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THE BAPTIST QUARTERLY

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EDITORIAL

IN the report *Church Relations in England,* which was published in 1950 as the outcome of conversations between representatives of the Archbishop of Canterbury and of the Evangelical Free Churches in England, it was stated that: "The question of Christian initiation is at present being discussed by all the Communions represented among us and divergent views are held within each Communion" (*op. cit.,* p. 32). During the eight years since then the matter of Christian Initiation has been taken up also in wider ecumenical discussions. It is at present being discussed within theological commissions of the World Council of Churches and within the Faith and Order Department of the British Council of Churches; it is very much a live issue at the practical level in the reunion schemes for Ceylon and North India. Commenting on the issue of baptism within these two schemes the Report of the 1958 Lambeth Conference says: "The view that Christian Initiation is only completed when the neophytes first receive Holy Communion is theologically sound. It is fully recognized that it is the duty of the Church to care for and nurture neophytes in all stages of initiation" (*op. cit.,* pp. 2, 33). It would be interesting to test Baptist reaction to such a statement. Yet it contains at least one implication which we should consider. The idea of completing Christian Initiation implies a process and not simply one or two actions. Most Baptists would tend, probably, to equate Christian Initiation with the act of believer's baptism. This is of course not how other denominations

think. For them Christian Initiation is a process spread over years and has within itself a series of events. This is most clearly stated in the Church of England document *Baptism and Confirmation Today* (1955), which comments on an earlier report, *The Theology of Christian Initiation* (1948) in these words: "The main achievement of this Report was to re-emphasize the truth that the Christian initiatory rites are to be regarded as a whole. 'The classical order of Christian initiatory rites is: (1) Preparation and Examination; (2) Baptism; (3) Confirmation; (4) First Communion.' (*op. cit.*, p. 19). Its diagnosis of the trouble was that these processes and rites had been too long thought of separately, even in isolation, and there could be no hope of improvement until the unity of the sequence was restored" (*op. cit.*, p. 27).

There is, of course, no explicit evidence in the New Testament that this process was practised by the Early Church, and for that reason it is open to us, perhaps, to reject the idea as irrelevant. On the other hand, that it was the practice fairly soon after New Testament times is clear. In the light of the widespread acceptance of the process of Christian Initiation the concept is worth while considering in the light of current Baptist practice.

On examining the so-called "classical order" of the initiatory rite it is immediately clear that Baptists could claim to hold more closely to it, both in its ordering and in its timing, than most other denominations. So far as its timing is concerned it is certain that in early days it was spread over months and not years, and this reflects our own practice. Let us look for a moment at our Baptist practice in the light of this initiatory rite. It is normal for us to give careful preparation to the candidate for baptism and to make sure that the teaching is understood. In some churches it is the practice to ask the candidate immediately before the baptism certain simple questions concerning the Christian faith; in other churches opportunity is given for a voluntary confession of faith. There can be no doubt that such was the practice early in the Church's history and there is much evidence to suggest that the Creeds as we have them grew out of baptismal confessions of faith. So, clearly, Baptists follow the first part of the rite, the preparation and examination. Again it is clear that baptism by immersion in the Name of the Trinity followed the confession of faith in the earliest days. This again is our current practice. Thus far, then, Baptists could claim to follow the pattern. At this point, however, two questions arise which Baptists should face.

The first concerns the ceremony of laying-on of hands which, during the Middle Ages, came to be known as Confirmation. It is well known that Anglicans are divided over the interpretation of this ceremony, but they will all agree that it is the point at which communicant membership of the church begins. Only rarely do Baptists practise the laying-on of hands after baptism. The New

Testament evidence for connecting the laying-on of hands with baptism is slight, but in *Acts* viii. 14-17 and xix: 1-6, and also in *Hebrews* vi: 2, some relationship is suggested. In the passages in *Acts* the laying-on of hands is connected with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thus it is doubtful whether any parallel can be drawn between the various rites of the reception into church membership practised in the Free Churches and the practice of laying-on of hands at Confirmation, though both represent the same stage in the life of a convert. In an article entitled "Baptists and the Laying-on of Hands" (*Baptist Quarterly*, XV, 5. Jan., 1954) Dr. Payne called attention to the problem and showed how there had been tensions concerning the rite of laying-on of hands amongst Baptists from earliest times. In the present state of discussion both on denominational and on wider levels the time may well be ripe for Baptists to re-examine the matter, always bearing in mind that it is in fact the common practice of Baptists in Denmark to follow baptism with the laying-on of hands. At the moment Baptists in England seemingly have no clear ceremony to represent the third element in the process of Christian Initiation.

The second question concerns the final element in the process—the first Holy Communion. We may note that the Baptists in Denmark follow the laying-on of hands with the Holy Communion. This point brings us back to the Lambeth Statement quoted earlier. The first Holy Communion, it is claimed, completes Christian Initiation. It is the sign of full membership of the Church. The inference is that it should not be received before baptism and reception into Church membership. Certainly at this point many Baptists would disagree—and so probably would John Wesley! Some would see the Lord's Supper as an evangelical opportunity, by the sharing of which, seekers after Christ find Him. Whilst not wishing to side-step this issue we would ask whether the Lord's Supper, from the first days of the Church in Jerusalem, was not, in fact, a meal shared in by members of the Church only. No one wishes to erect a legalistic barrier around the Table of our Lord, but it is open to question whether the regular sharing in the Communion by those who are not church members does not take away something of the sacred privilege and responsibility of church membership. It is at least argueable that partaking in the Supper should be the joyous end to the convert's path towards church membership rather than an aid on the way. This is, of course, rather a different issue from that of open and closed communion. If this view is adopted the Lord's Table is open to all who are in membership with any church—Baptist or otherwise.

It would appear, then, that although Baptists hold more closely to the classical order than most, the last two elements in the process of Christian Initiation must be open to further discussion amongst us.

We understand there is a good chance that a Baptist book about Baptism will be published in the spring of next year. This is indeed good news. No doubt it will provoke considerable discussion and that is an even better prospect! In any such discussion, however, it is to be hoped that a concept such as the process of the initiatory rite will be taken into consideration for we owe it to ourselves and to other denominations to try to understand their categories as well as our own. This journal will hope to publish articles on relevant points raised by discussion on baptism and entry into the church when the present series on *Baptists and the Ministry* is concluded.

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In this connection, it is regretted than the article in the series planned for January has had to be held over until April, and we shall take the opportunity in the January issue of publishing a full length article dealing with recent research on the Anabaptist Movement. The January issue will also contain a new feature in which Neville Clark will be commenting on new theological publications.

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Baptists and the Ministry

THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

IT must be stated at once that this theme is too big for an adequate discussion within the limits of this article. Questions about the ministry are being debated in nearly all the major Protestant denominations. The present situation of the churches, at least in European countries and particularly in Britain, is provoking practical questions about the recruitment and standards of the ministry, about forms of training and about the functions of the ministry in a scientific, technological society. Added to these practical questions are the theological considerations about the nature of the ministry aroused by the ecumenical encounter in which the Protestant Churches are engaged. In view of what is happening, no one may doubt the importance of the doctrine of the ministry, though some thoughtful minds are aware that too much discussion may give the doctrine an undue importance.

What this article seeks to do is to suggest an approach to the question of the ministry which may serve both to keep the doctrine in its true perspective and to illuminate the nature and function of the ministry.

The approach which I propose to make sets out from the total argument of the Epistle to Ephesians. It is customary, of course, in discussions about the ministry to quote fairly freely from the fourth chapter of Ephesians, especially the statement that "he gave some apostles; and some prophets . . . for the edifying of the body of Christ," but it may be doubted whether the citing of important statements is as valuable as the comprehension of the total theme of any writing. It is true that Ephesians is much more than a theological argument. John Mackay is right in saying that "this letter is pure music," "what we read here is truth that sings"; yet through the music sounds one theme which he describes as "God's order."[1] Through the music, the prayers, the devotion and the practical counsel of Ephesians we can discern the splendour of a majestic argument which, sweeping through all time, has its beginning and its ending in eternity. Let this argument be briefly surveyed.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." In spirit it begins with praise; in thought with God. God is eternal and

[1] *God's Order, the Ephesian letter and this present time*, p. 98.

His purpose is eternal. It existed in the mind of God before the foundation of the world. In eternal realms no man can move with dogmatism; so Paul speaks of the "mystery of His will." Yet in the realm of faith the believer can speak, for faith is response to revelation; so Paul can assert that God has made His will known in Jesus Christ. In Him it is perceived and experienced that God's purpose is that of reconciliation; He "will gather together in one all things in Christ." The purpose of reconciliation becomes in Christ the work of reconciliation. "Christ is our peace." It is in 2 Corinthians that Paul writes: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself," but it might also appear in Ephesians. Through Christ sinful men are reconciled to God; they are brought home to God.

But this new relationship with God immediately alters human relationships. The middle walls of partition are broken down; a new "household of God" is being created. This is the Church which thus comes into being according to God's purpose and by His act of reconciliation in Christ. At the same time, the Church exists as the new fellowship—"the communion of the Holy Spirit"—exhibiting and mediating God's reconciling love to mankind. The Church, as "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all," brought into being according to the Divine purpose and by means of the Divine act, is the realm in which the reconciliation or grace is known and experienced.

The whole Church, therefore, exists to exercise within the world a ministry of reconciliation. The Church is the body of which Christ is the head, i.e. the Church is obedient to His control and direction, and He is the one who reconciles all to God by His death on the cross, so creating for all a means of access to the Father. All who are in the Church belong, therefore, to this reconciling process which is God's will and share the ministry by which it is communicated. This is the vocation wherewith all believers are called and all are to walk "worthy of the vocation"; this task is further defined as "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The ministry of reconciliation which the Church exercises is further emphasized and placed within the context of God's purpose in sayings such as: "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us. . . ."

Within the context of this ministry to which the Church is called, Paul mentions the spiritual leaders given by God to His people; they are the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, i.e. believers who are gifted thus to serve in the Church. They are "for the edifying of the body of Christ till we all come in the unity of the faith. . . ." What is significant is that these leaders are given by God to His Church that the ministry of the Churches may be

fulfilled; but the ministry of the Church is the ministry of Christ who reconciles until through Him God fulfils the purpose which He had before all time to gather all things together in one.

Here then is our starting-point for an approach to questions about Christian ministry. The ministry of the Church, and ministry in the Church, are set within the context of God's purpose revealed in Christ. It is this context which determines first the nature and secondly the function of ministry.

(i) It has been made clear that according to Ephesians, Christian ministry is primarily the ministry of the whole Church, since the Church is the realm in which God's reconciliation is known and through which it is mediated to the world, but in the exercise of this ministry, the Church is guided by those who possess gifts of leadership. If now we use the term "the ministry" with its modern connotation whereby it refers to the full-time, duly appointed official, we are bound to say that according to Ephesians "the ministry" is given to the Church as a part of the reconciling ministry of the Church. The point is clear in *Ephesians* iv. 11, 12, when we accept the translation, which is widely agreed that God's "gifts were made that Christians might be properly equipped for their service" (J. B. Phillips). A number of translators and commentators accept this, e.g. Armitage Robinson writes: "The equipment of the members of the Body for their function of service to the whole is the end for which Christ has given these gifts to His Church,"[2] and he translates the phrase in verse 12 thus: "for the complete equipment of the saints for the work of service."[3] The "ministry" is given to the Church to guide and lead the Church so that it may fulfil its reconciling ministry or service (*diakonia*) in the world.

John Mackay says that "the whole idea is startling, but decisive. The supreme function of the so-called officers of the Church . . . may be defined thus: It is the function of 'ministers' so to equip the 'saints' that is, members of the rank and file of the Christian congregation . . . that they too may render service to Christ and the Church in the fullest sense of the term."

A similar point is made by the Bishop of Southwell. He commits himself to the judgment that ". . . it is the Church which validates the Ministry, not the Ministry which validates the Church."[4] Again, he writes: "In the scriptural meaning the laity *are* the Church—the people of God, the Christian community. The priest does not cease to belong to the laity when he is ordained to the priesthood—he is given a special commission and function in it. The Ministry is the ministry of the whole Church, and it is to be exercised by the whole Church." "If the Ministry is the ministry of the whole

[2] *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians,* p. 99.
[3] *ibid., p.* 182.
[4] *Vocation and the Ministry,* p. 33.

Church, then the operation order of the ordained man is helping the Church itself to fulfil its ministry."[5]

This view of the nature of the "ministry" implies a rejection both of the Catholic doctrine which finds the essence of the Church in a sacerdotal order which possesses a grace not available to the laity and of those conceptions which loosely assert that the Christian fellowship can dispense with the "ministry." The emphasis of the New Testament falls upon the ministry which the whole Church is called to exercise and for which it exists; the ministry follows the pattern of the Son of Man who came to minister and to give His life, thus revealing the eternal purpose of God and making it effective in a new way among men. The "ministry" of apostles, prophets, etc., is the gift of God to enable the Church to fulfil its ministry; thus it belongs to the total ministry of the Church, though it has its special function.

