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TRANSACTIONS

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Editorial

Should anyone suppose that this periodical is the preserve of Congregationalists, let him think again. Although the title of our first article in this issue might encourage such false notions, the second and third counteract them. Dr. White is a Baptist, on the staff of Regents Park College, Oxford, and John Creasey of Dr. Williams's Library, London, is an Anglican. Nor do we favour British contributors more than others. Distance need not be an obstacle in these days, yet often it seems to be. We welcome contributions, but not long theses, from abroad and at home.

We hope to see this year the publication of the whole of the nineteen volumes of *Transactions* up to 1964 by the Kraus Reprint Corporation.

Literary works on nonconformist church life are none too common, and hence the value placed upon Mark Hale White (Rutherford) for the Victorian period. Perhaps a similar value will become attached to a recent story, *The Concrete Village* (H & S, 1967, 30s.) by an East End Congregational minister who is also a journalist. John Pellow can hardly be called a mainstream minister, but his descriptions of life during a time of rebuilding, of house groups and theological conflicts, and his vivid renderings of cockney cut and thrust, take a lot of beating.

ORDINATION AMONG US

Is there anything resembling a tradition of ordination among Congregationalists ? Have they a doctrine, or a diversity of views ? How have these things changed over the years ? This is a brief report upon what the author has seen on an exploratory trip into the period up to the time of Forsyth.

Classical Independency

It is not unknown for ecumenical conversations to reach a state of confusion and weariness. Who has not longed to start all over again, with a blank sheet of paper, and none but the Holy Spirit to please ? But it is impossible. The early Congregationalists came as near doing it as anyone could. They set about it in the conviction that by the guidance of the Spirit the Bible would yield the blueprint of the true Church. They were probably less conscious than thinkers today of subjective pressures : the effect that their bitter experiences at the hands of Anglican bishops would have upon their doctrines.

They raised the banner of the local gathered church under the direct authority of Christ, against the old, catholic idea of the Church, which they found in practice cruel and corrupt. William Bartlet in his *Ichnographia* (1647) neatly sums it up: 'The Church under the Gospell . . . is not Universall and Nationall, or Diocesan, but congregational only'.[1] The Savoy *Declaration,* the authoritative statement of English Congregationalists, issued just before the death of Cromwell, says precisely that God 'hath given all that Power and Authority, which is any way needfull for . . . Order in Worship and Discipline' to 'particular Societies or Churches':

> These particular Churches thus appointed by the Authority of Christ . . . are each of them . . . the seat of that Power which he is pleased to communicate to his Saints or Subjects in this world.[2]

Then the document states the negative side:

> Besides these particular Churches, there is not instituted by Christ any Church more extensive or Catholique entrusted with power for the administration of his Ordinances, or the execution of any authority in his name.[3]

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 65.
[2] *Savoy Declaration* (ed. A. G. Matthews (1959)), Inst. Chs. IV, V.
[3] *Ibid.*, VI.

The doctrine of the ministry and ordination had to fit into this framework.

Before we leave the negative aspect of the doctrine behind, let us pause and listen to Thomas Hooker showing his disgust at episcopal ordination. Its spiritual nature is dead. The bishop lays hands on a young man's head, they 'put his parchments into his boxe, sealed with the great seale of the Bishops office' and send him off to 'take possession of his parish and tithes', and 'the poor multitude suffer themselves so far to be fooled and oppressed with the tyranny of the Prelate, that they are constrained to submit . . .'[4] This is the background to doctrine. Men who felt like this, who suffered persecution and exile, not surprisingly renounced their Anglican orders, thinking them false, and were ordained afresh. Some who did were Hooker himself, John Cotton, Richard Mather, William Bridge, and Hugh Peter.[5]

It follows that the early Congregationalists laid great stress upon the election of the minister by the local church rather than upon his ordination. Indeed the Congregational ordination service has always kept in the public eye the Congregationalists' characteristic freedom to choose their ministers. Statements by the church and by the candidate are made declaring their free choice of one another under the direction of God and the election is ratified. These features are as apparent today as they were in 1645, when Cotton said, 'the Brethren of that Church declare their Election of him with one accord, by lifting up their hands'.[6] So then, 'calling a minister', says John Norton, 'is more important than ordaining him'.[7]

At this point we must acknowledge our indebtedness to Dr. Geoffrey F. Nuttall, who in his *Visible Saints* (1957), pp. 81-96, provides us with a survey map for this part of our journey. Now this stress upon election brings us directly to the first of two principles which Dr. Nuttall sets out: that 'the church exists before it has a minister'. In other words, 'the ministry is not essential to the church'. This is in contrast to catholic doctrine: 'We are thus at the opposite pole from John Henry Newman's assertion, "A sacerdotal order is historically the essence of the Church".'[8]

[4]*Summe of Church Discipline* (1648), ch. ix. 3-5.
[5]T. G. Crippen, C.H.S. *Transactions*, VII, pp. 336-8.
[6]*Way of the Churches of Christ in New England* (1645), p. 39f.
[7]*The Answer* (written 1645, pub. 1648) ed. Douglas Horton (1958), p. 120.
[8]p. 85.

Related to this principle of early Congregationalism is the second: 'that equipment for the ministry and recognition of that equipment are both described in charismatic terms'. Election presupposes that the Spirit endows men with gifts for the pastoral ministry, and furthermore, that He enables men in churches to discern them. Evidence for both principles is furnished amply by Dr. Nuttall.[9]

What then of ordination itself? The Savoy representatives saw it as scriptural and valuable.

> The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person, fitted and gifted by the holy Ghost, unto the Office of Pastor, Teacher, or Elder in a Church, is, that he be chosen thereunto by the common suffrage of the Church itself, and solemnly set apart by Fasting and Prayer, with Imposition of Hands of the Eldership of that Church.[10]

It is the public recognition of the fact that the Spirit is already in the man making him a potential pastor.

But there was a difference of opinion about the laying on of hands, and so they made it optional.[11] Norton is rather startling: '*Cheirothesia*', he says, 'is an adiaphoron', no more necessary than 'coronation is necessary to being a king, or a wedding to being married'![12]

It is an 'external adjunct' agrees John Owen and it is difficult to demonstrate that it is now necessary since the 'cessation of the communication of extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost'. One thing it is not, however, is 'the sole conveyance of a successive flux of office-power, which is destructive of the whole nature of the institution . . .'[13] All agree that prayer is *the* significant part of the ordination, 'the maine weight of the work' as Hooker puts it.[14]

Douglas Horton's edition of John Norton's *Answer* came out after Dr. Nuttall's book. Norton was almost unknown and unknowable. His list of points which Congregationalists do not believe about ordination as propounded by 'papistical' (as he calls them) teachers is worth quoting because it covers all the issues succinctly.

> First, they teach that ordination and the laying on of hands are the essence of order, and consequently of the constituting of a minister, transferring to ordination what is proper to calling;

[9]p. 86f. [10]XI. [11]XII. [12]*Op. cit.* p. 122.
[13]*The True Nature of a Gospel Church* (pub. 1689), ed. Goold, *Wks.* XVI. p. 73.
[14]quoted by Nuttall, p. 93.

