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Editorial

In this issue we are privileged to publish the annual lecture to the Society by Dr. Ernest Payne. It has both historical and topical interest.

John Taylor has resigned from his position as joint-editor of this Journal. He brought to his work a keen interest in the history of our Church and a wide experience of editorship in the Congregational Historical Society. He was thanked at the Annual Meeting for his many services to the Society.

The Society also expressed its thanks to R. J. Watson who gave invaluable service to the Society as its Librarian: he did a vast amount of work in the rehousing and classifying of the Library and he was always ready to take trouble in answering enquiries from members of the Society and from visitors to the Library. Our debt to him is very great. We extend our good wishes to his successor.

Notes

The Librarian of the Society is prepared to supply to interested enquirers a photocopy of the now rare Statement of Faith (1956) of the Presbyterian Church of England.

The records of the former Carshalton Rd. Congregational Church, Sutton, are now available for consultation in the local Public Library.

Mr. J. Burgess, a Durham University research student, would be glad to know of materials for the study of 19th century nonconformity in Cumbria: his address is 6 The Crescent, Highmoor, Wigton.

NONCONFORMISTS AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL LECTURE, 1976

Our American cousins are celebrating on a considerable scale and with great enthusiasm the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of 1776 and their successful war against the Mother Country. National, State and local occasions vie with one another. Now the National Maritime Museum has at Greenwich an exhibition said to be more impressive than anything so far arranged in the United States.

Shortly the Queen is to pay a special visit to the territories once ruled by her great-great-great-grandfather. When Her Majesty opened the Greenwich Exhibition, she is reported to have offered forgiveness to the rebels on behalf of George III. It is to be hoped that her advisers will study the history of the 18th century carefully, when they prepare the speeches she will deliver in the U.S.A., and that they will see that it is made clear that many in this country were fervent supporters of the colonists. Among them were the great bulk of the old Dissenting community, still at that time themselves only second-class citizens. They saw the colonists' cause as their cause, the cause of civil and religious liberty. The rebellious colonists regarded themselves as appealing, over the heads of the King and a tyrannical government, to the ancient rights of free-born Englishmen.

"The American War," wrote Robert Southey, "made the Dissenters feel once more a political party in the State. New England was more the country of their hearts than the England where they had been born and bred."¹ One may cite three of those even closer to the events themselves. There is a remark recorded in 1768 by the strange young man Sylas Neville, whose diary we possess: "A sensible Gent wished that N. America may become free and independent, that it may be an asylum to those Englishmen who have spirit & virtue enough to leave their country, when it submits to domestic and foreign tyranny."² In 1775 Richard Price wrote to Richard Chauncey that if the colonists were defeated, "an asylum for the friends of liberty" would be lost, which would indeed be "a dreadful calamity."³ The third witness can be John Rippon, the Baptist leader. Writing to James Manning in 1784, a few months after the conclusion of the Peace of Paris, Rippon said: "I believe that all our Baptist ministers in town except two, and most of our brethren in the country, were on the side of the Americans in the late dispute. . . . We believe that the independence of America

¹Quoted by A. L. Drummond, *The Story of American Protestantism*, 1949, p. 144n.

²*The Diary of Sylas Neville* (edited by Basil Cozens-Hardy), 1950, p. 31.

³Roland Thomas, *Richard Price*, 1924, p. 71.

will for a while secure the liberty of this country.”⁴ Rippon was no firebrand. His words are significant, both for what they assert and for that cautious qualification about the future — “for a while”. The comment of a modern historian is in line with these earlier testimonies. This was, says Dr. Pauline Maier, “a defensive revolution”.⁵

The revolt of the colonies was a traumatic experience for 18th century Britain. The attitude of the Dissenters requires examination and explanation, for they had been strong supporters of the House of Hanover. Throughout the reign of Queen Anne they had had reason to fear that the limited freedom secured them by the Toleration Act of 1689 might be taken away. Though George I and George II were virtually foreigners, with no real mastery of even the language of their British subjects, Dissenters rallied to the throne as a safeguard. There was no doubt as to their attitude at the time of the two Stuart rebellions, the 1715 and the 1745. When George III succeeded his grandfather in 1760, he was a young man of twenty-two, more truly an Englishman than either of his predecessors. On the death of George II, Thomas Hollis, an interesting 18th century traveller, antiquarian and philanthropist of Dissenting ancestry and republican sympathies, wrote in his diary: “May his grandson, a youth of fine disposition, avoid his [i.e. his grandfather’s] imperfections, and excel his virtues, and pursue and adhere to, unswervingly, every manly and regal accomplishment. May his pattern be that of Alfred as historiated by the incomparable Milton.”⁶

Within a very few years, however, Hollis, as a result of letters from acquaintances in America, became growingly concerned about the deterioration of relations between Britain and the colonies. He did his best to improve matters. Hollis died in 1774, eighteen months before the Declaration of Independence. At least until 1768, when he was getting ready to retire to Coscombe in Dorset, he still regarded the Bostonians as staunch friends of the House of Hanover and George III.

Nor was this without substance. If the change in attitude of the Dissenters requires explanation, so does that of the colonists. They took up arms most unwillingly. John Adams, destined to be the second American President, is generally thought to have been right when he estimated that at the outbreak of hostilities in 1775 and the declaration by George III that the colonies were in a state of rebellion, only a third of the population were in favour of war against the British

⁴W. T. Whitley, *A Baptist Bibliography*, Vol. 1, 1916, p. 201.

⁵*From Resistance to Revolution*, 1973, p. 35.

⁶*Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, Esq.*, 1780, Vol. I, p. 98. Later his views changed. Syllas Neville, *op. cit.*, p. 23 records of either Thomas Hollis or a cousin Timothy Hollis, with whom he was friendly: “The House of Hanover are now the same to Mr. Hollis as the House of Stuart, and he agrees with me that they are rather worse, as they spent more of our money, and that this George is of as arbitrary principles as those of the House of Stuart.”

government. A third supported the British authorities and supplied the ranks of the so-called "Loyalists", many of whom ultimately left the colonies for Canada, the West Indies or Britain. As in most controversies and conflicts, a third of the population were at first indifferent or reluctant to make difficult and dangerous decisions. Even among the large church-going population in the colonies — most of them descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers and those who had sought across the Atlantic a freedom and toleration greater than that in Britain — there were differences and tensions. In particular Baptists, who were not at the time a very large community, felt aggrieved that they were expected to pay taxes for the upkeep of the Presbyterian, Congregational and Anglican establishments. That Baptists were swept into the ranks of the rebels throws important light on the general course of events.

The mistakes and misunderstandings, which led to armed conflict, began in 1765 with the passage by the House of Commons of a Stamp Act, which imposed duties on legal documents, newspapers, pamphlets, almanacs, cards and dice. From 1756 to 1763 Britain had been involved in the Seven Years War. Thanks to the inspiring leadership of the elder Pitt, she had been successful. The Empire had been greatly extended. Any serious threat to the colonies from France was at an end. Any threat from Spain had been lessened. Britain needed to develop a more efficient administrative machinery for her new dominions. She needed also new sources of revenue. But the Stamp Act was a ham-handed action, which not only provoked immediate and vigorous protest in the colonies, but was condemned by many influential figures in England. There was organised refusal to pay the duties, the resisters calling themselves "Sons of Liberty". What was more significant for the future was that the separate colonies made contact with one another and started on a course towards a union, which up to then had not been seriously envisaged.

One of the outstanding men of the century, Benjamin Franklin, a native of America, had been in England since 1757, making a name for himself as a scientist by his discoveries about electricity. In the Royal Society and the coffee-houses of London, Franklin hobnobbed with so-called "Honest Whigs" and with Dissenters of radical political and theological opinions. Prior to the Stamp Act he had written a pamphlet entitled *Cool Thoughts on the Present Situation of our Public Affairs* (1764) and for the following ten years he did his best to prevent a complete breach between Britain and the colonies. That is perhaps why Franklin has been chosen as the subject of a commemorative stamp by the British Post Office, though it is not one we shall much see, as it is an 11p one. In Parliament the elder Pitt made against the Stamp Act one of his most famous speeches. "I rejoice that America has resisted", he declared. There was a widespread feeling that the duties were contrary to the rights of Englishmen, since they were revenue taxes and the colonists had no direct representation in the

House of Commons. The Act was wisely, though not very graciously, withdrawn. Edward Gibbon, the historian, then a rather silent M.P., expressed regret at the change of attitude, as did Thomas Gray, the poet.⁷ It really was, however, as Macaulay said, "an indefensible Act".⁸

The "Sons of Liberty" quickly disbanded. But some very silly things had been said in the course of the debates. Charles Townshend, who was responsible for some further foolish actions a year or so later, asserted that the colonies ought to contribute "to the mother country which had planted, nurtured and indulged them". Unfortunately he paid no attention to the devastating retort of Colonel Isaac Barré, a brave, colourful, liberal Irishman, who had Huguenot blood in his veins. "They planted by your care! No, your oppressions planted them in America. They fled from your tyranny to a then uncultivated, inhospitable country, where they exposed themselves to almost all the hardships to which human nature is liable, and among others to the cruelties of a savage foe . . . and actuated by principles of true English liberties, they met all hardships with pleasure compared with those they suffered in their own country from the hands of those who should be their friends."⁹ So said Colonel Barré.

