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EDITORIAL

Wales and Independency were equally and powerfully represented in Pennar Davies, who died at the end of December 1996 and whose life is recollected by Geoffrey Nuttall. Presbyterianism was a motive force for John Macdonald Ross, who died at the end of March 1997, and who served this society and its Presbyterian predecessor distinctively and incisively. Davies and Ross were not more contrasting than the contributors to this issue or their subjects. Among new contributors we welcome Ian Randall, who teaches Church History at Spurgeon’s College, Richard Goldring and Martin Camroux, who are ministers of the United Reformed Church, Alan Tovey, who is General Secretary of an Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches, and Eileen Groth, who teaches at Florida State University.

So to this issue’s contents. They concentrate on the period between 1890 and 1945. In those years Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, and Richmond

Hill; Bournemouth, were household names among Free Churchmen, and so were their ministers. F.B. Meyer was an internationally famous Baptist whose best-known ministry was in a Congregational Church, although by the 1920s he stood for an increasingly conservative (if idiosyncratic) evangelicalism, of a sort decreasingly represented among Congregationalists. It comes, therefore, as a shock to learn that, at different times, he hoped that R.J. Campbell, then still at Brighton, and J.D. Jones, well-entrenched in Bournemouth, might succeed him at Christ Church. As Alan Argent suggests, Jones is not an easy man to place. There must have been more to him than is implied by W.E. Orchard's memorably dismissive quip about the man who kept the sweet shop down the road. There is abundant testimony to his pastoral genius, though it is his strategic skills which will particularly strike the reader. In Dr. Argent's account he emerges as a seminal figure in shaping the kind of Congregationalism that could find itself, thirty years after his death, in the United Reformed Church.

That leaves divorce and remarriage, subjects as likely to figure prominently in contemporary accounts of church life as they figure hardly at all (dynastic complications apart) in past ones. J.D. Jones appears judiciously in Dr. Goldring's narrative; and ageing members of Christ Church would have known that the first marriage of F.B. Meyer's predecessor, Newman Hall, ended in divorce. Victorian Christians were not immune from unsatisfactory marriages.

PENNAR DAVIES (12 NOVEMBER 1911 – 29 DECEMBER 1996 COMPLEXIO OPPOSITORUM

For most of four centuries Nonconformity in England and Wales has run in parallel, its history a shared history, but in the last hundred years this has changed. Universities are meant to universalize and unify; but in Wales, by championing Welsh, the university has increasingly sharpened the separateness of Wales (within Switzerland too linguistic difference has been divisive, but not in the same way), till the monoglot Englishman is unaware of its distinctive culture, the proponents of which are hardly names to him.

Pennar Davies (1911–96) is a striking and mournful example. Gifted, erudite, influential, beloved, not only with the Independents among whom he dwelt but throughout Wales, he is little known beyond its borders. Loss indeed; but it is part of the complexity that he chose to have it so. He was not hostile to the English but he could never – save occasionally to examine a thesis on a Welsh subject – be prised out of Wales; and though keenly international and equally well acquainted with English and German (not to mention the classical and biblical languages) – books in all three languages jostled indifferently on his bookshelves – he wrote mostly and increasingly in Welsh. He wrote poetry and novels as well as history and theology. But his books have not been translated. The *Expository Times* for 1975 carries a page or two under the heading "The Meaning of Messiahship" in translation from *Y Brenin Alltud* (*The Exile King* – a wonderful title). What else is

there? And, when he wanted, he could write so well in English. His long article, "Episodes in the History of Brecknockshire Dissent", is a little masterpiece. Its broad sweep, mastery of the subject and organization of detail, and illustrations that illuminate, make it a model among local history studies, while its insights and reflectiveness carry the reader far beyond the immediate neighbourhood. It is worth reading again and again. But who will find it, hidden in Vol. III pp. 11-65 of *Brycheiniog* (1957; repr. 1959)?

I first met Pennar Davies in 1950, when he was Principal at Brecon. Later I stayed with him in Swansea. In addition to letters from him in his pellucid, innocent, scholarly handwriting, we had long unbuttoned conversations in Swansea and Aberystwyth, and on holidays in Switzerland. His personality was like no one else's. I could call it enigmatic without offending his Welsh friends, for they use the word themselves in the volume published in his honour in 1981, but I prefer to say *complexio oppositorum*. I could never get him to agree that he was enigmatic (perhaps we none of us think it of ourselves?). Discussion left me sure there was a strong unity in him, embracing the puzzling opposites, if only I could find it; but I never did.

Though a Welshman in every movement, he did not grow up speaking the language but had to learn it. Nor was he born Pennar, but added the name to his patronymic from his birthplace Aberpennar (Mountain Ash) – a distinguishing practice not unusual in Wales, where surnames are few and common. He held deeply to Christian Pacifism, but when it crossed with Nationalism was prepared for damage to property, though not persons. His voice was gentle, his smile (at least in photographs) even a bit sappy, but his humour could be earthy, and his affections were as firm and unswerving as his convictions. He was Dean of the Faculty of Divinity, President of the Welsh Independents, President of the Free Church Council of Wales, but would talk eagerly of the simplest things. The history of the Church was the subject he taught all his life, but he lived in his imagination. His novels meant most to him, I think even more than his poems, especially when they were unfinished and he was not sure how things would turn out. But he would not agree that his work might suffer because of this. He was devoted to Celtic mythology; but when I asked him how he perceived the difference between the imagined and the facts on which Christianity turns, and whether the difference was of consequence to him, he would not be drawn.

Dear Pennar, keeping us guessing; it was all part of his enjoyment of life. I hear his chuckle still.

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL

“HOW TO WORK A CITY CHURCH”: CHRIST CHURCH, WESTMINSTER BRIDGE ROAD, FROM THE 1890s TO THE 1920s

In 1892 F.B. Meyer, a Baptist minister known for his commitment both to social issues and to the spirituality of the Keswick Convention movement, was called to be minister of Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, as successor to Newman Hall. Four years later Meyer wrote a book entitled *Reveries and Realities: Or Life and Work in London*,¹ which reflected his experiences at Christ Church up to that point. One chapter, “How to Work a City Church”, shows how Meyer attempted to construct a strategy which would enable an inner-city church to function as a successful, large-scale evangelistic and social agency. Meyer was minister at Christ Church from 1892 to 1907. Following a five-year pastoral vacancy, Len Broughton, an American, took up the pastorate in 1912 and remained until 1915 when Meyer returned for a second period of leadership which concluded in 1921. It is this span of about thirty years which provides the focus of the present study. Christ Church went through considerable change in these three decades and this paper will examine how the distinctive styles of Meyer and, to a lesser extent, Broughton, affected the life of what was reckoned to be one of London’s leading Congregational churches.

From Surrey Chapel to Christ Church

Christ Church was a continuation of Surrey Chapel, in Blackfriars, a non-denominational cause which dated from 1783 when it was established by Rowland Hill. A Church of England clergyman, though of an unusual kind, Hill had been deeply influenced by the outstanding eighteenth-century evangelist George Whitefield. Like Whitefield, Hill combined his Anglicanism with a strong attachment to a wider, less denominational evangelicalism. Surrey Chapel, which seated 2,500 people, became a centre of evangelical Calvinism in south London and Hill’s preaching attracted well-known figures such as Wilberforce, Sheridan, Southey and Hannah More. Hill’s leadership was an important factor in providing renewed vitality for non-Wesleyan expressions of revivalist thinking in England in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Responsibility for the affairs of church government at Surrey Chapel was assigned by Hill to himself and church elders, and where there was participation in decision-making by the membership it was with a view to their concurrence. Members were seen as counsellors rather than voters.² Congregationalism in its classic form had, for Hill, overtones of Republicanism. Surrey Chapel began under a minister who was a firm believer in the spiritual authority of the pastor.

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1. F.B. Meyer, *Reveries and Realities: Or Life and Work in London* (1896).
 2. W. Jones, *Memoir of the Rev. Rowland Hill, M.A.* (1837), pp470, 473, 486.

A second feature of Surrey Chapel was its wide-ranging evangelistic and social enterprises. The Sunday School network was huge. Thirteen schools, among the earliest examples of the Sunday School movement in England, catered for 3,000 children.³ Hill came from the landed interest, the Hills of Hawkstone, Salop.; his father was Sir Rowland Hill Bt., and his brother, Sir Richard Hill, was an M.P. and he himself was an Eton and Cambridge man; yet he devoted considerable attention to the needs of the poor. He became famous for personally vaccinating great numbers of people against small-pox. Societies and institutions set up at Surrey Chapel included a Benevolent Society whose members visited and helped many distressed families, a Dorcas Society which assisted "poor married women in the season of confinement", Almshouses for members of the Chapel and an informal group, men whom Hill designated his "ferrets", which addressed situations of poverty in Southwark. Christ Church inherited from Surrey Chapel a tradition of broadly based outreach.

In its internal life and especially in its worship, Surrey Chapel exhibited both Anglican and Congregational features. An abridged form of the Church of England's liturgical service was used each Sunday and Meyer, writing in 1926, could trace an unbroken liturgical line from Rowland Hill, through the pastorates of James Sherman and Newman Hall, and for twenty years thereafter. The liturgical responses in use during Meyer's period are not, therefore, to be taken as indicative of the trend towards more order and dignity in Free Church worship.⁴ Meyer himself in fact pressed hard, as we will see, for more informal services. He evidently felt, however, some tension in this area, since he also referred in 1903 to the "magnificent liturgy of the English Church" then in operation at Christ Church, and in 1926 pondered on whether it had been wise to abandon it.⁵ Meyer's overriding concern, which reflected the historic priorities of Christ Church, was to consider the evangelistic relevance of the services rather than his own preferences. Speaking to the elders in 1900, he pointed out that many of those attending the church came from "great distances" because they knew him and his books, but if a "lesser known" minister succeeded him then the failure of the church to have attracted the people of the district could have a disastrous effect on its fortunes.⁶ For Meyer, the only form of worship which had real credibility was one which was acceptable to those outside the church.

There was a tradition, which stretched back to Rowland Hill, that the outgoing minister at Surrey Chapel and then Christ Church influenced the choice of his successor. Hill wanted James Sherman, a Congregational minister and a personal

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3. E. Sidney, *The Life of the Rev. Rowland Hill, M.A.* (1835), pp147, 165.
 4. This is what seems to be suggested in M.J. Walker, "Baptist Worship in the Twentieth Century", K.W. Clements, *Baptists in the Twentieth Century* (1983), p23.
 5. F.B. Meyer, *Jottings and Hints for Lay Preachers* (1903), p104; J.W. Read, ed, *Christ Church Souvenir Jubilee Year Book* (1926), pp7-8.
 6. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 26 February 1900. The Christ Church records are held at the Lambeth Archives Department, Minet Library, 52 Knatchbull Road, London, SE5 9QY.

friend, to follow him and this is what happened in 1836 as a result of repeated approaches by Hill to Sherman.⁷ In 1854 Sherman in turn visited Newman Hall and suggested that he should succeed him, but Hall insisted that as a Congregationalist – he was minister of Albion Road Congregational Church, Hull – he required a call from the people as a whole. An invitation was accordingly signed by about 1,000 members.⁸ Hall was an evangelist – becoming internationally famous for his book *Come to Jesus* – and he was also a visionary leader. Because there was doubt about the continuation of the lease of Surrey Chapel after 1881, Hall decided in 1860 that it was necessary to move to another site and erect a new building. £14,000 was initially raised but by the time Christ Church was opened in 1876 the huge Gothic structure had cost the enormous sum of £62,000.⁹ It was to this cathedral of Nonconformity that Meyer came as minister.

Meyer's Call

In 1892 Newman Hall, who had been contemplating retirement from Christ Church, decided to approach Meyer. Meyer was not Hall's first choice. The Presbyterian John McNeill, who had followed a highly successful ministry in Edinburgh by moving to Regent Square in London, had previously turned down overtures from Hall.¹⁰ It became necessary for Hall to act quickly to secure Meyer since it was known that Meyer was being urged by the American evangelist Dwight L. Moody to move to America and engage in evangelistic work there. At a special meeting of the Christ Church Trustees and Elders on 18 June 1892, a meeting called by Hall, it was agreed to pursue the possibility of Meyer as the next minister.¹¹ The note in Newman Hall's diary for 27 June 1892 indicates that his intention was that Meyer should evangelise south London.¹² Meyer was already well known for his achievements in establishing and leading Melbourne Hall, in Leicester, which grew from seventy-seven members to 856 members between 1878 and 1888 and he subsequently became well known in London through his ministry at the influential Regent's Park Chapel, where he added about 300 members in four years. The appeal was put to Meyer at a select fraternal of London ministers and at a special meeting of Christ Church members on 27 June 1892, with Newman Hall in the chair, the resolution was put that Meyer be called. It was

7. J. Lake, *Christ Church and Upton Chapel, 1783-1893* (n.p. 1983), pp7-8; Read, *Jubilee Year Book*, p12.

8. Information held with the Minutes of the Meeting of Trustees and Elders, 11 July 1892.

9. J. Munson, *The Nonconformists: In Search of a Lost Culture* (1991), pp144, 153. For Newman Hall see C.N. Hall, *Newman Hall: An Autobiography* (1898).

10. A. Gammie, *Rev. John McNeill: His Life and Work* (n.d., p138)

11. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 18 June 1892.

12. Quoted in Read, *Jubilee Year Book*, p5.

carried unanimously. Meyer's acceptance was publicly announced at a meeting presided over by George Williams, founder of the YMCA and a trustee of Christ Church.¹³ Before that, however, Meyer was engaged in detailed negotiations with the Trustees of Christ Church about the form of leadership which he was to exercise. Meyer's acceptance letter of 9 July 1892 referred to a "draft basis of agreement" and it is clear from what was later recorded in the minutes of the meeting between Meyer and the Trustees and Elders that Meyer was determined to ensure that his plans for Christ Church were taken seriously and that his ideals would be implemented.

The points of agreement between Meyer and the Christ Church leadership were fifteen in number. Most of the stipulations undoubtedly came from Meyer. These included the agreement that a baptistry (for baptising believers by immersion) would be constructed in the Lower Hall; that Meyer's stipend was to be what was left from church income after the payment of necessary current expenses; that gallery seats were to be free; that a "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" style of service be started for working people; that communion would be observed every Sunday; that Meyer would be free every Tuesday and Wednesday – since he was heavily involved in travelling to speak at conventions organised by the Keswick movement – and that he would chair all meetings. For their part, the Trustees and Elders insisted that Meyer wear his BA gown (to which he gave his "consent") and retain the liturgical services.¹⁴ It was also minuted that Meyer would live within walking distance of the church. In the event he installed living quarters within the building so that he could be on the site for the whole of each weekend.¹⁵ Meyer's letter of 22 July 1892 to the church and congregation emphasised that the principles he was outlining "held the key" to reaching the neighbourhood. The church had to show "freedom and elasticity" if it was to achieve success. It was the challenge presented by Christ Church with its "difficult situation, meagre congregation and lessened stipend"¹⁶ which was so compellingly attractive to Meyer. His sights were set firmly on growth.

Meyer began his Christ Church ministry in October 1892, facing congregations, especially on Sunday evenings, which were run down, the average attendance being about one hundred.¹⁷ From comments made by Meyer it seems probable there were many memories of – and yearnings for – the days when the wealthy arrived in their carriages at the door of Christ Church, but Meyer made it clear that

13. C. Binfield, *George Williams and the YMCA* (1973), p214. See also J.H. Shakespeare in *The Baptist Times*, 4 January 1907, Supplement, p VI.

14. Minutes of United Meeting of Trustees and Elders, 11 July 1892.

15. W.Y. Fullerton, *F.B. Meyer: A Biography* (1929), p.78.

16. Letter of resignation from Regent's Park Chapel, July 1892. The Regent's Park records are held in the Angus Library, Regent's Park College, Oxford. Meyer suggested an initial salary of £400, which the Trustees saw as utterly inadequate.

17. A Chester Mann, *F.B. Meyer: Preacher, Teacher, Man of God* (1929), p53.

18. M.J. Street, *F.B. Meyer: His Life and Work* (1902), p89; Read, *Jubilee Year Book*, p31.

his aim would be to create a centre in which people in the neighbourhood could, without class distinction, come together in worship.¹⁸ Meyer's plans for Christ Church were carefully thought out, with the emphasis, as later set out in "How to work a city church", on firm control coupled with maximum delegation. New departments were formed, with representatives placed on a central committee which Meyer chaired.¹⁹ H.G. Turner, who worked for Lambeth Council, moved from York Road Congregational Church and gave up his business to become Meyer's Secretary. Some of Meyer's supporters from Regent's Park Chapel joined him and he also gained members from the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Turner commented on Meyer's "immense power" to enthuse followers. Meyer, who came from a family which was steeped in commerce, liked to model himself on a business manager and in meetings he had, according to *The British Weekly*, "unrivalled" management skills.²⁰ He believed that he should know all aspects of the business, down to the mechanics of the boiler used at the tea meeting. The selection and supervision of departmental leaders was done by Meyer and he required monthly reports from each of them. Given that this degree of leadership was implicit in Meyer's call, the question arises to what extent Christ Church remained a Congregational church in which the members exercised a decision-making role.

Christ Church and Congregationalism

It was with the ministry of James Sherman that Surrey Chapel moved in a more explicitly Congregational direction, although Rowland Hill had suggested that Methodist, Moravian, Quaker and Presbyterian churches were all congregational in internal church government.²¹ The style which Rowland Hill had developed was to persist to the extent that Christ Church was always governed more by the pastor than the church meeting. Meyer came to Christ Church as a Baptist minister with deep roots in Baptist life, though with some Congregational antecedents, for his parents, before their marriage, had been Sunday School teachers at Grafton Square, Clapham, where James Hill, and later Guinness Rogers, were ministers.²² The chief influences in his early life and ministry were two Baptist leaders, William Brock at Bloomsbury and C. M. Birrell at Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool, where Meyer was assistant from 1870 to 1872; thence he went on to become a significant, if erratic, Baptist figure.²³ While minister at Priory Street Baptist Church in York, he (in June 1873) encountered and was decisively affected by

19. Street, *Meyer*, pp88-9.

20. *The British Weekly*, 5 November 1903, p99.

21. Jones, *Memoir*, p479.

22. Street, *Meyer*, p10.

23. For Meyer and the Baptist denomination, I.M. Randall "Mere Denominationalism: F.B. Meyer and Baptist Life", *The Baptist Quarterly*, Vol 35, No 1 (1993), pp19-34.

D.L. Moody. It was through Moody that Meyer saw “a wider, larger life, in which mere denominationalism could have no place” and it was also as a result of seeing Moody’s evangelistic methods in action that Meyer came to believe that the majority of non-churchgoers were not antagonistic to the gospel but were offended by “the arrangements which raise barriers to the freedom of their access to our places of worship.”²⁴ For Meyer, an effective evangelistic church could not be strongly denominational. It must have an ethos which made it available to all.

A year after Meyer’s arrival the Christ Church Trustees and Elders considered a letter from the London Congregational Union requesting a special sermon and collection on behalf of the Union. It was agreed to reply that it was not possible to respond to the appeal and to remind Andrew Mearns, the Union’s secretary, that Christ Church was “not connected with the Union.”²⁵ In fact Christ Church continued to appear in the Union’s *Handbook* – and was the third largest Congregational Church listed – until 1899. It then dropped out until 1912 when the Council of the London Congregational Union inserted it with a note to show that it was “not fully Congregational”.²⁶ There was, however, co-operation with the Congregational Union in December 1895 over the education question and in the following month it was agreed that the college fees of £15 per year to train one of the Christ Church members, George Dent, at Cheshunt College, should be paid by the church.²⁷ Yet in 1897 the Pastor and Elders again pointed out to the Congregational Union that “in view of the constitution of Christ Church” (which gave considerable freedom to the minister) the leadership “did not consider it strictly a Congregational Church”.²⁸ While infant baptism does not seem to have been a point of issue between Christ Church and the Congregational denomination, it is noteworthy that the official register of baptisms ceased when Meyer took over in 1892, although one of Meyer’s associates baptised infants where parents so wished.²⁹ Meyer was willing to have infant dedications within the morning service, but one of the members of Christ Church recalls that “christening” was a dirty word.³⁰ Anglicans came in large numbers to be baptised at Christ Church and Meyer related how the local rector had to install a baptistry in order to “keep even” and how Meyer inducted him into the art of baptism by immersion.³¹

24. F.B. Meyer, *The Bells of Is: Or Voices of Human Need and Sorrow* (London, 1894), pp17-19.

25. Minutes of United Meeting of Trustees and Elders, 4 December 1893.

26. Minutes of the Council of the London Congregational Union, 16 December 1912. The LCU archives are held at the Greater London Record Office, 40 Northampton Road, London, EC1R 0HB. The two largest London Congregational Churches were City Temple and James Street, Westminster (now Westminster Chapel).

27. Minutes of Meeting of Trustees and Elders, 5 December 1895, and Elders, 20 January 1896.

28. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 5 September 1898.

29. Notes of interviews by Booth’s reporters, Booth Collection, B271, 26 February 1900, p233, held in the library of the London School of Economics.

30. Conversation with John Lake, a member of Christ Church, on 10 March 1989.

31. *The Baptist Times*, 7 April 1927, p239; Fullerton, *Meyer*, p85.

Meyer's instincts were transdenominational, although he could at times trenchantly dismiss the Anglican Church as, for example, when he referred to aspects of Anglicanism as "rusting relics of past battlefields."³² As evidence of Meyer's commitment to Free Church life, he was editor of *The Free Churchman* from its inception in 1897 and was President of the Free Church National Council in 1904 and again in 1920. J.H. Shakespeare, the Secretary of the Baptist Union, referred to Meyer as a united Free Church of England in himself, and it is probable that Meyer's experience at Christ Church, where he combined Baptist and Congregational elements, strengthened Meyer's belief in the possibility of a wider Free Church form of church life.³³ A committed church membership was important to Meyer. Attendance at worship was regularly monitored by the elders and names were frequently deleted from the membership roll on the grounds of non-attendance. In 1904 it was noted that Edith Jones had been "untruthful and inconsistent as a Christian". It was reported that since she had confessed her wrong and was repentant there was a need to encourage her: her membership was suspended for six months, to be reviewed.³⁴ But strict adherence to the principle of the gathered church did not, in Meyer's thinking, imply narrow loyalties. His friendships within the Keswick network were largely with Anglicans, and in 1899 he asked Edward Talbot, the High Church Bishop of Southwark, to the centenary celebration of the Southwark Sunday School Society, suggesting that it would be a "noble act of Catholicity" for Talbot to participate. It would also have been, for Meyer, excellent publicity. Talbot could not give such credence to Nonconformity, and refused.³⁵ In 1906 Meyer became president of the Baptist Union and, aware of the ambiguity of his position as a minister of a non-Baptist church, Meyer asserted that his election was a signal that Baptists recognised him as true to Baptist principles, however wide his ecclesiastical sympathies.³⁶ Meyer's vision was of Christ Church as essentially an undenominational church and in 1926 he spoke of being "entangled" by denominational alliances, warning Christ Church against involvement in any ecclesiastical organisation or movement.³⁷ It was a sentiment which had echoes of the spirit of Rowland Hill.

