i, 361. cf. 380.

[12] *Ibid.*, i, 351.

[13] Newbigin, *Household of God*, 1954, p. 55.

[14] "Doctor Martin Luther's Answer to . . . Goat Emser of Leipzig, With a Glance at his Comrade Murner," 1521, Phila. Ed., iii, 394f.

[15] *Address to the Nobility*, Phila. Ed., ii, 66.

[16] *Christian Liberty*, Phila. Ed., ii, 232, 235.

[17] *Ibid.*, ii, 338, cf. 337.

[18] *Concerning the Ministry*, 1523, American Ed., xl, 14.

[19] *Answer to Goat Emser*, Phila. Ed., iii, 319f.

[20] *Address to the Nobility*, ii, 68f.

[21] *Babylonian Captivity*, on Ordination, ii, 279.

[22] *Answer to Goat Emser*, iii, 321f.

[23] *Concerning the Ministry*, American Ed., xl, 35.

[24] *Commentary on Ps.* 110, 1535, American Edition, xiii, 294. The entire exposition (pp. 228-348) concerns the relation of Christ's high priesthood and the priesthood of the Church.

[25] *Light and Power of a Christian Congregation or Community to Judge All Teaching and to Call, Appoint, and Dismiss Teachers*, 1523, Phila. Ed., iv, 79.

[26] *Sermon on Keeping Children in School*, Phila. Ed., iv, 142f. Half of this treatise is devoted to the importance of maintaining the Church's ministry, including "pastors, teachers, preachers, lectors, priests (whom men call chaplains), sacristans, school-teachers, and whatever they work belongs to these offices and persons." (143).

[27] *Ibid.*, iv, 146.

[28] R. Josefson, "The Ministry as an Office in the Church." in Nygren, ed., *This is the Church*, 1952, pp. 273f. (transl. "En Bok om Kyrkan").

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 276.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 276.

[31] *Babylonian Captivity*, Phila. Ed., ii, 279; cf. *To the Nobility*, ii, 67f. and many places.

[32] *Concerning the Ministry,* American Ed., 21ff. cf. 34f.
[33] *Babylonian Captivity,* Phila. Ed., ii, 280.
[34] *Ibid.,* ii, 283.
[35] *Answer to Goat Emser,* iii, 326f.
[36] On this paragraph see *Answer to Goat Emser,* iii, 322ff.
[37] *Ibid.,* iii, 326.
[38] *To the Nobility,* ii, 78.
[39] *Ibid.,* ii, 69.
[40] *Treatise concerning the Ban,* ii, 42.
[41] *To the Nobility,* ii, 75, against the " second wall ".
[42] *On the Councils and the Churches,* 1539, v, 275.
[43] Extensively treated in *Papacy at Rome,* i, 376ff, *Concerning the Ministry,* American Edition, xl, 25ff, and *The Keys,* 1530, American Ed., xl, esp. 330ff.
[44] *The Keys,* American Ed., xl., 365. The entire treatise is important.
[45] *Christian Liberty,* Phila. Ed., ii, 346.
[46] *Babylonian Captivity,* ii, 279.
[47] *Ibid.,* ii, 283.
[48] *Right and Power of a Christian Congregation,* iv, 76f. This subject is treated in greater detail in Part II of *On the Councils and the Churches,* v, 178ff.
[49] *Right and Power of a Christian Congregation,* iv., 80f.
[50] *Ibid.,* iv, 82.
[51] American Ed., xl, 383ff.
[52] *Right and Power of a Christian Congregation,* Phila. Ed., iv, 84.
[53] *Address to the Nobility,* ii, 76-78.
[54] Josefson, " The Ministry as an Office in the Church," *op. cit.,* p. 280.

The Importance of Denominational History

Address to the Assembly of the Baptist Union on Tuesday, April 29, 1958, to mark the Jubilee of the Baptist Historical Society.

I HAVE been puzzling to find a good reason why a Methodist should address you on the importance of your own denominational history. I think I have found one, sufficient and important. For the Baptists and the Methodists are the two great Protestant Free Churches who in our time have to decide whether they will be either World Church—or World Sect. And one of the safeguards against our making a wrong decision is the appeal to history.

Of course the decision to have a sectarian or a catholic spirit is not a conscious one. And of course, a sectarian spirit will produce sectarian history. Faith and loyalty are always engaged when we study our own past, good virtues but in themselves too easily able to twist the pattern of the facts :—

> Ah! love couldst thou and I conspire
> To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
> Would we not shatter it to bits and then
> Remould it nearer to the hearts desire?

There has been so much Church history of this kind, Catholic and Protestant, Puritan and Anglican, that there are some great questions—concerning the Reformation, for example in which the historians' material is so rooted in a polemical setting as to make it extremely difficult for him to view it from another perspective. And that is where the Church historian needs to have the corrective of the secular historian, and where the Protestant or Nonconformist needs to take the large view and to set his own particular theme against the history of humanity, and of the whole Church. There is Church history penny plain, all black and white, whitewashing our own side, denigrating the other. But the coloured kind is better, and more costly, where faith and loyalty are controlled by the discipline of an imaginative charity and love of truth, and this has its eye for shades and twilights and fading colours, and changing perspective.

I said our own story must be set against the wider background. There is a "mistletoe" and an "oak" tree view of our history as Free Churches. The mistletoe theory would dissolve the history of the Church into isolated pockets of purely spiritual religion, to a pedigree picked rather choosily from out the centuries, the Early Church, the "Reformers before the Reformation," and our own spiritual ancestors, Puritan and Methodist leaders. The "oak tree" view on the other hand sees the Church as a "Church of pardoned sinners," always rooted in earthly and often very earthy history, often nearly submerged by secular pressures, here on earth always wearing the Cinderella like, ambiguous garments, the form of a servant. I am for the oak as against the mistletoe. And yet that is not perhaps the true choice. We need to remember what Professor Rowley has helped you to remember, that we belong to that one continuing People of God which stretches back into the mists of ancient history—we need to remember, (tell it not in Manchester, whisper it not to Professor Rowley) that Old Testament studies ought properly to be regarded as a sub-department of Church history.

On the other hand within this continuing great Church there have been raised up again and again prophetic voices and prophetic companies of men and women to remind the Church that she is a pilgrim, that her true abiding city is yonder. So it has been said of Thomas Helwys and the English exiles in 17th-century Amsterdam that they were too inclined to unchurch 99.9 per cent of Christendom, as though the "catholic Church could be equated with an upper room in a back street in Amsterdam." And yet we remember, and it was their witness to recall to the Church by their very existence, how long ago at Pentecost, the whole of Catholicity came down upon an upper room in a back street, and upon what was also a very bourgeois company.