Secondly, in the ordination of ministers they leave no part to elders but give all parts to the bishops, if not to the Pope ;

Thirdly, they try to make ordination a sacrament ;

Fourthly, they say that the effect of this sacrament, by the very act of laying on hands, is a grace that makes one acceptable ;

Fifthly, they say that another effect is to impart an indelible mark ;

Sixthly, the ancient but human distinction between ministers and other Christians suggested by the name *clerus* (clergyman: an allotted one) is made anti-Christian by their vainglorious *kakolalia* or jealously for ordination. The Roman meaning for *clergy* and *laity* makes the people of God seem worthless in comparison with ministers.[15]

It is not part of our plan to discuss now the merits and demerits of these things. What we shall do is to draw attention to three problems which the Congregational system brought upon itself. The first and most important in the light of the next century was the status of the missionary. Owen's doctrine was rigid and narrow. 'No church whatever hath power to ordain men ministers for the conversion of infidels.' Missionary work ever since the cessation of extraordinary gifts with the Apostles has been in the hands of providence and 'left without the verge of church-institutions'.[16] This kind of Calvinist thinking was to be a stumbling-block to the missionary movement. One can see why Owen and his followers were so rigid. To have given way on the point would have put ministers before the church, making a back-door for episcopacy.

Another drawback was that until a church was complete, furnished with a pastor, it could not celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for no visitor could do this.[17] The third problem was that just as the local church elected its pastor, so it had the

[15]p. 124f. On indelibility with Owen, *op. cit.*, p. 84, 'we have no concernment in the figment of an indelible character accompanying sacred orders'.

[16]*Ibid.*, p. 92f. Owen allows unordained missionaries.

[17]*Savoy*, XVI. 'where there are no teaching Officers, none may administer the Seals'. Did some churches rebel and let laymen celebrate, for we find Owen taking to task 'those who allow this practice' and arguing that 'there are no footsteps of any such practice among the churches of God who walked in order'. But the disorderly could, of course, have been people further left than Congregationalists.

right to dismiss him, and as Congregationalists held no belief in the indelible character imprinted upon a minister at ordination, dismissal from the church meant, of course, dismissal from the ministry. Injustice might be done and the only redress was to appeal to the local churches in the hope that they might admonish the offending church, or perhaps even sever fellowship with it and uphold the minister's integrity.[18]

Was a minister reordained when he took up a fresh church ? Would this not have been logical ? They never seem to have gone this far. *The Cambridge Platform* (1648) says that there was nothing to hinder the laying on of hands again, yet its wording suggests this would not be an ordination.[19] Perhaps there was some confusion. In England it was at last cleared up in the *Heads of Agreement* (1691): ' Ordination is only intended for such as never before had been ordained to the Ministerial Office '. Upon removal to a new charge a minister should have ' a like solemn service recommending him and his labours to the Grace and Blessing of God ', but no more.[20]

Presbyterian Influence

The *Heads of Agreement* is the product of new men in a new era. Early Congregationalism had had its hey-day. The Restoration had come and gone, bringing with it the Great Ejectment and the oppression of the Clarendon Code. Dissent had become a feature of the English social scene. And now the Age of Reason and of Toleration was emerging. Congregational and Presbyterian ministers launched the ill-fated Happy Union, based upon the *Heads*. It describes the practice of most churches throughout the eighteenth century and beyond. The right of the local church to choose its own minister is asserted, though churches should seek the advice of neighbouring ministers and churches in making up their minds. No one should be ordained ' ordinarily ' except a church had called him. The ordination should be carried out by an informal presbytery of local ministers together with any ' preaching elder or elders ' of the church concerned. This was no innovation. Congregationalists had taken part in similar ordinations by ministers of different persuasions since Commonwealth times.[21]

[18]Cf. Anon. *Answer of the Elders* (1643), p. 77.

[19]IX.7. (Williston Walker, reprint (1960)) p. 217.

[20]C.H.S. *Transactions*, VIII. p. 38f. The problem that reordination was to a great many of those who chose ejection rather than conformity with episcopal ordination is treated in *From Uniformity to Unity* (ed. Nuttall & Chadwick 1962), pp. 177ff.

[21]Nuttall, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

Nevertheless, this was not the strict Congregational doctrine of the Fathers and there were people who resented the change.

The orderly procedures laid down by the London ministers did not appeal to Richard Davis for example. In 1689 he had been ordained to the pastorate of Rothwell in the East Midlands. He was ordained by elders of that church alone after the rigid old fashion. Local ministers invited to attend had withdrawn when they learnt that this was to happen. Some were also uneasy because Davis had received no formal training for the ministry. The incident might have passed over but for Davis' influence as an evangelist and organizer of revival in the area. He taught lay-preachers and sent them out to galvanize dying churches into life. He assisted at the ordinations of some of them, often giving the charge to the minister or church, and these ordinations again followed the strict independent pattern. He attacked the more conventional ministry for lacking in fervour and drew upon himself a full-scale inquiry into his alleged antinomianism. His canvassing of the London ministers sparked off the controversy which destroyed the Happy Union.[22] He brings to the surface a tension between the old and new schools, between the less organized, lay Independents, upholding the work of the Spirit, and the more organized ministerial group in London with its concern for order.

Isaac Watts has not much to say on Church polity and very little on ordination. Yet there is one interesting and characteristic point: his confession that the Congregational doctrine about the election of the pastor by the church cannot be proved from the Bible. The most that can be said is that 'reason itself supposes' that church in N.T., times at least consented to the officers set over them. Too much store should not be set upon biblical precedents: 'these things cannot, in every point, be rulers or patterns for all following times'.[23]

The Laying on of Hands

As we come towards the middle of the eighteenth-century we are indebted to Philip Doddridge for giving us a detailed description of the process whereby his theological students became ordained ministers: how they were examined by a board of senior ministers before being allowed to preach; and how a student would go to reside with a congregation seeking a pastor for a trial period of months or even years. Normally men were not ordained

[22]Alexander Gordon, *Freedom after Ejection*, p. 186; R. W. Dale, *History of English Congregationalism*, p. 480; T. G. Crippen, C.H.S.T., VII, pp. 419ff.

[23]Watts, *Wks.*, III, p. 206f. Cf. Savoy *Declaration*: of Faith, ch. I. vi.

before they were 27 years old. During the trial period they preached regularly and performed ' most other ministerial offices excepting ' —and here we must note the significance that ordination meant— ' excepting the administration of the sacraments '.[24]

> When the ordination prayer is given:
> 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 their hands on also, at the same time.

But some caution is needed before accepting this as general practice. Doddridge himself admits that usages were varied, and the evidence of two sermons by prominent men, Samuel Morton Savage at the ordination of William Ford at Miles Lane, London, in 1757, and Thomas Bradbury at Thomas Winter's ordination, 1759, is that the laying on of hands was in ' disuse '.[25] Indeed there seems to have been confusion and uncertainty about it.

Bradbury was an arch-conservative. He had been ordained in 1707 in the Happy Union style, by a group of ministers of different denominations and, in his own words, he had ' had the utmost satisfaction in having Ordination by the laying on of Hands of the Presbytery.' He understood nothing by it ' of a conveyance of a Ministerial Power ' ; that would have been a ' Popish, Prelactical, and really no better than Mechanical Notion '. What the ministers did was to ' give their Approbation, with a Desire of a Blessing on those that they admit to the Fellowship of the Gospel.' This old view obviously did not satisfy everyone. Savage tried to explain the disappearance of the laying on of hands in his sermon, and he began from the opposite pole. The laying on of hands, he says, has been considered ' a sign of authority and communicating office-power '. This is why the Savoy *Declaration* puts it squarely in the hands of the elders of the church concerned, not in those of other churches, but times have changed.

