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TRANSACTIONS

CONGREGATIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. XIX. No. 4. MAY 1963

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TRANSACTIONS

THE CONGREGATIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EDITOR JOHN H. TAYLOR, B.D.

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Editorial

The Tercentenary

On the whole the commemoration of 1962 has been successfully completed. Fears that the newfound friendship between Anglicans and Free Churchmen might receive a set-back have proved unfounded. The Archbishop of Canterbury himself set an example by going to the City Temple on St. Bartholemew's day. Less in the public eye were many occasions up and down the country when Free Churchmen joined Anglicans to commemorate the tercentenary of the Book of Common Prayer. When one recalls the strife roused by the commemoration in 1862, it is plain to see that something of major importance has happened in the different churches to produce such a new atmosphere, a spirit not witnessed before in the history of English dissent.

Whilst on the one hand churches proudly claiming a 1662 pedigree have held popular celebrations, on the other hand there

has been plenty of evidence that the Great Ejection held no interest for perhaps a majority of congregations. The Rally at the Albert Hall in October testified to the truth of this, for there were too many empty seats. Yet the fact is that all the churches, and indeed the nation, owe an immeasurable debt to those who suffered for religious liberties. The ignorance of many members of Congregational churches is nothing for them to be proud of. The lesson of the tercentenary seems to be the same one which ecumenical encounters have tried to bring home to us, namely the duty of being a good churchman, educated in one's own tradition.

If publications alone ensured that people learnt what 1662 and Puritanism were about, the goal would have been reached, for last year witnessed a surge of literature, most of it sound and good.

By strange coincidence A. G. Matthews, a past President of our Society, whose reference book *Calamy Revised* has been the most consulted book during the commemoration, passed away as the year came to its close. Dr. Geoffrey Nuttall knew Matthews well and has kindly contributed a note upon him which follows the editorial. We also regret having to record the loss of J. Reynolds Jones of Lower Clapton, who was for several years a member of our committee; and further, of Thomas Richards, the main writer in English, so far as standard works go, on Welsh Nonconformity.

Victorian Nonconformity

One has heard it said that general historians have not given to Nonconformity, or even to religion, the place they deserve in the story of the last century. Therefore it was with great pleasure that we opened Dr. G. Kitson Clark's recent book, *The Making of Victorian England*, to find no less than 58 pages devoted to 'The Religion of the People'. Nonconformity has its full share.

In the space here available it is impossible to give an account of the interesting things to be found in this and other chapters of the book. An example must suffice. On page 159 the author says that 'the strongest *political* tradition seems often to have been among the Congregationalists, who by their own account were often shopkeepers'. Those familiar with Congregationalism in Victorian times will quarrel with neither of these statements. When we go on to reflect that political radicalism has passed by our churches long since; and that the small shopkeeper who manages his own affairs is no longer common, the large combine with its mobile managers having arrived, we begin to realise the social

change that has come over the churches. One would not be surprised if the men of 1862 felt more deeply for their independent polity than do their successors in 1962.

Dr. Kitson Clark's views on Matthew Arnold's strictures about Nonconformists, their provincialism, ignorance, self-satisfaction, lack of any critical standard, their relish for bathos, 'the fact that they had seemingly locked themselves into the narrow room of "Puritanism" and showed no desire to get out' are particularly to be noted. He accepts as most probable what Arnold said. Then he adds that 'the question to be asked is whether, Nonconformity apart, they had much chance of being anything else' (p.195). J. J. Lawson's words quoted by Dr. Kitson Clark may exaggerate what the chapel did for folk but there is truth in them, 'The chapel gave them their first music, their first literature and philosophy to meet the harsh life and cruel impact of the crude materialistic age.' Primarily of course, these chapels were religious and evangelistic organisations, and they had a profound religious impact upon society.

One senses that Dr. Kitson Clark has rightly appraised the place of religion and Nonconformity in Victorian society, although one notes certain important features of the scene which are absent. Perhaps we may mention two which are not without real significance in understanding the age. One is the cult of the popular preacher and the other is the development of overseas missions, both of which had political repercussions. In the section on education it is a serious omission not to mention British Schools, the spearhead of the Nonconformist programme; it makes it look as though Nonconformists did almost nothing for education, which is untrue to fact. Wanderers in the back streets of old towns will often come across small Victorian school buildings. Somewhere in the stonework one can often find the words National School Society (the Anglican society), but surprisingly often one reads British School.

However, anyone who wants to see how Nonconformity fits into the picture of Victorian England, and anybody who wants to understand the malaise of modern Congregationalism clearly, would do well to read and ponder this book. Moreover, he will surely enjoy it.

A. G. Matthews

A.G.M., as he was known to his familiars—Mat to a favoured few—was the most distinguished historian among us, and his death on 6th December, 1962, is a sensible loss to our Society. As long ago as 1916 he spoke at our autumnal meeting on early Nonconformity in Staffordshire, in preparation for his small book on the Congregational churches in that county, where he was assistant minister at Queen Street, Wolverhampton; and in 1932, when the autumnal meetings of the Congregational Union were held at Wolverhampton, he presented additions and corrections for the book in "Some Notes on Staffordshire Nonconformity". This threefold thoroughness over many years was characteristic of him. Without it he would never have attempted, certainly he could never have carried through, the enormously laborious work necessary to produce his two great volumes, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934) and *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1947).

The titles of both are really misnomers arising from his modesty, for the material copied (or often corrected) from Calamy or Walker is far less than what, over the years, Matthews gathered from widely dispersed MS. sources as well as books; but only a fundamentally modest man would have devoted himself to work of this kind in the first place, content to provide bricks for others to build with rather than to construct an interpretation of his own. For a scholar to go on to give the same attention to Walker's clergy sequestered by the Puritans as to Calamy's ministers ejected by the Anglicans was also a remarkable object-lesson; in his unassuming way Matthews was a worker in the ecumenical field as well as the historical. Failing energies prevented him from complying with the editors' desire that he should contribute to the recent symposium *From Uniformity to Unity, 1662-1962*; but the frequency of reference to him by name, as well as to *Calamy Revised* and *Walker Revised*, in its pages is an index of the extent to which all students of later seventeenth-century English religion, Anglicans as much as Free Churchmen, now lean on him and trust his work as unprejudiced and reliable.

Some who have occasionally referred to one or other of these lists of names may not have suspected Matthews' breadth of outlook. This in fact went far beyond the seventeenth century or ecclesiastical history in any century. Among the books in his sitting-room there were Greek and Latin and French writers (including Proust) as well as English, tastefully bound but not for show.

In his latter years he read Homer steadily, in Greek of course. Another of his enthusiasms was Gothic architecture. He spent many holidays abroad and amassed a magnificent collection of postcard views of French Cathedrals with which to adorn the summerhouse in the garden where he did much of his writing. Indoors, representations of modern art had places of honour, along with oil paintings of his ancestors and a portrait of Cromwell. These and other interests, such as music or the ways of birds, overflowed into his conversation and made him a charming companion, once the persistent shyness which would ice over even quite close relationships had worn off, as after a few hours it always did; while until her death at a very advanced age his home was redolent of his utter devotion to his mother.

On a Sunday summer evening he would often choose to walk across the fields to Evensong at Tandridge parish church. Yet he was a convinced and faithful Congregationalist. He had a lovely pride in 'The Peace', as he called the church at Oxted of which he had been minister and, after his early retirement, secretary; and he was always ready to help men who had neither the financial security nor the New College, Oxford, and Mansfield *cachet* which were in the air he breathed. If his manner sometimes suggested an Olympian uncommittedness more natural in an undergraduate or a country gentleman than in a Christian minister, at other times the flame shot forth from his blue eyes or in his gentle but decisive voice, revealing an affectionateness, a severity, a fury for truth and decency, which self-protection and good manners normally veiled.