(ii) The argument developed in the foregoing paragraphs that the "ministry" exists to enable the Church to minister among all men so that God's purpose of reconciliation might be fulfilled, has necessarily included references to the functions of the ministry, but now more specific statements must be made about these functions.

These functions are not the result of an individual's decision; they may not be made the subject of our choices at all. Since they belong to the total ministry of the Church and this is the reconciling ministry of Christ in the world they are controlled by the pattern of His life. It is not being argued that Jesus gave certain rigid commands which exactly define the functions of "ministers," but it is suggested that Jesus made clear the ways in which the Messianic community of His disciples should fulfil their ministry. He commissioned them to preach and teach, He taught them to pray, He gave the symbols of baptism and of bread and wine, He empowered them to care for people, e.g. healing the sick and casting out demons; and for these functions He promised the gift of the Holy Spirit. These were the functions of His own earthly ministry, so that in obeying His injunctions the disciples are communicating Him.

The experience of the Church since the time of the New Testament, has confirmed the necessity and validity of these functions for the maintenance of the Church's life and witness. The "ministry" enables the Church to fulfil its ministry by guiding the Church in its doctrine through preaching and teaching on the basis of the apostolic testimony, by leading the Church in its prayer and worship, including the observance of baptism and the Communion, and by caring for all the members in all their personal circumstances and relationships, so that the community is constantly created.

But all these functions fulfil their purpose within the Divine reconciliation as the Church in all its ministry is innerly responsive

[5] *ibid.*, pp. 41 and 50.

to the Spirit. Ministry is a spiritual attitude as well as a visible activity. The outward function will be simply dead bones, lifeless skeletons of theological formulations, of traditions and patterns of worship, of ecclesiastical organization unless the Spirit within imparts life. The earthly life of Jesus is again the pattern for all His activity of preaching, teaching, healing, doing good, etc., was the expression of His perfect inner obedience to the Father. He came in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. The point we are making here is very clearly expressed by Paul in his discussion of spiritual gifts in 1 *Corinthians* xii-xiv., for He does not add love (*agape*) to the spiritual gifts by which the Church exercises ministry, as if love is the supreme gift. He sets love in the centre of his discussion as that which alone makes all gifts effective. Since for Paul, as Nygren among others has emphasized, love is primarily the love of God for men, 1 *Corinthians* xiii. is Paul's way of saying that all functions of ministry fulfil their purpose only as they are directed by a true inner response to God.

Where the minister fulfils these functions in the Spirit of Christ the Church is edified, i.e. it is enabled to perform its ministry among men so that the will of God is done on the earth.

We have now reached the point at which certain practical questions begin to emerge, but in facing these questions we must continue to think within the context of God's eternal purpose of reconciliation in Christ, by which and for which the Church and its ministry was brought into being. First of all, we have to ask: how does the Church discern that one of its members is called and gifted by God? Here at once we notice how our previous argument has determined the form of our question. It may be true that God in His freedom calls a person to be a prophet or an evangelist without using the community of His people; it may be equally true true that individuals have been rightly conscious of being called in this personal and individual manner, e.g. Amos: "I was no prophet neither was I a prophet's son . . . the Lord took me as I followed the flock and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel"; or Paul: "When it pleased God . . . to reveal His Son that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." But if the Church is the outcome of God's purpose in Christ and if forms of ministry are called into being to enable the Church to minister, then normally the inner call of God will need to be discerned and ratified by the judgment of the Church. This is really saying that God calls His servant, God equips him and God guides the Church to appoint him.

But what is involved in this process of God guiding His Church to appoint? The answer is twofold.

(i) The members of the Church are responsible for the Church's ministry and that means that they are responsible for discerning the functions which individuals may fulfil and for encouraging them

to exercise their gifts. In discharging this responsibility the members have to exercise powers of judgment and discernment. Apostolic injunctions to "try the spirits" or to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good," as well as the apostolic prayer "that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment that ye may approve things that are excellent" make it clear that knowledge, insight and wisdom are all needed if the Church is to meet the obligation. Discerning that God is calling a believer to the "ministry" is no vague, mystical process; it is an act calling for robust qualities of mind and experience.

I doubt whether at present this obligation is sufficiently acknowledged. Each local church has the responsibility of discerning among its members one who may be gifted for the "ministry," of encouraging and guiding that member, thus confirming his inner call. And all this should be done consciously and deliberately because the ministry is essential to the life of the Church. I agree with the Bishop of Southwell's emphasis that "men are available if we go and look for them. Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you. It is for the Church to assure them that they are wanted and deliberately to call men to its ministry. They will not be found if we merely 'wait and see' or if we seem to be only half-convinced about it. . . . All practising Church people in all parishes must take this as a personal assignment."[6]

(ii) The Church must then proceed to prepare such a person for the work of the ministry and after proper preparation appoint him to a specific task. All this is the responsibility of the Church in order that it may properly fulfil its ministry in the world. Consideration of what is involved in proper preparation is beyond the scope of this article; it is obviously a very important question about which the Church needs to give much more thought and to accept more fully its true obligation. But further consideration must be given here to the question of appointment.

In the light of the practice of the Apostolic Church and of subsequent Christian experience it cannot be doubted, I think, that God uses the local church to give recognition to the inner call and the possession of spiritual gifts and that, therefore, the local church may appoint a member to exercise some particular function in its ministry. It was thus that the church in Jerusalem was used to bring the seven members into a special service and was responsible for appointing them. Thus, too, the church in Antioch was used to discern the fitness of two of its "teachers," Barnabas and Paul, for evangelistic work so that the church solemnly appointed them for this service and they reported back to the church "from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled."

Here the point should be made that when a local church recog-

[6] *ibid.*, p. 88.

nizes that God has called and equipped one of its members for the work of the ministry and sets that member apart, it is authorizing him to exercise his ministry simply within and on behalf of that church. A classic illustration in Baptist history is the relationship of Andrew Fuller and the Soham Church. Both he and the church in which he had been spiritually nurtured gradually became aware that he possessed gifts for pastoral work so that the church called him for a time to exercise his gifts in preaching and then later ordained him as pastor of the Soham Baptist Church.

This process of discernment, appointment and ordination is not quite the same as the present practice among Baptist Churches whereby a local church may invite a stranger to conduct its worship on two Sundays, may receive information from responsible people about him and may then invite him to be its pastor. This process is important and where it is properly carried out involves the church in responsible discernment and judgment; but it is not the long and personal process whereby a church discerns the calling of God in one of its own members and is used by God to appoint him to the work of the ministry. An attempt to equate the two has led us into a position in which we have allowed the invitation of the local church to gain an undue significance.

What is required, therefore, is a more thoroughgoing attempt to understand the calling and appointing of a minister in the light of the doctrines enunciated in Ephesians. Here it is made clear that all local communities of believers are members of the body of Christ. They belong together in Christ as the separate members of a physical body belong to the common life of the one body. 1 *Corinthians* xii. is as definite an exposition of this theme as the passage in Ephesians. The implication is that individual communities cannot act as if they were isolated units for that is to deny the body—a grave sin according to 1 *Corinthians* xi. 29. This does not involve the impossible ideal that each local church should always act with the consent of the total Church, for a community of believers under the Lordship of Christ and guided by His Spirit is competent to make decisions and to act upon them, but it does mean that the local church will always make its decisions as a member of the body.

This understanding of the nature of the Church has to be worked out in the situation in which we now find ourselves. The Church has become a vast organization and is separated in the "denominations." Without going into the question of the relationship of the concept of the body to denote the totality of the Church as a living organism and the complex forms of organization which Christians have developed, it might be pointed out that on the highest level organizations can be a means whereby many local churches are able to realize and experience their life together in the body. Not all forms of organizations are justified, but organization itself is the

necessary instrument of our membership one of another. Ecumenical thinking may emphasize the sinfulness of the fact of denominations, yet organization does belong to a theological understanding of the nature of the Church. At this stage of the Church's ongoing journey the Baptist Union, e.g. has a proper place in the theological concept of the Body. It is not simply a convenient—or inconvenient!—piece of organization. With all the limitations and inadequacies that inevitably belong to what mortal, sinful man constructs, it is still an expression of the fellowship of churches in Christ. The concept of the Church as the body of Christ means that the Association and the Union are as valid expressions, within our present situation, of the corporate life of the believer as the local church.

In regard to the calling and appointing of a minister our churches have made it possible for the whole fellowship to be involved in the process. A local church may discern a man's calling and gifts, encourage him to use them and so be able to testify to them; a college in which he has been trained and churches in which he may have served as a student pastor will be able to give evidence of his preparation and growth; mature believers who have known him personally and groups of responsible Christians who interview him will be able to make judgments about him. All this evidence then should enable those given the responsibility of acting on behalf of the churches within the denomination to appoint the man to the work of the ministry. In this way the fellowship of Baptist Churches, recognizing that they are members together in Christ, and all responsible for the total ministry of the Church, recognizes God's call and gifts in a member and sets him apart for the work of the ministry; he may then be regarded as authorized to exercise ministry in all the Baptist Churches to which he may be invited.

The public act of appointning, which is usually termed ordination, may take place either in a local church or at some appropriate gathering of the churches. What is important is not the place in which the service is held but the total way in which the service has been authorized. Behind it should be a series of responsible judgments and careful preparation; and in this process the whole fellowship should take part. Hence the service of ordination should not be held until the process of spiritual preparation and testing is complete and it should be an act on behalf of all the churches. This suggests that the Association Meeting or the Union Assembly is the proper place for the service of ordination, yet this has the disadvantage of introducing an impersonal element. I should make the judgment that the place is much less important than the people present and the process which justifies the service of ordination.

One further question remains. It concerns the relationship of Ordination and Induction. If the process of ordination is seen to be the responsibility of the total fellowship of churches, it is an act

which can take place once only in a man's lifetime and at the beginning of his ministry. Induction is then the repeated act by which a man is authorized to exercise his ministry in a particular sphere.

Furthermore, the placing of the work of the ministry within the context of God's eternal purpose of reconciliation manifest in Christ and wrought out in the Church makes it clear that the proper and immediate sequel to his ordination is his induction to a sphere of service. It is at the point that I should dissent from the argument developed by the Rev. N. Clarke in the *Baptist Quarterly* of January, 1958. We are in clear agreement that the ministry is rooted in the ministry of Christ, though I should want to go beyond that to the purpose of God, but I cannot follow his emphasis upon an institutional priesthood and upon the climax of the ordination in the observance of the Lord's Supper. I should regard Induction as the climax of Ordination, though I do not think that this implies that the two must always take place on the same occasion. The suggestion that the Lord's Supper is the climax of the Ordination Service means that the one who is called, gifted and appointed by God through His Church, is turning again to God to receive in the the bread and wine the symbols of His grace. But God's grace is the beginning and the foundation of the calling, the gifting and the appointing. The purpose and climax of the whole process is ministry (*diakonia*) i.e. the proper climax of ordination is a going out from God's presence and in the Spirit of God to serve sinful and needy people. Ordination does not lead primarily to the Lord's Table but to the evangelistic proclamation or to the hospital visitation! This is what we mean in asserting that the sequence of ordination is induction.

We do well to remember here *Isaiah* vi., where the climax of the experience of Divine call is the Divine command: "Go, tell this people." This, too, is the pattern of our Lord's earthly life. He was the Son of Man who came to minister and give His life. This, of course, is T. W. Manson's argument in *The Church's Ministry*. He rightly bases the Church's ministry upon the ministry of Christ and stresses the fact that the ministry of Christ was not an office or a status or a privilege; it was the saving, compassionate activity of the Servant of the Lord among men and for men. .This, says T. W. Marson, "provides the standard and pattern for the life of the followers of Jesus."[7] Ministry is to be understood in these terms. What a man is set apart to do is—to minister!

In a final paragraph I want to call attention to the danger inherent in too much discussion about the details of ordination. We can exaggerate the importance of methods and forms of ordination. They should be ordered according to our fundamental conception of the nature and purpose of the Church as that is defined by the

[7] *The Church's Ministry*, p. 17.

revelation of God's purpose in Christ; what is, however, of primary significance is not how a man is ordained, but how a man ministers. This warning is underlined by some words from Daniel Jenkins: ". . . an undue preoccupation with the rights and status of the ministry can be a sign of a church which is losing its mobility . . . it is desirable that the church should act decently and in order in matters of recognizing, calling, entitling, empowering and dressing its ministers and these matters deserve some attention, but it is infinitely more important to ensure that the essential work of the ministry should not be held up because of preoccupation with them. Can anyone who considers the state of the Church on the American frontier in the 18th and 19th centuries deny that the Methodists and Baptists who provided a great deal of ministry with little attention to order, were more in the right than the Episcopalians, who provided very little ministry but did it in a very decent and orderly fashion? The ultimate test of Ministry is not whether it is properly authorized according to the view of the more settled Christian communities but whether through it the power of Christ is made effectively visible and the Church carried forward upon its pilgrimage in obedience to His will for mankind."[8]

L. G. CHAMPION

[8] *The Protestant Ministry*, p.47f.