Townshend tried another lot of duties in 1767. At once opposition revived. Professor J. H. Plumb has said: "The plantations of America provided admirably protected markets for infant British industries and produced raw materials of exceptional value — sugar, tobacco, furs, fish and timber. At the same time they created a market for slaves and also absorbed some of the more undesirable elements of English society — criminals, whores and bankrupts."¹⁰ If we accept this as a reliable description of current opinion, then what happened is hardly surprising.

The colonists remembered things passed down to them from John Robinson and Roger Williams. One of the colonies had been founded by William Penn, who in 1687 had issued in Philadelphia a handbook entitled *The Excellent Privilege of Liberty and Property* "for the information and understanding (what is their native right and inheritance) of such as may not have leisure from their Plantations to read large volumes." In its pages ordinary men and women had to their hands extracts from the Magna Carta and the Petition of Right with Penn's comments. Professor Winthrop Hudson, like W. W. Comfort thirty years ago, believes Penn's writings, as well as his practice, to have been a fundamental influence on the shaping of colonial opinion.¹¹ The writings of John Locke were closely studied

⁷*The Autobiography of Edward Gibbon*, World's Classics, pp. 178f. *The Letters of Thomas Gray*, World's Classics, p. 294.

⁸Macaulay, Essay on the Earl of Chatham, *Edinburgh Review*, Oct., 1844.

⁹Quoted in Peter Brown, *The Chathamites*, 1967, p. 196.

¹⁰*The First Four Georges*, Fontana edition, 1966, p. 29.

¹¹W. W. Comfort, *William Penn and Our Liberties*, 1947. Professor Winthrop Hudson at Regent's Park College, Oxford, 20 May, 1975.

also. The word "revolution", we may remind ourselves, meant initially "recurrence" or "restoration". "The men of the revolutions" in colonial America and later in France were, says Hannah Arendt, "firmly convinced that they would do no more than restore an old order of things that had been disturbed and violated by the despotism of absolute monarchy or the abuses of colonial government."¹² In fact, there were such new features about what took place that the very word "revolution" changed its emphasis and tone. Human participation in the struggle for freedom and for a new order was so enlarged and extended that the events at the end of the 18th century must be judged to mark one of the great climactic changes in history.

There were issues besides those raised by the Stamp Act and the Townshend duties to rouse public opinion. As early as 1762 Dr Jonathan Mayhew, minister in Boston, had written to his friend Thomas Hollis about his fear that the British government and the Archbishop of Canterbury were contemplating the appointment of a bishop for the colonies. Hollis was the fifth in his family of that name. His great-grandfather had settled in London in Commonwealth times and in 1679 secured the lease of Pinners' Hall in Old Broad Street and let it to various Nonconformist groups for their services. The son of the first Thomas Hollis was a munificent benefactor of Harvard College and a trustee of the Particular Baptist Fund. The Thomas Hollis, who became a traveller and antiquarian in the middle of the 18th century, inherited a large fortune from his father and uncle. After a good education, during which he came to know Dr. Jeremiah Hunt and Dr. James Foster, preachers at Pinners' Hall and from them imbibed "an ardent love of liberty and freedom of sentiment",¹³ followed by extensive travel on the continent, Hollis settled in Lincoln's Inn and gave himself to collecting and distributing the works of Milton, Algernon Sidney and John Locke. There were few European libraries that did not benefit from his gifts and he continued a most generous helper of Harvard and a number of American ministers.

To Trinity College, Cambridge, Hollis gave a portrait of Isaac Newton and to Sidney Sussex a portrait of Milton, as well as making gifts to the British Museum and the Dr. Williams's Library. At least once he gave Dr. Johnson five guineas to draft an appeal for him. This perhaps accounted for the fact that in 1781 someone mentioned in Johnson's presence "Mr. Thomas Hollis, the strenuous Whig, who used to send over Europe presents of democratical books with their boards stamped with daggers and caps of Liberty" and said "He was a bad man, he used to talk uncharitably." Johnson commented: "Poh! poh! Madam; who is the worse for being talked of uncharitably?", and when the lady went on: "I doubt he was an atheist." Johnson said: "I don't know that. He might perhaps have become one, if he had

¹²Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*, 1947, p. 37. Cp. Paul Lehmann, *The Transfiguration of Politics*, 1975, pp. 8-9.

¹³*Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, Esq.* p. 5.

had time to ripen." Then smiling, according to Boswell, Johnson continued: "He might have *exuberated* into an atheist."¹⁴

Jonathan Mayhew was one of Hollis's most frequent correspondents. When Mayhew wrote to him in 1762 about the threat of a bishop being appointed to the colonies, Hollis replied that Jasper Mauduit was "the properest person that I know to manage an opposition to such a scheme . . . a leader among the dissenters and in connection with people in power."¹⁵ Jasper Mauduit, a wealthy London woollen-draper, belonged to the Dissenting Deputies and was their chairman from 1764 to 1771¹⁶. Hollis remained suspicious of the intentions of Archbishop Secker and "the project of episcopizing America", but nothing had happened by the time Mayhew died in 1766. However, in a letter to Hollis in 1765, Mayhew gave early warning of the rising tide of anti-British feeling in the colonies: "The people of the colonies are far, very far indeed, from desiring to be independent upon Great Britain and nothing I believe could make them even willing for it, but what they esteem hard, cruel and oppressive treatment. God forbid there should be an entire breach between them, which might prove fatal to both." This letter Hollis took to the Prime Minister of the day, but reported to his friend that Rockingham "did by no means seem to feel the importance of it".¹⁷

After Mayhew's death, Dr. Andrew Elliott, of Boston, became a correspondent of Hollis's and on 1 July, 1768 Hollis wrote to him: "There is great reason to believe that the scheme for bishoping America has been dropped wisely, most wisely, by the civil minister here, of some months; but that should by no means prevent the non-episcopalians with you from urging on the controversy concerning it, in the public prints, to the uttermost."¹⁸

Like many of his contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic, Hollis was also strongly anti-Catholic. He had passed away before 1780, when during the war between Britain and the colonies, the Popish Riots associated with Lord George Gordon erupted in London.

At the end of the 1760s, it was John Wilkes, who had become the centre of public interest. Few have found him an attractive figure. He is usually portrayed as a dangerous demagogue, "subtle, popular and sinister", says Peter Brown in his book *The Chathamites*. But in

¹⁴Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, Globe edition, pp. 563-4. Hollis's heir, Thomas Brand, took the name Hollis and corresponded with John Adams and other Americans.

¹⁵*Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, Esq.*, p. 161.

¹⁶On the Deputies and the American colonies, see Bernard Manning, *The Protestant Dissenting Deputies*, 1952, Pt. IV ch. 1, pp. 407-424. Further allegations that there were those who wanted "not to Christianise but to Episcopolize the Plantations" reached the Deputies from America in 1769, 1772 and 1774. See also Maurice W. Armstrong, "The Dissenting Deputies and the American Colonies", *Church History*, XXIX, No. 3.

¹⁷*Memoirs*, pp. 281ff.

¹⁸*ibid*, p. 402.

1765, at the time of the campaign against general warrants, Hollis wrote to Mayhew: "I am sorry for the irregularities of Wilkes; they are, however, but as spots in the sun. Having contended with fortitude and magnanimity his own, that is the cause of a great, and yet free, though a sunken and falling people, he is worthy of every respect; and I rejoice that our travellers [i.e. American visitors] have had good sense and spirit enough to show it to him."¹⁹ Francis Blackburne, Archdeacon of Cleveland, editor of Hollis's papers in 1780, by which time Wilkes had been M.P. for Middlesex and Lord Mayor of London, said: "Mr. Wilkes had demands upon the public for something more than respect."²⁰

Wilkes's biographers have paid little attention to his contacts with America, his influence there, and the effect his tempestuous career had upon the developing tension between Britain and the colonies. Wilkes had a number of close acquaintances among Dissenters. One of his associates was Sir Frederick Bull, one time Lord Mayor, a Baptist and a benefactor of Bristol Baptist College. Wilkes had also a number of important supporters among the American agents and students in London, though Benjamin Franklin thought little of him. William and Arthur Lee, brothers of R. R. Lee, one of the signatories to the Declaration of Independence, were in frequent touch with him. In June, 1768, Wilkes was sent a copy of John Dickenson's *Letters from a Farmer*, denying the authority of Parliament to levy taxes on the colonies. When Lord Hillsborough's rebuke of the Massachusetts Assembly for circulating a list of grievances was rejected by 92 votes to 17, ninety-two became a patriotic number in the colonies and was linked with No. 45 of the *North Briton*, for which Wilkes had been imprisoned in the summer of 1768. From Boston Wilkes was sent two turtles, one weighing 45lbs., the other 47lbs., together a total of 92. Gifts of money were sent him and William Palfrey, secretary of the Boston "Sons of Liberty", became one of his most frequent correspondents.²¹ This same event led Paul Revere to design his silver Liberty Bowl, replicas of which have been offered by the *Times* newspaper for £556.87. The inscription on one side commends "the Glorious Ninety-Two Members of the Honourable House of Representatives". That on the other is simply "No. 45. Wilkes and Liberty".