> Since therefore, the congregational churches have declined the custom of having other (ruling) elders, besides the pastors (or teaching elders) the practice of imposition of hands has dropped along with it. Upon the whole, one cannot help remarking that our notions about the design of imposition of hands probably need correction ; but surely, the total disuse of the practice itself is not very consistent . . .

[24] *Wks.* III. pp. 225-7.

[25] These and subsequent sermons of the period referred to here are in a collection at New College, London, for the use of which I am grateful to the authorities.

The logic of this explanation is most attractive, but whether it is true is rather doubtful.

There was something else in the air. In that Age of Reason, men could not see the point of an empty symbol. Calvinists had long held that extraordinary powers ceased with the Apostles. What nonsense then was laying on hands. It is no longer necessary, said Thomas Hall at Thomas Towle's ordination in 1747/8, 'since no extraordinary gifts, or miraculous cures are now to be expected.' The Arian wing of Dissent went on to question ordination itself, as we see from a sermon of Thomas Belsham at Exeter at Timothy Kenrick's ordination, 1785. Many people entirely disapprove the service; he is uneasy about it. Ordination is a public occasion when the candidate makes his pledges. 'No new powers, nor qualifying a minister to perform any part of ministerial duty to which he was not before equally fitted' are involved.

Evangelicals and Order

Meanwhile the resurgence of Independency in the last half of the century in the wake of Wesley and Whitefield completely changed the face of things. Maybe real insight into Congregational principles suffered, but we would be wrong to imagine a reign of ecclesiastical anarchy resulted. Fascinated with events on the continent, preachers might explain Congregationalism in terms of Christians' rights, as for example Robert Winter in 1794: Congregationalists, he stated, stand for 'the right of all Christians to chuse their own religious instructors'.[26] Nearly forty years later when the newly formed Congregational Union of England and Wales issued its *Declaration of Faith, Church Order and Discipline* (1833) we find the calling of a minister treated in a rather secular fashion and ordination, paraphrased as 'dedication to the duties of their office', is dismissed in three lines. R. W. Dale, who knew extremely well some of the architects of the document, said the Union was comprised of 'popular preachers, children of the Revival', who were indifferent, 'perhaps too indifferent to the intellectual forms' in which their beliefs were set forth.[27]

One has spent more hours than one cares to calculate searching the leaves of both the *Evangelical Magazine* and the *Congregational Magazine* in the hope of discovering the views of evangelicals on ordination, but all in vain. It seems that no one bothered whether it was an ordination or an induction being reported; all is confusion, nothing reliable. Apart from recording when men were 'set

[26] *E.M.*, 1794, p. 30f.
[27] *Hist. of Eng. Cong.*, p. 704.

apart over' their congregations, the subject but rarely occurs. Perhaps we can add that the laying on of hands is much less frequently mentioned by the 1840s. But of doctrine nothing has come our way.

Maybe Congregationalism had become somewhat secularized, popularized and confused with political notions—this would continue—but all was not lost. In the *Congregational Magazine* for 1824 there is an outcry by someone who calls himself Pluribus Unus against an unusual, irregular ordination, conducted by such unimpeachable persons as William Roby of Manchester and Thomas Raffles of Liverpool. When they ordained John Holgate at Orrel, Wigan, late in 1823, they had also, on the spur of the moment it seems, ordained an old and trusted friend of theirs, the long-suffering agent of the Lancashire Itinerant Society who had been at North Meols since 1807. Was it consistent with Congregational discipline, asks the challenger, 'to ordain a person without the knowledge or concurrence of the church over which he has the pastoral care, and at a considerable distance?' The reply was that Mr. Greatbach had no opportunity before the service to ask his people, but took the first opportunity afterwards—a lame reply. But it says something for Congregationalists that this is the only instance of the kind that one has come across at any time.[28]

It is remarkable to see the care taken over ordination by the London Missionary Society in its infancy. It is equally remarkable that the missionaries were so keen to be ordained. Indeed, the first two volunteers refused to sail because no bishop could be found willing to ordain them.[29] Four of the original missionaries who went to Tahiti in the *Duff* were ordained, all with the laying on of hands, and the Society was proud to report that three of them were ordained by 'Episcopalian Seceders, Antiburghers, Presbyterians, Independents and Methodists all united'.[30] Many years later, in 1839, it was reported that one of the men who had not been ordained, an Irishman, W. Henry, a carpenter stationed at Roby Town, Tahiti, was in conflict with the Board's Pacific agent, an Anglican, Samuel Marsden, for practising lay-celebration. His defence was that he thought his valedictory service authorized him 'to administer every gospel ordinance'. He was a long way from home and this is just what we might expect, but the Board

[28] *C.M.*, 1824, pp. 167, 356. For Greatbach, see W. G. Robinson, *William Roby*, pp. 102, 106.
[29] R. Levett, *History of the L.M.S.*, p. 118.
[30] *E.M.*, 1795, p. 206; 1796, p. 385.

set about restoring order. In South Africa the Board put Vanderkemp in charge and when he died, H. Schmelen. One of his letters reports in a single sentence what must have entailed a journey across arid country of some 700 miles, lasting several weeks: 'I have made a tour to Pella in order that Br. Bartlett might be ordained and other things settled about mission affairs.' (1817)[31] Again, the records of the Society in India display the same care in reporting ordinations.[32] None of these ordinations were of a kind to please John Owen ; they bore a more catholic impress, though not episcopal in the strict sense ; but we may not say that these evangelicals had no care for order in making missionary ministers.

At home, order was not left unattended by Congregationalists. We may all disparage the attempt of the Union to make a modern equivalent of the Savoy *Declaration* in their *Declaration* of 1833, but we should not neglect their long tract entitled *A Declaration on the Congregational Ministry* nine years later. This tract on the ministry was meant to be a reply to Tractarian doctrine. It was authoritative, having been submitted paragraph by paragraph to the Union Assembly, and passed. It tries to defend Congregationalists against the charge of disorderliness, saying that they 'have stood for liberty, but they have never trampled upon order.'[33] The tract emphasizes the very point the 1833 document failed to, that *the* authority is Christ himself. The Spirit must rule and the church obey and order. In electing a minister and ordaining him we need both 'heavenly influence and human order'. 'A ministry is authorized because it has the sanction of Christ, orderly because it has that of the church.' Their quarrel with the Tractarians was that they made validity depend upon order, thus making the divine depend upon the human. On the other hand, the Congregational churches gave 'their sanction for order,' because they judged 'Christ had given his for validity'.[34] Unhappily the document is neither profound nor comprehensive enough to perceive that the traditional doctrine of election and ordination was inadequate to meet the needs of a new generation ; it left the minister-missionary out of account.

It appears that just as there were two theological schools of thought developing in the early Victorian period, the older Calvinist, and the newer Arminian, so there were two schools

[31]Correspondence files at the C.C.W.M., London.
[32]T. H. Hacker, *A Hundred Years in Travancore* (1908), p. 54f.
[33]*Op. cit.*, p. 18.
[34]*Op. cit.*, pp. 18-20, 28f.

of thought, one older and one newer, about ordination. The newer and liberal, in revolt against the older and orthodox, was contained peacefully by Congregationalism, though not without some fears,[35] until the influence of German theologians in the middle decades of the century sharpened the issue, and the liberal school triumphed.

