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Faith and Thought

A Journal devoted to the study of the inter-relation of the Christian revelation and modern research

Vol. 95 Number 3 Spring, 1967

EDITORIAL

One of the articles in the present Number, by the Rev. J. Stafford Wright, represents a paper which was delivered at a meeting of the Institute held in London on 19th November, 1966. There was some interesting discussion which followed, and we hope to publish this in due course. The second paper at the November meeting was delivered by Dr R. E. D. Clark, and this, too, will appear in a subsequent issue of the *Journal.*

Some of the Institute's members will recall that the Council had agreed in June 1966 that regular meetings should again be held in London, following meetings of the Council, at least twice a year. We hope, therefore, that all who are interested in the work of the Institute will help in making known the Annual General Meetings in May each year, and the winter meetings which will normally take place each November.

The article reprinted here from the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation* takes up a subject, which, to the best of the Editor's knowledge, has not ever been dealt with specifically by the Victoria Institute before. There were some brief allusions to the place of political theories in their relation to Christian belief by the Rev. D. R. Davies, speaking on *Theology and Some Recent Sociology* at a meeting of the Institute in March 1947. It is significant that there was no discussion. Perhaps the following article by Professor James Cameron will evoke some response on the part of our readers.

JAMES R. CAMERON

The Christian Perspective and the Teaching of Political Science[1]

Politics and religion are usually regarded as the two most controversial subjects for social conversation and are often avoided in the interests of congeniality. Unfortunately there have been too few efforts to consider the relationship of Christianity to the discipline of political science. Most of the attempts at *rapprochement* have been from the direction of theology. This article will examine the teaching of political science from the perspective of a Christian faith.

There are three things to notice as we approach this topic. In the first place, a Christian world view was not seriously challenged until the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century. Historians regard the scientific revolution as of far greater importance for our modern world and its basic outlook than the Renaissance, Reformation or the Industrial Revolution. Contemporary movements in theology and philosophy as well as in political science are a result of the intellectual impact of the scientific revolution. It will certainly not be a naïve Christian faith which emerges from the crucible in which traditional views of the world, man and God are being challenged.

Secondly, social sciences as distinct areas of study emerged from the enlightenment of the eighteenth century. One of the last, or perhaps most recent, to make its appearance has been political science. In fact, it has been only in the twentieth century that political science has been accepted as an academic

[1] James R. Cameron is Professor of History, Eastern Nazarene College, Wollaston Park, Quincy, Massachusetts. Paper presented at the Conference on The Christian Perspective in the Social Sciences, Wionna Lake, Indiana, Fall, 1965. It is reprinted here by kind permission of the Author, and the Editor of the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, where it appeared in Volume 18, Number 2, June 1966.

study in the United States. The American Political Science Association was founded in 1903 and since that date has published the *American Political Science Review*. This should not be taken to mean that prior to this time men were not interested in politics. It suggests rather that the professional study of political science had not developed to the degree which warranted a distinct organization. Much of the history written before the last century was essentially political and military history. Philosophers, theologians, and political leaders of all ages have made pronouncements on political philosophy and the accomplishments or failures of governments. Within the last twenty-five years the study of political science has finally developed to the point where its methods, content, philosophies and objectives can at least be discussed intelligently even though consensus has by no means been reached.

A third preliminary observation is that Christians in general and evangelicals in particular have tended to shy away from both the study and the teaching of political science. To some extent all of the social sciences are treated gingerly. This attitude undoubtedly is a reflection of a lingering hostility to the 'social gospel' emphasis of liberal theology. In our emphasis on other-worldliness and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in man's life, we have been in danger of ignoring the fact that the Gospel does have a social influence and a stake in social betterment. On the other hand, we must do more than support crafty politicians who court the support of church people with pious words.

Since the words *politics* and *political* are interpreted to mean several different things, they, together with *political science*, must be defined to clarify this discussion. In addition to defining these basic terms, we must at least enumerate the foundations and fields of political science before proceeding to a summary analysis of the main currents in political science. With this review or introduction to political science before us, we can then move to consider a Christian perspective in the teaching of political science.

When Dr. Clyde Taylor says that the activities of the National Association of Evangelicals in Washington are non-political, a political scientist would say that they are non-

partisan. Political in this sense means support for a particular party. Politics is also used to mean any form of influence – whether exercised on the church board or in the local PTA. A political scientist would probably define such activity as propaganda, but he would certainly contend that the definition of *political* implicit here is too broad. Politics literally means everything that concerns the *polis* or city. This definition was fine for the ancient Greek city-states, but we may interpret it to mean any activity of a community exercised through and under the state. The content of this activity has varied greatly. For centuries religion was a political matter since it was regulated by the state.

A traditional definition of political science is given by Roger H. Soltau in *An Introduction to Politics:*

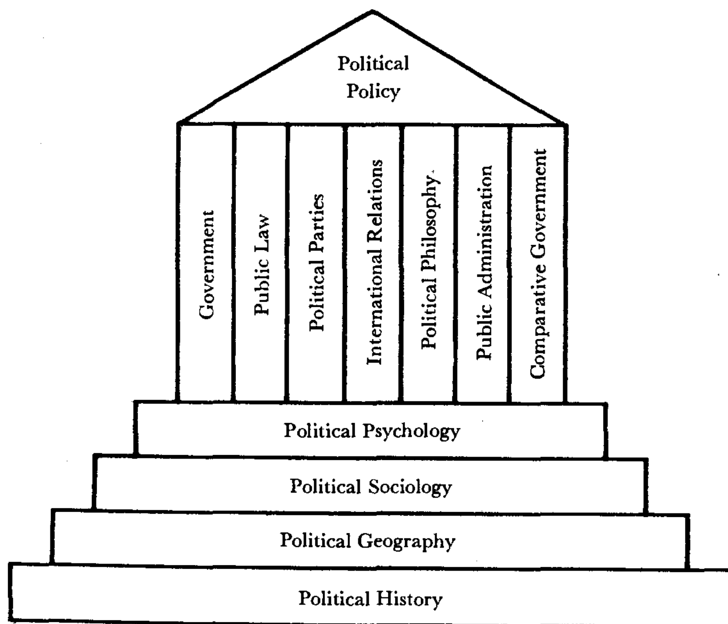
'Political Science, then, is going to be the study of the state, its aims and purposes – the institutions by which those are going to be realized, its relations with its individual members and with other states, and also what men have thought, said, and written about all these questions. It has three essential aspects. The first is an analysis of *what is*, both in human nature and in its manifestations in political action; this may be called *descriptive*. The second is a study of what *has been* in the past, and may be called *historical*, and the third is an examination of what *ought to be* in the future, and may be called *ethical*.'[2]

This definition best describes the type of teaching in political science that goes on in extension or adult education courses and in small liberal arts colleges which do not have a *bona fide* department of political science. In many, if not most, church-related liberal arts colleges there is a department of history and government, or history and political science. A basic course in American government or introduction to political science together with two or three other courses in government are given in alternate years by a historian with little or no real training in political science. This is merely one manifestation of what seems to be an inherent bias among evangelical Christians against careers in government, the profession of law,

[2] (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1951), p. 4.

and political activity in general. The work of Professor Richey Kamm of Wheaton College and Dr. Clyde Taylor of the National Association of Evangelicals in conducting an annual Washington Seminar on Federal Service for students in church-related or independent Christian colleges is to be commended. Most of the faculty who accompany the students to Washington are historians by training. They hope to acquire new illustrations to enliven their course in political science. Unfortunately, this situation seems to be self-perpetuating.

Political science is taught principally in large universities in the United States and in well-endowed colleges. As intimated above, this situation is brought about partly by the default of small liberal arts colleges, but it is also a result of specialization within this discipline. Alfred De Grazia has illustrated 'The Foundations and Fields of Political Science' as practised in American universities with a diagram.[3]



[3] *The Elements of Political Science* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), p. 9.

The foundations of political science emphasize the factor analysis approach: political history, political geography, political sociology, and political psychology. The fields, or major subject-areas of political science are: Government, Public Law, Political Parties, International Relations, Political Philosophy, Public Administration and Comparative Government. The cap-stone of the structure is Political Policy and the whole is permeated by political theory. Most political scientists are subject-area specialists. It is generally held in political science, as in other academic disciplines, that continuous, intensive study of one area of human involvement will produce more significant results than the one-sided application of a law or principle. This is the reason that there are few books or even articles[4] for that matter, on political science written from a Christian perspective by political scientists. Such attempts written by laymen, philosophers, or theologians do not receive respectful treatment by political scientists because of the lack of technical knowledge of the subject on the part of the author.

At the outbreak of World War II, four principal currents or traditions could be clearly recognized in the study of political science in the United States. For purposes of analysis, these scholarly traditions may be called: (1) legalism, (2) activism, (3) philosophy, and (4) science.[5] There is an interrelationship and an overlapping among these approaches for none of them exists in isolation. There are, however, distinct emphases and interests.

Legalism evolved from the study of constitutional history. This approach is particularly concerned with specific laws, constitutions, and government documents. Frederic William Maitland, the famous historian of English law, arrived at some very distorted views on the origin of English towns because of

[4] Kenneth W. Thompson, 'Political Science', *Christian Faith and the Liberal Arts*, ed. by Harold H. Ditmanson, Howard V. Hong, Warren A. Quanbeck (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1960). John H. Hallowell, 'Political Science', *Religious Perspectives in College Teaching*, ed. by Hoxie N. Fairchild, *et. al.* (New York: The Ronald Press, 1952).

[5] Francis J. Sorauf, *Political Science: An Informal Overview* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1965), pp. 10–21.

his pre-occupation with legal questions.[6] He was oblivious to the fact that most towns arose about a market or a trading place. For political scientists of this school, comparative government consists in the comparison of the constitutions of major governments with little or no concern for the actual function of the government which operates under the constitution. For example, the constitution of the Soviet Union adopted in 1936 as well as the constitutions of several Latin American countries seem to provide for all the safeguards of democratic government. In spite of the democratic nature of the instrument of government, the regimes that in fact operated under these constitutions were dictatorships. The legal tradition finds relevance in courses in public law, constitutional law, and those which involve regulation of certain sectors of our society such as labour, agriculture, and international trade.