32. F.B. Meyer, *The Religious Basis of the Free Church Position* (1903), pp14-15.

33. J.H. Shakespeare, *The Churches at the Cross-Roads* (1918), p208.

34. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 25 January 1904.

35. G. Stephenson, *Edward Stuart Talbot* (1936), p114. For an introduction to Keswick, D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 1989), Chapter 5.

36. This was part of Meyer's presidential address: *The Baptist Times*, 27 April 1906, pp305-10.

37. Read, *Jubilee Year Book*, p7.

Evangelism at Christ Church

Christ Church was described by *The British Weekly* as a dimly lit, cathedral-like building and it seemed to be far from ideal as a mission centre. It did, however, border on the slums where some of the “abject poor” of south London lived.³⁸ It was to this challenge that Meyer gave his attention. Numerical growth at Christ Church suggests that Meyer had good reason to be satisfied with his first ministry. From 1892 to 1907 about 1,500 people joined the church, and membership increased from 646 to 942 in Meyer’s first four years. In 1902 Charles Booth’s reporters found that all 2,500 seats were required in the evening, while the morning congregation was about two-thirds of that number.³⁹ The Christ Church membership records provide quite detailed evidence of the people who were joining the church. There was a steady stream of converts from the Brotherhood, usually referred to as the PSA (Pleasant Sunday Afternoon). William Bristow, a working man, was brought to Christ through conversation with Meyer and it was noted that he had been a regular attendee at the PSA. Henry Cameron, a gas purifier, was converted at the PSA Prayer meeting. Alfred Seller, a tailor working at home, was brought into church membership having been converted three months earlier at the PSA.

In the case of the women who joined Christ Church the descriptions in the records are often briefer, probably indicating that Meyer did not take such a personal interest in the work among women. Meyer conducted Monday afternoon meetings for women, when he revelled in such unconventional methods of introducing a talk as asking the wives to hold up their hands if they had kissed their husbands that morning. This was preparatory to a message on marriage.⁴⁰ In most cases the details about women joining Christ Church are restricted to comments like “a young girl living at home” or “a married woman”. Florence Crapper, who joined in 1893, was noted as taking her Bible to work, and it was observed that Elizabeth Rudder, a working woman who joined in 1895, had been converted under Mr Moody. Her husband had been attending the PSA. Winifred and Caroline Hames joined the church in 1896 and both worked closely with Meyer, Winifred as his secretarial assistant.

At the other end of the social scale were new members such as Dr Josephus Shaw, Medical Officer of Health, who, Meyer noted with approval in 1894, had been “restored to Christ through our services”. In the following year J. Williams Benn MP, together with his wife, two sons and two daughters – Ernest, William (the future Lord Stansgate), Lilian, and Eliza – transferred to Christ Church from Hackney and Upminster Congregational Churches. Their address was

38. *The British Weekly*, 10 September 1903, p521; Fullerton, *Meyer*, p107; Street, *Meyer*, p88.

39. C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London: Third Series: Religious Influences* (1902), p32. Cox, *Lambeth, 1870-1930*, p144, quotes lower figures.

40. Meyer, *Reviews and Realities*, p79.

Westminster Palace Hotel, Jennie Street, the journalist, became a member in 1898 and publicised Meyer's work through her biography of him, published in 1902. As some indication of the balance of wealth in the congregation, the Christ Church income in 1900 from general offerings was £757 while the contribution from sittings (pew rents) was £606 and the special donations (undoubtedly from the better off) amounted to £1717. After expenditure had been met the balance, of £698, was paid to Meyer.

Through Meyer's efforts perhaps one third of the Christ Church congregations came to consist of working-class people and he acted as a bridge between the better off and the poor in a way which had not happened before.⁴¹ Charlie Chaplin relates how his mother began to attend Christ Church when she was in great need, having lost her job performing on stage. A more affluent member of Christ Church gave her accommodation at reasonable rent. Although Mrs Chaplin found spiritual comfort through Meyer's ministry, her son was unimpressed by Meyer's "fervent and dramatic" preaching, which seemed to him to resound down the nave "like shuffling feet". Meyer's preaching served only to produce in Chaplin an "aching impatience" for the service to end. Nor was he moved by Bach being played on the great Christ Church organ.⁴² Meyer was increasingly frustrated by this very fact: the services failed to capture the imagination of the mass of the people. In May 1903 he agreed with his elders that non-liturgical evening services would start and that this would be announced in the Press.⁴³ Two years later, in July 1905, Meyer told the elders that he intended to dispense with the benediction at the end of the evening service and instead "give opportunity to those who wished to indicate their... trust in Christ". The elders concurred.⁴⁴ By September Meyer was letting it be known to the press that he wanted to make the evangelistic services more powerful, with better preaching and a "real Salvation Army choir".⁴⁵

Despite these tactical evangelistic moves, Meyer was deeply unsettled. During the whole of the period from 1901 to 1906 he was uncertain whether or not to stay at Christ Church. *The British Weekly*, in 1902, urged him to stay in a settled pastorate and in the following year Meyer announced that in view of the deaths of Joseph Parker and Hugh Price Hughes he felt he should continue his London ministry.⁴⁶ *The Baptist Times*, however, suggested that it would be better for Meyer to give himself to mission, rather than pastoral work.⁴⁷ The membership at Christ Church was declining (albeit slightly) by 1905, from 901 at the end of 1905 to 893 a year later. This was not a trend with which Meyer was comfortable. At a meeting on 12 March 1906 it was announced that he had made an "unalterable decision" to

41. Interview with H.G. Turner, Meyer's Secretary, Booth Collection, B271, 19 July 1899, p79; H. McLeod, *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City* (1974), pp66, 92.

42. C. Chaplin, *My Autobiography* (1964), pp12, 53.

43. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 1 May 1903.

44. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 31 July 1905.

45. *The British Weekly*, 7 September 1905, p509.

46. *The British Weekly*, 20 March 1902, p589; 29 January 1903, p425.

47. *The Baptist Times*, 30 January 1903, p84.

relinquish the pastorate in May 1907. Following his resignation Meyer received what he called a "second ordination" to a wider mission as a "travelling Bishop" of the Free Churches.⁴⁸

The gospel and society

Drawing on his experiences at Melbourne Hall, Leicester, Meyer constructed the framework for Christ Church to operate as a centre serving the neighbourhood. H.G. Turner believed that the scale of operations overseen by Meyer was unparalleled in London.⁴⁹ By 1905 a *British Weekly* correspondent could remark on the "large proportion of sturdy-looking working men" at a Christ Church evening service.⁵⁰ Most of these were probably initially attracted to Meyer's Sunday afternoon Brotherhood which he started in 1893 and saw grow to 800 men.⁵¹ Through the Brotherhood Meyer opened an evening school for adults which H.M. Inspector assessed as having the best results in London.⁵² J. Cox suggests that Meyer confined his informal Brotherhood services to Sunday afternoons to avoid offending his liberal Nonconformist congregation at Christ Church.⁵³ This is misleading. Undoubtedly there was uncertainty at Christ Church when Meyer first began to open up the church to all classes, but it is apparent from Meyer's writings about the Sunday afternoon meetings that he believed religious meetings designed specifically for working men had the advantages of producing a sense of community which was the key to success. Far from being a second-best option, Meyer's targeting of the working class in an environment which they would find conducive was at the heart of his evangelistic and social strategy.

A second area in which Meyer mobilised the resources of Christ Church was in his fight against prostitution. The social purity movement, stimulated by its success in bringing about the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts which had seemed to church leaders to condone prostitution, attempted from the 1880s to close as many brothels as possible. From 1895 to 1907 Meyer achieved the suppression of between seven and eight hundred brothels in Lambeth, Southwark and Bermondsey, using as the vehicle for this the Central South London Free Church Council, which was "practically Christ Church".⁵⁴ Meyer's Christian Stalwarts, as his vigilantes were called, watched suspicious premises and kept detailed records.

48. *Free Church Year Book* (London, 1907), p81; *Free Church Year Book* (1908), p33.

49. Interview with Turner, Booth Collection, B271, 19 July 1899, p79.

50. *The British Weekly*, 25 February 1905, p529.

51. Street, *Meyer*, p92; Fullerton, *Meyer*, p108; Turner interview, Booth Collection, p85.

52. Street, *Meyer*, p94.

53. J. Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth, 1870-1930* (Oxford, 1982), pp144-5.

54. Turner interview, Booth Collection, B271, p95. See also P. McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform* (1980), pp28-9; Read, *Jubilee Year Book*, p30, and *Free Church Year Book* (1908), p179.

For example, at one brothel a woman was seen to enter, over a period between seven o'clock and midnight, with twenty-three men. Meyer, as well as organising applications for summonses, gave evidence to a Royal Commission in the course of which he denied that the police were bribed by prostitutes or that the police blackmailed them.⁵⁵ Constables who gave Meyer "efficient service" in his fight against prostitution were recommended by him to Scotland Yard for promotion. The work was a drain on Meyer's resources since the finance came largely from him. His workers were apparently "very inadequately remunerated".⁵⁶ Meyer also attempted to put pressure on local Councillors and on shops which stocked indecent material.⁵⁷ Finally Christ Church staff undertook "rescue" work. Sister Margaret Graham, one of Meyer's close colleagues, opened her home to prostitutes and took some to Christ Church services. After a sermon preached by Meyer, one prostitute commented to Sister Margaret: "Ain't he lovely: he wouldn't condemn you."⁵⁸

Meyer's social vision was most unusual for a Keswick leader but it was consistent with his Nonconformist convictions and, like many other Free Church leaders of the time, Meyer's activities extended beyond benevolence to political action.⁵⁹ From 1902 until he left Christ Church in 1907 Meyer campaigned against the education policy of the Conservative government and on behalf of the Liberal party. The Education Act of 1902 led to a movement of "passive resistance", in which Nonconformist objectors deducted from their rate payments an amount (normally 3d to 6d in the £) which they estimated was for church schools. Meyer rented a house near Christ Church specifically to be liable for rates and in September 1904 he made a well-orchestrated and well-publicised (he was at that time President of the Free Church Council) appearance before local magistrates as a passive resister.⁶⁰ Speaking to his cheering supporters Meyer announced that he had to do everything possible "to save the children of England from the influence of Romanism and High Anglicanism".⁶⁰ There is no evidence that Meyer used the Christ Church pulpit for political purposes, and he stated in 1905 that the pulpit should concentrate on the central doctrines of the faith rather than on social issues,⁶² but his social and political engagement could not be divorced from his overall ministry. In Meyer's thinking, all that he did was evangelistically and spiritually motivated.

55. *The Times*, 11 May 1907, p6.

56. *Free Church Year Book* (1910), p167.

57. E.J. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain since 1700* (Dublin, 1977), p167; Street, *Meyer*, p111; Cox, *Lambeth, 1870-1930*, p153.

58. Fullerton, *Meyer*, p151-3. Meyer's estate was divided between Margaret Graham and Winifred Hames.

59. For Keswick and society, I.M. Randall, "Spiritual Renewal and Social Reform: Attempts to develop Social Awareness in the early Keswick Movement", in *Vox Evangelica*, Vol 23 (1993), pp67-86.

60. *The Christian World*, 8 September 1904, p14; 15 September 1904, p14.

61. *The British Weekly*, 15 September 1904, p533.

62. *The British Weekly*, 1 June 1905, p195.

Internal tensions

The first signs of any serious tension at Christ Church appear to have surfaced in 1898 over a sermon which Meyer preached against dancing, gambling, cards and theatre going.⁶³ This approach to personal holiness was standard material in Keswick messages and in the early years of his Christ Church leadership the elders had congratulated Meyer on his Keswick ministry and had expressed the hope that "for many years he will be spared to teach the deep things of God".⁶⁴ Now, however, there were voices on the eldership which wanted to leave the matters raised by Meyer to the individual conscience. Others insisted that it was wrong to give the impression that church members could be permitted to gamble. The disagreements were left in the context of a vague understanding that difficulties would be dealt with according to their merits.⁶⁵ Some of Meyer's emphases were beginning to prove less popular. In 1898 a decline in collections was noted and it was decided to write to members and seat holders. The autumn of that year saw arguments about the harvest festival decorations and about the elaborate services; and Meyer was apparently headed for a confrontation with the organist, J.R. Griffiths.⁶⁶ For Griffiths, Meyer's intentions for the worship at Christ Church posed a threat to the cultured musical environment which he had nurtured. On one occasion Meyer asked Griffiths to play the hymn "Safe in the arms of Jesus" and Griffiths refused, although he played it when, later, Meyer collapsed while serving communion.⁶⁷ This was not, however, the breakthrough which Meyer was seeking.

On 26 February 1900 Meyer invited the elders to support his wish to move to a "free and more congregational" evening service. Meyer was confident that he could "sooth the disturbed feelings of any who were rooted to the old services" and that he could prevent friction and division. The elders were divided, three in favour, three against and one hesitant. At first it seemed that Meyer might let the matter rest, but on 11 September 1901 he wrote to the church officers to say that he would be terminating his ministry in a year's time. The ostensible reason was so that he could travel to America, Australia, the Cape Colony and "other parts of the world". The elders were clearly agitated and responded by suggesting that he should be free from responsibilities at Christ Church for six (later reduced to three or four) months each year for his wider ministry.⁶⁸ Meyer's reply was uncompromising. The proposal was not acceptable to him.⁶⁹ A new minister would be needed. Meyer had in mind R.J. Campbell, who was to become well known as the theologically liberal minister of the City Temple. Campbell declined the

63. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 7 March 1898.

64. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 10 September 1894.

65. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 7 March 1898 and 14 March 1898.

66. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 19 September 1898.

67. Conversation with John Lake on 10 March 1989.

68. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 22 October 1901.

69. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 4 November 1901.

invitation to consider Christ Church.⁷⁰ Later Meyer may have wanted A.T. Pierson, the American interdenominational missionary statesman, as his successor and Pierson served Christ Church for two periods in Meyer's absence, picking up the challenge of some of the internal tensions. Pierson appears to have been unenthusiastic about the Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis within the Christ Church services and in 1902 general congregational debate broke out about his changes to the evening service. It was felt by the elders that a meeting should be held at which the organist, Mr Griffiths, would be present.⁷¹ As a result of some appreciative words to Griffiths about his "careful and reverent" contribution to the worship, he accepted that there would be a restricted liturgy with "an occasional anthem in harmony with the sermon". Pierson was satisfied. He had succeeded where Meyer had failed.

When Meyer returned to Christ Church he took up the fight for change with renewed vigour, arguing that a break with the liturgy on Sunday evenings was necessary in order to "gather in the unsaved" and the elders finally agreed.⁷² Griffiths, perhaps sensing that the tide was turning against him, resigned as organist in 1904, after twenty years, and a sub-committee was set up to appoint a replacement.⁷³ The job description said that he must be a man of certified Christian character and would be responsible to the pastor and elders for all matters relating to music and worship. A tight rein was perceived by Meyer to be needed. No doubt also at Meyer's instigation a note was added that no-one should be in the choir who could not "give satisfactory evidence to the Pastor of conversion to God" and that no choir member should receive payment. After years of conflict, Meyer now appeared to have a firm grip on the services at Christ Church. The problem was that Christ Church no longer presented a challenge to Meyer and it was inevitable that his restlessness would move him on to attempt new conquests.

Broughton and the return of Meyer

Meyer's first ministry at Christ Church was followed by a time of uncertainty. Before his departure Meyer attempted to secure J.H. Jowett of the famous Carrs Lane Congregational Church, Birmingham, as the next minister. The call was couched in enticing terms, but Jowett quickly replied in the negative.⁷⁴ John McNeill, who had been engaged in itinerant evangelistic work for sixteen years and had lost his financial backing in February 1908 through the death of Lord

70. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 9 December 1901; *The British Weekly*, 13 February 1902, p470.

71. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 13 October 1902.

72. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 1 May 1903.

73. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 19 December 1904.

74. Minutes of Meeting of Trustees and Elders, 10 May 1906; Elders, 14 May 1906.

Overtoun, was approached by Christ Church about ministry and agreed to take on the pastorate for one year, beginning in September 1908. It was reckoned that 3,000 people were present on his first Sunday and after six months in which a high level of enthusiasm was sustained the Christ Church members pressed him to accept the pastorate on a longer term basis. To the great disappointment of the church and of influential Free Church leaders, McNeill refused and returned in 1909 to evangelistic campaigning. Assistant ministers continued to serve Christ Church, The congregation was also used to famous visiting preachers such as R.F. Horton and G. Campbell Morgan, and to these was added the American devotional specialist S.D. Gordon. Without sustained leadership, however, the only prospect for Christ Church was decline.

The next phase in the life of Christ Church began in 1912 when Len Broughton, previously of Atlanta, USA, accepted an invitation to take up the pastorate. Broughton, under the influence of the Wesleyan holiness leader and Principal of Cliff College, Samuel Chadwick, had converted his church in Atlanta, which was a preaching centre, into a Methodist-style Central Mission. He had also built a conference centre which seated 3,000.⁷⁶ With a reputation as a minister who combined evangelistic, social and spiritual concerns, Broughton must have seemed ideal for Christ Church. One of his visions, which no doubt derived from his success in Atlanta, was to improve the Christ Church buildings. Major internal changes to Christ Church's main hall, Hawkstone Hall, were achieved, but in the process substantial debts were incurred. Broughton was also determined to reorganise the church to ensure that it really was the enterprise's "central and controlling organisation".⁷⁷ It is obvious that Broughton was deeply unhappy about the relative autonomy of the church's departments. He wanted to bring the Southwark Sunday School Society into a closer relationship with the church. Other societies were to be disbanded. The Brotherhood and all other functioning bodies were not to appeal for funds without the approval of Christ Church but on the other hand they were to contribute to Church funds.⁷⁸ Soon Broughton went further: he believed that the Brotherhood had "spent itself" and that many were attending merely to be entertained. The elders were pleased about the large numbers of people joining the church (3-400 in three years) and it was probably the evidence of growth under Broughton's ministry which influenced them on 9 January 1913 to agree to his plan to dissolve the Brotherhood. As with Meyer, Broughton's personal authority enabled him to achieve a change of direction at Christ Church.

In certain respects, however, Broughton's achievements differed from those of Meyer. Broughton was apparently more interested in internal change, including building alterations, than in overtly evangelistic work. While he placed his stamp

75. Gammie, *McNeill*, pp138-41.

76. N.G. Dunning, *Samuel Chadwick* (1933), pp.144-5.

77. Minutes of Joint Meeting of Trustees and Elders, 25 July 1912.

78. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 1 November 1912.

on the Church he also left it with problems. Relationships between the Southwark Sunday School Society and Christ Church broke down when representatives from the church were excluded from the Society's committee.⁷⁹ Debts grew to £6,000 because of the building alterations. On 8 January 1915 the Trustees approved a reduction in Broughton's salary from £1,500 to £1,000, at which time it appears that he was on leave, suffering from a nervous breakdown.⁸⁰ Although Broughton had intimated in 1914 that despite his health problems he intended to remain at Christ Church, and it was agreed that he would have a break from ministry until April 1915, he abruptly resigned in January 1915, announcing that in view of this "crash" and the advice of his doctor (an expert on nervous diseases) he was to return to the United States. He had not, he said, conferred with the elders since he did not want the added strain which that would cause. Most significantly, given that he was unable to continue at Christ Church because of his state of mind, he had already accepted an invitation to the First Baptist Church of Knoxville, Tennessee. The resignation was received by the Christ Church officers with expressions of regret, but they lost no time in putting into action what must have been an existing plan. By 12 March Meyer had accepted an invitation from the elders and Trustees to return to Christ Church.⁸¹ For a short time the pulpit was filled by visiting preachers – among them the Wesleyan holiness leader Samuel Chadwick and the Baptist M.E. Aubrey – but by 7 May 1915 Meyer was back in harness. After the uncertainties of the previous decade, Christ Church was opting for safety.

Christ Church into the 1920s

Although Meyer did not accomplish as much during his second period at Church Church as during his first, there were achievements. The Southwark Sunday School Society was brought back into the Christ Church fold.⁸² The balance due to the bank on 31 December 1915 was £8,521 and Meyer extracted from the Trustees promises amounting to £3,625. Meyer was determined that, as he put it in a letter to members in July 1916, "our dear and beautiful church" should be free from debt. On 1 March 1918 it was reported that £4,000 had been paid off during the year but a debt of £3,456 still remained.⁸³ It was resolved towards the end of 1918 that all members were to be advised that they should have a sitting at 2s 6d per quarter, "with a further voluntary gift towards the upkeep of the ministry".⁸⁴ This

79. Letter from H.J. Metcher, Hon Secretary of the Christ Church Sunday School, 10 September 1914.

80. Minutes of Meeting of Trustees, 8 January 1915.

81. Minutes of Meeting of Trustees, 5 March 1915, and Trustees and Elders, 12 March 1915.

82. Minutes of Trustees and Elders, 17 January 1916.

83. Minutes of Meeting of Trustees, 1 March 1918.

84. Minutes of Meeting of Trustees, 1 November 1918.

approach must have been painful for Meyer who in his earlier ministries at Melbourne Hall, Leicester, at Regent's Park Chapel and at Christ Church had campaigned against the system of pew rents. But this time, however, Meyer was changing his own priorities in some areas, The First World War saw him engaged in frenetic activity as he attempted to meet the needs of both conscientious objectors and military personnel,⁸⁵ but by 1917 he was emerging as the leader of the British premillennial movement and this emphasis on the return of Christ as the only hope for humanity helped to lead him away from his previous active involvement in the world and its concerns.⁸⁶ The spirituality of the Advent Testimony Movement, as it came to be known, was of course in tune with the devotion of Keswick and it is probably significant that in 1917 Meyer was asking the Christ Church elders if he could have meetings in the church in the spring of 1918 on the "lines of the Keswick Convention".⁸⁷ The way in which Meyer broached the subject suggests that Keswick had never really come into the centre of Christ Church life.

Meyer knew that if Christ Church was to flourish in post-war society he must hand over the reins to a younger minister. The church had suffered massive losses during the war, with 760 men on active service. Following the example of Newman Hall, Meyer chose the man to follow him. W.C. Poole was given Meyer's mantle and Meyer became minister emeritus. Right to the end of his life Meyer retained the ideal of Christ Church as a place to which the people of Lambeth would find their way and where the "simple Gospel service" on Sunday evenings would elicit a response from those outside.⁸⁸ Meyer saw Poole as one who could fulfil his hope "to sustain and enlarge the service of our Church to the neighbourhood, London and the World". Poole, who was Australian-born but American by background, was minister from 1921 to 1930 and although it was said that people in London asked either about "No, No Nanette" or about Poole's preaching,⁸⁹ the greatest days of Christ Church were now over.