The importance of these links was lost on most people in England. Nor was it realised how many in the colonies were following with interest and concern what was happening in Ireland and Corsica. In neither island did it seem that democratic rights were much regarded. The cause of the Corsicans was dear to James Boswell, it may be remembered. It had also the support of Thomas Hollis.

These events combined to cause a shift and polarisation of opinion in the early 1770s. Petitions from the colonists to George III brought

¹⁹*ibid.*, pp. 289-290.

²⁰*ibid.*, p. 290.

²¹See Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution*, p. 164.

no response, were even said to have been contemptuously tossed aside. Then there came another development which stirred Nonconformists. A number of Anglican clergymen, including some well-known Cambridge dons, tried to get rid of the necessity of subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles. They failed in their efforts, but from among them came the nucleus of the Unitarian Society. Nonconformists hoped that this was a favourable moment to seek the ending of some at least of the restrictions they still suffered under the Test and Corporation Acts. To be barred from public office was a serious deprivation and affected some of the ablest men of the time — persons like Richard Price, for example, an expert in public finance and a pioneer in the field of insurance, and Joseph Priestley, a distinguished experimenter — both of them ordained Presbyterian ministers. Edmund Burke and Sir George Savile supported the cause of Nonconformists in the Commons. Chatham and Shelburne supported it in the Lords, but George III took a personal part in securing the defeat of the proposal. London Dissenting ministers who helped to organise the campaign included the Presbyterian Andrew Kippis, Caleb Fleming, Thomas Gibbons and Samuel Wilton, all three Independents, and Samuel Stennett and Benjamin Wallin, Baptists. All of them were acquainted with Benjamin Franklin and in touch with the colonies. Of Samuel Wilton it was said: "If in anything he discovered what approached to an enthusiastic zeal, it was for the success of America in her struggle for independence."²² In the provinces men like Robert Robinson, of Cambridge, and Joshua Toulmin, of Taunton, were associated with the Nonconformist agitation. In both London and the provinces, however, there were some ministers of strictly Calvinistic views, who held back, since the main leadership in the effort appeared to be in the hands of those who had come to be known as "Rational Dissenters" because of their liberal theology. The effort failed. This was to have its effect when the breach with America came.

The next milestone in the increasing tension between Britain and the colonies occurred at the end of 1773 with the famous Boston Tea Party. A number of Americans disguised as Red Indians boarded a ship in the harbour and threw the cargo overboard. Samuel Adams, the older and more impetuous cousin of John Adams, was not the only one in Boston who had become not simply suspicious of British intentions, but openly hostile. In September, 1774, a first General or Continental Congress assembled, with just over fifty delegates, to consider the situation. It

²²Walter Wilson, *Dissenting Churches of London*, Vol. I, 1808, p. 193. Dr. Wilton was minister first in Tooting and then at the Weigh House, Little Eastcheap. By 18 March, 1770 Franklin could write to his friend, Charles Thomson, in Philadelphia: "We have for sincere friends and well-wishers the body of Dissenters generally throughout England" (quoted in *Horace Walpole: Writer, Politician and Connoisseur*, edited by Warren Hunting Smith, 1967, p. 90n). The Midland Baptist Association in Pershore in 1773 expressed concern about hostilities in America.

met in Philadelphia. A Pennsylvania lawyer, Joseph Galloway, presented a scheme for a Grand Council to which American legislation might be submitted by the British Parliament. This might now be described as a kind of Dominion Status scheme. It was rejected by the Congress, but by only one vote. The Declaration of Rights and Grievances finally sent to George III declared: "We ask for peace, liberty and safety." The rejection of Galloway's plan led its author later to join the British forces and in due course he arrived in England, a very disgruntled "Loyalist", of whom there is more to tell.

The first Continental Congress was a disappointing one for the Baptists. Their outstanding leader was Isaac Backus, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Middleborough. With John Gano, later a chaplain with the colonial forces, Backus journeyed to Philadelphia. After meeting members of the Philadelphia Baptist Association (the most important Association of the time, uniting some thirty churches and 4,000 members), Backus saw the Massachusetts delegates to the Congress. He assured them of general support, but made clear some of the current Baptist grievances. They evoked little sympathy. Samuel Adams suggested that complaints about taxes for the religious establishment came from only a few fanatics. Thirty-nine year old John Adams, who had the largest law practice in Massachusetts, said that a change in the solar system would be as likely as the end of Congregational rule in the colony.²³

However, in the following year, Baptists almost to a man supported the colonial cause. When during the war Backus published his important *History of New England*, he felt bound to ask: "Since the Baptists have often been oppressed in this land, and would have suffered more than they did, had it not been for restraints from Great Britain, how came they to join in a war against her?"²⁴ His five-fold answer has interest because of its similarity to the way in which most British Baptists were reacting to the crisis: (1) Experience under Episcopalians in England; (2) Treatment in America under "establishment" principles; (3) The teaching of Roger Williams about government based on a contract; (4) The injustice of the arbitrary claims of the British authorities; and (5) Hope of a final deliverance from difficulties which would benefit the people of Britain as well as those in America.

There was a General Election in England in 1774. This brought the main issue more into the open. Shortly before the dissolution Burke made a famous speech on behalf of the colonists and later developed his opinions before his Bristol constituents.²⁵ He followed

²³Isaac Backus, *A History of New England*, Vol. II, 1777, pp. 302ff.

²⁴*ibid.*, pp. 299ff. The one significant exception was Morgan Edwards (1722-95), who went to Philadelphia in 1761 and ten years later became an evangelist at large.

²⁵See Edmund Burke, *Speeches and Letters on American Affairs*, Everyman edition, 1908.

the elder Pitt in the view that the relationship between Britain and her colonies was basically a trading one; as the colonists were not represented in Parliament, it was wrong to raise revenue from them. Priestley, who had recently left Leeds for a house on Lord Shelburne's Bowood estate, where he acted as tutor and librarian, issued an *Address to Protestant Dissenters* dealing with the election and the American situation. Benjamin Wallin, of the Maze Pond Baptist church, who was in correspondence with Backus, preached on *The Popular Concern in the Choice of Representatives*. Franklin was still doing his best to bring the parties together and had the help of John Fothergill, a Quaker doctor, well known for his medical, botanical and educational interests. "I can hardly conceive that a better man has ever existed", said Franklin.²⁶ But Franklin lost some standing by the disclosures he made against Thomas Hutchinson, the unfortunate Governor of Massachusetts, who had been opposed to the Stamp Act and was at heart of liberal sympathies. In a letter Thomas Hollis wrote to Jonathan Mayhew in 1766, he described Franklin as "a man of knowledge, ability, wishes well to what is right, loves his country, North America, even to partiality; and yet, according to old observings, to me he is a trimmer."²⁷ Whatever one's attitude to this verdict, it is certain that at the end of 1774 Franklin was responsible for an action of vast consequence. He met Thomas Paine, then aged 37, a disgruntled excise officer, of Quaker background, and encouraged him to cross the Atlantic, providing him with useful letters of introduction. Tom Paine, destined to be described as "America's Godfather", reached Philadelphia on 30th November, 1774.

An important pamphlet controversy had begun in England. To the concern of Boswell, Samuel Johnson stepped into the fray with *Taxation No Tyranny*. He was unfortunately prejudiced against Americans. A man of "passionate humanity", as Professor Coupland says,²⁸ he could not see how people who practised and upheld the slave system could protest against ill-treatment and the denial of rights. In a biting phrase a few years later, Johnson spoke scornfully of "yelps for liberty from drivers of negroes".²⁹

Johnson's pamphlet might not have won so much attention had not another old Tory decided to adapt it for his own purposes.

²⁶*D.N.B.*, "Joseph Fothergill".

²⁷*Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, Esq.*, p. 335. In 1761 Hollis had sent Thomas Hutchinson, "a gentleman of capacity and erudition", a copy of Toland's *Life of Milton*. Note the recent biography *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*, 1975, by Bernard Bailyn. Those interested in calligraphy may study the signatures on the Declaration of Independence — Franklin's rather flowery, the flowing one of Samuel Adams and the careful, laboured one of John Adams.

²⁸*The British Anti-Slavery Movement*, 1933, p. 58.

