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EDITORIAL

Church history is untidy. The United Reformed Church's history reflects more untidiness than might be expected even from the synthesis of three distinct traditions. This issue illustrates something of that untidiness. Malcolm Harrison's article focuses on Evangelicalism's Whitefieldite wing: it was hardly Congregational but its contribution to the evolution of Congregationalism was incalculable. Stephen Orchard's article was originally delivered as a lecture at Gresham College, and we are grateful to the College for permission to publish it here. It illustrates the continuing strength of nondenominational Evangelicalism in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, its relationship with Congregationalism, and its social contribution. In continuing the Welsh theme developed in our last issue, Nigel Lemon explores a different untidiness: he reminds us that Englishness in Wales and the anglicisation of Wales were not just Anglican things. He also reminds us of a Congregational benefactor, R.S. Hudson, of whom more will be learned in a future issue.

Hudson's descendants were socially and politically prominent. Daniel West's connections take us into the denser groves of family history. The Wests were kin to the Highbury Wilsons whose Daniels, Josephs, Stephens, Thomases, and Williams confound even the stoutest genealogist. There will be more of them, too, in a later issue. For the moment, however, suffice it to introduce the Brookes, Pattles, and Collets. Mrs. Daniel West (Anne Brooke) was the collateral ancestress of the White Rajahs of Sarawak and of the Pattle sisters from whom descended the Grants, Stephens, Stracheys, and thus almost the whole of Bloomsbury. That connection was verified while the present paper was in preparation. One other name in it also catches the eye: the Collets discreetly complicate a fair number of banking and City pedigrees. Family history merely records such facts, but what confused dimensions of cultural, imperial, and commercial history are here suggested, none of them fully understood without their mental, spiritual and ecclesiastical aspects.

One of the Pattle sisters was Julia Margaret Cameron, the pioneer photographer. Her sittings were arduous affairs, her subjects sometimes clamped into position. Her portraits were no snapshots. Paul Walker's snapshot article has a different bearing for us; it indicates the number of listed buildings for worship still in URC use in nine synods in England and Wales (three English synods did not respond, and Scotland was not included in Dr. Walker's wider survey). These are what Soviet Russia would have called "working churches". They include neither disused nor demolished buildings. Neither do they include listable buildings (and criteria change as the years lengthen). They indicate a civic responsibility which many find burdensome, some find incomprehensible, and others regard as an unwelcome, even improper, dimension (or distortion) of mission. Historians will see this differently. Such buildings fix our history as well as our present in the public consciousness.

We welcome as contributors Malcolm Harrison, formerly head of Religious Education at Ilford High School, and Paul Walker, formerly of Sheffield Hallam University. We welcome as reviewers Jason Askew and Susan Durber, who are URC ministers in Wooler and Oxford; Roger Brown, who is Vicar of Welshpool and Rector of Llanfair Caereinion; and William Kay, who is Reader in Pentecostal Studies at University of Wales, Bangor.

DANIEL WEST: GEORGE WHITEFIELD'S FORGOTTEN TRUSTEE

Within a stone's throw of Hawksmoor's Christ Church is 6 Church Street, Spitalfields, considered to be one of the finest residences in Spitalfields and from 1763 to 1794 the home of Daniel West, one of Whitefield's worthy, trusty, and tried friends and grandfather of Daniel Wilson.¹ It is an impressive four-bayed, three-storeyed building constructed in fine red brick. A superb door case with Ionic columns and a unique carved console hood gives the house a distinguished appearance without making it ostentatious.² Equally splendid is the oak staircase, an exquisite work excelled only by that in the minister's house at 2 Fournier Street.³ The staircase at 6 Church Street with its delightfully turned and twisted balustrades and fluted Ionic columns with carved tread ends and hand rails, down which Daniel Wilson would slide, rises to the first floor which is dominated by the large front room that occupies the full width of the house.⁴ What gives this house such an impressive frontage is the emphasis that the builder, William Taylor, gave to the first floor where four full height windows and a high ceiling give the room a light, airy atmosphere.⁵ Here Daniel West received his guests: Thomas Wilson, father and son, John Eyre, John Newton, Thomas Haweis, Benjamin Mills, Samuel Brewer and George Whitefield.⁶ This was emphatically a merchant's, or master weaver's house, one of those grand, roomy and comfortable houses that abounded in the old-fashioned parts of London.⁷

At first sight it might appear strange that someone of whom so little is known should live in a residence as grand as any to be found in Mayfair. But in fact he was a quite remarkable person.

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1. L. Tyerman, *The Life of George Whitefield*, 2nd ed. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890; J. Bateman, *The life of the Right Rev. Daniel Wilson, D.D.: late Lord Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India*, London: John Murray, 2 vols, 1860.
 2. The house is illustrated in W. Ison & P. A. Bezodis, eds, *Spitalfields and Mile End New Town*, London: The Athlone Press, Vol. xxvii, 1957. See also: D. Blain, ed, *The saving of Spitalfields*, London: The Spitalfields Trust, 1989. A. Byrne, *London's Georgian Houses*, London: The Georgian Press, 1986. M. Girouard, "The East End's Streets of Silk: Spitalfields I", *Country Life*, 15 November, 1979.
 3. D. Cruikshank, "No 2, Fournier Street: the Minister's house of Spitalfields", D. Blain, ed. *The Saving of Spitalfields*, pp. 49-66.
 4. J. Bateman, *op.cit.* p. 7. There is an illustration of the staircase in Blain, p. 19.
 5. W. Ison & P. A. Bezodis, *op.cit.*
 6. Thomas Wilson [I] was the uncle of Stephen Wilson, son-in-law to Daniel West, and a partner in the firm of Thomas, John and Thomas Wilson at 121 Wood Street, Cheapside, founded in 1754 by Stephen Wilson [I]. John Eyre, Samuel Brewer and Benjamin Mills were, with Daniel West and Thomas Wilson [I], involved in the formation of the Hoxton Dissenting Academy in 1778. Later Thomas Wilson [II], Daniel West, Benjamin Mills and Thomas Haweis served as Directors of the London Missionary Society.
 7. M. Girouard, *op.cit.* J. Bateman, *op.cit.*



BISHOP WILSON'S BIRTHPLACE IN SPITALFIELDS

Born in 1726, Daniel West was the son of a silk weaver, also called Daniel, of Vine Court, Wood Street, Spitalfields. Little is known about the father except that he was married to an Elizabeth and that they had three children of whom two survived to adulthood. These were Daniel and Elizabeth. From the records of the Worshipful Company of Weavers we learn that Daniel West senior had been apprenticed to a John Partridge by whom he had been made free in 1721.⁸ Apart from having been admitted to the Weavers' Company there is no evidence to show that he took an active part in the affairs of the Company and yet the very fact that he could afford to live in Wood Street, then considered to be a desirable area, would indicate that the Wests were far from poor.