Lay Celebration

No minister in Congregationalism was more honoured and respected than George Redford. A founder of the *Congregational Magazine,* said to be the man who drafted the 1833 *Declaration,* Chairman of the Union in 1834, holder of two doctorates, he was the most fitting elder statesman to preside at the service when R. W. Dale was ordained at Carr's Lane, Birmingham in 1854. In the course of his introduction he not only voiced the observations common in that century, that the ordination involved no 'communication of any official virtue, grace or influence', and that it had no 'efficacy' and gave no authority which was 'before possessed', but he went further and said, 'we do not believe the *NT* restricts the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments to those who have been ordained.'[36] With Dale this became something of a principle. In his influential primer, *A Manual of Congregational Principles* (1884), he says, 'An "ordained minister" is not necessary to give validity to the service . . . There is not a fragment of evidence in the New Testament that the elements require any official consecration.' The fact that it was customary for the pastor to perform this function was 'a matter of propriety and order'.[37] Dale's liberalizing views accorded well with Congregationalists who had no time for the sacerdotal teachings of the Oxford Movement; but they did not fasten on to his 'high church' teachings about the real presence, as he called it, in the Lord's Supper, which he evinced from the Savoy *Declaration,* in opposition to prevalent memorialism.[38] So then, Dale's fight for lay celebration was not promoted by any slighting of the sacrament, such as many Congregationalists seem to have been guilty of in the last century.[39]

[35]See Hamilton of Leeds, quoted in Dale, p. 705.
[36]Sermons at R. W. Dale's ordination.
[37]*Op. cit.,* III. iii.
[38]*History of Eng. Cong.,* pp. 707-9; and *Ecclesia,* I, pp. 386-8. The 1833 *Declaration* said the sacrament was 'to be celebrated by Christian Churches as a token of faith in the saviour and of brotherly love'. This prevalent view Dale attributed to Pye-Smith and Halley's influence. It was merely subjective.
[39]*C.H.S.T.,* xix, p. 237.

But Dale's view was not accepted easily and there is evidence of a rear-guard action to defend the celebration of the sacrament by ordained men only. Our evidence is not in literature so much as in records. For example, in 1852 Hammersmith church arranged pulpit supplies with New College during an interregnum and the Treasurer of the College wrote saying that the students could not, of course, celebrate the sacrament, and so Dr. Harris would come on those Sundays—at the normal fee of 20s. per sermon.[40] In 1862 Joseph Stuchbery solemly removed 49 members from the Tiverton church roll because in defiance of his orders they attended a celebration by Mr. King, an unordained evangelist in charge of a small daughter church. No doubt this pastor was thought an old-fashioned reactionary.[41]

New Sacramentalism

The tide of liberalism swept forward relentlessly. Ordination was almost drowned. 'Among Congregationalists', said Dale's son and biographer in 1902, 'when a minister first enters upon the work to which he has given himself, it is customary to mark the occasion by a service of "ordination".'[42] Ordination: a custom. R. J. Evans, who became secretary of the London Congregational Union in 1907, told the writer that in those days ordinations were chiefly social occasions which appalled him, and he has put on record that,

> During his Chairmanship of the L.C.U., T. Yates of Kensington and I co-operated to draw up the Order of Service of Ordination and Induction. That Order, with some modification still commands the support of the churches. It lifted such services on to a higher plane of dignity and fitness than had often previously been characteristic of them.[43]

The year before, 1917, P. T. Forsyth's *Church and Sacraments* was published, a real advance in doctrine, raising Congregationalism from Victorian individualism and voluntaryism. And with Forsyth we must conclude; his prophetic work is not yet completed. His protest is against casual individualism, against a 'sprawling and shambling type of Church' which potters 'in dressing gown and slippers . . . and to do this as a principle, in the name of independence'. 'No authority, no church'.[44] In a chapter, 'The Ministry Sacramental' he contests liberal thinking

[40]Hammersmith Collection at Greater London Record Office, S. Bank.
[41]W. P. Authers, *Tiverton Congregational Church, 1660-1960*, p. 89.
[42]A. W. W. Dale, *Life*, p. 94.
[43]*Reminiscences*, MSS., p. 29. G. London Record Office.
[44]*Op. cit.*, p. 81.

which made the minister 'the talking or the presiding member' appointed for the sake of 'decency and order in the Church'. The 'Church is sacramental as a living element and vehicle of Christ's redeeming grace' (though not an extension of the Incarnation for Incarnation is not possible in a 'quasi-personal corporation'), and the ministry is the organ which conveys that 'last Reality, which gives the soul any reality it has'. It is the gospel then which makes both Church and ministry.

The ministry does not make the ministry, nor does the Church. Apostolic Succession is unacceptable. The Apostles were original witnesses to the gospel, but this was 'historically intransmissible'; ministers *plus* the New Testament took its place, *i.e.* 'the ministry *of the* Word'. It is mistaken to think the Church can make ministers, for ministry is a gift of God to the Church. The Church has selective powers to discern the gospel which calls the man. The Church can give opportunity to him.

In ordination, then, two authorities must meet: the 'creative and sacramental authority' of the Spirit, and the 'judicial and licensing authority' of the Church. Moreover, as the gift of ministry is to the whole Church, the authority to ordain belongs to the greater Church, whilst the local church makes the opportunity. 'That is ordination, which no single congregation has power to give, but only the greater Church.'[45]

To sum up this hurried survey we can say that the centuries have witnessed a movement away from the neat doctrine of the ministry and ordination seen in terms of the local church as the great Church, to a wider, more catholic conception, whilst retaining the significant place of the local church in the calling and ordination of ministers by election. The agelong debate over the laying on of hands has not concluded. Although the practice is most common it is not obligatory and the same tolerance over the symbolism has continued throughout our history.

Rarely has ordination been unrespected by Congregationalists. Although it is said that some well-known men of early this century were never ordained, it has been impossible to prove the point; in most ages men have sought ordination.

Except in Forsyth's sense, sacramental views of the ministry have not been favoured by Congregationalists, but for all their love of liberty, they have repeatedly seen the necessity for order and thus, ordination.

JOHN H. TAYLOR

[45] *Op. cit.* p. 134ff.

JOHN TRASKE (1585-1636) AND LONDON PURITANISM

John Traske only held 'Traskite' opinions, namely, that the Mosaic Laws concerning foods and the Saturday Sabbath were binding upon Christians, during one brief period of his life in London.[1] Unfortunately for him the ecclesiastical authorities neither forgave nor forgot this lapse into 'Judaism' and were never fully convinced that his recantation was genuine. Their suspicions were undoubtedly due in part to the fact that some of his former disciples, including his wife, still maintained 'Traskite' views years after John Traske had himself renounced them.

Little is known of Traske's career before his arrival in London about 1615.[2] He is said to have been a schoolmaster in his native Somerset,[3] seems to have been ordained about 1611,[4] and once described himself as formerly a preacher at Axminster in Devon.[5] It was also later reported that he had boasted that he had been accepted for the ministry although he had 'never byn more than a guest in any University.'[6] He had, according to the same unsympathetic source, qualified himself by the production of 'a perfect Summe of all Divinity, only abstracted by his owne Confession out of *Musculus* his common Places.'[7] His first book, pub-

[1]E. Pagitt, *Heresiography*, London 1661 'the sixt Addition' is the most important single source for the Traskites. All references to the *Heresiography* in this article are to this edition.

[2]*Heresiography*, p. 184 'about' 1617. Reasons for believing that he had arrived in London before this include (i) the publication of his first book there in 1615 (ii) his marriage, apparently to a Londoner, in February 1617 (iii) time needed for the evolution of his opinions before his arrest in 1617 (iv) the statement of 'T.S.', a Londoner, dated 27 December 1636 (E. Norrice, *The new gospel not the true gospel*, London 1636, p. 7) that he had known Traske 'these full twenty years.'