Ekklesia and Koinonia[1]

AN ESSAY IN UNDERSTANDING

"BEING a Christian," it has been said by Dr. John Baillie, "means both believing and belonging." By this I understand Dr. Baillie to mean, "belonging" not only to Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Saviour, but also to one another as fellow-members of His Body—the Church. The idea is one of those commonplaces which we can never afford to allow to lie "bedridden in the dormitory of the soul" (to use Coleridge's phrase). This truth is the indispensable corrective to every form of unchristian individualism which claims to follow Christ and yet wilfully sits loose to church connections. Yet even if we accept the truth that as Christians we belong to one another, it is doubtful whether we are always alive to the variety of the ways in which it is possible for men to belong to one another in Christ. No doubt there are many grounds for this; but one reason at least, in my judgment, was anticipated by William James in his famous *Talks to Teachers,* when he called attention to the importance of language. "When people are at loggerheads about the interpretation of a fact, it usually shows that they have too few heads of classification to apperceive by; for, as a general thing, the fact of such a dispute is enough to show that neither one of their rival interpretations is a perfect fit." Is there any important fact about whose interpretation Christian men of equal conscientiousness are more at loggerheads today than the fact of the Church? Certainly there can hardly be any which so perplexes the average Christian as he contemplates the bewildering variety of churchmanship which he sees around him. It might be argued with some plausibility that this very variety points to the infinite wealth of meaning hidden in the word "Church"—that word which Thomas Carlyle described as "richer than Golconda and the treasures of the world." Yet this argument would be more convincing if we were able to go on to show how it is that Christian bodies which are in many cases almost completely out of relation with one another seem to find little difficulty in according to one another—in some sense at least—the name of "Church." And, as the growth both of world-communications and of the Ecumenical Movement extends the range of the problem, so it lends urgency to the question whether there may not be something lacking in our terminology which needs attention. Have we—to use James's phrase

[1] Presidential Address to the Oxford Society of Historical Theology, 1954.

—in dealing with the Church, "too few heads of classification to apperceive by"? I am not sure. But I confess I have been sufficiently intrigued by the question to want to follow it up a little, and to enquire whether it might not be possible by a development in our terminology to seize the essential facts about the Church in a fresh and more fruitful way. Admittedly the prospect is not particularly hopeful. Can anybody today say anything fresh about the Church? The topic seems already to have been flogged to death. Yet the need is so pressing that, in the interests of mutual understanding, there may be room for some remarks which will, I trust, focus attention upon it from a new angle, and perhaps provoke a more searching examination of the subject by others.

To begin with, it is rather remarkable how modern this concern about the meaning of the word "church" seems to be. Our English term gives us no help, for its most likely derivation, according to the *O.E.D.*, is simply the adjective *kuriakon*, first found about the third century as applied to a building for Christian worship. I have seen it suggested by (I think) an Orthodox scholar that neither the Fathers nor the Schoolmen—not even St. Thomas Aquinas—have supplied us with any formal definition of the word "Church." If that be true, one may perhaps conclude that in both East and West the fact of the Church was plain for all to see, and its meaning lay in its life. All the same, the circumstance is not a little surprising.

The name traditionally and universally used for the Christian Society is, of course, *Ekklesia*, in its Greek or Latin form. As to that, it is to be noted that in secular Hellenistic usage in early times an *ekklesia* was an *ad hoc* assembly of citizens summoned by a herald—in short, a kind of public meeting. The religious use of the term derives from the Septuagint where, from Deuteronomy onwards, it is invariably used to translate the Hebrew *Quahal*, meaning "the assembly of the congregation of Israel." The alternative word "*Sunagoge*," of approximately the same meaning as *ekklesia*, was generally used by the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew *Chedhah* (congregation or assembly); but *sunagoge* tended to be restricted in meaning to the local group, or the building in which it met for worship. *Ekklesia*, on the other hand, carried no such implied limitation, and this fact may well have been one of the reasons why this word (and not *sunagoge*) was normally used by Christians to describe the New Israel of God—the Christian Church. Moreover, *ekklesia* was already a familiar scriptural word for the congregation or people of God, and the fact that the term was not exclusively Jewish obviously enlarged its potential usefulness in the opening years of the Christian era.

In the New Testament the word *ekklesia* exhibits the same ambiguity which characterised the Hebrew term with which it was originally linked. That is to say, its application oscillates between the local congregation and the larger society to which it belongs. It

is true that, judged statistically, the narrower meaning largely predominates. Yet that is not the whole story, for some of the most important instances of its use are those which have a universal rather than a local reference. To quote T. M. Lindsay: "Out of the 110 times in which the word (*ekklesia*) occurs, no less than 100 do not contain this note of a widespreading unity. In the overwhelming majority of cases the word 'church' denotes a local Christian society. St. Paul alone, if we can except the one instance in Matt. 16 ('upon this rock . . .'), uses the word in its universal application; and he does it in two Epistles only . . . both of them dating from his Roman captivity." "Nevertheless," adds Dr. Lindsay, "though it is true that we cannot point to a single use of the word 'church' in the earlier epistles which can undoubtedly be said to mean a universal Christian society, the thought of this unity of all believers run through them all."[2]

It is clear from this that the scriptural word *ekklesia*, as a name for the growing Christian community, had considerable advantages, in as much as it anchored the Church firmly to its Hebrew antecedents, while at the same time it permitted easy contact with the usage of the Hellenistic world. But it had one great disadvantage. It did not, and could not, single out, as another term might conceivably have done, the distinctive nature of the Church's life and work. The word was neutral in meaning; and this is important. For the outstanding fact about the Christian Church to which the New Testament bears witness is, that it was anything but neutral, and that it emerged at a definite point in history as a quite new and challenging kind of corporate entity. Dr. L. S. Thornton uses different terms but describes the same phenomenon when he says: "The Pauline descriptions of the Church as the body of Christ postulate the entrance into history of a new sociological principle, for which we can find no parallel."[3] I say that the Church "emerged" in history, but it would be more accurate to say that it was thrust into history, for the picture given to us by the Book of Acts is that of a group of people who were initially very far from seeking to establish themselves as a distinctive community. In fact, they became such only through a series of significant events which finally made apparent both to the world at large and to Christians themselves that they *were* a new society, and not simply a modified form of an old one. In so far, therefore, as the traditional term *ekklesia* tended to disguise this new fact, and to veil the issues involved in the rise of the Christian Church as a distinct entity, it can hardly be judged to have been wholly satisfactory as a name for the new community, however useful it may have been in the special circumstances of the ancient world. In saying this, I am not wishing in the least to beg the question how far the Christian Church as

[2] *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, pp. 10-12.
[3] *The Incarnate Lord*, p. 276.

the New Israel served itself heir to the privileges and responsibilities of the Old Covenant. That is a major issue whose importance everyone recognizes. But the action taken by official Judaism in violently repudiating the mission and claims of Jesus, and the forcible way in which it extruded His disciples from their place in the national church, established once and for all the fact that the *Christian ekklesia* was adjudged to have no reason for its existence unless it could claim a character and a mission of its own, however intimately it might be related to the Old Testament *ekklesia* of which it was the offspring. Judaism at any rate had no use for it. To that extent Marcion's insistence upon the essential newness of Christianity was valid, even although the Fathers rightly decided that his way of asserting that truth was erroneous. Perhaps we shall get nearest to the truth of the matter if we recognize the distinction which Dr. Rowley draws between Judaism as an official body, and the Scriptures of which Judaism was the trustee: "For"—to quote Rowley—"if the New Testament looks back to the Old which preceded it, the Old looks forward to something which should follow it, and that something is not post-biblical Judaism."[4] The element of newness in the Christian Church is actually implicit in the sovereign claim made by Jesus during his earthly life upon the undivided loyalty and obedience of his followers. The explicit meaning of this new allegiance in terms of the life of the Church has recently been expounded by Emil Brunner, who enumerates three main points at which the difference between Israel and the Christian *ekklesia* is revealed. First, the ceremonial and cultic laws of Judaism (such as circumcision and the regulations regarding food) were no longer authoritative for the Christian *ekklesia;* secondly, a clear distinction was now drawn between citizenship in a nation or race, and membership of a society based upon personal conviction; and thirdly, the *ekklesia* no longer regarded the civil legislation of the Old Testament as relevant to its life. In short, the Christian Church manifested what Brunner calls "a new dimension of life in the Holy Spirit,"[5] and because of that it was committed to the task of working out its destiny along lines which were essentially new, and in the strictest sense unprecedented. It is important to notice, moreover, that the freedom from its Jewish matrix which the Christian Church claimed for itself was one not merely of fact but also of principle. As Bishop Newbigin has recently reminded us, St. Paul's antagonism to the acceptance of circumcision in the Christian Church was rooted in his conviction that such a step would have been a return to a former Jewish legalism from which Christ had set his people free. To quote Newbigin's words: "The tremendous struggle about circumcision was not a struggle about two alternative rites of initiation into the people of God. It was a struggle

[4] *The Unity of the Bible,* p. 94.
[5] *The Misunderstanding of the Church,* pp. 20f.

about the fundamental principles upon which that people is constituted."[6]

It is at this point, I suggest, that the question of terminology becomes important, for the New Testament makes use of another word to describe the early Christian community, which, unlike *ekklesia*, does tell us something about what the Church was aspiring to be: I mean, the term *koinonia*. Friedrich Hauck's essay on this word shows that the fundamental meaning of *koinonos* and its cognates in Greek writers generally was that of *sharing*, in the sense both of "having a share in" and, more rarely, of "giving a share to."[7] In particular, *koinonia* was used to describe an intimate personal relationship such as that realized in friendship, or, deeper still, in marriage. It was characteristic of the Greeks that they did not hesitate to carry over this idea of a sharing of life into the sphere of religion, and to postulate a *koinonia* between the deity and men through various media such as sacramental meals and the like. The Septuagint usage, on the other hand, differed from this in two significant respects. First, the root meaning of the corresponding Hebrew word *Chabar* is not to share, but to unite or bind, as, for example, when Jehoshaphat of Judah and Ahaziah of Israel united in a joint undertaking to send ships to Spain (2 Chron. xx. 35). The notion apparently approximated to that of a covenant or binding agreement. Secondly, it seems that neither of the terms *Chabar* and *Koinonia* was ever used in the Old Testament of the religious relationship. In contrast to the Greeks, the pious Israelite thought of himself in relation to God not as an associate (*Chaber*), but as a servant (*Hebed*). Even though the sacrificial use of blood was thought to restore God's people to fellowship with Him, yet the word *koinonia* was not used in that context. To quote Hauck: "The theological consciousness shrank from defining what was experimentally apprehended." At first sight, this attitude might seem to conflict with the evidence which the Old Testament provides of the close and friendly relationship which God extends to His people. Nevertheless, the contradiction is more apparent than real, for the Old Testament uniformly views the relation of men to God against the background of the Divine holiness, which imparts to it a feeling-tone of a very special kind. It insistently rebukes any want of humility, or any disposition to presume, on the part of sinful man in the presence of his Maker. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant" (*Ps.* xxv. 14).