In 1740 Daniel West junior, as he is referred to in the records of the Weavers' Company, was apprenticed to his father.⁹ However it was not until 1752 that he obtained his freedom, the same year that his first child, Elizabeth Brooke, was born.¹⁰

His wife, Anne Brooke, whom he married between 1749 and 1751, was the eldest daughter of Captain Robert and Elizabeth Brooke of Goodman Fields, Whitechapel.¹¹ Although Robert Brooke is cited in Burke's *Landed Gentry* as descended from the Brookes of Horton there survives no evidence to support this claim.¹² His more notable claim to fame however is that he and his wife, Elizabeth Collet, daughter of Captain Thomas Collet, were the great-grandparents not only

8. Guildhall Library: Gld Mss. Weavers' Company. 4656/vol 6: 1721-1737. Freedom Admission Books. Gld Mss. 4655/vol 12: 1721-1729 Court Minute Books.
9. Guildhall Library: Gld Mss. 4657 Weavers' Company: Apprentice Bindings: vol. 1: 1694-1765: 2nd February 1740.
10. Guildhall Library: Gld Mss. Weavers' Company: 4655/15. Court Minute Books 1737-1750: vol 16: 1750-1765, where he is cited as having been made good by servitude on the testimony of the said father, July 20 1752. Why Daniel West should have deferred taking up his freedom in 1752 is not known but it may well be that he worked for his father, though not as a full partner. In *Compleat Guide* (1758) Daniel West is cited as a satin weaver of Wood Street, Spitalfields, later renamed Wilkes Street. The houses are typically Georgian Spitalfields houses with integral bysards or garrets. See: A. Byrne, *London's Georgian Houses*, p. 65.
11. Anne West was the eldest daughter of Captain Robert Brooke of Goodman Fields, Whitechapel, who is cited in the Will of Captain Thomas Collet as being a Maritime Captain. (PCC. Prob/1743). It is from Captain Robert Brooke and Elizabeth (née Collet) that the Brookes of Sarawak are descended. In T. Farrington, *Biographical index of the East India Company: Maritime Service Officers: 1600-1834*, London, 1999, Captain Thomas Collet is cited as in the service of the HEIC maritime section.
12. *Burke's Landed Gentry*, (1921) *sub* Brooke of Horton, where a Captain Richard Brooke is cited as being the grandfather of James Brooke, Rajah of Sarawak. Later editions deleted the reference to Richard Brooke of Horton as the grandfather of James Brooke. Notwithstanding that, entries under Brooke of Sarawak state that Captain Robert Brooke of Goodman Fields, Whitechapel, is believed to be a member of the family of Brooke of Warwick and Horton. In fact the two families are quite distinct.

of Daniel Wilson, fifth Bishop of Calcutta (1832-1858) but also of James Brooke, the first White Rajah of Sarawak (1848-1863).¹³

In 1758 Daniel West is listed as of Wood Street, Spitalfields: the same year he is cited as being elected to the Livery of the Weavers' Company, thus beginning a distinguished career with that Company.¹⁴ By 1763 he had moved to Church Street, an even more desirable street, where he was in partnership with a Mr Wren.¹⁵ In 1774 he is cited in the *London Directory* as being in partnership with a Stephen Wilson, his future son-in-law.¹⁶ By this time he had started to make his way through the ranks of the Weavers' Company, being elected Auditor, then Renter Bailiff, finally rising to the rank of Upper Bailiff, the highest post in the Company and one normally restricted to its social and economic élite.¹⁷ That West was able to rise to the highest office in the Company indicates that he was a person of integrity as well as wealth.

In addition to the affairs of the Weavers' Company we also find that Daniel West took an active role in the life of Whitefield's two tabernacles, Moorfields and Tottenham Court Road, where for twenty-five years he served as a trustee.¹⁸

Of Daniel West's religious background we know nothing apart from the fact

13. Although Bateman refers to Daniel Wilson visiting Sarawak to consecrate the new church he does not refer to the fact that Daniel Wilson and James Brooke were cousins. Likewise none of the biographies of James Brooke make this point. Stephen Wilson, *Private Calendar* (1795-1803), where Stephen Wilson refers to Aunt Brooke, and Cousin Thomas Brooke of Calcutta. Aunt Brooke was the grandmother to James Brooke and Cousin Thomas was James Brooke's father.
14. Guildhall Library. Gld Mss. Weavers' Company 4655/16 Court Minute Books: 1750-1765, December 20th 1758.
15. *London Directory* 1763: This is probably the same Wren who is cited in the Court Minute Books of the Worshipful Company of Weavers as being the son of John Wren, deceased, who was made free by patrimony 18 March 1754. See Gld Mss Weavers' Company 4657/1: 1694-1765, also: Gld Mss. 4655/16: Court Minute Books, 1750-1765. Daniel and Anne West had five children of whom only four survived to adulthood: Anne Collet (1754-1829), Daniel (1755), Elizabeth (1760-1795), Charlotte (1762), and Catharine (1764).
16. *London Directory*: 1775. Stephen Wilson was the second son of Stephen Wilson deceased of Coventry and 121 Wood Street, Cheapside. In 1774 Stephen Wilson married Anne Collet West, eldest daughter of Daniel and Anne West.
17. Guildhall Library. Gld Mss. Weavers' Company 4655/17 Court Minute Books, 1765-1785: 2 vols: Gld Mss. 4655/18, 1785-1795 where he is cited as having been elected Auditor (1774), Renter Bailiff (1775), Upper Bailiff (1776-77). Later he is listed as serving on a committee with Richard Lea of Old Jewry to investigate the importation of Bengali silk organized in Italy and passed off as Italian silk.
18. Daniel West and Robert Keene were executors to George Whitefield's Will in which he left the Two Tabernacles and Minister's House to his executors and Trustees of the Two Chapels. *E.M.* (1796) vol. iv. "Obituary of Daniel West", pp. 518-521. See also *E.M.* (1803) "Letter to the Editor" from E. Parsons who refers to the late Daniel West and Robert Keene, the Revd Mr George Whitefield's executors.

that in 1757 he appears as a signatory to the Rules and Orders of a Christian Society that met weekly in Bethnal Green to study the Bible, sing hymns, pray, and meet the pecuniary and physical needs of its members and their families.¹⁹ This would indicate that he had undergone a conversion experience, but whether it was as a result of the preaching of the Revd Samuel Brewer, a close friend of the family, or through George Whitefield we are not told; by the time that he had completed his apprenticeship in 1747 the Evangelical Revival was already underway.

Whether he ever listened to Whitefield preaching nearby in Moorfields is not known either but such a possibility cannot be ruled out. The park was a popular meeting-place for the crowds who came for the bear-baiting, cock-fighting, wrestling and dog fighting. It was also where Wesley, Whitefield, and other ministers would preach to the crowds. Not far away was Wesley's Chapel, built on the site of the old foundry, whilst nearby was the Tabernacle that Whitefield's followers had built in 1741. This was a source of embarrassment to Whitefield and so as to avoid further criticism and distress to the cause of the Gospel Whitefield had another chapel erected on a plot in Tottenham Court Road. Together these two chapels formed what was known as the Whitefield Trust of which Daniel West was one of the trustees.²⁰

Even though Whitefield and his followers found themselves outside the Established Church, the two chapels continued to observe the full rites of the Church of England and their members and ministers would have regarded themselves as "Members of Christ's Catholic and Apostolic Church."²¹ Those who attended them occupied the middle ground of evangelical religion, mixing with Churchmen and Dissenters. Thus Daniel West often attended local parish

19. See MS. B.G. 105 (1757) Rules and orders of a Friendly Society: Tower Hamlets Local History Library. Daniel West is a signatory to the Rules of the Society: 7 September 1757. The society met weekly to study the Bible and was one of the earliest friendly societies to meet at Hurley Street, Bethnal Green. See also: E. Welch, *Two Calvinistic Methodist Chapels, 1743-1811: The London Tabernacle and Spa Fields*, London: London Record Society 1975 where there is a reference to a Sister West in the Minutes of the London Tabernacle.
20. The temporary building that George Whitefield referred to as a tabernacle was replaced by a permanent building in 1753. Further developments took place in 1868: the foundation stone was laid by John Remington Mills, grandson of Benjamin Mills and Thomas Wilson. The inscription read: "Near this spot stood the Tabernacle built by Revd G Whitefield in 1753. 115 years later it was taken down and in its place this building was erected. This stone was laid by J Remington Mills Esq. MP on 11 September 1868." The Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road was built in 1756.
21. Thus Thomas Haweis: "you ask of what Church we profess ourselves: We desire to be esteemed as members of Christ's Catholic and Apostolic Church and essentially one with the Church of England." The Two Chapels continued to follow the office of the Church of England until J. C. Campbell moved them into the Congregational Union.

churches to hear the preaching of William Romaine, Henry Foster, John Newton, Richard Cecil, Basil Woodd.²²