With his wide culture A.G.M. combined the historian's judicial cast of mind, but he could only with difficulty be persuaded to consecutive writing. His friendship with H. C. Carter produced an essay in a slim volume on Emmanuel church, Cambridge, and a pamphlet written around the diary of one of its ministers, Joseph Hussey; his friendship with K. L. Parry produced an essay for the *Companion to Congregational Praise* and his loyalty to his old Principal an essay on Puritan worship for the *Festschrift* in honour of W. B. Selbie, *Christian Worship* (Oxford, 1936). With this should be read his study 'The Puritans at Prayer' in the collection not very happily called after its opening essay, *Mr. Pepys and Nonconformity* (1954), which first appeared in these *Transactions*. Matthews published here a small number of other articles, besides a valuable bibliography of Richard Baxter (later printed separately), an occasional review and a few documents, including

the will of Robert Browne. In 1959 he provided a tercentenary edition of the Savoy *Declaration* with a characteristic introduction; but his last contribution to our own pages was his paper on 'Church and Dissent in the Reign of Queen Anne' which he read to us in May, 1951 on becoming the Society's President. At its close he called on the historian of 'English religious life during the Interregnum . . . to give his most careful consideration' to the *unejected*; 'these men were faithful to the Englishman's inveterate belief that the religion of all sensible men is always one of compromise. That is all'. For A.G.M. this was *not* all. More of the man of faith comes through in the delicate assessment, which he read to us nine years earlier, or 'B. L. Manning, the Historian'. 'The main value of history is for the heart', he quoted from Manning. 'It keeps the heart tender, as only a study of our own poor humanity can'.

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL

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PHILIP DODDRIDGE ON THE METHOD OF ORDINATION

The late F. W. P. Harris left a manuscript thesis on Philip Doddridge which now lies in the library of New College, London. Appendix C to this manuscript draws attention to an account of the 'methods of ordination generally used among the protestant dissenters' which Doddridge published in 1745 with the charge he had delivered at the ordination of Abraham Tozer at Norwich. We are grateful to Mrs. Harris and to the Librarian of New College for the use of this manuscript.

Doddridge's account helps us to se how far present practice adheres to the old traditions and how far it departs from it. Unhappily the account does not tell us the nature of the engagements which candidates undertook, but on the other hand, it does emphasize that they declared their resolution never to forsake the ministry. Another point which might pass unobserved is that it appears that whilst the pastors present laid hands upon candidates, the custom of some lay representative of the local church doing so was not known to Doddridge.

It very rarely happens, that a minister among us is admitted to the pastoral office, till he hath spent some years, as a kind of candidate for it; and, so far as I can recollect, more undertake it after, than before their twenty-sixth year is completed. But as our theological students generally employ either four or five years in preparatory studies after they have quitted the grammar-schools, so they are examined by three or four elder ministers before they begin to preach. A strict enquiry is made into their character, and into their furniture; both with respect to the learned languages, especially the sacred, and also as to the various parts of natural and moral philosophy; but above all, into their acquaintance with divinity; and some specimen of their abilities, for prayer and preaching, is generally expected.

An unordained minister is seldom chosen to the pastoral office in any of our churches, for in the members of each of these societies the whole right of election lies, till he has resided among them some months or perhaps some years; preaching statedly to them, and performing most other ministerial offices, excepting the administration of the sacraments.

When the society, which generally proceeds with entire unanimity in this great affair, has received what it judges competent satisfac-

tion, the several members of it join in giving him a solemn and express call to take upon him the pastoral inspection over them. And if he be disposed to accept it, he generally signifies that intention to neighbouring pastors; whose concurrence he desires in solemnly setting him apart to that office.

Previous to the assembly for this sacred purpose, his credentials and testimonials are produced, if it be required by any who are to be concerned; and satisfaction as to his principles is also given to those who are to carry on the public work, generally by his communicating to them the confession of his faith which he has drawn up; in which it is expected, that the great doctrines of christianity should be touched upon in a proper order, and his persuasion of them plainly and seriously expressed, in such words as he judges most convenient. And we generally think this a proper and happy medium between the indolence of acquiescing in a general declaration of believing the christian religion, without declaring what it is apprehended to be, and the severity of demanding a subscription to any set of articles, where if an honest man, who believes all the rest, scruples any one article, phrase, or word, he is as effectually excluded, as if he rejected the whole.

The pastors, who are to bear their part in the public work, having been thus in their consciences satisfied, that the person offering himself to ordination is duly qualified for the christian ministry, and regularly called to the full exercise of it; they proceed, at the appointed time and place, to consecrate him to it, and to recommend him to the grace and blessing of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, by fasting and prayer, generally accompanied by the imposition of hands; and the public work of the day is usually, so far as I have been witness, carried on in the following order, or something very near it.

It commonly opens with a short prayer, and the reading of some select portions of scripture which seem most proper to the occasion: Then a prayer is offered of greater length and compass than the former, in which most of our common concerns as christians are included; which is sometimes, though less frequently, succeeded by another of the same kind. Then follows a sermon, on some suitable subject, such as the institution, importance, difficulty, and excellency of the ministerial work, the character and conduct of the first ministers of the gospel, or the like.

After this introduction of a more general nature, another minister, usually one of the eldest present, who is a kind of moderator for

the day, gives the assembly a more particular account of the occasion of its being convened. The call of the church to the candidate is then recognised, either in word or writing, or by lifting up the hand; and his acceptance is also declared. He is then desired, for the satisfaction and edification of the assembly, to pronounce the confession which his brethren have already heard and approved; and pertinent questions are put to him, relating to the views and purposes with which he undertakes the solemn charge, that he may be brought under the most awful engagements to a suitable behaviour in it; and an express renunciation of the errors and superstitions of the Romish church generally makes part of these answers, as well as a declaration of his resolution, by divine grace, never to forsake the ministry, whatever inconveniences and sufferings it may draw after it.

This being dispatched, the presiding minister comes down from the pulpit, and prays over the person to be set apart. There is no particular form of prayer on this occasion, or on any other among us; but I have observed, that the person who officiates is generally led in such a circumstance to adore the divine wisdom and grace, . . . (*The person to be set apart to the ministerial office*) is then solemnly offered up to the service of God, and recommended to his blessing, in all the several parts of his work, which are distinctly enumerated . . . .

When that part of this prayer begins, which immediately relates to the person then to be consecrated to the service of the sanctuary, it is usual for the speaker to lay his hand on his head; and the other pastors conveniently within reach, frequently to the number of six, eight, or ten, lay on their hands also, at the same time: by which we do not pretend to convey any spiritual gifts, but only use it as a solemn, and expedient, though not absolutely necessary, designation of the person then to be set apart.

When this prayer is over, which often engages a very profound attention, and seems to make a very deep impression both on ministers and people, the charge is given to the newly ordained pastor, who generally receives it standing, as much as may be in the sight of the whole assembly: And an exhortation to the people is sometimes joined with the charge, or sometimes follows it as a distinct service, unless, which is frequently the case, it is superseded by the sermon, or some previous address. Another prayer follows; and singing having been intermingled, so as properly to diversify a service necessarily so long, the whole is concluded with a solemn benediction.

F. W. P. HARRIS

THE LEAN YEARS OF SUSSEX NONCONFORMITY

The period c. 1720-60 has been seen as generally one of serious decline in English Nonconformity. It was only towards the end of the period that the emergence of Methodism began to influence the Nonconformists and to relieve the gloom. Comparisons between conditions in Sussex and other counties are difficult to draw because of the lack of strictly comparable data. The writer's tentative view is that Nonconformity in Sussex was in rather better shape than it was in most predominantly agricultural counties. Most Presbyterian and Congregational churches managed to survive even though they all lost strength and none showed any missionary spirit. The Friends were a spent force and the Particular Baptists were still an insignificant factor. But the General Baptists held their ground quite well and even showed some evangelical zeal.