During the first weekend in February 1960, while attending a debate tournament at Harvard University, I became aware of the fact that several outstanding scholars were not only supporting John F. Kennedy, but were ready to leave their positions to serve with him if he was elected President of the United States. The willingness of academicians in general and of political scientists in particular to leave their ivory towers for public service began with Progressivism and represents the second tradition in American political science – that of activism and reform. Most of the movements for political reform in this country – initiative, referendum, recall, direct primary, civil service reform, city manager and commission government on the local level – all had political scientists in the forefront. Most candidates for high public offices today have at least one political scientist on their staff of advisers. There are numerous instances in which political scientists who have served as advisers in a campaign have become caught up in politics to the point of running for public office themselves.

Political theorists and philosophers of all ages have tried to find the good life and prescribe the system of government which would be best able to achieve this goal. The systematic

[6] James R. Cameron, *Frederic William Maitland and the History of English Law* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), pp. 82–99.

study of the Western political tradition is still conducted in courses in political theory. In this approach to the subject, political theory approaches the humanities with a concern for values, ideals, goals and doctrines about political science rather than a systematic study of propositions of a casual nature such as one would expect to find in the social sciences.

Since the beginning of the study of political science as a distinct discipline, there have been practitioners who have regarded politics as a science to be mastered by the same methods and discussed in the same terms as any natural science. Often this empirical study resulted in mere description of processes and behaviour with a few restricted, specific assertions. Long before the development of behaviouralism, such political scientists as Arthur Bentley and Charles Merriam were calling for the development of concepts and methods which would promote a rigorous, systematic science of politics.[7]

Though the four approaches to the study of political science, which we have just considered, are distinct, they do have at least three elements in common.[8] In the first place, all four of these traditions have been concerned primarily with political and governmental institutions – legislatures, political parties, constitutions, and law – rather than with behavioural decisions and processes within the institutions. Secondly, they all rely heavily on history and methods of historical analysis. Most textbooks in American government begin with the founding fathers and the writing of the constitution and proceed chronologically. Third, dominated by older historical traditions, political scientists of these schools of interpretation believe in letting the facts speak for themselves. They have distrusted generalizations and have not attempted systematic explanations.

Since World War II a new mood or movement, behaviouralism, has appeared in political science which has challenged the traditional approaches. This new approach has stimulated a

[7] Arthur Bentley, *The Process of Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1908). Charles Merriam, *New Aspects of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925).

[8] Sorauf, *Political Science: An Informal Overview*, p. 13.

reassessment of the goals and data of political science. The behaviouralists are concerned with individual and group behaviour within the political institutions. They are studying power struggles, the role of leadership, role-perception, and in general, political actors and processes rather than formal structure. New methods – the use of mathematical models, statistical studies, sampling techniques, and other tools of analysis – have been borrowed from other disciplines in an effort to achieve a more rigorous and systematic empericism. Political scientists are borrowing not only new techniques but new concepts and categories. The goal of this activity is the explanation of relationships within the political system from specific findings and propositions to an over-all theoretical integration.

Although the lines are not clear-cut between the traditionalists and the behaviouralists, something of a battle does rage in political science. Behaviouralism is not by any means a monolithic movement, and differences exist among behaviouralists over methods, concepts and techniques. One must conclude that the behaviouralists are asking new questions, trying new methods, and securing new and significant information. It would be folly, however, to limit political science to the rather narrow limits prescribed by the behaviouralists. Harold Lasswell has asked the most pertinent question of the behaviouralists, 'Knowledge for what?' He has gone on to propose that the verifiable propositions of political science be used to help solve the public's pressing problems.[9] In addition to the work of the behaviouralists, there remains the need to ask and try to answer for this age the basic problems of mankind – what constitutes justice and equality; how shall we deal with confrontations of power (now nuclear), clashes of ideology, and the problems of the world's increasing population.

Now that we have defined our terms and clarified our concepts in political science, we can move on to a consideration of a Christian perspective in teaching political science. The teaching of political science must be viewed in the perspective of current liberal arts education. Two valid criticisms of

[9] *The Future of Political Science* (New York: Atherton Press, 1963).

modern liberal arts education in general are that it fails to provide the student with a unified view of its varied subject matter and that it fails to develop in him a sense of values. The Hebrew-Christian tradition or point of view can provide the student with a broader and deeper understanding of his work by helping him to develop a unified grasp of his intellectual discoveries and a sensitivity to their moral implications. The integrative results of the religious premise are not confined to the student who accepts this frame of reference, for it gives the student who rejects it a point of reference in reverse by offering him something to react against in establishing his own point of view.[10]

Political scientists, whether they admit it or not, do have a world view or a frame of reference. It is fair to say, however, that political science is primarily concerned with the processes of government as they actually exist and not with how they ought to exist. It is the function of social ethics and not of political science to attempt the moral or philosophical evaluations of governmental institutions.[11] It is true, nevertheless, that the political scientist must organize and present his factual data within a conceptual framework which is based upon his world view. Students have a right to have an explicit statement of the point of view of their instructors, and conversely, teachers have an obligation to think through their frame of reference and relate it to their subject matter if their teaching is to be either relevant or coherent.

The problem of teaching political science from a Christian perspective resolves itself into two major questions: first, how does the subject matter relate to Christianity in a relevant manner; and, secondly, is the atmosphere created in the classroom characterized by Christian conviction and concern? The purpose of the Bible is to reveal God to Man and not to serve as a treatise on political science, natural law or any other academic subject. One must therefore conclude that the Bible

[10] E. Earle Stibitz, 'A Religious Point of View in Teaching the Liberal Arts', *Liberal Education*, May, 1959, pp. 249–262.

[11] D. Luther Evans, *Essentials of Liberal Education* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1942), p. 126.

can not be used as a direct source of information for principles of political science. The Bible can provide man with concepts of himself, God, and values, within which one can relate his factual information of political science. Among these Bible-based concepts are the dignity and worth of each individual with the attendant responsibility to develop his full capacities, intellectually, socially and spiritually. The primacy of Christian faith demands that man accept and live by values that can never be wholly validated empirically. The right and duty of private judgement are emphasized, with each individual held accountable to God for the quality of his decisions. This freedom of inquiry in the quest for truth and Christian idealism must be permitted to extend to the very bases of the Christian faith. Since Christianity is based upon faith and political science is based upon empiricism, a Christian political scientist can never by means of his discipline discover God's plan or purpose for society as a whole. He can, however, learn from the Bible the lesson that Cain learned too late: man is his brother's keeper.

If there is universal truth revealed by God in Christ, it is the law of love. Most of the activities and teachings of Jesus are simply illustrations of this truth. It makes far more sense to me to accept this interpretation of Jesus' life and ministry than to try to piece items together to form a comprehensive code or ethic. Jesus himself summarized the law and the prophets as 'Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'[12] When Jesus was asked, 'And who is my neighbour?' he answered with the parable of the Good Samaritan. Jesus' method was one of indirection, for the hearer is left to draw his own conclusion. The ultimate test of the law of love was indicated by Jesus when he foretold his second coming in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel: 'And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

[12] Mark xii. 30–31.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; For I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat . . .'[13]

It is at this point that the Christian can begin to make his faith relevant in political science. This message of Christian love has a meaning for Christian atheists and humanists as well as for evangelicals. Since it is through our political institutions that our most binding as well as our most significant decisions are made, it must be through our political institutions that the law of love becomes embodied in practical programmes and policies. In this day in particular when everyone is searching for meaning or values, a Christian professor, whether teaching in a private or public institution has every right to couch his teaching consciously in terms of his Christian frame of reference. While others are teaching from bases such as cultural or economic determinism, logical positivism, or existentialism, the Christian must not hide or disguise his position. This does not mean that one should be dogmatic or engage in apologetics. One can be Christian in his teaching without apology, condescension, or a doctrinaire attitude. The classroom is not the place to evangelize, but it is a place to bear witness through his mind. Teaching involves a search for truth. It is more important for the instructor to teach methods of inquiry and processes of decision-making than to try to teach correct answers. Teachers should have their own answers to the questions under scrutiny and the students have a right to know the answers of their professors. These must be communicated without dictation or dogmatism. Real learning will not take place without conflict and hard thought. Students, therefore, should be encouraged to challenge the positions held by instructors, even Christian professors teaching from a Christian perspective.

Before returning to the main currents in political science to suggest some Christian perspectives, let us examine the problem of moral judgement in politics. A Christian because he is a Christian and not because he is a political scientist must make moral judgements even at the risk of indulging his petty prejudices, or appearing to try to impose his personal convic-

[13] Matthew xxv. 40–42.

tions or even his code of ethics on others. A distinction must be recognized between a personal and a group ethic.

Reinhold Niebuhr has referred to this necessary distinction as one between 'moral man and immoral society.'[14] An individual can consider the interests of others in addition to his self-interest. Indeed this is the essence of the law of love for the Christian. Individuals give themselves to causes or even to the community of the group or fellowship of the concerned. Groups on the other hand consider themselves in practice, ends in themselves and not means to an end. The causes to which groups give themselves tend to become absolutes instead of remaining relative to other groups and other values. The problem of moral judgement in politics becomes particularly acute in international relations. International law becomes interpreted in relation to national interest and not any absolute standard. International morality as a force in international politics is of minor importance. When a statesman must choose between the personal dictates of his conscience and the best interests of his nation, the group must take precedence over the individual.

Even within a nation, the complexities of modern, industrialized, urbanized society no longer permit the individualism which characterized agrarian life in the United States before the Civil War. Extreme individualism becomes a moral issue in a society such as ours. Does a man have a right to plant what he wants to on his own land? Does a man have a right to burn his draft card? There is also a moral issue on the other extreme. Corruption in government is a moral issue. Incompetence in government is a moral issue. The failure of elected officials to act speedily to meet the needs of their constituents is a moral issue. And the general failure of churchmen to become directly involved in politics is a moral issue!

There is no inherent reason why a Christian political scientist can not bring his faith and witness to bear upon his discipline in any of the principal approaches noted earlier.

[14] *Rienhold Niebuhr on Politics*, ed. by Harry R. Davis and Robert C. Good (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1960), pp. 84–91.

Let us now re-examine each of these approaches in terms of a Christian perspective. Within the legal tradition, the Christian political scientist must recognize that laws and constitutions were not created as ends in themselves but to serve the ends of justice and order. When these instruments no longer achieve the purpose for which they were established, they must be altered or abolished. The law of love will not permit injustice to hide behind archaisms of tradition or constitutionalism. There must be enough respect for law and order for its own sake, however, to try to secure needed change by peaceful means, if at all possible.