As a young man Daniel West would have been open to the influence of many fine preachers but surely the greatest such influence was that of George Whitefield. Whitefield was alive to the importance of providing members with the opportunity to share in the wider ministry of the Two Chapels.²³ There was the opportunity to become Class or Band Teachers, Band Leaders, Door-Keepers, or, as in the case of Daniel West, to be appointed one of two trustees to the Trust. That he should be entrusted to such a position is a good indication of the confidence in which he was held, and it is a clear reflection of his own personal piety. From a purely administrative perspective this was clearly a post that he was eligible to hold: his experience in the Company of Weavers fostered a minute attention to detail, careful and precise book-keeping or auditing of the Trust's accounts as well as neatness. But to these everyday qualities should be added those which struck the writer of his obituary: the quality of his faith and his desire to honour God.²⁴

Whereas membership was in the hands of the conference, the responsibility for the management and upkeep of the two Tabernacles lay with the trustees who were accountable to conference for their actions. Along with the other trustee, Robert Keene, West was responsible for the maintenance of the ministers' houses, the almshouses and the two schools. They were also responsible for the payment of the ministers' stipends as well as raising funds, paying bills, and distributing relief to the poor and sick of the two chapels: that task they would probably have delegated to the Band Leaders and Visitors – there would always have been tasks for members irrespective of gender, age or status. In addition to all this it would have been their responsibility to ensure that the pulpits of the Two Tabernacles were regularly supplied with preachers who, in the words of the older Thomas Wilson, were of a "warm lively affectionate manner and who were able to address the conscience."²⁵

22. It is generally considered that Romaine was the first leader of the Anglican Evangelicals in London. He was appointed lecturer at St Botolph's in 1748 and was Rector, St Anne's Blackfriars, 1766-1795. He attracted many fine preachers to the City, some of whom were foremost in the formation of the Eclectic Society. Of these Henry Foster was appointed curate to Romaine in 1767; John Newton, Rector of St Mary Woolnoth, 1779; Richard Cecil, St John's Bedford Row, 1780; Basil Woodd, 1785, Bentinck Chapel. See: J. S. Reynolds *The Evangelicals at Oxford: 1735-1871*, Oxford, 1953.

23. It was not until the ministry of J C Campbell, successor to Matthew Wilks, that the Two Tabernacles were forced by some of their members, amongst whom was William Bateman, brother-in-law to Daniel Wilson (Bishop of Calcutta), to join the Congregational Union despite attempts by other members such as the younger Thomas Wilson to prevent Campbell from undoing the Trust. See: C.L. Mss II; c.34: Item 11: J. C. Campbell to Thomas Wilson, May 22, 1834: Michael Cruttenden to Thomas Wilson, 22 September 1834.

24. Obituary of Daniel West, *Evangelical Magazine*, 1796, vol. iv. pp.518-521.

25. J. Wilson, *Memoirs of Thomas Wilson*, London, 1846.

Such duties were time-consuming and physically demanding and yet, despite suffering from a disorder of the bladder for the last thirteen years of his life, it was said of Daniel West that he was always regular in performing them with never a murmur on his lips. But there was more. Daniel West with Robert Keene, Benjamin Mills, Thomas Wilson, the Revd Samuel Brewer, Joseph Barber, the Revd John Clayton and the Revd John Kello took an active role in the formation of the Hoxton Academy. Founded in 1778 for the training of Dissenting ministers it owed its creation two years previously to the formation of the Evangelical Society.²⁶ Later, in 1795, one year before his death, Daniel West was appointed one of twelve lay Directors to the Board of the London Missionary Society. It is interesting to note that of the twelve, three were members of the Wilson family: Thomas Wilson and his brother, Joseph Wilson of Highbury the younger, and their cousin, John Wilson of Upper Street Islington, who served as a lay examiner for candidates.²⁷

Given these activities it comes as no surprise to find that, along with Benjamin Mills, he was appointed by the Weavers' Company to the trust set up by the terms of the will of James Linborough, July 1774, who had set aside a capital sum of £3,000 in 3% Consolidated Bank Annuities to establish a series of lectures. These were to be held on a Sunday evening commencing with the first Sunday in September and concluding on the last Sunday in April. Amongst those who attended were the Wests and the Wilsons, among them the young Daniel Wilson who showed a marked irreverence during the service "sitting in a careless, lounging manner and often laughing and talking..."²⁸

The first Linborough Lecturer was Henry Foster of Long Acre Chapel, who held the post for three years and was paid £50 per annum. At the end of the series there was a grand meal held in the Hall of the Weavers' Company. Foster was followed by Richard Cecil of St John's Bedford Row, Thomas Scott of Lock's Chapel, Josiah Pratt, (curate to Richard Cecil), and Charles Simeon of Cambridge. What is interesting about this list is that these speakers were members of the Eclectic Society, formed in 1783, the year that the Linborough Lectures were first held. The Eclectic Society met fortnightly at St John's, Bedford Row, where Richard Cecil was incumbent and Josiah Pratt was his curate. All save Simeon were Oxford men and all exerted a significant influence in the development and spread of evangelical religion in London.²⁹

From this we begin to see the part that Daniel West played in the spread of evangelicalism in and around London. We begin to obtain a picture of a man who, with his family, enjoyed a rich and varied religious life. At the same time we are

26. See *ibid* p.146.

27. J Morrison, *The Fathers and Founders of the London Missionary Society*, London, 1839. J. Wilson, *Memoirs of Thomas Wilson*, London, 1846, pp.147-149.

28. Guildhall Library: Gld Mss. 4648b. Linborough Lecture Trust. Account Book: 1783-1813. See also: Christ Church Vestry Minute Books. Step. 82. Tower Hamlets Local History Library. J. Bateman, *Life of Daniel Wilson*, London, 1860, p.7.

29. J. S. Reynolds, *The Evangelicals at Oxford: 1731-1871*.

able to appreciate the atmosphere into which his grandson, Daniel Wilson, later Bishop of Calcutta, was born and though in his youth Wilson reacted against the piety of his family, what cannot be overlooked is the debt that he owed to his mother, considered to be the power-house in the family, and to his grandfather, in a line that went back to George Whitefield.

Apart from a few terse references in Bateman's life of Daniel Wilson and the memoir of the younger Thomas Wilson, the only other significant reference to Daniel West is in the *Evangelical Magazine*. Yet, even here, the details about his life are sparse the author preferring to concentrate on West's deathbed, which, whilst serving as a model for other Christians, was far removed from the same events depicted by his son-in-law, Stephen Wilson, in his *Private Calendar*.³⁰ That said, the obituary in the *Evangelical Magazine*, probably written by its editor, John Eyre, a close friend of the family, is a remarkable tribute.³¹

There remains the role that West played in the lives of the Wilsons and in particular the lives of his sons-in-law, Stephen and William Wilson. Exactly when or where the Wests made the acquaintance of the Wilsons is not known. Even though they were all engaged in the silk trade it is more than likely that it was through Whitefield's Tabernacle that the links were first forged when as young men both Daniel West and the elder Thomas Wilson took their children and their apprentices to listen to Whitefield, the greatest orator of the age, whose sermons were all life and fire.³²

In accordance with the terms of his will Daniel West was buried in the vault under the communion table in the Tottenham Court Road Tabernacle: an appropriate place for a morally upright and devout person who, in the words of Matthew Wilks, "not only lived well but died rejoicing in his Saviour."³³

MALCOLM J HARRISON

30. *E.M.* (1796) iv. p.518-521. The account given by Stephen Wilson in his *Private Calendar* offers a different picture. The only person present at his death was West's son-in-law, Stephen Wilson, who "sat up with him till 20 minutes past one o'clock this morning when he died aged 70." (30 September 1796) Stephen Wilson, *Private Calendar*: 1795-1803. (Privately owned).

31. *E.M.* (1796), pp.518-521.

32. J. Leifchild, *Piety the best patriotism*, London, 1843 pp.18-19 states that the younger Thomas Wilson was carried in his nurse's arms to gaze upon George Whitefield.