[3]*Heresiography, ibid.*

[4]P.R.O. S.P.16 Vol. LXXII.45 'hee hath binn a licensed preacher above 16 years' in a document written shortly after 30 July 1627.

[5]John Traske, *The power of preaching*. London 1623. The titlepage described him as 'Preacher of Gods Word sometimes at *Axminster* in *Devon*: afterwards at the *Fleete* in *London*: and now at *Tillingham* in *Dengie* hundred in Essex.'

[6]John Falconer, *A briefe refutation of John Traskes iudaical and novel fancyes*. St. Omer. 1618 p. 8. Falconer (1577-1656) was a Roman controversialist whose information about Traske apparently came from Romanists imprisoned with him.

[7]*Ibid.*, p. 9. Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563) was a Calvinist whose *Loci Communes* were translated into English and twice printed under Elizabeth I in 1563, 1578.

lished in London in 1615, was called *A pearle for a prince* and afforded evidence that, to the influence of Wolfgang Musculus, there had been added the emphasis of the puritan 'preparationist' theologians who were to achieve growing importance both in Old and New England.[8] In writing to help those seeking saving faith John Traske stressed that, whilst it was undoubtedly the gift of God, nevertheless,

> 'the ground wher Faith is sowen, is an humbled soule, a wounded spirit, or rent heart, to such God giveth the grace of Faith, as are so prepared for it; such as hunger and thirst for it, to such, and to none but such, doth hee open a fountaine for sinne, and for vncleannesse. Hereby then thou maist examine thy selfe: Hast thou sought to God with feare and trembling, as the Jailor did? Has thou felt thy soule sick with sinne? Hast thou been pressed down with the burden thereof? Hath thine heart melted within thee, and thine eyes gusht out with teares, for thy sinnes?'[9]

Only to such, he argued, would saving faith be given. However, mainstream puritanism did not continue to satisfy Traske. As one who claimed to have known him well for the last twenty years of his life was later to write, whatever way John Traske took in doctrinal matters he always 'marched like Jehu most furiously, making divisions in the Church about London.'[10]

At the time of his marriage, in February 1616/7, to Dorothy Coome[11] Traske was a widower of 'thirty-two years or thereabouts' living in the city parish of St. Sepulchre: his bride was a spinster of the same age and from the same parish. An account of his teaching at this time suggests that he was developing a highly individual version of 'preparationist' theology. Whilst it was alleged that in any case he tended to walk 'in the path of *non conformity*' it was further claimed that he considered all men to be in one of three spiritual conditions: in the first they were unconcerned for their salvation, in the second they were in

[8]N. Pettit, *The heart prepared,* Yale 1966. *Passim.*

[9]John Traske, *A pearle for a prince,* London 1615, p. 10f.

[10]Edward Norrice, *op. cit.,* p. 7 quoting 'T.S.' as 'an honest Citizen of London'. T.S. also wrote a letter to Mrs. Taske (*Heresiography,* pp. 164-183). Traske's *The power of preaching* (1623) was printed by T.S. but this seems to have been Thomas Snodgrass who died in 1625 (R. B. McKerrow, *A dictionary of printers and booksellers . . . 1557-1640.* London 1910, p. 250f.)

[11]Guildhall MS 10,091/6 in which his wife's maiden name appeared twice as Dorothy Coome and once as Dorothy Coone.

a state of penitence seeking to reach the third, and final state, that of grace.[12] In addition he was reported to insist that only the converted could convert others, that 'one child of God might know anothers election, as certainly as his own', and that those who had reached the state of grace need no further penitence since they no longer committed sin.[13] It is not clear how far such allegations were the garbled and inaccurate reports of enemies.

Certainly it appears that Traske's sermons not only moved his hearers to immediate tears but also to a lasting desire for peace with God so that 'many by his Preaching were at their wits end: and spared not to pull down their bodyes by fasting, watching, and hard labour; which he then prescribed, as a means to mortifie the flesh.' It seems likely that, already, the congregation he had gathered round him was virtually, if not formally, separated from the Church of England. Meanwhile he came to require express instructions from the Bible 'for every thing that was done.' Such an emphasis led, naturally enough, to a growing concentration upon the Old Testament where detailed regulations for the ordering of daily life could be discovered or, with some exegetical ingenuity, deduced. The inevitable, given the unhistorical premises of the people chiefly concerned, shortly happened. One of John Traske's circle of intimates, a tailor named Hamlet Jackson, came to the conclusion that the regulations governing the diet of God's ancient people were also binding upon Christians. Jackson soon secured Traske's agreement. Traske then won over the rest of their group. For them it was now a fundamental belief that 'whatsoever is to be done, if there be a law for the doing thereof, we are to leave all mens opinions, and follow that word in doing it.' The next step was to adopt from the Old Testament what mainstream puritanism had more wisely defined as 'laws ceremonial' to guide the Traskites in their 'building, planting, wearing of Apparel, and sundry other things, as well as eating.' Meanwhile Hamlet Jackson's private Biblical studies were leading him to the belief that the Saturday-Sabbath had never been abrogated by God and that Christians should therefore continue to keep Saturday, not Sunday, as their weekly day of rest and worship.[14]

It seems to have been at this point, before the Saturday-Sabbath became a matter of general concern among the Traskites, that their leader decided to ordain four messengers to go out to proclaim

[12] *Heresiography*, 184.
[13] Norrice, *op. cit.*, p. 6ff.
[14] *Heresiography*, 184, 188, 189.

their discovery of the new principles for Christian living and obedience and, in addition, 'to cure diseases by anointing with oyl.' The stir which followed provoked the authorities to action and to prosecution and Dr. J. E. C. Hill has linked Traske's prosecution with signs that the leaders of the English Church were, at this time, growing anxious about an upsurge of millennialist teaching.[15] Whilst, however, there are one or two hints of apocalyptic interests among the Traskites it seems clear that the centre of their own excitement lay elsewhere: they believed that their interpretation of Scripture had carried them back to the Apostles. For them the situation was that 'the whole letter of the Scriptures lying dead, from the Apostles daies to our times, were now revived and stood upon their feet.' So, for these men who had always been taught that they would find God speaking to them in every part of Scripture, the ancient law codes of the pentateuch sprung to new life. From being merely an extended sermon illustration, a 'type' pointing forward to the perfect redemption wrought out at Calvary, it glowed with a new relevance as it offered infallible instruction for the daily diet and daily doing of God's saints in Jacobean England.[16]

It was with this fundamental conviction that the four newly minted apostles, Hamlet Jackson, Returne Hebdon,[17] and two others were dispatched into the world. After the mission had been launched it was Hamlet Jackson who, one Saturday, whilst he still practised the Sunday-Sabbath, 'saw a shining light about him, which struck him into an amazement . . . And thereupon he concluded, that the light of the law was more fully discovered to him, than to any since the Apostles.'[18] Henceforth he was resolved to observe the Saturday-Sabbath. Soon he had won Traske's support and soon Traske had begun to win over the others.

[15]J. E. C. Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*, London 1964, p. 202.

[16]*Heresiography*, p. 190.

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 192 suggests Traske won Hebdon for the Saturday-Sabbath. In 1648 *A guide to the godly*, containing material by Hebdon bequeathed by him to Mrs. Traske was published 'by a friend of hers'. The preface to the reader stated that Hebdon was 'A Gentlemans Sonne . . . of Holmeshurst in the county of Sussex' who had died twenty-three years before after eight years imprisonment. The titlepage announced that he had died in the King's Bench prison.