Governor Mark Hatfield of Oregon and Presidential Assistant Bill Moyers are two Christian men who illustrate what can be done through political activism. Hatfield was led to the Lord by his students at Willamette College where he taught political science. He was also challenged by his students to practise what he advocated in the classroom and to run for political office. With the assistance of his students, he began his political career. Just three weeks after Bill Moyers arrived in Washington to assist Sargent Shriver in the Peace Corps, he addressed the Washington Seminar on Federal Service. On that occasion, he told us of the divine imperative that prompted him to resign from the Southern Baptist parish ministry in Texas to serve in this wider and more secular ministry. As a result of Moyers' willingness to follow this leading of the Lord, many of the messages of the President of the United States are couched in a Biblical idiom. One might go further and suggest that many of the president's programmes are conceived in terms of the law of love that recognizes that man is his brother's keeper.

It bothers my conscience to see Unitarians, agnostics, and Jews today carrying the torch against human injustice and suffering while we evangelicals keep Sunday school as usual. Why are we in the world if not to leaven the lump? A Christian message without a heart of compassion for social concern is too mystical for the secular man in the street. Christian men and women must not be too religious to serve their neighbours wherever there is need whether on the PTA, at the polls, or working in the precinct for the political party of their choice. Christian involvement includes political activism. Secular

society will evaluate Christian truth and experience in terms of Christian love in action and not pious proclamations. It is time to overturn the tables of the money changers and denounce those who have turned the temple of justice into a social Darwinian jungle ruled by WASPS – white, Anglo-Saxon protestants.

In political philosophy, the Christian is certainly interested in the elements of the good life. Man cannot live by bread alone, nor can man live without bread. 'Five acres and independence' may be one man's bread and another man's poison. Technological change has drastically transformed the American way of life. Driving through the towns and countryside of northern New England, one can sense peace, security and conservatism. One can always grow a crop of potatoes for food and cut wood on the hillside for fuel and even do a little hunting or fishing for meat. Those who live in that great megalopolis which stretches from Portland, Maine, down to Virginia are totally dependent on an artificial society for both sustenance and security. Rugged individualism has given way to interdependence. Where men do not know or practise the law of love in Christ, they have had to invent its secular counterpart. Christians must find values that transcend technology. Unfortunately, we seem to have assumed a stance of opposition to anything that is new and then have been forced to yield slowly. This obscurantism seems as unnecessary as it is undesirable. While philosophers and theologians are devoting most of their attention these days to linguistic analysis, there is a pressing need for clear thought in the areas of values and ethics. Political ethics could use some clear and compelling pronouncements. Christians in political science must not only raise relevant questions, but must suggest directions in which solutions may be found and then begin to act.

The scientific approach to politics is as concerned with theories as is the philosophical. The philosopher begins with ideal constructs and proceeds by deductive logic. The scientist using observation and experiment, where feasible, would use induction to build a process model in political science. Philosophers, of course, have always been concerned with observable facts but have made no systematic attempt at observation and

the actual application of their theories to practise. Early empiricists in political science were interested in gathering self-evident facts of political life that needed no explanation. Their books on political science were encyclopaedias of statistics and factual details with no attempt at analysis to explain what the facts meant. Alexis De Tocqueville, in his *Democracy in America*, made one of the first attempts to construct theory on the basis of direct observation. The gathering of uncontroverted, factual data is always a valuable if limited activity. Hopefully, someday someone will come along to interpret the facts. It would be unfortunate if Christians in political science concentrate all of their energies on this type of activity since it is safe and will not embroil them in controversies either professional or theological.

Since the Second World War, the behaviouralists have come along to offer a meaning to the volumes of uninterpreted facts in political science and to ask new kinds of questions about function rather than structure in political life. To be associated with this term has become, to some persons, a badge of accomplishment to be worn conspicuously. To others, the term is an epithet to be used against those who are viewed as misguided, confused, naïve, or even intellectually dishonest. Behaviouralism, whatever its presuppositions, must be neither shunned nor avoided. Political science has been redefined by the behaviouralists as 'the study of the legitimate allocation of benefits and rewards for a society.' This definition recognizes value judgements, for if there are legitimate allocations, there must also be instances in which power is wrongly used. Governments not only reward but also possess the supreme power to punish. Is the drafting of men to fight in South Vietnam a legitimate or an illegitimate use of the power of the state? Is capital punishment morally justified? What value judgement must be made on civil disobedience? Did Martin Luther prepare the way for Hitler by declaring at the time of the Peasants Revolt, 'Whoever fights for authority, fights for God?' Even those who proclaim that God is dead or an unnecessary hypothesis and that man is mortal can not escape the practical questions of values in human existence. In our world, these values will be both decided and implemented in the political arena. Wherever

values are involved, Christianity is particularly relevant.

There are Christians who view behaviouralism with alarm. Some, I fear, would label this new development simply a fad and would withdraw from professional activity in political science to await a more convenient day. Defeatism or escapism must be rejected in favour of a dynamic confrontation with the world as it is. The Christian political scientist must view the present situation from the perspective of both his profession and his faith. The Christian finds in behaviouralism a challenge to some of his basic ideas about man. For the behaviouralist, man is not a living soul created in the image of God but merely an animal unusually adept at adapting to his environment. The Christian must recognize that the behaviouralist is right, as far as he goes. Man is an animal with reflex actions and conditioned responses; but, unlike other animals, he has the capacity to make symbols and exercise moral judgement. In many instances, truth for the behaviouralist is truth for the Christian. In other cases the behaviouralist's view is distorted for the Christian, for the Christain must evaluate or at least consider factors which the behaviouralist will not accept as being valid. Therefore, the Christian must study his behaviouralism and know the subject as well as the behaviouralist. The point of conflict will usually not be with the results of investigations but with the assumptions on which the experiment of investigation was based. If the assumptions are successfully challenged, then the conclusions must be reinterpreted. Confrontation on this level, which is the only significant level, can only take place when people are willing to risk their lives and careers on Jesus' proclamation, 'I am the way, the truth and the life...' (John xiv. 6).

The quest for 'The Christian Perspective in Political Science' must always remain as elusive as 'The Christian Interpretation of History.' There will be almost as many Christian perspectives or interpretations as there are Christians. One can not use methods and techniques which are empirical in nature to demonstrate a proposition which is based on faith. This does not mean that the Christian academician should not attempt to make his Christian faith relevant to his discipline any more than a business man should be excused from making his faith

relevant to his business ethics. A problem arises, however, when one is called upon to demonstrate that his conclusions are indeed Christian and not simply a matter of his own opinion or judgement. One must not hide behind his Christian faith as a cover-up for narrowmindedness or shoddy thinking. Further, the Christian must hold his judgements in love and not condemnation, for as John Locke pointed out, a man may think that he is right but he can never know it. In the same manner as the Christian is admonished to be ready to give to every man a reason for the hope that is within him, so the Christian teacher of political science should be ready and willing to share with his students his own conclusions or judgements based upon both his Christian faith and his professional training, with an explanation of the processes by which he arrived at his answers. The instructor must then encourage the student to do his own thinking and come to his own conclusions, even though the conclusions of the student differ from those of the professor.

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT, M.A. (Principal of Tyndale Hall, Bristol.)

The Virgin Birth as a Biological Necessity

To the best of my knowledge no modern writer has attempted to link together the facts and hypotheses of biology, psychology, and theology, in discussing the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ. A brief, but useful, contribution is made by the Roman Catholic, Dr. E. C. Messenger, in Vol. 2 of *The Mystery of Sex and Marriage*, but most Christians are understandably content to admit that the manner of the Incarnation must remain a mystery. Nevertheless it is right for some of us to ask the question, What is likely to have been involved if the Virgin Birth – or, more correctly, the Virginal Conception – was a fact of history? This involves looking at the origins of human personality, the mechanics of heredity, and also the continuance of the pre-existent personality of the incarnate Son.

If one accepts the pre-existence of the Son, as this is presented in the New Testament, then modern genetics would seem to suggest that the Virgin Birth was necessary for a true incarnation. One may go further and say that the Chalcedonian fathers were probably thinking on correct lines in their statements about the manhood of Christ, even though they have been accused of depersonalizing Him.

During the first three centuries the Christian Church rightly tried to formulate what God had revealed about the Person of Jesus Christ. This was necessary because people were taking isolated texts and building up ideas that were not true to the Biblical revelation as a whole. The Church followed the scientific method, which aims to take account of all observable phenomena, so as to formulate a law that will cover the total picture. Thus reputable scientists conclude from all observable phenomena that the world is round, as opposed to certain heretics who, from the observation of a few facts in isolation, conclude that it is flat.

The first set of definitions concerned the relationship of the Son to the Father, and on the total evidence the Council of Nicea in 325 declared that the Son is eternal and is essentially God, as the Father is God. The second set of definitions concerned the place of the divine and the human in Jesus Christ after the incarnation. Some would have eased the difficulty by regarding Jesus as a totally God-filled man, of the same quality as the prophets, but exhibiting the indwelling Christ, or the Holy Spirit, to a unique degree. If this view were true, the Virgin Birth must be incidental, and it might indeed be a gain to repudiate it.

Others moved towards the concept of two persons existing side by side. One cannot think of a human nature without its manifestation in a person. But in Jesus Christ there is also the divine person who has become incarnate. Thus two natures must imply two persons, even though they always act concurrently. This is a somewhat crude statement of Nestorianism. Others, to safeguard the unity of the person of Jesus Christ, regarded the humanity as virtually swallowed up by the deity. This was Eutychianism.

The Council of Chalcedon in 451 gave us the orthodox formula of One Person, recognized in two natures, 'Without confusion, without change, without division, without separation . . . not as though He were parted or divided into two Persons, but one and the same Son and only-begotten, God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ.' The title *theotokos* (literally, God-bearer) was applied to the Virgin Mary to indicate that the godhead, or the divine Person, was not somehow added to a purely human baby.

The Chalcedonian Fathers are criticized today for postulating a vague human nature for Jesus Christ without a genuine human personality. They are not actually saying this, but they are saying that the humanity was not centred in any person other than the eternal Son, who had become incarnate.