33. *E.M.* (1796), p.518-521. In his account of the funeral Stephen Wilson records that in addition to the hearse and the four coaches-and-pair there were six other coaches bearing members of the family; eight Tabernacle Brethren were Bearers. Stephen Wilson: *Private Calendar*, 1795-1803. (Privately owned)

CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPY IN LONDON 1830-1850

On Monday 4 August 1845 eleven men held a meeting in the chapel of the newly created cemetery at Abney Park, Stoke Newington. The City's graveyards were full to overflowing and Christian philanthropists had set about creating new cemeteries in the suburbs and country villages around London. The Christian philanthropists meeting on this occasion had made their money in the City and were primarily Dissenters, always strongly represented in London. Abney Park was planned as a non-denominational cemetery and, as a consequence, was much patronised by Dissenters, replacing their previous burial ground of choice, Bunhill Fields.¹ The new cemetery at Abney Park was launched as a joint stock company. The philanthropists had a duty to see that there was a reasonable return on the capital invested. The old mansion of the Abney family was demolished when the cemetery was created. It had been the home not only of the Abneys but of their long-time guest, Isaac Watts, the celebrated hymn writer and Dissenting divine. The cemetery company had acceded to the request of a committee formed to erect a monument to the memory of Isaac Watts at Abney Park and the meeting was held to determine the site. It was a meeting of some of the most powerful and influential people in the City of London. This was the Diana, Princess of Wales, monument of the 1840s. The artist, who was present, was Edward Hedges Bailey (1788-1867), the most celebrated monumental sculptor of the day, the man who put Nelson on his column in Trafalgar Square.²

So who were the other ten people? In the chair and representing the company was Alderman Kelly. Thomas Kelly (1772-1855) was a Dick Whittington character, a man who had risen from modest beginnings to be Lord Mayor and a respected Alderman.³ After his father's bankruptcy in about 1788 Kelly was sent to work at Hoggs, the publisher and bookseller, on Paternoster Row. He attended the French Protestant Church in Threadneedle Street but also heard Evangelical preachers in the City and at St John's, Bedford Row. Kelly was a Christian entrepreneur of the highest order. A publisher by trade, he had exploited the new technology of stereotyping to produce thousands of cheap copies of the Bible, with a popular commentary by the Revd. John Malham, as a part-work. At the same time he had developed a sales force which went from door to door promoting this edition. It had made him a fortune. His Bibles cost more than conventional one-volume editions but they were available to buy in cheap instalments, 173 parts at 8d each. From Bibles he went on to other universal texts, such as Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, before turning to the street directories, with which his name is popularly associated. Kelly was a Low Church Anglican and had combined faith and works to enrich himself vastly.

1. Paul Joyce, *A Guide to Abney Park Cemetery*, Abney Park Cemetery Trust, 1994, gives an excellent introduction to the history of the cemetery as well as its present condition.

2. *ODNB*.

3. R. C. Fell, *Passages from the private and official life of the late Alderman Kelly*, London, 1856 gives an account of Kelly's life from which this summary is drawn.

It is estimated that he grossed over £400,000 from his Bible alone. By the 1840s Kelly was in semi-retirement in Streatham but he was a vigorous promoter of the Abney Park Cemetery. He had a good record on statues, having recently presided over the commissioning of Sir Francis Chantrey's representation of Wellington. Also representing the company was Alderman Hunter, another former Lord Mayor, and John Foulger, a Cape merchant and a Dissenter (d.1850).⁴ Foulger, who had an oil business on Ratcliff Highway, had also quit the City, in his case for Walthamstow. Foulger held the largest single block of shares in the Abney Park Cemetery Company. With Hunter he served on the Board of the London Missionary Society, which had recently taken the risk of sending a young man called David Livingstone to work for it in Africa. The fourth Director of the company at this meeting was James Sherman (1796-1862), minister of the Surrey Chapel, across the river from the City in Southwark. Sherman had been ordained in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, always a small denomination but historically strong in the City. Denomination was not important to Sherman. He was a pulpit prince in his own right, an influential commentator on public affairs and amply rewarded by his well-to-do church members.⁵ Accompanying these four Directors was the company secretary, John Conquest, a lawyer and son of John Tricker Conquest (1789-1866), a celebrated obstetrician we would now say, though his contemporaries termed him a male midwife.⁶ It is to be regretted that these eminent directors were not keeping a closer eye on their company secretary, for John Conquest would shortly abscond with a large sum of money.

From the Isaac Watts Monument Committee came three people who were also shareholders in the company. These were William Alers Hankey (1771-1859), a City merchant and Dissenter; Ebenezer Clarke of Snaresbrook (1797-1875), Secretary to the committee and Secretary to the Hall of Commerce in Threadneedle Street; and William Copeland Astbury, who had an interest in the firm of Copeland and Garrett, the successors to Josiah Spode, run by Astbury's cousin, William Taylor Copeland, another former Lord Mayor.⁷ Two remaining members of the committee, though not shareholders, were a Mr Moore of Camden and a Dr William Camps of Park Lane. Foulger, Kelly and Sherman were also members of the memorial committee but on this occasion were there to represent the board of the company.

The meeting was highly successful. A site was agreed in the centre of the cemetery, where the monument may be seen to this day, though the chapel where the meeting was held is now in poor shape. These business-like Christians do not

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4. Sir Claudius Stephen Hunter, (1775-1851), see *ODNB*. John Foulger, (1752-1850), see the article on his wife, Dorothea Foulger, (1787-1852), in *ODNB*.
 5. Henry Allon, *Memoir of James Sherman*, London 1863. There is a portrait of Sherman at Westminster College, Cambridge.
 6. *ODNB*, where he is said to have no children.
 7. William Alers Hankey, see S.W. Roskill, *Hankey: Man of Secrets*, 1970; William Taylor Copeland, see *ODNB*.

seem to have anticipated that running a cemetery as a joint-stock company might present a problem once the principal asset, the land, has all been assigned. Or perhaps they assumed that families would always be ready to contribute to cemetery maintenance. In 1845 the cemetery was a success, the site for the monument was agreed and the little meeting of the great and good dispersed, using the highly successful transport system that had developed in the previous decade, the horse-drawn omnibus. The record of the meeting on which this account is based rests not in the company records, which have long since disappeared, but in the account kept in his Journal by William Astbury. It is this hitherto little known source which will form the thread linking these observations on the City and Christian philanthropy.⁸

William Copeland Astbury was born in 1783 in Staffordshire but came to London with his parents as a boy. His mother was a Copeland, sister of that William Copeland who acted as Josiah Spode's partner in London. William Astbury went to work with his uncle Copeland once his schooling was finished. By now the firm of Spode and Copeland worked out of Copeland's London house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which was eventually sold to the Royal College of Surgeons, who occupy the site today. Behind the house, facing onto Portugal Street, was an old theatre used as a warehouse by Copeland.⁹ When his uncle died, although William Astbury retained an interest in the firm, his cousin William Taylor Copeland took as his partner in the business William Garrett. Astbury fought a losing battle with his Christian duty of charity towards Garrett and could not resist some feelings of satisfaction when the partnership broke up with recriminations all round. Garrett had two factors working in his favour. First, he was friendly with William Taylor Copeland and a particular favourite of his mother. Secondly, Copeland regarded his cousin Astbury as too religious by far. "A methodistical" person, as he once characterised Astbury behind his back, was hardly going to be a boon companion for a man who ran shooting parties and kept a string of racehorses.¹⁰ William Taylor Copeland was conventionally religious when necessary – these were times when a Lord Mayor was expected to be a church-goer – but he also liked the high life, parties, speculative business and the turf. Copeland was a close friend of Carr Glyn, proprietor of Glyn's Bank, and at the time when other worthy City figures were committed to raising a monument to Isaac Watts, these two were much more concerned with railway speculation. So cousin Astbury was a good man to send down to the City with the day's banking or to carry out the inventory on a fashionable house which the Copelands might take for the season, but not a partner for risky investments, or a house-guest for the race-meeting. That said, Copeland did his Christian duty, He pensioned off

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8. The Journal of William Copeland Astbury, 9 volumes, is in the Cheshunt Foundation Archives at Westminster College, Cambridge. Astbury lived from 1783 to 1868.
 9. For the general history of the Spode firm under William Taylor Copeland see Leonard Whiter, *Spode, a history of the family, factory and wares from 1733-1833*, London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1970.
 10. Astbury Journal vol. 6 p.240.

loyal employees and he allowed Astbury to run a branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the Warehouse. He also permitted the distribution of Christian tracts in the manufactory at Stoke. These were the shibboleths of any decent City merchant at that time and it might help reduce the number of strikes.