With this in mind, it is the more suggestive that, in the New Testament, there is a notable change of temper, so that both the idea of fellowship with God, and the corresponding term *koinonia* acquire a fresh depth of meaning. We owe this development largely

[6] *The Household of God*, p. 36.
[7] *Theologisches Wörterbuch des Neuen Testaments.*

to the Apostle Paul, for it is one of the main characteristics of his teaching and work; but there is reason to think that he seized upon and interpreted more deeply than others a feature of the life of the early Christian community which distinguished it from the very beginning. It was, of course, implicit in the whole ministry of Jesus, and was clearly expressed in the words to His disciples which are recorded in the fourth Gospel: "Henceforth I call you not servants . . . but I have called you friends" (*John* xv. 15). St. Luke tells us that the earliest converts "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship (*koinonia*), in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (*Acts* ii. 42). Armitage Robinson points out that this is the first description given us of the newly-baptized converts as a body after Pentecost, and he deprecates the assumption that the phrase "the breaking of bread and the prayers" is an exhaustive explanation of the meaning of the word *koinonia*. "The fellowship was exemplified no doubt in these acts; but it was wider than any of its special manifestations: it was the unity and membership in which the whole Body was constituted and maintained."[8] That this is a true reading of the situation is confirmed by the remarkable exhibition of practical generosity which the members of the Early Church gave to their poorer brethren. This has sometimes been crudely described as an early experiment in Christian Communism; but it was actually a spontaneous exhibition of the sense of brotherhood which animated the Christian *koinonia* in its earliest days. This consciousness of sharing in a common life is, as I have said, powerfully present in St. Paul, who imports a very rich content into the verb *koinonein* in its various forms. To him, also, the giving of help to the poor brethren at Jerusalem is a form of *koinonia* (*Rom.* xii. 13). But in his view the term represents supremely the religious fellowship of believers with their Lord, and so, by derivation from Him, with one another—a fellowship which expresses itself in many and varied forms, but which does not exhaust itself in any or all of them. Having in mind the characteristic Old Testament attitude to which I have already referred, it is instructive to note—as Hauck says—that St. Paul runs true to form in not speaking of a direct and unmediated fellowship with God. For him, the fellowship which Christians enjoy with God is one which is created and sustained for them by Jesus Christ. It is a holy fellowship, not in the sense that its members were morally superior persons, but that they were publicly committed to give unqualified allegiance to Jesus Christ. The *koinonia* is the fruit of His work on their behalf, and of His alone. This is expressed with particular force in the many words which St. Paul uses to describe the believer's relationship to Christ which are compounded with the preposition "with" (*sun*). The Christian lives *with* Christ (*Rom.* vi. 8) and suffers *with* him (*Rom.* viii. 17); he is crucified, dies and

[8] *H.D.B.*, I.460.

is buried *with* Christ (*Rom.* vi. 6, and *Col.* ii. 12); he is raised *with* Christ (*Col.* ii. 12), and is made alive *with* him (*Col.* ii. 13). Nor is this a relationship which is peculiar to specially distinguished souls. It is the gift of the gospel to all who will accept it by faith. They are "called into the *koinonia*" of the Son of God (1 *Cor.* i. 9). Being so called, they are made members one of another, as equally deriving their life from their one Lord, whose "Body" they are. Paul's summary title for this new life is (you will remember) life "in Christ" (*'En Christo*)—as to which Anderson Scott says: "The Church in fact is his (Christ's) body in the sense that in and through it he is continuously realizing himself. . . . When we see how St. Paul equated the community and its Head, we can see how being 'in Christ,' 'baptized into Christ' and 'putting on Christ' were intelligible forms of expressing the deepest meaning of incorporation into the community."[9]

This sharing of life with Christ and with one another is realized by Christians in its intensest form at the Lord's Table. "The cup of blessing which we bless" (says St. Paul, 1 *Cor.* x.) "is it not a participation (*koinonia*) in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not a participation (*koinonia*) in the body of Christ"? The material elements become in some unexplained way the instrument of a relationship with the Living Christ which is at once individual and corporate. For, as St. Paul's next words show, it is an essential part of the significance of the rite that its action binds those who participate not only to Christ but, through Him also to one another. (Cp. *R.S.V.* "because there is one loaf, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the same loaf" (1 *Cor.* x. 17). We may note in passing that a similar thought, though differently expressed, occurs in 1 *John* when, in speaking about the gift of eternal life which is the theme of the Gospel, the writer says: "Our *koinonia* is with the Father and with his son Jesus Christ . . . if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have *koinonia* with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 *John* i. 3, 7).

To go more deeply into this would require an exposition of New Testament theology beyond my present purpose. It is enough to state simply that this "life-in-community," as we may call it, was for St. Paul and the rest essentially a supernatural fact. As such it is necessarily invisible, for it is "hid with Christ in God." But its reality was evidenced by the rapidly increasing spread of the Christian Movement in the world. The Christian groups springing up here and there in Asia Minor and elsewhere are (says St. Paul) living epistles, which are eloquent of Christ's continuing presence and the power of his Spirit at work in them. Thus the *Koinonia of the Holy Spirit* ranks in St. Paul's eyes with the *Charis of the Lord Jesus Christ* and the *Agape of God* as unitedly constituting

[9] *Christianity According to St. Paul*, p. 157.

the supreme blessing which the apostle desires for his converts (2 *Cor.* xiii. 14). It matters little for our present purpose whether the phrase "*koinonia of the Holy Spirit*" in this benediction is taken as an objective or as a subjective genitive for, as Winstanley says, "the source behind, the efficient cause of the manifestation, corporate or otherwise, is always the Spirit of God in the last resort: the Spirit that interacts with the human spirit, making realizable both communion with God and fellow-membership with man."[10]

I have been bound to dwell at some length on this aspect of New Testament teaching at the risk of boring you, not because I suppose that these facts are new to you, but because their recall is necessary in order to illustrate the main point which I am trying to make. Here was a society which began its career in the world as a Fellowship—a *koinonia*—in fact as well as in name. It was not a perfect fellowship by any means, as may be easily seen from the pages of the New Testament. Yet it is not for nothing that love (*agape*) is set forth as the first of the "Fruits of the Spirit" (*Gal.* v. 22). *Koinonia* was not a merely superficial or accidental attribute of the new Christian Society. It was something in which the life of the community revealed its innermost essence; and its fundamental importance was proclaimed every time Christian believers engaged together in the central act of their worship. They were a *koinonia*, not in the sense of a voluntary association of like-minded individuals, but by virtue of the creative influence of the Holy Spirit continuously at work, uniting them as persons to the Living Christ and to one another in Him. This activity was essentially something new. It pointed to the working of the Spirit of God in Jesus Christ in a new dimension; and therefore, if we describe the Church of the New Testament as the "*Ekklesia* of God" in the sense of a society which inherited and carried forward elements from the ancient People of God in the Old Testament, must we not also recognize it as the "*Koinonia* of the Spirit," that is to say, a society whose essential relationship with God is both new in itself, and creative of a new relationship between its own members? In other words, the Christian Church was from the outset both an *ekklesia* and a *koinonia;* indeed, I would make bold to say that there is a sense in which it was originally a *koinonia* before it was an *ekklesia*. It had to find itself as a corporate entity of a distinctive kind before it could safely take up and use the heritage of the past which, in its own way, was equally necessary to its life.

I have not the knowledge to carry this argument further, and to enquire how far the life of the post-apostolic church continued to exhibit the pattern not only of an *ekklesia* but also of a *koinonia*. I think it would be very instructive if such an enquiry could be made, although I fear the data would probably be scanty. It has often been remarked that the early Church Fathers showed com-

[10] *Spirit in the New Testament*, p. 82.

paratively little interest in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit until at any rate the latter half of the fourth century, and that even then the subject was treated rather as an after-thought. The usual explanation offered for this fact is that the Church had necessarily to give priority to the working out of the doctrines of God, and of the Person of Christ, before it could grasp and expound the special place of the Holy Spirit in the Christian Faith. No doubt that is true. Yet I have sometimes wondered whether another reason may not have been that the Early Church failed adequately to realize that it was called into being as the "*Koinonia of the Spirit,*" and that its very life depended upon recognizing and implementing that fact. When I have said this, I confess to some misgivings, for was it not the warmth of the early Christian brotherhood which—in spite of ecclesiastical controversies—made the deepest impression upon the hard Roman world? Perhaps this is another case where Christian experience outran the Church's theological apprehension of it. I have not, as I say, enough knowledge of patristic literature to test the point; but such scanty enquiries as I have been able to make rather suggest that, as far as the word *koinonia* went, the term became fairly soon a technical label for the Eucharist,[11] and its more fundamental meaning as a description of the Church itself was not in the forefront of people's minds. If that was the case, then it would be only what one might expect if, in failing to grasp firmly the essential character of its own life as the *Koinonia of the Spirit,* the Church found difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory theological exposition of the Holy Spirit. Be that as it may, the divided Church of our day is in no position to pass judgment upon the Martyr Church of the first three centuries in the matter of *koinonia.* What we can, I think, say with truth is, that it cannot have been an accident that the age which subsequently witnessed the break-up of the old ecclesiastical order under the impact of the Reformation, was also the age in which many new forms of Christian *Koinonia* came into being, and when, as Dr. G. F. Nuttall has shown, men began once more to think freely and fully about the nature of the Holy Spirit, and His significance for the life of the Church.[12]

You will perceive that I have raised more questions than I find myself able to answer, and probably the best thing I can do, therefore, is to sit down. But before I do so, may I suggest two further points which are relevant to our situation today? First, I would ask: How far are we satisfied that Jesus entrusted Baptism and the Breaking of Bread to His disciples considered as an *ekklesia,* and how far may we suppose on the contrary that it was the *koinonia* which he had specially in mind? We are all exercised today about the conditions under which these rites shall be observed by the *ekklesia.* I sometimes wonder whether we are not morbidly

[11] Just as is the case with the word "Communion" today.
[12] *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience.*

exercised on the matter. It seems to me that the Church of the New Testament enjoyed an enviable freedom in its use of the sacraments which is in refreshing contrast to our modern anxiety about them. Are we right in treating these observances as if they needed as it were our protection? Ought we not to think of them rather as being themselves instrumental to the *koinonia* of the Spirit—that is, helping to create and nurture that fellowship between Christ and His people which is the very essence of the Church? Do they not belong to the growing-edge of the Church—if I may so put it—as well as to its fully-established life? No doubt there will be a certain risk attached to this view. But ought we not to take it? I have seen the late Principal Oman quoted for the remark that Plato concerned himself mainly with safeguards, but Jesus wholly with venture. It is altogether right that the *Ekklesia* of God should concern itself with safeguards. But if the *Koinonia* of the Spirit does indeed stand for what is distinctively new in the Society created by Jesus, it will be an ill day for the Church if it allows the adventurous element to drop out of its life altogether; for it is largely by the adventurous element that the world is won for Christ. Mons. Ronald Knox has made the significant comment: "Christianity is a balance of doctrines, and not merely of doctrines but of emphases. You must not exaggerate in either direction or the balance is disturbed."[13] Is it possible that some of our difficulties today originate in the fact that the balance between *ekklesia* and *koinonia* has been too heavily weighted on the side of *ekklesia,* and that what we need now is a recovery of emphasis upon the *Koinonia* as a Spirit-guided community exercising its prescriptive freedom in all things under the Living Christ as its Head?

My second question would carry the same issue a little further. What kind of relationship do we envisage as existing between the Church as the Ekklesia of God and the Church as the Koinonia of the Spirit? Some kind of relationship there must be, since the essence of both lies in their prior relationship to Christ as both the Head of the Church, and the Presence in the midst of the two or three gathered in His Name. The evidence of the New Testament obliges us, as I have said, to see the Christian community emerging in history as a new kind of society brought into being through the creative action of God in the crucified and risen Christ. - Its distinctive character lay in its being a *koinonia* of believers united in Christ, and charged by Him with the duty of living as His witnesses in the spirit of obedience and brotherly love. But that was not all. From the very beginning the *koinonia* drew upon the heritage of the *ecclesia,* using it under the Spirit's guidance to develop the structure and the instruments necessary for its own life, and for carrying out its special commission in the world. Thus *koinonia* and *ekklesia* were, and are, twin aspects of the Church's life. Yet how

[13] *Enthusiasm,* p. 580.

are they related to one another? What happens when their claims conflict? Is it permissible to consider the Church in its *ekklesia* aspect as ultimately a Koinonia of the Spirit which has been *organised* adequately for the service of its Lord? And if so, may not the character or pattern of its life *qua ekklesia* be variously and freely recognized without thereby denying the reality of that same life *qua koinonia*, wherever and however it may be found? I do not know. But, for myself, I desire no better expression of their mutual relationship than that unconsciously suggested in the words of the Bidding Prayer used in our own University Church of St. Mary's: "Ye shall pray for the Holy Catholic Church, that is, the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the world."

R. L. CHILD

Some Disregarded Sources of Baptist History*

PRINCIPAL UNDERWOOD, in his Preface to the *History of English Baptists*, declares his resolution to confine himself to England, adding that the history of the Welsh Baptist churches can be recorded only by a native of the Principality. What a wonderful flourish of disregard! All I can say is that he has lost something good, some romantic records, almost all of them written in English: the arrival of John Miles in 1649 to found at Ilston in Gower the first Particular church in Wales, to write up 263 names in the church register, carry it off to America with him, where for many years it has found a home at the Browne University in Rhode Island; the arrival in the highlands of Brecon and Radnor in 1650 of Hanserd Knollys, one of the greatest names in Baptist history, to preach the gospel under the Act for the Propagation, and (incidentally) to be well paid for his work; the visit of William Rider to the church at Llanwenarth in 1655, a General Baptist imposing upon Particulars, to drive home the practice of the laying-on of hands, which was to cause endless controversy in later generations; the baptism of William Jones in 1667 by immersion, his founding of the church at Rhydwilym, parent church of the two present powerful Associations in south-western Wales; and how the example of the mighty Vavasor Powell, coupled with the influence (to a large extent) of the church of Broadmead across the Bristol Channel, bred groups of free-communionists on the Border who (Baptists in reality) came to life in the Indulgence documents of 1672 as Congregationals; and how Dr. Whitley, by a lack of acquaintance with the Welsh background leading to actual disregard, lost some very valuable points in correcting the classified summaries of Professor Lyon Turner in his second volume of *Original Records*. Would not Principal Underwood enjoy these high-souled romances, even excuse the occasional lapses of human endeavour? And follow on to read the story of Andrew Fuller's visit to the two South Wales Associations in 1812, the visit of Dr. John Ryland to the Moleston Association meetings in 1814, where he preached three times, twice after the redoubtable Christmas Evans; of the Missionary Meeting at Swansea in 1815, when Robert Hall, with Drs. Rippon and Ryland, were expected to speak; of the

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bold invitation to William Winterbotham to preach at the Carmarthen meetings in 1819, he being a man who had spent over two years in prison as a favourer of the French Revolution, but had endeared himself to the tough Calvinists of the Association by editing one of the hyper-Calvinistic works of Dr. Gill.[1] And what of the Circular Letters of the various Associations, by now over 1,500 in number and many of them written in English, bringing testimony both to vagaries of doctrine and the vicissitudes of the churches? I am sure after this course of reading—letters as well as romances —the Baptist historian must admit that it is neither a good nor wholesome thing to leave the entire track of Welsh Baptist history at the mercy of native runners.