I am assuming that the Chalcedonian Definition is a proper summary of the New Testament evidence, and I want in this paper to discuss how this links up with the Virgin Birth. While the early Church accepted the Vigin Birth because it was the only record that the New Testament gives, I think it may well

be essential for the solution of certain problems about the incarnation which modern science would otherwise show to be present. In this I part company with a number of Christian writers, including Augustine (*De Genesi* ad *litteram.* IX. 16) and Aquinas (*Summa.* III. 31. 4), who have held that the Virgin Birth was 'most suitable,' but not necessary for a true incarnation. Aquinas naturally knew nothing of chromosomes and genes, but modern theologians should know what they are accepting or rejecting biologically.

It will be best to begin with a summary of the known facts of heredity. They may be found easily in such a book as *Human Heredity*, by C. O. Carter (Pelican). Every cell in the human body has 46 rodlike chromosomes, which are visible under the microscope. (Older books wrongly give 48.) Other creatures, including the apes, have a different number. Gorillas and chimpanzees have 24 pairs, gibbons 22. More correctly, in man there are 23 matching pairs. The whole body has been built up from one original cell by continuous cell-division. Before a cell divides, each of the 46 chromosomes itself divides longitudinally, and the separate halves move to each side of the cell, so that, when the split comes, there are still 46 in each of the two resulting cells. These chromosomes carry the genes, whose number is not known, since they cannot be seen, but whose existence, as the carriers of hereditary factors, has been demonstrated by experiment.

There are two exceptions that are relevant for our study. One is the difference between the cells in a woman's body and those in a man's. The chromosomes in a woman are in 23 pairs, with the two members of each pair closely resembling each other in size and shape. In a man there are 22 matching pairs, and one odd pair – let us refer to it as Number 7 – where the members do not match. One member of Number 7 closely matches the two Number 7s in the woman, but the other is quite different, and very much smaller. The larger is denoted as X, the smaller as Y. Thus a woman in every cell of her body has an XX chromosome, while a man has XY.

The other exception to the cell of 46 chromosomes is the sex cell in both men and women. A moment's reflection shows that this must be so. Conception occurs through the union of

two cells. If each of the two had the full complement of 46, the new cell would have 92. So for the sex cells the division occurs differently. At the final stage, instead of the chromosomes dividing longitudinally before the cell division, one set of 23 moves to one side, and the matching set to the other. Thus, when the sex cell splits, there are only 23 in each of the two final cells, and these match up to form the proper number of 46 in the new cell after conception.

The knowledge of this mechanism clears one theory out of the way. In the past some Christians have spoken of the Virgin Birth as parthenogenesis. Since parthenogenesis simply means virgin birth, the term is only meaningful if we link it with parthenogenesis in the insect world and in occasional experiments with animals. Spontaneous parthenogenesis has even been claimed by women in modern times, but in the nature of things this is hard to establish. But one cannot claim this 'natural' experience for the Virgin Mary. We noticed above that only the man carries the Y chromosome. There is no Y in any cell in the woman's body. In the other cells of his body man has the chromosomes XY matching as a pair, but in the sex cell, after the final division, one cell will have the X and the other the Y. If out of the multitude of sex cells the one that fertilizes the female ovum carries the X, then it will pair with the X in the female cell to produce a girl. If the cell carries the Y chromosome, then the pairing XY will produce a boy. Since there is no Y in the woman's body or sex cells, any child that might be produced by a freak parthenogenesis would necessarily be a girl. Incidentally beekeepers know from bitter experience that an unfertilized queen or laying workers only produce drones (males), since in bees the female carries the equivalent of YY. Similarly poultry breeders use the fact that in birds the cock has XX and the hen XY, and, since certain other physical characteristics are linked to the X and Y chromosomes in birds, by crossing two special breeds they can sex the young birds at hatching.

We turn next to the formation of personality. Fortunately we need not wrestle with its definition and description. One of the best books on the subject is Gordon Allport's *Personality*, where some fifty definitions are discussed. What concerns us is

the basic fact that from this single initial cell a person develops. In other words, the 46 chromosomes, with their genes, contain a potential person, who is unique and distinguishable from every other person, even though he and they can be comprehended under the term 'human.'

How the person will develop as a person depends upon environment. If at birth I had been taken from my own family and brought up in completely different circumstances, I should have been both the same as I am now, and yet different. Speaking very generally, my animal body would have been much the same, though not entirely so, since diet and exercise would have altered it to some degree. My mental pattern would have been different, since different patterns of thinking and response would have been imprinted on me. Thus personality has a given physical structure, with genetic possibilities which may or may not emerge, and which in any case will express themselves according to an environmental pattern. A Christian may take heart at the thought of latent possibilities that, under the drive of the Spirit, will emerge after conversion.

Enough has been said to make the point that a complete person is the result of the union of the male and female cells. Assuming that in Jesus Christ we meet God incarnate, what would have been involved biologically in God becoming Man? We are considering incarnation, and not the view that would regard Jesus Christ as a God-filled man, since this latter view puts him on the level of the prophets, albeit greater than any other prophet. He was, to use a modern slogan, 'the Man for others,' but this by itself does not answer the New Testament belief, and, as we shall see, His own belief, in His pre-existence. Nor can it do justice to the New Testament concept of redemption through the action of God-become-Man. God did not redeem us through the act of someone other than Himself.

If there is in fact a genuine Incarnation, and yet Jesus Christ was conceived normally, then we are forced into a form of Nestorianism. The Divine Person must have been added to an already existing 46-chromosome human person, since the inevitable result of normal conception is a potential person.

A way out would be to introduce the idea of the Soul as the vehicle of personality apart from the 46 chromosomes.

This would assume that creationism is a correct theory of the origin of the soul. Creationism is the doctrine that at conception ('Immediate Animation'), or at some time before birth ('Mediate Animation'), God infuses a soul into the body. Thus God might have refused to create a human soul for the child conceived through Joseph and Mary, and have substituted the divine soul of the Son. We will not spend time on this solution. Those theologians who reject the Virgin Birth are unlikely to accept creationism. And any theory which eliminates some vital aspect of man, such as soul or mind, and substitutes the divine soul or mind for it, destroys the full humanity of Jesus Christ.

The alternative theory is traducianism, which holds that the infant in its entirety, including its soul, is the result of the union of the parents. This seems to me the proper view, and it does not compel us in this paper to discuss the exact nature of the soul. We can more helpfully keep talking about the person. Yet traduciansim closes the door to any incarnation of God in a child who is conceived in the normal manner, since the potential or actual soul is a manifestation of whatever is contained in the 46 chromosomes.

It is easier to be negative than positive, but we must now look at a possible solution. First, let us see what we are postulating by the Virginal Conception – and I am doing this with all reverence. My answer may be wrong, but it cannot simply be dismissed as speculative without suggesting some alternative. There is no doubt that we are postulating a miracle, and we are not trying to slip in natural causes through a technical use of the term parthogenesis. We are not attempting to explain *how* God performed the miracle, but we are considering what must have been involved if such a miracle actually occurred, just as a doctor might discuss what was involved if Christ gave sight to a man who had been born blind.

In the ovum there are the 23 chromosomes. They can only begin to grow into a boy if 23 chromosomes, including the Y, are added to them. The result will be, not two half persons, one from the father alongside of one from the mother, but one single human personality, with a single centre of awareness and

consciousness. Yet 23 chromosomes were actually the vehicles of the father's personality and 23 of the mother's.

The miracle of the Virginal Conception, then, involves the creation of 23 chromosomes, containing the Y, to be the vehicle of the divine personality. From the moment of union there begins to develop, by the normal method of cell fission, a single person, both human and divine. Thus there is a genuine incarnation. The initiation of this process is described in both the Birth narratives in Matthew and Luke as being due to the direct action of the Holy Spirit. Only so could the Child be Son of God in a unique sense. Since man alone is made in the image of God, human chromosomes could be vehicles of the incarnation, and Christ could not have become incarnate in any other animal form.

There is a further point of importance and of difference between Christ and ourselves. This is His pre-existence. There is little evidence for our own pre-existence, although Origen held such a view, and Mormons do so today. A very large number of people, especially Hindus and Buddhists, believe in reincarnation, in which case we have all been born and reborn countless times already; but again the evidence for this, apart from an act of faith and philosophy, is scanty, though it cannot be dismissed out of hand.

Jesus Christ is different. According to a number of references in the Fourth Gospel, He declared more than once that He had had a personal pre-existence with the Father. Thus 'Before Abraham was, I am' (viii. 58). 'The glory which I had with Thee before the world was' (xvii. 5). He speaks of coming from heaven (iii. 13) and from the Father (xvi. 28). Too little attention has been paid to what may well be a significant use of this word 'come' in connection with Jesus Christ in the Synoptic Gospels, e.g. 'The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many' (Mark x. 45). 'I came not to destroy, but to fulfil' (Matt. v. 17). There are other similar references, and there is also the parallel use of the verb to refer to His Second Coming. On the lips of Jesus Christ I have little doubt that the verb describes His consciousness of having come from heaven. The word is not used by the Synoptists of the prophets, with the significant exception of

John the Baptist, who is in some sense the pre-existing Elijah, who comes as the forerunner of the Messiah (Mark ix. 11–13).

The Epistles certainly teach the pre-existence of Christ, and there is no real reason for supposing that this doctrine was the invention of the early Church. The indications are that the belief goes back to Christ Himself.

In an article in the *Expository Times* for August 1965, John Harvey writes that modern man no longer accepts such ideas as pre-existence. Yet, modern man may need to face the fact that Jesus Christ was convinced, not of everyone's pre-existence, but of His own. One can say that He was hallucinated, or that the early Church fathered the idea on Him, but there is still adequate evidence for us to ask, Suppose He had a pre-existence?

Modern Arians, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, believe in His pre-existence as the archangel Michael. Seventh-Day Adventists also identify Him with Michael, but believe that this is His pre-incarnate title, although He was fully God as the Second Person of the Trinity. Is it really worth discussing whether, if He had a pre-existence, He was a supernatural being who was less than God? Such a view would take the heart out of the redemptive work that He came to do. God would be sending someone else to suffer; He did not become Man Himself.

If He pre-existed as God, in what form did He exist? John Macquarrie in the *Expository Times* for April 1966, wrestles with the problem in the light of the concept of the Logos, or Word, but does not seem to me to do full justice to personal pre-existence. The heart of our problem lies in our desire to visualize the Trinity. In reaction against the naïve visualization of three big Men up in the sky, some professional theologians have tended to throw over the concept of Three Persons. We may need to think out fresh analogies, but these must do justice to Biblical revelation, while still falling short of enabling us to visualize God as He is. This means the acceptance of facts that God has revealed about Himself to prevent His remaining the Unknown God, without our being able to fit them all together in descriptive form. We have to do a similar thing with what physicists now know about the ultimate structure of the universe.