But Astbury and the Evangelical Christians like him wished to go further than the conventional religious responses. The role of the City in developing Christian work with young men has been set out in Clyde Binfield's book *George Williams and the YMCA*, so this will not be retold here.¹¹ The pivotal role of the Scot, David Nasmith, in broadening the Evangelical social agenda is part of that story.¹² Astbury was a friend of Nasmith and deeply influenced by him. As important to Nasmith as societies for young men were, his principal creation was the London City Mission, whose object was to bring the Bible and the Gospel to the urban poor. Auxiliary to this mission were District Visiting Societies, which, unlike the London City Mission, have long since ceased. Arising also from the London City Mission work was the attempt to help young women, especially those caught up in prostitution, for whom Nasmith formed the London Female Mission. Through Astbury's Journal we can see more of these forgotten aspects of Christian philanthropy in the 1830s and 1840s. It is true that we have accounts of attempts to end prostitution later in the nineteenth century, but the experience of the pioneers is not so easily available. District Visiting Societies, with which we begin, have all but disappeared from the corporate Christian memory.

In 1829 Astbury, with his younger brother James and his younger sister, Hannah, set up house in Camden Town, then a developing suburb of London. Astbury enjoyed a daily walk, so where better to live than on the edge of Regents Park, with possible excursions to Primrose Hill, out to the village of Highgate, or to Hampstead Heath, or a walk along the canal to St Johns Wood, even to the point where the canal met the Thames at Chelsea, "a beautiful spot" according to Astbury.¹³ If the modern reader finds it hard to imagine Lots Road, Chelsea, as picturesque, an even greater degree of imagination is required to visualise the first lodgings the Astburys took, with Messrs Simons at Camden Wharf, where there was a coal business. These would not seem to be ideal for someone looking for the country air. It is easy to forget that for the early Victorians, especially the middle classes, machinery and commerce could be beautiful things. A print of the opening of the Chalk Farm cutting on the Birmingham railway shows a rural scene with an admiring crowd of spectators. In his time in Camden Astbury watched the building of this railway with interest and took every opportunity to travel on railways as they were opened. Omnibuses, railways, steamboat services on the Thames – all these were fascinating to Astbury. When he and his siblings moved from Camden Wharf it was not because they wanted to move but because

11. Clyde Binfield, *George Williams and the YMCA*, London: Heinemann, 1973.

12. John Campbell, *Memoirs of David Nasmith: his labours and travels in Great Britain, France, the United States and Canada*, London 1844, is an inadequate account of his work but the only extensive biography available.

13. This observation was made on 2 January 1829, Astbury's Journal vol. 1 p. 1.

it suited the new owners, the Murphy family, who were Roman Catholics. The Astburys then took a house on Camden High Street. Hannah Astbury regularly attended the Independent or Congregational Chapel which served Camden Town. William divided his time between the Independent and Wesleyan chapels and the Episcopal chapels of ease serving the developing district. On occasion he would walk into the City to attend a Quaker meeting.

Camden Town was a diverse community in the early 1830s. There were middle-class people like Astbury, living on independent means or taking the omnibus down to their place of business in the City. There were local businessmen and tradesmen, ranging from a linoleum warehouse through joiners and chemists to the dairies which supplied London's milk. A great many of London's pianos were made in Camden Town and jobbing artists, who specialised in book illustrations, tended to congregate there. There was the barracks in Regent's Park, St Katherine's Hospital, transplanted from the docks, and the new University College Hospital. There were the servants and labourers who worked for the middle classes and local firms. Then there were the unemployed, particularly the aged and widows with children at home, dependent on the kindness of others, begging or criminality to make ends meet.¹⁴ Speculative building in the 1830s and 1840s drove out some of the well-to-do and urbanised what had been a rural suburb, with its own Veterinary College. Astbury himself would retreat to Fulham in 1844. Today people look to governments to shape social policy and address the needs of those who barely subsist by their own efforts. In the 1830s and 1840s it was very different. In 1842 the population of St Pancras parish, including Camden and Kentish Towns, was 130,000, an increase of 30% in a decade.¹⁵ The system of parish relief, dating back to Elizabethan statutes, was breaking down, even in country districts. Government would be driven to act, creating the workhouse system. Workhouses were seen as the last resort. Voluntary activity was the only other remedy available to lift social casualties back to self-sufficiency. To Astbury and his contemporaries it was wholly proper that the Christian public should expect to give for the relief of distress and poverty alongside tract distribution and preaching. Transform the inner person with the Gospel message and the outer person would flourish, thus removing the need for welfare provision.

Astbury was not alone in this classic Liberalism, that is to say, a belief in a minimalist state. In September 1842 one of Astbury's friends was blaming the recent re-introduction of Income Tax, at the iniquitous rate of 6d in the pound, for a falling off in charitable subscriptions.¹⁶ In 1843 the majority of Dissenters resisted the education provisions of the Factory Bill because state subsidies for education would favour the Established Church at their expense. Voluntarism set the agenda. We should not therefore be surprised to see William Astbury devoting

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14. Information is to be found in the Journal, local histories and the 1841 Census.
 15. *London City Mission Magazine* vol VIII 1843 gives tables of population and places of worship for 1842; this shows that St Pancras, with a population of 130,000 (31% increase in a decade), had only 32,140 sittings in places of worship.
 16. Astbury's Journal vol. 4 p. 145.

a great deal of his spare time to the promotion of the Camden Town District Visiting Society, based on Nasmith's principles. The General Society for Promoting District Visiting had begun in 1828 to promote a network of Christian care across London and Nasmith's London City Mission of 1835 inspired new local groups. The wealthier members of the community were expected to subscribe to a fund for the relief of the poor. District Visitors, usually middle-class women, would visit the poor in their homes to pray with them, distribute Bibles and tracts, and assess their physical needs before making gifts, usually a voucher cashable for goods at a local shop. Subscribers had the right to draw attention to cases of poverty which they felt to be particularly deserving. District Visiting Societies were trying to make good the shortfall in pastoral care in urban areas. Camden Town was ecclesiastically part of the parish of St Pancras. As the new vicar, Henry Hughes, pointed out in 1845, he and his curates were expected to minister to a population greater than that of the whole of Herefordshire.¹⁷ In Jamaica the ratio of clergy to population was 1 to 6,000 and the missionary societies were appealing for funds to remedy this situation. In St Pancras there was one clergyman to every 10,000 people. Even if, grudgingly, one allowed for the Dissenters, there was still a massive under-provision of pastoral care and places of worship. For those Evangelicals who supported the London City Mission the answer was clear. Town missionaries needed to be employed and voluntary Christian service mobilised. All this required local committees, treasurers, annual reports and a steady stream of subscribers.