Conclusion

Writing to the Christ Church members in 1920, Meyer recalled that he had been associated with the church for nearly thirty years apart from (and this was an unenthusiastic reference to his second ministry at Regent's Park Chapel from 1909 to 1915) "one longer intermission".⁹⁰ To what extent did those thirty years

85. For Meyer and the COs, see J. Vellacott, *Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War* (Brighton, 1980), especially pp74, 102-3 and 213.

86. For background on premillennialism, D.W. Bebbington, "The Advent Hope in British Evangelicalism since 1800", *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol 9, No 2 (1988).

87. Minutes of Meeting of Elders, 3 August 1917.

88. Chester Mann, *Meyer*, p63.

89. Lake, *Christ Church and Upton Chapel*, p15.

90. Letter dated 4 June 1920.

represent continuity with the previous history of Christ Church and to what extent was there a move away from the church's roots? Much of what was done by Meyer and Broughton was consistent with Christ Church tradition. The church remained ambivalent about denominationalism, moving ever further to the edge of denominational affairs. There was a general willingness to follow pastoral leadership, particularly in the early years of a new ministry when fresh ideas were proposed. Especially under Meyer, the evangelistic and social ministries of Rowland Hill were sustained and broadened. The discontinuities are less obvious. From the 1890s the new devotional ethos of Keswick affected Christ Church although its impact was less than might have been expected. Probably the most notable achievement was that Christ Church became known for the presence of working-class people integrated with the "wealthy and illustrious".⁹¹ Christ Church's rich congregation, announced Meyer in 1905, had either gone to heaven or to the suburbs.⁹² That was an exaggeration, but the perception was that it had been possible in the course of a decade substantially to change the ethos of one of London's largest Nonconformist churches.

IAN M. RANDALL

THE PILOT ON THE BRIDGE: JOHN DANIEL JONES (1865-1942)

Introduction

In 1942 Sidney Berry, the secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales (1923-48 and 1955-6), described J.D. Jones as "the most distinguished figure in this generation" of Congregationalists. He had left an "ineffaceable mark... upon the denomination he loved and served" and was "a great leader" and "statesman". He had "built himself into the life of the whole denomination, and so long as there are Congregational churches at all the name of J.D. Jones will take a high place on its roll of honour". Indeed Jones was the "power behind the throne", the "director of the Congregational Union's policy" in the early years of the twentieth century, who had become in 1919 the honorary secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales (CUEW). He was "the natural leader not only of great denominational campaigns but also a key man in the talks about Re-union. The heavily-built body, the mellifluous voice, the benign face and the aristocratic monocle together made J.D. Jones a commanding figure in great assemblies".¹ Berry anticipated that future

91. *The Christian*, 16 May 1907, p11.

92. *The British Weekly*, 19 October 1905, p37.

1. *Congregational Year Book*, hereafter *CYB*, [1943], 417, S.M. Berry "J.D. Jones", *The Congregational Quarterly* [1942] vol. 20, 204-5. R.T. Jones *Congregationalism in England 1662-1962* [1962] 383-4, A. Peel *These Hundred Years* [1931] 370.

generations would be thankful that, "in a period of restless uncertainties and amid so many currents and cross-currents", Jones, "a clear-minded and great-hearted pilot, was on the bridge". Yet this pilot was always "accessible" and "we all knew him simply as J.D."²

This "Unmitred Bishop of Congregationalism" was minister of Newland Congregational Church, Lincoln 1889-1898, and of Richmond Hill Congregational Church, Bournemouth 1898-1937. The latter church became known to "a far wider circle than his own town, denomination, or even his own country. It was crowded Sunday by Sunday, not only by his own people but by the many visitors to Bournemouth from all parts of the world". J.D. Jones was "the uncrowned king of Bournemouth, and it was commonly supposed that the Mayor was often chosen at Richmond Hill". In addition to the many denominational offices he held, J.D.'s outstanding status was so widely recognized that he was appointed a Companion of Honour in 1927, a startling tribute to a Nonconformist minister.³

If J.D. Jones stood in the tradition of the dominating Victorian Nonconformist preachers he was also in the vanguard of those who introduced moderators and a minimum stipend into Congregationalism. The effect of such measures, "reasonable and necessary" as they seemed to be, was, "in institutional terms, to centralize the Church". The tide which had turned towards centralization within Congregationalism in the last years of the nineteenth century became more pronounced during the early twentieth century. Jones had an enormous influence on "denominational developments during this period". The Roman Catholic scholar, Adrian Hastings, has observed that "in truly Congregational terms" J.D. Jones's work "was no less than revolutionary. Nonconformity was rendered viable in relatively large scale modern terms but at the cost of much that was most characteristic to it."⁴

Early Life

J.D. was born on 13 April, 1865, at Ruthin, Denbighshire and was the third of four surviving sons of Joseph David Jones and his wife Catherine, the daughter of Owen Daniel, a farmer of Penllyn, Towyn, Merionethshire. The father, Joseph David Jones (1827-70), was himself an accomplished musician and composer and the son of a Wesleyan preacher. Joseph had published, before he was twenty, a financially successful collection of hymn-tunes and went on to write songs, anthems and more hymn-tunes. After attending the Borough Road College in

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2. A. Porritt *J.D. Jones of Bournemouth* [1942] 83, *Congregational Quarterly*[1942] vol. 20, 204.
 3. Berry *ibid.*, *DNB*, *A Gammie Preachers I Have Heard* [1945] 167.
 4. A. Hastings *A History of English Christianity, 1920-1985* [1986] 115, A. Peel *op. cit.* 370.

London, he became master of the British School at Towyn in 1851 and in 1865 he opened a private grammar school at Ruthin but died aged forty-two in 1870. J.D. had little memory of his father but was conscious of his influence as “an incentive and inspiration to his sons”. However Catherine Jones lived to be ninety-two and had a “really formative and determining influence” on J.D. He recalled her more than average “natural ability”, her “character”, “individuality” and “amazing courage”:

She kept open house and had a genial welcome for all and sundry... She loved games... And with all this she united a deep, genuine piety. There was nothing dull or gloomy about our home life, but plenty of fun and laughter...Every morning mother would gather us together for family prayers. We used to read the verses of the chosen scripture in turn and then mother herself would act as priest and commend us all in prayer to Almighty God.⁵

J.D.'s mother, on her husband's death, returned with her boys to Towyn where she let rooms in the summer to English visitors. On her slender resources she sent the eldest boy, Owen, to the City of London School while the others went to local schools. The family attended the Calvinistic Methodist chapel and there J.D. learned conversational Welsh although he admitted that he never mastered the language. He also heard some fine preachers there - “men of such moving eloquence” - both Independents and Methodists. By the age of twelve he was playing the harmonium in chapel although he never had music lessons. He recalled his time at Towyn as “very happy years” although “our home was almost Spartan in its simplicity”. The boys spent summer days on their grandparents' farm working in the hay and corn fields with their uncles, gathering damsons and picking pears, and watching the farmers shearing the sheep.⁶

In 1877 Catherine Jones married again and her new husband, David Morgan Bynner, was minister of St. George's Street Congregational Church, Chorley, in Lancashire. Bynner (1851-1917) had been an assistant teacher in Joseph Jones's school and had then trained for the ministry at Lancashire Independent College. The two elder brothers, Owen and Haydn, had already left home, but J.D. at twelve and Lincoln at ten moved to Chorley. There they attended Chorley Grammar School until J.D. won an exhibition to Owens' College, Manchester at the age of seventeen. Bynner himself was a modest, bookish man, with a “receptive rather than an independent mind”, and two defects, according to J.D., for a preacher. He read his sermons, and did so obviously, and he used an artificial voice when in the pulpit. Yet he was “a good minister of Jesus Christ”, “full of faith and prayer” and the two brothers owed much to “his teaching influence and example”. Indeed Bynner led them to recognise and accept the call to the ministry. His “relations with his stepsons were of the most beautiful kind, and their affection for each other

5. *DNB, Dictionary of Welsh Biography to 1940[1959]* 490-1, J.D. Jones *Three Score Years and Ten* [1940], 15-16.
6. J.D. Jones *ibid.* 16-22.

was deep and strong". On his retirement naturally he and Catherine returned to Towyn.⁷

The Ruthin schoolmaster and the Towyn farmer's daughter, produced a remarkable family. The eldest, Owen Daniel (1861-1951), pursued a career in insurance but also became a major in the 1st Durham Royal Engineer Volunteers. He served as High Sheriff of Merioneth in 1930 and was a local JP. Henry Haydn Jones (1863-1950) joined his uncle at Towyn in the ironmongery business, and eventually owned the Talyllyn miniature railway, several farms and slate quarries. He became Liberal M.P. for Merioneth in 1910 and retained the seat until 1945 when he resigned; he was knighted in 1937. The youngest son Daniel Lincoln (1867-1962), followed J.D. in the Congregational ministry, training at Lancashire College, with pastorates at Morley, in Yorkshire, at Manchester, and at Sutton Coldfield. Their mother used to say she preferred Lincoln's preaching to that of the more celebrated J.D.⁸

While at Chorley J.D. became a Congregational church member: "I experienced no sudden conversion. I had been brought up in the faith; my mother's faith had become mine and joining the church for me was the public confession that I had taken as my own Lord and Saviour the Jesus whom mother had taught me to love and obey." At Chorley he came to teach in the Sunday School, play the organ, work in the Band of Hope, take part in the discussions of the Mutual Improvement Society, and preach his first sermon. In 1886 he graduated from the Victoria University, Manchester, with honours in classics, and then joined a solicitor's office at Chorley. However, convinced he had a vocation, in 1887 he entered Lancashire Independent College to train for the Congregational ministry. For a short time he was associated with its teaching staff but in 1889 he accepted a call to Newland Congregational Church, Lincoln. He had passed the examination for Free Church students at Manchester and became A.T.S. (Associate of the Theological Senatus). This qualified him to sit for the Bachelor of Divinity degree at St. Andrew's University and, at his tutor's prompting, he did so and succeeded, also in 1889.⁹

Newland

At the age of 24 J.D. Jones settled in Lincoln. Newland's building could seat 1,200 people and had enjoyed a succession of celebrated ministers, Caleb Scott, his Lancashire college principal, among them. It was the leading Congregational

7. *Ibid.*, 22-25, A. Porritt *op. cit.* 18, *CYB* [1918] 123, [1963-4]. 433-4

8. *Who was Who, 1941-1950*, 614, *Who was Who, 1951-1960*, 597, *The Times* 3 July 1950, and 1 October 1962.

9. J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 26-27, 32-33, Porritt *op. cit.* 19-21, *CYB* [1943] 417. Victoria University was incorporated in 1880 and Owens' College was at its beginning its only college. By 1893 University College, Liverpool, and the Yorkshire College at Leeds were also parts of the university. J. Thompson *Lancashire Independent College* [Manchester 1893] 182-3.

church in Lincolnshire, with three mission stations attached to it. The Newland church members had felt that a college student would not be suitable but reconsidered the matter on the recommendation of Dr. Scott. The ordination of the young J.D. was reported in a Lincoln newspaper as a "very unusual event".¹⁰

At that service J.D. "made a simple and touching statement" which included "touching allusions to his early home life, and with genuine emotion acknowledged the great influence for good his mother had exercised over him". Dr. Scott spoke of his former student as worthy of the church members' "confidence and esteem; he was a scholarly, gentlemanly man, and an earnest and successful student of the word of God". Within three months of his settlement J.D. married Emily Cunliffe of Chorley whose father, Joseph, was a calico printer and an Anglican. The marriage lasted twenty-seven years and produced a son, Gwilym, and a daughter, Myfanwy.¹¹

The senior deacon at Newland was Joseph Ruston, whose wealth came from engineering, and who had formerly been Liberal M.P. for Lincoln. Of the remaining deacons some were businessmen but others lived on a less exalted level. In time J.D. came to exercise "to large extent the functions of a bishop in the county" and in June 1891 the church meeting agreed "to undertake the care of the church at Caistor for three months". This care continued well beyond the three months and every year from 1894 onwards a report on the church at Caistor (whose status became that of a mission station) was included in Newland's yearly printed *Manual*. Jones would travel to Caistor, to the north of Lincoln and on the Wolds, once a month, involving a train journey and a horse-drawn bus ride. He learned thus of the difficulties of the country church, how a comparatively small debt might be crippling, and also of the social disabilities under which such Nonconformists laboured. He came to admire their "courage and staunchness", their "deep devotion to their Chapel" and their "strong but simple faith". He felt the town churches owed much to the villages as village folk came to live in the towns and refresh the city churches with their faith.¹²

While at Lincoln J.D. also became a lecturer at the Nottingham Institute, established by J.B. Paton (and later known as Paton College). This institute was intended to give men who were otherwise unable to take an ordinary college course a more practical training, enabling them to become "useful and successful country ministers". In 1893 Paton was unwell and he invited J.D. to teach courses in New Testament and church history. Jones continued to do this for five years.¹³

10. Jones *ibid.* 36-37, F. Hill *Newland Congregational Church 1820-1974* [Lincoln 1979] 13, Newland Congregational Church Meeting minutes book 1876-1892, 17 April, 1889, [no folio, no pagination] held at Lincolnshire Archive Office, Lincoln.

11. Newland Church Meeting minutes, *ibid.*, J.D. Jones *ibid.* 40.

12. Jones *ibid.*, 43, 44, 56, Porritt *ibid.* 27. *Evangelical Magazine* [1901] 533, Newland Congregational Church's *Manuals*, available at Lincolnshire Archive Office.

13. Jones *ibid.*, 57-59, Newland Church Meeting minutes 1892-1909, 15, Deacons' Meeting minutes 1893-8,9.

In May 1892 the Newland church meeting heard that J.D. had refused a call to Emmanuel Congregational Church, Cambridge. In 1893 he proposed that the church should hold a grand Indian bazaar to raise sufficient money to clear its debts. Its mission work was costly and, in consequence, Newland had been in debt for over twenty years but the target of £1,500 was reached. In October 1893 he led a series of special mission services and this resulted in fifty-three new church members. In March 1895 he informed his deacons that he had received a "pressing invitation" to Tacket Street Congregational Church, Ipswich, and that he was "in some perplexity" about it. The deacons expressed "serious apprehension". They felt that the work "has prospered greatly, and is prospering at Newland" and looked "with anxiety" for J.D.'s response. Their feelings were the same as they had been when J.D. declined to go to Cambridge - "the work at Lincoln would suffer" if he left. At a meeting on 20 March 1895 J.D. stated "he could not stay... unless he had more effective assistance in the co-operation of an assistant minister so that he could have more time to devote to the fostering of the Mission Stations which appeared to be slipping away from his influence". At this meeting the deacons felt unable to ask the church for such an assistant, as "multifarious obligations" placed the finances under great pressure. Nevertheless one week later J.D. secured a unanimous vote in favour of an assistant pastor. In May 1895 he received a letter from Dr. Fairbairn, the principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, recommending Gilbert Sadler to the church and in June Sadler was appointed with a stipend of £170 per annum.¹⁴

During J.D.'s time at Lincoln (1889-1898) the membership grew markedly. In 1889, 402 members were recorded on the church roll, in 1890 - 385, in 1891 - 398; in 1893 the church had grown with the influx from J.D.'s special mission services to 483 (the "largest number yet recorded"), in 1894 -496, 1895 - 487, 1896 - 489 and in 1898 there were 481 members. J.D.'s leaving did not alter the upward trend for in 1901 the church had 580, and in 1902 620 members. The three mission stations, Far Newland Chapel (the "most successful"), Croft Street Chapel, and South Bar Chapel, as well as Ashton's Court Mission (founded in 1896 by Sadler and Newland's branch of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour) and Caistor Congregational Church all placed demands on the Newland pastor.¹⁵

In March 1898 J.D. indicated that he had decided to leave: "After long and prayerful consideration and after a mental conflict I hope I may never have to pass through again I have come to the conclusion that it is my duty to accept the call sent to me by the Church at Richmond Hill, Bournemouth". "It is sheer pain to

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14. Newland Church Meeting minutes 1892-1909, 15, Deacons' Meeting minutes 1893-98. 8, 9, 48, 50, 52, 54. For Sadler see *CYB* [1927]. Emmanuel Congregational Church, Cambridge was without a minister from 1891, when W.S. Houghton left, to 1894 when P.T. Forsyth came. *CYB* [1895]. Tacket Street, Ipswich was served by T.J. Hosken 1896-1917.
 15. Newland Church Meeting minutes 1892-1909, 14-22, *Newland Manual* [Lincoln 1897] 74. J.D. was succeeded at Lincoln by Henry Herman Carlisle 1899-1908.

me” to leave. Newland gave him a “handsomely bound address, a Gold Watch, a Derby Roll Top Desk and a Liberty Chair” and to “Mrs. Jones a silver fitted dressing case”. In the year of his leaving Lincoln J.D. also became chairman of the Lincolnshire county union of Congregational churches. The assistant pastor, Arthur G. Spears, (appointed in November 1897, after Sadler had accepted the call to Chester Street Congregational Church, Wrexham) wrote in the 1899 *Manual* that J.D. left “a gap... very difficult to fill” and that his pastorate there had been nine years’ work of “conspicuous ability and conspicuous success”.¹⁶

Richmond Hill

The members of Richmond Hill Congregational Church, Bournemouth, voted overwhelmingly in favour of J.D.’s coming to them in March 1898 in succession to J. Ossian Davies. He was to receive a stipend of £600, with the free use of the manse. The invitation mentioned the “spontaneity of the first manifestation of feeling” towards him and “the growth of that feeling has been as remarkable as it has been deep-rooted”. J.D. preached there first when on holiday in July 1897 and began his ministry there in June 1898. He was to remain for almost forty years until 1937: “an era of expansion” for the church and Bournemouth.

As at Lincoln, J.D. saw debt as a challenge and in September 1898 the church meeting minutes record that he “had come to the conclusion that the time had arrived for an effort to be made to clear off the debt during the next three years”. The meeting “heartily” approved Jones’s scheme. In December J.D. announced that the church magazine “would take an altered form” and he was to be the editor. He was concerned with a number of activities at this time. In October 1899 his involvement in the International Congregational Council at Boston, Massachusetts, at which he gave a “memorable address”, was noted whilst in the following February he asked the church members to pray for the success of the forthcoming mission of Gipsy Smith. As a result of this mission eighty-five names were forwarded to J.D. who sensitively introduced these new converts to the more formal customs of the church.¹⁷

Again, as at Lincoln, J.D. invited leading Congregationalists to preach at Bournemouth. While Dr. Mackennal of Bowdon Downs, Charles Berry of Wolverhampton and R.F. Horton of Hampstead had preached at Lincoln, Ossian Davies, J.H. Jowett of Birmingham, Campbell Morgan of Westminster, Bernard Snell of Brixton, Dr. Paton, and Joseph Parker of the City Temple, all preached at

16. Newland Church Meeting minutes *ibid.* 19, 20. Deacons’ Meeting minutes 1893-98, 74 *Manual* [1899] 1.

17. Richmond Hill Congregational Church Meeting minutes book [no folio, no pagination] 14 March 1898, 30 September 1898, 3 November 1898, 5 October 1899, 1 February 1900, 29 March 1900, *Evangelical Magazine* [1901] 533, J.T. Davies *Richmond Hill Story* [1956]44. For J. Ossian Davies see *CYB* [1917] 72.

Bournemouth in J.D.'s first three years there.¹⁸ In June 1900 J.D.'s stipend had increased to £700 and three years later it was raised to £800. In July 1908 a proposal to appoint an assistant pastor, who was to work especially among young people, was approved and in October J. Evelyn Thomas of Treforest, Glamorganshire, was called with the stipend of £200.¹⁹

In September, October and November 1914 letters were received from the Congregational Unions of New Zealand, New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, Victoria and Tasmania thanking Richmond Hill for releasing J.D. to visit them. Whilst abroad he had been awarded an honorary doctorate by St. Andrew's. In June 1916 J.D. spoke of the "unbroken harmony" (a recurrent theme for him at Newland and Richmond Hill) during his eighteen years at Bournemouth.²⁰

Then, in 1917, his wife died, casting him into "profound sorrow" and in 1923 his son Gwilym, aged twenty-eight, died in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) following a motorcycle accident. Gwilym had been working on one of Lord Leverhulme's plantations while acting also as an honorary District Commander. He had volunteered in 1914, was sent to the front early in 1915, was wounded twice, won the Military Cross, had been gassed, transferred to the RAF, became a pilot and was recommended for, although not awarded, the VC. After his wartime experiences he found west Africa "congenial". J.D. learned the news in London, where he kept an appointment to preach and said "nothing to anybody", until his return to Bournemouth at 2.30am. There he allowed the "deeps of... grief" to flow. He recalled the loss of his wife and son as "an impoverishing time".²¹ In March 1936 J.D. sailed on a three months cruise, paid for by anonymous friends, to west Africa where he visited Gwilym's grave. There "the great deeps" opened again but he was comforted by the kindness of those who had worked with his son and who recalled him with affection.²²

In 1926 the Richmond Hill church meeting called Thomas Yates to be the "associate minister". J.D. did not have an assistant at the time and Yates was both distinguished and experienced. He had been chairman of CUEW 1922-23 and had had successful pastorates in Liverpool and at Kensington Chapel. Yet he had only recently survived a near-fatal road accident, felt "worn and tired" and had suggested that he would welcome an invitation to Bournemouth. Yates and J.D. had been friends for years. In February 1926 the church members agreed to "invite a colleague to Dr. Jones in the pastorate involving a division of the responsibility for the Sunday services", and in March Yates's invitation was sent, offering him £750 pa. The members stated that they "have felt for some time that the strain of

18. Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 1 November 1900, 3 January 1901, J.D. Jones *op. cit.*, 64-66.

19. *Ibid.*, 30 July 1908, 29 October 1908. For Thomas see *CYB* [1956] 526.

20. *Ibid* 1 June 1916, 3 July 1917, J.D. Jones *op.cit.* 159.