The pre-existence of the Second Person of the Trinity was in such a form that He was aware of having had it, i.e. it was as a personal centre of consciousness. It was not existence in a physical body, but after the same manner as the personal pre-existence of the Father and the Holy Spirit. I have deliberately used the phrase, 'Aware of having had it,' so as to avoid the issue of the nature of the full consciousness of the incarnate Christ. This needs a paper on its own.

What we have argued is as follows: The Christian Church during the first few centuries regarded the Bible as the consistent revelation of God. Accordingly they wrestled to produce positive and negative formulae, which would apply consistently to any Biblical text about the nature of God. I believe that their conclusions in the Chalcedonian Definition represent fair conclusions from the evidence.

In particular they wanted to avoid any suggestion that there was a duality of persons in Jesus Christ, though there were two natures. In the light of modern genetics, we have said that this could have been achieved only by a Virgin Birth. Normal conception would have produced a human person, to whom the Son would have had to be mysteriously added.

The miraculous conception ensured that the Person was both human through His mother's chromosomes, and could be divine through the newly-formed chromosomes. This would be a genetical equivalent of 'One Person and two Natures.' We could say that the centre of consciousness of the Divine Son was now concentrated within the space-time sequence. It is useless to try to put ourselves into His experience so as to imagine how He felt, since none of us could ever have the experience of deity. The most we can say is that, on reflection, we find that we are one thing because of our father's side, and another because of our mother's. We have inherited ways of being ourselves. It is not necessary to bring in Jung's concept of the inheritance of certain racial and archetypal responses, but at least the analogy is helpful. Then Jesus Christ after His incarnation drew not only from the racial Unconsciousness of humanity, but also from the divine equivalent to this. He had the present experience of communion with the Father that we have, but He also had the special union which enabled Him

to say, 'I and My Father are one,' and 'No one knows the Father except the Son . . .'

Additional note

In the discussion that followed the reading of this paper, the chairman and others raised the question of the creation of the 23 chromosomes ex nihilo. I certainly intended this, but obviously one may consider other possibilities.

1. God the Holy Spirit might have brought about a mutation in one of the X chromosomes within the Virgin Mary, so that it received the Y property, and thus the child of this parthenogenesis would have been a boy. I have in this paper taken the theory that personality belongs to the chromosomes as a whole, and not to the Y alone. This alternative suggestion would make Christ receive everything from the Virgin, and nothing that corresponds with what a baby receives from its father. It is hard to see how the modified Y chromosome by itself could be the vehicle of the incarnate Person. However, if one accepts creationism, one might say that God added the soul of His Son to the incipient personality that was derived wholly from Mary.

2. Since the basic compound of which chromosomes and genes are composed is deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and protein, these are present in every body, and what I have described as the *creation* of the extra 23 chromosomes could have been the formation of the 23 from the DNA and protein in Mary's body. The formation would have been in a combination that could be a proper vehicle for the Person of the Son, and, unlike the first suggestion, there would have been the proper fertilization of the ovum. The miracle would have been one of rearrangement rather than of direct creation ex nihilo. This seems sensible.

3. The question was also raised about the relevance of sex changes in human beings. There was no suggestion in anyone's mind that the Virgin Mary was sexually abnormal, but the point was whether, if one who is born a female changes later into a male, her XX cells become XY. If so, the Y must have been produced within her own body, and so presumably a Y cell might have been produced naturally within the Virgin, thus resulting in a boy-child. Since the paper was read, a

leading geneticist has confirmed what I said in the discussion, namely that in any apparent change from woman to man, there is no formation or creation of a Y chromosome. The cells remain XX. It might be helpful to add a few further particulars about this. Abnormalities have been recognized in the sex chromosomes. Thus a woman with only one X fails to develop into sexual maturity. A man with XXY develops markedly feminine characteristics. In other cases the sex chromosomes are normal, but, probably through a disturbance of the gene pattern of other chromosomes, the endocrine glands, which at the proper times should supply a true balance of hormones for the total sexual development of a man or a woman, are in some way defective. Thus a man develops abnormal characteristics of femaleness and a woman those of a man. But these do not include the production of a Y chromosome where this did not exist before, nor the loss of Y where it already existed.

4. It is not the creation or formation of the 23 chromosomes that makes Christ divine. It was pointed out that a scientist might one day synthesize DNA and proteins into precisely the 23 that I have postulated. They would not then produce a fresh incarnation, nor make the resulting child divine, although the result might be a person who had certain physical resemblances to Jesus Christ. His body would not be entirely identical, since the new 23 could not be matched with the same 23 as were present in Mary. We can say that the 23 chromosomes that God formed were the vehicle whereby the Son could become properly and personally incarnate, but not that they compelled Him to become incarnate.

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Christianity in Modern Educational Trends?

There are many educational trends in England today and reasons for this state of change are not difficult to suggest. I shall select a number without claiming that no more exist; some of those I do not deal with I would claim to be derivative from those I do; others, I do not doubt, I have not noticed. It is possible that some will think of educational trends in the sense only of moral trends, rather than of trends concerning the organization of secondary schools or school architectural design; but, despite the correctness of Belloc's advice from Cardinal Manning that *all* problems are, ultimately, theological problems, it is not necessary to select specifically moral trends only. Nor do I intend to do so here; but simply to consider a number of interesting and very important tendencies in contemporary English education. These can then be examined from the viewpoint of Christian principles – which is, of course, to bring them into a moral perspective.

I shall limit myself to modern educational trends in England, though I may make references to other countries, because trends in other countries which appear similar to those in one's own may be deceptive, for they require for their correct appraisal an understanding of the history and the contemporary social organization of the countries concerned. This article cannot find space for so much. Firstly, then, I shall consider a number of educational trends in modern England. I shall then summarize them; and I shall conclude by placing these summarized trends in a Christian perspective, commenting upon the picture that appears.

II

The first trend to be noticed is the development of scientific and numerate studies and the emphases placed upon them, as opposed to the historico-classical and linguistic studies of the recent European past. By these terms I mean to suggest not only the long-standing public school and grammar school curricula, but the state primary and, to a lesser extent, the secondary modern curricula in which scientific and mathematical studies, outside 'nature study' on the one hand and 'arithmetic' on the other, have only recently developed. However much grammar school science has reached towards the many different courses provided at universities, its provision is notoriously inadequate in terms of engineering; that is, towards the practical and the pragmatic.[1] The unfilled places in science, the poorer students who choose these studies[2] while the better students choose arts' subjects,[3] indicate clearly that, whatever the economic basis, let alone development, of England may require, the ambitions and aspirations of sufficient adolescents are not related to it. To the humanist, this may be a sign for which he is thankful; I am stating the fact, not evaluating it. The case is similar with mathematics. It is remarkable that, in a country which has trained teachers for more than a century, the psychology of learning of mathematical concepts is a matter, despite Piaget and many others, of which we are largely ignorant. The appalling results in the most elementary mathematical calculations of training college students as demonstrated by Professor Land[4] makes the point. This is the result of eleven to thirteen years' full-time education. So complete is the inadequacy of these students that some training colleges will only train students in mathematics where ability is present. No attempt is now made to train all students to teach even the simplest mathematics in the junior school because of the ignorance and the apparent inability to learn of the students themselves. When Sir Geoffrey Crowther's suggestion that all citizens should be both literate

[1] *The Robins Report*, 1963.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] F. W. Land, *Recruits to Teaching*, 1960

and numerate is examined, one of the prior conditions required for achieving this is absent. This trend, then, is at the moment one of official intention, rather than in existence.

The trend to scientific studies and to numerate ones is closely related to a second; the change towards the vocational approach to education at higher levels in the educational system. In the cases of the working and the lower middle classes this has always been true; no society could exist unless an important part of its educational syllabus related to the tasks which have to be performed by each generation in order that the society may be maintained. Forster's Act of 1870 made provision, as has often been pointed out, for a supply of adequately literate and numerate artisans and clerks. The middle class grammar school and upper class public school, however literary their education may seem, however much it appears to provide for a leisure class, in fact provided professional men for what, in those days, were the only professions and civil servants and administrators in spheres beyond the home government. Today, when the aims of the universities are confused, even the sons of the wealthy – their daughters have always been less considered – find a tendency to early specialization forcing them towards vocational studies. Even if, as Mr. John Wilson has written,[5] boys can enter Oxford with only four O level G.C.E. passes, the majority require two or three A levels, sometimes to be gained only after a third year in the sixth form. Even here there is no guarantee of entry to the university, though Oxford and Cambridge seem to provide easier access to public school applicants than do other universities.[6] The one or two subjects to A Level constitute the vocational trend which is usually referred to as 'specialization,' but this term misses the point implied in its own connotation of 'narrowing' towards a job – and university students see their future in this way. We have come a long way from the cultured men of wide knowledge and deep sensibility, the sources of sweetness and light. Concentration on studying for the job removes the breadth of an undergraduate's intellectual experi-

[5] J. Wilson, *Public Schools and Private Practice*
[6] *The Robbins Report*, 1963

ence – experience which is part of one's studies, not derived only from one's social life. However much, as has been claimed, the nineteenth century English university course turned out to be a form of vocational training by virtue of the occupations followed later by its recipients or participants, the content of the study itself must be seen as much less specialized than most courses today. The nineteenth century's paler reflection today is seen in 'foundation years' and in grouped and related subjects in, particularly, the newer universities which have been established since 1945.

In the schools we see two aspects of the vocational trend; one is the great concern with examinations which, in so far as their results are important for a pupil's future, tend to promote specialization – and, hence, vocational tendencies and interests – in the timetable. These appear in the secondary schools where C.S.E. is added, but vaguely related, to the G.C.E. Secondly, there is the apparently opposite tendency: the removal of examinations at the age of ten or eleven years to decide a child's future secondary school and in consequence reduce specialization and widen the range of future vocations. This paradox is not complete because there is nothing to prevent a narrowing of studies once the primary stage has been passed; this happens in schools which, although comprehensive, are organized internally in two, three, four or more ability streams with appropriate specialization. The school which favours breadth risks rejection by parents and, possibly, poorer academic results as measured by examinations. No clear information on this latter point is, unfortunately, available. It runs counter to one of the findings of the American Eight-Year Study,[7] namely, that undergraduate success is determined, not by earlier schooling, but by the student's motivation. Those who begin studies in college are as successful, and sometimes more successful, than those who began their studies several years earlier in high school. If basic ability is there, desire to study is the important factor. This is, in fact, tacitly recognized in those British universities in which a graduate in, say, classics, may be admitted after two or three

[7] Aikin, *The Story of the Eight-Year Study*

terms' successful study to a higher degree in, for example, economics. Our schools, unfortunately, do not share these beliefs.