²⁹*Life of Johnson*, p. 432. The remark was made at Ashbourne in September, 1777.

John Wesley was in his early seventies and one of the best known men in England as a result of his ceaseless journeyings and preachings. He turned Johnson's pamphlet into his own so-called *Calm Address to our American Colonies*. Wesley reacted against any hint of criticism against King or Government. In September, 1775, he was in Plymouth and records in his journal: "Understanding some of our friends here were deeply prejudiced against the King and all his Ministers, I spoke freely and largely on the subject at the meeting of the Society. God applied it to their hearts; and I think there is not one of them now who does not see things in another light."³⁰

There were, however, those who disliked Wesley's theology as well as his politics. Augustus Toplady — "Rock of Ages" Toplady, who was nearing the end of his short, intense life — rushed into print with a pamphlet entitled *An Old Fox Tarr'd and Feathered*. Toplady had no difficulty in pointing out inconsistencies in Wesley's attitude. Had he not shortly before said: "No man can dispose another's life but by his own consent"? Wesley was not prepared to accept rebuke from a dyed-in-the-wool Calvinist. To a letter he wrote to *Lloyd's Evening Post* in November and inserted in his Journal, he attached this post-script: "As to Reviewers, Newswriters, London Magazines and all that kind of gentlemen, they behave just as I expected they would: and let them lick up Mr. Toplady's spittle still: a champion worthy of their cause!"³¹

Criticism of Wesley came also from Bristol. Caleb Evans, of the Baptist College, published *A Letter to the Rev. John Wesley occasioned by his Calm Address*. He probably knew that Wesley had dropped his usual Bristol printer, William Pine, who was of democratic sympathies and had expressed support of the colonists. Evans not only charged Wesley with changing his views — which Wesley later admitted — but claimed that "under an artful disguise you have revived the good old Jacobite doctrine of hereditary, indefensible, divine right and of passive obedience and non-resistance."³² Here the question — still a very pressing one — of the right of ultimate resort to force is raised. Those who regarded themselves as standing in the tradition of Cromwell and Milton were finding voice. It is perhaps not surprising that twenty years later several of Evans's students found themselves in conflict with the authorities. Thomas Olivers, the Methodist preacher, and Fletcher of Madeley tried to defend Wesley. Olivers charged Caleb Evans with drawing on the writings of Joseph Priestley. That,

³⁰*The Journal of John Wesley*, Everyman edition, Vol. IV, p. 55.

³¹*ibid.*, p. 61. Wesley wrote *A Serious Address to the Inhabitants of Britain* in February, 1778.

³²Caleb Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

Evans said, he regarded as "undesignedly, a very high compliment".³³

Meantime there had been in America at Lexington and Concord the kind of clashes inevitable as feeling mounts and the authorities get nervous. A second Continental Congress was held and in spite of the growing dangers adopted what became known as the "Olive Branch Petition", drafted by John Dickenson. But on 22 August, 1775, a testy George III and a blundering Lord North declared the colonists to be in open rebellion. Dr. Pauline Maier suggests that the royal proclamation was "aimed more immediately at suppressing" support of the colonists by their friends in England. It spoke of "the traitorous correspondence, counsels and comfort of divers wicked and desperate persons within this realm."³⁴

The course of the subsequent war is not our concern. The British generalship was poor. The government tried to get mercenaries from Russia and, having failed, secured 30,000 Germans from Hesse — "to add terror to the roarings of the British lion", in Backus's biting phrase.³⁵ What would have happened had they been Russians, who can tell? The colonists did not win easily, but in George Washington they had a commander experienced in fighting the French and the Indians, and of great skill and endurance. He owed his appointment to John Adams, whose proposal — made, it is said, entirely on his own responsibility — "perhaps more than any other single act ensured the ultimate success of the Revolution".³⁶ Washington is very inadequately represented by the statue in Trafalgar Square. He was 6ft. 2in. tall and straight as an Indian, with big feet and large strong hands. Between 1758 and 1775 he had shown himself a successful planter, shifting from tobacco to wheat. He took to arms again very reluctantly and was later to prove himself entirely worthy to become the First Citizen. He himself said of his forces that they were far fewer than the British, "composed of men often half-starved, always in rags, without pay, and experiencing every species of distress which human nature is capable of undergoing."³⁷ But once embarked on the fight, the colonists dare not give up. The promise of assistance by France in 1778 and by Spain a year later hastened their victory, but it would have come sooner or

³³Evans, *A Reply to the Rev. Mr. Fletcher's Vindication of Mr. Wesley's Calm Address*, p. 22. See Rippon's *Register*, I, p. 247f. for an elegy on Caleb Evans by Benjamin Francis, and Bogue and Bennett, *History of Dissenters*, IV, p. 290, for this tribute: "Many who are still living bear testimony to the superiority of his mind, the extent of his learning, the ardour of his zeal and the holiness of his character". K. M. Manley in *Baptist Quarterly*, XXVI, No. 6 (April 1976), p. 264, says Evans "appears to have displayed the strengths and the weaknesses of the Welsh temperament" and quotes Rippon and Samuel Stennett on his sudden outbursts of temper.

³⁴Maier, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

³⁵Backus, *op. cit.*, II, p. 306.

³⁶James Truslow Adams, *The Adams Family*, 1930, p. 51.

³⁷Esmond Wright, *Washington and the American Revolution*, Penguin ed., p. 134.

later in any case. The modern world has had reminders that this is what happens when men are driven to revolt.

The issues had been made clearer to the colonists and to their supporters in England by two publications which appeared early in 1776, shortly before the Declaration of Independence. In critical times, often after a long period of uncertainty, some publication, some word, some event, suddenly and swiftly crystallises public opinion. "The revolution", as Trotsky said in his account of what happened in Russia in 1905, "has its own system of chronology, where months are decades and years are whole centuries". Solzhenitsyn has written about "key-moments" in which "everything mysteriously coalesces; the things that are brewing in darkness or broad daylight, and those that are to flow from them. Central figures suddenly materialize, act, dominate an event or are dominated by it".³⁸ The early months of 1776 were of this kind. In January, Tom Paine's *Common Sense* came from the press in Philadelphia. It quickly won a wide circulation, "working", as Washington wrote from Virginia, "a wonderful change there in the minds of men", because it contained "sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning".³⁹ "Everything that is right or reasonable pleads for separation", wrote Paine. "The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries 'Tis Time to Part!" A few weeks later there appeared in London Richard Price's *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government and the Justice and Policy of the War with America*. Wesley said of this that "if practised (it) would overturn all Government and bring in universal anarchy"⁴⁰. In March, 1776, the *Northampton Mercury*, now the oldest English newspaper which can claim a continuous publication, declared, "Of all the wretches that ever disgraced the name of patriot, none come up to those pests of society, to those enemies to Britain, our Anglo-Yankies, that is, English abettors of American rebels". But Price's pamphlet had to be reprinted five times within a month of publication and is said to have had a circulation of 60,000 copies, with translations into several European languages. The pamphlet won Price the Freedom of the City of London and the offer of a free passage to America and American citizenship, an offer conveyed in a letter from Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Arthur Lee, but declined. To Price civil and religious liberty were inseparable. He remained a firm believer in the right of people to rise in rebellion, overthrow a government that had encroached upon their freedom and erect a new government in

³⁸Trotsky, 1905, p. 58. Solzhenitsyn, *Lenin in Zurich*, quoted in *Times Literary Supplement*, 23 April, 1976

³⁹Maier, *op. cit.*, pp. 267ff., but she plays down Paine's influence. Dr Caleb Fleming, of Pinners' Hall, had seen one of the first five copies of *Common Sense* to reach England in May, 1776. See *The Diary of Syllas Neville*, p. 244.

⁴⁰Journal, Vol. IV, p. 70. 14 April, 1776. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* appeared on 5 March, 1776. Smith had been about in London since 1773 and, "a steady Whig", knew both Franklin and Price.

the place of the one destroyed.⁴¹ A decade later, Price and Burke, on the same side on this occasion, were to be protagonists in controversy over the French Revolution.

Price spoke for the majority of the Presbyterians and Baptists of the time and for most of the Independents, I imagine. There were in London some 14 Presbyterian churches (many of them moving in a liberal theological direction), 16 Baptist churches and 18 Congregational. I find it difficult to understand why R. W. Dale and Tudor Jones give so little, indeed virtually no attention to the American War and Revolution in their histories of Congregationalism. One is also surprised at the rather patronising language in the *History of Dissenters* by Bogue and Bennett, which appeared between 1808 and 1812. They described the Americans as "these self-willed children of the woods". "They lived in a degree of practical freedom from restraint, and of uncontrolled management of their internal affairs, which was scarcely known in Europe and which tended to fill them with exalted thoughts of their own personal consequence. Having no nobility among them to decorate society they grew up without the sentiments of veneration for the order, which were at that time universally felt in Europe."⁴² Bogue and Bennett regretted the division of opinion over the American question, but noted with satisfaction that after thirty years it could be said that the American revolution had furthered the cause of both civil and religious liberty.