Who were these subscribers in Camden? We know from another entry that the Camden Town Visiting Society dates from 1837, but unfortunately there is a gap in Astbury's Journal at the particular time. He says in a later entry that he formed it in conjunction with David Nasmith in 1837.¹⁸ This corresponds with what we know of Nasmith resigning as Secretary of the London City Mission in 1837, partly in order to retain support for it from the Church of England. Nasmith then formed the British and Foreign Town Missions Society to keep the inter-denominational principle secure. Astbury certainly had a continuing concern to keep the Camden Town District Visiting Society non-denominational. In June 1842 Astbury was concluding one of his spells of working each day for Copeland and Garrett. This allowed him to resume the formal entry of his Journal notes. It is at this period that we learn most about the workings of the Visiting Society and one other charitable activity, the North Western District Asylum for Penitent Females. The Camden Town Visiting Society Committee met on Friday evening 17 June 1842 at Mr Woodman's "as usual".¹⁹ Richard Woodman (1784-1859), the Secretary of the Society, made his living by engraving and portraiture and his wife Ann, who was also present, was the daughter of the sculptor Charles Horwell. Woodman's usual subjects were sporting or theatrical scenes, not quite the pictures Astbury would admire, though the visual arts did

17. *London City Mission Magazine* vol X 1845, p.46.

18. Astbury's Journal vol. 4 p. 30.

19. Astbury's Journal vol. 4 p. 30.

attract him, along with serious literature. Woodman was now, like Astbury, in his late fifties.²⁰ Also present at the June meeting were Miss Skinner, daughter of John Skinner, a Congregational minister employed by the British and Foreign Bible Society; a Mr Holland, converted by the idiosyncratic evangelist William Huntington, but who now worshipped at the Independent Chapel; and a Mr Hopps. We also know that the committee included Thomas William Gittens, a local upholsterer who had formed the Independent Chapel in Camden Town and who retired from business in 1842 to act as full time minister; and Alexander Miller, superintendent of the recently opened Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park, who succeeded Woodman as Secretary in 1842. Holland and Astbury were also active in promoting the Camden Town Monthly Tract Society, which had been formed by Nasmith and Astbury. Further committee members were a Miss Rickwood, Samuel Kidd, professor of Chinese at University College, London, and George Murphy, a coal merchant. A Thomas Wilcox junior acted as sub-treasurer.²¹

The first duty of a District Visiting Society Committee was to collect subscriptions. This involved calling on the wealthier members of the community in an upmarket version of the door-to-door collection. We know something about the subscribers because as Treasurer Astbury often noted in his Journal when a subscription was sent to him and he entered it in the books. Mr John B Pope of Morningson Crescent, a coal factor, Joseph Claypon Esq of The Elms, Hampstead, benefactor of the London City Mission, and Mr Stevens, Secretary of Kings College Hospital were all mentioned in this way. A Mr William Bencroft of Melbourne Cottage, Crescent Place, travelling in the omnibus from Camden Town to Cornhill with Astbury, was talked into giving ten shillings. Another seven subscribers derived their income directly from the City, either as merchants or investors, and four were running businesses in Camden Town.²²

Voluntarism usually leads to duplication, as a free market in charitable provision arises. It is no surprise to find that Camden Town had a Church District

20. *ODNB*.

21. For John Skinner see *CYB* 1886: Thomas Gittens see *CYB* 1860 : Alexander Miller see *ODNB*: Samuel Kidd see *CYB* 1844 and *ODNB*.

22. Subscribers who have been identified in addition to those mentioned are: Benjamin Richardson, Chemist; Mrs Catherine Leader and Miss Leader; Miss Barker; Mr Downey and Sarah Downey, who kept a school; John Collyer Knight, a Latin and Greek teacher, of the British Museum; Samuel Bellin 1799-1893, the engraver; Clarkson Stanfield, RA; B. Allen of Brecknock Terrace, carpenter; Col Lindsay Baker; Professor William Morton, of the Royal Veterinary College; James Everingham, (Ind); Mr and Mrs George Simpson, of independent means; Mr Gray, Gittens's son-in-law, who was secretary after Woodman; Edward Turst Carver, city speculator and colleague of Nasmith; Mrs Cooper, Camden Cottages; Mrs Millington, Haverstock Hill; Richard Thompson, grocer, 2 Park Terrace; James Nicholson, linen draper, Park Terrace; Mrs Mary Huxley, 10 Bayham Terrace, wife of a solicitor; Mrs Susannah Kerr, 3 Great Randolph Street; Mr Robert Atkinson of Sussex Cottages, merchant. Mr Wray, Morningson Crescent, manufacturer's agent.

Visiting Society by 1839, a distinctively Anglican challenge to the non-denominational approach favoured by Astbury. There were also Societies associated with a particular congregation, such as the Fitzroy Chapel District Visiting Society and Christ's Chapel District Visiting Society, and the St Clement Danes District Visiting Society, all of which served Camden Town or neighbouring areas. Such societies would solicit subscriptions only within their own constituency but distribute their charity without reference to denomination. The Albany Chapel Visiting Society for relieving the Sick Poor of all denominations at their own dwellings is self-explanatory in its title. Not only were there rival District Visiting Societies but rival brand names for this form of charity. Camden Town probably benefited from the exertions of the Poor Man's Friend Society for the relief and instruction of the Necessitous Poor in Kentish Town and its vicinity. What we may conclude as we multiply the examples is that, in the absence of local or national government welfare services beyond the workhouse, there was a ready market in personal charity.²³

Just as there was a plurality of societies to which philanthropic subscriptions could be made, those in receipt of benefit might have it from various hands. A "young woman delivered of twins" in Camden Town had help from the Maternity and Church Visiting Society. Astbury sent her half-a-crown through a Camden Town District Visiting Society visitor but as from himself, so as not to compromise her chance of more help from the Church Visiting Society.

It would not have been possible for such societies to rise and flourish and melt away, to be replaced by others, if there were no middle-class people in London to sit on their committees and fill up their subscription lists. We need a statistician to collate such data as remain in hundreds of local records and the archives of the London City Mission. This might help us to see whether people were more generous with their personal wealth at this period than now. The suspicion is that they were and that Lord Shaftesbury and Charles Dickens are simply the prominent examples of those moved by the poverty evident in London at the time. In order to draw on the charitable impulse the Camden Town District Visiting Society had 1500 annual reports prepared and 800 envelopes in order to canvass its district. Much of the donkey work was carried out by Astbury himself. In February 1843 he tried to persuade the committee to appoint paid help and to join in a canvass of the District to raise funds but they were unwilling to take this on. It would seem that in order to meet the bills of local tradesmen for the previous year a fair bit of money still needed to be raised and the committee, quite naturally, were not prepared to expand the work in order to make it more solvent. Astbury was always ready to trust the Lord in a tight corner. However much of a Puritan he was in other matters he was ready to bet on Providence every time. In the long run, their failure to back him lost the Committee the services of their treasurer. After working hard to raise the funds needed Astbury handed over the administrative work to the sub-treasurer, Thomas Wilcox junior, ordered a

23. Astbury Journal vol. 4 p. 263.

suspension of activity by the visitors, and turned his attention to his other philanthropic enterprise, keeping young women out of prostitution.

Since the writings of Sigmund Freud and his followers we approach committees of pious Victorian men attempting to end female prostitution with some wariness. Middle-class women, especially Quakers, took a role in running the voluntary societies which offered help to young women who had turned to the streets to make a living, or were likely to. However, when it came to strategic management of institutions, and eventually to legislative proposals, these were roles assigned to men. The largest Evangelical Christian body for work among the poor of London was the London City Mission. Alongside that organisation the work with women on the streets was spearheaded by the London Female Mission, formed by Nasmith in 1836, though we also find the London Society for the Protection of Young Females and the Female Aid Society. It has already been mentioned that the public reason given for Nasmith's withdrawal from the London City Mission was the need to keep Anglicans on board. In fact, Nasmith was forced out by the resignation of Robert Ainslie, a Congregational minister, who then succeeded him as Secretary. Ainslie was highly, and justifiably, critical of Nasmith's organising abilities. Nasmith was good at inspiration, hopeless at what we now call "follow-through". In the midst of a financial crisis in the London City Mission Nasmith had started up the London Female Mission. This was the last straw for Ainslie; "my confidence has been materially shaken in the prudence, discretion, and judgment of Mr Nasmith."²⁴ It was not only that Nasmith was simultaneously appealing to the same people to support a multiplying set of societies, but that a close association with the rescue of fallen women would, in Ainslie's opinion, discredit the London City Mission.