Now behind the generalisations and the interpretations, there lies the appeal to facts. There is in the end no substitute for archives. And this is where your own denominational historical society is so important. We must have the local historians, the local records, we need more men and women, laymen with a hobby, working parsons with a concern, to be aware of, interested in and working at these things. I say this is our own denominational business. Let us mind it, for if we don't do these chores of investigating our own denominational story, nobody else is going to do it for us. It is one of the dangers that often generalizations and views run ahead of the facts. There is, for example, the well-known saying that "the Methodist Revival saved England from revolution"—a half-truth which is often defended and often criticized, but about which the historian ought to say that the full sociological setting of early Methodism has never yet been explored,

that we still lack essential details, and that we must wait until we have more scholarly monographs and that the monographs must wait on detailed records. I stress this, because nowadays there is a tendency to despise this kind of thing as "antiquarian." But let us not be ashamed of this, what Professor Butterfield once called the one "monkish" thing in Methodism, the one piece of austere historical excavation which recalls the great Roman historians like the Bollandists. So I am a little sad that the austere, Victorian looking "Transactions of the Methodist Historical Society" have in recent months been given a new look, with a view to being more up to date, more ecumenical. And I gather that something of the same may have happened with your own Transactions. I was interested to find that Cambridge University Library does not take the *Mennonite Quarterly* but does take *Men Only*. I wouldn't suggest that your *Baptist Quarterly* is a cross between the *Mennonite Quarterly* and the magazine *Men Only* and I think in these days when parsons can only afford one quarterly magazine it is right to blend modern theology, book reviews and denominational history. All I would plead is that the denominational archives be not swamped or undervalued. For those are the only things in your *Quarterly* that the rest of us cannot find done as well—perhaps even better elsewhere. How important this may be is illustrated by two extremely interesting and able articles which appeared in the *Baptist Quarterly* in 1957 on "Signatories to the Orthodox Confession, 1679." In them the author discusses the tension between the Baptists of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire and those of the Caffynites, the General Baptists of Kent, Sussex and the Eastern Counties. What is exciting is the link which the author traces between the 17th-century Baptist congregations and the mediaeval "Lollards of the Chiltern Hills," that formidable underground movement of the later Middle Ages which we glimpse mainly through the records in John Foxe. Mr. Baines in his article shows that this Lollardy, the strength of which was centred in certain families, included families like the Hardings, the Durdants, the Dells, who are to be found in later Baptist chapels in that area; that a Richard Monk led the Lollards in 1428 and a Thomas Monk the Baptist in 1654. Here again, we need to check. We should want to know what wider parish records say, to decide whether in fact these names are to be found all over the community and in other churches. We must not over-rate the orthodoxy of this later Lollardy. At least there is one glimpse of them reading at a wedding the "Gospel of Nicodemus" which suggests a whole underworld of late mediaeval gnostic and apocalyptic which may have infected the movement. And we need to remember that this Lollardy was also very strong in the Eastern counties. But there is an excellent illustration how local history can illuminate a most important problem of spiritual pedigree.

The mention of pedigree reminds us of the importance for Reformation studies of the origins of the Anabaptist Movement and of the need for the work upon it of English Baptist scholars. The universally hostile verdicts upon the Anabaptists of three centuries of historians and theologians have now been completely reversed. Fundamental to this revision is the publication of the facts, mountains of them, in the printing of masses of documents in Switzerland, Germany and Austria which is proceeding massively apace. But facts must be interpreted. And here we must pay tribute to the American Mennonite historians under Dr. Bender who in a few years have made their *Mennonite Quarterly* an almost indispensable tool in Reformation studies, and whose *Mennonite Encyclopaedia* abounds with information not available elsewhere in the English language. Of all these things a convenient account can be found in the recent volume, *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* a *Festschrift* to Dr. Bender. But we have the defects of our virtues, and I hope it is not ungrateful or hypercritical to say that there is about the work of American Mennonite scholarship a certain uncritical exuberance which is perhaps partly Mennonite but mainly just American! There is the tendency to make the Anabaptists altogether too tidy, too respectable. Now if it is true, as Dr. Payne says that the Anabaptists produced more martyrs than all the other Protestant bodies, it is also true that they were associated with more genuine fanatics, more really wild men than any other body. They had some queer fellow-travellers, like the Christian pacifists marching to Aldermaston or like the Underground movements in France and Greece at the end of the war just because what they were doing was really revolutionary. One of the sad things about the Mennonite Encyclopaedia is the way in which, in one article after another, the eccentricities and aberations of many of the radicals are toned down. How much more striking are the facts. The fierceness of Conrad Grebel and his "angry young men" of Zurich burns out of Grebels letters more clearly than from the pages of Dr. Bender—and it is when we listen to the authentic note of storm that we feel that here is something at least as important as the angry middle-aged men of Wittenberg were saying, and rather more excusable! Or we read the story so vividly retold by Professor Blanke in that article translated by Dr. West, in the *Baptist Quarterly,* 1953, of those first Baptists outside Zurich and that meeting in the house of Ruedi Thomann, January 25th, 1525, where the Communion was celebrated with evangelical simplicity, while one of the onlookers, Heinrich Thomann glared suddenly and fearfully on, while he sweated with fear and anxiety at these revolutionary and dangerous and—authentically apostolic proceedings. The American view of the Anabaptist vision is too exuberant, claims far too much for the Anabaptists. The original

Anabaptist vision was bi-focal. There was a picture in *Punch* recently of an AA-man reading the letters off on the wall at an opticians. The top letter is a single A, but the AA-man saluted. Ah! says the doctor, I see you have double vision. Now there is an ancient and primitive division between the early Anabaptists about duty to the State and the office of a Christian magistrate. There were the "stave" Anabaptists, the apolitical pacifists and the "sword" Anabaptists of whom the most distinguished was Balthasar Hubmaier. But for Dr. Bender Hubmaier and the "sword men" represent a "transient aberration in the Anabaptist movement," and in the same volume it is Professor Blanke of Zurich who has to put the opposite view, that it was Hubmaier who saw the important and fundamental truth about Christian politics.