It may be that things would have been much more difficult had Sussex been exposed more directly to the forces which began during the period to reshape the economic and social patterns of English life. Sussex was not immune to these forces, but the pace of change was far slower than in the Midland and Northern counties. There was no industrial development to replace the rapidly declining iron industry. Communications with the swiftly growing Metropolis remained difficult and expensive. Sussex remained preponderantly rural.

It has often been argued that the decline of Nonconformity is to be explained largely in terms of the combined effects on the churches of anti-Trinitarian heresies and of hyper-Calvinism. According to this theory, hyper-Calvinism destroyed the evangelical spirit of the Nonconformists, and Socinian and Arian heresies shattered the congregations. The theory has the almost irresistible attraction of simplicity. It does not, however, seem to fit the facts of Sussex Nonconformity. Nor has it always gone unchallenged at national level even if it has all too often been repeated with more assertion than evidence.[1]

[1]For example : R. W. Dale : *A History of English Congregationalism*, W. T. Whitley : *A History of British Baptists* and W. C. Braithwaite : *The Second Period of Quakerism*. For a refutation of the Arianism thesis, see F. J. Powicke in *Essays Congregational and Catholic* (ed. A. Peel).

The argument about the pernicious influence of hyper-Calvinism can be summed-up most simply in John Wesley's unkind description of the views which, he alleged, were held by the Calvinistic Methodists :

> The sum of all this is : One in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected ; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will ; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can.

What then was the point of evangelical effort ? Halévy claimed that ' In any church where it established a footing this quietism destroyed every species of missionary activity '.[2] It should be remembered, however, that selfishness and indolence have always played a large part in the neglect of evangelism and it may be unwise to look on doctrinal issues as the justification for these personal failings. Haweis was conscious of this important distinction when he defended the Calvinistic Methodists against Wesley's attack : ' The numbers of those who *professed* these tenets were very few, whilst too many who held the Calvinistic system lived as *if* they believed them to be true '.[3]

In the case of Sussex, the historian of the diocese of Chichester concluded that there was in the county a ' strong infusion of Calvinism ' which had been brought in by the Protestant refugees from the Continent.[4] But Stephens adduced little evidence to support his firm statement. It is to be doubted whether there was a strong infusion of Calvinism. If there was, it had not prevented the General Baptists or the Friends from making striking progress in Sussex. Had the Calvinistic influence been so strongly marked, one would have expected that the Particular Baptists would have gained ground rather than the General Baptists, particularly as the latter were influenced by Matthew Caffyn's unorthodox views about the Trinity. As it was, the Particular Baptists gained but little ground until after 1770.

One would expect that the doctrinal views of ministers would have influenced strongly those of their congregations, but it is difficult to establish what were the views of Sussex Presbyterian and Congregational ministers during this period. What little evidence the writer has found suggests that their Calvinism was *moderate.*

[2]E. Halévy : *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century* (2nd edition, translation) vol. 1, p. 410.

[3]T. Haweis : *Impartial History of the Church of Christ,* (1800), vol. 3, p. 92.

[4]W. R. W. Stephens : *The South Saxon Diocese, Selsey-Chichester,* (1881).

The entries relating to ministers in Sussex amongst the Congregational Fund Board *Characters* are few—there were not many Presbyterian or Congregational churches and not all of them were Fund-aided—but in no case is there any reference to Calvinist views. This may be because less was known about the men in Sussex, which was notoriously difficult of access from London. But there is nothing to suggest that these men held the hyper-Calvinist position. The cases were :

> Mr. John Button (of the Rye Congregational church) an honest, serious, & faithful Preacher, stedfast in the Faith, & of good behaviour.
> Mr. Timothy Thomas (of the Horsham Presbyterian church) sound in the Faith, a Letter from himself, wherein he made such a Profession : his Income is small.
> Mr. Joseph Chandler (of the Worth/East Grinstead Presbyterian church) sound in the Faith £20 per Ann. a Wife & 4 Children.
> Mr. Robert Dent (also of the Rye Church) Serious, Sound, & very useful.

It may be felt that even this tentative appraisal warrants at least some caution about accepting the influence of hyper-Calvinism as a powerful factor in the decline of Sussex Nonconformity. But what of the other factor of the disruptive and deadening influence of Socinian and Arian views ?

What little can be gleaned about the affairs of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches during the period suggests that few ministers were noticeably unorthodox in their views about the Trinity. Ebenezer Johnston, of the Westgate Meeting at Lewes, almost certainly held unorthodox views and, towards the end of the period, it is possible that John Heap, of the Presbyterian church at Chichester, also sympathized with the Arian position. Nothing has come to light which points to divisions in Presbyterian or Congregational churches leading to the formation of new causes, or to transfers of members from one denomination to the other. The only two Toleration Act registrations in the Lewes Archdeaconry between 1725 and 1760 for the Presbyterians do not appear to have been connected with divisions in existing congregations. In any case, at Lewes the Westgate Meeting did not lose ground during this period ; indeed, it was during Ebenezer Johnston's pastorate—in 1759—that the older meeting united with the Westgate Meeting.

It may not always have been easy for the Congregational Fund Board to obtain an authoritative statement of the Trinitarian views of those whom it helped, but the Board was concerned to avoid giving encouragement to any whose orthodoxy was in doubt. The revised Rules of 1738 were explicit about the importance of this matter :

> Section II. 4. That Satisfaction be given to this Board, if required, that all those to whom any Exhibitions are allow'd are sound in the Faith, particularly as to the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity as reveal'd in the Scriptures and explain'd in the Assembly's Confession of Faith and Catechism, and that any member of this Board has a right to desire this Satisfaction.

It seems probable then, that the Sussex ministers who were helped by the Board held orthodox Trinitarian views.

The one denomination in Sussex in which Socinian or Arian views notably influenced the ministry was the General Baptists. And it was the General Baptists who alone of the Nonconformists at this time displayed some energy and achieved some modest success in seeking out new adherents. The strength of the older General Baptist congregations during this period is itself sufficient to cast doubt upon the generalizations about the dessicating influence of Arianism as far as Sussex is concerned.

It is tempting to equate the rational religion of the late eighteenth century Arians or Unitarians with the unorthodoxy of the Sussex General Baptists at this time. But this would be very misleading. Indeed, one is compelled to wonder whether the great majority of the church members were really aware of the refinements of Caffynite theology and its successors, just as one wonders how far the rank and file of members of Presbyterian congregations whose ministers held Arian views fully appreciated what was involved. The more distinctive marks of the General Baptists in Sussex were the rejection of Infant Baptism and Calvinism. For the rest, the organization and worship of the General Baptists in Sussex must have seemed more orthodox, in the apostolic sense, than that of the other Nonconformists.

Between 1725 and 1760, sixteen meeting places were registered in the Lewes Archdeaconry for *Baptists,* and it is possible to identify almost all of these as General Baptist. Even towards the end of the period the Sussex churches were still playing a leading part in the work of the General Assembly.

Against this background, one is led to doubt whether Arianism played a significant role in the general decline of Sussex Noncon-

formity between 1720 and 1760. It looks as if the real causes of the decline must be sought elsewhere.

One of the principal causes is likely to have been the limited supply, and sometimes the uncertain quality, of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers. The information in the Evans MS. points to some fourteen ministers serving Sussex churches around 1720. The minutes of the Fund Boards help in tracing pastoral successions (and the Rev. Charles E. Surman's work is gratefully acknowledged here) but some churches were able to provide stipends without outside help and do not feature in the records of the Boards, and some were so small that they would have been unable to support a full-time pastor even with the maximum grants allowed by the Boards. In most cases the Fund-aided churches managed to secure ministers during the period but often there were gaps, sometimes quite long ones, during which the congregations had to manage as best they could.