21. J.D. Jones *op. cit.*, 193-7, A. Porritt *op. cit.* 60, *CYB* [1926] 87.

22. Jones *ibid.*, 196, Porritt *ibid.* 120.

28 years of service here entitled Dr. Jones to any relief we can give him". Yates, a man of "bubbling fun", remained with J.D. for over seven years working in "double harness... without jolt or jar of any kind". Yates's presence at Richmond Hill rendered J.D.'s visits abroad to Australia and New Zealand in 1926, to the United States in 1929, to Canada in 1930, and South Africa in 1932 less painful to his church members. In 1934 Yates left Bournemouth for St. Aubyn's Congregational Church, Upper Norwood, London, and he died in 1936. J.D. presided at his funeral service: "Congregationalism has lost a great leader".²³

During Jones's time at Richmond Hill the number of church members rose from 470 in 1899 to 738 in 1918. Thereafter the rise continued but less steeply and in 1938 the church had 799 members. Numbers of Sunday school pupils in contrast dropped from 386 in 1899 to 212 in 1938 and, alongside this, the numbers of lay preachers rose from fifteen in 1899 to twenty-three in 1918 but had dropped to seven in 1938. These figures, although clearly not providing a full picture (other Congregational churches had developed in Bournemouth during this time), suggest that, although J.D.'s preaching and presence remained as attractive as ever, the church was not immune to the decline which the Christian churches in Britain suffered in these years.²⁴

At the peak of his powers, J.D.'s health began to suffer. On the last day of the International Congregational Council, in Bournemouth, 8 July, 1930, at an afternoon tea party, the retina of his left eye slipped and he never regained his sight in that eye. He became depressed for a time although R.F. Horton's sympathy helped (he was similarly afflicted), for he pointed out that F.B. Meyer had laboured brilliantly under a like disability. Indeed in June 1931 J.D.'s thirty-third anniversary at Richmond Hill was celebrated and his "impaired eyesight" was noted although the church meeting minutes record "he simply ignores the handicap... and refuses to become in any sense an invalid". Yet J.D. injured a knee soon after and from 1931 onwards he was often unwell, being advised by his specialists in 1933 to curtail drastically his activities and, by Lord Horder, to retire immediately from Richmond Hill. However also in 1933 J.D. married again and his health improved. His bride, Margery Thompson, aged forty-four, was a member of Richmond Hill and a close friend of Myfanwy Jones. They married in September at Towyn in a quiet service conducted by Dr. Sidney Berry and Thomas Yates.²⁵

He was very proud of his church ("the finest folk any pastor ever had") and of his deacons in particular ("a wonderful entourage of godly men"). Chief among

23. Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 4 February 1926, 11 March 1926, Jones *ibid.* 283-7, 288, Porritt *ibid.* 114-117, A.A. Lee *A Happy Warrior: Thomas Yates DD* [1938] 45, *CYB* [1928] 11-12, [1937] 713-4.
24. *CYB* [1899, 1918, 1938]. Richmond Hill formally provided sittings for 1,200 people at its services.
25. Porritt *ibid.* 69-70, Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 4 June 1931. Margery Thompson had been a childhood friend of Nathaniel Micklem.N. Micklem *The Box and the Puppets* [1957] 16.

them were members of the Beale family. John Elmes Beale had once been a Methodist and retained much "Methodist unction and fervour". He built up his business to become "easily the biggest... in the town" and served as mayor of Bournemouth for three successive years and was a long-serving treasurer of Richmond Hill. J. Bennett Beale, also a deacon, was the mayor in 1938 when J.D. Jones was given the freedom of the borough and, with J.D., was a representative of the CUEW at the centenary celebrations of Congregationalism in Jamaica in the winter of 1935. J.D.'s "consummate and devoted" church secretary was Ernest Lacan Lane, the "staunchest of friends", who became a deacon of Richmond Hill in 1890 and church secretary in 1898. He was to remain secretary until 1936, the year before J.D.'s retirement, having served also as chorister, Sunday school teacher, and lay preacher. Lane was to be the last survivor of J.D.'s original deacons at Bournemouth. Percy Bright, another deacon, was the son of a former LMS missionary and became mayor of Bournemouth in 1930 when the International Congregational Council met in the town. Bright's store was also one of the largest businesses in the town. Percy Bright was to be an influential director of the London Missionary Society for many years. "Devoted allegiance to the Church was the very breath of life to pastor and deacons".²⁶

During J.D.'s ministry at Bournemouth his church campaigned consistently for Sunday observance and strict control of the drink trade. In July 1903 a letter went from Richmond Hill to the town corporation, objecting to the proposal to run tram cars on a Sunday. In 1906 the church members congratulated the local magistrates on "the prospect of a decrease of licensed houses in Commercial Road" and in 1912 they opposed the extension of the licence of the Norfolk Hotel, "as being unnecessary and against the best interests of the community". During the First World War J.D. spoke at political meetings to support Lloyd George in his measures to control the sale of alcohol and in May 1928 the church expressed its disapproval of a greyhound racing track being built at Winton.²⁷

Richmond Hill was not unique in founding other Congregational churches but it was unusual in the level of its continued maintenance and support of those churches and their ministry. The Richmond Hill Group ("an adventure in fellowship") was J.D.'s creation and he was its "bishop". "He gathered about the Mother Church many of those Churches which had sprung from Richmond Hill; and, as Bournemouth grew, new Churches were planted in new districts". By 1925 the churches under Richmond Hill's parental care were Charminster Road, Longham and East Howe, Pokesdown, Throop and Moordown, Westbourne, and Winton. In 1928 Sutton Road was opened and Moordown separated from Throop

26. Porritt *op. cit.* 46, 71, 96-7, J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 60, 62, 77-78, 80, 193, 272, N. Goodall *A History of the London Missionary Society 1895-1945* [1954] 533, *Richmond Hill Congregational Church, Bournemouth: Jubilee 1856-1906* [Bournemouth 1906], *CYB* [1926] 88.

27. J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 230-1, Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 1897-1914 2 July 1903, 1 March 1906, 29 February 1912, 1914-1931 31 May 1928.

and a new church building opened there in 1930. The last of the churches, Iford, opened in January 1934 so that by the year of J.D.'s death (1942) the group consisted of eleven churches including Richmond Hill. The terms on which churches became part of the group included their acceptance that Richmond Hill's pastor was the senior pastor of the group, that pastors of the group churches attended the deacons' meetings at Richmond Hill, and that two Richmond Hill deacons attended the deacons' meetings of each of the group churches. On their acceptance of these terms Richmond Hill made grants to the group churches. The connection with Richmond Hill "saved them from the disadvantage of extreme independency without encroaching on true Congregational autonomy". Even at Lincoln J.D. had dreamed of a United Congregational Church in every British city.²⁸

J.D.'s regard for smaller churches revealed itself in his devoting two days a week "in his forties, fifties and sixties" to preaching anniversary sermons and addressing "little public meetings in the evening which could only muster small audiences in keeping with the small population". In addition he enjoyed preaching the anniversary sermon at Bloomsbury Baptist Church which he did for over twenty years in succession.²⁹

J.D. made no inflated claims for his own preaching. He saw himself as just "a plain man who spoke straight on", with none of the "rushing eloquence" of his predecessor Ossian Davies. However early in his second year at Bournemouth the congregation began to grow and until the end of his ministry there the church remained "consistently full" and "often crowded... to overflowing". J.D. had "a fine, compelling power" in his preaching which "never soared to the heights of a Parker or a Jowett" yet maintained a "wonderfully even level, below which he never fell". Ernest Jeffs likened J.D.'s preaching to that of "one or other of the great composers", an impression gained, over forty years, of "a stream of music... all to the accompaniment of that golden voice, soft yet resonant, with the Welsh lift at the end of each sentence which made it heard without effort in the remotest corner of the largest building". Another sermon-taster, while conceding that J.D. attracted congregations which included "Anglicans as well as Protestants of all shades" and that he was best known to the public as a preacher, believed he was "not one of our greatest preachers": "his sermons were not particularly outstanding either in intellectual brilliance or in surpassing eloquence of delivery". They were neither "very profound" nor "sensational" yet they were carefully written always.

28. Porritt *op. cit.* 49, 50, 98. *The Manchester Guardian op. cit.*, *CUEW The Eighty-Third Autumnal Assembly op. cit.* 22-32, *The Richmond Hill Magazine op. cit.* 65, Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 1914-31 30 December 1915. In the *United Reformed Church Year Book* [1988-9] nine churches of these eleven are recorded as surviving. From the Richmond Hill group "it was a natural step" to "the new ideal of Congregationalism as a living and growing organism rather than a mass of unrelated units". *The Christian World* 23 April 1942.

29. *British Weekly* 23 April 1942. The minister of Bloomsbury Baptist Church 1905-28 was T. Phillips. *Baptist Handbook* [1936].

J.D. used his manuscript in the pulpit but in such a way that made it "almost impossible" for his hearers to realise he was reading.³⁰

J.D. willingly invited his hearers to accompany him on "a pleasant country walk" which led them without realising it to "the Divine Kingdom" (as Silvester Horne put it). In 1931 A.T.S. James noted that Jones was "still carrying on a ministry at Bournemouth which is one of the most notable the denomination has had". This note followed James's listing of remarkable ministries in particular localities, such as R.W. Dale in Birmingham, Arnold Thomas in Bristol, Alexander Mackennal in Bowdon, and Joseph Parker at the City Temple. Yet Dale had died in 1895, Parker in 1902, Mackennal in 1904, and Thomas in 1924. J.D. Jones certainly exercised an "unique influence" which was "memorable" but part of his uniqueness was, as James implied, that he survived and prospered long after the day of the Victorian Nonconformist preachers had vanished. Men like Jones were "the rear-guard of a generation which was passing away". In and out of the pulpit, "he maintained the manner of the mid-Victorian divines".³¹

A Bournemouth clergyman who frequently attended the Tuesday morning services at Richmond Hill saw J.D. as "too catholic in his outlook to be confined to any one locality". "His sympathy and understanding of people were amazing as I, personally, have good reason to know... A delightful sense of humour and his cheery and sunny nature had a dispelling effect upon gloom and depression whenever he encountered it." J.D. was simply called "the pastor" at his churches and he took pains to know his people's names. He "radiated geniality on his way", carrying "their burdens on his heart". He was a punctual visitor and won the affection, even the adulation of his flock "by an almost incredible accessibility".³² J.D. was regarded as a careful pastor, making many visits in an afternoon. How he fitted so many in "is a mystery never solved" but his visits were allied with "a lovely intimacy and regard, as he knew the family and their circumstances".³³

In 1934 J.D. went to Jamaica to attend the centenary celebrations of the Congregationalists there. In February 1936 the question of his continuance at Bournemouth was raised. The deacons did not feel the time was right "for him to terminate his ministry at Richmond Hill". They wanted him to complete forty years there and promised him their "love and devotion". They agreed that he should have three months' holiday every year and in April 1936 he stated that he felt "it was time to go" but he would acquiesce in the deacons' judgement. In October J.D. was firm: he would leave the following May, and in March 1937 Dr.

30. J.D. Jones *ibid.* 70, 71, 72, A. Porritt *ibid.* 90, 93-94, Davies *ibid.* 45, A. Gammie *Preachers I Have Heard* [1945], 167-8.

31. A. Gammie *op. cit.* 168-9, *The Manchester Guardian* 20 April 1942, A. Peel (ed.) *Essays Congregational and Catholic* [1932] 326-7, *The Congregational Two Hundred* [1948] 176, 205, 208, 215, I. Murray *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years 1899-1938* [Edinburgh 1982], 360.

32. *The Richmond Hill Magazine op. cit.* 64, A. Porritt *op. cit.* 96.

33. *British Weekly* 23 April 1942.

John Short of Hampstead was called to the pastorate. J.D. had been anxious that Richmond Hill should have chosen his successor before he left. Short, who was not asked to preach with a view, was the unanimous choice of "an amazing vote" (as J.D. described it).³⁴

Congregational Union

In January 1902 the church meeting at Richmond Hill discussed Joseph Parker's proposals for the re-organisation of the Congregational Union which he had put forward as its chairman in 1901 in his addresses at the Spring and Autumn assemblies. Parker had used the same title for both addresses, "The United Congregational Church", suggesting that in such a body the resources of the churches - funds, colleges, literature, buildings - would be administered centrally by an assembly of delegates from the county unions. Parker argued that Congregationalism needed reconstruction and consolidation. "Is it really a glorious thing to be absolutely independent of each other?", he asked rhetorically. He anticipated that a United Congregational Church would have a ministerial sustentation fund which would not sustain inefficient, lazy ministers but would help "devoted pastors", and "comparatively obscure" ministers to whose "unostentatious service" so much is owed. He also expected that the U.C.C. would find an acceptable means of recognising ministers. "What are 2,866 Congregational ministers in England and Wales doing? What are the 400,000 Church members doing?... For what noble testimony do the 4,600 Congregational churches, chapels and mission stations unitedly and co-operatively stand?" The church meeting unanimously approved "the proposals for the closer federation of the Congregational Churches for the purpose of creating efficient sustentation and superannuation funds" and agreed "to be assessed for the support of such funds on a reasonable basis provided always that the entrance to the ministry is sufficiently safeguarded and the denominational colleges are brought under the control of the proposed representative council". It nonetheless stated its "disapproval" of the proposed title, "The United Congregational Church", and expressed a preference for "the retention of the present name". Just as its minister's reputation was rising - in May 1902 J.D. indicated he would be visiting Canada as one of four delegates from the Congregational Union in 1903 - so Richmond Hill expected that its voice would be listened to.³⁵

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34. An assistant pastor, H.I. Frith of Reading, was appointed in May 1934. For Frith see *CYB* [1960]. J.D. finally left in July 1937. Richmond Hill Church Meeting minute book 14 December 1933, 3 May 1934, 1 November 1934, 27 February 1936, 2 April 1936, 4 March 1937, 1 July, 1937, Porritt *op.cit.* 71-72. Short was to be one of the signatories, with J.D., of the letter *To The Ministers of Christ's Holy Gospel*, published in 1939. For Short see *CYB*[1959], 404.
35. *Ibid.* 23 January 1902, 1 May 1902, *CYB* [1902] 17-50. A. Peel *op.cit.* 351, 360, R.T. Jones *op. cit.* 376, J. Munson, *The Nonconformists* [1991], 164-4.

Parker's scheme proved unacceptable to the county unions but it resulted in a committee to discuss how the churches might "unite more closely for common purposes". This committee drafted a new constitution for the CUEW which was accepted in 1904. As a result the council of the CUEW was set up, composed of about 300 members (CUEW officials, those elected by the county unions, and some few others), to carry out executive work and prepare material for the assemblies. In 1903 J.D. served as chairman of the Hampshire Congregational Union. In June 1908 the church meeting noted its sense of the honour bestowed on the pastor and the church by his election to the chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.³⁶

In April 1909 J.D. explained the proposed Central Fund of the Congregational Union to his own church members. He spoke of the aim to raise the minimum stipend for a minister to £100 and, as the fund became large enough, to £120 and also "to make provision for ministers temporarily out of charge, to help towards superannuation, and to raise for these purposes a capital sum of £250,000". The fund should be so controlled as to provide "safeguards against the entry into the ministry of incompetent and untrained men". The church approved and pledged itself to raise £2,000 within four years. This was "carried unanimously with enthusiasm". In May 1909 the Congregational Union assembly also committed itself to the Fund. Its beneficiaries were expected to join the superannuation scheme and their churches, to receive further help from it, were required to adhere to the regulations relating to the recognition of churches and ministers (their calling of ministers was subject to the approval of the executive of their county union). Thus the Fund increased the centralizing tendencies at work in Congregationalism.³⁷

The Fund itself arose out of a widespread concern about the financial support of the ministry. A committee, "the strongest that could be chosen" - Sir Albert Spicer, Sir J. Compton-Rickett, Sir Arthur Haworth, Gerard N. Ford, Sir Murray Hyslop, J.C. Meggitt, Dr. W.B. Selbie, R. Wardlaw Thompson, and others - was set up in the autumn of 1908 to consider this matter. Its members chose J.D. to be their chairman. They decided that "all monies subscribed were to be for Denominational and not local purposes. This was something new in Congregationalism. It was an exercise in fellowship. It was a call to think not in terms of the local Church, but of the whole Union of Congregational Churches. It provided a test of... whether we were just a number of detached and isolated Churches, each living its own separate life, or whether we were a Denomination with a common life and common responsibilities."³⁸

36. *Ibid.* 28 June 1900, 4 June 1903, *Who was Who*, 1941-50, 614, R.T. Jones *op. cit.* 376-7.

37. *Ibid.* 29 April 1909, R.T. Jones *op.cit.* 377-8.

38. J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 97-99. The Twentieth Century Fund, ten years earlier, had raised a considerable sum but this had been administered locally, not centrally, and churches had used it "to pay off their debts and to add to their own equipment".

J.D. recalled an "old-fashioned Independent" from the Potteries saying to him at the Council meeting in March 1909, "Well, that's the end of the old Independency, but to show my good will, I'll give you £250". Through personal advocacy Jones raised £12,250 in one day and by the time of the May assembly in 1909 £40,000 had been promised. The entire sum of £250,000 was raised by May 1913 largely through J.D.'s efforts. His "sympathy for the village minister" led him to support so wholeheartedly the campaign.³⁹

For his Spring address as chairman J.D. chose the title *Catholic Independency* and described himself as "a plain working pastor", overawed by the reputations of those who had preceded him. He spoke of the relationship between Congregational and other churches, especially those claiming the title Catholic, and he pleaded for a freedom "modified, corrected, balanced by respect for the authority of the witness of the Holy Catholic Church". He made clear his dissatisfaction with liberal theology. "The substitution of Jesus Christ is no development of historic Christianity, it is the repudiation of it. Whosoever subscribes to that substitution makes a breach with historic Congregationalism; he makes a breach with the Christianity of the apostles and the New Testament." He expressed his opinion "upon the present situation" - "we are suffering from an exaggerated and excessive subjectivism". He praised the recent Welsh revival ("Drunkards and reprobates five or six years ago - sober men praying today") and urged upon Congregationalists "a living, energetic faith" resting "on a personal experience" of Christ. In 1925 he returned to this theme, praying for an increase of faith in the Congregational churches, as well as a restoration of the prayer meeting, and a recovery of belief "in the special and distinctive things for which we stand".⁴⁰

On 10 June 1910 Richard J. Wells, the secretary of the Congregational Union (1905-1923), wrote to Ernest Lane, Richmond Hill's church secretary, to record the "denomination's deep sense of indebtedness" for the church's sacrifice in freeing J.D. in his chairman's year. "He has rendered yeoman service and with magnificent results so far as the Central Fund Scheme is concerned". The Council Report of 1909-10 stated that "by no mere coincidence the launching of this scheme fell to the lot" of J.D. Jones. "To his able statesmanship is due the fact that the scheme was floated with a success that never before has marked our denominational enterprises". In May 1913 the church gave its thanks to God and congratulated J.D. on the success of the Central Fund and "the pastor feelingly replied".⁴¹ The CUEW Council Report in 1913 recorded that J.D.'s "advocacy of the Scheme assured its acceptance, and by his untiring and self-denying labours he has carried it through to completion; he has shirked no task, and he has grudged no sacrifice." Albert Peel, though a critic of Jones's centralizing work in the Congregational Union, wrote in 1931 of the Central Fund. "The Fund proved, and still proves, the greatest boon to churches throughout the country. It merely needs

39. *Ibid.* 99-101, *Congregational Year Book* [1943], 417.

40. *CYB* [1901] 35, 36, 50, 57-58, [1926] 109, 120.

41. Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 10 June 1910, 29 May 1913.

a reference to the grants made in the *Year Book* in any year to realize the difference that the Fund has made to many churches and ministers".⁴²

In March 1919 Sir Albert Spicer addressed the Richmond Hill church meeting "on the proposal to nominate Dr J.D. Jones for the position of Honorary Secretary of CUEW" and the members expressed their "satisfaction" at this "honour". The church had "absolute confidence in its Pastor's Judgement in so weighty a matter" and desired to give him "the fullest freedom in coming to a decision". J.D. had been asked to stand as secretary of the CUEW in 1905 but had declined. R.J. Wells, who was appointed then, had become particularly unpopular with the Congregationalists of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Wells, who had been secretary of the Hampshire Congregational Union and was a friend of J.D.'s (which may suggest Jones's influence in the choice of Wells for the post), was a good administrator but the public advocacy of CUEW schemes was largely left to Jones after his acceptance of this unique role. As J.D. put it, Wells became secretary "at the transition period when Congregationalism was becoming conscious of itself as a denomination... The transition from the old isolated Independency to our modern more coherent and interdependent Congregationalism was not easily made... [I]n a sense Wells sacrificed his popularity on the altar of efficiency". J.D. was too astute ever to make that mistake. He knew how to cultivate popularity and retain it and was never likely to be a sacrificial victim. His honorary secretaryship of the Congregational Union was "inevitable" because he "had been for many years the most prominent church statesman in Congregationalism and no Union meeting was complete without him". He had become as indispensable to the running of the CUEW as he was to Richmond Hill. In November 1919 at Bradford he pleaded for an increased minimum ministerial stipend. Again his plea was heard and acted upon.⁴³

In May 1924 J.D. was elected to serve a second term as chairman of the CUEW, and he received several nominations to serve in the Union's centenary year, 1931, only withdrawing his name some months before the election. He made "A Plea for Preaching" in his Spring address in 1925, seeing "a revival of... preaching with grip and passion and reality in it" as at least a partial remedy to the "ground" which "we have lost" in the past twenty-five years. "I am not for having our young ministers stress the devotional to the disparagement of the preaching", he stated, as he defended that "Evangelical preaching" which "confronts this burdened and stricken world of ours and proclaims to it a Gospel of Redemption". In his funeral address Berry recalled Jones as a "great expository preacher, as Sunday by Sunday, and Tuesday by Tuesday, to that mid-day congregation that he drew into his sanctuary and that he loved so much, he opened up the eternities". For him JD's preaching was "simple and direct" always.⁴⁴ The autumn assembly of the

42. *CUEW Council Report* [1913] 590, A. Peel *op. cit.* 384-5.

43. *Ibid.* 4 March 1919, J.D. Jones *ibid.* 106-8, A. Peel *op. cit.* 361, *Congregational Year Book* [1921] 9-10, *Congregational Quarterly* [1923] 141-3, R.T. Jones *op. cit.* 383-4.

44. *The Richmond Hill Magazine* [June 1942] vol. 44, no. 6, 64, *CYB* [1926] 90-91, 97.

CUEW in October 1925 was held in Bournemouth (twenty-five years after its previous visit in 1903). On this occasion J.D. was presented with an oak bench and desk for use "in the Chancel of the Richmond Hill Church", as a token of appreciation for his efforts for the Forward Movement Fund.⁴⁵

Moderators and the Forward Movement

In 1919 the system of provincial moderators was established and J.D. was closely involved with this development also. The special Committee re Areas and Superintendents which preceded the adoption of moderators was set up in 1917 to define the areas into which county unions may combine "for the purposes of help, especially with regard to ministerial settlements and removals and problems of overlapping and other denominational activities". Also "when counties combine they should consider the appointment of a Superintendent for such combined area to co-operate with the County Union Executives and who, in conjunction with the Council should act as friend and counsellor of ministers and churches in his area". A committee of twelve was set up and Jones was elected chairman.⁴⁶

The committee recommended the formation of nine areas (north-west, north-east, eastern, southern, Wales, western, east and west midland, and London) each with an appointed superintendent who should have "an average inclusive stipend of £400" (from July 1919 Jones's stipend at Richmond Hill was £1,000). At its second meeting, in January 1918, J.H. Shakespeare, secretary of the Baptist Union, attended to explain "the working of their Ministerial Removal Scheme". He remained "about two hours answering questions". The next day the committee agreed that superintendents should be appointed "for the purpose of stimulating and encouraging churches, and to act as the friends and counsellors of ministers and churches; that they should seek to co-operate with the County Union Executives" by overseeing church aid and Central Fund administration, assisting in "all matters of Ministerial Settlements and Removals", and they are "to further in their respective Areas general Congregational Policies". The superintendents were intended also to be ex-officio members of the county union executives in their areas. A J. Viner, secretary of the Lancashire Congregational Union, was keen to bring a firm proposition to the committee. He wanted to set time limits to pastorates, but this was considered impracticable.⁴⁷

45. *Ibid.* [1926] 80-81.