There is also an over-anxiety to dissociate the Anabaptists from Thomas Müntzer the Saxon false prophet of the Peasant War of 1525: understandable as a reaction from the legend started by Bullinger which made Müntzer the first Anabaptist (he could more plausibly be called the first Methodist! He would have been more at home further down Kingsway than Baptist Church House). Müntzer was an original, a genius of whom you could say what Chesterton said of H. G. Wells that "you can hear him growing in the night." It may be true that Müntzer never received the letter which Conrad Grebel wrote him in 1524, but that doesn't close the question of Müntzer's possible contact with him in the next month, still less the question of Müntzer's ideas. There is a sermon attributed to Hans Hut, and printed as his by Lydia Muller in her collection of Anabaptist writings. Hans Hut was a publisher, and though very far from a 16th-century Hugh Martin, Dr. Martin would share with him an experience of the difficulties of war-time publishing, for Hut got entangled in the battle of Frankenhausen and gave as his alibi that he had come to see a man about a book. And I think there is a possibility that this sermon is one of Müntzer's, copied and perhaps edited (it was never printed) after his death. Like Müntzer's other writings it bears the strange address "From the Cave of Elijah": it has an amazingly high proportion of Müntzer's technical vocabulary, higher than any other radical document: above all it expounds a striking natural theology, about which there are many hints in Müntzer but which he nowhere fully expounds, a "gospel of all the creatures" which Urbanus Rhegius says was Müntzer's doctrine and which this sermon sets forth. But it is a sermon on *Mark* xvi. 15, and it expounds a doctrine of baptism. It is a thing I dare not press and there is much to be said on the other side, but I do think that the current Müntzerophobia would be likely to hinder a frank examination of this and other questions. That is

why it is so important for British Baptist scholars to take their place in this field. I rejoice in these days that Dr. Ernest Payne has become an ecclesiastical statesman, who knows that making history is even more important than writing it, but I sometimes grudge the fact that we have turned our most eminent Free Church historian into yet another ecumenical inter-continental missile! I hope that Dr. Morris West who has given us more than the promise of fine scholarship will be allowed a few years of reading and writing and that he will be joined by many others. And here again is a field where, if your denominational historians do not make their contribution, against the background of a sympathetic teaching Church, the whole field of Reformation studies must suffer.

Finally, there is the ecumenical importance of your own history, and your own understanding of it. I have read and re-read as I hope you have all done, Dr. Payne's fine oration to the Free Church Federal Council. I am so very glad that the Free Churches can stop talking about their claims and speak about their prayers, about their penitence and about their thanksgiving. I am sure the way of claims and counter-claims is the bad old way. That kind of ecumenical argument began with the Fall of Man, and it is the way of the Old Adam. At least Milton said so :—

> " Thus they in mutual accusation
> Spent the fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
> And of their vain contest appeared no end."

I earnestly hope that his suggestion may be taken up if theological discussions should begin between the Free Churches. Too long have we thought of this alliance between us in ethical and it would seem in 19th-century evangelical terms. But there is much to be gained, and not least in our conversation with the Anglicans, if we could consider together our common heritage of truth about conversion, about justification and sanctification, of the sacraments and the Holy Spirit. These are days, as Dr. Payne reminded us, when the world situation is leading men to consider notions which are peculiarly our inheritance. Only let us not assume too easily that in our time these historic platitudes, enormous and magnificent are what God wants us to say. It may be that the Continental state churches under the Cross can say these things more sharply than we can—that Karl Barth and Dr. Niemoller are more important than Dr. Littell or our English Free Church leaders. Two trains may be in the same station at the same point, but going in different directions. So, for example, it may be that this great truth of the witness of the laity—which is so important a contribution of Methodism to 19th-century social and political history, is something which the Church of England is about to discover in a new, fresh and visible way, much more real than anything that

Methodism can say in 1958 having sent so many laity into the secular spheres in the past, but whose children have cut their spiritual lines of communication. Indeed, we Free Churchmen must stand in amazed admiration, at the boldness of the Anglican project for a House of Laity which can meet separately, by itself. For as Gilbert so nearly said:

> "But then the prospect of a lot
> of leading laity in close proximity
> all thinking by themselves
> is what no clergyman can face with equanimity."

It may be that God has other things for us to learn and say, the other side perhaps of our familiar half truths. It is only too easy for German Methodists to say: "Ah! yes, the state Churchmen are coming to see things our way," and yet themselves to become sectarian at that very point.

Our faith is something we share with the whole Church of Christ. Our history is something God has given us. I remember going into the Kingsgate Press some years ago, and being shown a book called "What the Baptists Stand For." It was so interesting and important yes, but I wanted to say: "Have you perhaps another book called "What the Baptists Won't Stand For" for those things are of the very vitals of Christian and English liberties. These great positive negatives are not written in our confessions, but they were written in flesh and blood in real story, by men and women sinful and foolish and fallible. There is always a high content, therefore, of non-theological factors in the story. You know how in the war the battle raged around the strong point of Monte Cassino until at last there came the break through and the armies poured out and the war went past and Monte Cassino became a name on the map and no more a point to dig in and die. There are some Monte Cassinos in our Free Church History which we must not fight in our time, and it is your task as Christians in this age to try and disentangle what was vital from what was transient in the past. Church history is the Church remembering. And I think I agree with Dr. Manson that there are some things we all might agree to forget: and others about which we must be penitent in the presence of God. The rest is a living witness to the communion of saints, the path along which God has led us. Not only dare we not forget this, but it is the very thing we have to give, our most precious contribution to the coming great Church.

Not long ago I went with the secretary of the Methodist Historical Society to an auction sale which included a large tea chest full of Wesleyana. After the sale we went to the West End bookseller who bought it and he very kindly tipped the contents

out on to the red carpet in his showroom. What a jumble it was, early Methodist sermons and printed hymns, old class tickets, engravings of chapels, photographs of bewhiskered Victorian divines and their overflowing quiverfulls of offsprings—and I heard somebody say in the shop: "What a lot of old junk. Sectarian, antiquarian rubbish?" And then I thought how long ago there was a box, very ornate and very elaborate I know, but still a box, a frame of wood for putting things in: nothing very impressive inside it, for that matter, some bits of wood and stone, and a jar of sticky stuff—a pot of manna, Aaron's rod, tablets of stone—just little items of denominational history, just a church remembering, that here and here and here in the past the Living God had touched this earth, "and it came to pass that when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the ten thousands of the thousands of Israel." The Church which will possess the future will be a Church which has learned to remember, which finds in past mercies the sure ground of future hope.

"We shall not in the desert stray
We shall not full direction need
Not miss its providential way."

E. G. RUPP

An Early Sunday School Minute Book

THE association of John Fawcett with early efforts in the North in the cause of ministerial education is well known. He combined a pertinacity in advocating the establishment of a northern college with very practical efforts to supply himself what was lacking. His own success in this respect fortified him in his advocacy and the ultimate founding of the Northern Education Society was largely due to him.