[18]*Heresiography*, p. 190.

What happened next, and the circumstances in which, apparently, Traske, Jackson,[19] Mrs. Traske, Hebdon and almost certainly others, were arrested, are not recorded. The immediate consequence of his arrest was Traske's appearance before the Court of High Commission. There the bishops first attempted to argue him back to orthodoxy but, finding him stubborn, they imprisoned him rather more strictly than was common in those days 'that hee might not infecte others.'[20] This move was not immediately successful either in converting Traske or in keeping his views from others. It was reported that he not only boasted of his personal abilities but also that the King, the Church of England, 'and all other Protestant Churches' would eventually come to agree with him. Meanwhile, after studying the practices of some early Christians as recorded in the *Church History* of Eusebius, he adopted the Jewish date for Easter and the Jewish festival of Unleavened Bread. John Falconer, a Roman controversialist, was more impressed with Traske's folly than with his consistency under pressure however, and warned him that 'as he that putteth him selfe on a stage to play the Fooles part, must patiently expect laughter . . . so *Traske* broaching his hereticall fancies, must prudently prepare himselfe to be more then smiled at by iudicious Readers.'[21] Nevertheless there can be no doubt that John Traske took himself very seriously: when he learned that Edmund Howes, who was preparing the continuation of Stow's *General Chronicle of England*, wanted to see him Traske provided a very full account of himself for the historian's benefit. He must have been rather disappointed with the meagre details which Howes eventually published.[22]

Whilst Falconer sought to use ridicule to answer Traske the Court of High Commission tried a different method. From November 1617 until he found himself before the Star Chamber Court in June the following year,[23] 'hee was only allowed the Flesh meates in his opynion supposed to bee forbidden.' The prisoner's

[19]*Ibid.*, Jackson was imprisoned for a time at the New Prison, Maiden Lane.

[20]Bodleian Library. Rawl. MS. C.303 f.38. This was transcribed in *Trans. Bap. Hist. Soc.* V. 1916-17, pp. 8-11 under the heading 'Trask in the Star-Chamber 1619'. This was later corrected to 1618 (*ibid.*, p. 114).

[21]John Falconer, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 19, 58. Falconer published in 1618 and mentioned how Traske had kept Easter: he must therefore be speaking of the imprisonment which preceded that which followed the Star Chamber hearing of 16 June 1618.

[22]Stowe (Ed. E. Howes), *Annales or a General Chronicle of England*, London 1631, p. 1029.

[23]'Trask in the Star Chamber', *op. cit.*

reaction was to write 'a most scandalous letter' to the king complaining of his treatment by the bishops. This produced no reply so John Traske wrote a further letter repeating his former complaints and, in the eyes of the authorities, compounding his offence most grossly in that he 'thirtie two tymes useth the uncivill terme of Thow and Thee to the Kinges most excellent Maiestie in the said letter.' The Court of the Star Chamber briskly found him guilty of 'detraccion and scandall' upon his sovereign and of a seditious attempt 'to divert his Maiesties subjectes from their obedience to followe him and his Iewish opynions.' After a discourse from Lancelot Andrewes[24] the barbaric sentence was given.

Traske was to be imprisoned in the Fleet for life, he was to be degraded from the ministry, he was to be whipped from the Fleet to the Palace of Westminster there to be nailed by one ear to the pillory and to have a 'J' burned upon his forehead 'in token that hee broached Jewish opynions'. Next he was to be whipped from the Fleet to Cheapside there to have his other ear nailed to the pillory. Finally he was to be fined £1,000. It is probable that the physical side of this punishment was carried out[25] but that, as in other similar cases, the fine was not exacted.

Traske's disciples were not, apparently, treated so harshly: Hamlet Jackson was soon free. Accompanied by his wife he emigrated to Amsterdam where he finally became a proselyte to Judaism. It seems likely that, even before he left London, Jackson and his friend Christopher Sands had denied that Jesus was Israel's Christ.[26] Sands, in his turn, had won Mary Chester to his opinions and, although a spell in prison seemed to have cured her, soon after her release she returned to them.[27] Sands was himself summoned before the court of High Commission as late as 1635 on charges, which he denied, of Judaising.[28] Hebdon died in prison in 1625.

Perhaps the most pathetic of all the Traskites was Mrs. Traske herself. Although for a time in the same prison with her husband she refused to share his quarters and refused to share his later recantation. Both then and later she rejected all attempts made by friends to alleviate her extreme poverty even though all she

[24]*Heresiography*, pp. 198-208. The MSS at Cambridge, mentioned by W. T. Whitley, 'Trask in the Star Chamber' *op. cit.*, p. 12 were not records of other speeches but of this.

[25]Norrice, *op. cit.*, p. 4 'hee was stigmatized with the letter I, in the forehead for a Iew which he bare to his last.'

[26]*Heresiography*, pp. 189-192. Jackson and his wife were both dead by 1635.

[27]*Ibid.*, pp. 192-6.

[28]*Cal. S.P.D.* 1635/36 provide several references but little information.

had was an annuity of forty shillings and what she earned by doing small services for other prisoners. For years she lived on bread and water, roots and herbs, until after the Long Parliament arranged her transfer to the Gatehouse prison and she met Paul Best.[29] He had been imprisoned for denying the doctrine of the Trinity and now began not only to win her over to flesh and wine once more but also to his own brand of heterodoxy. Unfortunately the change of diet made Mrs. Traske ill and it was to this that her death shortly afterwards was attributed. Her long, and almost lonely obstinacy (she seems to have had at least one active sympathiser, a former maidservant) has some significance for the history of the Seventh-Day Sabbath in puritan England since it virtually bridged the years between John Traske's congregation in 1617 and the years after 1648 when, once more, congregations were gathered to practice it.[30]

Meanwhile John Traske had long ago published his own recantation, *A treatise of libertie from Judaisme*.[31] Whether or not the punishment imposed upon him had undermined his earlier optimism about the truth and coming acceptance of his teaching or whether it was the shock of his erstwhile disciples' conversion to Judaism which finally changed his mind cannot now be known. What is clear is that in 1620 he set out to eat his former words with some thoroughness. Towards the end of this somewhat indigestible exercise, which was presumably a condition of his release, he wrote, 'if any say I doe hereby vilifie my selfe: I answer I will be yet more vile, if humble submission to my holy Mothers Authoritie be to be esteemed basenesse.'

What happened to Traske between the publication of his recantation and his pamphlet entitled *The power of preaching* (1623) is still somewhat obscure. It is evident that he had been granted some recognition as a minister once more since, on the titlepage, he described himself as 'Preacher of Gods Word . . . at *Tillingham* in *Dengie* hundred in Essex.'

When he was in trouble with the Bishop of London in 1627 an anonymous manuscript account (which was not in his own writing)

[29]Paul Best was a 'close Prisoner in the Prison of the Gatehouse' on 10 June 1645 H. J. McLachlan, *Socinianism in Seventeenth Century England*, Oxford 1951, p. 152.

[30]*Heresiography*, pp. 196f, 210f. The account of the Traskites was introduced (p. 184) 'for an Admonition to Quakers and Sabbatarians' and the comment was made (p. 197) that with the death of Mrs. Traske 'there was an end of her Sect, in less than half a generation, 'tis true it begins of late to be revived again; but yet faintly: The progress it makes is not observed to be much.'