46. Minute Book of Committee re Areas and Superintendents [1917-1934] 337-8, held at the United Reformed Church Library, Tavistock Place, London.

47. *Ibid.* 1, 2, 4-8, Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 31 July 1919. The Baptists had introduced their Sustentation and Ministerial Settlement scheme in 1916: the country was divided into ten areas over each of which a General Superintendent, with "moral and persuasive authority", was appointed. E.A. Payne *The Baptist Union: a Short History* [1959] 182-4, A.C. Underwood *A History of the English Baptists* [1947] 249-50.

In December 1918 a letter was read from the Sussex county union, suggesting the name "Provincial Counsellors" in the place of superintendents. It was decided to persist with superintendents. The Council of the CUEW, "with practical unanimity", adopted the scheme for "areas and superintendents" in March 1919. Immediately following the details of this scheme in the Council Report for 1918-19, the recommendation, "in view of the special conditions and problems of the present time facing both the Nation and the Church", that Jones should become honorary secretary of the CUEW appears. J.D. was clearly to help and watch over both Wells and the new officers. On 1 May, 1919 the Committee re Areas and Superintendents, having received replies from thirty-five of the thirty-six county unions (thirty-two in favour and none clearly against), resolved to recommend that the title "area" should become "province" and "superintendent" become "moderator". The moderators were inducted at the autumn assembly of the Congregational Union in November 1919 when Arnold Thomas of Bristol gave an address in which he specifically and unashamedly referred to the new "bishops": men who would not be troubled by the "fatal opulence of bishops", who "will be on our own level, not our ecclesiastical superiors, alarming us by their grandeur, but brothers still, trusted and beloved". J.D. Jones led the assembly in prayer. Wells's sudden death in February 1923 and the subsequent appointment of Sidney Berry (a member of the Committee re Areas and Superintendents from its start) as secretary of the CUEW did not loosen J.D.'s hold on affairs. Indeed Berry and Jones were reckoned "an irresistible combination".⁴⁸

The moderatorial scheme encountered much opposition but, moved by J.D. in the CUEW assembly, it received an assured majority. Some saw it "as the end of real Congregationalism" and the whole scheme, although adopted, was subject to review in 1924. Significantly J.D.'s younger brother, Lincoln was chosen unopposed as moderator for the west midland province. A.J. Viner became moderator of the north west, adding Cheshire, Westmorland and Cumberland to his Lancashire responsibilities, and E.J. Saxton, formerly full-time secretary of the Yorkshire county union, became moderator of the north-east. The other original moderators (who were all ministers in pastoral charge) were H.R. Williamson of the eastern, H.H. Carlisle of the east midland, F.H. Wheeler of the southern, E.P. Powell of the western, David Walters of Wales, and W.L. Lee of London. They were not all first choices. Williamson and Powell had been reserves while Thomas Yates, originally wanted for London, had declined. The scheme was widely recognized as a novel development (although it resembled the Baptist Union's earlier innovation) and Sir John McClure, of Mill Hill School, considered it the first step towards amalgamation with the Presbyterians. After 1919 the moderators met together in London once a month with J.D. Jones presiding over their meetings.⁴⁹

48. Minute book of Committee 20, 23, 24, 25, *CUEW Council Report* [1918-19] 5-7, A. Peel *op. cit.* 397, R.T. Jones *op. cit.* 380, *Congregational Year Book* [1920] 83-86.

49. Minute Book of Committee 27, 28. Twice in September 1919 W. Hardy Harwood was proposed for London but he was not appointed. No reason is given for this decision. *Ibid.* 31-33. R.T. Jones *ibid.* 380-1, J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 108-111.

The financial cost of the moderatorial system added to the expenses of the Congregational Union and, although Jones again "collected large personal subscriptions", they proved unequal to the extra charges. Consequently the 1922 annual accounts were judged to be "appalling".⁵⁰ Nonetheless the Council Report of the CUEW in 1920-21 spoke of the "unqualified" success of the moderators. The moderators themselves, under Jones's chairmanship, remarked that although their appointment was "such an innovation in Congregationalism, and was viewed with suspicion by the stalwart Independents amongst us, it is a pleasure to report that... the Moderators have received a cordial welcome from the Churches"... even though they have also encountered "stubborn independency". Albert Peel felt that the moderators, like the Baptist superintendents, exercised "episcopal functions" in their areas, although their powers were merely advisory, and he described them as "Nonconformist Bishops". The Council Report of the CUEW in 1921-22 saw them as "fathers in God" both to ministers and churches. Even in the 1960s Erik Routley saw the moderators as "men set in a special office best described in terms of the New Testament meaning of 'episcopal'".⁵¹ By 1924 the CUEW, governed by the constitution of 1904, had set up a number of committees dealing with superannuation, moderators, publications, youth and women's work. J.D. involved himself with their activities as he felt it necessary, but he was more fully concerned with the Council of the union.⁵²

The administration of the Central Fund was "enormously helped" by the reports of the moderators. "Induction services under their guidance acquired a new dignity". J.D. Jones later confessed, "I believed... that the only way to keep our Congregational witness alive and potent was to weld the Churches more and more closely together, to turn ourselves from a number of isolated fellowships into a Denomination. The Central Fund was a step towards that End: the Moderatorial system was a further step."⁵³

The next great denominational effort to consume J.D.'s energies was the Forward Movement which he very largely devised. The Council Report of 1920-21 referred to J.D.'s "setting forth the urgently pressing financial needs of the Denomination" and recommended the raising of a special fund. The resultant Forward Movement aimed to raise a capital sum of £500,000 to provide a higher pension for retired ministers and their widows, to pay the expenses of the moderatorial system, to meet the debts of the London and Colonial Missionary Societies and to make some allowance for the Congregational schools, among other denominational causes. In May 1921 the assembly approved the proposal although the appeal was not launched in earnest until the following year. J.D.

50. A. Peel *op. cit.* 373.

51. CUEW Council Report [1920-21] 2, 3 [1921-22] 4, A. Peel *ibid.* 381. C.S. Horne *A History of the Free Churches* [1926], an additional chapter by A. Peel on the years 1903-26, 431-2, E. Routley *The Story of Congregationalism* [1961] 93.

52. Routley *ibid.* 99-100.

53. J.D. Jones *ibid.* 114.

again travelled the length and breadth of the country, speaking in every large town, and the required sum was raised, although the last £4,300 was contributed somewhat dramatically at the Thanksgiving meeting in the Albert Hall in May 1925. Erik Routley described the Forward Movement as a “curious surge of administrative energy” but it was also a “serious and successful attempt to grapple with the problems of poverty and old age amongst ministers”. Richmond Hill alone gave over £13,000 towards it and “ungrudgingly” released J.D. to speak throughout the country on “his great crusade”. Unlike the Central Fund the contributions were not sent to “Headquarters” but were raised by “Churches and by Counties”, with Forward Movement Commissioners appointed in local areas.⁵⁴

The Forward Movement was criticised, especially in the north, for linking “the less popular and more controversial parts of the Scheme (the endowment of Headquarters and of the Moderatorial system)” with the evidently necessary and welcome superannuation appeal for ministers and their widows. To assuage their critics the clause referring to the moderators had the following words added to it - “if continued, or such purposes as the Union may determine”. However, J.D. and his colleagues, by launching a national appeal for funds, to finance the moderators among other causes, years before the then experimental scheme was to be reviewed in 1924, had effectively spiked their critics’ guns. Once the churches had spent more than two years making great efforts to raise money in order to finance the moderators, it was most unlikely that, almost within sight of reaching the Forward Movement’s target, those same churches would have decided to jettison the scheme. J.D. “toiled, begged, cajoled” for the fund for three years, doing “the lion’s share of the work”, and in May 1925 became the “hero of the hour”. This was judged to be “the crowning achievement of his career” although Jones characterized himself as “the Denominational mendicant”, as for several years his main work for the Congregational churches had been “begging”.⁵⁵ By 1926 the increased importance of, and work done by, the Congregational Union necessitated the appointment of an assistant to its secretary. The choice of Maldwyn Johnes of Sandown, the secretary of the Hampshire county union, again probably reflected J.D.’s influence.⁵⁶

J.D. Jones “attained to his mastery of assemblies by dint of stern self-discipline and assiduous study”. He became an “ecclesiastic and man of affairs... to the finger-tips”. Critics of the results of the Central and Forward Movement Funds suggested that “Congregationalism chose the least worthy method of exercising control” over its churches and ministers - “through the power of the purse”. Sidney Berry summarily dismisses this as “a smart gibe”. Yet it led unerringly to J.D.

54. Routley *op. cit.* 110, R.T. Jones *op. cit.* 378, *CUEW Council Report* [1920-21] 7, [1922-23] 33, Richmond Hill Church minutes 4 May 1922, *CUEW: The Eighty-third Autumnal Assembly* [1925] 26.

55. A. Peel *op. cit.* 386-7. A. Porritt *op. cit.* 63, *Congregational Year Book* [1926] 88. A.G. Sleep organised the fund in its concluding stages.

56. A. Peel *ibid.* 407, *Congregational Year Book* [1928] 12. For Johnes see *CYB* [1954] 514-5.

whose labours were rewarded with financial riches, in sharp contrast to many of the fellow ministers for whom he felt concerned. At Congregational assemblies J.D. was the acknowledged "master" although Berry admitted that some detected in him "traces of the dictator". Sir George Newman (1870-1949), a pioneer in public and child health, and a Quaker, wrote that J.D. won the loyalty and devotion of "his followers" who "would apparently follow him anywhere".⁵⁷

J.D. over the years gained "poise" and "ease of efficiency". Whatever demands were placed upon him he displayed "no bluster or hurry". It was suggested that he developed "the tact, the sure touch, the firm diplomacy for which he grew famous" in the conduct of Richmond Hill's deacons' meetings. Certainly he "reigned unobtrusively and carelessly dominant, avowedly *primus inter pares*" over these lengthy meetings, each one lasting over three hours.⁵⁸

Wider Interests

From the Lambeth Conference of Bishops in 1920 an appeal was issued for Christian "reunion" and in subsequent years official conversations were held. As moderator of the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches 1921-3, J.D. was a leading participant in these meetings and he and Archbishop Randall Davidson led the brief opening worship, processing to and from the stalls while bishops and Free Church ministers stood. He believed he was, therefore, the first Free Church minister to offer prayer in Lambeth Palace chapel. He signed the joint report on church unity with the two archbishops and secured, as he believed, the admission that Free Church ministries are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments. In 1925 (the year when these conversations broke down) J.D. stated that "it was about time" Congregationalists made up their minds "about the kind of unity" they desired.⁵⁹

G.K.A. Bell (later Bishop of Chichester), who became acquainted with J.D. at Lambeth, took advantage of the Lambeth Appeal's resolution which stated that ministers of other denominations might be authorised to preach in Anglican churches. As Dean of Canterbury he invited J.D. to be the first Nonconformist minister to preach at an ordinary service in Canterbury Cathedral and in return Dr. Bell preached a few weeks later at Richmond Hill. In November 1921 the Bishop of Hereford preached also at Richmond Hill, and in his turn J.D. preached in Liverpool, Hereford and Worcester Cathedrals, and in several parish churches. He counted Archbishop Davidson and his successor, Cosmo Lang, as friends and worked with successive bishops of Winchester while at Bournemouth. Again he took part in the resumed "conversations" at Lambeth in the 1930s which were to be suspended in 1939 at the outbreak of war, with no further progress towards

57. Porritt *ibid.* 86, 95, Gammie *op. cit.* 169. For Newman see *DNB*.

58. Porritt *op. cit.* 95-97.

59. J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 199, *The Times* 20 April 1942, *CYB* [1926] 107.

visible unity. J.D. was “an ardent reunionist” but in February 1938, after a meeting with the bishops, he wrote despairingly, “I feel these meetings are a waste of time. I do not see anything coming out of them”. He subscribed to the view (propounded earlier by the Baptist J.H. Shakespeare) that the Free Churches should unite and his last publication advocated such a union. If resources were pooled “nothing essential would be lost. The differences that divide us are really not differences of principle”. And in 1938 he served as president of the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches.⁶⁰

This breadth to J.D.’s life and work (including an element of social climbing) was reflected in Archbishop William Temple’s foreword to Arthur Porritt’s life of Jones. There Temple confessed that he knew J.D. “better by repute than by personal acquaintance” although “many of my friends knew him intimately and spoke of him with the highest appreciation”.⁶¹

In 1899 J.D. was the principal founder of what became Wentworth College. The existing high school for girls at Bournemouth became a “definitely Anglican school” so the leading Free Churchmen there established a Christian school “free from sectarian bias”. Jones remained chairman of the Bournemouth Collegiate Schools Ltd. until his death, outliving the other directors. After 1918 and the founding of a secondary school for girls in the town, Wentworth’s usefulness to Bournemouth lessened. Therefore the boarding side was developed at this “Girls’ Mill Hill” where “Free Church faith” had “absolutely fair play”. J.D. attended the school each Friday evening to conduct Bible study and during the second world war Wentworth was evacuated close to Bala where J.D., in retirement, again kept a pastoral eye over its proceedings.⁶²

J.D. had several invitations to leave Bournemouth. F.B. Meyer wanted him at Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, in 1906. In the same year he was considered for the principalship of Yorkshire United College but he felt he was not equipped for this post. In October 1910 he preached at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, and was called to its pastorate. Silvester Horne with “delightful banter” advised J.D. against the move. “You are elect of God, if ever any man was, to regenerate English Congregationalism. You are doing it. You are doing what nobody has ever yet done. I will go out to America with a pint of nitro-glycerine and blow the Fifth Avenue up before you shall be Americanised, Presbyterianised, and demoralised... Denominationally it is J.D. first, and all the time; and if you don’t know it, it is time you did.” He declined and J.H. Jowett of Carrs Lane, Birmingham went instead. In consequence, J.D. was asked in 1911 to succeed Jowett at Carrs Lane. In 1912 he was approached about becoming secretary of the London Missionary Society but again declined, and that autumn

60. A. Porritt *More and More of Memories* [1947] 203, E.K.H. Jordan *Free Church Unity* [1956] 248, Jones *ibid.* 209.

61. A. Porritt *J.D. Jones of Bournemouth* [1942] 5, 64, 135-6, Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 3 November 1921.

62. J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 269-270, A. Porritt *ibid.* 100, 126, J.T. Davies *Richmond Hill Story* [1956] 52-3.

he was pressed to succeed W.F. Adeney as principal of Lancashire College which had a special claim on his affections and to which he felt a loyalty. Influential friends urged him to go - W.B. Selbie, J.H. Jowett - and several Lancashire businessmen - Sir William Lever, the Haworths, and Colonel Pilkington, among them. College friends wrote praising his "lofty personal character, scholarly equipment, ... great teaching gifts,... powerful influence with men, and... fine administrative abilities". J.D. was thus fitted, they felt, "in a unique degree for the headship of a theological college". A special church meeting was held in October 1912 at Richmond Hill after a Sunday evening service at which the members expressed their alarm. They knew that "the claims of the wider Congregationalism have demanded and are likely still to demand from the Pastor much time and thought and self-denying service... They pledge themselves in the future to give their loved Pastor the fullest liberty that he may wish to claim". Given such a free hand, J.D. declined the college's invitation and, after that, never seriously considered leaving Richmond Hill even though Lancashire College renewed its invitation in 1921.⁶³

He had also attended the various gatherings of the International Congregational Council, except the first in London in 1891 - Boston, Massachusetts (1899), Edinburgh (1908), Boston again (1920), and the fifth, significantly at Bournemouth (1930). At each of these, apart from the first, he took an active part and in 1920 he was nominated as moderator for the next council which proved to be "eminently successful" and a "triumph". "His Moderatorial message, his unexcelled grace in presiding, his deep, spiritual emphasis,... contributed in very large measure to the notable success" of the meetings. Lloyd George, at Bournemouth for the Council, told the Independence Day banquet that "he had come because he was ordered to do so by the Moderator, who was the arch-wangler of Nonconformity whom nobody could disobey. Dr. Jones's power and influence in Congregationalism were well known, but there was no Nonconformist leader in the British Isles with a following like his. He had zeal directed by sagacity, intensity qualified by tolerance, and an inexhaustible energy which gave force and power to all those qualities."⁶⁴

J.D. took an active interest in politics, campaigning in 1906 on behalf of the Liberals in the south-west Midlands with Silvester Horne. He was rumoured to

63. J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 142-4, 251-261, Porritt *op. cit.* 58. Richmond Hill Church Meeting minutes 30, 31 October 1912. The manuscript letter contains one correction; "teaching" is changed into "preaching". Is this J.D. Jones's own correction? Lancashire College's letter is held in the J.D. Jones manuscript collection at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

64. *Ibid.* [1942] 417, *The Times* 20 April 1942, A. Porritt *op. cit.* 66-7, *Proceedings of the Fifth International Congregational Council* [1930] ed. A. Peel 30, 148. Henry Allon and Joseph Parker share the distinction with Jones of serving twice as chairman of the CUEW. J.D.'s address at the third ICC was entitled "Is Church Life Necessary to Christian Civilization?" *Proceedings of the Third International Congregational Council* [1908] 166.

have threatened to resign his pastorate at Bournemouth if a Conservative was returned as M.P., thus forcing his flock to vote Liberal. He was once asked to stand for parliament and was offered his choice of constituencies but stated that to leave the pulpit for politics would have been a "come down". Some felt that if he had entered politics he would have found a place "on the Front Bench". In 1934 Lloyd George belatedly attempted to recruit the once powerful Free Churches again to his political cause and J.D., with other similar "ageing pundits", co-operated in the ensuing Council of Action, addressing the problems of international peace and unemployment at home. The failure of this venture did nothing to enhance the prestige of its supporters and this was J.D.'s last intervention in politics. He always believed that the Liberal party would have a "renaissance" and had campaigned on his brother Haydn's behalf. Ironically the Conservative Stanley Baldwin recommended J.D. for appointment as a Companion of Honour in 1927, which to J.D. made clear "that neither politics nor personal friendship suggested the appointment." It was a remarkable tribute. In the 1930s, when he realised his health was deteriorating, J.D. played with the notion of leaving Richmond Hill and accepting a position as a Nonconformist life peer (as part of a proposed reform of the House of Lords). He hoped this was not "vanity".⁶⁵ He received many honours, of course. To add to his St. Andrews doctorate, in 1937 the University of Wales conferred to him an honorary DD and in 1938 Manchester University gave him their DD also.⁶⁶

J.D.'s relaxation lay in the rounds of golf, every Monday morning during his Bournemouth pastorate. He played with his deacons, his daughter and, occasionally, Lloyd George with whom he spent weekends at Churt in Surrey. In retirement the golf continued and he took to gardening, fruit-growing and excursions in the motor car, while accepting invitations to preach most Sundays.⁶⁷

Publications

Among his writings Jones wrote an appreciation of Dr. John Brown in the 1928 edition of Brown's biography of John Bunyan which marked the tercentenary of the latter's birth. He described Brown as "a Puritan with the grace of culture and the charm of geniality". Curiously Brown remained as pastor in Bedford for thirty-nine years, the same length of time J.D. was to minister in Bournemouth. In 1928 also J.D. spoke on Bunyan at the City Temple with Lloyd George chairing the

65. J.D. Jones *ibid.* 243, Porritt *ibid.* 69, 122, 128-130, *The Christian World* 14 May 1942, S. Koss *Nonconformity in Modern British Politics* [1975] 71, 109, 191, 195, 197, E.K.H. Jordan *op. cit.* 102, 161-2, Gammie *op. cit.* 167-9, A. Hastings *op. cit.* 266-7.

66. J.D. Jones *ibid.* 318.

67. J.D. Jones *ibid.* 78, 239, 318, Porritt *ibid.* 138, Koss *ibid.* 189, *Who was Who, 1941-1950* 614.

meeting, and preached at Bunyan Meeting in Bedford in the presence of the town's corporation.⁶⁸

He published a number of books, mostly devotional in character. His titles, *The Way into the Kingdom* (1900), *The Glorious Company of the Apostles* (1904), *The Gospel of Grace* (1907), *Things Most Surely Believed* (1908), *The Hope of the Gospel* (1911), and *The Unfettered Word* (1912), speak of that exposition of the central truths of the Christian faith for which J.D. was admired, and through which he was able to build up his influence as a guide to be trusted throughout the country. This stream of expository, devotional, and practical writings did not dry up during his years as honorary secretary of the CUEW but it slowed down considerably. His published sermons, in particular, were widely read and he also produced between 1913 and 1921 a four volume "devotional commentary" on Mark's Gospel. Writing of *Mark 15: 40-41*, he states with obvious feeling: "I picture to myself these devoted women with gentle firmness pressing food upon Him, taking care of Him as a mother would take care of her son".⁶⁹

J.D.'s writing is that of a preacher, rhetorical with appeals to the heart. He comments on *Mark 16: 3-5* under the heading, "The Recklessness of Love":

This reckless and daring love, this love which issues in a faith that removes mountains, is it a characteristic of ours? Is it an outstanding quality of the church today? Do we astonish the world by the recklessness of our courage, by the dash and abandon with which we fling ourselves into apparently impossible enterprises? That is not my reading of the situation. There is not much recklessness about the modern Church. Her policy is a calculating, prudential kind of policy. We make sure that a job is compassable and manageable before we tackle it. We cut our coat according to our cloth. We do not say, 'Here is a world to be evangelised - let us go forth and evangelise it.' We say rather, 'Here is so much money, and here are so many men, we will confine our efforts to this little corner'..We are lethargic, limited in our view, tepid in our temper. We hear of no great and daring schemes; of no mighty challenges to our faith... There is an absence of the heroic temper. And that again is the result of coldness of heart and lack of love. Religion is a propriety with us and not a passion. What men will do when a mighty passion takes hold of them.⁷⁰

Jones's eloquence is clearly employed to good effect in the expression of these fine Christian sentiments but one is led to ask if J.D. was not speaking of himself also. Was his own religion merely a "propriety"? Did he himself suffer from "coldness of heart and lack of love"? One knows that J.D. hoped to meet the needs of those who heard him and read his sermons. Yet he may also have tried simultaneously to still his own fears. If so, then there is an ambiguity in J.D.,

68. J. Brown *John Bunyan: His Life, Times and Work* [1928] xi-xiv, H.G. Tibbutt *Bunyan Meeting Bedford 1650-1950* [Bedford 1950] 95.