Less well known, perhaps, was the interest he took in education in general. On Tuesday, September 5th, 1775, the following advertisement appeared in the *Leeds Mercury*:

> At Wainsgate
> near Heptonstall, in the Parish of Halifax
> Youth are generally boarded, and carefully
> Instructed in the following Branches, viz: the English,
> Latin, and Greek Tongues: Writing and Merchants
> Accompts, with the Use of the Globe &c.
> By John Fawcett, & proper Assistants
> Terms for Board, Washing and Learning 15L per Annum.
> N.B. Wanted at the above Place, a Person of sober
> character, who is capable of teaching French.

From 1776 this work was continued on a much more ambitious scale at Brearley Hall and later at Ewood Hall. In his *History of Ewood* (Halifax Antiquarian Society Papers) George Dent quotes figures of a census early in the nineteenth century giving the inmates of the Hall as eighty, which would mean about sixty students, a small number of whom would be somewhat older men preparing for the ministry.

Early in his Brearley Hall period, after he had left Wainsgate, Fawcett began a Sunday School in Hebden Bridge. The date claimed for this is 1790, but as his son, in the biography of his father, says that "This was almost immediately after the simple but grand idea suggested by Mr. Raikes," it may have been earlier than this. His quaint *History of John Wise* was written as a religious and moral guide for children.

To Fawcett's great regret this work had to be abandoned because of inability to secure premises for the work, and it was some years before the school was revived. It is to the credit of a succeeding minister of Ebenezer, Hebden Bridge, John Jackson, that in 1824 this Sunday School was re-formed and its activity continues to the present day. The first minute book of this Sunday School remains in Hope Church (the continuation of old Ebenezer, the church of Fawcett's founding). The book covers the years from 1824 to 1845, and it throws an interesting light upon the conduct of an early Sunday School.

The minutes of the first committee meeting on May 21st, 1824, begin with the resolution " that Rev. John Jackson be the President of this Institution." The secretaries were William Fawcett and John Chambers, and five superintendents were elected.

At first the school opened at 8.45 a.m., but shortly the time was altered for the winter months to 12.30, prior to the opening of afternoon service. At first the school had no separate premises, all the work being done in the church itself, but very soon the success of the work led the teachers to request the church to take in a house adjoining which had been built for the minister, and at the same time to adapt the whole premises both to enlarge the sanctuary with an additional gallery and to provide separate classrooms for the school.

The equipment in the early days must have been meagre, for in June, 1824, we find a resolution "that eight copies of the Bible now in use be each divided into four parts in order to supply the first classes with books," and some years later " that the Bibles which are undivided shall be divided when necessary." One wonders whether the practice of dividing Bibles was at all common in early schools. In addition, " twelve spelling books of the most approved kind " and twelve copies of *Reading Made Easy* were purchased, and later it was decided " that the Reading Book published by the Sunday School Union be adopted and one hundred copies be ordered."

We know that in days when general education was scanty, Sunday Schools rendered a conspicuous service in the teaching of reading and writing, and much attention was paid to fundamental education in two of the three " Rs." We have here references to an " Alphabet Book " and to Sunday School Spelling Books which reveal how early a Sunday School Union was active in providing teaching materials.

From the first days tangible encouragements were offered to scholars for attendance and good behaviour. Tickets were issued to them; " those scholars who have ten tickets for attendance and good behaviour shall be entitled to rewards to the value of one penny." In this connection we find a very human note in a resolu-

tion of the teachers in 1824—" that it is desirable that scholars be warned of bartering or imposing on each other by means of their tickets or books."

Scripture examinations were an ordeal still to come; but quite early tests were instituted for the scholars. In the second year of the school's existence a public meeting was arranged for the catechising of scholars, and suitable catechisms were secured for them to learn and repeat, after which refreshments were provided for both teachers and scholars. Fifteen of the children repeated the first chapter of Lloyd's Catechism and another twenty Watt's First Catechism. This became an annual event and on later occasions texts of Scripture and hymns were added to the repertoire.

Discipline in the school was ever a thorny problem which is frequently reflected in resolutions of teachers' meetings:

In 1831 it is "recommended to the teachers that a number of boys particularly those who are rude and disorderly be every Sabbath required to meet in the schoolroom during morning service in order to have correction as well as religious instructions."

In 1824 "that a piece of wood labelled with the appropriate offence be provided to be used as a punishment for refractory scholars."

In 1837, " that in order to preserve better order on opening school every Sabbath day all the boys be requested to kneel and the girls to stand orderly; likewise during singing in service time all both boys and girls be requested to stand up and join the singing."

In 1839, " that scholars after assembly at noon be not allowed to go out till the close of the service and that our friend Mr. Chambers be in attendance to examine those who we think have gone out under false pretences," and—the choicest of all—in 1840, " for the better discipline of the school the following persons . . . be requested to exhibit publicly in the school the crimes which the scholars are guilty of, for which they shall be subject to be detained half-an-hour after the others have gone."

The expenses of the school naturally fell upon the church, and at the very beginning the church was asked to take collections to defray them. Almost at once the Sunday School Anniversary, as it came later to be called, was a red-letter day. In 1826 it was resolved " that sermons be preached for the benefit of the Sabbath School on Easter Sunday and that it be recommended to have these sermons on that day each succeeding year." Special hymns were printed for the scholars and congregation, and the scholars repeated " pieces." The services of eminent ministers from the north were sought, the names including Godwin, of Bradford;

Aldis, of Manchester; Dowson, of Bradford; Birrell, of Liverpool, and Steadman, of Bradford.

At first there was no assumption of singing ability in the scholars, for it was decided " that it is desirable that one tune be sung till many of the scholars become familiar with it," but it is not long before we find a much more varied selection, and among the arrangements for 1827 we have " that the 153rd Hymn of Dr. Fawcett's Hymn Book be first in the afternoon service . . . and the 150th Psalm to conclude the afternoon service. For the evening service the 12th of Rippon's selection, the 28th of Miss Taylor's Hymns, the 529th of Dr. Williams, the 474th of Montgomery's Hymnal to conclude the service." A choice was made of the best scholars " to aid the singing in the church service."

From time beyond memory Whit-Monday has been in the north an outstanding day for Sunday Schools. Our Minute Book shows that as early as 1826 this day had a place of its own, but the nature of the " treat " was then somewhat different from its later development. The scholars were assembled in the church at 5 p.m. to repeat portions of Scripture, hymns and catechisms, and to hear a sermon either from the minister or from some eminent visitor, after which a currant bun was given to each scholar to fortify him for the hearing of the school report. Fun and games were not yet regarded as a necessary part of Whit-Monday treat!