Charities at this stage had no command structure; under voluntarism a hundred flowers bloomed and competed for the same light. The London Female Mission, which offered a range of services to women of all ages, was one of a number of local philanthropic enterprises providing asylums or refuges for young women. The young women were first admitted to the Probationary House, which Ainslie judged too close to the main office, where men came and went on London City Mission business. From the Probationary House they were dispersed among the asylums supported by local committees. Within an asylum they would surrender their own clothes for a uniform and be put to domestic work, such as laundering. They were only allowed out under supervision or to go to what we would now term "work-placements". The ultimate goal was to prepare young women for service in respectable families. Once in employment they were expected to reimburse the Asylum some of the costs of their accommodation and training out of their earnings.

Astbury's Journal shows the dynamics of both the London Female Mission, on whose committee he served, and his local Asylum in Camden Town, to which he

24. Campbell, *Nasmith*, p.331. According to Astbury, Ainslie supplied much of Campbell's information.

gave great but unavailing attention. It was not a popular cause. It was hard to raise subscriptions and hard to recruit proper staff. Astbury was a key member of the London Female Mission committee, although its public patron was the Marquess of Cholmondeley, supported by Lord Henry Cholmondeley, the Hon William Ashley and the Hon Arthur Kinnaird, later 10th Baron Kinnaird. The financial muscle came from the bankers Joseph Gibbins, a Quaker, and Thompson Hankey, a Congregationalist, whose brother we saw at Abney Park Cemetery. The navy was represented by Sir Henry Hart and the Hon William Waldegrave. Other committee members included Wigram Money, a wealthy nurseryman from Hampstead, and William Ashley's secretary, Edward Turst Carver, who subsequently married the daughter of John Key, Lord Mayor in 1830. Carver was a neighbour of Astbury in Camden Town and had been Nasmith's close associate in founding the London City Mission. The Ladies Committee was strong on kinswomen of the men – the Marchioness of Cholmondeley, Lady Hart and the Misses Waldegrave, for instance.²⁵

These committees usually met at the London City Mission office in Red Lion Square, also the base for the Religious Tract Society and other Evangelical charities. The Honorary Secretary was John Blanchard, who also served the Town Mission and Scripture Readers' Society. George Groser was employed as paid secretary and Richard Eaton as the Travelling Secretary, who drummed up support. The Mission ran a probationary house at 57 White Lion Street, Pentonville, where young women were first lodged and put to work in the Laundry. Isaac Pidduck was the physician, although young women were also patients at the new University College and Kings College Hospitals. William Short of Bloomsbury was the Honorary Chaplain. When J William Gowering, a blind clergyman, was appointed chaplain in 1841 it became a source of conflict. Ashley had offered to pay the chaplain and wanted to do it through the Society. Astbury and others objected that this compromised the non-denominational status of the Society. Ashley and Oswald Mosley wished for Anglican dominance and set forms of prayer. Astbury resisted this and was put out when a set form of prayer was adopted for committee meetings. However, he got his own way with the chaplain. The very Protestant but Anglican A S Thelwall was paid as chaplain in 1843, having succeeded Gowering, but the money from Ashley and his friends not being forthcoming in 1844 Thelwall was forced to find other work. He never held a benefice but was eventually appointed Professor of Elocution at Kings College.²⁶

25. The Ladies Committee: Mrs Pilkington, Mrs Clift, Hon Misses Waldegrave, Marchioness of Cholmondeley, Lady Hart.

The main committee: Hon W Ashley, Edward Carver, Allen, Gibbins, McNeil, Wigram Money, Hon Arthur Kinnaird, Humphreys, William Lowe, Watson, McKellar, Lord Henry Cholmondeley, Sir Henry Hart, Oswald Mosley, William Adeney, Hon William Waldegrave RN, Thompson Hankey Junior, William Taylor (d.1844).

26. *ODNB*.

In addition to the work of the London Female Mission Astbury put a great deal of effort into supporting the local Camden Town Asylum, both in driving the committee and in leading prayers there on a Sunday evening. We know from various sources that at least thirty-seven young women were inmates at one time or another of the North Western District Penitent Females' Asylum. The 1841 census shows twelve young women, all described as seamstresses, in residence at the house on Camden Street used for the asylum. That seems to have been its capacity. Of the total of thirty-seven young women, seven went into service, fulfilling the objective of the place, but two lost their jobs within a year and were made poor again. Seven more were known or suspected of returning to prostitution. A further six went home, with or without their parents' encouragement, one of them simply to look after a small brother now that both parents had died. These young women were from as far afield as Kings Lynn and Portsmouth. Four went to the London Female Mission probationary house when the Camden Town asylum closed. Amongst these four was a young woman who was despatched to Old Windsor poorhouse when pregnant and returned without her baby, though we are not told if it died or was taken from her. A further young woman was employed by the London Female Mission. One was dismissed, one left and the fate of four more is not recorded. The remainder are the saddest of all. Sarah James, a long-time resident, died in St George's in the East workhouse, having left the situation she had obtained when she became too ill to work. Mary Ann Keen was in the same workhouse with her, but did manage to secure a job and leave. Sarah Saggs was sent to St Pancras Infirmary with venereal disease. A young woman, known only as Saunders, died in University College Hospital of an unspecified illness. Harriet Teague, who had been a monitress and gone into a situation, died of consumption.²⁷ The success and failure rate, although not the mortality rate, would be comparable today.

William Acton is generally reckoned to be a pioneer in the treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and reform of the laws concerning prostitution. Astbury regarded him as too sanguine about the problems. On 14 May 1843 he asked the young women themselves what the consequences were of their life-style:

At conclusion of service & after catechising I asked the inmates successively the question 'What becomes of the young women who walk the streets?' I did so on account of assertions made by Mr. W. Acton at last meeting of Legislative Enactment Committee that the majority of them married to working men. The result was rather that they are distributed in various ways. Those who enter on an evil course early say 17 or 18 die at about the age of 27 or 28 average. Many go into keeping. Some of these marry. Many go into hospital & die there. Many both of those who walk the streets & those who having been in keeping are turned off commit suicide. Knew several who have done so. Thus far Guppy, confirmed by Garvey, who added many

27. The information on the young women is all gleaned from Astbury's Journal.

commit robberies & are sent out of the country. Many go into Penitentiaries & either are reconciled to their friends or obtain situations. Wilkins, gents get tired of them, they get old & go into workhouses. That many who lose their situations who, if they had a home to go to would be preserved. Russells remarks were not materially different. Eves' she said many go into hospitals & return to their evil courses. Others go into Asylums.²⁸

As a result of these interviews, which have a Dickensian ring, Astbury prepared his own account of what had happened to young women in order to inform the committee working on the problems of prostitution. Just as Shaftesbury tired of voluntary efforts to relieve poor and ill-educated children, and began to call for primary legislation to control conditions in the mines and elsewhere, so Astbury and his colleagues in the London Female Mission realised that they needed fresh laws to help combat the exploitation of young women. Like Shaftesbury, they were to find their Tory friends in parliament were not sympathetic.

An article on the problems of prostitution was published in the *Quarterly Review* in 1843 and extensively quoted in the London City Mission report for that year. Figures from the Lock Hospital suggest that Astbury had a better appreciation of the situation than Acton. The Lock surveyed 289 patients discharged over the four years to 1843 and found that 151 were in service, forty-three were married, five dead and one insane. Nothing was known of forty-six of the women but forty-three had returned to prostitution. "Something has to be done;" said the article, "a certain number of feeble institutions creep on from year to year, offering scanty accommodation, languishing under the shade of narrow means or a burden of debt, unable for want of room or funds to carry out any efficient system of discipline or classification and conducted on most imperfect principles."