Given the limited supply of men, it is not surprising that service in Sussex should have appeared unattractive, for even the larger congregations found it difficult to raise substantial stipends. The Union Street church at Brighton was said to have 560 *Hearers* in 1717 and the diocesan Visitation of 1724 admitted that there were many Presbyterian families in Brighton in that year, but in 1738 the minister, John Duke, recorded in his Register : ' A list of the Subscriptions or accounts of what the People give me yearly October 27 : 1738 '.[5] and the total was only £38 12s. 6d. Perhaps there were some smaller contributions which he did not think worthy of special mention but it is to be noted that his successor, John Whittell, received a grant from the Presbyterian Fund Board from 1754 onwards.

Perhaps the difficulty was that church members in Sussex still could not see that they had an obligation to contribute regularly to the support of the ministry in their own churches, let alone to send anything to the Fund Boards. The Rules of the Congregational Fund Board had envisaged that country churches might send donations towards the maintenance of the ministry :

> Section I.1. That care be taken to send to the Churches which are able, in and around this City, to contribute to this Work ; and in the Country also, *if we can find any that are so happily disposed.*

It had often been a point of pride with the Presbyterians and Congregationalists that they did not depend on ' untrained '

[5]Non-Parochial Registers, Sussex No. 9.

men like the Baptists and there was something approaching contempt for the part-time ministry of the latter.

This contrast between the denominations was noted particularly by Ebenezer Johnston in 1772 when he wrote to Josiah Thompson about the state of Nonconformity in Sussex :

> The Paedobaptist part of the Dissenting Interest in this County is manifestly in a declining State. The Congregations are generally small & it too often happens that when a Minister Dies or removes, the People either through want of ability or want of Heart suffer the Interest to be lost amongst them.—— The Baptists are in a more flourishing situation, their preachers are generally Laymen & engaged in Seculiar Business & employment, receive but little from their People & support themselves & Families by their Trades.[6]

The General Baptists in Sussex certainly had the great advantage of a long line of gifted and devoted Elders and Messengers. But there was another advantage which the General Baptists enjoyed in that they came together in association, both at national and county level. The General Assembly was often ineffective and not all the Sussex churches were regular in their attendance through Representatives ; the Kent and Sussex Association did not always meet regularly and the member churches often neglected to send Representatives. But the General Baptist churches were not as isolated from each other as the Presbyterian and Congregational churches of Sussex. They could refer their serious problems to the County Association or to the General Assembly and the Messengers were there to visit them at times of difficulty.

Too little is known about the pastoral work of the Presbyterian and Congregational ministers to justify criticism. But some appear to have been second-rate. Joseph Stedman of Lindfield and Ardingly, given his record at Glasgow University and his disputes with the leading Presbyterian ministers in London, was probably quite unsuited to the ministry.[7] John Whittell may have done better work at Battle than he did at Brighton where his ministry was decidedly ineffective, as was noted by Ebenezer Johnston in 1772.[8] Timothy Thomas at Horsham seems to have done little to strengthen the Presbyterian cause, and the continued strong support

[6]Thompson MSS., Sussex portion.

[7]This emerges even in Stedman's own account of the dispute : *Presbyterian Priestcraft,* (1720).

[8]Thompson MSS.

for the Baptists was matched during his pastorate by a notable recovery in the Parish Church.

In Sussex, the Presbyterians and Congregationalists generally were of higher social and economic standing than the General Baptists. This must have exposed them to somewhat greater temptation to conform and so to avoid the civil disabilities to which they were still subjected. No doubt, it was a feeling of concern for the prospects of their children which often played a large part in the lapse into conformity of the more prosperous Nonconformist families. In cases where the parents remained loyal to their denominations, the children were not persuaded to shun the Church of England. It is interesting to note that the Visitation of 1724 referred to the fact that at Steyning many of the children of the Presbyterian families 'come to ye Church'. It is probable also that there would have been some attrition through the inter-marriage of Presbyterians or Congregationalists and Anglicans. The General Baptists were less likely to lose adherents in this way because of their strong discouragement of marriage outside their own denomination; the General Assembly (*Association* as it then was) in 1698 had sternly advised, 'all Members of the Severall Churches of our Comunion to keep themselves pure in the Separacon'. At Horsham, the General Baptist Church's Registers show how this discouragement of inter-marriage with other denominations persisted; between 1756 and 1846 there were over 180 names for 6 families only.

Finally, one wonders whether the weight of respectability was not also a factor in the decline, at least in the cases of the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. They were not often exposed to the stirring, if painful, challenge of serious local opposition. Their neighbours accepted them as people whose religious views no longer led to the unpleasantness of open-air preaching or stern condemnation of popular recreations. It was only the General Baptists who, as a denomination, still tried positively to discourage alcohol, card-playing, dancing, and even smuggling and trafficking in uncustomed goods, though not always with success as entries in some of the Sussex church registers clearly show.

But who are we in this generation to say that complacency and indolence sapped the vitality of the Nonconformists two centuries ago!

N. CAPLAN

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Part II

The Evangelical Revival brought realism to the Bible. 'Go you into all the world . . . ' was a text stirring the minds of many people, preparing the way for the firm and continuous support from all over the country that would be needed for the new Missionary Society.

Wesley's words :

> Love, like death, hath all destroyed,
> Rendered all distinctions void,
> Names and sects and parties fall,
> And Thou O Christ art all in all.[1]

became a popular form of the Fundamental Principle, as will be seen from the following extract from a letter written by one of the German missionaries who had received final training in England before being sent to Java in 1814 :

> By the grace of God I hope to stick close to your Christian Motto all my time : viz. " Let names and sects and parties fall (yea, let them fall to the bottom of hell) and Jesus Christ be all in all ".[2]

There were at least two parties that came together in the founding and leadership of the Missionary Society. The one, loosely labelled Methodist, taking in those who were influenced by the Evangelical Revival, some ordained within the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, others as Congregational ministers or Anglican priests, together with laymen of wealth in the mercantile world. The other party, labelled Presbyterian, comprised ministers of various branches of the Church in Scotland ministering to congregations in London. The minister of Camomile Street Church (now the City Temple) in his diary entry concerning the choice of a secretary, on 25 September, 1795, makes this fact of two parties plain :

> A meeting of ministers and delegates from various churches, etc. . . . a long altercation took place respecting the appointment of a secretary. Mr. Shrubsole proposed by the Methodist party, opposed by the Scotch Presbyterians.[3]

[1] *Cong. Praise*, 241.

[2] L.M.S. Letters, Java, C.1 ; April 2, 1816, J. C. Supper.

[3] MS., Diary of John Reynolds, 1772-92 (L.M.S. Archives).

The Rev. John Eyre also mentioned the subject later, when resigning as secretary, in a letter to Dr. Haweis :

> But who shall succeed me ? It must not be one of the Party which have given us already so much trouble.[4]

As the new secretary appointed, the Rev. George Burder, was firmly rooted in Congregationalism, and the minister above wrote as being outside the parties he mentions, one is left conjecturing exactly what Eyre meant. He certainly makes plain both his own and Haweis' identification as Methodists along with the Countess of Huntingdon ordained men.

The sects and parties were not absent, either, from within Presbyterianism. The Scottish ministers in London were all active in the founding of the Missionary Society and the variety of their allegiance is here noted :

JOHN LOVE (1756-1825) belonged to the Established Church of Scotland, and was minister of the Scots Church, Artillery Street, Bishopsgate. He was secretary of the provisional committee that launched the Society, and secretary for foreign correspondence until 1801 when he returned to Scotland.

JAMES STEVEN (1761-1824) minister of Crown Court Chapel from 1787 to 1803 belonged to the Evangelical party within the Church of Scotland.

GEORGE JERMENT (1759-1819) ministered to the Antiburgher branch of the Secession Church of Scotland, being ordained at Bow Lane, Cheapside in 1782. He remained in London until his death.