The poverty of some of the children was clearly a great concern to the teachers : in 1827 it was decided that four boxes be provided for donations for clothing for destitute children, and in 1842 we have a resolution " that Mr. Chambers and Miss Ann Appleyard be requested to receive articles of clothing contributed from any of the friends who are able and disposed to give them in order that they may be distributed to the poor necessitous children in the Sabbath School according to their directions."

The advisability of visitation was realised from the first. Four persons were appointed to visit the homes of absent scholars, and at a later date lists of absentees were made and the names given to teachers resident nearest to the homes of absent scholars. The teachers were also conscious of the need of the support and prayers of the church, for they asked that an open prayer meeting should be held on the first Sabbath in January at nine o'clock in the morning " for a Divine blessing to attend the interests of the Sabbath School and to implore the influence of the Holy Spirit upon teachers and scholars."

A notable feature in the work of the school was the attempt to provide good books for the scholars who had been taught to read there. Long before the founding of public libraries, signal service was rendered by many Sunday Schools in this direction. Much earlier than this, the two outstanding figures in the district, John

Fawcett and Dan Taylor had co-operated to provide a library for the people of Heptonstall, the ancient township on the hills above Hebden Bridge.

The Ebenezer Sunday School took up this work in 1834, when it was decided "that Messrs. Stephen Fawcett and J. Ogden should obtain £3 from the school treasurer and that subscriptions be sought on behalf of the library for the school as soon as possible." Further sums were later secured and the nucleus of a library created which gradually grew until by the middle of the century a really fine library had been built up, of which a printed catalogue and a supplement are still preserved. A number of the books still remain at Hope and reveal the high quality of the literature chosen—novels, history, biography, Baptist history, science and theology. It provides a fine example of the private libraries which in the early part of the 19th century offered the only reading available for most people.

In the earliest days strict limitations were placed upon the books chosen. The original rules state that "no novels, political publications or books of controversy on religious subjects be admitted into the library," but later there was a vastly more liberal choice. The first lists of books selected provide an interesting commentary on earlier standards set for the young. They include *The Baptist Magazine,* Harris's *Mammon,* Beaufoy's *Guide to the True Pilgrim,* Keach's *Travails of True Godliness,* Bogue's *Divine Authority of the New Testament* and Craps' *Election Calmly Considered.* Some years later we find, *Memoirs of Dr. Carey, Examination of Dr. Pusey's Sermon* by Dr. Godwin, Cramp's *Textbook of Popery* and Hoby's *Visit to the Christian Brethren in Copenhagen.* The privilege of using the library was very soon extended to the families of any who held sittings in the church.

Teachers' meetings were held regularly each month. The minutes suggest that they were not of undue length, but there must have been occasions when longer meetings were briefly minuted, for in 1840 we find the resolution "that in future no teachers' meeting shall continue longer than half-an-hour and all business remaining after that time shall be postponed."

There is little record of the number of scholars until 1851, when there was a national census in which much more information was sought than is nowadays required. The church minutes record the details of the Ebenezer return for church and school. They show that on Census Sunday 192 scholars were present at morning service and the same number in the afternoon. The total enrolment was 243, 95 boys and 148 girls, of whom 209 were present on that day, so that most of them joined in the services in the church. Of that total enrolment, 77 only were in attendance at a day school, though 99 others had attended but had ceased to do so. In

addition, it was reported that a writing school was held on Wednesdays with an average attendance of 30. The annual expenses of the school were recorded as £32. There were actually 92 teachers on the roll.

In this period Baptists had the dominant place in the Calder Valley, and on the hill above the town the General Baptist at Birchcliffe maintained a strong Sunday School. What little co-operation there was with General Baptists and other Christian bodies seems to have been mainly in connection with Sunday School work. The Ebenezer church staffed a Sunday School in a neighbouring village, and we find the decision of the teachers to solicit subscriptions in Ebenezer to help the building of a Methodist School at Blackshawhead. A bond of union was provided by the Halifax Sunday School Union, which Ebenezer School joined in 1841. A year later we find them circularising the various schools of the neighbourhood " to know if they will attend a lecture to be delivered by Mr. Gurney on Idolatry."

One of the last recorded minutes in the book is of some interest —" that the Sunday School Library be a subscriber to the Hanserd Knollys Society."

W. S. DAVIES

A REQUEST

A correspondent interested in the early Baptists of Hampstead asks if any member of the Historical Society can suggest lines of research which may give further information about the church meeting at Holly Bush Hill, Hampstead. It would appear that this Baptist group was founded in 1818 by James Castleden an ex-Anglican. Any suggestions should be sent to the Editor.

A Note on Baptist Beginnings in Bristol

BAPTISTS in Bristol, whose forefathers began soon after 1600, are surprised to read Dr. Winthrop Hudson's categorical statement that "practically all the early Baptists had been Congregationalists before they became Baptists." Also, it is a surprise to hear that we Baptists owe little or nothing to the Anabaptists. Some of us always remember them when we sing the Te Deum: "The noble army of martyrs praise Thee."

For Baptist beginnings in Bristol we go to the early pages of the Broadmead Records. There are two editions: the earlier one published by the Hanserd Knollys Society in 1847, edited by E. B. Underhill; and the later edition included in the Bunyan Library in 1865, edited by Nathaniel Haycroft, minister of the Broadmead Church.

Soon after 1600 a group of earnest Christians in Bristol, then the second city in England, found themselves drawn together by a deep longing for the Word of God as given in Holy Scripture. They also obtained no help from the lifeless formality they so often found in their parish churches. "The hungry sheep look up but are not fed," wrote John Milton at this time. Whenever a godly and evangelical vicar appeared, such as Mr. Yeamans at St. Philips, then people would flock to hear him.

Gradually, however, this group of believers were led to the conclusion that the only way for them was separation from the Church of England. Sometimes this fellowship would invite "lively and powerful preachers" from South Wales to come and minister to them both the Word and the Sacrament. Such visitors would stay in the home of William Listun, a glover in the city and a man outstanding both in personality and ability. Another leader in those early days was Robert Haynes, a writer and school-master. Both are mentioned many times in the early pages of the Records. The editor of the Broadmead Records Edward Terrill (1635-1686), received his training and instruction from Robert Haynes, and also became a writer and school-master. He married a widow, Mrs. Dorothy Heath, who was the daughter of William Listun.