[31]London, 1620, 'printed by *W. Stansby* for *N. Butter*.'

which has now found its way into the State Papers and is entitled 'A true report of Mr. Traske his proceedings' claimed that he had been 'though silenced once yet restored againe by the high commission, and hath preached before an Archbyshop with approbation, many other bishops, and divines present at the same tyme, sence that hath exercised his ministery 7 yeares together with good likeing of the Minister and congregation as his severall testemonyes may declare.' The occasion of the sermon before the ecclesiastical dignitaries seven years before was, presumably, his formal recantation before the Court of High Commission but the narrative went on to hint at further troubles which had attended Traske and of further minor breaches of ecclesiastical discipline of which he had been guilty. It reported that once more since 1620 he had been suspended from functioning as a minister 'yet freed from that by his Maiesties pardon under the great seale, and if hee want a Curates Lycense for ye Last place he was in, hee was alsoe ready to take it out, and onely hindered by the Incumbent who retayned him with him not as his curate but as his friend.'[32] With all the obscurities of this document, which reads rather as if dictated as an *apologia* by Traske himself, it is clear that he did not lack friends in London.

The affair with which he was involved in 1627 supports this view. It appears that a certain person, belonging to London puritan circles, one Joshua Purcas, was executed for rape on 30 July 1627 at Newgate. The case does not seem to have been entirely straightforward and, rather surprisingly, appears to have been mixed up with ecclesiastical politics. In a letter to William Laud the Bishop of London said that Purcas had been[33] 'a violent Puritane' and that members of that party in the city had 'labored much for his life and spoke that which displeased the Recorder as if he fared the worse for his Religion at which ye Recorder was much displeased.' This was the background to a complaint about Traske who had been intended, the Bishop believed, to preach the funeral sermon for Purcas where, it was rumoured, 'he would have iustified him and have censured the proceedings against him and I believe it for the church was so full of that faction.' When the bishop forbade Traske to preach and ordered the curate to take his place the congregation, rather pointedly, melted away.

A record of Traske's examination before his bishop on 9 August 1627 shows that whilst he firmly claimed to have abandoned the

[32]P.R.O. SP/16/72 f.45a, b.
[33]P.R.O. SP/16/73 f.7 1 August 1627.

Jewish Sabbath he had to admit that his wife still remained convinced of it 'notwithstanding all the reasons he can gyve her to the contrary.' He admitted that he had spoken to Purcas in Newgate prison by permission of the chaplain but affirmed that, far from insisting upon the prisoner's innocence, he had chiefly sought to persuade him to confess his guilt. He had been 'utterly unacquainted with the prisoner till that day', Saturday 28 July, when, in the absence of another minister he had been summoned by Purcas's relatives to visit him. Traske had offered prayer at the execution at Tyburn but in that prayer he affirmed that he had said nothing improper to the occasion, furthermore, he claimed, he had never said he thought Purcas innocent of the crime for which he had been condemned but only that he 'hath sayde to divers that att the tyme of his death he denyed it stoutly.'[34]

Traske then explained that he had been invited to preach at the funeral but had refused since he had an appointment to preach at a Christening at St. Sepulchre's. The Christening had been fixed a week before and a crowd of Purcas's friends had attended under the impression that Traske was going to speak about him. This, Traske claimed, he had had no intention of doing.

It is difficult to be sure what the real situation was but Traske's version is quite plausible: he was quite innocently the tool of circumstance and episcopal suspicions dating from his earlier 'Judaising' phase. On the other hand it is possibly significant that the friends of Joshua Purcas called for his help: it seems certain that his known commitment was to militant puritanism rather than to the episcopal authorities.

At all events, guilty or not in the Purcas affair, it seems that he was for a time imprisoned and suspended once more from exercising his ministry. This was indicated by his letter, dated 13 June 1629, addressed to William Laud who was by this time himself Bishop of London.[35] There is no evidence that he was ever restored to favour again.

One of those who had evidently given Traske a measure both of protection and employment during the 1620's was probably Sir Richard Strode of Cattistock, Dorset. The dates of their connection are unknown and the matter was only raised incidentally when Sir Richard was cited, in June 1634, before the Court of High Commission as the result of a family quarrel. It seems likely that Strode's earlier friendship with Traske was only dragged into

[34]P.R.O. SP/16/73 f.64 9 August 1627.
[35]*Cal. S.P.D.* 1628/9 P.376.

the case in an attempt to prejudice the court against him. At all events they complained that, although he had known that Traske had been suspended from the Anglican ministry in 1618 he

> 'did beare great Respect to the said John Thraske, and did much countenance him and . . . a few years last past did entertaine the said Thraske into his house, where he the said Thraske did pronounce prayers ex tempore and expounded a chapter or text of Scripture to the said Sir Richard Stroud and his family. And besides the said Sir Richard Stroud carried him the said Thraske abroad with him into the Country to preach in other places. And the said Sir Richard became a Suitor unto the late Lord Bp of Canterbury and other his Maties Commissioners ecclesiastical for Mr. Thraskes restitution and dismission out of the Commission Court . . . '[36]

Strode's answer, far from being a denial of his relationship with Traske was a defence of his actions on the ground that he had understood that Traske

> 'long before he was entertained by him had recanted his erronious opinions and had preached publiquely abroad in the Cittie of London and other places which induced him to conceive that he had bene restored againe to the exercise of his functions in the ministery by order of this Court.'

Unfortunately although it seems likely that Traske had known Sir Richard before he first went to London[37] no other evidence concerning their relationship appears to remain. It may, indeed, be significant that, for the hearing in 1634, Strode had thought it wise to arm himself with a certificate from the Bishop of Exeter to the effect that he was not himself now guilty of any ecclesiastical irregularities. He had now both 'left gadding abroad to other Ministers' and had discarded Traske some years before. In the years of William Laud's ascendancy it was well even for West Country gentry of puritan leanings to read carefully.

Meanwhile, at some stage during the 1630's, John Traske had joined the London Independent congregation which had been led at the beginning by Henry Jacob.[38] His only appearance in their records narrated the circumstances at his death in 1636: 'John Trash was taken by Rag at Mr. Digbys and . . . was had to ye

[36]P.R.O. SP/16/261 ff.55b, 56a.

[37]John Falconer, *op. cit.*, p. 10 speaks of Traske's 'aboad with *Maister Drake* in Devonshire'. Sir Richard's sister Joan had married Francis Drake Esq., (*Diary of Walter Yonge*, Camden Society. 1848 p. xxx).

[38]Cf. Champlin Burrage, *Early English Dissenters*, 2 Vols. Cambridge 1912 for a transcript of these records at II. pp. 292-302.

Lord Mayor . . . and was committed to ye Poultrey Counter for ten days and then was released upon Bail, wanted his health and was shortly after translated.' The ever-curious 'T.S' was able to recount the circumstances of his burial:[39]

> 'Mr. Traske had at last turned himselfe to the Jacobites, or semi-separatists in one of whose houses he dyed (at least the mans wife being that way) from whose house some of that societie carried him to his grave in Lambeth Churchyard, where they cast him in, with the heeles that way that the heads of other men lie, contrary to all men, and least the Minister should come to bury him, according to the order, they ranne all away, and there left him to bee covered by others . . . '

For the writer it is clear that this rather pitiful end summarised Traske's life. Since he had run from one unorthodoxy to another, it was hardly surprising that in his grave he should be 'with the heels that way that the heads of other men lie.'