In the last paragraph the words "lack of acquaintance" were used and a hint given of virtual disregard. But let not such pinchbeck terms make us forget at this juncture to pay tribute to two gallant historians of Dissent, no less than the late Professor Lyon Turner and the late Dr. W. T. Whitley, the first whose three volumes of *Original Records*—penetrating, detailed, comprehensive —are simply invaluable, and the second, at once gleaner, compiler, editor, bibliographer, historian, whose memory should be very vivid to us all in this year of Jubilee. In the tables of his third volume, based in the licence-entries in State Papers 320, 321, and especially on the Entry Book 38A Turner, who had a virile obsession for statistics, was pleased to find 210 Baptist preachers who were licensed in 1672-3, and 202 meeting-houses.[2] These results were put under the microscope by Dr. Whitley, who rescued an additional thirty Baptists from the ranks of Presbyterians and Congregationals, but generously conceded that some people called Baptists by Turner were not Baptists at all.[3] Unfortunately, as has already been hinted, by disregarding the evidence from Wales, he missed some cogent material in which he would find about twelve Baptists, all free-communionists of the Bunyan School, masquerading (like Bunyan himself) under the name of Congregationals, and one or two of them under a Presbyterian cloak, old friends and disciples of Powell in the highlands of Radnor, old colleagues of William Thomas of Llltantrisant, a frequent visitor to Broadmead, in the central hundreds of Monmouth.[4] Interesting men like Maurice Griffith of Beguildy, friend and companion of Vavasor in his great itinerant days, like Thomas Quarrell of Shirenewton, a close relative of Vavasor's first wife, and William Milman, the Sabbatarian Anabaptist, who first came to Wales as a schoolmaster, and whose personality was so puzzling to the clerks at Whitehall that they forgot to enter his Christian name on the licence-entry, and forgot also to call him and his householder at Llangwm either Congregational or Baptist on the same entry.[5] On the other hand, one free-communionist leader, Christopher Price of Abergavenny, at once minister, apothecary, and man of means, did not attempt to deceive

either Lyon Turner or Dr. Whitley, but roundly declared himself a Baptist, a flourish of conviction that was somewhat tarnished by his doings during the Indulgence of 1687.

THE RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF 1676

Before coming to this later Indulgence it would be well to note the Religious Census of 1676, set on foot by Archbishop Sheldon and his coadjutors just after the withdrawal of the licences in 1675 in order to prove the abiding weakness of nonconformity in the land. Answers were required from each parish to three questions, the third reading thus: *What number of Dissenters are resident in your parish, which either obstinately refuse, or wholly absent themselves, from the communion of the Church of England at such times as by law they are required?* Only the bare number was asked for, no lead was given whether that number meant individuals or households above the age of sixteen, and most ghastly omission of all, no sub-analysis was suggested regarding the strength of the respective sects, of resolving the total into its constituent elements. The returns for England and Wales are lodged in the William Salt Library at Stafford, surely some of the most challenging documents in the history of Nonconformity, and also the most refractory. I have not heard of many Baptists resorting to the Salt Library, copying out the relevant figures for certain parishes, and returning home to extract the exact number of Baptists from the parish total of "obstinate refusers." Occasional efforts are heard of, as we read in the *Baptist Quarterly* for 1952 in an article by Mr. Page on the Baptists of Sandy in Bedfordshire.[6] Twenty-two Nonconformists were counted here in 1676, apparently (he says) members at Bedford, but worshipping at Blunham, all twenty-two appropriated as Baptists, a rather dangerous conclusion in so Congregational a county as Bedfordshire. Dr. Whitley himself, writing of Eythorn in Kent, says that twelve Dissenters were counted there in 1676, and "safely" draws the conclusion that they were all Baptists, *for no other form of Dissent* (he says) *was known there*, a not altogether safe dictum when Presbyterian and Congregational discoverers (not to mention Quakers) are on the prowl for beginnings.[7] On the whole, I believe we have been more successful in Wales. Take the parish of Llandysilio in West Wales, where we have the help of the Rhydwilym Register and the churchwardens' reports. The census number is ten Nonconformists, in a parish where the impacts of Independents, Quakers, and Baptists were all three at work. The wardens in 1678 report fifteen schismatics, evidently counting in wives and including a gentleman who had refused to take the oath as churchwarden; in 1684 they report seventeen, also counting in wives. It is known that about 1676 Independent influence had loosened considerably in the parish, leaving us with the conclusion that the ten were Baptists and Quakers, and that they were heads

of families. The exact number of Baptists is still problematical. We are nearer the bone in two Carmarthenshire parishes; four was the number of Baptist schismatics reported by the wardens of Llannon in 1684, four was the Nonconformist number in 1676. For Llangennech the wardens name seven in 1684, adding in the wife of one of them; the census has six. Could one apply similar methods of apportionment to the 300 Nonconformists entered at Bromsgrove in Worcestershire, the largest number in the diocese, especially noting that six years later 87 members were written down on the Baptist church book?[8] And who will be brave enough to attempt to analyse the 800 Nonconformists, and deduce the exact number of Baptists, counted in the Northgate district of Canterbury, remembering that an Anglican reformer had reported in 1669 that Quakers were numerous there, Baptists not so numerous, and that we know that the Independents had organized one settled church in the city in 1646, and another in 1647 (the first Baptists are not dated before 1654)?[9] To return to Wales for a moment: the highlights of the census are the 220 Nonconformists counted in the parish of Clodock,[10] which includes Longtown and the Olchon Valley, which goes far (without proving) to see that Valley as the cradle of Baptist tradition in the Principality, and the 292 in Swansea. Not all Baptists: there is evidence for Independents in Clodock, and Baptists were certainly a minority in such a Congregational stronghold as Swansea. The 292 undoubtedly shadowed forth the later strength of Nonconformity in the town itself and in the valleys radiating from it. Have not the Baptist Union of Wales and the Congregational Union settled their headquarters there? There is a world of work for us to unravel the mysteries of the census, more especially in arriving at the number of Baptists concealed in the lump cumulations of Answer No. 3.

THE INDULGENCES OF 1687 AND 1688

The time has come to address ourselves to the Indulgences of 1687 and 1688, by which the Catholic James II, through the use of the dispensing power, hoped to establish Catholicism as the State religion, and to depress and embarrass the Church of England by suddenly showing favour to the Dissenters who had for the previous decade suffered the severest of persecutions. Not only was there promise of liberty of worship (by means of licences), but of appointment as magistrates, of entry to the highest offices of the great corporations. The temptations before the persecuted Nonconformists were tremendous, and the Baptists did not stand the test too well (as Dr. Whitley has shown), neither did the Presbyterians and Congregationals. As far as I know, there is no register extant of those who received licences under the Indulgence of 1687 nor under that of 1688, similar to the Entry Book 38A for the Indulgence of 1672 (only such a register would solve the doubts that

still exist over the attitude of Bunyan). Nor had Alexander Gordon or Dr. Whitley, heard of any such,[11] though the former had seen some sporadic references in *Notes and Queries;* and it is unfortunate that the Calendar of State Papers for 1687-8 has not to date been published. But the Calendars of Treasury Books for the period have been; in them it is possible to see the sharp contrast between the King's warrant to the Remembrancer to discharge all processes issued against Recusants and Dissenters (this on 21st April, 1687) and the effort made just a year before by the authorities of Christ's Hospital, favoured by the King, by the application of the procedure cy-près, to annex for themselves the annuities (amounting to £225) accruing from the will of Thomas Bell, a surgeon, for the benefit of poor ministers and members of Congregational churches.[12] To return to the actual licences: the absence of a register is not really to be surprised at, for instead of having to come in person (or through a licence agent) to Whitehall as in 1672 which would naturally produce a register, in 1687 the licence could be issued by the nearest J.P. (as happened to the preacher Richard King at Southampton),[13] a transaction which could conveniently be forgotten in the Revolution which was at hand.

The most notable contribution of recent years to the study of these Indulgences is the lucid article of Mr. Arnold H. J. Baines in the *Baptist Quarterly* for 1955 based on a pamphlet he discovered at the Bodleian entitled *Innocency Vindicated*,[13a] an apologia emanating from the orthodox leaders of the London (Particular) Assembly of 1689. This pamphlet roundly declares that not a single *congregation* of Baptists had sent addresses to King James II thanking him for the exercise of the dispensing power to remove the penal laws, but admitted that "some lewd persons . . . of our Societies" were used by the late King to regulate Corporations, and emphasized yet again the "miscarriage of a few persons." Mr. Baines, however, cites the names of pretty prominent Baptist leaders, lewd persons or not, in London and Abingdon who had joined in the thanks; about eight such addresses came from groups af Baptists;[14] sixty altogether from the three main denominations, all published, without names of signatories, in the official *London Gazette.*

Twenty-four Baptist ministers signed the abjuring pamphlet of 1689 to clear the good name of the denomination of "reproach and infamy." We are surprised, even startled, that the twelfth signatory is Christopher Price of Abergavenny, the prominent free-communionist who boldly signed himself Baptist in 1672, and who in 1687 handed the Congregational address "within your county of Monmouth" to King James at Gloucester about 20th August, and which was printed in the *Gazette,* No. 2272 (25-29 August). The term *Congregational* need not frighten anybody; as has been said already, Price was a free-communionist of the Bunyan school, and in the

documents of the period such Baptists, like Bunyan himself, masqueraded as Congregationals.[15] The Monmouth address of 1687 refers to "your extraordinary favour and princely clemency . . . humbly casting ourselves at your Royal Feet, paying humble thanks for your transcendent favour." And yet in 1689 Price is allowed to call himself one of the "lewd persons who were of our Societies" and to place himself calmly under "reproach and infamy." It is rather curious that under the great roof of the Bodleian rest the abjuring pamphlet of 1689 and the *Rawlinson MS. A.*139A of 1687 (f. 151) in which the Duke of Beaufort, as Lord President of Wales and the Marches accompanying King James on his journey to the West, pens with his own hand on his Monmouthshire report:

Dissenter not in Commission } *Dr. Christopher Price. That gave the King the Address at Gloucester,*

thus holding out (it is evident) high hopes of Dr. Price being made a J.P. under the new dispensation.