The meetings of this group of Separatists began to attract attention, and soon there followed disturbance and persecution. During one of their meetings in High Street "the house was assaulted by a rude multitude and seamen, so that they broke all the windows because they heard there was a strange conventicle of puritans." When this outrage was laid before the Mayor of the city "instead of justice being done, he imprisoned several of the godly that met; whereupon some of them, being public, active and spirited men, drew up a petition to Parliament that then sat, against the Mayor of the City, for suffering them to be abused, and imprisoning them when they complained." This petition was taken to London by William Listun, and presented to Parliament. The Government soon made it known that they "well resented their case in Bristol, which so startled the Mayor of the City that it abated the fury of his spirit." When William Listun returned to Bristol he soon heard rumours that he was to be arrested, yet undismayed he went about his business as usual. A message came inviting him to meet the Mayor, who "entertained him civilly."

An important landmark is the year 1640, when "the providence of God brought to this city one, Mr. Canne, a baptized man." He had come to Bristol from Amsterdam and described himself as "Pastor of the Ancient English Church" in that city. Six years earlier he had published a book, *The Necessity of Separation from the Church of England.* Planning to stay awhile in Bristol he put up at the Dolphin Inn, but one of the fellowship, Mrs. Hazzard, "went to the Dolphin Inn and fetched him to her house, and entertained him all the time he stayed in the city. He helped us much in the Lord, being a man skilful in Gospel order. Like unto Aquila, he taught them the way of the Lord more perfectly." Before John Canne departed he "left with them a printed book treating of the same and divers printed papers to that purpose."

Several signs make it appear that John Canne "a baptized man" had convinced a good number in this separated group, to became baptized believers. So a second fellowship was formed in 1640 or soon after, wherein all the members were baptized. This included the two leaders, William Listun and Robert Haynes. The Broadmead Church also began to baptize in 1677. The second Church met in "the Fryers," monastic buildings still surviving, and used for over 250 years by the Society of Friends. Before long this second Church was strong enough to call a minister, Henry Hynam. In the Records, under 1652, this Church is evidently well established, for concerning the first Church we read: "The Lord awakened some in this Church to consider that there was no ground for baptizing children, much less for sprinkling them; and therefore they had not been rightly baptized according to Scripture. Whereupon one of our members, namely Thomas Munday, being con-

vinced in the year of our Lord 1652, he desired leave of the congregation to go and join himself to the other Church in Bristol, that were all baptized, having one Henry Hynam for their teacher. They gave him liberty to depart and join himself to the other Church aforesaid."

We do not know when Henry Hynam was appointed, but when he died on the 19th of April, 1679, he was almost the first to be buried in the new burying ground in Redcross Lane, bought jointly by the two churches and maintained by them until the year 1926. "There they buried that weak but holy, lamb-like servant of God, Henry Hynam, pastor before brother Gifford." For some years before Hynam's death, Andrew Gifford (d. 1721) had served as assistant pastor. He was ordained in June, 1677. Led by him the Church bought land in the Pithay that had been "a sope house," on which they built a chapel of their own in 1699. This remained the home of the Church until 1817, when they removed to Old King Street, to a large chapel seating 1,060. Now, after nearly 150 years they have settled down into their fourth home upon a spacious site in Cairns Road, situated in a very large suburb of the city. The site at Old King Street was needed by the city in the re-planning for a new shopping centre.

From these two Baptist Churches, Broadmead and the Pithay, have sprung all the Baptist churches in Bristol—there are now twenty-five—as well as many others in Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. Not one of these owes its beginning to Congregationalists. The two mother churches, through John Canne,[1] have a direct link with Amsterdam and the Mennonites there.

GORDON HAMLIN

[1] An article on John Canne can be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Reviews

British Baptists in China, 1845-1952, by H. R. Williamson. (Carey Kingsgate Press, London, 21s.)

Dr. Williamson has written this history "to provide a record of the work of British Baptists in China," and especially that of the Baptist Missionary Society. After a brief look at previous Nestorian and Roman Catholic missions, and the beginning of Protestant work, the book gives us a systematic and detailed account of B.M.S. work as it developed across a large area of North China. The story ends in 1952 when the forced withdrawal of all B.M.S. staff was completed. The next section deals with the variety of methods used in the total programme of Mission and Church. The last part attempts to assess results achieved in the light of difficulties encountered, and the ability of the Church in China to survive under the present Communist-dominated government.

The book will be of interest to all who have a concern for Baptist work overseas, and in the China mission of our own Society. Much careful research has gone into the history. It recalls the service of a great number of missionaries and nationals who, through an almost incredible series of wars and civil wars, have been instruments in God's hands for the calling out and building up of His church in China. The quality of its leadership is shown in a message from the Shensi Synod to the B.M.S. as missionaries left that province in 1951, and recorded on page 196. It is a notable and courageous statement in an era of mud-slinging!

The story itself is a notable one, and for this reason it seems a pity that there is so much background material. This, though excellent, can be found elsewhere, but the full story of Baptist work in China is being told here for the first time. It is a record that deserves fuller treatment. Our appetites are whetted rather than satisfied! The last section is the least satisfactory of the whole. It does not take serious account of the criticisms of Mission and Church policy raised since the withdrawal. The slowness of development from the "mission-station approach" to the truly indigenous church cannot be dealt with merely in terms of external difficulties. The questions about the effectiveness of much institutional work, and the lack of balance between resources for institutions and those for the direct church and evangelistic task, seem to be explained away. The attempt is made to justify the use made by Missions of extra-territorial rights, forced from China by war, to do their work and protect their converts. Our Chinese colleagues themselves have said this was a mistake and a great

hindrance to the work of the gospel. Must we not say the same? The opinion is expressed that our Chinese church leaders were "by no means ignorant of the nature and challenge of Communism." But those who lived beside them under the new conditions saw their utter bewilderment. They were better prepared for persecution than for the total adjustment demanded of them in living and witnessing under the new régime as the established, lawful government of the country. For this we had not prepared them.

These questions—of Mission—Government—Church relationships—of the achievement of indigenous churches—are of fundamental importance, for they affect our work on other fields. The trenchant criticism that came to us, much of it from our fellow-workers, provides an unprecedented (and surely God-given) opportunity to think through both achievements and failures. Are we to learn from our experience or not? It is here that work still has to be done. Dr. Williamson's valuable history and review of the B.M.S. China mission should serve to give us fresh material and opportunity to do this.

There are some bad printing errors for a major book. Should not the date 735 on p. 1 be 635, as in section 1 below? Cambaluc is three times wrongly spelt on pp. 3 and 4, and Hitchin on p. 192. There are proofing errors on pp. 113, 156, 186 (where Shanghai is in the far West!) and 344.