ALEXANDER WAUGH (1754-1827) belonged to the Secession Church of Scotland and ministered to a congregation in Wells Street from 1779 until his death. He was a wise counsellor, a beloved friend, and above all, one of the main influences in keeping the peace amongst such a group of men of strong character.

> He would quench the violence of a most threatening debate, and restore the Christian tone of a meeting after it had been considerably impaired[5]

[4]Maggs Cat. 616, 1935 : Report of Correspondence of T. Haweis (original now in Mitchell Library, Sydney).

[5]Lovett ; *History of the L.M.S.* II. p. 644. Quoted from Hay and Belfrage, Memoir of Alexander Waugh.

and it was,

> his constant aim to check every symptom of personality and of unholy asperity.[6]

DAVID BOGUE (1750-1825) came to London with a preaching licence from the Church of Scotland, but, as he later threw in his lot with the Congregationalists, he does not reckon as a Scottish minister, though in common with them he had the freedom of the pulpits of his first allegiance for deputation purposes.

It was the fact of a call to minister to their compatriots in London that put these Scottish ministers into the place where they could be of service in the launching of the Missionary Society.

> The great seat of the operations of the Society is London, all the members at a distance maintaining a correspondence with the body of directors in the Metropolis, who order all her affairs, and receive the pecuniary supplies from the different parts of the kingdom, and such persons as offer themselves for the work of the mission, who, after examination, if approved, wait their call to embark for whatever country the directors appoint them.[7]

The names of the effective 'body of directors in the metropolis' who ordered the affairs of the Missionary Society can mainly be gathered from the lists of those who attended the meetings of directors. A look at a few of the most notable of these, other than the Scotsmen, will serve to show how naturally, in their Christian obedience, they came together, each to make some special contribution to the Missionary Society designed to 'proceed on a new system, that of universal love among true Christians, without waiting to particular opinions'.[8]

MATTHEW WILKS (1746-1829) was an apprentice in Birmingham and had no particular religious inclinations until 1771. In West Bromwich one day he stopped under the window of a house to listen to a loud voice coming from within; the words of the curate went straight to his heart. With his help he went to the Countess of Huntingdon's college at Trevecca. One of the managers of Whitefield's two London Chapels, having heard him preach,

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] L.M.S. Letters, Home Extra 1. 7 Nov., 1797, Address to Sweden, in English.

[8] L.M.S. Letters, Home A.5. 1 April, 1798, Sundius, covering letter for Address to Sweden.

asked him to supply the pulpits. After itinerating under the Countess's instructions, he settled in London, and remained for the rest of his life at the Tabernacle, Moorfields, and Tottenham Court Chapel until it was closed owing to the expiry of the lease a year before his death. He was one of the prime movers in starting *The Evangelical Magazine.*

JOHN EYRE (1754-1803) was a Cornishman from Bodmin, well educated and apprenticed to a clothier at 15 years old. Contact with the Rev. Andrew Kinsman of Plymouth, led to conversion for him and his two friends. The three young men immediately set about evangelizing their home town, Tavistock, and Eyre was turned out of his home for such unseemly ' enthusiasm '. He went into the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion after a period of training at Trevecca College, and preached in Lincolnshire and the East End of London before going on to Oxford and ordination in the Established Church. In 1785 :

> the Episcopal Chapel of Homerton was vacant, and the worthy individuals who had purchased it, for the express purpose of securing an evangelical ministry within its walls, had their attention directed to Mr. Eyre, whose reputation as a gospel minister was now fully established.[9]

GEORGE BURDER (1752-1832) was born in London within Congregationalism, his father being a deacon at the Fetter Lane Church. As he grew up and wandered, ' he found abundantly more of the power of God with the Evangelical clergymen and with the Calvinistic Methodists '.[10] His mother died when he was ten, and his stepmother inherited a fortune which gave the family considerable wealth. After serving an apprenticeship with Isaac Taylor, the engraver, and some study at the Royal Academy, he went off to visit one of the family estates in Shropshire. Here he tried his hand at itinerant preaching, having come under the influence of the ' Methodist ' Matthew Wilks at the Tabernacle. He entered the ministry by way of private study and practical experience, and was ordained to the Congregational ministry at Lancaster in 1778, whence five years later he went to Coventry, coming to London in 1803 as minister of the church of his childhood, Fetter Lane, and secretary of the Missionary Society. His earlier years in a settled charge did not prevent him spending periods itinerating over the north of England, noting as many as 2,500 miles on horseback and 254 sermons in a year. He met Wesley on one occasion, and

[9]Morison, *Fathers and Founders of the L.M.S.* I. pp. 264/5.

introduced the Gospel into an unknown number of places, including Kendal, Bootle, Garstang and Preston. In 1793 he was :

> . . . deeply interested, and assiduously engaged, in the formation of the Warwickshire Association of Ministers for the spreading of the Gospel at home and abroad . . . the proceedings, the correspondence, and the publications of the Association, contributed not a little to prepare the way for the establishment of the Missionary Society in London.[11]

ROWLAND HILL (1744-1833) belonged to the aristocracy. As a Cambridge undergraduate his excessive evangelical zeal, in ' visiting workhouses, etc., calling sinners wherever he could find access to them, earnestly to repent and flee from the wrath to come '[12] led him into trouble. Whitefield himself encouraged him to persevere in spite of opposition, and his first regular preaching was at the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel at Bath. He greatly desired episcopal ordination, but could get no further than deacon's orders, and took to itinerating all over England giving encouragement and help in countless places. Even when settled in Southwark, building up the Independent Church known as Surry Chapel, he still had a country congregation at Wotton-under-Edge, and could write that ' The poor sheep in the country are near my heart '. He was then asking George Burder to take charge of Surry Chapel as a return engagement while he went off to the country for a month's preaching in the open air. A Congregational minister of more orderly ways recorded his first impressions of Rowland Hill. He was

> afflicted to hear sacred things treated triflingly by Rowland Hill, a man cryed up by many for his seal, faithfulness and power . . . He is borne up on the breath of popularity, and an apparent sense of his own importance.[13]

His opinion, twenty years later, was more moderate ' the sermon (at the founding of the Missionary Society) like himself, rambling. Some good though, very zealous and well intended '.[14] Rowland Hill was beloved by the many who owed to him their knowledge of, and building up in the Christian faith, and who were less critical than his brother minister.

[10]Burder, *Life of Burder*, p. 35.
[11]*Ibid.*, p. 156.
[12]Morison, *op. cit.*, II. p. 149.
[13]MS., Diary of John Reynolds, 1772-92, 20 Sept., 1775.
[14]*Ibid.* 27 Sept., 1775.

THOMAS HAWEIS (1734-1820), pronounced Haws, was a Cornishman from Redruth, educated at Truro Grammar School, who went into the ministry as a qualified doctor, having first served his apprenticeship in Truro. He went to Oxford where he resurrected the Holy Club of the Wesleys, got both deacon's and priest's orders, albeit with difficulty, and was expelled from the curacy of St. Mary's, Oxford, for his 'enthusiasm'. He became one of the Countess of Huntingdon's chaplains, with his charge at Aldwinkle, serving her chapels for a period each year until she was forced to register them as dissenting places of worship in 1781. Then his 'regular' soul rebelled, and he withdrew. A few years later, having married the Countess' secretary, he returned, and at her death found himself one of her trustees, in charge of her chapels. A year or two prior to this he had, with the Countess' encouragement, had two men trained to go as missionaries to the South Seas. The scheme fell through at the last minute, and it was when he found out that a movement was going on towards founding a Missionary Society on a broad basis of Christian love and unity, that he joined in, and was able to see his dream come true. His energy, drive, and connections, were all-important for the early days of the Missionary Society.