By way of contrast let me quote the description of a remarkable scene, which we owe to Robert Hall, the famous Baptist preacher. As a boy of eleven or twelve, he was taken by his father to the school kept by John Collett Ryland, of College Lane, Northampton, and remembered Ryland saying:

"Were I General Washington, I will tell you what I would do. I would call together all my comrades and brother officers. I would order every man to bare his arm, and then I would order one of them to bring a lancet and a punch bowl, and he should bleed us all one by one into the punch bowl; and I would be the first to bare my arm; and when the punch bowl was full, and we had all been bled, I would call upon every man to consecrate

⁴¹See Carl B. Cone, *Torchbearer of Freedom: The Influence of Richard Price on 18th Century Thought*, 1952, ch. VII. Note the tribute to "good old Price" in Sir William Jones's *Ode to Alcaeus*. This clever young man moved to the left and quarrelled with Dr. Johnson over the latter's remarks about Milton, "whom of all men I most admire". See Peter Brown, *The Chathamites*, pp. 341ff, and Bogue and Bennett, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 423.

⁴²Bogue and Bennett, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, 1812, pp. 149f. Cp. Brougham in the House of Lords in 1843 expressing "our natural abhorrence of the levelling system and a democratic form of government"; he called America "a level republic, ruling and conquering, and flourishing without King to govern, without a prelate to bless, without a noble to adorn them" and spoke of the War of Independence as bringing "defeat, disaster and disgrace to the British arms", quoted by Jasper Ridley, *Lord Palmerston*, Panther edition, 1972, p. 357.

himself to the work by dipping his sword-point into the bowl, and entering into a solemn covenant engagement by oath to one another, and we would swear by Him that sitteth upon the throne and liveth for ever and ever never to sheathe the consecrated blade till he had achieved the freedom of his country."⁴³

A fiery outburst, indeed, from a rugged old man! But you may recall that thirty years before Philip Doddridge had enrolled the citizens of Northampton to fight against the Young Pretender. And lest any here feel left out, let it be remembered that the one ministerial signatory to the Declaration of Independence was John Witherspoon, a Presbyterian, who had gone from Scotland in 1768 to be President of Princeton College. "Cousin America has run off with a Presbyterian parson," quipped Horace Walpole.

John Newton, ex-slave captain and Vicar of Olney, no doubt spoke for many Christians in England, when in August, 1775, he wrote to a friend about "our sinful distracted land, in this dark hour . . . I meddle not with the disputes of party, nor concern myself about any political maxims, but such as are laid down in Scripture . . . Poor New England! Once the glory of the earth, now likely to be visited with fire and sword. They have left their first love and the Lord is sorely contending with them. Yet surely their sins as a people are not to be compared with ours."⁴⁴ In 1779, while the war was in progress the *Olney Hymns* appeared. The curious will find therein Newton's own compositions for the National Fast Days called for in 1776, 1778 and 1779, as well as some verses headed "On the Commencement of Hostilities in America".⁴⁵ National Fast Days were a form of escapism and self-pity much favoured at the time.

More interesting and surprising is the contents of a little booklet re-published last year by Methodists — *The American War*, a three-part poem by Charles Wesley. It supplements a MS volume of *Hymns and Verses on Modern Patriotism and the American Rebellion and Independency, etc.*, known since 1964.⁴⁶ The background of the new publication is this. John Wesley made the following entry in his journal on 13 March, 1779:—

"I had the pleasure of an hour's conversation with Mr. G., one of the members of the first Congress in America. He unfolded a strange tale indeed. How has poor K.G. [i.e. King George] been betrayed on every side. But this is our comfort; there is one higher

⁴³James Culross, *The Three Rylands*, 1897, p. 62. Cp. Theophilus Lindsey on "the much injured and persecuted Americans" in a letter of January 1775, *Letters, etc.* Ed. by H. McLachlan, 1920, p. 79.

⁴⁴*The Works of John Newton*, 1841, p. 250.

⁴⁵*Olney Hymns*, Bk. II, Nos. LXIV, LXV, LXVI and LXVII.

⁴⁶See Donald S. Baker, "Charles Wesley and the American War of Independence", *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, Vol. XXXIV, September, 1964 and March, 1965.

than they; and He will command all things to work together for good."¹⁷

Mr. G. was Joseph Galloway, author of the 1774 Dominion status proposal, now in England. Galloway was as critical of General Howe, whom he had joined, but who had not treated him with the respect he thought proper, as he was of the colonists he had deserted. After being examined before the House of Commons, he published *Cool Thoughts on the Consequences of the American Rebellion*, thoughts which were sour as well as cool.

John Wesley found them to his liking, however, and put some of them in the *Political Extracts*, which he published for his followers in 1780. Brother Charles was even more of a High Church Tory and King's man than John. He decided to put some of Galloway's prose into verse. In Charles's view the colonists were rebelling not only against the Mother Country, but against God and His "dread Vice-Regent here", George III. Anglican preachers at that time often described as heathen all those outside the established Church. Presbyterians were particularly obnoxious on account of their suspected republican sympathies. So we find among Charles Wesley's Rebellion Hymns verses like the following:—

"The horror of the good old cause,
The hate of Kings and Church and Laws
Thou wilt, O God, repel;
And then the Kingdom of the Fiend
Shall come to a perpetual end
And sink again to hell."

Charles regarded the making of peace in 1783 as a catastrophe, its final blasphemy being the recognition of a republican form of government. Lord Shelburne was an arch-fiend as the Prime Minister, who had concluded the peace.

"Accurs'd by all his memory shall rot,
Yet let the wicked never be forgot,
But while the memory of the just is blest,
Stand it in Britain's chronicles confest,
That smooth, perfidious, perjur'd SH — sold
His King, his country and his God for gold."

The poem *The American War* outlines the course of events as Galloway saw them and repeats the charges Galloway made against General Howe.

"Glory invites, but softer charms
Detain him in Armida's arms;
Wasting the time in careless ease,
In revels, sports and wantonness,
In dear Luxurious dissipation,
And double dear Procrastination. . . ."

¹⁷*Journal*, Vol. IV, p. 173. Galloway spent the last twenty years of his life studying Biblical Prophecy and died in Watford in 1803.

What now has our great Captain done?
 Wilfully lost whate'er he won;
 Done to his friends as little good
 And as much mischief as he could. . .
 Wasted our lives with wanton pleasure,
 And twenty millions of our treasure:
 His Country sold; his duty slighted;
 The Colonies with France united;
 Made our amazing Efforts vain;
 Imbroiled us both with France and Spain;
 Gained his own Party the ascendant,
 And made America independent."⁴⁸

Poor Charles Wesley! This is not the right note to end on, not really fair to the Methodists of that day, certainly not fair to the Colonists and their supporters in this country. The rebels and their friends should not be idealised, but the future was with them. If any proof of this is needed, it lies in the fact that a document like the Declaration of Independence could not have come from 18th century England. There seems no doubt that the original draft was the work of Thomas Jefferson, though John Adams and Benjamin Franklin touched it up, and John Adams was chiefly responsible for its adoption. Jefferson, a shy, tall man, large boned, with red hair, which turned an untidy grey, no doubt had the weaknesses as well as the strengths of the intellectual, but any cause able to win the dedication and loyalty of such a man merits attention. Jefferson would gladly have included in the Declaration a condemnation of the slave-trade. He persisted with his bill for full Religious Freedom⁴⁹ in the face of seven years of opposition. He was also the father of decimal coinage. Two of his remarks may serve as conclusion, the one likely to win our assent, the other "strong stuff", as one of his biographers admits, but certainly not disproven by this century's happenings.

"State a moral case to a plowman and a professor. The former will decide it as well and often better because he has not been led astray by artificial rules."

"What country can preserve its liberties if their rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance. . . What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure."⁵⁰

ERNEST A. PAYNE

⁴⁸*The American War*, 1975, pp. 21, 33f.

In fairness one should note a Bi-Centennial Hymn, published by the American Hymn Society, in July, 1975, with *Sine Nomine* as the suggested tune. The first two verses are:—

"Boldly through stormy seas, the pilgrims came
 To find true freedom, nurture holy flame
 Of faith in God — all glory to the Name!
 Alleluia! Alleluia!

In '76 the patriots, wise and good,
 Declared their independence, bravely stood
 United — thirteen states, a neighbourhood.
 Alleluia! Alleluia!"

⁴⁰The Virginia Statute "made an instantaneous, profound and lasting impression on Dissenters. Among them Brand Hollis had it printed in his local paper the *Chelmsford Chronicle* (14 July, 1786), Lindsey's brother-in-law John Disney (who had recently followed him into Dissent) printed it in his memoirs of Jebb, and Price had a modified version published as a broadsheet", C. C. Bonwick, "English Dissenters and the American Revolution", *Contrast and Connection*, edited by H. C. Allen and Roger Thompson, 1976, p. 100.