J. SUTTON

The Plan of Church Union for North India and Pakistan—a Summary from a Baptist Point of View, and *Baptist Pamphlets on Church Union. I. Introductory.*

We have received these two leaflets from the Rev. E. L. Wenger, of Serampore College, Serampore, West Bengal, the leader of the Baptist delegation in discussions on church union in North India and Pakistan.

The first leaflet runs to six quarto pages, printed in two columns, and giving the background to union, a summary of the constitution, comments on the inauguration of union and the proposed declaration of principle of the Baptist churches. At certain key-points, there are insertions in italics, drawing attention to those points which Baptists need to consider with special care. The second leaflet runs to four octavo pages, containing nineteen questions and answers on union. Both are extremely well done, and provide a first-rate guide to the scheme of reunion for British Baptists. They should be widely read, and the points they raise most carefully considered.

A. GILMORE

St. John's Gospel. A Commentary by R. H. Lightfoot. Edited by C. F. Evans. (Oxford University Press, 30s.)

In his *Gospel Message of St. Mark* and in the present volume we have Dr. Lightfoot's last legacies to students of the New Testament; in fact this commentary is posthumously published, and its readers owe a great debt of gratitude to Mr. C. F. Evans for his careful editing throughout, and especially for his work on the introductory chapters.

It may be that his last two books will be regarded as containing Dr. Lightfoot's most valuable and enduring contribution to the study of the Gospels; his earlier works, *History and Interpretation in the Gospels,* and *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels* were to a considerable extent devoted to the presentation of recent emphasis in Continental scholarship to English readers. In his last two books, and especially in the present commentary, he is more directly concerned with the exposition of the Scriptural text, and one feels that this is his most mature and magisterial work.

The commentary was originally designed to be one of the Clarendon series, but it greatly exceeds the limits observed by that series in general. At the same time, it does not depart altogether from the format and manner of presentation adopted by other Clarendon commentaries; thus the English text of the Revised Version is printed, points of language and text are not discussed at length, the use of footnotes is very sparing, and references to the work of other scholars are comparatively few. These features enable the commentator to concentrate in undistracted fashion on theological exposition, and it is this above all else which he regards as important in the interpretation of this Gospel.

The Introduction (pp. 1-76) deals with six themes: The Origins of the Gospel—The Text—Plan and Structure—Relation to the Synoptic Gospels—The Background (Jewish and Greek)—The Portraiture of the Lord. The following selected points may give an indication of Lightfoot's general approach to the Gospel. In an inconclusive discussion of the problem of authorship, he points out how the course of detailed study of the matter has shown how difficult it is. Interest has shifted considerably since the time of Westcott away from the question of authorship to the questions of the author's background of thought and the identity of the readers whom he had in view, while it has been increasingly acknowledged that the value of the work does not stand or fall with its attribution to the son of Zebedee. On the question of the relation of the Fourth Gospel to the Synoptics, Lightfoot gives respectful mention to Gardner-Smith's attempt to prove the complete independence of John, but comes down definitely in favour of the use of the Synoptics. "Nevertheless this book is written in the belief that the evangelist knew not only the synoptic tradition,

but the three synoptic gospels themselves" (29). "It seems to me that St. John's gospel, if considered by itself in isolation, is a riddle; but that if it is regarded as the crown and completion of our gospel records, it falls forthwith into place" (32). Much of what is said in this connection recalls W. F. Howard's treatment of the "explicative" function of the Fourth Gospel, while some of the illuminating comments on the plan and structure of the Gospel, and on the close inter-relation of its various sections reinforce C. H. Dodd's similar observations in his *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.* While admitting the apparent attraction of rearrangements of the text, Lightfoot joins Dodd and Barratt among recent writers in rejecting them as mistaken. The discussion of the Jewish and Greek backgrounds is set forth in lucid and masterly fashion; both "had a distinctive and necessary contribution to make to Christianity; but at the same time each had to undergo a certain transformation, and to be marked with the sign of the cross, before it could make its contribution" (55).

We cannot attempt to do any justice to the "Expositions" and "Notes" which follow in the body of the Commentary proper. The Expositions are full and detailed, revealing great insight into Johannine thought and establishing inter-connections between different parts of the Gospel with fine skill and discrimination. We note that Lightfoot disagrees with Dodd's (non-sacrificial) interpretation of the "Lamb of God" (i 29) and his view that "paschal allusions in the gospel are by no means clear or certain" (see pp. 96, 97, and the Appended Note: "The Lord the true passover feast," 349-356). At certain points, readers will undoubtedly feel that the commentator is over-subtle in his suggestions, though one has a due sense of reserve in this connection when the Fourth Gospel is in question! But it is doubtful how far Lightfoot will win the assent of his readers in suggesting that in xvii. 12 "St. John invites those who welcome his interpretation of the Gospel to see in Judas 'the man of sin, the son of perdition'" referred to in II *Thess.* ii. 3 (since the day of the Lord is regarded as realised in the life, the work, and above all the death of Jesus Christ). Again many will feel that it is unconvincing to take the expression generally rendered "and he gave up his spirit" (xix. 30) as meaning "he handed over the new dispensation of Spirit" (though it may be noted that Hoskyns argued for this interpretation as "not only possible but necessary").

But, however, one may respond to certain disputable points of interpretation, there can be no question that to follow Dr. Lightfoot in his exposition of this Gospel is a most profitable experience, and there are times when, as someone put it with regard to his book on Mark, we seem to be "listening to the whispering of fascinating secrets." As a work which concentrates

so pre-eminently on exposition, with comparatively little concern for linguistic and critical details, it should prove helpful for preaching purposes, and amply reward all who are prepared to attend to profound and close-knit thought set forth in fastidiously careful language. Many of us will prize greatly this last and characteristic work of our revered teacher.

D. R. GRIFFITHS

Why Integration? by Ernest A. Payne and David G. Moses. (Edinburgh House Press, 2s. 6d.)

To those people who are interested in the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, as well as to those who feel their lack of knowledge on both movements, this little book presents a mine of information; the fact that it does it at a price within the reach of every man's pocket ought to make it a " must " for all ministers and thinking people.

Readers of the *Quarterly* will be aware of the discussions which are now taking place between the W.C.C. and the I.M.C., with a view to the closer integration of the two bodies. This book seeks to explain these proposals, indicating the reasons that have produced them. Dr. Payne's qualifications for such a task are well-known among Baptists, but perhaps it should be said that Dr. Moses is a College Principal, a Vice-Chairman of the I.M.C., and a member of the United Church of North India and Pakistan.