A corollary, and a paradox, which follows from increasing concern with science and, more especially, vocation, is that things and jobs become more important than people. It is true that some jobs, e.g. shop-keeping, are partly conditional for their successful pursuit on an ability to deal with people, though the customers tend, necessarily, to be seen as means to ends. At a time when, at long last, we become more consciously 'sociate,' it is not, as might have been expected, in reaction from an excessive concern with industrial expansion, large-scale organization or the so-called 'conquest of nature,' but to increase production and to make means of social control, whether by coercion or manipulation, more efficacious. As the English economy tends increasingly to the tertiary type, marked, not by primary production or industrial processing, but by marketing, selling, advertising, insuring, banking and transporting, the need to use people as economic factors increases. Fewer people make things; more manipulate others and symbols.[8] The society for which children are educated, therefore, becomes one in which, increasingly, they learn to handle people for their own economic and prestigious ends; in which increasing attention is given to sociology, psychology and economics as subjects of study relevant to a vocation; in which people face and think of each other as little else but manipulable.

It is probably true to say that, for the majority of those who use the term, a 'meritocracy' is seen as beneficial and just. It represents a deserved success of talent or intelligence, with the implication that there can be no juster ordering of a society than that which lets the 'best,' who are identified most often with the intelligent as measured by objective tests, reach the high prestige, best paid, most influential and most enjoyable positions in society; the claims of birth and wealth are at a discount. Those who do so have missed the point of Dr. Young's satire.[9] Firstly, a meritocracy ignores all other qualities but

[8] C. W. Mills, *The Power Elite*

[9] M. Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy*.

that of talent as measured by I.Q. or ability tests. Secondly, it assumes a completely open society in which neither persons nor institutions are privileged. Thirdly, it requires completely free access, not only to educational institutions but to the other institutions which conduce to educational success. Fourthly, it means that those who are not born with talent or who do not develop it are at a lifelong disadvantage for prestige, wealth, power and enjoyment; and the assumption is that this is both just and desirable. To these implicit requirements it may be countered that qualities other than intelligence and specific talent are of great, some might say fundamental, importance in society and in life. Even if it is possible to prevent privileged institutions developing – and this would require schools to be state-licensed, if not state-controlled; even if it is possible to prevent the meritocratic élites from giving their children advantages in the cultural background of their childhood or in the acquaintances which they will have among persons of influence simply by being their fathers' children, the inequalities in the preconditions of educational success which vary from birth-order in the family through educational facilities in the area in which childhood is lived to a secondary headmaster's knowledge of available opportunities for school-leavers, would have, theoretically, to be taken into account to meet the requirements of a true meritocracy.[10] To fail in this is to put a premium on fortune, as well as on intelligence and talent. How could these requirements be met?

The answer, at first sight, lies in the detailed suggestions made in such reports as that of the Newsom Committee and in the recommendations of such authors as Jackson, Marsden and Mays.[11] Others would go further and require, as a prerequisite of social justice, a comparatively undifferentiated school to the age of at least fourteen years; others would say until sixteen. The Americans have long had a system of such elementary and high schools which vary in their leaving age according to the

[10] *The Newsom Report*, 1963

[11] B. Jackson and D. Marsden, *Education and the Working Class.*
B. Jackson, *Streaming.*
J. B. Mays, *Education and the Urban Child.*

state's law; Sweden is in the process, after seventeen years of enquiry and experiment between 1940 and 1957, of developing a similar, though not identical, institution to the age of sixteen.[12] In Britain, a bewildering pattern is developing, though the basic types of school are clear. As practice in the United States has shown, however, the degree of equal opportunity of education – which is the first formal requirement of a meritocracy – depends upon the area in which the school is situated; so that a comprehensive high school in a wealthy district is more socially exclusive,[13] since its catchment area is the wealthy district, than an English grammar school whose catchment is much wider than the residential area surrounding the school buildings. When it is remembered that the total Swedish population is less than that of Greater London and that Sweden is, with the exception of a handful of towns not large by British standards – Stockholm with a million inhabitants, Gothenburg with less than half a million, Linköping and Uppsala with less than one hundred thousand – predominantly rural, it must be questioned how far Swedish circumstances are comparable with England's. The point to be made in response to the last of the four factors enumerated above is that any society which so clearly rejects, without possible alleviation of their condition, all but the intelligent and the talented for positions of prestige, wealth, influence and enjoyment is providing, by such social exclusion in an open society, conditions for alienation, rejection and revolt. In a closed society this would not be the case, save in times of great tension, because social immobility would be the norm. In an open society the norm is the possibility of mobility and its restriction in operation to one factor only when others existed – for example, the appropriate use of one's inheritance of property – would prove impossible.

The next trend, to which I shall refer briefly, is the increasing tendency of the government of the day to control, either directly or indirectly, the field of formal education. Since the first grants to schools, the government has provided more and more

[12] Duhring, *The Swedish School Reform Act*, 1950.
[13] J. B. Conant, *The American High School Today*.

funds and exerted more and more control over primary, secondary and higher education by paying an increasingly large share of teachers' salaries; by instituting entirely new systems of schooling in developing grammar schools after Balfour's Act of 1902 and, if the provisions of the Act of 1944 had been carried out, might have done the same for stillborn county colleges. It has unified the examination system by calling for a new secondary examination on receiving the Beloe Report – to the exclusion of a number of private examining bodies; has, by setting up permanent committees, prepared to exercise some control over syllabuses and teaching methods; and by, very tardily it is true, suggesting research to organizations such as the N.F.E.R., has put itself in a position to bring pressure on local authorities to follow policies stemming from the findings of research. The maintenance of private schools is on the sufferance of the Minister; local authorities' schemes of development and reorganization may be denied his approval and, at least under a Labour Government, the so-called public schools face the possibility of the formation of an educational trust for the enforced alteration of their entrance systems. The role of the central government in education has grown and is growing.

Lastly, attention must be drawn to two trends which involve staff more directly than the trends so far discussed. The first of these concerns the very large numbers of children who will receive education in the next twenty years from a teaching force which will be, numerically, quite inadequate. The reasons for the increasing numbers of children include earlier ages of marriage which result in earlier childbearing; larger families than have been expected by the Registrar-General; the increasing numbers of children staying at school beyond the minimum age permitted for leaving; and the raising of that age, firstly to fifteen, soon to sixteen. The reasons for the inadequate numbers of teachers are the poor image of the profession among possible applicants; the competition in the economy for scarce talent, so that enough suitable applicants are not obtained for teacher-training because equal pay for men and women was introduced at a level which was, fundamentally, a woman's rate and men find higher payment and better

working conditions elsewhere. At the same time, the number of women applying for teacher-training is affected by widening opportunities in an economy which is experiencing a general shortage of labour. Concurrently with these tendencies has come the pressure on the universities from qualified pupils seeking higher education; thwarted, many turn to another institution which will provide a form of higher education and find it, especially where they are women, in the colleges of education. Only a proportion of these men and women teach for long and some do not teach at all. To this loss is added, almost unbelievably within five years of their training, four-fifths of all women trained.[14] The majority marry and rear families. The extent to which they will return to teaching, even in a part-time capacity, is unknown. In these circumstances of too many students and too few teachers, recourse is made to aids to education to enable large numbers to be taught. Closed-circuit television, broadcast television, film, radio, shift systems, team-teaching, teaching machines, correspondence courses, re-designed buildings, non-teaching auxiliary staff – all are mooted, treated briefly as panaceas and then largely ignored. Those which are not too expensive for use meet considerable resistance from teachers, even if that resistance is often apathy. Of one thing it is possible to be sure; the problem is not solved and there is no sign that it will be. Sir John Newsom, in a public speech, forecast the complete breakdown of primary education within ten years;[15] in this phrase he presumably foresaw classes of sixty pupils and more. A few years later, secondary education would follow the course of primary education.

The second trend concerning staff is not the obvious conclusion which follows the matters just dealt with; namely, that teachers will become less and less involved with students, more rigid in their mass-production system, more addicted to the formal imparting of formal knowledge, but concerns the contradictions between their work as teachers and the aims which society, and to a great extent they themselves, think

[14] *Ministry of Education Annual Reports.*

[15] In 1964: reported in, for example, *The Times Educational Supplement.*

desirable for adults. England, as was said earlier, emphasizes mobility by intellectual merit; the former requires, for success, physical mobility; society increasingly encourages the migrant, the seeker of the new experience, the man on the move; it expects him to give but brief periods of service before taking the next step upwards. Increasingly, the good teacher is encouraging this through the school system. Yet he himself, if he is a good teacher, is recommended not to move much, for the best service to teaching lies in a degree of permanence extending over ten years at least. Except for the one man or woman in twenty-five who becomes a headmaster or headmistress – and the increasing size of secondary schools is widening this proportion – little promotion can be expected. After sixteen years there is nothing to look forward to financially; one can only draw nourishment from one's days of work. It can not even be said that the few rewards come to those who stay, for it is more likely that they will go to those who move after a year or two because they are generally, and practitioners of certain subjects are specifically, in short supply. The teacher finds himself in a dilemma: to move or not to move. One choice may make him a better teacher; the other widens his experience and opportunities. Professionally, he should, for much of his life, take the former course; practically, he will choose the second. It is a sociological axiom that groups maintain themselves by allegiance to group norms of conduct. These include aspirational norms. Where the likelihood of these norms being met is interfered with, dissatisfaction arises; men feel failures and lose their sense of personal worth. Teachers, men teachers especially, have felt this loss for many years; current trends and, more regrettably, current policies, do nothing to reduce this experience. Rather, both acerbate it.