Towards the end of his life it appears that he had been working with one Rice Boy who also had had links with the Jacob-Lathrop congregation.[40] The two had adopted views which Edward Norrice had flatly described as Antinomian. He alleged that Traske claimed that the truly converted were 'as free from sinne as Iesus Christ', that saving faith is not to be evidenced 'by any signes, fruits or effects but only by the perswasion it selfe,' and that ministers invoking the Law in their teaching were 'Legalists'. Apparently Traske's latest views were actually published 'since his death (as its suspected) by Mr. Boye' but the book does not seem to have survived. It was, Norrice claimed, entirely characteristic of John Traske to be 'turning from one opinion to another, as the yeare turned about, but never setling in the truth.'[41]

Such was the career of John Traske: a shadow on the frontiers of English puritanism, sometimes coloured by personal heterodoxy, always under the sword of episcopal displeasure, normally able to find some who would respond to his preaching and, at last finding a home among the earliest London Independent congregation.

B. R. WHITE

[39]Edward Norrice, *op. cit.*, p. 8. Compare *Heresiography*, p. 196 which ended the narrative of Traske's burial: 'before he was covered, the Mr. of the house where he died, caused him to be taken up and laid in the ordinary way.'

[40]Champlin Burrage, *op. cit.*, II, p. 299.

[41]Edward Norrice, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE ON SIR JOHN DODDRIDGE

Philip Doddridge enjoyed a wide and varied acquaintance and amongst it was the Revd. John Jones (1700-1770), an eccentric country clergyman best known as the anonymous author of the *Free and candid disquisitions relating to the Church of England, and the means of advancing religion therein*, 1749. Doddridge and Jones became acquainted at some time in the 1730's when the latter was curate of Abbots-Ripton in Huntingdonshire and there are several letters from him to Doddridge in J. D. Humphreys: *Correspondence and Diary of Philip Doddridge*, and also an interesting account by Doddridge of a visit from Jones in 1736.

Jones was an indefatigable scribbler and one of his literary projects was for a grand biographical dictionary. The scheme came to grief from over elaboration but during the 1730's he collected widely for it and his collections for this are amongst his many manuscripts in Dr. Williams's Library where the greater part of them form MS. Jones B.48. Amongst these papers is the following account of Sir John Doddridge (1555-1628) a noted Judge in his day and the brother of Philip Doddridge's great grandfather. It is not in Philip Doddridge's handwriting but he signed it and made some corrections. The anecdote of the candlesticks has not, I believe, hitherto appeared in any account either of Sir John or of Philip Doddridge.

'Sr. John Doddridge was remarkable for ye attentive care wth wch he heard causes, & inflexible Justice wth wch he determin'd them. He generally sat upon ye Bench wth his Eyes shut, & his memory was so strong yt wthout ye assistance of Notes he could circumstantially remember ye whole Evidence yt had been given in, even in a very long cause, If he had any suspicion of unjust Designs Forgeries Perjuries & ye like, he applied the utmost of his Sagacity to detect & expose them. A little Story wch is an instance of ys has been long in our Family. A Gentleman of a good estate, but large Family had been sued by a Person who on ye credit of false deeds pretended a right to the Estate; & Sr. John alarm'd by some suspicious circumstances examin'd ye Affair wth such dexterity, yt he unravell'd ye whole falshood, so that ye Rescue of of [*sic*, the] Defendents Family from Ruin was more owing to ye Judge than to his own Council. When Sr. John came off ye circuit ye Gentleman sent him a present of a large pair of silver

candlesticks curiously wrought & of considerable value ; Sr. John was call'd out of his study, & ye servant deliver'd his Compliment wth ye Present but Sr. John giving ye Messenger a piece of gold dismiss'd him wth ys remarkable answer ; *Go & tell your master yt he is to thank ye Justice of his cause & not me, & let him know yt I neither take bribes to do wrong nor rewards for doing right.*

He continu'd all his Life in ye Church of England, but was a great Favourer of ye Puritans, & did his utmost to protect ym from vexatious Prosecutions. He was uncle & godfather to ye Revd. Mr. John Doddridge son of Mr. Philip Doddridge a merchant ye Judges Brother ; ys godson & nephew of his (my Grandfather) was afterwards ejected from ye living of Sheparton in Middlesex. He was a person very remarkable in his Day for his acceptable preaching & serious Piety, of wch some MSS. remaining in my hand are Testimonies, particularly several Letters to his Children.

P. Doddridge. Oct. 29. 1737.'

JOHN CREASEY

REVIEWS

Dissenters in Public Affairs in Mid-Victorian England by F. R. Salter (Friends of Dr. Williams's Library Lecture, 1967, from Dr. Williams's Trust, 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1, 5s.) This is a record of a most enchanting lecture given shortly before Frank Salter died. It was a privilege to hear it and it is a pleasure to read it. It covers the fields of local and parliamentary government, education and the press, temperance and disestablishment, philanthropy and the Trade Unions ; it deals with the question of leadership in radical politics and why no one save possibly John Bright came near it. *Ministers in Need* by Ronald W. Thompson (Baptist Church House, 4 Southampton Row, London, W.C.1, n.p., 1968) is an account of the work of the Society for the Relief of Aged and Infirm Dissenting Ministers, 1818-1968. J.H.T.

In *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity*, 1689-1765 (The Olive Tree, 2 Milnthorpe Road, London W.4, pp. 171, 21s.) Peter Toon gives an account of one such cul-de-sac, if this is not too unfair a designation of a movement which gave rise to the Gospel Standard Strict Baptist churches, which apparently still 'officially support no missionary societies '.

Hyper-Calvinism is defined as 'a system of the doctrines of God, man and grace, which was framed to exalt the honour and

glory of God and did so at the expense of minimising the moral and spiritual responsibility of sinners to God.' 'Hyper-Calvinism led its adherents to hold that evangelism was not necessary'.

A sketch is given of the essential elements of Calvin's theology, followed by a brief account of the modifications made in his system by the generation of theologians which succeeded the great Reformer. The trends of nonconformist theology in the first half of the 18th century are outlined: the emergence of Deism, Arianism and a rationalistic spirit.

The heart of the book consists of an account of the thought of three ministers; Lewis Wayman, a Congregationalist, and John Gill and John Brine, both Baptists.

The whole book is carefully and fully documented. A somewhat pedestrian account of a far from exciting movement. W.W.B.

Peter Toon hopes to publish *The Correspondence of John Owen* and has found 70 letters so far. He would be glad to know the whereabouts of any letters in church books, *etc.*

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

The Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, Vol. XIII No. 4 May 1967, includes a very interesting and valuable account by A. L. Macarthur of '1876 and the Unity of the Church'. Doris N. Nix writes on 'Christopher Love 1618-51.'

Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, Vol. XIV No. 1 October 1967, has an article by A. Ruston on 'Radical Nonconformity in Hackney, 1805-1845.'

The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society, Vol. 51 No. 2. 1966, is a varied issue with articles ranging from 'George Fox's 1662 Appeal for Money' to one on 'Agrarian Unrest and the Early Lancashire Quakers'.

The Baptist Quarterly, Vol. XXII Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 (January-October 1967) No. 1 includes an interesting sketch of the place and influence of Dissenters in the social and economic life of industrial towns ('Dissent in Urban Yorkshire, 1800-1850' by R. W. Ram) In No. 2 Christopher Hill comments on the complexity of the denominational pattern in 16th and 17th century England ('History and Denominational History'). No. 3 is a special issue consisting of articles offered as a tribute to Dr. Ernest Payne. 'The Nonconformist Conscience' by G. W. Rusling is of particular interest.

Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society, Vol. XXXVI, Parts 1, 2, 3 (February-October 1967). W.W.B.