The greater portion of the book is contained in the Appendices (52 pages), and the information that is given here is the sort which many a man will be glad to have on his shelves in such a handy form. One Appendix, for instance, sets out the constitution of the W.C.C., another that of the I.M.C. One gives a list of member churches and of councils associated with the W.C.C., and another lists member councils of the IM.C. A fifth Appendix gives the minutes of the joint committee of the W.C.C. and I.M.C., dated July 23-27, 1957, and incorporating the draft plan of integration.

The minor portion of the book (28 pages) supplies the reader with information about the histories of the two bodies, and their relationships with each other, followed by some comments on the draft plan and some points for consideration.

Broadly speaking, what it means is that the W.C.C. will create a *Division of World Mission and Evangelism,* comparable to the present divisional units within the present W.C.C. A Director of the Division of World Mission and Evangelism will be appointed, and he will also be an *Associate General Secretary of the W.C.C.*

The authors say that what has been in mind is "not the merging or absorption of one organisation in another, but the building of a new structure which can more adequately care for the concerns of both. It is important that this be realised" (p. 20). It is indeed! For in the nature of the case, it does rather look as if "integration" in this context means that the I.M.C. will become a branch of the W.C.C. That would not necessarily mean that the plan was defective, but the fact that that is how it appears helps to explain the hostility which some supporters of the I.M.C. feel towards the scheme.

On the other hand, within the Plan itself, good reasons for the integration are produced. It is pointed out that in our day a basic and long-forgotten truth is being re-discovered, viz. "The *unity* of the Church and the *mission* of the Church both belong, in equal degree, to the *essence* of the Church" (p. 29). This principle has been working itself out in the closer "association" which there has been, especially in recent years, between the two councils. Moreover, pressure has come from churches and councils which desire to be associated with a single organisation, concerned both with the unity and with the mission of the church.

And if all this work can be done through one body (and there does not appear to be any good reason why it should not), then it appears so obviously sensible to bring the two together. That there are difficulties, nobody in his senses will doubt, and it is freely conceded within the Plan that "No plan can by itself ensure the spiritual integration which is our deepest desire" (p. 32); yet it is to be hoped that this Plan, even if in a modified form, will eventually be such as to commend itself to both sides. Meanwhile we are indebted to Dr. Payne and to Dr. Moses for giving us such useful information, and for so carefully clarifying the issues for us.

The Christian Tradition and the Unity We Seek, by Albert C. Outler. (Oxford University Press, 12s. 6d.)

One thing which the World Council of Churches said when it met at Evanston was: "We intend to stay together." Progress since the previous meeting had been so great that it was obvious that the constituent churches must stay together and work together. One sometimes wonders what will be said when the Council next meets in 1960 (or 1961). Has real progress been made since Evanston, or will the next Council feel that we have only been talking about the same old things in the same old way?

The writer of this book apparently fears the latter verdict, for it is his view that the ecumenical movement is in danger of stagnating, unless a new and living interest in it can be quickened among intelligent and sympathetic people. He suggests that now attention

should be directed to three things: God's community, the continuity of Christian history and God's tradition. And this is the theme which he here develops, being the 1955 Richard Lectures in the University of Virginia.

According to Dr. Outler, "the ecumenical honeymoon is over," and many of the problems that have come to the surface, such as the doctrines of the church, ministry and sacraments, he regards as "insoluble." What matters vitally at this stage, therefore, is not what we decide or do, but "the atmosphere or temper" in which we propose to live with each other, while we go on working with these "insoluble" problems that confront us.

The author himself describes his work as a "tract for the times," and so it is. There is much truth in the basic position which he adopts, and much wisdom in what he suggests by way of solution. Yet one cannot help but feel that he is best when he is expounding the problems, and then again when he is drawing his conclusions. For a "tract for the times" there is something rather remote and academic about the remainder of the book, most of which would lead the reader to pause, reflect and examine, rather than brace him for further action.

A. GILMORE

The Study of Missions in Theological Education. An historical enquiry into the place of world evangelization in Western Protestant ministerial training with particular reference to Alexander Duff's Chair of Evangelistic Theology. Vol. 2, 1910-50. (Egede Instituttet, Oslo).

The author's first volume (reviewed in *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, No. 6) carried this important investigation up to 1910. In two lengthy chapters he now traces developments as far as 1950. The book bears all the same marks of able and devoted scholarship as did the first. Once again Mr. Myklebust adopts the method of the "scientific" rather than the "literary" historian and if this means that occasionally the account becomes something of a catalogue, the facts set out all contribute to the case which he builds up, as well as providing a store of information.

At Edinburgh in 1910 voices were raised which pleaded for the worthy treatment of Missions or "Missiology" in places of theological education. In the subsequent decades there has been a steadily increasing recognition of the world-wide setting and mission of the Church. This has been reflected in the work of major theologians and Church historians on both sides of the Atlantic. On this side however the study of Missions has not generally won a place for itself as a distinct discipline standing in its own right in the curricula of theological colleges or among the subjects prescribed as required or optional in theological degrees. In Britain the question

has been felt to be not one of "addition" but of "orientation." In so far as the subject has penetrated the basic academic work of the colleges it has been by a process of infiltration, of colouring rather than conquest.

In America the scene is very different. That country is responsible for "about half of the world mission's resources in personnel and more than two-thirds of its total resources in funds," and it can be claimed that it is the seminaries which constitute "the most important link in the chain" of this whole effort. Chairs and lectureships abound and in many places—not only those specialising in the training of missionaries—the subject of missions either may or must be taken.

With some qualifications the author would say that the major contribution by theologians has come from those of the conservative Biblical wing; among the denominations he would give the laurel to the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. Baptist readers will warm to the tributes paid to K. S. Latourette: "the greatest missionary scholar that America has produced," and to the American Baptist interest generally. There, in proportion to the number of its seminaries, "no church family has made a greater contribution to the teaching of Missions than the Baptist group." E. A. Payne's efforts to gain some recognition for the subject in the Oxford School of Theology are also noted. Generally speaking, however, this book presents us in Europe with room for heart-searching both as to the scope and the methods whereby this whole subject is handled. Is the author simply an idealist? Many who read these volumes will feel that his message is an urgent one and his challenge needs an answer.

One thing is certain. Any individual, college or denomination wishing to undertake serious study or instruction in this field will find here a most useful starting-point. The bibliographies alone would make it invaluable. As a survey the ground covered is so vast that it inevitably suffers somewhat from compression yet it gains so much in comprehensiveness that this is but slight criticism. There can be few if any of the significant means of missionary instruction —literary or institutional—in Western Protestantism which have been overlooked.

G. W. RUSLING