The several trends considered suggest the development of a society which is concerned with the advancement of meritocrats to scientific and vocational ends in which things and persons seen as things predominate. Non-meritocrats are ignored. The education system which formally moulds such persons is under increasingly centralized control, is staffed with insufficient numbers of teachers for an increasingly large number of students in a system in which teachers will have to rely, tardily and

unenthusiastically, on a variety of untried technical aids, rather than on genuine techniques; and while they feel themselves remote from the current ambitions of society, any attempt to achieve these ends brings them into conflict with their own professional beliefs.

III

There is no single 'Christianity.' There are many Christianities, aspects, facets of the teachings of Christ; and as one, rather than another utterance is interpreted and applied to circumstances, the perspective changes. To the liberal Christian, tolerant in his interpretations, aware of the possibilities of a fundamental spirit manifest in many ways through different religious doctrines, through different religious experiences, whether mediated by the priest or immediate to the sufi and mystic, the subordination to a theocracy or to a church can no more be accepted than the control of education by the secular state. In both cases there occurs a concentration of power, secular and sacred, which is, for him, inimical, because the only errors such power commits are those it admits. For the liberal Christian, life is as much built on error as on truth. The Roman Catholic can not separate religion from education in any sense at all; the liberal Christian is quite capable of doing so. In the United States it is separated completely from public education in the fifty-one states. Through their family, social and pastoral organizations Christians find it possible to bring up their children as Christians. They assent to the view, a little unwillingly, that in a multi-denominational nation there is no logic for the expenditure of public funds on a single or, alternatively, on a variety, of doctrinal teaching. Private denominational schools are, of course, permitted and used by those who wish to do so – and the reasons for doing so are by no means always religious. In the nations in which Roman Catholicism is the predominant teaching, everything is done by its church to secure complete control of education. The logic of the demand, given the Roman premise, is irrefutable. Similar demands and similar arguments have been advanced by other churches and sects; for example, the Calvinists in the United States and in Europe. The basis of their argument

is the wholeness of life; if that life is Christian, education is Christian – not in part, but wholly; there can be no separation between the religious and the non-religious. From an English standpoint, not merely a Christian English standpoint, therefore, the increasing state control of education is viewed with concern because it is seen as an alteration in an elaborate system of checks and balances by which power is divided among many actors and many spheres of life, in which, if one source cannot override another, it can come near to nullifying it; in Riesman's phrase, it is exercised by a 'veto-group.' To many English Christians, such a system is preferable to any other because absolute power, of whatever origin, wielded in the interests of whomsoever, is liable to corrupt absolutely. To the followers of churches in more absolute states the same fears are not present because the church's power, having divine origin, cannot be wrongly exercised; only its servants are fallible. To minds in other countries, the fallibility of servants means fallibility in the work of the institution. Far better, then, to recognize its divinity but to counterbalance its power by that of temporal organizations.

It is tempting to consider that Christianity requires the development of what men of the Renaissance called 'the whole man.' It would be easy to examine the contemporary emphasis, first on science and numeracy, then on specialization and education for a vocation and conclude that in sum this was a denial of full human development; that studies in other subjects, proficiency in other skills, experiences in other realms, in the emotional, in the aesthetic, in the contemplative were omitted in favour of one or two aspects of thinking and acting. Yet further thought compels the admission that such views are classical, not Christian. In Hellenic thought they antedate Christianity. Indeed, it is far easier to make a case for education as Christian in the narrower view which fits a person for a particular life in a traditional society without educating him for choice between different roles, initially on his entry into society and throughout his life, wherever he finds it possible to choose. If Christians prefer a wider education, it is as likely that their thoughts and beliefs are affected by humanist thought of the classics as by any Christian teaching or commentary.

The particular emphasis on science and numeracy, however, requires further consideration.

It is difficult to resist the argument that concentration on science reduces interest in the particular and, consequently, in the human being. Scientific method deals with generalities, for hypotheses would be impossible without them; otherwise one deals with the unique which, by being such, cannot be grouped with similar occurrences. Increasingly men concern themselves not with individual suffering but with 'cases' and, later, with 'medical statistics'; interest and importance is transferred from the social worker to the research worker. In making this change the loss of the particular removes interest further from the human. 'Science shows' becomes another way of claiming that 'the system shows' and in consequence elements of inaction, of excuse, of pessimism develop; responsibility declines and, becoming apathetic, men cease to concern themselves with what can be done, become interested in the theoretical aspects of social life and withdraw with the implication that action is either beyond their powers or that the probability of success is minimal and the effort therefore not worth making. No contemporary situation can be traced to such a single cause, for matters of political organization and religious or ideological belief are relevant in providing explanation; but too great a concern with science as a mode of investigation is itself part of an ideology and thus becomes a relevant factor. Its partial replacement with humanist studies might countervail the influence of such factors as economic and political organization and lead to a willingness to act. On the other hand, such an outlook might be unable to withstand the tendencies and pressures of other factors; until the attempt is made, the outcome cannot be known.

The trend to remove obstacles to education must face the same argument as the earlier case of science and numeracy. There is no Christian view or doctrine that requires the opening of careers and enjoyment to all the talents, to all nature's geniuses and epicures. The narrowing of avenues is, as has been suggested, thoroughly Christian. It may be necessary, in the opinion of many, to take steps such as these to educate and train personnel to develop and maintain an economically

sound society with an advanced standard of living; but, although few Christians would require an advanced standard of living as a specifically Christian aim, equally few would dispute the need for an economically sound society. The soundness can exist at a lower – a much lower – level of life. Social and economic trends that require offering hitherto privileged opportunities to an increasing number of children, adolescents and adults are not, certainly, demanding action that is contrary to Christian belief; but they cannot expect the approbation of its doctrine.

The trend for the number of teachers to be far less than required, with its concomitant of new methods of instruction, and the trend of teachers to be affected adversely by events in society which cause conflict between their personal interests and their professional values are both outside any particular church. There is only one satisfactory solution to the problem of good teaching and that is by research into different methods, different sized classes for different subjects and the time given to various media with each lesson, size of class and characteristics of children. It is ironical that insufficient teachers have brought more research and invention into teaching than any earlier consideration of teachers' needs. For generations, the teachers' approach has been limited, with comparatively few exceptions, to the use of literary methods; the size of classes has only changed from seventy to forty, thirty and less under circumstantial development and not according to any clear investigation that one size, rather than another, is better for a particular purpose. The great dangers now are, firstly, that so long as some piece of equipment enables a teacher to deal with more children, its use will be extended, irrespective of whether 'teach' includes stimulation of further interest and logical understanding so that further enquiry through the child's aroused curiosity will result; and, secondly, whether something will be taught because the device enables this to be done while some other matter, intrinsically more important, will be omitted because the device cannot deal with it. It seems incontestable that no Christian of whatever church can be other than suspicious, wary and highly critical of all attempts to 'produce more education' by an understaffed profession.

One point remains; the extent to which teachers' professional opinions conflict, not merely with society's aims, but with developments in their own. Too much emphasis can be placed on a teacher's remaining in the same school for a long time. After one's first school, in which the greater part of one's professional learning and its accompanying errors have occurred, periods of five years seem enough to give good service to a school. By staying too long one becomes rigid, not so much in one's own methods but in helping to maintain a given system in a school; by changing and allowing new teachers to enter, the school is helped to benefit from new personalities, new methods, new content and interests, sometimes by introducing a new subject or by developing another hitherto neglected. Obviously, we require a balance between ephemeral residence and ossification. When change, whether for promotion, experience or pleasure militates against sound education and the sense of security which long-service staff can give to a school, Christians can agree that an undesirable state has been reached. To some extent, increased salaries, by reducing slightly the need for promotion might reduce movement between schools; but the desire and the need for experience will maintain some. A reduction might be effected by a system of in-service training and secondment so that one's greater experience would be in part through visits to other schools and discussions with other staff, so enabling a teacher to introduce change into his own school instead of moving to another. While promotion is comparatively easy because teacher shortage is severe, the Christian cannot expect that teachers in a society which places so much emphasis on the acquisition of means and prestige through mobility within and between occupations will remain unaffected by such aims. We may also, then, expect movement out of teaching to increase as well as movement within it; whether the reverse of this will introduce increasing numbers of older people, themselves occupationally mobile, we cannot know, for the tendency in this direction at the moment may only be of men and women who have always wanted to teach but have never found means of doing so until the present. Such sources, once used, will not recur.

Circumstances emphasize different aspects of interpretable

doctrine. Trends in English education in the middle of the twentieth century are developed far more by circumstances than by educational theory and when theory is adduced it is invariably after the development, a transparent means of assuring respectability to an action. When we have clarified our minds on the meaning of Christianity to us as individuals and have decided whether we can, if the conditions of our earlier lives permit us any real choice, choose between authoritarian systems of Christianity in which, ultimately, decisions on doctrine and conduct are given to us, or whether, at the last, we find we must assume responsibility as individuals, then, when this is done, we shall be able to place contemporary educational trends in England in a Christian perspective.

If the relativity implied in this conclusion seems regrettable, the disappointment must be borne. It is implied in all transmitted doctrine whose nature is such that, unlike a scientific hypothesis, it cannot be subjected to frequent testing by unbiased means and impartial observers. The cost of such convenience, however, is that we must be content with probability. The parable, the gnomic utterance, the disputed translation are extreme examples of the difficulty of conveying clear meaning; forgeries, interpolations, mistaken commentary cloud the meaning of the word (the interpretation of acts not always clearly understood at the time), and make us less certain than we would like to be of what is truly a Christian perspective and what is our own gaze.

The Light of the Nations

BY J. EDWIN ORR

The Paternoster Press, Exeter, pp. 302, 25*s*.

J. Edwin Orr has devoted his life both to promoting and to studying evangelical revivals. This book, volume 8 of the Paternoster Church History, is a survey of these revivals from the late eighteenth into the early twentieth century and will therefore surely be of interest to many evangelicals. The series editor, F. F. Bruce, properly indicates in the preface that much of the present book is based on secondary literature in contrast to the author's earlier primary research on the worldwide awakenings around 1859. This particular movement was considered to be important enough to warrant seven of the thirty chapters in *The Light of the Nations*. I highly recommend that the prospective reader first read the concluding chapter in order to gain an overview of the whole. The chapters are arranged chronologically, geographically and methodologically. The common problem of such historical surveys is how many different items to mention. Orr leans heavily toward at least passing reference (and hence seldom more) to a large number of revivals and revivalists. The result is a welter of names, dates, numbers and places. However, the nature of the subject matter will help to hold the attention of readers who have been previously motivated. In the midst of all the information I missed certain things. For example, many foreign mission societies are named, but how did a typical one actually function; many revivals are mentioned, but what was it like really to be caught up in one; one learns of many agencies for social concern, but how did an agency go about its task? While recognizing that abuses are possible, Orr avoids any fundamental criticism of revivals and evangelicalism. While referring to the rise or resurgence of divergent views of Christianity, he does not seek to answer, at least in this book, a crucial question: why, when evangelical Christianity in the wake of so many revivals played such a prominent role in the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century (especially in America and in some other lands of the younger churches) had it increasingly become outside the mainstream of professing Christianity by World War I and since? Is there something in revivalistic religion which not only brings renewal and expansion but also decline?