69. J.D. Jones *The Gospel According to St. Mark: A Devotional Commentary* [1921] IV, 234.

70. *Ibid.* 261.

arising from a deep uncertainty in himself of which he may have been only partly conscious, and which with his passion he was trying to lessen. By addressing, even unwittingly, this psychological need he may have found added power in his preaching. For he was able to arouse a passion in the hearts of many. During the 1914-18 war, when his own congregation was affected by news of their dead and wounded, J.D. wrote of eternal life. He felt that over the preceding fifty years "the entire emphasis in popular thought, and even in the preaching of the pulpit, was laid on the present world, and the present life, and the great Hereafter was almost entirely ignored". This was an immediate pastoral issue which invaded his own church every week, with men returning from the front. "The shadow of anxiety and loss lies today, not over single homes, but over our whole nation." J.D. stressed that "immortality is not a dream, but a fact... Personality endures" and that "upon evil God's judgment will fall". He stated that "we can trust God with our dead" and also confessed that "I am a Calvinist in the sense that I believe in the Divine Sovereignty. It is the truth from which I start in all my thinking. I believe God is working out His will." During the second world war J.D. wrote of endurance but, even in 1940, called upon his readers to remember that "in lands like Germany and Russia loyalty to Christ and His Gospel carries with it still the risk of bonds and imprisonment and even death itself".⁷¹

In 1922 J.D. wrote of some of his reflections on Psalm 23, stating his reluctance to do so for "It is like criticising your mother's face". Writing on verse 6, he noted that "in the Father's house are many mansions. We live in an outlying mansion now. What happens at death is that we are called into another mansion 'fairer than this we leave and lovelier', where the fellowship becomes closer and more intimate still." He gave the address in 1934 in Westminster Chapel at the memorial service for Sir Albert Spicer, "the perfect example of the very best type of Victorian", at which he spoke of heaven. "They see, where we grope. The lowest place, the newest comer in the company of heaven, is more blessed than anything on earth. That wondrous and unspeakable blessedness is, we believe, now his."⁷²

Curiously J.D.'s little work on church membership proved to have the longest life of all his publications, reprinted several times until 1955. Even this contains the anecdotes which might grace a sermon - the sailor who, once converted, nails a card to his bunk, announcing "Servant of Jesus Christ", or the businessman who wants to join the church as a "sleeping partner". The book is not a manual but rather a personal approach. The chapters refer to the various duties of the church member - the church meeting, Sunday services, the personal life - but also the matter of Christian liberality, in which J.D. was accounted an expert. On giving, "a delicate matter to speak about", J.D. stated that "every member ought to contribute of his, or her own substance" and should "set apart a definite proportion of his income for Christ's work". Yet J.D. cautioned the unwary, "nothing but love

71. J.D. Jones *The Great Hereafter* [1916] 9, 14, 21, 38, *The Power to Endure* [1940] 9.

72. J.D. Jones *The King of Love* [1922] 13, 156, *An Address Delivered at the Memorial Service for Sir Albert Spicer* [1934] 10.

will loosen our purse-strings. What we need is not instruction in the duty of giving, but more love to Christ". In addition he wrote two small books defending the Free Church and Congregational positions and, with J. Vernon Bartlet, a defence of the Congregational ministry. His books are often dedicated to his church members at Bournemouth and reveal his debt to Bishop Westcott, R.W. Dale, Andrew Fairbairn and others. Interestingly his autobiography and Arthur Porritt's memoir of him are both dedicated "To Margery and Myfanwy - a devoted wife and the best daughter under the sun".⁷³

Later Years

In the 1930s Jones aligned himself with the growing theological revolt against liberal churchmanship. At the autumn assembly of the Congregational Union in 1931 an unsympathetic critic accurately "discovered a 'sharp turn to the right' in Congregational theology, and snapshotted" J.D. Jones and the much younger Nathaniel Micklem and John Whale "all stepping to the right together." "We could not help wondering which of the three was most surprised to find himself in the company of the other two."⁷⁴ In company with the same "Genevan" school and with others, J.D. signed a "Call to Reformation" sent to all Congregational ministers in March 1939. The signatories insisted, "We must not merely restate the Gospel in terms of the needs and thoughts of men today; restatement, however necessary, is not enough; we must also ourselves more passionately believe it and more effectually embody it in the life of our Church fellowship".⁷⁵ Its authors (John Whale, Bernard Lord Manning and Nathaniel Micklem) were regarded "on this evidence, as the arch-enemies of the traditional freedom of Congregationalism: almost as traitors to the churches. This return to the Biblical language, so greatly loved by their puritan fathers, caused them to be labelled fundamentalists; their fearless proclamation of the dogma of the Resurrection got them the name of anti-progressive Calvinists."⁷⁶ J.D. was not convinced that the "progressive theology", favoured by many Congregationalists in the first half of the twentieth century, was an advance. Although he did not want "extreme Calvinistic dogmas" he believed, "We should be all the better for some of the

73. J.D. Jones and J.V. Bartlet *The Validity of the Congregational Ministry* [1916], J.D. Jones *The Ideal Church Member* [1933] 3, 6, 24, 25, 28.

74. *The Congregational Quarterly* [January 1932] vol. x, no. 1, 2, J.W. Grant *Free Churchmanship in England 1870-1940* [no date] 328-9.

75. Grant *ibid.* 331, R.T. Jones *op.cit.* 450, 455, *To The Ministers of Christ's Holy Gospel in the Churches of the Congregational Order* signed by S. Cave, J.D. Jones, H.F. Lovell Cocks, B.L. Manning, N. Micklem, E.J. Price, J. Short and J.S. Whale. The "Call to Reformation" is quoted in full in E. Routley *The Story of Congregationalism* [1962] 164-171.

76. Routley *ibid.* 94.

Calvinistic iron in our blood... For the past fifty years we have allowed the Gospel of the greatness of God to fall into the background." In this J.D. may have been harking back to his spiritual roots in Welsh Calvinistic Methodism. Certainly he felt that the needed "Calvinistic iron" could be found in Martyn Lloyd-Jones.⁷⁷

In retirement J.D. enjoyed a reputation for "Evangelical orthodoxy" but in the 1890s he had been considered "a rather dangerous modernist" who spoke of the Bible as the "progressive revelation of the mind and will of God". In 1909 he recognised that he probably attached "more weight to the great Christian creeds than most" of his Congregational brethren would assign to them. He also stated then his desire to see "a gracious revival of vital religion". In his preaching he was "from first to last an Evangelical" who aimed to set before his hearers "the gospel of the Grace of God and the redeeming life and death of Christ". In 1901 he had been seen theologically as a "cultured Evangelical neither impatient of the new nor enslaved to the old".⁷⁸ J.D.'s flirtations with both the Genevan school of Micklem and Whale and with Martyn Lloyd-Jones suggest that even in his maturity he felt uncertain about his own theology. He may have sought an external validation to shape up what he suspected was his own want of faith.

In 1941 the Welsh nationalist and Roman Catholic convert, Saunders Lewis, mercilessly satirized J.D. Jones in his verse, thus taking revenge on J.D.'s scorn for the revival of nationalism in Wales. He described J.D. as preaching a waxen sermon to a gluttonous congregation, providing lard-like droppings for the greedy. His return to Wales, "the land of the poor", was in effect, Lewis claimed unfairly and irrationally, to urge this "frail nation" to succumb to the superiority of its political and economic neighbour and master, England. Such a bitter, personal attack was a hard blow to a dying man, even if he were living in relative opulence in Bala.⁷⁹

J.D. became an admirer of Martyn Lloyd-Jones whom he encouraged in 1939 to accept the call to be associate minister of Westminster Chapel alongside Dr. G. Campbell Morgan. Lloyd-Jones, a Calvinistic Methodist, had been likened in his preaching to the young J.D. Jones. J.D.'s retirement to Brynbanon, a beautiful old house near Bala, did not remove him from his involvement in and concern for Nonconformist affairs. In February 1942, when his health was declining, J.D. expressed "a great desire" to see Martyn Lloyd-Jones who travelled to Bala where J.D. "pleaded with him to recognize his duty to lead the Free Churches in the years ahead. He was the man destined for it." Lloyd-Jones refused to accept this charge because "he was an evangelical". He found that the prominent Free Church men were concerned with political rather than spiritual concerns. J.D. replied, "Just give them the same political sops occasionally and they will follow you." In his

77. I. Murray *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939-1981* [Edinburgh 1990] 61.

78. J.D. Jones *op. cit.* 71, Porritt *op. cit.* 92, *Evangelical Magazine* [1901] 533-5, *CYB* [1910] 45-6, 70.

79. S. Lewis *Byd a Betws* [Aberystwyth 1941].

last illness J.D. was therefore aware that the Congregational Union (which in large part by the 1940s was his own creation) and the Free Churches generally required not merely capable administrators but inspiring leaders. He did not place his trust (for the future) entirely in central funds and moderators but rather looked for preachers of faith and vision. J.D.'s failure to find that sort of successor marked a clear change in the witness of those Churches to the public at large.⁸⁰

Lloyd-Jones also found this dramatic meeting "crucial" and unforgettable. He recognised the "force in the dying man's plea that he should pursue the wider leadership" and thus render his gifts useful to the greater number but he also felt that J.D. was proposing a "compromise" which was for him "impossible". J.D. also asked his visitor for his medical opinion, specifically whether his health would recover, but Lloyd-Jones answered truthfully in the negative. At this J.D. "began to weep and said, 'It's all right. I really don't want to leave this' - pointing out of the window to the beautiful scenery - 'but it's all right, I believe what I've been trying to preach', placing his hand upon his heart." He died two months later on 19 April 1942 at the age of 77. He was buried in the cemetery at Bournemouth beside his first wife.⁸¹

In 1942 Sidney Berry, in writing of J.D. the "statesman of Congregationalism", noted a reluctance on the part of ordinary church members to acknowledge the "great part" played by "those who have toiled to make the organisation of the Church express the realities of her faith and fellowship". J.D. Jones tackled problems which could "only be settled by more organised forms of co-operation". His successful advocacy of the Central Fund, the moderators and the Forward Movement Fund led the Congregational churches toward ever closer co-operation. Berry recalled J.D. "answering critics 'again and again' by stating that Congregationalism must make up its mind whether to retain its independency or to adopt some form of connexionalism, but it cannot have the advantages of both systems". By the 1940s "there was no aspect of Congregational life that was not in some way a concern" of the Congregational Union.⁸²

"The possession of large Funds for the maintenance and superannuation of the ministry and for the aiding of churches tends to destroy... that independence" which the founders of the Congregational Union in 1831 held to be "their own distinctive principle". Indeed some believed that, while the administration of these funds was admittedly "kindly and well-disposed", its effect was "in the long run, the reverse of beneficial". The efforts of J.D. Jones to produce an "orderly communion" within Congregationalism therefore resulted in a considerable shift away from independency. J.D.'s youthful experience of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism may have swayed him towards centralism. He maintained that he had not "scrapped" the old "machinery" of Congregationalism but had done "a lot in the way of repairs". Yet he added a corrective that "the best machinery in the

80. I. Murray *D.M. Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years* 332, 336, 360, *op. cit.* 62.

81. I. Murray *D.M. Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith* 63, Porritt *op. cit.* 150-151.

82. Porritt *ibid.* 78, 83, R.T. Jones *op. cit.* 392.

world is useless without driving-power". At his death the doubts which haunted him were about that "driving-power".⁸³

For all his involvement at the centre of Free Church and Congregational affairs J.D. never became merely an administrator. He was the Honorary Secretary, a unique office but not his first commitment, for he remained a pastor and a preacher always. He became "a master of the gracious phrase in speech and of the irenic intervention in debate. He assiduously cultivated the diplomatic art."⁸⁴ He acquired much of the joys of this world - material wealth, respect and renown well beyond the reach of the average Congregational minister of his day - and he viewed with regret the loss of such treasures as he approached death. And he was also a "beloved figure who inspired trust". He had the common touch and was "one of us, shouldering the humdrum burdens himself". His concern for the ministers of the small churches was genuine and his desire to establish a succession of powerful preaching at the centre of Nonconformist life nationally reveals a sincere wish to hand on the best that he knew.⁸⁵

J.D. remains, therefore, a paradox since to his contemporaries, close colleagues and adoring church members alike, he was the model of the successfully integrated, Christian character. At F.B. Meyer's church, on the Sunday following Meyer's death in March 1929, J.D. represented the Free Churches "better than any other man could represent them" and "spoke straight to the hearts of an immense congregation". Yet this integration was in some measure superficial, another result of his masterful control and diplomacy. Clearly J.D.'s relations with others contained an element of manipulation. He had built a power base at Bournemouth by attracting the rich men of the town. He had absorbed his mother's simple faith but had inherited too the family's extraordinary ambition. His charm, preaching, pastoral, and administrative gifts all qualified him supremely for high office and the world rewarded him. However J.D. became cut off from his roots and this dislocation was detected in different ways by his fellow Welshmen, the zealot Saunders Lewis and the uncompromising Martyn Lloyd-Jones (who both saw in him the faults of an older generation which they felt called upon to repudiate and correct), and also, in his penetrating quip, by Lloyd George who knew an "arch-wangler" when he saw one.⁸⁶

Any dislocation notwithstanding, J.D. Jones was always a Welshman who had sought and made his fortune in England and his return to North Wales, at the end of his life, as a successful emigrant, was perfectly natural. He had retained the outward forms which his mother had taught him and in 1940 wrote of Christian discipleship. Jesus said "that if anyone wanted to be his disciple he had to take up the Cross and deny himself daily. Daily! It was not a case of one big effort and

83. A. Peel *These Hundred Years* [1931] 408, *CYB* [1926] 109, *CUEW: The Eighty-Third Autumnal Assembly* [1925] 3.

84. R.T. Jones *op. cit.* 383-4, 450, 465.

85. *CYB* [1926] 109.

86. W.Y. Fullerton *F.B. Meyer: A Biography* [1929] 220.

then comparative ease and quiet. It was effort and sacrifice all the way." J.D.'s mother had made considerable efforts and sacrifices for her sons. Given his success, J.D. inevitably came very close to forgetting the spirit which informed his mother's teaching and life.⁸⁷

ALAN A. ARGENT

DIVORCE AND DISSENT: FREE CHURCH ATTITUDES TO DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE, 1910-1937.¹

It first became possible to obtain a divorce in the English courts in 1857. The petitioner had to prove that the respondent had committed adultery, and a female petitioner had to prove some other offence as well. All divorce cases had to be tried in the High Court in London, with consequent expense for the litigants, and no legal aid was available. Divorce was therefore difficult and expensive. It was a luxury not practically open to the poor. Although there were in 1900 a mere 700 applications for divorce and 100 for judicial separation, nearly 15,000 applications were made by or on behalf of battered or deserted wives in magistrates' courts for maintenance orders; the low figure for divorce petitions did not necessarily indicate a high level of marital harmony.² The unsatisfactory state of the current law was pointed out by Sir Gorell Barnes (later Lord Gorell), the President of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division, in the case of *Dodd v. Dodd* in 1906.³ When Asquith's government appointed a Royal Commission in 1909 to look at the question, Lord Gorell was made Chairman. Other members included Archbishop Lang of York and Sir Lewis Dibdin, Official Principal of the Court of Arches.⁴

The Commission's Report runs to 166 pages, together with a minority report, various Appendices and three thick volumes of Minutes, in small print on

87. J.D. Jones *The Power to Endure* [1940] 6.

1. This article draws on the findings of the author's "Attitudes to Marriage, Divorce and the Remarriage of Divorced Persons in the United Reformed Church and its Predecessors 1830-1992", Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham 1993 (referred to subsequently as "Ph.D."), particularly chapters 2, 3, 4 and 7. That thesis gives the detailed references to the various source documents quoted.
2. For further analysis of the law of divorce as enacted in 1857, see Lawrence Stone, *Road to Divorce: England 1530-1987* (Oxford 1990).
3. [1906] p. 189, at pp. 207-208.
4. I.e. Judge of that ecclesiastical court.

foolscap, recording *verbatim* the questions and answers of the witnesses.⁵ A wide range of opinion was canvassed. The Commission's Secretary reported that it had communicated with "all recognised bodies of churches".

By contrast with the Churches of England and Scotland, the Free Churches had little to contribute to the discussion. The Presbyterian Church of England (PCE) sent a memorandum but no witnesses to be interviewed. The only representatives sent by the Free Churches were John Scott Lidgett, ex-President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, and J.D. Jones and A.J. Shephard of the Congregational Union (CUEW).⁶

At first sight this gives the impression of a considerable Free Church consensus. There seemed to be agreement that the grounds for divorce should be the same for husband and wife, that there should be restrictions on the reporting of divorce cases (because of the lurid nature of some of the evidence), that facilities for divorce should be equally available to rich and poor, and that adultery should be the sole ground for divorce. It was the grounds for divorce which provided the focus of interest and controversy among church leaders.

Both the PCE and CUEW sent memoranda stating categorically that divorce should be allowed only in the case of adultery. Had this recommendation been followed, there would have been no extension of the grounds permitted by the Matrimonial Causes Act 1857. The passing of that Act had not apparently been the subject of any official comment from either Congregationalists or Presbyterians, even though laws affecting marriage (*viz.* the solemnization of marriage, and the possible legalisation of marriage with a deceased wife's sister) were discussed at length in the 1850's.⁷ There appeared to be a sense that divorce was permissible and appropriate as a punishment for adultery and for that alone, and that a legal divorce in such a case merely declared what was the fact anyway: that the marriage bond had been destroyed by the act of adultery. Since the primary concern was with the immorality of adultery rather than its social consequences, Nonconformists had disapproved of any difference in the grounds of divorce between husband and wife. The special significance of adultery is illustrated in a sermon of the Congregational minister, William Bengo Collyer, in 1837:

One crime alone dissolves the marriage tie by the laws of God and our country, but many offences may occur to render it sore bondage.

A similar, though less succinct, view came from the Presbyterian, J. Oswald Dykes, in 1873.⁸ Adultery dissolved an otherwise permanent bond.

5. Great Britain, Royal Commission, Report, Minutes and Appendices of Royal Commission on Divorce and Matrimonial Causes, London 1912 (Cd. 6479-6482).

6. Jones was at the time of his appointment Chairman of the CUEW, but had ceased to be so by the time he gave evidence. Shephard, a solicitor, was Chairman of the CUEW's General Purposes Committee.

7. The author is not aware of any official comments from other Nonconformist denominations.

8. *The Laws of the Kingdom*, 2nd ed., London 1873.

When it gave evidence to the Commission in 1910, the PCE was as certain as the CUEW that divorce was permissible for adultery only. This is surprising because the Westminster Confession, their acceptance of which all English Presbyterian ministers and elders were required to declare, strongly suggested that divorce (with the right to remarry) was permissible in the case of desertion as well as adultery. The evidence of the Scottish Presbyterian witnesses showed that the Confession had consistently been so interpreted in Scotland, where divorce was already permissible for desertion as well as adultery, and that no conflict was perceived to exist between the law of the country and the teaching of the church. The Synod of the PCE had, however, in 1886 approved a Declaratory Statement of the sense in which the Church understood and accepted the Westminster Confession, and in 1890 it approved "Twenty-Four Articles of Faith", an Appendix to which, dealing amongst other things with marriage and divorce, followed by 1892. That Appendix contained a statement that, in the case of adultery, it was permissible for the innocent party to sue for a divorce and subsequently to remarry, but it contained no statement on desertion. The suggestion by the Northumberland Presbytery that divorce should be lawful *only* in the case of adultery was not taken up. It is possible that Dykes, as convener of the Confession of Faith Committee, and other members of it, may not have agreed with the Westminster Confession's apparent endorsement of divorce for desertion but were constrained from including any provision conflicting with the Confession, which remained a subordinate standard.⁹

The dogmatic assertion that adultery be the sole ground of divorce is even harder to understand when it is appreciated that, among the Protestant Reformers, there was a wide range of views on the question of what grounds might be permissible, even though they all drew heavily on Erasmus's work on the biblical divorce texts.¹⁰ The views expressed by the Free Churches at the beginning of the twentieth century reflected the very strictest of that range of views.

The responses given by the Free Church witnesses and the discussion in Free Church circles of the Commission's Report and proposals to change the law show that the dogmatism of the official submissions was not a function of any overwhelming consensus of view or any great profundity of thought. Sheppard's evidence conceded that, while the CUEW Council had been unanimous on the other points it made, on the adultery-only point there had been some difference of opinion. Jones agreed that there was "a considerable measure of feeling" among Congregationalists which would favour divorce in cases of incurable insanity and desertion. As to Christ's dictum on divorce, Sheppard agreed that among Congregationalists there were those who thought divorce absolutely forbidden,

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9. Departures from the Westminster Confession could also give rise to legal difficulties with the trusts on which church buildings were held if the trust required total adherence to the Westminster Confession.
 10. See V.N. Olsen, *The New Testament Logia on Divorce: A Study in their Interpretation From Erasmus to Milton*, (Tübingen 1971); also Ph.D., chapter 11, section 1.

those who thought it absolutely forbidden in any other case than adultery, and those who thought that there might be more than one exception. These differences of view also appeared to be represented among Wesleyan Methodists.

The Commission did not find the evidence given to it by church leaders very helpful. On "the main question of dissolubility" it noted that there were wide differences of opinion ranging across each of the following:¹¹

That all marriages are indissoluble.

That Christian marriages are indissoluble.

That marriage is dissoluble on the grounds of adultery only.

That marriage is dissoluble on the grounds of (1) adultery, or (2) desertion.

That marriage is dissoluble on other serious grounds based on the necessities of human life.

The Commission thought it "striking" that theological difficulties had "weighed little" with most lay witnesses and that, among those who felt them, there were great differences of opinion. Most English laymen seemed generally "to base their views, not upon ecclesiastical tradition or sentiment, but upon general Christian principles, coupled with common sense and experience of the needs of human life". The Commission could not find "any general consensus of Christian opinion, which would exclude any of the questions... from being freely considered". Since differences of theological opinion about divorce had always existed, and since "the State must deal with all its citizens, whether Christian, nominally Christian, or non-Christian", the Commission "must proceed to recommend the Legislature to act upon an unfettered consideration of what is best for the interest of the State, society, and morality, and for parties to suits and their families".¹² The Commission recommended by a majority that the grounds on which a divorce should thenceforth be available should be adultery; wilful desertion for three years and upwards; cruelty; incurable insanity, after five years' confinement; habitual drunkenness, found incurable after three years from the first order; and imprisonment under commuted death sentence.¹³ The Commission also recommended that husband and wife should be placed on the same footing.¹⁴

The report of the minority of the Gorell Commission, who included Archbishop Lang, would have allowed divorce for adultery alone.¹⁵ The conclusions of the minority were thus far more consistent with the evidence given by the Free Churches than were those of the majority report. Although in 1912 Scott Lidgett expressed support for the minority view, the work of the Gorell Commission clearly caused other Free Church leaders to change their minds. Whether Shephard had defended the adultery-only principle when he was examined by the

11. Royal Commission, 1912, Report, pp. 30-35, para. 40. This paragraph gives a useful synopsis of the views expressed by each church leader or theologian.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37, paras. 46-47.