WILLIAM SHRUBSOLE (1759-1829) was the Methodist choice of secretary for the Missionary Society in 1795, and he remained active in its service, as a director, until the year he died. He came from Sheerness, where his father, a master mast-maker in the dockyard, had built up a Christian Society of Protestant Dissenters of which he was minister. William junior started work in the dockyard but was later offered an opening in the Bank of England where he rose to a responsible position. He made his confession of faith in his father's church, but was not actually in membership anywhere. He mixed with Evangelicals of all sorts and was well known both within and without the Established Church. He worshipped mostly at the Tabernacle, as his wife was a member there, and they lived within a few doors of Matthew Wilks, in Old Street.

JOSEPH HARDCASTLE (1725-1819), the first treasurer of the Missionary Society, came of a Yorkshire family whose Nonconformity dated from the ejection of the Rev. Thomas Hardcastle from his living in 1662; and his wife was descended from Thomas Goodwin. His uncle, in 1766, started 'introducing him to the commercial life of London', in order that the business might remain

in the family. Joseph Hardcastle lived in the City, worshipping with his uncle at a dissenting church in Bury Street, St. Mary Axe. At his marriage he settled in Peckham, moving later, as he prospered, to Hatcham House in the neighbouring parish, close by the present New Cross railway station. He found his closest personal friends amongst the Evangelical clergymen and members of the Clapham Sect, remaining himself a consistent Nonconformist.

Their Christian obedience gradually drew these men more closely together, until, with many others, it issued in common action for the evangelizing of the world. A clue to the working of the Spirit may be seen in the letter, written in February, 1796, by the Rev. George Gill of Market Harborough (where Doddridge had once ministered) to Joseph Hardcastle, in appreciation of the founding of the Missionary Society :

> . . . it is now more than eleven years since a monthly meeting was established in this place, and which has been regularly attended to pray for a more general spread of the Gospel, and that the Lord would visit the heathen world with this invaluable blessing. I cannot but think that the formation of this Society is in part an answer to our prayers . . .[15]

Hardcastle himself had no doubt that what God called them to do He could accomplish in them, and saw, in the events of the commissioning of the first missionaries in 1796 a measure of fulfilment of the Fundamental Principle they had so recently written into the Directors' Minute Book :

> Nor did we suffer the evening to close till we received the Lord's Supper, together with the Captain, the Missionaries and their wives, and many of the most serious and active friends of the Society, and as a striking proof of the union maintained, and the extinction of bigotry among us, it was previously resolved, that the oldest minister who might be present, whatever his denomination, should lead the worship, and the next to him in years conclude it, each of the ministers taking some intermediate part in the service . . . It was surely a little specimen of what the Church, in the latter days will be, when love, like death, will level all distinctions. It was a foretaste of heaven.[16]

I. M. FLETCHER

[15] *Evangelical Mag.* 1796, pp. 72/3.

[16] Annual Reports, 1795-1814, p. 58, and Annual Report, 1797, single issue, p. xxii.

JAMES FORBES LIBRARY

In his list of the virtues of James Forbes, Calamy notes an unusual devotion to scholarly reading. 'His rare Diligence in private Study even in old Age, redeeming his mornings for that use' (*Continuation*, I.500). Very few private libraries of such scope have been able to survive the enormous hazards of fire, water, riot, and neglect.

Bibliographers will note with excitement the items not listed in the *Short Title Catalogue*. There are many cases of 'near' variants —perhaps these are of real value only to specialists. As an indication of the Library's 'scarcity value', there are about 170 titles that have less than 3 locations. Many of the volumes bear Forbes' 'mark' of ownership, his motto, Ora labora, etc., but other names also appear, sometimes with Forbes' initial, sometimes alone. Names like Allen, Bridges, Browne, Cole, Everard, Girle, Hancock, Jelley, Vailes, Delamain, Duglis, Green, Scudamore, Keck, Hyett, Phelps, Bawston, Deyton, Moston, Malbon, Nayler, St. George, Tallamy, present an interesting challenge to the researcher. There are, however, a few indications that the Library as we have it was not entirely the work of Forbes but was added to in later years.

To say this is not to disparage Forbes—rather to suggest he had succeeded in a scheme to invigorate the intellectual and devotional life of his followers. A stimulating article on "Luther and Libraries" in *The Library Quarterly*, April, 1962, quotes from Luther's treatise on education 1524 to show how greatly he valued the setting up of choice but comprehensive collections of books in every city. The influence of such thinking is obvious in the structure of Forbes' library, which contains many 'humanist' and technical works over and above the strictly theological items.

The Collection abounds with stimulating byways. Among the MSS., (so far largely untouched) there is a priced book list of great interest. Many of the books themselves have prices and in a few cases the date has also been added. Much valuable research can be carried out but time is running short. The condition of the volumes is deteriorating and the City Libraries Committee is supporting the gradual physical renovation of the books, but funds are urgently needed for repair work.

THELMA SMITH

REVIEWS

From Uniformity to Unity, 1662-1962. Edited by Geoffrey F. Nuttall and Owen Chadwick (S.P.C.K. 1962, 35s.)

This symposium has been sponsored by the three historic Dissenting denominations and by the S.P.C.K., with the support of the Church Historical Society. It is an irenical memorial and was published on St. Bartholemew's Day just three hundred years after the Ejectment. It was right that such a scholarly assessment should be undertaken and it was right that it should be shared by both sides. The resultant work is excellent.

The survey is mainly historical and gives us a wide-ranging and judicious conspectus of a teeming and often confusing landscape. Dr. Anne Whiteman of Lady Margaret Hall takes the first stage in a weighty and comprehensive account of the years which led up to 1662; she indicates how much more is now known about the pre-Restoration period than was available to the historians of 1862. Professor E. C. Ratcliff of Cambridge brings all his vast liturgical learning to bear upon the changes which took place between 1644 and the restored Prayer Book of 1662 and pays special attention to the Savoy Conference and the attitude of the Dissenters to the B.C.P. Dr. Nuttall follows with a sympathetic and deeply learned chapter on 'The first Nonconformists' in which he shows how different ministers apprehended the issues at stake with different degrees of emphasis and, of course, where Richard Baxter fits into the picture. As well as writing this important chapter and shouldering much of the editorial burden, Dr. Nuttall has also contributed a useful bibliographical excursus to be used with his checklist (*The Beginnings of Non-conformity, 1660-1665,* published by Dr. Williams's Library) and demonstrates again the ease with which he moves among the writings of the period and how unrivalled is his knowledge of them.

The period of comprehension and indulgence between 1662 and 1689 is fully covered by Roger Thomas of Dr. Williams's Library; then the period of Toleration and 'Establishment' is dealt with by Dr. Ernest Payne and Canon Edward Carpenter. What G. M. Trevelyan called 'the two-party system in religious observance, popularly known as "Church" and "Chapel", receives in all its aspects a careful study. Dr. Payne's contribution is important as showing the rise of Nonconformity; Dr. Carpenter's for its examination of the changed attitude of the Established Church.

So far the symposium is mainly historical. It is completed by

two chapters which attempt to deal constructively with the issues. The Bishop of Bristol, Dr. Oliver Tompkins with his knowledge of the ecumenical movement is responsible for what ought not to be an intrusion as he speaks ecumenically. Principal Huxtable concludes the book by showing what progress has been made in the improvements of church relations in this country and by asking why it has been so slow and so tentative. He has much to say which is searching and provocative including his suggestion that 'the two apparently self-consistent and mutually exclusive wholes are not what they appear to be'.