⁴⁰Max Beloff, *Thomas Jefferson and American Democracy*, Penguin ed., pp. 16 and 89.

A PSALM GENTRIFIED

Amateurs of pulpit style, chapel humour, and the perennial quest for "relevance" (what could be better for a genteel congregation?) should note this parody of a distinguished early Victorian Father and Brother, which naughtily did the rounds of students and sermon tasters.

"Deity is my pastor; I shall not be indigent. He maketh me to recumb on the verdant lawns; He leadeth me beside the unrippled liquidities; He reinstalleth my spirits, and conducteth me in the avenues of rectitude, for the celebrity of His appellations. Unquestionably, though I perambulate the glen of the umbrages of the sepulchral dormitories, I will not be perturbed by appalling catastrophes; for Thou art present; Thy word and Thy crook insinuate delectations.

Thou spreadest a refection before me in the midst of inimical scrutinations; Thou perfumeest my locks with odoriferous unguents, my chalice exuberates.

Indubitably benignity and commiseration shall continue all the diuturnity of my vitality, and I will eternalize my habitance in the metropolis of Nature."

(The 23rd Psalm in the style of R. Winter Hamilton, [d. 1848], minister of Albion and Belgrave Congregational Chapels, Leeds, from 1814 to 1848. Quoted in E. Paxton Hood, *The Lamps of the Temple*, 3rd. ed., 1856, p. 79).

PRESBYTERIANS IN ALDERNEY

When in 1967 the first Adventure Camp was organised at Saye Bay by the Presbyterian Church of England, most of the young people and staff arrived thinking that they were probably the largest party of Presbyterians Alderney had ever known. It did not take them long to realise their mistake. Then and at each subsequent visit camp groups undertook research projects on the church life of the island and soon discovered the "old Presbyterian Church" (*alias* the skating rink and the cinema), the now sadly derelict building standing at the corner of the High Street and Le Val. However, despite much probing in the museum and among knowledgeable residents, information about Presbyterianism in Alderney was not easy to find and this prompted me to search in the archives of the United Reformed Church History Society.

The librarian produced an elderly brown envelope marked "Alderney", which had survived the V2 rocket attack on Church House in 1945, when so many church records were lost. On the outside were the words "Founded 1859, Preaching station 1874, Church closed 1894, funds transferred to Guernsey q.v.". Inside was an interesting but haphazard collection of documents, press cuttings, photographs and letters which had obviously been placed in the envelope at random over the years.

First of all there was an article by the Rev. S. Huston, Minister in Alderney from 1877 to 1883, on "Primitive Presbyterianism in the Channel Islands". This told how island families, who had fled to Geneva during the persecutions of Queen Mary's reign, returned after her death to introduce the Reformed faith to the Channel Islands. French pastors were introduced into parishes and in 1563 Sir Thomas Chamberlain, Governor of Guernsey, allowed Elders and Deacons to be appointed. A consistory was held weekly, the Governor, the Bailiff and some of the Jurats being members. Jersey acted similarly and the two consistories called a Synod which met in Guernsey in 1564. Despite some problems with the Bishop of Winchester, who claimed jurisdiction over the Channel Islands, the Synods of 1576 and 1579 agreed a complete form of ecclesiastical discipline for all the islands and in the following century King James sanctioned the Presbyterian form of church government in the Channel Islands, though recommending the use of the Anglican liturgy. This he succeeded in introducing in Jersey, though Guernsey and Alderney held out until they were compelled to conform in 1662.

The first major account of more recent Presbyterian developments in Alderney is found in an article, presumably from the English Presbyterian journal, *Messenger*, of October 1858. This records that, on account of the immense fortifications and other government works being undertaken there, the population of 5-6,000 people required Christian ordinances on a much greater scale — "Church accom-

modation being less than sufficient for two-thirds of the people, while great ungodliness of every kind prevails". The military and civilian population contained many Presbyterians, and in May 1858 William Turnbull, a distinguished elder from Guernsey, had visited the island to assess the need. A large room, the Temperance Hall (on the Butes), was placed at his disposal by Mr. Jackson, a government contractor. When he found 80 civilians and 70 soldiers wanting a church, he arranged for the hall to be renovated to accommodate 200. Forms and pulpit were made in Guernsey and sent over. The Rev. Walter Wright (a licentiate or probationer minister of the Presbytery of London working in Guernsey) was sent to take charge and the first services were held on June 27 attended in the morning by 120 and in the evening by 140. Mr. Wright was shortly afterwards appointed chaplain to the Presbyterian troops in Alderney. On September 7 he was ordained at Southampton by the Presbytery of London and appointed minister of the new Presbyterian cause in Alderney.

The February 1859 issue records a "soirée" held at the Assembly Room, Oliver Street, attended by 140 (70 of whom were Royal Artillery). Despite the remoteness of their temporary worship centre in the Temperance Hall, good attendances were maintained and two prayer meetings a week were held in the manse. In an appeal to mainland Presbyterians for a proper church on Alderney a member wrote, "The Church of England, the Wesleyans, the Primitive Methodists and the Roman Catholics have all their comfortable places of worship and why should we not?" A contractor had offered to build a church with 600 seats for £700 and the site was expected to cost £60 to £70. Evan Bisset, one of the chief overseers of the government works, had agreed to act as treasurer.

An official extract minute, signed by William Chalmers, Clerk of the Presbytery of London, April 1860, set out the appeal mentioning the importance of Alderney as a military and naval station with a population of 7,000. Various contracts (in French, of course) dated October 18, 1859 and August 31, 1860 were signed in the presence of Monsieur le Juge and Messieurs les Jurés de la Cour, transferring property in the "grande Rue" to trustees for the Presbyterian Church in England for the construction of a chapel dedicated solely for divine worship according to the rules and practices of the Presbyterian Church in England and the Free Church of Scotland — an interesting addition.

The foundation stone was laid on August 29, 1860 by William Turnbull, and the Rev. A. J. Murray of Jersey conducted the service. Various documents and papers were placed in a receptacle by the minister, Mr. Wright, and set beneath the stone. After the service a tea meeting was held in the Temperance Hall. The minister's infant son was baptised, suitable addresses delivered and the evening was

graced by the presence of a number of ecclesiastical and military dignitaries. £430 had already been subscribed towards the church.

On September 7, 1862 the new church was opened at a service conducted by the Rev. William Jeffrey of Guernsey. Excellent attendances were recorded at the three services, Mr. Jeffrey presiding at two of them and the minister at the third. A tea meeting the following day was attended by more than 300. The chair was taken by William Turnbull and addressed by Mr. Brown of Her Majesty's Customs and by Mr. Jeffrey. Greetings were brought by Mr. Kevern, Wesleyan Minister, Mr. Peek, Primitive Methodist and Mr. Tougis, French Wesleyan. Mr. Wright and the congregation were congratulated on a building which was also an ornament to the island. It measured 68' by 44' and would accommodate 400. Its style was described as "of a mixed character, partaking of the Corinthian, with five buttresses on each side". Mr. Bisset had superintended the work throughout and only £400 was required to finish the furnishings and free the building from debt. A sum of £300 was also asked for the erection of a manse.

There is little information about the life and work of the congregation for the next 30 years. Mr. Wright resigned on October 6, 1863. The Rev. Alex. Salmon was inducted on March 9, 1864 but died August 6, 1864. The Rev. William Charteris, formerly an English Presbyterian missionary to the troops and the Jews in Corfu, was inducted as minister on July 11, 1865 and remained until November 8, 1869. In May 1874 Synod reduced the status of the congregation to that of a preaching station (i.e. a sort of mission without full rights to call a minister) and there is no record of a minister being there between 1869 and 1877.

The Rev. Samuel Huston was on the island from 1877 to 1883. Two extracts from the Presbyterian *Weekly Review* sum up the situation. An advertisement appeared in the issue of August 3, 1878, which said:

"The Rev. S. Huston, Alderney, is prepared to receive a limited number of pupils for instruction in the usual branches of an English and Mercantile Course, together with Latin, Greek, French and Mathematics. The salubrity of Alderney stands very high, as shown by military medical reports. Terms and references on application."

An article a fortnight later looked back upon the history of the church:

"About twenty years ago when matters were prosperous a Presbyterian Church was formed and a place of worship erected. The chief promoter was William Turnbull, Esq., now of Briery Yard, Hawick, a well tried friend of Presbyterians in the Channel Islands, but many of the older members of the Church remember the earnest canvassing of the Rev. W. Wright, the first Minister on Alderney, who visited the larger towns in quest of means to carry out the enterprise. We regret to say that, owing chiefly to

the discontinuance of the Government works, the congregation, never large, is now a small one and comparatively feeble. The Presbyterian Church in Alderney is no longer a pastoral charge, but an ordained Minister, the Rev. S. Huston, labours there with much assiduity and zeal. Except from among the careless, there is not much room for increase and yet there is work to be done. Mr. Huston deserves encouragement from the Presbytery and the Church at large and we trust that will not be withheld. A supply of healthy literature would be a boon."