But we Baptists of Wales are not disposed to be too hard on this compromising free-communionist. Even the venerable William Kyffin reluctantly allowed himself to become an Alderman of the City of London (under, it is true, the limitations named by Mr. Baines), but his name stood first as a signatory of the Bodleian pamphlet. And Christopher Price had a great record as one of the upholders of John Tombes in the Abergavenny debate of 1653, as the man who gave the land on which the first Baptist chapel in Wales, that at Llanwenarth, was built, and as the channel by which the benefactions of George Griffith and Isaac Marlow were distributed amony needy ministers in the Marches of Wales, both Baptist and Congregational. To close the paragraph, I should not like anyone to think I am accusing Mr. Baines of disregarding the evidence of the Rawlinson MS.; rather do I admire his great good fortune in giving to the world the message of *Innocency Vindicated.*

THE TOLERATION ACT OF 1689

No doubt the men of conscience and the dabblers in compromise[16] were all elated by the coming of toleration in 1689 when (in the words of an old church book) liberty of conscience was made legal by Act of Parliament. There were critics, of course, who pointed to the cumbrous eighteen clauses of the Toleration Act. to the swearing of two oaths and a declaration, to the necessary subscription to the 39 Articles, to the insistence on open doors, to the double fees (sixpence on swearing the oaths, sixpence on receiving the certificate). But the overwhelming voice of Dissent, later to be expressed in vivid antitheses by Macaulay, decided ao accept the gift of toleration, with all its limitations, as the best concession they

could get from a parliament of Anglicans on the difficult morrow of a Revolution. Baptists, described as people "who scrupled the baptizing of infants," were especially pleased to be excused the 27th of the 39 Articles. There was nothing to do but to approach the nearest Diocesan Registry with a petition definitely naming the preacher and the place of meeting decided upon, or visit the Quarter Sessions of the county one resided in, with the confident knowledge that the Act gave no option of refusal to the Registrar or the Clerk of Sessions. Unfortunately, this choice of registration was, and still continues, a disconcerting bedevilment to researchers and historians: a systematic study of the working of the Act means, in England, the goodwill of forty Clerks of the Peace and over a score of Diocesan Registrars; in Wales thirteen Clerks and four Registrars at the least. Thus it is not surprising that exhaustive studies of the Act have never appeared; we have perforce to be satisfied with casual quotations in local newspapers, fugitive references in denominational *Transactions*, truncated entries in county histories, and (let us not forget) with the immense total of 54,804 entries in the keeping of the Registrar-General at Somerset House, of which 2,724 are definitely Baptist and 27,233 "Protestant Dissenters," a term which conceals many Baptist licences.[17] For all the staggering immensity of the total, it is really hopelessly incomplete, what with the loss in the country of the original records, the disappearance of the rolls in decayed boroughs, and sometimes the sheer prejudice and pigheadedness of officials. The entries covering 1689 to 1715 are grievously few, the most interesting period of all, witnessing the resurrection of Puritanism after a deadening persecution of nearly twenty-seven years. All these papers were called in pursuant to the Act of 1852, 15 and 16 Vict., cap. 36, and were not actual licences at all—these licences were dispersed all over the country, some of them appropriately framed in vestries or in self-respecting deacons' rooms—but bare returns of names and places. It is well to remind ourselves that a cursory examination of these attenuated entries at Somerset House will never be a substitute for the exact details of the original applications that lie in the custody of Registrars and Clerks of Sessions. In Wales we have attempted to do a little of this work: lists of Sessions licences for Glamorgan, all of the 18th century, have been printed in the *Transactions* of the Congregational body,[18] and in a few months the present writer hopes to present to our Historical Society a considered study of the working of the Act among the old Baptists of Caernarvonshire, based on the County Sessions papers and the records of the Diocesan Registry at Bangor.

Not only the exact terms of the Toleration Act have to be kept in mind but also its supplementary legislation: a statute of 1779, 19 Geo. III, c. 44, decreed that Dissenting petitioners were excused subscription to the 39 Articles on condition that they subscribed a

simple declaration that they were Christians and Protestants, and were ready to make the two Testaments the rule of their doctrine and practice; and a further statute of 1812, 52 Geo. III, c. 155, by which the oaths could be sworn before the nearest J.P., the record to be forwarded forthwith to the Clerk of Sessions (if the congregation was under twenty in number, oaths and licences were unnecessary).[19] This emphasis on the local Justices and Quarter Sessions would lead one to think that the Diocesan Registries were left deserted by Dissenting petitioners; that would be a serious misapprehension indeed, for in a tabulated list presented to Parliament covering the years 1760 to 1808, it appears that for every one petitioner at the Sessions there were five at the Registries;[20] nor did the Act of 1812 seem to affect the ratio in any substantial way. Ratios or not, the strict enquiries of Parliament notwithstanding, it is true to say that in hundreds of instances (to repeat an old story) the records of Registries and Sessions have been irretrievably lost, thus involving the disappearance of the original petitions, a loss particularly exasperating because they usually contained the names of the main upholders of a cause when the application was made, very often indeed of the founders themselves. The saddest example is that of Anglesey in Wales, where the surviving Sessions records open not earlier than 1768, and where the first licence to come to view in the Bangor Registry (to a Presbyterian) is dated 1774, eighty-five years after the passing of the Toleration Act! Very curiously, the Baptists of the county did not suffer much from these disasters, as the first Baptist invasion of this part of Wales did not happen before 1775-6, and it happened too that the petitions, when they did arrive, were reported fully and circumstantially. Further still: the Bangor Diocesan Registrar of 1922, a severe Anglican with a sympathetic sense of history, decided to make up for the laxity of his predecessors by himself compiling a list of all nonconformist licences issued for Anglesey since 1774, and printing it in the *Trans. of the Anglesey Hist. Soc.* for 1922 and 1924.

Do I accuse Baptist historians of disregarding the world of Toleration licences? I do not, the world is too immense, what with the records of Sessions, Registries, and Somerset House.[21] Do I suggest that this Historical Society should appoint a high-salaried expert to survey the whole field, and make a report? I am afraid the Treasurer will have something to say about that. But I do think that when an able and ambitious Baptist student appears, armed with skill in research and an inordinate patience, he should be tactfully guided to this syllabus of study, and advised to write a thesis for a higher degree on some substantial aspect of the problem. Or, 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? This would serve, to some extent, to

assuage the sad observation of Dr. Whitley about the paucity of evidence regarding the General Baptists of Surrey and Sussex: "No one seems to have explored the Quarter Session rolls to see what persons and places were registered in or after 1689."[22]

THE LAW REPORTS

A discussion of the Toleration Act leads inevitably to the old-fashioned *Law Reports* which were compiled by retired judges who enjoyed running over their old cases, scanning the lines of evidence, assessing the arguments, and peering over ancient verdicts; their Reports bear such honoured legal names as Ventris, Salkeld, Vernon, Lord Raymond, and others. It is in Salkeld we read of the case of *Rex & Regina v. Clark,* the story of an extreme Puritan who was bent on ignoring the Toleration Act, and going on preaching illegally as of yore in direct contravention of Clause XVIII. He preached, on the relevant occasion, to an audience of twenty. However, he was lucky; the prosecution in their pleadings had omitted the hoary but all-important words *contra formam statuti;* and so, said the Judge facetiously, "as far as I know, Clark preached to his wife and nineteen children," thus constituting a "family" within the meaning of the Conventicle Act of 1670 (under which he was prosecuted, being outside the Toleration Act).[23] More important is Lord Raymond's recital of the evidence in the case of *Green & Fifteen Others v. Pope,* when the three judges of the King's Bench, all Anglicans, brushed aside very brusquely the trivial reasons of Registrar Pope of Chester in refusing a licence to Green and his friends to name a place of meeting to preach in the parish of Hindley near Wigan.[24] The fates were not so kind to Mr. Peach in the reign of Queen Anne, a gentleman who used his certificate to preach outside his own county: "No," said the Judges, "a licence inrolled at the Sessions in one county will not extend into another county,"[25] a prohibition, however, that was over-ruled by (of all places) Clause IX in the Occasional Conformity Act of 1711, with the addendum that, if put to the question, he must swear the two oaths and declaration over again in the new county; always the preacher had to remember that he could preach only in a licenced place, and to his own sect. *Britton v. Standish*[26] (and, to some extent, *Burdett* v. *Newell*)[27] uncover somewhaat different circumstances, Anglicans affecting to be Dissenters to save themselves from holding onerous offices (thus falling into the sin of occasional nonconformity) by pleading benefits from certain clauses of the Toleration Act. "If a man be a professed churchman," said the Chief Justice, "and his conscience will permit him sometimes to go to meeting instead of coming to church, the Act of Toleration will not excuse him; for it was not made for such sort of people." Quite dissociated from these Laodicean opportunists were the upright and conscientious men who figured in a goodly crop of cases, men who suffered from

the disabilities of Dissenters under the wretched Corporation Act of 1661, debarring them from all offices of honour and profit in the large towns. In the second year of William and Mary a Dissenter named Clarke was nominated bailiff of the town of Guildford, but the Anglican mayor prosecuted him unsuccessfully in the King's Bench for disobeying the Corporation Act.[28] Not so was the fortune of a wealthy Nonconformist merchant of Norwich named Larwood who was named sheriff, an honour he refused on conscientious grounds. This refusal brought him to the King's Bench, his prosecutors demanding a heavy fine for his refractoriness. Two judges against him, one for. The minority judge objected to punishing a man twice for the same offence; in any case, he said, it was ridiculous to punish a man for refusing to do what the law already prevented him from doing. The majority argument laid it down that the law was passed in order to induce people to come up to the standards necessary to fulfil certain offices; it was never passed to show favour to Dissenters, but to encourage them to become Churchmen, Chief Justice Holt winding up with the portentous dictum that no man should take advantage of his own disability.[29] It was the verdict in *Rex v. Larwood,* rather than in that of Clarke of Guildford, that the judges followed until the famous Sheriff's Cause and the historic judgment of Lord Mansfield in 1767. Even then the disabilities of Dissenters were liable to recur, at witness the dicta of Lord Ellenborough in *Rex v. Walker* in 1817;[30] they had to wait for the complete removal of their grievances till the repeal of the Corporation Act in 1828. Though the Toleration Act does not touch the disabilities of Dissenters under the Corporation Act, by implication it brought an atmosphere of liberty and light to other ancillary interests: benefactions by will for the benefit of Dissenters were no longer frowned upon, nor did the judges interfere with the organization of funds for the development of Dissenting interests; in the astringent atmosphere of this new Revolution it was impossible for Christ's Hospital, as it attempted to do in 1686,[31] to lay its hands upon annuities accruing from a Dissenter's will for the benefit of poor Congregational ministers and their members. Schools still lay at the mercy of episcopal licence, but it was ruled in *Bates' Case* (as early as 1670) that a schoolmaster, though without a bishop's licence, could not be turned out if he had been a founder's nominee, a ruling (by implication again) that led to the institution of a host of Dissenting academies.[32] Unfortunately, in face of the Tory reaction in the reign of Queen Anne and especially the passing of the Schism Act in 1714, such interpretations and the lot of the Dissenting academies became more and more precarious until the stability secured by the Hanoverian legislation of 1715-19.

In all these *Reports,* whether arising out of the problems of the Toleration Act, or the *malaise* of the Corporation, or the difficulties

of Dissenting schools (one remembers the very dispiriting account given by Dr. Whitley of the state of education among Baptists at the beginning of the 18th century),[33] very few names of Baptists, prominent or other, appear in their personnel, which may account for the hesitation of Baptist students to ask for the *Law Reports* at the library of Dr. Williams, where there is an imposing collection of them. Old, brown, musty, they are of intrinsic importance because of the decisions recorded, though but seldom involving Baptists by name, and the ensuing reactions upon Baptist ministers and laymen in town and country.

THE DISSENTING DEPUTIES

Charges of forgetting the laws and ignoring the *Law Reports* cannot be laid against the *Dissenting Deputies,* who started work in 1732 as representatives of the three main denominations to hear about virtual resuscitations of the old penal laws, infractions of the terms of the Toleration Act, and other outrages against ministers and their flocks. A *Sketch* of their proceedings was published in 1814;[34] but a much fuller account appeared in 1952, mainly the work of that very loyal and acute Cambridge Dissenter Bernard Lord Manning, and edited by Ormerod Greenwood, one of their present Secretaries. On pp. 155-181 of the *Sketch* there are summaries of cases in which the Deputies took action, and very interesting they are. Interesting, but rather valueless; they are bare summaries containing the names of places and an outline of the abuses suffered, but no further details about the ministers who brought the plaints, the full circumstances, the magistrates and clergy who were accused. Some years ago (1926, in fact) I addressed a letter to the then officials of the Deputies inquiring about the documentary background of the various cases, but this was the answer of the Secretary, Alfred J. Shepheard: "I cannot get any information anywhere, nor have I anything in my office that will help you." In the volume published in 1952, p. 10, there is an explanation of Mr. Shepheard's lack of information, for we are told that the early minute-books of the Deputies contained full files of the correspondence relating to every case, but that the later minutes were thinner, more official, less communicative. "(The) modern minutes usually record results reached without the full documentation which formerly accompanied the decision." I should dearly like to examine the early cases from Wales, but where is the line of demarcation between the circumstantial accounts and the later bare decisions? The answer is simple: make prolonged visits to the Guildhall Library, and examine the sixteen volumes of the Deputies' records that are lodged there (one was destroyed in the blitz of 1941). Though possibly the first five or six volumes will uncover the boundary line, I am not disposed, having just passed the span of eighty years, to shoulder this new duty; indeed, to the delight of

one or two critics here, I am going to disregard it, leaving those ministers who have gone to the Guildhall Library to search for stirring incidents in their chapel histories to throw stones at me. Yet, before going home, I may call there myself, ask for Vol. II under the date 27 Febr., 1784, to go over the story of a Baptist minister at Beaumaris in Anglesey being maltreated, when administering the ordinance of Baptism, by a Humphrey *Tyer* as the leader of a riotous mob. The name *Tyer* conveys nothing, but *Tyrer* would, as the name of a Beaumaris family who later became useful members of Anglesey churches, and Baptists at that. Baptists would be glad to find this interloping 'r' in the record. *Tyer* is the spelling on p. 13 of the 1952 volume. (The visit will be unnecessary, as the Librarian assures me by letter that the original is *Tyrer*.)