Taking each of the contributions with the rest the book is a worthy memorial. Though neither exciting nor thrilling it is sober, fair-minded and instructive. We have moved far from the days of recrimination into days of a desire for co-operation and understanding and a deep searching of heart. The 'foundations of the problem' are set down by Professor Owen Chadwick in his introduction. 'The desirability of agreement in worship; the hypothetical possibility of comprehension; the refusal of Presbyterians (and later of Methodists) to accept any act which might be interpreted as confessing their present ministry to be inefficacious or 'invalid'; the refusal of Episcopalians to countenance any act which they would regard as a 'breach in Catholic order'; the conviction of Independents that in the last resort no mere comprehension will satisfy by its limitations since each congregation of Christians must retain its liberty'. We may take exception to the wording of any or all of the clauses. The problem is with us still.

GORDON ROBINSON

Isaac Watts: Hymnographer by Harry Escott (Independent Press Ltd., 1962, 28s. 6d.)

Students of hymnology might be forgiven for asking why another book on Watts has been published after the considerable works of Gibbons, Milner, Paxton Hood, Wright and Davis. A single reading of Dr. Escott's Preface would soon answer that question. Whereas they were concerned with Watts' life as a whole, his concern is with his poetry and hymns. In this realm the author has done a monumental piece of critical research such as has never been attempted before.

That Watts did most of his best work in this field when he was quite a young man has been recognized by several of his biographers. Dr. Escott is the first of Watts' biographers to go back to the

first edition of his *Horae Lyricae*, his first published work, 1706 (or Dec. 1705). He lays new emphasis upon the 'hidden years', 1694-96, when Watts was 20-22 years of age at his home at Southampton, 'the most momentous and exciting in his evolution as a hymn-writer'. He feels his father's well-known challenge to Isaac 'to try to do better' was not the snub of a reactionary, but words of encouragement to one in whom he recognized genius. From his earliest years Watts had been a poet, supremely a lyricist; but by his Academy training he had been given a trained mind. The young poet who had been writing poems as 'a light employment for his leisure hours' was driven to find a 'rationale for his lyrics' and all the more so for his hymns 'which were written to meet practical needs'. And so he worked at his 'system of praise'.

Chapter VI, 'The Christianized Psalm', is important in that Dr. Escott shows Watts exercising a revolutionary freedom in biblical interpretation in an age of Calvinistic literalness. Patrick had experimented with verses which gave a gospel setting and flavour in a Psalm or two, but no one before Watts had dared to rewrite practically the whole Psalter and 'make David speak as a Christian'. It is food for speculation what Watts would make of our collection of Psalms in the Authorised Version in *Congregational Praise*, albeit expurgated and selected.

The other chapter to which reference ought to be made is 'Children's Songs and Praises', because Dr. Escott reveals a Watts who was a far greater innovator than has been previously supposed. Many of his hymns and poems for children may appear amusingly stern to us today, but in comparison with Bunyan and Janeway whose writings the author examines and quotes from extensively, Watts appears indulgent and kindly to a degree. Indeed, his *Moral Songs* were an attempt 'to make religious instruction through verse not an imposition, but a delightful, cheerful and natural pursuit'. Escott rightly diverts our amusement from Watts to Janeway, who published in 1670 a book for Puritan homes entitled, 'A Token for Children; being an Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives, and Joyful Deaths of Several Young Children', which a contemporary said was 'a certain means of saving many infants from Hell and damnation'. Cotton Mather in his continuation of Janeway's book showed that 'New England children were no less adept at the fashionable art of dying than their little contemporaries in the mother country'.

Dr. Escott's conclusion regarding Watts' contribution to Church praise deserves quoting :

> Whatever views Watts came to hold in his old age, there is no question that his ' Psalms ' and ' Hymns ' on the whole conserved and passed on the theology and spiritual experience of an age of faith . . . . There can be no doubt that at a time when the psalm-singing, disorganized Presbyterian Church of England largely became Unitarian, the gathered communities of Independency using the sung-liturgy provided for them by Watts, kept the Faith '. (p.257)

Perhaps more use could have been made of appendices rather than devoting so large a number of pages in the text to quotations and lists ; but it is a definitive work, indeed the result of a lifetime's study, for which all lovers of Watts' hymnody must be rightly grateful.

ERIC SHAVE

Oliver Cromwell and his Times by Peter Young (Batsford, 1962, 16s.)

The author of this volume in *The Makers of Britain* series teaches military history at Sandhurst. He explains that his ' sympathies are with the Royalists ' and from that point of view he writes interestingly about battles and strategy ; but in other respects his sympathies sometimes cloud a rational judgment. Such terms as Anglicans, Episcopalians, Nonconformists and Puritans are used rather indiscriminately—but, to the author, it is always clear which side did the persecuting, the double-dealing and who was responsible for all the iconoclasm. The author intended to let Cromwell ' tell his own story ', but when he gives Cromwell's words he is apt to misquote by italicizing part of the quotation.

Perhaps it is impossible to write a satisfactory small book about such a big man, but Cromwell was more than a great soldier : he was a deeply religious man living at a time when religion was vital. To be unable to approach his greatness in some humility, to be wholly out of sympathy with his religious beliefs, is to fall short in an adequate assessment of his character. Brigadier Young tries hard to be fair : ' if he was occasionally vindictive . . . he normally listened to the dictates of a tender conscience, leaving a record to shame the grosser dictators of latter days '. It would have been too bad if a maker of Britain had turned out to be no better than a Hitler or a Mussolini !

BERNARD MARTIN

The Journal of a Slave Trader : John Newton 1750-1754, Edited by Bernard Martin and Mark Spurrell. (Epworth Press, 1962, 30s.)

John Newton's *Journal of a Slave Trader* is now published for the first time, and it is probably unique as a complete day-to-day record of the negro slave trade at the middle of the eighteenth century. For those interested in the nautical details of the three voyages which he made to the windward coast of Africa between 1750 and 1754 it gives an intensely interesting and detailed account ; and Bernard Martin and Mark Spurrell, by the apt quotations which they have introduced from Newton's *Letters to a Wife,* have provided the human touch which makes the Journal more pleasurable for the ordinary reader. The glossary and the folding map at the end of the book help the uninitiated, though it would perhaps have been clearer if some indication of the routes of the voyages could have been shown.

A more profound interest in this Journal is to be found in John Newton's gradually changing attitude towards the trade. Though he says that ' during the time I was engaged in the slave trade I never had the least scruple as to its lawlessness' there are signs that he was beginning to question the social justice of slavery, and the editors have done well to complete the book by including *Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade,* which he wrote thirty years later when he had become convinced of its iniquities.

KATHLEEN T. HEASMAN

Evangelicals in Action, An appraisal of their social work by Kathleen T. Heasman. (Geoffrey Bles, 1962, 30s.)

Now that the Welfare State has taken over many of the organizations which the Evangelicals began, and the religious origins of these organizations are in danger of being forgotten, it is good to find a book as exciting as that of Dr. Heasman. Here is no emotional extravagance but a plain unvarnished account showing a remarkable degree of historical research and written in a most readable style.

Among the subjects covered are ragged schools : children's homes and orphanages : work for the working teenager, for the reform of the prostitute, for the prisoner, for the blind and deaf, for the unsound in mind and body, for the sick and aged, and for the sailor and soldier. In most of these fields the Evangelicals played the sole or predominant part and organizations such as the National Children's Home and Dr. Barnardo's Homes owe their origins to Evangelical action.

In some of their numerous fields of activity the Victorian Evangelicals were associated with zealous members of other denominations and with a true historian's impartiality Dr. Heasman's book mentions the social work of Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics and Unitarians. Among the Congregationalists mentioned in the book are Thomas Arnold, John Blackham, Newman Hall, J. B. Paton, Andrew Reed, James Sherman and Benjamin Waugh. The London Congregational Union also receives honourable mention for its early realization of the need for social work, as does the Christian Union for Social Service in which J. B. Paton was active and which in 1896 opened two colonies for the unemployed.

Christians of all shades of opinion will be indebted to Dr. Heasman for a book which has not only a high historical value but also provides material for answers to the two questions which are often addressed to Christians : ' What has the Christian church accomplished in the past ? and ' What is the Christian church doing today in the field of social service ? '

Three Hundred Years 1662-1962 by C. Gordon Bolam. (3s., post free, from the author at 13 Devonshire Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham).