However, the record shows that Mr. Huston was inducted in 1879, indicating a measure of support from Presbytery. Although he left in 1883 his efforts were largely responsible for the purchase of a manse in 1885 for his successor, the Rev. C. P. Way.

The ordination and induction of Mr. Way took place on June 17 1884 in the presence of a large congregation. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Nicholson of Jersey and the ordination, the first to be held on the island, was conducted by the Rev. D. Fotheringham from London. An interesting but undated letter from Mr. Way extolled the virtues of Alderney and commended it as a health resort for "jaded and weary Ministers and Christian workers". He went on to speak of a commodious building in its own grounds, formerly the Government House, which had been unoccupied for many years, and which he proposed to rent as a House of Rest and Orphanage. He also expressed concern that "the Jesuits were spreading their specious errors over the islands; they have here a school of 75 children, chiefly Protestants". There were 300-400 soldiers in the garrison and he hoped to use "a large semi-detached room" of the building for gospel meetings, bible classes, and reading room.

Another report of about 1888 or 1889 by a visitor, Mr. A. Thompson, tells how in Alderney he was cordially received by Mr. Way, and by Mr. Turnbull (returned from Hawick?) Despite the small number of Presbyterian troops in the garrison and the relatively small local population, church attendance was about 100 and the work was encouraging. Commending Mr. Way for his loyal and earnest work, he did remark, however, that "after serving in a very isolated place like Alderney for 7 years with scarcely a break it might be time for him to move on and a new and fresh worker give an impetus to the cause". You have to read between the lines.

Mr. Way did not remain in Alderney for seven years. An article, dated January 4, 1889, and signed "Le Baillage" recounted how friends in Guernsey and Alderney had been urging Mr. Way to reconsider his decision to "resign his charge in the Spring". Apparently he had come originally for 6 months but during his 6 years stay membership had increased three-fold and attendances at worship continued to rise. It appears that Mr. Way departed for America in 1890.

The Rev. James Carswell came from Heaton, Newcastle on health grounds. His stay was, however, short — July 1890 to early 1891. Reference is also made about this time to the death of William Turnbull after 40 years service to Presbyterianism in the Channel Islands. The churches in Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney all owed much to him.

On June 16, 1891, the Rev. Ralph Haddon was inducted as Alderney's last Presbyterian minister by the Rev. J. Reid Howatt of London and the Rev. H. Millican, who had been for some 10 years minister in Guernsey. The report of the induction, like all the previous ones, spoke in optimistic terms of a large attendance and great possibilities. It spoke of "a brighter day dawning on Alderney, the outpost of English Presbyterianism".

Alas, it was not to be. This was the last glowing report of progress and prospects for Presbyterianism in the island. On April 5, 1892, Presbytery records Mr. Haddon's resignation. For a brief period a Mr. J. Paynter was described as "preacher in charge", sanctioned and approved by Presbytery on September 13, 1892. At the time he claimed a population of 1350 civilians and 430 military. Reading between the lines it seems that the congregation was in a bad way — in fact he described it as "poor and struggling" — though he had high hopes that the work on the breakwater and on a new rifle range would increase both population and trade and that the church would again flourish.

The Presbytery had an Alderney Committee which kept the situation under review and attempts were made to help the struggling cause. However, on November 5, 1895, Mr. Thompson the convener reported that, with the diminishing population of the island, Presbyterian services were no longer required. As an opening had appeared for a letting for the manse, advantage should be taken of this and Presbytery would be well advised to sell the church for the benefit of the new church being built in Guernsey. An appropriate resolution agreeing with regret to proceed on these lines and giving thanks for the good work done in Alderney which owed so much to the late William Turnbull was passed and Synod gave its approval.

Three trustees — Le Montais, Ollivier and Rowe — put up a strong rearguard action contesting the sale in the courts in Alderney and Guernsey. There is some evidence that originally the island authorities were interested in purchasing the property for use as a Town Hall. The matter dragged on for several years and finally seems to have been settled in 1900 when the trustees forwarded all the books and papers to Presbytery in London. Nowhere is the date of the last service recorded (probably in 1894) nor the date of the actual sale of the property. However, the completion of the major government works in the island and the reduction of the garrison had finally removed the *raison d'être* for a Presbyterian Church.

One heartening point which comes through in the press cuttings is the very cordial relationship which existed (long before the ecumenical movement had got under way) between the Presbyterians, the Wesleyans and the Primitive Methodists. In fact Free Church interests are very well covered today by the one Methodist Church and the Salvation Army Citadel.

In a way the story of the Alderney Presbyterian Church is a sad one. However, for 40 years the church sought to provide services, Christian education and pastoral support for Presbyterians, most of them temporary residents or military personnel, at a time when they were needed and it is heartening to read of the dedication and hard work of those who founded and served this outpost. Meanwhile we shall, as the United Reformed Church, try to provide a congregation on the island at least once every four years when we bring out 160 campers and staff to Saye Bay and we are always grateful for the welcome and help which we receive on these occasions. Here's to 1979!

MICHAEL J. DAVIES

REVIEWS

The Journal of George Fox. A Revised edition by John L. Nickalls. Pp. xlviii, 789. London, Religious Society of Friends, 1975. £4.00.

This is a reprint, with corrections and amendments, of the edition published by Cambridge University Press in 1952. It is not altogether easy reading, since it is based on a considerable range of manuscripts, very skilfully woven together by the editor but recognizably different in attitude and style.

There is a characteristically gracious and thoughtful introduction by Dr. Geoffrey Nuttall. Tribute to the founder of the Quakers from a distinguished member of the U.R.C. may be regarded as an example of turning the other cheek, and so an illustration of the attitude Fox commended; for Congregationalists and Presbyterians come in for some of his most bitter strictures. "This", he says, "was the rage and fruits of the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists in that which they called their Gospel times, which were the times of the power of darkness". (p. 260). And again: "This was in the Presbyterian and Independents' anti-gospel times, who were against the gospel of peace". (p. 276).

That for the Quakers the Restoration was relatively speaking a liberation is itself a good reason to commend Fox's writings to members of the Reformed churches. They could make a good Lenten discipline for them.

STEPHEN MAYOR

A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600-1660. By Anthony Fletcher, Pp. x,445. Longmans, London, 1975, £13.

The effect of the Civil War on particular counties has been the subject of several studies. One of the earliest and best was Mary Coate *Cornwall in the Great Civil War and Interregnum 1642-60* (1933), and later ones include Alan Everitt's *Suffolk and the Great Rebellion 1640-60* (1960), *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion 1640-60* (1966) and *The Local Community and the Great Rebellion* (1969).

In his book on Sussex Anthony Fletcher goes back in time to take his story from the reign of Elizabeth I (with references to the Marian martyrs in Sussex) and thus makes his account more complete.

Although the family, governmental and political sections of the book are valuable, its interest to readers of this *Journal* lies in pages 61-124 which are devoted to religion in Sussex. And what a rich tapestry is displayed in the four sections: "The Puritan mind", "The enforcement of Arminianism", "Catholicism and fear of popery", and "Achieving the millenium".

Puritanism was stronger in East Sussex than in West Sussex and its impetus often lay behind the founding of grammar schools. Puritanism was characterised by the strict moral and spiritual upbringing of children and young people, and was troubled by the need to avoid interpreting material success as proof of godliness. *The Bible*, John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, and Lewis Bayly's *Practice of Piety* were standard reading in Puritan homes.

During the reign of Charles I the attempts to enforce Arminianism brought the Laudians into conflict with churchwardens and villagers who tolerated the grazing of cattle in churchyards, and often neglected the repair of the fabric of churches. Rye parish church was used for the whipping of unruly servants and boys, while other Sussex worshippers played cards during divine service. One man beat his wife during service time and another let his bitch give birth in the pew beside him. The latent anti-clericalism of the Sussex gentry faced with Arminian innovations is ably demonstrated as is the time-serving of the Roman Catholics who often practised "occasional conformity" and whose Catholicism was described by Puritan pamphlets and pulpits as "politically seditious, morally evil, and doctrinally damnable". The picture is complicated by the emergence of Quakers and of extreme Dissenters.

The thoroughness of the author makes this book most impressive and absorbing. It is the result of much scholarly research and gives a vivid picture of Sussex life between 1600 and 1660).

H. G. TIBBUTT

Everywhere Spoken Against: Dissent in the Victorian Novel. By Valentine Cunningham. Pp. xii, 311. Oxford University Press, 1975, £7.50.