NON-PAROCHIAL REGISTERS

Among the multifarious activities of the Dissenting Deputies was a keen interest in church records, their proper preservation, and their acceptance as legal evidence on a par with the parish registers of the Established Church. There ensued a long series of triangular negotiations between the Deputies, a Royal Commission, and the Government of the day, the latter being particularly desirous of uniformity of registration and of the registers being stored in proximity to the Law Courts as factors relevant to the proving of wills and the devolution of property. The upshot was the passing of the Registration Act of 1836 which involved (through the action of the Commissioners) the transference in 1837 of chapel registers throughout England and Wales to Somerset House, and the passing of the Non-Parochial Registers Act of 1840, definitely according to the registers validity as legal evidence. Seven thousand registers were handed over to the custody of the Registrar-General,[35] ranging from those of the main denominations to those of foreign Protestant churches in England, Quakers, a few Roman Catholics, not forgetting the thousands of birth and baptism certificates which had been lodged at the Dr. Williams' Library in Red Cross Street (over 30,000 entries bound in eight volumes).

In 1841 official Lists of the registers were printed (henceforth referred to here as the *Catalogue*). They contained some barbarous distortions of place names, especially in Wales, and curious misspellings like William Gadsley for Gadsby, the pernickety hyper-Calvinist who is described as ministering at Manchester, St. George's Road, and Peter Anslie as minister of Exeter, South Street, for the Peter Anstie of the church records. The delivering officers were asked to fill up a form giving the date of the foundation of the cause, but often ill-informed secretaries and over-sanguine ministers were far awry in their estimates; we recall a sharp attack in the *Baptist Quarterly* for 1957 on the modern fanciful dating of anniversaries, confusing the beginning of building and the first meetings

with the exact institution of a self-governing independent church. The main cause at Reading was put back to the reign of Henry VIII, when no one today places the beginnings before 1640. Far more causes were over-modernised in date, like Rowley in Durham (1700 for 1652), Friar Lane in Leicester (1688 for 1651), while the founding of historic churches like Tiverton and Nantwich is made to appear absurdly late. It must have been the clerks at Somerset House who filled in Nottingham, George Street (now Derby Road), as founded *prior to 1742,* who thought such words a safe risk to take seeing that the first book of births that reached them started in that year; one wonders what the minister James Edwards was doing just at that time, and did he not know that the Baptist cause at Nottingham went back circa 1650? In the General Baptist church at Wisbech there seems to have been two registers, one of which extended from 1784 to 1837, and was returned to Somerset House by J. T. Cooper the minister (*Catalogue,* p. 8), while the other went back to 1700, was lost, but found by a local antiquary having some connections with the church, who made transcripts of it, and lodged the original in Somerset House about 1857.[36]

Though there are 7,000 registers at Somerset House, though the *Catalogue* runs to 112 pages, he would be a very credulous person indeed who believed that they were exhaustive of the Nonconformist strength in the country, that all the registers had come in. 464 Baptist causes were listed, 580 separate registers (many churches sending in two, several five or even six). Absent are the most historic registers of Wales, such as Rhydwilym, Llangloffan, Llanwenarth,[37] and that of the inaccessible retreat of Capel-y-ffin, the subject of a very interesting article by the Catholic Donald Attwater in the *Baptist Quarterly* of 1926-27. In England (and the following are examples only) there is not a word of the church book of Porton in Wiltshire, dating from 1655 to 1685,[38] nor of the General Baptist cause at Bourne in Lincolnshire, probably because the church book commencing in 1702 is mainly occupied with church developments, and not with births and burials,[39] nor of two church books which still remain at Great Ellingham in Norfolk, though a burials book has arrived at Somerset House.[40] There is not a word in the *Catalogue* of three old Baptist churches in the Isle of Axholme and of one register that goes back to 1673, seen and admired by a roving band of Baptist pilgrims in May, 1952[41]; nor can we expect to find any reference in the *Catalogue* to that of Warwick, Castle Hill church, as an irate minister named John Lincoln left the church in 1834 for London, taking all the church registers with him; they were later recovered, it is true, but never found their way to the Registrar-General.[42] Not dissimilar was the lot of the old register at Dalwood in Dorset, which extended from 1653 to 1795; in the latter year it was lent to Dr. Rippon for his *Register;* he never used it, kept it for many years, and on its return (we are told) it looked " as

if it had been in a barrel." The original—this news is given in the fourth volume of the *Trans.* of the Society—is now in its proper home, which is not Somerset House.[43] And where, we may ask, is that ancient book that testifies to 84 men and women, all Baptists, drawing up a covenant in the Staplehurst area of Kent in 1640? It is jealously guarded, not at Somerset House, but at Bound's Cross chapel in the Weald.[44] Rawdon, in Yorkshire, has four church registers at Somerset House, the earliest opening in 1756, but not the old church book that commenced in 1715.[45]

What of the 464 causes that *are* represented in Somerset House? Bewdley in Worcs. is certainly there, as there is a record that George Brookes the minister deposited two registers with the Registrar, which in confirmed by the *Catalogue,* p. 69; so did George Withall of Ditchling in Sussex, two registers (p. 65): both ministers, one gets the impression, delivered them in person.[46] The registers generally, with some notable exceptions, range in date from the three last decades before 1800 to the three after 1800; many of the birth registers are arranged in columns, citing the names of the parents in each case, and their occupations, touching therefore on the realms of genealogy and economics, and bringing life, colour and variety to these ancient societies. But how many have been copied by Baptist researchers? The registers of the Wisbech congregation of "baptized believers that owned universal redemption" have been examined,[47] and Mr. A. L. Humphreys in 1914 in writing the story of Wellington, South Street, Somerset, copied out in full (Part iv, pp. 593-620) the registers of that church in Somerset House; Dr. Tongue has also examined the burial records of Exeter, South Street.[48] But what are three causes out of 464, four registers out of 580? Would it be very wrong to say that these rich veins of Baptist history have been disregarded?

One must admit that little encouragement to examine the registers has come from the recognized historians of Nonconformity; Dr. Stoughton managed to write Vol. VIII of his *History* without the slightest reference to them; the same is also true of H. W. Clark's *History of English Nonconformity,* Vol. II; Dr. Whitley's broad sweep in his *History of British Baptists* is not broad enough to include the non-parochial registers apart from a fleeting reference in the preface to the first volume of his *Bibliography;*[49] Principal Underwood gives a large place to the General Baptists in his *History,* but little (if any) to their several registers that have been listed. More revealing is the account given by the Rev. Bryan Dale in the first volume of *Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc.* in his introductory remarks to the "Non-Parochial Registers in Yorkshire"; he makes it clear, much more clear than the account given in the *Protestant Dissenting Deputies* of 1952, that the summoning in of the registers were not a statutory demand at all—there is no reference to them in the Registration Act of 1836—but a request by the Royal Com-

missioners who were paving the way for the Non-Parochial Registers Act of 1840, a request to which no penalty was attached for neglect or refusal. This must be the prime explanation for the dearth of registers from Wales, and for the strange fact, that though seven Independent causes at Sheffield are represented at Somerset House, there is not one Baptist, though they had a well established church in the town at the end of the 17th century.[50]

Talking of registers, there are also the parish registers of the country, as important as ever, in the custody of the local clergy; it is often a very fruitful study to compare the lists of petitioners under the Toleration Act with family entries in a long series of parish registers, and watch the impact of descent and marriage, occupation and social standing, upon the personnel of the petitioners. The study may be deepened by consulting the ponderous volumes issued by the Historical Manuscript Commission and the local records of municipal corporations; in these may be seen, occasionally perhaps, Baptists dabbling in politics, or inheriting property or (though pious men) coming down to the arena to secure important offices. Excellent examples of delving in municipal records are the several efforts of Professor Lyon Turner and Dr. Whitley to find the probable Leicester Nonconformists who gave lodgment and hospitality to Bunyan when he visited the town in October, 1672. Evidence of an ancillary character is the light thrown by the Liverpool Directories upon the prominent leaders of the church at Byrom Street, without (for all that) solving several problems arising out of the membership there in 1794 of a migrant Welsh preacher from the Conway Valley named William Gibson, father of John Gibson, R.A. Cognate in material to that catalogued by the Manuscript Commission are the estate documents found dispersed in mansions all over the country, though very many of them by today have found a home in county repositories. Though these are mainly concerned with leases and demises, mortgages and marriage settlements, we get occasional glimpses of Baptist men and women, glimpses all the more interesting because of their rarity. For example, an old chronicler named one of the founders of a little cause on the north coast of Anglesey (about 1794) as John Rowland, to be copied by half a dozen other chroniclers in the course of the 19th century. However, the agent of Lord Boston, on whose estate the farm lay, has the tenant's name down for those years as William Rowland; and it is very unlikely that the agent was wrong. A small point, but significant.

Are we thoroughly alert for Baptists in the variegated sources of the last paragragh, parish registers, directories, commissioners' catalogues, estate papers? In this year of Jubilee we ought to be.

NOTES

[1] The article on Winterbotham in the D.N.B. was written by J. R(amsay) Macdonald, who was to become Prime Minister of this country in 1924.

[2] *Original Records,* iii, 728-9.

[3] *ib.,* iii, 837-842.

[4] In reviewing the author's book on *Wales under the Indulgence,* pub. 1928, Dr. Whitley went a good way in acknowledging the cogency of the evidence from Wales (*Bapt. Quarterly,* iv. 280-7).

[5] For these silences, examine the actual text of E.B. 38A, pp. 204, 220. "One Milman" he was to an Anglican informer in 1669.

[6] p. 356.

[7] *Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.,* iii. 45.

[8] *Bapt. Quarterly,* i. 381.

[9] Lyon Turner: *Orig. Recs.,* iii. 807: *Bapt. Quarterly,* iii. 91.

[10] This parish is in county Hereford, but in the diocese of St. David's up to 1852. In the days of persecution, the accused Nonconformists had to tramp the weary way to the consistory court at Brecon.

[11] As expressed in letters to the author, from A.G. in Febr., 1924, from W.T.W. in Febr., 1923.

[12] Calendar for 1685-9, viii (ii. 520, 535; iii. 1321). Compare the utter ignominy of the verdict in *Attorney-General v. Baxter* in 1684 (I Vernon, 248-250).

[13] *Bapt. Quarterly,* i. 225.

[13a] It is not quite true that Mr. Baines discovered the Bodleian tract as there is a very thin reference to it in Dr. Whitley's *Bibliography* (i. 121). But it was he who gave the first authoritative account of it.

[14] Two such addresses (there are doubts about the third) were printed in *Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.,* v. 83-88.

[15] Alexander Gordon is refreshingly iconoclastic about Bunyan: "I know of no evidence that Bunyan was a Baptist. I tell my Baptist friends that they have put his statue at Baptist Church House in the right place, outside" (in a letter to the author, 15th February, 1926). For a corrective of Gordon's extremism, read the article of J. Hobson Thomas in *Baptist Quarterly,* iv. 97-103.

[16] According to Dr. Whitley and Mr. Baines one of the most prominent London Baptist ministers who thanked James II for his Indulgence was William Collins of Petty France; unlike Dr. Christopher Price, he did not sign the abjuring pamphlet of 1689; he was prominent, but not unnaturally, as signatory of the Association Oath of Loyalty to William III in 1696. (*Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.,* vi. 183).

[17] *Trans. Cong. Hist. Soc.,* vi. 199-208. The returns were to cover the period 1689 up to 29th June, 1852.

[18] *Cofiadur,* 1950, 72-78.

[19] The whole procedure of the Toleration Act (and its supplementaries) was brought to an end by the Act of 1852.

[20] *Hist. Dissenting Deputies* (1814), 107-109, note.*

[21] I am referring here to the whole ambit of Toleration records. The Baptist evidence in itself is large, but not unmanageable.

[22] *Bapt. Quarterly,* iv. 67.

[23] Trinity Term, 5 William and Mary, K.B. (1 Salkeld, 370).

[24] Michaelmas, 8 William III (1 Lord Raymond, 125-8).

[25] Michaelmas, 3 Anne, K.B. (2 Salkeld, 572).

[26] *Sketch. Hist. Diss. Deputies,* 200-1, note.*

[27] Michaelmas, 4 Anne (1 Lord Raymond, 1211).

[28] Michaelmas Term, 2 William and Mary (2 Ventris, 247-8).

[29] *Rex & Regina v. Larwood,* Hilary 6 & 7 William and Mary. The case is reported in two separate places by Salkeld and once by Lord Raymond.

[30] K.B., Easter, 57 Geo. III (6 Maule & Selwyn, 277-279).

[31] Compare N. 12 (and text).

[32] Michaelmas, 21 Charles II (1 Ventris, 41).

[33] *Hist. British Baptists,* 182-184.

[34] My copy has 1814 clearly imprinted on it, but the *Protestant Diss. Dep.* of 1952 says 1813 (p. 11 and n. 4).

[35] These 7,000 registers, deposited at Somerset House under the combined force of the Acts of 1836 and 1840, must be very sharply distinguished from the 54,000 odd Toleration Act returns that came in under the Act of 1852, also to Somerset House (see N. 17). The 7,000 is the number given in the Annual Report of the Deputies for 1840 (*Prot. Diss. Deps.,* 270).