The Editor of the Unitarian Historical Society whose scholarly article on ' The Ejection of 1662 and the Consequences for the Presbyterians in England ' appeared in the *Hibbert Journal* (April, 1962) has now published this illustrated history of the eleven congregations in the North Midland Presbyterian and Unitarian Association (Belper, Boston, Derby, Hinckley, Kirkstead, Leicester (2), Lincoln, Loughborough, Mansfield and Nottingham). Almost all of these causes are of seventeenth century origin and in their story there is much to interest Congregationalists.

We meet ministers who trained at Dissenting Academies such as Attercliffe, Daventry, Findern, Kibworth, Northampton and Warrington. There are references to famous Independents such as Caleb Ashworth and Philip Doddridge, and echoes of the ' Happy Union ' and the ' Common Fund '. We learn how Friargate Chapel at Derby changed from Presbyterian into Unitarian but not without a secession of members who founded a Congregational Church in 1785. Even more interesting, if regrettable, were events in Nottingham in the 1730's when there was friction between the Castlegate and High Pavement Chapels, caused by the Scots Presbyterian assistant minister at Castlegate.

Mr. Bolam is to be congratulated on a miracle of compression for in less than 50 pages he gives not only the histories of the eleven churches but prints lists of their ministers—with dates!

Providence Chapel, Chichester by J. S. Reynolds (Chichester City Council 1961, 7s.).

This is one of a series of local history pamphlets 'The Chichester Papers'. Written by the author of *The Evangelicals at Oxford* 1735-1871, it is the story of a Calvinistic Independent Chapel opened in 1809. This 48-page pamphlet is exceptionally well-documented and illustrated and is of considerable interest to Non-conformist historians as a serious and valuable contribution to the history of the Huntingtonians.

H. G. TIBBUTT

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

The Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, Vol. xii, No. 3 (June 1962) includes an article by one of our members, John Duncan —'The Presbyterians of Bury St. Edmunds'. F. G. Healey writes on 'Presbyterians and Nonconformity'.

Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, Vol. xii, No. 4 (October 1962) includes a Unitarian view of the Great Ejectment by F. Kenworthy —'From Authority to Freedom in Church Life'. This issue includes the Index to Vol. xii.

The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Spring 1962). William H. Marwick continues his account of 'Some Quaker firms of the Nineteenth Century'. (A previous article appeared in Vol. 48, Autumn 1958).

The Baptist Quarterly, Vol. xix, No. 6 (April 1962). Harold J. Schultz contributes a useful re-appraisal of an outstanding Seventeenth Century figure —'Roger Williams, Delinquent Saint'.

Vol. xix, No. 7 (July 1962) includes an article by P. N. Hardacre on 'William Allen, Cromwellian Agitator and Fanatic'.

Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society. We acknowledge with thanks receipt of Vol. xxxiii, Parts 6 (June 1962), 7 (September 1962) and 8 (December 1962). The last issue includes the Index to Vol. xxxiii.

W. W. BIGGS

HISTORIES OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

The following list includes histories known to have appeared between January, 1960 and September, 1962 (inclusive). The Research Secretary would be grateful for information about other histories which may have appeared in this period, and also to receive copies of these and of histories appearing in the future.

Authers, W. P. The Tiverton Congregational Church, 1660-1960. (1960).

Biggs, W. W. The Congregational Church, Romford. 1662-1962. (1962). *Brown, F. E.* The Story of Marlpool [Derbyshire] Congregationalism. (1960). *Burton, D.* The first 100 years at East Hill [Wandsworth Congregational Church, London] (1960).

Chapman, P. G. Tetbury [Glos.] Congregational Church, 1710-1960. (1960). *Chislett, C. J.* Masbro' Independent Chapel [Rotherham], 1760-1960. (1960). *Christchurch.* Christchurch Congregational Church, 1660-1960. (1960).

Davis, R. A. The up-to-date history of Cam Meeting Congregational Church [Glos.], 1662-1962. (1962). *Down, E.* Fifty years of witness. Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church, 1910-1960. (1960). *Driver, A. H.* 1962 looks at 1662 (together with some notes on the history of the Congregational Church in Shaftesbury. (1962). *Duncan, J.* The history of the Congregational Church in Bury St. Edmunds. (Its first 150 years). (1962). *also,* The early history of the Tacket Street Congregational Church, Ipswich. (1960).

Eldred, H. B. The history of the Abbey Foregate Congregational Church [Shrewsbury], 1862-1962. (1962). *Elkes, L. M.* History of the Congregational Church and Sunday School, Uttoxeter, 1788-1960. (1960).

Fry, A. W. Brief Outline of Deal Congregational Church. (1960). *Farndon.* The Rock Congregational Church, Farndon, Chester, 1889-1959. (1960).

Garlick, G. and *Lay, L. L.* The story of Wickford Congregational Church, 1811-1961. (1961). *Goodman, F. C.* The Great Meeting : the story of Toller Congregational Church, Kettering, founded in 1662. (1962).

Harland, F. W. Cranbrook [Kent] Congregational Church 250th anniversary year book, 1710-1960. (1960). *Hickling, E. F.* Hopton Congregational Church, Mirfield, [Yorkshire] Tercentenary Celebrations, 1662-1962. (1962). *Horsman, J. B.* A history of Hope Congregational Church, Wigan, 1812-1962. (1962). *Howes, R. K.* A history of Egerton [Bolton] Congregational Church. (1962). *Hurd, A. G.* These three hundred years : the story of Ramsgate Congregational Church, 1662-1962. (1962).

Lewis, M. G. The Congregational Church, Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford, 1662-1962. (1962).

Manchester. Wilbraham Road Congregational Church, 1902-1962. (1962). *Martin, J. W.* Ingress Vale [Dartford, Kent] Congregational Church, 1860-1960. (1960). *Martin, R. G.* The Chapel, 1660-1960. The story of the Congregational Church, Newport Pagnell, [Bucks.] 1660-1960. (1960). *Milton.* Kendall Memorial Congregational Church, Milton, Portsmouth, 1860-1961. (1961).

Pearce, K. R. Old Meeting Congregational Church, Uxbridge, 1662-1962. (1962).

Smith, C. W. A short history of Upminster Congregational Church, 1911-1961. (1961).

Thomas, C. The history of the first Nonconformist Congregational Church in Hinckley. (1962). *Thomas, D. H.* East Sheen Congregational Church [London], 1662-1962. (1962). *Thomas, F. C.* Chinley Chapel : celebration of the 250th anniversary of the building of the Chapel, 1711-1961. (1961). *Tibbutt, H. G.* A history of Howard Congregational Church, Bedford. (1961). *Towers, L. T.* 1662-1962. A short history of the Congregational Church meeting at Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire. (1962).

Upminster. Upminster [Essex] Congregational Church, Jubilee of Building, 1911-1961. (1961).

Woodger, P. L. and *Hunter, J. E.* The High Chapel : the story of the Ravenstonedale Congregational Church, [Westmorland] 1662-1962. (1962).

Copies of these histories can be seen in the ' chapel history ' collections of the Congregational Library, Memorial Hall, London, and of Dr. Williams's Library, London. The histories vary in size from small duplicated pamphlets to handsome printed works of more than 130 pages. Miss Elkes' history of the Uttoxeter church prints in full the Sunday School rules adopted in 1813 and subsequently amended in 1814 and amplified in 1820. Miss Lewis' history of the Bishop's Stortford church prints in full the church's 1811 petition against Lord Sidmouth's Bill which was aimed at limiting Dissent. The Rev. E. F. Hickling's church at Hopton, Yorkshire, still has its original church book for the period 1662-1732.

H. G. TIBBUTT

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