It seems inevitable that a people like the British, with a rich and continuous literary tradition, should turn to the literature of a period — and in particular its novels — to gain understanding of its social currents and evidence about its institutions. But suppose the object of historical curiosity is one which almost all the novelists who touched upon it at the time treated with bias? The reader then may discover a good deal about the state of contemporary opinion on the object of his inquiry, but precious little about the object itself. It is Dr. Cunningham's thesis that most of the novelists who have written about Dissent have done so from a standpoint of antagonism, and some have shown both ignorance and contempt.

Dr. Cunningham quotes Edmund Gosse's description of his father's congregation of Plymouth Brethren: a "quaint collection of humble, conscientious, ignorant and gentle persons. In chronicle or fiction, I have never been fortunate enough to meet with anything which resembled them." Many of the novelists writing of — or alluding to — Dissent fixed on the qualities of quaintness and ignorance but did not care to see the humble gentleness and conscience too. Dr. Cunningham brings forward powerful reasons for this blinkered attitude. There was snobbery: gentlemen are not adherents of Dissent ("a gentleman," says Kingsley: "of course I mean a churchman, for all gentlemen owe that name to church influence over themselves or their parents"). There was fear of Dissent as a breeding-ground for working-class rebels, and there were "the anxieties of a class which fears the Nonconformist-radical alliance". There was a jealous suspicion on the part of the well-educated of the poor who under Nonconformist leadership set out to learn and to better themselves, forgetting their station. And there was a suspicious jealousy of the Dissenter's claim to spiritual experience and to a closer walk with God.

The Dissenter's attitude to fiction could not but widen the gulf — novelists could not expect to find their readers in a class which would allow only Bunyan (and later, Harriet Beecher Stowe) into its houses.

As we might expect, of the great novelists it is George Eliot, with her wide sympathy and her Nonconformist connections (her aunt, a Methodist preacher, is supposed to have been the original of Dinah Morris in *Adam Bede*) who comes best out of Dr. Cunningham's analysis; and Dickens — Dickens of the lampoons, of Stiggins and Chadband — who comes out worst. Dickens attended a Unitarian church for a time, Unitarianism being an aristocratic, cultured and learned persuasion; but the religious practices of the poor — the poor of whom he writes so affectingly in other contexts — are in his novels matter for ridicule. As Dr. Cunningham justly asks, "Why this clamant unseriousness about Nonconformity?"

Dr. Cunningham's range is wide, and he takes in many writers; he is also erudite, and backs up his arguments with ample evidence of the actual state of Nonconformity, which his novelists do or do not — and generally they do not — reflect. Inevitably, the reader wishes he had written more. Literary mockery of Dissent began long before Victorian times, and continued at least as late as when Amos Star-kadder preached to the Quivering Brethren. But to ask for more is to show how much one has enjoyed Dr. Cunningham's book. He has, I believe, performed a great service to social historians, and to readers in general, by his warning of how unreliable the novel may be as an historical tool.

One small quibble: and that is with the publishers, who have allowed in the footnotes the unrestricted use of "op.cit." not backed up by an exhaustive bibliography. Wanting to track down an obviously important book referred to in a footnote on page 94, I had to work my way back to page 28 for the original full reference. Is this fair to an enthusiastic reader?

ANN PHILLIPS

Leslie Weatherhead, A Personal Portrait. By Kingsley Weatherhead, Pp. 222. Hodder and Stoughton. London £5.25.

It is disturbing for the historian to read a biography not written in strict chronological sequence: this one begins, "On a warm evening in mid-October 1960. . ." That, together with the absence of footnotes and index, is bound to be annoying for some. But this book does evoke, and evoke authentically, the person of Leslie Weatherhead and his world. Those who heard him preach or had dealings with him will be helped to relive past experiences by this book; others will understand better the Weatherhead phenomenon, which was so prominent a feature of English Free Church life in the mid-years of this century.

There is immense painstaking collation of events and utterances behind this book, but the material is woven together in concrete, lively and readable style. For example, here is the beginning of the description of the opening of the rebuilt City Temple:

"The day the Queen Mother came, there were carpeting and a red and white awning over the pavement. Over the entrance the Stars and Stripes flew alongside the Union Jack in recognition of the American help which had been received. A procession of fifty clergy and laity brought up by Les and the Queen Mother, the city officials and the Mayor, moved slowly down the central aisle. Les was wearing his scarlet D.D. gown and purple hood, the Queen wore a hyacinth blue dress in Watteau silk, the Lord Mayor was in black and gold robes."

But there are also details from family life which a biographer from outside the Weatherhead family would not have had access to. The description of the reopening is followed by this brief paragraph:

"It was a great day For Les, it was the day he had been awaiting

for seventeen years. It was, he said to my mother, the greatest day of his life. 'What about our wedding day?' she enquired, cooling off the enthusiasm a bit."

Yet this flowing vivid style, with its Proust-like chronological fluidity and its wealth of fascinating anecdotal detail tends to crowd out discussion of some very big issues. Weatherhead's move from Brunswick, Leeds, to the City Temple is a case in point. The two chapters on the Leeds ministry end with a description of how the City Temple pulpit came to be offered to him (pp. 105-6). No mention is made at that point of why he moved to a Congregational church, nor of how he failed to become minister of Wesley's Chapel. That traumatic event *is* mentioned, but only in passing, on p.17, in connection with his parents. Yet Weatherhead's going to the City Temple and not to Wesley's Chapel had immense repercussions, in his own life, and in the subsequent histories of the two churches. Little space, too, is devoted to very important discussion concerning the possible re-siting of the new City Temple.

None the less, I hail this as a very good biography. It is honest, generally accurate (although the Mrs. Keith Robbins who appears on p.70 is really Mrs. Keith Rankine), full of significant detail and arresting human touches. Most of all, it enables the reader to come to a greater understanding and appreciation of Leslie Weatherhead.

ANTHONY J. COATES

People and Places in the Story of the Scottish Church. By Edwin Sprott Towill. Pp. 100. St. Andrew Press, 1976. Hardback £3.25; Paper £2.00.

This is a concise dictionary of people, places and events which have left their mark upon the story of the Church in Scotland. It will appeal to many readers and is admirable for serious study or casual browsing. It is beautifully produced, is amply illustrated, and is excellent value for money. Such a collection, as the author admits, must be subjective in its selection, but, even so, there are some surprising omissions. There is no entry on William Robertson (the historian), Alexander Whyte or George Adam Smith. Even more surprising, John White gets no more than a passing reference in the article on Norman Macleod of whom Lord Macleod of Fuinary is erroneously stated to be the nephew.

R.B.K.

History of the Presbytery of Durham. By F. H. Hawkins. Pp. 236. No price given. Obtainable from the Tavistock Bookshop.

This work was commissioned by the Presbytery of Durham in 1972 at the time of the formation of the United Reformed Church. The Rev. F. H. Hawkins, with the assistance of several contributors, has written an account based on the records of the congregations in the Presbytery since its formation in 1896. He also has had a close personal

knowledge of the Presbytery and he has prepared his account with accuracy and enthusiasm. All of the congregations have had their problems with shifting population and with buildings. There have often been heavy burdens of debt to be cleared. Sometimes buildings have had to be abandoned. Yet in 1972 the Presbytery was still a lively and valued part of the Presbyterian Church of England. Most of these congregations owed much to the faithfulness of Scots who treasured their Presbyterian inheritance when they came south of the border. The book is well produced and is profusely illustrated. As the Rev. J. Howard Williams says in his preface, "The names and incidents which have found mention here do no more than indicate the extent of the faith and vision, the courage and sacrifice of our fathers".

R.B.K.

'A Bit of a Rebel', The Life and Work of George Arnold Wood. By R. M. Crawford, pp. xiv, 386. Sydney University Press, 1975, (London distributors Prentice Hall) £11.20.

Historians are seldom subjects for compelling biography, and very few have been as well served as Lewis Namier has been by his widow. Here is another exception to the rule. George Arnold Wood lived from 1865 to 1928. He was born in Manchester, educated at Oxford, and from 1891 he taught history in Sydney. He published little, and his fame as a teacher survives among a dwindling band of pupils. R. M. Crawford, himself among the most notable of Australian historians, was one of them. He has written a rare book, spacious, intricate, affectionate, suffering from none of the parsimonies now forced on publishers and authors. This is commendation enough, but readers of this *Journal* will be especially drawn to the first six chapters, because Wood was a Congregationalist, Manchester cotton on his father's side, manse and academy on his mother's (she was one of the ministerial Alliotts). He was reared amidst the influences of Bowdon Downs church, and his formative years owed much to the moulding of its minister, Dr. Mackennal. He moved from Owens' College to Balliol, and then he became one of Fairbairn's men at Mansfield, which he saw opened. But he did not become a Congregational minister: his was among the first Nonconformist generations for whom academic life offered a respectable alternative. Professor Crawford's distinguished account of this intellectual outworking of the Nonconformist Conscience, Cromwellian and Gladstonian to the end, will commend itself to all students of Nonconformity, especially those fascinated by the impact of Oxford on their sort.

J.C.G.B.