[36] *Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.,* i. 178-180.

[37] All three are now in the National Library of Wales.

[38] *Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.,* i. 56.

[39] *Bapt. Quarterly,* xv. 236-8.

[40] *ibid.,* xv. 218-220.

[41] *ibid.,* xiv. 370.

[42] *ibid.,* xvi. 62.

[43] *Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.,* iv. 129-130. The article is referring to the causes of Kilmington and Loughwood in Dalwood.

[44] *Bapt. Quarterly,* ii. 374.

[45] *ibid.,* iii. 179-180.

[46] *ibid.,* iv. 73 (Ditchling); xiii. 121 (Bewdley).

[47] *Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.,* i. 178-180. Dr. Whitley wrote many articles in this first volume, but the list of contributors does not attach his name to the Wisbeach account. The term *examined* in the text is an over-statement; all Dr. Whitley did was to cite the title of the old register that opened in 1700 (*Bibliography,* i. 205).

[48] I am particularly grateful to Dr. Tongue, the Librarian of the Society, for the references to Wellington and Exeter.

[49] He seems to imply that the registers were collected in 1838, but corrects this to 1837 in the preface to the second volume. All those I have examined undoubtedly arrived in 1837.

[50] *Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.,* vii. 19-21.

Additional Note.

THE LISTS OF 1859. In the foregoing paragraphs dealing with the non-parochial registers the lists referred to are those published in 1841 sponsored by the Registrar-General. There was a second edition in 1859, the "working copy" at Somerset House. Those who expected large accessions in the new addition were sadly disappointed. There are not more than sixty all told, the great majority of these being added in red ink (in the copy I have examined) at the foot of the relevant pages. No response came from the Baptist causes at Porton in Wiltshire, Bourne in Lincolnshire, from Great Ellingham with its two church books, from the three old churches in the Isle of Axholme, nor from Dalwood in Dorset, Bound's Cross in the Weald, nor Warwick Castle Hill. They all decided to keep their ancient registers.

Wisbech is the one exception of those referred to above. The shelves of Somerset House bear witness to the recovery of the old General Baptist register recording births from 1700, deaths from 1706, marriages from 1715 and witness also to the benevolent activities of the enterprising local antiquary described in *Trans. Bapt. Hist. Soc.*, i. 180. Unfortunately, this came in too late to be "authenticated" by the officials of the Registrar-General; to quote the official words: "Certificates from these unauthenticated registers are given under signature only, not under seal." With the Wisbech Manuscript register came a printed copy. Was this also the work of the local antiquary?

One column in the 1841 lists was omitted in the 1858 edition, that containing the names of the officiating ministers of the churches when the registers were delivered over in 1836-7, a rather regrettable omission. Nor was any real effort made to revise some of the barbarous mis-spellings of 1841.

THOMAS RICHARDS

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Editor would be glad to hear from any reader who would be willing to part with a copy of the *Baptist Quarterly* for January, 1958.

Reviews

The Meeting of Love and Knowledge, by Martin C. D'Arcy, S.J. (George Allen and Unwin, London, 12s. 6d.).

Ever since the apostle Paul met the syncretism prevalent in Colossae with the assertion that in Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge because in Him dwells the godhead bodily, and John countered incipient gnosticism with the declaration that the Word became flesh so that men beheld His glory finding in Him the fulness of grace and truth, the problem of the relationship existing between the Christian gospel and the teachings of other religions has challenged the thinkers of the Church.

In our own day Dr. H. Kraemer has made notable theological contributions to this theme with his emphatic assertions of the uniqueness, not of Christianity as organized religion, but of Christ. Now in a book of 167 pages Father D'Arcy offers a philosophical discussion of this theme.

Modern syncretism finds a leading exponent in Aldous Huxley who has endeavoured, in his book *The Perennial Philosophy,* to show the fundamental similarities between all religions and thus to outline an understanding of life which is the basic wisdom of the ages. Father D'Arcy has given a careful and appreciative examination to this position, recognizing the profound wisdom to be found in the teachings of other religions, especially Hinduism and Buddhism. The choice quotations from the writings of these religions are a valuable feature of the book.

But the author recognizes clearly the fundamental difference between Christianity and other religions in spite of the similarity of counsels regarding the spiritual life. Both east and west have knowledge of the mystic way, but for the Christian this is a meeting of persons; consequently the end of life is not absorption but communion. The uniqueness of Christian truth is in its emphasis upon the personal so that it finds its deepest wisdom in the relationships of life which are relationships of giving and receiving, in which man finds himself in the integrity of his being just because he is found by God whose coming is an act of grace.

To this discussion Father D'Arcy brings a wealth of knowledge and a choice style. He has made a valuable contribution to an important theme and readers both Catholic and Protestant may find much Christian wisdom in his book.

L. G. CHAMPION

Documents on Christian Unity, Fourth Series, 1948-57. G. K. A. Bell (ed.). (Oxford University Press, London, 21s.).

This fourth volume of Bishop Bell's invaluable series of documents covers a decade in which there have been many significant developments in church relations in different parts of the world. The formation of the World Council of Churches, its first and second Assemblies and the Lund Faith and Order Conference; the conversations on the Archbishop of Canterbury's Cambridge sermon; the definitive edition of the schemes of Church Union for Ceylon, North India and Pakistan; the initiation of discussions in many other countries and important declarations by the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church—all these and other matters claim a place in this volume, to which the editor prefixes a brief, clear and judicious introduction reviewing the progress towards understanding and unity during the past forty years. It is dangerous to talk loosely and without one's book about matters of this moment. There is now no excuse for this, for the essential documents are here to hand in most convenient form. Dr. Bell frankly admits that there have been various disappointments and checks since the high hopes created by the Lambeth Appeal of 1920. He believes, however, that there has been a real movement forward.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

Sermons for Special Occasions, by C. H. Spurgeon. (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London, 15s.).

This is the first of twenty volumes of Spurgeon's sermons to be issued periodically for the next five years. The editor is Dr. C. T. Cook, and that is a guarantee of loving care in the selection. The Special Occasions are, for the most part, those of the Christian year.

To the reviewer, the unique religious phenomenon of the second part of the last century was the preaching ministry of Charles H. Spurgeon in London for thirty-seven years. For nearly all those years crowds filled the Tabernacle seating about 6,000 twice each Sunday. This has no parallel in all the history of the church from the first days till now. Spurgeon died in January, 1892, fifty-seven years of age. These and the following volumes are necessary documents for anyone who wishes to study and understand what took place. All the sermons bear common features. They are expository, analytic and homiletic, theological—more dogmatic than argumentative, and above all, with an appeal. The congregation is always within sight of the preacher. He has them in his mind and deeper still in his heart. He has a message for them. He has a purpose and displays it openly. He seeks and secures their conversion. And the converts become missionaries.

But beyond this, these sermons were printed and bought. They go to the Shetlands, to Cornwall, to places in Wales where English is seldom heard. Most spoken sermons suffer in print. And probably these are no exception. But the residue is still gold.

And here they are for us today, to encourage us in a difficult time. I wish the dates of their first delivery had been inserted.

B. GREY GRIFFITH

To Build and to Plant, by H. W. Abba. (Independent Press, London, 7s. 6d.).

The Rev. H. W. Abba went to Beverley in 1906 to take charge of a small Congregational work which had been begun in a housing estate. There was only a handful of people meeting in a hut. He stayed forty-five years, and during that time saw the church grow into a vigorous and sizable community housed in modern buildings. When he retired it was to the sorrow of his people.

His was a remarkable ministry exercised through years in which the Free Churches generally were losing ground. What was its secret? First, Mr. Abba cared for people and made it his business to get to know all sorts and conditions. More, he became the best known and most loved figure in the district. Secondly, his preaching was Biblical. He resisted the excesses of liberal thinking and steadily expounded the Bible as the living Word of God to men. Finally, he was a man of prayer and saw to it that his church was a praying church.

Mr. Abba records some striking examples of the conversion of men and women in middle life. He clearly does not take the view so often taken nowadays that the one hope of new disciples is in the Sunday-school.

Parables from Daily Living, by Margaret Shave. (Independent Press, London, 6s.).

When the present reviewer noted in the publisher's blurb of this book that it contained stories for women's meeting he began to read it with some foreboding. He soon realized that here was something well worthwhile. The book is well written and free from mawkish sentimentality. It comes from the pen of a writer who looks out upon life with discernment and sympathy and who has a keen insight into human character, needs and motives. Moreover, the stories reveal a sure grasp of the evangelical message. Christ is shown as the Bread of Life, the Saviour who is adequate to every need and whose power has transformed many a life. This little book can be warmly commended.

JOHN BARRETT

A Commentary on Mark Thirteen, by G. R. Beasley-Murray. (Macmillan, London, 18s.)

In his introduction, "The Authenticity of *Mark* 13," Dr. Beasley-Murray summarizes the five reasons given by Colani (in 1864) which provided the ground from which many attacks upon the authenticity of this chapter as a word of Jesus have been made. To these he adds four further points representing more recent criticisms such as those of Wendt, Schweitzer, Hölscher and C. H. Dodd. The main point made is that the Discourse reflects the outlook of the Jewish Christian church and not that of Jesus. The writer asserts, on the contrary, that the *Jewish Christian* eschatology revealed in the gospels, and in this chapter in particular, is so un-Jewish in its Christo-centric emphasis that it must be accepted as stemming from Jesus.

The commentary itself is minutely detailed, one hundred pages being devoted to the discussion of these thirty-seven verses! Each verse, or group of verses, has its own expositional comment followed by exhaustive critical notes. In the body of the commentary is an excellent extended note on the history of interpretation of the *bdelugma eremoseos* in which Dr. Beasely-Murray analyses each of the many interpretations of this phrase. The author maintains the position he took in *Jesus and the Future.* He claims that the view that the *bdelugma* was the Roman Army (which was soon to destroy Jerusalem) and its standards, satisfies all the requirements of the text but does not exclude many of the other traditional explanations of the saying.

There may be many points on which scholars may differ from Dr. Beasley-Murray but all will be grateful for his insistence that this chapter has both moral and practical messages, which makes it of abiding worth. The speculations regarding possible interpretations of apocalyptic symbolism easily lead to the conclusion that they belong to the scholar's study (or to the Hyde Park Corner "soap box"!). Here, in the course of a scholarly survey, we see the practical value of these sayings coming out spontaneously from the study of the text. We will refer to two passages to illustrate the point. In comments on vv. 9-19, in which Jesus warns His followers of persecutions, we are reminded how our Lord asserts that even suffering can be used by the disciple for service or witness. "The Gospel is to be preached at all costs, and judicial courts are to be viewed as providing audiences for the message" (p. 41). Our second illustration comes from vv. 26-7, which may be regarded as a more "typical" (in *both* meanings of the word!) apocalyptic writing. Dr. Beasley-Murray shows how the effect of the parousia on the sun, moon and stars is described, in poetic parallelism, to make a sombre background for the Shekinah glory of His Coming. Then we see the Son of Man, Son of God, performing that act which is "all-of-a-piece" with His earthly

ministry, drawing together the elect from the uttermost parts of heaven and earth. "The goal of history is the union of God's people with his Son in the eternal Kingdom; that is all disciples need to know—in the first and in any other century" (p. 90).

Apocalyptic writings always arouse interest in days of crisis. Dr. G. R. Beasley-Murray's book not only provides us with a masterly analysis of the argument regarding the textual validity of this sorely used chapter; he also shows us that it carries the imperative of Christian morality and the assurance of Christian hope.

A. STUART ARNOLD

The Origin and Transmission of the New Testament, by L. O. Twilley. (Oliver & Boyd, London, 8s. 6d.)

In seven chapters and less than seventy pages, this book aims at giving a brief outline of the early days of the church, indicating within that history the points at which the New Testament books came to be written, and also at showing how those books have been transmitted through the centuries to our own day. Four chapters deal with the first point, and three with the second. In addition, there are several maps and illustrative diagrams, and from time to time the author inserts brief paragraphs in small type in order to give expression to views different from his own.

The book is very carefully and attractively produced, and moves so swiftly (as indeed it must) that the reader's interest is never allowed to lapse. Nevertheless, some points of criticism are called for. The treatment is so brief that many views and opinions had of necessity to be overlooked; let it be said that the author has triumphed gallantly over this limitation, but the fact still remains that the value of the work is considerably diminished on this account. The dust cover hints at the value of the book for theological students; it is to be hoped that such men will acquaint themselves with much more than is found in these pages. Moreover, some of the diagrams will not be easily understood by the layman, coming to the subject for the first time, whilst they will tend to be superfluous for those who have read more widely. But the real problem is whether the kind of person for whom this work is written will ever spend so much on such a slim volume. If it could have been produced with a paper back, and possibly without the maps and diagrams (which add little to the clarity but much to the cost), it would doubtless have had a wider and more successful appeal.

A. GILMORE