13. *Ibid.*, Part XV and Summary, p. 163, para. VI.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 83-89, Part XIV, and p. 163, Summary, para. V.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 171-191, Minority Report.

Commissioners in 1910 (where adultery had been committed “there was no longer a marriage existing”; wilful desertion did not have the same effect), when the CUEW’s Council discussed the report in 1913, he pressed the validity of the Commission’s approach:

...he contended that in each case the ground of divorce was for a cause that really nullified the marriage. As a citizen he went with them, while as a Christian the question seemed to him not what Christ said 2,000 years ago, but what Christ would say now. Desertion was not in the mind of anyone at the time of Christ, but it was an exceedingly pressing matter now.

So far had opinion shifted since 1910 that P.T. Forsyth proposed a resolution expressly supporting the majority view and it received a considerable measure of support. It was narrowly defeated, probably because, though many of the Council were persuaded that the majority’s general approach was the right one, reservations were felt about individual recommendations. The PCE’s Committee on the State of Religion and Public Morals, while noting in 1914 that there was a distinct possibility that “divorce may be legalised in this country on grounds that the Church has never recognised as sufficient”, expressed considerable doubt as to whether it could properly be said that adultery should be the *only* ground for divorce, and recommended the Synod to appoint a special committee to consider “the proprieties of extending the facilities and grounds of Divorce”.

The Gorell Commission held the view that, leaving aside theological grounds, adultery should be considered “not as a peculiar cause, but as one of the few causes which go to the root of the marriage relationship and render joint life practically impossible”.¹⁶ The law had proceeded on the basis that “faithfulness to the marriage vow, which involves the sexual union of two people, is an essential feature of the union”.¹⁷ The point of disagreement with the Churches’ witnesses was not that there was not something particularly significant about adultery but whether there could be other grounds for divorce as well. They shared the view that marriage was “not an ordinary simple contract in which no one is concerned except the parties”, and that “marriage should not be terminable at will”, but noted that the law concerning judicial separation already recognised that “certain grave causes” would put an end *de facto* to married life. It was important that divorces should not be granted for “trivial reasons”.¹⁸

The view that marriage should not be terminable by consent, because it was not merely an arrangement for the convenience of the couple but was to benefit their children and society generally, was regularly expressed by church leaders until the 1960’s, and shared by many others. Concern about divorce by consent was frequently reflected by opposition to proposed new grounds of divorce in cases where there had been no wrongdoing on the respondent’s part. Proposals made in 1917-1918 to change the law were condemned by the National Free Church

16. *Ibid.*, Report, p. 90, para. 220.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 96, para. 247.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 90, paras. 223, 224, 244.

Council and PCE Synod: they were felt to provide scope for collusion by a couple so as to permit divorce by consent. At the CUEW Council discussions in 1913, Forsyth doubted the appropriateness of the Gorell Commission's recommendation that insanity should be a ground for divorce because it was "rather a misfortune, and of the nature of a visitation of God, and a different thing from cruelty". The Commission had in fact anticipated this sort of objection, arguing that it was "based on a misconception, arising from a narrow view of marriage as a mere contract, and treating a suit for dissolution of marriage as if it were an action for breach of contract". Marriage was rather "a relationship, voluntarily entered into by agreement between a man and a woman... and such relationship is regarded as creating a status resulting from the joint life, which alters the position of the parties towards each other and the community". Even if marriage were looked at on a contractual basis, contracts could be "frustrated", and therefore terminated, without the fault of either party.

One factor which enabled many Free Church leaders to support the approach of the majority of the Gorell Commission was the making of a distinction between the roles of state and church. As Forsyth put it, it was not possible to "legalise people into Christianity". In October 1913, the CUEW Council passed the following resolution:

The Council... recognises that indissoluble monogamy is the absolute ideal of Christ for the society of his Kingdom. Therefore while it owns that this ideal of the Kingdom cannot be forced in the present actual stage either of Church or State it would express the conviction that any relief the State may give to the present situation should be conceived in that final interest, and should tend, on the whole, to its more effective recognition

This view, that the law of divorce should somehow buttress marriage, was a perennial theme among church leaders and secular, law reforming, bodies alike.¹⁹

Once a distinction is drawn between the teaching of the church and the legislation of a secular state, the question arises as to how the church should deal with those divorced people who, according to its teaching, "should" not be divorced. Thus, for example, C.J. Cadoux, who believed that Christ taught the absolute indissolubility of marriage, did not think that the state should necessarily attempt to impose this principle on everybody, but thought that deliberate non-compliance with this teaching of Christ would be "a very serious position for a Christian to take up". An article published in *The Christian Advocate* in 1922 and probably written by William Robinson, Principal of the Churches of Christ's Overdale College, who was clearly influenced by Cadoux, expressed the hope that, if the state were to allow divorce, "in all Churches... our Lord's teaching will be enforced and divorced persons remarrying be disciplined".²⁰ Cadoux and Robinson

19. *Putting Asunder*, the Archbishop's Group's report of 1966, expressed this view, and the Law Commission did so in the same year.

20 Unlike Cadoux, Robinson then thought the state should not allow divorce and certainly should not extend the legal facilities for it.

were among the strictest Free Church leaders on the question of whether divorced Christians might remarry, and it appears that the Churches of Christ held particularly strict views on these questions.

The Commissioners showed some interest in the question of how the church dealt, or would deal, with the remarriage of divorced persons. Shepherd declared confidently that, as the law stood in 1910, Congregational ministers would invariably remarry the innocent party. He also expressed the remarkable view that ministers would also conduct weddings for the guilty party, even when "the guilty person proposes to marry the paramour in connection with whom he or she has been divorced": the original marriage tie "had by law been loosened" and it was better for the offending parties to live together in rather than outside wedlock. The argument overlooks completely the fact that there were civil facilities for such persons to marry. Shepherd's view was certainly not typical, and remarks in *The British Congregationalist* suggest that it had hesitations about whether adulterers should be allowed to marry their paramours at all, let alone in church. The Council resolved in October 1913 that "in cases where guilt is the ground of divorce, it would deprecate the re-marriage by any minister of the guilty party in the other's lifetime". Discussions after the Second World War showed how problematical any test based on "guilt" or "innocence" would be. The reasons why the problems inherent in the Council's ruling were not soon exposed are that, until 1937, it was still necessary to prove adultery to obtain a divorce and in such cases it was easier to reach a clear (even if simplistic) view as to who was guilty and who innocent: that divorce was not much encountered in Free Church circles; and that there were not yet large numbers of divorced people with little or no church connection seeking weddings in Free Churches.

Although after the Gorell Commission there was increasing Free Church support for (or at least benevolent acquiescence towards) the extension of facilities for divorce in the way the Commission recommended (which did not become a reality until A.P. Herbert's Matrimonial Causes Act 1937)²¹, there was more caution about whether it was proper for a person to remarry.

Among the most liberal Free Church views were those expressed by the editor of *The Christian World*, though his comments frequently generated correspondence from those who disagreed. Commenting in 1932 on Archbishop Lang's view that divorced men and women (and those who had not been baptised or who wanted to marry within the prohibited degrees) should not be married in church, the editor said "Archbishop Lang's manifesto indicates a desire to tighten up the Church's regulations against marriages which the State (and public opinion outside the Church)²² finds nothing immoral or dubious". *The Christian World*

21. The Methodist Conference passed a resolution welcoming the 1937 Act "in so far as it is an attempt to implement the findings of the Royal Commission of 1912, and an attempt to remove the anomalies and hardships of the previous law". It does not appear that any other Free Church assembly passed a resolution on the subject.

22. Meaning the Church of England.

certainly believed that there could be an innocent party in a divorce case, and saw no objection to that party being remarried in church. "Ilico" (the name taken by Nathaniel Micklem) in *The British Weekly* expressed more cautious views. He argued that Free Churches supported Herbert's Bill "in so far as they may be of the opinion that on the whole the stability of home life will be better served by its passing than by its rejection". Nevertheless, in both 1932 and 1937 "Ilico" argued that the church could only permit separation and not divorce, and that "divorce with remarriage is a *prima facie* case for Church discipline... the Free Churches must stand (where they have always stood) for the indissolubility of the marriage bond; those married by the Church are not free under any circumstances to contemplate divorce". Other articles in *The British Weekly* and the correspondence they generated illustrate the diversity of Free Church opinion during the 1930s on whether a Christian might divorce and remarry.

The Christian World observed that Archbishop Lang's pronouncement ("the Archbishop's insistence on the stiffest Anglo-Catholic view of marriage") would "probably tend to an increase in the number of marriages contracted in register offices - or even Nonconformist conventicles". It is interesting to note that the likely consequence of the Anglican attitude was seen primarily as an increase in the number of *register office* weddings. This observation was made in 1932, and this, together with a similar remark in *The British Weekly* in the same year, is the earliest comment found about the impact of Anglican attitudes to divorce on remarriage practice in Nonconformist churches.

The 1937 Act contained a provision which, taken with the Resolutions of the Church of England's Convocation in 1938, was to affect Nonconformist Churches in an indirect way. These measures had the effect of substantially eliminating the possibility of remarriage in the Church of England. The 1857 Act included a proviso that no Anglican clergyman should be compelled to solemnize the marriage of anyone whose previous marriage had been dissolved on the grounds of adultery if the former spouse were still living, but required the clergyman to permit the use of his church for such a wedding if some other clergyman were prepared to officiate.²³ It did not exempt the former from his duty to solemnize the marriage of the "innocent" party, or of those who obtained divorces abroad on grounds different from those extant under English law. The 1937 Act extended that exemption to the wedding of *any* person whose former marriage had been dissolved.²⁴ How radical the practical effect was is difficult to ascertain, because the Church of England had made it increasingly difficult for divorced people to remarry in church, even if innocent, despite the limited exemption given to clergy under the 1857 Act. The view that no divorced person, "innocent" or "guilty", could remarry in church had gained ground; the Lambeth Conference resolved in 1908 that it was "undesirable" to bless in church the marriage of such an "innocent" person, and the Conference of 1930 resolved that "the marriage of one

23. Matrimonial Causes Act 1857, section 57.

24. Matrimonial Causes Act 1937, section 12.

whose former partner is still living should not be celebrated according to the rites of the Church". A.R. Winnett wrote that "most bishops refused to allow the issue of marriage licences to any divorced person, and while the clergy remained bound by the provisions of the 1857 Act, the marriage of divorced persons in church was met with episcopal disapproval, if not censure", with the result that "one or two clergymen and churches came to 'specialise' in the marriage of divorced persons who had been refused marriage elsewhere".²⁵ Nevertheless, before the 1937 Act, an Anglican clergyman, solemnizing the remarriage of an innocent party living in his parish after the publication of banns, could defend his action on the ground that he was merely acknowledging that parishioner's legal rights. In his evidence to the Archbishop's Commission on the Relations between Church and State in 1935, the Bishop of London frankly acknowledged that there was no legal justification for the practice of the Anglican church before the passing of the 1937 Act.

The 1937 Act meant that it was no longer necessary to discourage remarriage by denying licences. In 1938 the Convocations of Canterbury and York both resolved that the Church of England should not permit the use of the marriage service in the case of anyone who had a former partner living; the effect was to "require the clergy to use [the] discretion [sc. given by the 1937 Act], in all cases, negatively. The bishops..., whether they accepted the principle behind the Resolutions or not... agreed to support the Resolutions in their dioceses; they could exercise strong moral suasion on their clergy, though, again, they could not compel them, nor proceed against them formally if they chose to act upon a liberty allowed them by the law".²⁶ The effectiveness of the Anglican policy is demonstrated by the fact that, in 1952, only 0.03 per cent of weddings in the Church of England involved a divorced partner: the comparable figures for the PCE and CUEW were 16.14 per cent and 17.58 per cent respectively.²⁷ These developments weakened the position of clergymen who were not averse to officiating at a remarriage but who were unwilling to defy their church's authority. Sympathetic Anglican clergy would often send couples to the local Free Church minister to do what they personally felt constrained not to do.

In consequence of wartime conditions and the wider grounds of divorce, divorce rates rose dramatically:²⁸

25. *Divorce and Remarriage in Anglicanism*, (1958), p. 213.

26. *Marriage, Divorce and the Church*, (1971), p. 7, paras 10-12.

27. Ph.D., Appendix G, Tables 4, 7. The rates for Baptist and Methodist churches were rather lower than those for PCE and CUEW churches, being 11.82 per cent and 12.04 per cent respectively.

28. O.R. Macgregor, *Divorce in England: A Centenary Study*, (1957), p. 36.

<u>Period</u>	<u>No. of Divorce and Nullity Petitions:</u> <u>Annual Average</u>
1931-1935	4784
1936-1940	7535
1941-1945	16075
1946-1950	38901
1951-1954	33132

At the same time the Church of England was hardening its position with the result that there were many more people who could not expect weddings in the Church of England and who were not content to have civil weddings. There was a sudden, and great, demand for Nonconformist ministers to conduct their weddings. Nonconformity was ill-prepared for this challenge, even though it was in many respects a logical consequence of Nonconformist support for the kind of legislation the Royal Commission had recommended in 1912. Nonconformity had not resolved, or even apparently given much thought to, what it would do pastorally if such legislation were eventually passed.

Divorce was not one of the social questions with which Nonconformists were traditionally concerned and some of the statements made in 1910 were clearly made hurriedly and without deep reflection. Between 1910 and 1937 Nonconformity's traditional hobby-horses (liquor, Sunday observance, gambling) still occasioned more concern and interest than questions of marriage and divorce. Nor did church leaders apparently regard divorce as a problem among people they encountered in their churches. When the three English Free Church witnesses were examined by the Royal Commission, they indicated that they had virtually no direct experience of divorce in their practical or pastoral experience and this appeared to be typical of leaders in their churches. Though Shepherd had practised as a solicitor in London for more than forty years, he did not "know a dozen cases of divorce amongst Congregationalists that have come to my knowledge - either professionally or as a member of the body" and had only had "a very few cases" in his practice of divorce amongst Nonconformists. Jones and Scott Lidgett claimed not merely that they had not encountered divorce cases in their own pastoral experience but that they hardly knew of a single case within their own denominations. In 1920, speaking at the CUEW's Autumnal Assembly, the Revd. George Shillito still thought it could be said that "a man might be fifty years in the ministry and not hear of a [divorce] case", and in 1932 "Ilico" in *The British Weekly* thought that Jones's comments in 1910 about the extreme rarity of divorce in Congregational churches still held true, even though "we would not go so far as to claim that our marriages are always happy or that they all seem to enjoy the blessing of God".

The position changed radically after the 1937 Act came into operation, and the pressing urgency of divorce and remarriage during the early post-war years is shown in the attempts of individual denominations and ecumenical bodies to provide guidelines on the subject, and the lively debate in such periodicals as *The*

Christian World and *The British Weekly*. The intractability of the issues was reflected in the fact that Committees and Assemblies often failed to reach agreement or only achieved it by including alternative provisions which allowed people to agree to differ. Much of the disagreement arose because there was no real consensus about the issues at stake. Quite apart from the problems of divorce itself, what was it that made a marriage a "Christian marriage", assuming that there was any such thing, and what was the point of having weddings in church anyway? The fact that Nonconformity had no clear theological rationales for these meant that there was no firm basis for discussion of how the church should handle delicate issues of divorce and remarriage.

RICHARD GOLDRING

THE PRESBYTERIANS IN LIVERPOOL, PART 5 A SURVEY 1939 - 1945

Although the First World War had a great impact on the life of the Church, it could be said that the effect of the Second World War was greater, for now Merseyside was an arena of War. Moreover, in the First World War it was mainly the men who were fighting and were killed. In the Second everyone was at risk. Many were killed when their homes were bombed. Many churches were damaged too - some totally destroyed - and one manse got a direct hit and the minister's wife was killed.

The churches had tried to make some provision for war. In July 1939 the Presbytery's Emergency Committee sent out letters giving advice on what to do if there were a "national emergency". The aim was to keep congregations in full working order whatever happened. Each was told to deposit all records, minute books and other important documents in the bank. If there were a shortage of ordained preachers, churches were to have an afternoon service instead of an evening one, and to keep a list of lay preachers in case of emergency. Churches were linked together - such as St. Paul's with Trinity, Bootle - so that if anything happened to a minister, the churches were to get in touch with each other immediately and the two sessions were to meet. As it turned out, because of the destruction of St. Paul's building, the emergency plan for the Bootle churches came into early operation.

On the day the War started, Sunday 3 September, 1939, some churches held emergency joint meetings of session and managers to decide on the times of services. Most decided to transfer the Sunday evening service to the afternoon in the winter months (from the end of September to the end of March) for no-one wanted to go out at night, unless there was a full moon, because of the blackout.

The War had a profound influence in other ways. It was difficult for small churches, like St. Paul's, Bootle, which did not have a minister, to get one to take Communion. In Presbyterian churches only an ordained minister was allowed to

preside at a Communion service. However, so that they could have the Sacrament, the Presbytery gave permission to St. Paul's for their Lay Pastor to preside at Communion - an unusual situation in the Presbyterian Church of England.

The Sunday schools were badly affected too, because many of the children were evacuated soon after the War started. Some Sunday schools were so depleted that they had to close. The areas from which the children were sent were Liverpool (all on the town side of Queens Drive were advised to be evacuated, but those outside Queens Drive could go if their parents wished), Birkenhead, Wallasey and Bootle. It was therefore the churches in these areas which were most affected, for all the school-age children were evacuated with their schools, mainly to Wales - places such as Bangor, Denbigh, Wrexham and Llangurig. Though most of the evacuees returned home within eighteen months, they had got out of the way of going to Sunday school, and did not go back.

Ordinary week night meetings were out of the question, partly because of the blackout, but also because most people were working long hours, were fire-watching, or were in the Home Guard. This meant that meetings of the session and managers in many churches were held on a Sunday, after one of the services. Another development was that with the wartime shortage of manpower some churches began for the first time to ordain women as elders.

Most of the young people were in the Services - in this war that meant some of the women as well as the men. Young men's clubs and the Scouts were particularly down in numbers. For example, in 1942, twenty-four young men and women from Rankin Memorial had joined the Forces and one had died.

The women's meetings, on the other hand, were not so badly affected. Attendances were down because many members employed on war or other work were unable to go to the meetings, and there was difficulty in obtaining speakers. At Rankin Memorial, for example, the membership was down to fifty - though 100 went on the picnic to Blackpool. However, at the beginning of the War it was not possible to hold bazaars or sales of work, although rose queen festivals went ahead in the Summer - because they were in daylight and no heating was needed. Coal was rationed, and had to be kept for Sunday services. It was difficult to make tea at any events because food was rationed too.

Another difficulty was housing for new ministers or church workers. This was particularly acute in Bootle, where so many houses had been blitzed that it was difficult to find accommodation for the people of the town, let alone for any newcomers. A church without a manse which wanted a minister needed to appoint one who was already in the area. St. Paul's and Trinity, Bootle, surmounted this difficulty by appointing as temporary pastor, a Baptist from Wallasey, whose church had been destroyed in the blitz and who wanted to resume his ministerial duties.

But perhaps the most obvious effect of the War was the damage caused to church buildings. Many were damaged at least once, and some were destroyed. For example:- *RANKIN MEMORIAL* was twice damaged, in January and March 1941. After the first incident the minister and the writer's father reglazed the windows

(for no tradesmen could be obtained), and, no sooner had they finished, than the church was blitzed again. This time the damage was much worse and the congregation had to worship in the hall for two and half years. *ST. PAUL'S, BOOTLE*, was damaged by an incendiary bomb in October 1940, when a good deal of mess was caused, but not a great deal of damage. On 5 April, 1941, the hall was damaged, and the premises were not included in the compulsory list of buildings for fire-watchers on duty. The church building was hit again on 5 May, 1941, and this time was completely destroyed. The congregation met with Trinity, in the latter's building, until the union known as St. Paul's and Trinity, Bootle, came into being. At *TRINITY, BOOTLE*, both church and halls had been damaged, but some rooms were made habitable for use by the joint congregation. *EVERTON VALLEY* was damaged in May 1941, and a joint pastorate was set up with Queen's Road until 1944. After that both churches went their separate ways. *GRANGE ROAD, BIRKENHEAD*, was slightly damaged. In September 1940, the manse of *ST. PAUL'S, NORTH ROAD, BIRKENHEAD*, was bombed and the minister's wife was killed. *EGREMONT* had some damage from incendiary bombs to the church, hall, manse and mission. *TRINITY, ORRELL PARK (WALTON)*, was seriously damaged in September 1940. Then, in May 1941, the church was destroyed: only one wall was left, though the beautiful rose window remained intact. The services were thereafter held at noon at Brook Road Methodist Church. At *HESWALL* the minister and his wife were injured in an air raid, and at *GREEN LANE* the manse was damaged. The *WALLASEY VILLAGE* building received serious damage, while at *BLUNDELLSANDS* the hall was destroyed.

It was difficult to get the repairs done. There was a shortage of materials and it was practically impossible to find workmen, for they were doing other work or had joined the Forces.

Some money for repairs came from the Government's War Damage Commission. Unfortunately the money was not to hand when the repairs were carried out, and many churches had to borrow the money. Emergency work to make a slightly damaged building usable was effected quite quickly, but repairs under the War Damage Scheme were held over to February 1944 unless special permission was given.

The War had other effects. Mention has already been made of St. Paul's, Bootle, and Trinity, Bootle. If the War had not occurred, they would have continued on their own, getting smaller and smaller, until one or other set of buildings needed such extensive and expensive repairs that closure would have been the only option and only then would union have beckoned. But both churches were bombed and their congregation met for worship in Trinity's schoolroom, which was hastily made habitable. As Trinity's pastorate was vacant, the Lay Pastor of St. Paul's took care of both congregations, and as they were short of money, some of their buildings were let to Bootle Council for a British Restaurant; thus the situation gradually improved.

Grange Road was another church particularly affected by the War. In 1939 they were still hoping to move to the outskirts, but the War intervened, and no building

could be done. The minister left and they could not get a replacement, so the officebearers suggested that they join with Trinity, Claughton. The congregation voted against this. Although the Church possessed considerable capital, the decline in membership had accelerated through evacuation and national service, and active workers were elderly and few. The Presbytery in turn advised them to link with another church; so, in 1942, they turned to Trinity, Claughton, still with the hope that when the War was over they would either return to Grange Road or build further out.

St. Columba's, Smithdown Gate, decided to worship with Sefton Park on a temporary basis in 1943. However, they soon found that they would not be strong enough to go back to their church, and the congregation was dissolved from the end of that year.