DONALD TINDER

An Open Letter to Evangelicals

BY R. E. O. WHITE

The Paternoster Press, Exeter, pp. 276, 21*s*.

The First Epistle of John is not the easiest book in the New Testament to understand. There is something elusive about the author's style so that its seeming simplicity is soon found to be deceptive, once we attempt to get to grips with the Epistle. Mr. White is an experienced Baptist minister who

has discovered in his pastoral ministry the necessity to make the Scriptures clear and plain. This he proceeds to do in a fascinating book. His acknowledgements indicate his debt to various writers, though, like many another commentator on this Epistle, his judgement is: 'It is, however, Robert Law (*The Tests of Life*, Kerr Lectures, 1909) who remains master of this Epistle.'

The book is divided into two main sections: (1) Devotional interpretations, (2) Contemporary reflections; and there is a useful shorter section of exegetical and other notes. The reviewer began his work by dipping into different parts of the book, finding matters of interest everywhere. But to go into the exposition systematically brought him to see something of its full value. The Introduction gives explanations of what lies behind the title – Why 'Evangelicals'?; Why 'open letter'?; What has gone wrong?; The source of the trouble. The author sees Evangelicalism as laying its main emphasis upon the gospel rather than the Church. It nourishes a 'gospel piety' which is concerned with consecrations, trust and divine guidance, whilst not ignoring ethics.

The situation addresses in this letter 'is one of great delicacy' (p. 13). 'The reference to error is always oblique . . . No one is forced into impossible situations from which it would be humiliating to retreat.' When one plunges into the first main section of the book, it is to find a most profitable summing-up of the 'extraordinarily tangled and condensed opening sentence' of the Epistle. This prepares us for the good things to come. The author is at pains throughout these pages to show how deliberately the writer of the Epistle – and surely this must be the 'beloved disciple' who wrote the Fourth Gospel? – steers his course, quietly yet firmly, to press home his teaching while ever desirous of conciliating by love.

Paragraph by paragraph the Epistle is unfolded in this section, many gems of thought being found on the way. Mr. White has chosen carefully, so that his quotations from other writers are always excellent as well as being apposite. Having given the basic exposition of the text, the author then turns to contemporary reflections. Here we are brought face to face with such problems as Authority, Spiritual Experience, Ethics, Ecumenicity, the Cross, with the final chapter entitled 'Evangelicals and Jesus.' John's Epistle is shown to contribute to all of these realms of thought. He brings us frequently to the original gospel message; he speaks much of the inner life of the believer, with the true knowledge of God it brings; he enlarges upon the 'moral requirement of faith' (p. 171); he calls continually for a right relationship with our fellow-Christians; he touches upon vital aspects of the Cross, as in his reference to Christ as 'the propitation for our sins'; and his recall to the historic Jesus, is to bring us worshipfully to the feet of the Lord Who is both Son of God and Son of Man.

The book abounds with penetrating thought. We cannot begin to select passages to suggest as examples. Let the reader but begin, and he will soon discover the very full provision of these profitable pages.

G. C. D. HOWLEY

The Reformers and their Stepchildren

BY LEONARD VERDUIN

Paternoster Press, 1966. pp. 296, 25*s*.

After centuries during which the name of Anabaptist has been a term of reproach and distrust scholars are now giving their doctrine a more sympathetic consideration as they are able to view their history more objectively in the light of primary sources now becoming available, and Mr. Verduin has his own contribution to make to that study. Published in America in 1964, his book has rightly found a publisher in this country, with a Postscript (wrongly labelled 'Preface' on p. 283) by Principal G. R. Beasley-Murray which enhances the value of the work.

That the Reformers soon realized that there was dissension in their ranks is clear from Zwingli's letter to Vadian stating that the struggle with the Catholic party was but 'child's play' compared with that that was developing on the Second Front, as the Anabaptists parted company with them. In the ensuing conflict many of the leading reformers were clearly guilty of inconsistency as their own attitudes hardened in reaction against the Anabaptists. They all came up against one problem which seemed well nigh insoluble, and in their endeavour to come to terms with it they tended to compromise some of their earlier convictions, notably Zwingli, on the subject of Infant Baptism. The dilemma which confronted Luther and others was this, how to have at one and the same time 'a confessional Church based on personal faith and a regional Church including all in a given locality,' the *Corpus Christi* and the *Corpus Christianum*. Out of this cruel dilemma stemmed the Second Front. This is the constant theme of the book, the Stepchildren's quarrel with 'Christian sacralism.' They were, says Leonard Verduin, 'pitted against a theology that slurs over the distinction of "regenerate" and "not regenerate," a theology that identifies the *Volk Gottes* with the *Volk*, a theology that equated the *Corpus Christi* with the *Corpus Christianum*.'

Many were the terms of abuse applied to the Anabaptists, and eight of these have been selected as headings for the eight chapters of the book, some e.g. *Donatisten* referring to specific historic groups, others like *Winckler* indicating any body of people meeting in some quiet or secluded spot for religious purposes, and such *Winckelpredigten* or 'Winckel-preachings' soon conveyed the idea of gatherings that were unauthorized and illicit. It is not our author's intention to give a detailed survey of the history of any of these groups: rather he sets out to show that none of these names were new in the sixteenth century, nor were their ideas new. On the contrary they were typical of various phases of the struggle of the Mediaeval Church with those who by their deviation were known as heretics. The source of most of the trouble, according to Mr Verduin, had been the 'conversion' of Constantine, the 'fall' of the Church as the deviationists regarded it, the merging of the interests of Christ and Caesar, the fact that they had, in the language of the Stepchildren, 'welded the Cross to the sword.' That the Stepchildren rejected the power of the magistrate to enforce religious belief was not to say – as

their adversaries claimed – that they rejected all civil law and order, though many were opposed to warfare and capital punishment. So, too, many took very seriously their obligation to help fellow Christians by sharing their goods, but that does not justify the assumption that the activity at Münster was typical of the movement: on the contrary Dr. Toynbee has aptly called Münster 'a caricature of the movement.' In fact Mr. Verduin goes so far as to say that if the Western world had listened to these radicals and had taken over their ideology and practice then Karl Marx would have had little with which to sustain his economic theories. Repeatedly we are brought back to the same monism, the confluence of Church and State in the fourth century, and in that sense the Stepchildren were dualists, refusing to identify the 'once born' and the 'twice born.'

Certainly the point is well established that the chief opposition of the Reformers was due to their anxiety, for obvious reasons, to secure the support of the State, but from such an unequal yoke of Church and World there must inevitably spring certain changes in Christian outlook. In personal life the Christian individual was no longer so conspicuously different, and the offence of the Cross would cease: as Leonard Schiemer, imprisoned and burnt for heretical opinions expressed it, 'If the Cross is not experienced then we have the proof that we are false Christians, not yet adopted into the sonship of God.' In a larger context Mr. Verduin claims it would affect the outreach of the Church. 'Since,' he says, 'missions cannot thrive in the climate of sacralism and since the Reformers turned to a new version of "Christian sacralism," it is not at all surprising that the Reformation did not develop a theology of missions nor a practice of missions.'

The book is repetitious, but that is surely a pardonable fault when, as here, it serves to establish its main theme. It may be that here is too favourable an estimate of the Anabaptists: rather it would seem to me to be a necessary corrective of so many erroneous views arrived at by taking the activities of the 'lunatic fringe' as typical of the whole. The general attitude of the movement was surely right, that Christian faith is to be a matter of personal conviction not of public coercion, and in the light of the ecumenical movements of our generation, as Dr. Beasley-Murray rightly says, the Churches of the world would do well to heed these voices from the past.

E. G. ASHBY

But That I Can't Believe

THE BISHOP OF WOOLWICH,
JOHN A. T. ROBINSON
Fontana Books, 1967, pp. 128, 3*s*. 6*d*.

None of the heresies in this book appear to be original. Here are 24 chapters written in the racy style we have come to expect. The following quotations may serve to illustrate the general tenor:

p. 20: Adam and Eve. 'The creation story does not oblige us to think of Adam and Eve as *a* particular man and *a* particular woman – if we still had to believe that Adam and Eve were the first man and woman on the earth, the whole story would be hopelessly discredited.'

p.39: The Resurrection. 'Precisely what happened to the body we shall never know. The New Testament is silent and we may be silent too. No one in the New Testament dreamt of instituting a search for the body.'

p.41: The Second Coming. 'People really suppose that the Church teaches that one afternoon Telstar will pick up a picture of Christ descending from the skies with thousands of angels in train, returning to earth to judge the world.'

p.49: Hell. 'There are still a few who would like to bring back Hell, as some want to bring back birching and hanging – in a real sense the definition of heaven and hell is the same: being with God – for ever. For some that's heaven, for some it's hell: for most of us it's a bit of both.'

p.76: Ascendancy. The author quotes an advertisement for Bible reading notes concerning a Scripture Reader chatting about space travel with soldiers. In the conversation the Reader mentions that two others had "gone into space" before Christ and reads the references to Enoch and Elijah and then goes on to speak of Christ's ascension and explains the way of salvation. 'You may smile,' writes the author, 'but many intelligent people outside Church really do suppose that this is the Christian line. And I fear there is much to encourage them and that not only from fundamentalist sources.'

Times change and bring different aspects of the truth to bear and it would be wrong to suggest that this book has no message for us. On the other hand it would be equally foolish to imagine that it made any difficulties some may have more comprehensible. Dr Robinson's book appears to be so filled with what the New Testament writers *ought* to mean as to make his own position frequently without scriptural foundation. One wonders how soon this type of writing will be out of date, both for style and content.

D. C. M. BACON