Other congregations too were finding that membership and finances were dwindling. This was particularly noticeable in the down-town areas - Queen's Road, Everton Valley and Trinity, Prince's Road, for example. Their members were moving out and finding it too far to travel.

Yet, although some congregations had to join together with a view to full future union because that was their only hope of survival, four new causes were founded in these years: St. Columba's, Hunt's Cross; Grange, Bebington; St. John's, Huyton; and St. David's, Eastham. They were started under the care of the Church Extension Committee, and three of them were flourishing congregations fifty years on.

The ministers of the Presbytery helped the war effort in various ways. Some of them were away on war service for some time, and that had far-reaching effects on their congregations. For example, the minister of Sefton Park Church, William Sutherland, was absent for over eighteen months from November 1943, as a chaplain in the R.A.F. Earle Road Church which was not financially in a position to have a minister; had a "student assistant" instead. When he went on holiday in November 1941, he could not get back for he was required to join the Merchant Navy, and by the time the session clerk had written to the Presbytery, asking them to secure his release he had already sailed. It was eighteen months before he could resume his work at the church. The preacher-in-charge of Green Lane asked the Presbytery in 1942 for permission to accept an appointment under the Ministry of Supply. At first the General Assembly refused to keep his name on the list of preachers-in-charge, but finally agreed that it counted as war service. In 1941 the minister of New Brighton took up an appointment for six months as warden and welfare worker to a community of evacuees in the south of England, but he did not come back. In his place the minister of New Brighton Baptist Church supplied the pulpit each Sunday and took general oversight of the congregation. This arrangement went on until the end of the War. The minister of Wavertree Church asked the Presbytery for permission to take up an appointment in a city office for the duration of the War so that the financial position of his congregation might be eased. However, while approving his generous offer, the Presbytery did not give permission and, instead, gave him some Church Extension work at Hunts Cross,

which carried a stipend of £100: Wavertree had to find only the balance of his stipend.

The churches, like their ministers, helped in a variety of ways. For instance, at Rankin Memorial soldiers were billeted in the hall until the church was blitzed, when they had to be moved so that the hall could be used for the Sunday services and other church activities.

Towards the end of the War, the Assembly launched a "United Appeal Campaign" for £200,000. Each church was given a proportion to raise, and the money was to be used, when the War was over, to restore the Presbyterian Church of England's property in foreign lands, and the Presbyterian churches in England which had been destroyed by the bombing. It was also a time for the churches to get back to normal. With the start of Double Summer Time in April 1944, the afternoon services reverted to the evening. Some rooms were repaired, women's meetings started again and youth activities got under way. But things were different and, as after the previous War, there was a decline in church-going.

One good effect was the closer co-operation between churches of different denominations. We have seen that St. Paul's and Trinity, Bootle, had a Baptist Minister as Temporary Pastor, and the same congregation lent a room for the bombed-out congregation of the Bootle Protestant Free Church. (Some thirty-five years later, the congregation of Trinity worshipped in the Protestant Free Church when their buildings were demolished).

Another effect was a decline in class consciousness. This was particularly shown in the attitude to clothes. Although people still wore their best to church, this aspect of church-going became less important. People went to worship God in a difficult time, not to show off their clothes. Anyway, it was difficult to get new clothes when the monthly rations of coupons did not go very far. "Make do and mend" was the wartime slogan.

ALBERTA JEAN DOODSON

Note: For a bibliography see *JURCHS*, vol. 5, No. 6, May 1995, pp. 368-9.

REVIEWS

John Bunyan in Context. By Michael Mullett, Pp. 320. Keele University Press, 1996. £40. ISBN 85331-162-6.

This book, the third in the series, *Studies in Protestant Nonconformity* (Editor: Alan P.F. Sell) will prove a most useful work of reference for students of Bunyan and his time. It is primarily devoted to his writings, each of which is described and discussed, some at length, thus nineteen pages are given to *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*. Naturally, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* figures prominently in the two biographical chapters at the beginning of the book, which

provide a very readable account of his life and sympathetic insight into his character. Even gaol was unable to do more than hamper the activity of this busy evangelist. Bunyan's appearances in court are fully covered. It seems he was lucky and only slightly abused whereas his wife, Elizabeth, was rudely treated when she tried presenting a petition for her husband's release. It was her experience that Bunyan used for Faithful's trial at Vanity Fair. Incidentally, the exchanges between the regicides and their judges were even more appalling.

In his Preface the author tells us that he aimed at exploring Bunyan's indebtedness to medieval and popular culture and piety, his theology of grace and works, his comparability with Luther, Calvin, Fox, Baxter, Donne and Herbert, and further, to examine his ecclesiology, attitude to women and political views. His achievement in these fields is to be applauded. Of particular interest in our day is Bunyan's attitude to the other sex, which turns out to be very like that of a great many Roman Catholic clerics of our time. In work after work we return to watch in wonder how Bunyan manages to balance himself between rigid Calvinism and quasi-Arminianism. Pastoral concerns dominate. Luther makes many appearances in the book, followed by Baxter; Calvin has fewer than Fox, while the poets receive a few allusions. A disappointingly small space is given to the medieval and popular culture theme. I learnt more about the roots of say, Christian's combat with Apollyon, from my grandfather, a baker and confectioner, who could be occasionally persuaded to recite long lengths of rustic verse about the contest between St. George and the Dragon from the Mummer's Play he had taken part in at Stockbridge as a lad, than I can here. It needs pages and quotations, not simply references.

Excellent as the book is in so many ways, it would have been even better if the author had given more attention to *The Pilgrim's Progress Part I*. Has everything that could be said about it been said? One would like to have his comments.

JOHN H. TAYLOR

John Gibbs: A Newport Pagnell Puritan 1627-1699. By Marilyn Lewis. Pp. 173, published by the author, 1995, £8.65 including postage.

Mrs. Lewis is the wife of the present Rector of Newport Pagnell and a recent contributor to this *Journal* ("The Newport Pagnell Academy 1782-1850", Vol. 5, No. 5, November 1994). This book constitutes the third volume in her series on the history of Christianity in Newport Pagnell. It was written with local readers and the non-specialist in mind. Her subject, John Gibbs, was the Vicar of Newport Pagnell who founded the Independent Church there and was ejected some time between August 1659 and Christmas 1660. Edmund Calamy described him as "much esteem'd".

Gibbs was an educated man, having studied at Bedford School and the Puritan seminary, Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Mrs. Lewis sets his story against the turbulent political and ecclesiastical history of the times, both locally and

nationally, and among other things she relates his association with his more famous friend, John Bunyan. Gibbs argued against infant baptism but also sat lightly on believers' baptism. I particularly enjoyed the colourful account of the arrest of Sir George Booth, the Presbyterian royalist, in which Gibbs had a part. In her penultimate chapter the author deals in detail with Gibbs's writings on death, describing him "as something of a specialist on how a Christian should prepare for death" (p. 148).

There are many positive features to this book: it is easy to read and very well produced in a loose-leaf format; it contains some pleasing illustrations. Mrs. Lewis sees it as a contribution to ecumenism in a study of our denominational roots. One need not agree with all the modern lessons she seeks to draw nor with her general theological approach to appreciate her study. There are other general matters. For instance, in Chapter 7 we are offered a description of the content and aims of a Puritan sermon and on page 74 we have a delightful pen portrait of the Quaker preacher, Mary Fisher, who interrupted Gibbs while he was preaching.

But there are some negatives. Chief among those is that the book is as much a history of the times as it is a life of John Gibbs. The details about Gibbs are scattered throughout the book. It might have been helpful to have brought them together more. Again, the evidence of Gibbs's life and writings is sparse, which makes the project a difficult one. I listed many occasions when conclusions are tentative - such as "Gibbs' probable policy on baptism" (p. 69), "but I have found no evidence to support that conjecture" (p. 88), "Although no record remains" (p. 95) or "Taken together, these three fragments of evidence give us a very imperfect picture of John Gibbs' persecuted ministry during the 1660s" (p. 113). Although she provides us with excellent descriptions of Gibbs's extant funeral sermons and his small book *Several Divine Treatises* (Ch. 16), there are also some misleading statements, especially in the earlier chapters, which deserve qualification, as when Mrs. Lewis identifies the theological position of the Marian exiles with opposition to both episcopacy and a set liturgy (p. 4). And arguably she presents a one-sided judgement on Richard Davis (pp. 143f.). Further, Mrs. Lewis does not provide references though there is a great deal of cross referencing between chapters.

But one does not wish to quibble. This is a good book, packed with information, and deserves to be read. It is available from the author (postal orders to be made out to her) at The New Rectory, 81, High Street, Newport Pagnell, Bucks, MK16 8AB.

ALAN TOVEY

The Necessity of God: The Message and Ministry of Leslie D. Weatherhead. By John Travell, Congregational Lecture 1994. London. The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust Limited. £2.

If, as I believe, preaching is God's chosen means of redeeming, transforming and reshaping human history it is sad that preachers are often inadequately studied.

This is certainly true of Leslie Weatherhead. Growing up as I did in a liberal Congregational Church in the late 1950s he seemed an awesome figure. He had packed out the City Temple week by week for seventeen years. People bought his books, travelled to hear him preach and frequently re-used his sermons and illustrations. Yet all we have on him is two biographies (one a work of filial devotion by his son Kingsley, the other very slight), and the odd chapter in books like Horton Davies' *Varieties of English Preaching*. It is good therefore to have this short printed lecture. John Travell was a member of the City Temple in the last years of Weatherhead's ministry and is immensely knowledgeable about him.

What we have here is more biographical than theological. The title "The Necessity of God" reflects Travell's belief that this is "the core conviction which runs through every part of Weatherhead's message and ministry". It brings to mind the ending of one Weatherhead sermon when he declared "Outside God there is nothing but death". Travell outlines Weatherhead's openness to new ideas - exemplified in his interest in psychology at a time when Principal Garvie was denouncing it as the "most dangerous menace to the Christian way of life". There is an interesting discussion on the City Temple as a Congregational church. In comparison with the autocratic ways of Joseph Parker, or Leonard Griffiths's lack of sympathy with the Church Meeting, he argues that "The City Temple was more nearly a Congregational Church during Weatherhead's Ministry than at any time in its history on Holborn Viaduct, before or since".

Travell sees the closest companion to Weatherhead in America's greatest liberal preacher Harry Emerson Fosdick. This is certainly correct (which is why Rockefeller funded the rebuilding of the City Temple which he saw as the equivalent of Fosdick's Riverside). But there are important differences between the two. Through Russell Maltby Weatherhead was committed to the liberal tradition that depended on a direct access to the historical Jesus. Fosdick centred on the compelling power of continuing religious experience. Weatherhead's voice touched people, his quiet confidence seemed to radiate, giving his preaching a genuinely mystical quality. Fosdick lacked this pulpit charisma - with him the power of his preaching was more in the ideas than in the performance.

This essay is very positive towards Leslie Weatherhead. If, as one hopes, a full biography follows, it is important that John Travell faces adequately the critical questions. In some ways Weatherhead has dated quite badly. He failed to appreciate the degree to which even the earliest New Testament material reflects the post-Resurrection faith of the Church. He was over-sentimental, over optimistic. Sometimes his mind would veer off in peculiar directions. He was politically naive - he so concentrated on the changing of individuals that he did not adequately recognise the extent to which systems, structures, and power and poverty relationships also need redemption. All this needs to be acknowledged. But the fact remains that Weatherhead mediated the Christian gospel to people in vast numbers to whom simplistic faith was not possible. Without doubt he was one of the last of the great Nonconformist preachers.

MARTIN CAMROUX

'Fire in the Belly': Motivation for Mission in the LMS/CWM over Two Centuries. By Barrie D. Scopes. The Congregational Lecture 1995. Pp. 27. The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust Limited. £2.

Barrie Scopes, former General Secretary of the CWM, LMS missionary in Bengal, and offspring of LMS missionary parents, is well qualified to present this survey of missionary motivation in the LMS/CWM over the two hundred years since 1795. Most of the themes familiar to students of the nineteenth-century missionary movement are touched on, such as concern for the "perishing heathen", the blessings of "civilisation", and David Livingstone's creed of "commerce and Christianity". The first part of the lecture draws mainly on the standard LMS histories by Richard Lovett and C.S. Horne, and does not engage with any of the more recent academic studies of missionary motivation in the nineteenth century. Of potentially greater interest is the second half of the lecture, in which Scopes cites from letters written to him by those whose missionary call dates from the mid-twentieth century. What emerges from these letters is still "fire in the belly", but it is fire of a rather different kind from that found in the LMS pioneers. Scopes comments that anxiety to rescue non-western people from hell-fire is, not surprisingly, absent from these more recent testimonies of mission motivation. More prominent are the motifs of service and concern for the global spread of God's kingdom and its values of justice. For LMS missionaries in the twentieth century these were as forceful impulses as those which animated an earlier generation. For the ordinary church member, however, one suspects that they possessed neither the romance nor the urgency of the older appeals to the eternal destiny of the "heathen", as Scopes implicitly acknowledges when he remarks that in our current materialistic society few people are "moved to give themselves unstintingly to a vision of a world where kingdom values shape whole communities and countries". For reasons good or bad, modern western Christianity has lost the missionary fire in its belly, and Scopes is on firm ground when in his final paragraphs he points to the cross of Christ as the only place where the fire can be rekindled.

BRIAN STANLEY

A Congregational Formation: An Edwardian Prime Minister's Victorian Education. By Clyde Binfield. The Congregational Lecture 1996. London. The Memorial Hall Trust Limited. £2.

This is the second part of Clyde Binfield's mini-trilogy on Asquith and his Congregational connections. It offers the usual Binfield feast of often esoteric information on family and other relationships presented with the elegance, wit and sophistication his readers have come to expect. Might one suggest Dr. Binfield should turn his hand to detective fiction in his spare time? The plot is as complex as a Morse tale. Who else in twenty-three pages could trace the connections

between Asquith, Edward Baines, Lloyd George, Nathaniel Micklem (the QC, not the Mansfield Principal), Field Marshal Haig, Hugh Trevor-Roper - and Dr. Crippen and Virginia Bottomley?

Dr. Binfield must have shuddered a little at some features of the editing- he attended Emmanuel College, Cambridge, not Emanuel; and the claim that the lecture deals with the Herbert years of Henry Asquith is certainly mystifying, though it may be accurate.

STEPHEN MAYOR

From Taylor to Taylor One Hundred Years of St. Aidan's Presyterian Church, Didsbury (now Grosvenor St. Aidan's United Reformed Church) 1894-1994. By Norman Leak. Pp. 84. Manchester, 1994.

Capturing the texture of the life of a congregation is never easy. Local church histories frequently turn into recitals of ministries which seem to have been conducted in a socio-political vacuum. Grosvenor St. Aidan's has had a distinguished role in the distinguished history of Mancunian Presbyterianism and, since 1972, in the United Reformed Church. How fortunate that its history has been charted by Norman Leak, for although *From Taylor to Taylor* has been organised around a succession of eight ministries, the flavour of congregational life shines through, and that life is set against a backdrop of the shifting panorama of political affairs from the Boer War to the Falklands campaign. "Can the story of a Christian Congregation ever be written?" asked a previous minister on the occasion of the church's fiftieth anniversary. No, it cannot, for the unknown cannot be chronicled. A judicious selection of what can be known fills these pages which have been written with warmth and care.

DAVID CORNICK

Workaday Preachers: The Story of Methodist Local Preaching. Edited by Geoffrey Milburn and Margaret Batty. Methodist Publishing House 1995. Pp. xiv, 367. ISBN 1 85852 058 4 (paperback); ISBN 1 85852 0 (casebound).

This story of Methodist local preaching, produced to celebrate "the 200th anniversary of the general introduction of local preachers' quarterly meetings" (which reads perhaps a little like the famous small earthquake in Chile) contains much of interest - straight history, memoirs of individual preachers, statistics, sociological analysis, theological controversy. Unintentionally it illustrates the gap between the Methodist and the Reformed traditions: the latter is virtually unmentioned, except for the breakdown in provision of a common course of training by the Methodists and the URC. It is not much of an over-simplification to say that while Congregationalists and Presbyterians recognized, sometimes reluctantly, the place of lay preaching in filling the gaps left by the ordained the

Methodist ministry evolved gradually out of preaching by laymen (and laywomen too, even in the early days).

Doubtless both traditions could still find much to learn from one another.

STEPHEN MAYOR

The History of the Unity of Brethren. By Rudolf Rican. Pp. v, 439. Bethlehem, P.A.: The Moravian Church in America, 1992. \$19.00.

Readers of English will find their knowledge of "the first Reformation" greatly increased by this detailed study from the pen of the late Professor Rican, formerly of the Comenius Faculty, Prague.

The story begins with fourteenth-century protests against the perceived corruptions of the Roman Church. The Czech Reformers initially sought a renewed Catholic Church centred in Rome and, with feudalism disintegrating all around them, their message was urgent and eschatologically-flavoured. They sought a society subject to the Word of God, and a Church prepared to meet Christ, her Bridegroom. Such was the position of Milic of Kromeriz (d. 1374), the "father of the Czech Reformation". His student, Matej of Janov (d. 1393) understood the true Church to comprise the elect of God. The best known early leader was Jan Hus (martyred in 1416), and among exotic influences on the growing movement were John Wyclif, honoured by the Hussites as "the evangelical doctor", and the Waldensians.

The differences of emphasis as between Reformers in Bohemia and Moravia are spelled out, and it is made clear that the Czech Reformers had political as well as religious objectives - another source of tension, since some Hussites were more radical in both spheres than others. Clear accounts of the teaching of Petr Chelcicky and others are provided, and the beginnings of the Union of Brethren are traced. Living under the Word, gathered in churches of congregational order (though with an over-arching council of elders), the Brethren practised the priesthood of all believers and repudiated such doctrines as transubstantiation. While the more conservative Hussites remained loyal to Rome - their criticisms of it notwithstanding - the Unity made a significant break in ordaining its own priests. In the ensuing strife the Brethren of Moravia suffered their first exile in 1481.

Under the influence of the theologian Lukas, the Brethren formulated their distinctive positions, among them this: "Our separation from the Roman unity is good and just. Although this is true because of their evil deeds, it is, however, truer because of their wicked view of faith and because of much erroneous belief."

With the turn of the fifteenth century the activities of hostile Roman Catholic noblemen caused problems for the Unity, but with the advent of "the second Reformation" increasing contact with broadly like-minded Christians proved a source of strength. There were differences between the branches of the Reformation, however. For whereas the Lutherans focused upon personal

salvation, the Czechs emphasised rather the obligation laid upon the Church to be faithful to God in the world. Again, the Brethren carefully explained to Bucer their grounds for upholding the separation of Church from State. In 1536 they published a significant Confession of Faith.

The sometimes strained relations between the Brethren and the Utraquists: the severe restrictions placed upon the Bohemian congregations by the royal mandate of 1548; the exile in Prussia and the removal of some to Poland; contracts with the Reformed in Hungary from the mid-1560s; the Bohemian Confession of 1575; the publication of the Kralice Bible in 1596 - all of these matters are carefully discussed. In general there was growing sympathy with Calvinism, especially with its view of the whole of society under the Word, and its teaching on the Lord's Supper.

The trials of the brethren under the Counter-Reformation, and the impressive contribution of Jan Amos Komensky (Comenius) - himself exiled - are faithfully recorded. By 1700 five Brethren congregations only were left - all of them in Poland. In the 1720s a congregation of Czech immigrants arose in Herrnhut, Saxony, on the estate of Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf; it became Brethren, though now with the tincture of Zinzendorffian pietism. From the missionary zeal of these Brethren arose the Moravian Church as we know it today.

In a most illuminating concluding chapter the late Amédeo Molnár discusses the Brethren's theology in relation to that of "the second Reformation". Nor are the different societal contexts of the theologies overlooked: whereas the first Reformation was popular and sometimes revolutionary, the second was favoured especially by the young middle class, and was socially conservative. The Brethren sought always to ground in the Bible. They deemed confessions of faith to be revisible. They held Word and sacrament together, the latter never being regarded as a symbol only. They were silent on double predestination.

A bibliography and an index complete this most welcome book, whose translator, C. Daniel Crews, archivist of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, supplies a rendering which is never less than intelligible and is for the most part fluent.

ALAN P.F. SELL

The Shaping of American Congregationalism 1620-1957. By John Von Rohr. Pp. xi, 499. Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 1992. ISBN 0-8298-0921-X.

John Von Rohr's book presents a broad-ranging survey of American Congregationalism from its roots in English Puritanism to its merger with the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1957 to form the United Church of Christ. This is a volume which lives up to the accolades offered on the back cover. While the book is largely descriptive and by the author's own account offers "little new scholarship for the academic world" (p. x), the breadth of the study and the vast historiography associated with Congregationalism make the synthesis offered by

Von Rohr all the more impressive. As the first significant history of the denomination in fifty years, this work brings together the ideas of many scholars working not only in the familiar arenas of New England Puritanism and the Great Awakening but also developments on the frontier and the influence of women, American Indians and African Americans in shaping the denomination.

Von Rohr divides his account of Congregationalism into seven distinct periods and devotes a chapter to each. The chapters are all structured in the same manner. Each begins with a narrative account of the events and individuals who shaped that period in the church's life. Then consideration is given to the nature of the church as a religious community in sections on theology, polity and worship. A final section in each chapter explores the church's outreach and mission.

The story begins within an examination of the nature of English Puritanism which is essential to the understanding of the foundations and development of American Congregationalism. In the new world, the Congregational settlers sought to fulfil their covenantal responsibility to build "a city upon a hill" or a "holy commonwealth". The scriptures were to be their guide in all matters of life. To this end, civil and ecclesiastical government became indistinguishable. By the late seventeenth century, second and third generation Congregationalists were grappling with the difficulties posed by remaining faithful to the strict tenets held by their forefathers and seeking to respond to the challenges posed by changes in colonial life. The exclusive position of the Congregationalists began to be challenged for the first time in the period between 1660 and 1730. Glimmers of liberalism issued from concerns to maintain the church's prominence in the life of the community. This was seen most clearly in the opening of baptism through the Half-Way Covenant and Stoddard's offering of the Lord's Supper to all baptised adults within the church, provided they lived "without scandal". The intense revivals and political revolution of the second half of the eighteenth century further transformed Congregational life through new understandings of the relationship between the clergy and the church members and altered perceptions of "Christian liberty". The process of democratization which characterized civic affairs in this period soon infused Congregationalism. Home missions and a commitment to social activism, most notably in the abolitionist cause, began during these years and were to be greatly expanded in the modern period. The Congregationalists, having long shed their privileged status, participated fully in the mainstream of American church life. Von Rohr completes his survey with a discussion of the challenges posed by twentieth-century crises and the tensions over social liberalism and ecumenical merger.

Von Rohr's book is written in a fluid and accessible style. It will undoubtedly be welcomed by students and general readers in the United Church of Christ and their British counterparts in the United Reformed Church.

EILEEN L. GROTH