This is the point at which the London Society for the Protection of Young Females, which had run an asylum in Tottenham since 1835, comes into the picture with the London Female Mission. On 31 March 1843 a meeting was called at the Exeter Hall in The Strand, the principal gathering place of Evangelicals, bringing together the committees of those societies throughout the metropolis who were addressing the question of prostitution. The Earl of Mountcashel, of an old Northern Irish Protestant family, was in the chair. Astbury was put on a committee for preparing a petition for parliament.²⁹ They called themselves the Legislative Enactment Committee, subsequently changed to the less opaque London Society for the Protection of Women. This being the world of Evangelical voluntarism Astbury was also recruited for the committee of the Associate Institution, another organisation sharing the same objective. They lobbied parliament and secured meetings with Henry Brougham, but were unable to agree

28. Astbury Journal vol. 5 pp.18-19.

29. Astbury Journal vol. 5 p.342. It is not quite clear whether it was first termed the "Legislative" or the "Legislation" Enactment Committee.

draft legislation which both met their aims and satisfied Brougham's concerns about its operation and the politics of the House of Lords. Their chief support in parliament came from Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford. In the absence of any immediate relief through legislation the young women of the London streets would continue to rely on philanthropy to ameliorate their misery and it would continually fail to meet all their needs. After a few years' work the Asylum in Camden Town closed for lack of support. Astbury had been the chief mover of it and he had given up on Camden Town in order to rent a house in Fulham. The outskirts of London were now two or three miles further out as the omnibus services multiplied and railways were built.

The voluntary approach had and has limitations that are sometimes overlooked. Astbury wanted to keep Benjamin Bond Cabell, a successful lawyer and Member of Parliament, off the committee of the Associate Institution because he was "not a pious man".³⁰ The battles for control between Churchmen and Dissenters also diverted energy from the chief objects. Then there was the problem that such work attracts sexual predators. Sending young girls into domestic service with a family might be to put them precisely where they would be abused. The London Female Mission sacked their matron for sending women to work for John Trenchard, vicar of Highworth in Wiltshire, because he was judged to be unsuitable.³¹ Astbury suspected that sometimes the full story of pregnant young women servants from supposedly respectable households was not being told. Was an asylum a genuine refuge, or a school for vice? Concentrating vulnerable young people in institutions has always had its down side for individuals.

In the course of this study we have followed the food chain of philanthropy, as it were, from the heart of the City where wealth is generated to the humble households who are the recipients of philanthropic endeavours. Our link has been a man who worked in the City and knew many of its leading men, but who also translated his concern for the poor into voluntary activity and mobilised his middle-class neighbours to assist. The same kind of activity was happening all over what was fast becoming a metropolitan area. James Sherman's Surrey Chapel offered a range of philanthropic activities, some dating back to the ministry of Rowland Hill and others formed in the 1840s. Its list included:

The Benevolent Society for the Relief of the Sick Poor

The Auxiliary to the London Missionary Society

Ten Sunday Schools and two Ragged Schools, in which 3,590 children were taught by 380 teachers

The Dorcas Society, for assisting poor mothers during their confinements

The Bible Association, for distributing scriptures

The Auxiliary to the Tract Society, circulating thousands of tracts and books

The Surrey Chapel Alms-houses for twenty-three poor women

The School of Industry for girls

30. Astbury Journal vol. 6 p.33.

31. Astbury Journal vol.7 p.106.

The Female Clothing Society
The Christian Instruction Association
The Maternal Association
The Young Men's Association
The Auxiliary to the London City Mission
The Christian Mutual Provident Society
The mission hall in the Waterloo Road
A class for educating Jewish children
The Cheshunt College Fund, for supporting the college where Sherman had trained.³²

Consider how many of these needs are now addressed from general taxation and the professional disciplines involved. Whatever the shortcomings of earlier philanthropy the sheer scope and ambition of the services provided must attract our admiration. Even where these needs are today addressed by voluntary organisations the funding is largely by public grants rather than private benefaction. Were the Christian merchants of the City more imaginative and generous in the early nineteenth century? Possibly not, but they did explore the limits of voluntarism before adopting that panacea of the twentieth century, "the government should do something about it." Whatever means are adopted to counter social evils, they have to mobilise human imagination and commitment to be effective. A spirit of altruism is critical. Such a spirit is not confined to religious people, and some religious people seem conspicuously lacking in it, but there is a strong correlation. For charitable enterprises to flourish such altruism is essential. Whatever the failures in their methodology the evidence is there to show that strong streak of altruism in the City in the 1830s and 1840s, over and above the activities of the long-standing City charities. It was both generous and imaginative in response to new needs and we should celebrate it.

STEPHEN ORCHARD

32. Henry Allon, *Memoir of the Rev. James Sherman*, 1863, London, p.333.

**CROSS-BORDER CONGREGATIONALISM –
BENEVOLENT IMPERIALISM AND SHARED INDEPENDENCE:
THE FIRST HALF-CENTURY OF THE NORTH WALES ENGLISH
CONGREGATIONAL UNION**

At a conference held in Chester at the Queen Street Congregational Chapel on 16 October 1876, the Revd. W. Griffith of Holywell, Flintshire, supported by Mr Thomas Minshall of Oswestry, successfully moved the following resolution: "That this conference, recognizing the urgent need of the English speaking population of North Wales, cordially approves of the proposal to establish a society for the formation and sustenance of English speaking Congregational churches, and hereby proposes to support such an association under the title of 'The society for establishing and sustaining English Congregational churches in North Wales' ".¹ The two issues of Language and Borders implied above might be construed as both unifying and divisive for Congregationalists during the period from 1876 to 1972: whilst the late Twentieth Century saw in Wales a resurgence of concern and enthusiasm for its own language, Congregationalism had one hundred years earlier felt an anxiety for the then growing number of English, whether residents or tourists, in the face of most chapels having only Welsh-language activity. The South Wales Congregational Church Aid Society had been founded in 1860: the later emergence of a parallel North Wales body is traced here, together with some elements in its subsequent development through its first half-century. In part, this is the story of individual enthusiasts for the Union, notably ministers from north-east Wales and laymen from the English border counties: the initial, strong English involvement then holds less prominence as the years pass.

Two closely printed pages in the *Chester Chronicle* of 21 October 1876 reported on the Chester conference: its president was William Crosfield, J.P., long a stalwart of Liverpool and Lancashire Congregationalism and prominent in the decade's discussions about federating County Union funds in order to support the poorer Unions. Congregationalism nationally was represented by the Congregational Union of England and Wales, the Congregational Home Missionary Society and the English Congregational Chapel Building Society; regional and more local interests were present through the County Unions of Anglesey, Cheshire, Denbighshire & Flintshire, Lancashire, Salop, South Carnarvonshire and also the South Wales Union;² numerous individual ministers

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1. In this paper, "English Congregationalism" follows traditional Welsh usage and normally refers to English language causes within the principality: "Welsh Churches" similarly describes those using that language. Spelling of place names follows the usage of the particular time, which may itself be inconsistent.
 2. This use of the title seems premature. *CYBs* later (e.g., *CYB*, 1915, p.333) recorded the foundation in 1899 of the South Wales English Union, with which the 1860 South Wales Congregational Church Aid Society was then amalgamated.

attended including Queen Street's P.W. Darnton, whose address of welcome contained a claim for Chester as the most convenient central place: it was an absolute next-door neighbour of North Wales.³ An evening meeting was addressed by Henry Richard, M.P., popularly known as "the Member for Wales" and "the Apostle of Peace": Chairman-Elect of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, he had earlier with Samuel Morley been instrumental in founding the similar South Wales body.⁴

A substantial introductory paper on "English Congregationalism in North Wales" was read by the Revd. D. Burford Hooke: this traced the conference's origins from an 1874 Congregational Union of Denbighshire and Flintshire resolution seeking "some immediate and strenuous effort to obtain aid from England to support and to start English interests in North Wales, similar to that accorded to South Wales". A June 1875 meeting of English Congregational ministers appointed a committee which convened the Chester gathering to effect the formation, staffing and ordering of the society, and to seek sympathy and co-operation from the churches in England:⁵ the Cheshire Union was noted as already committing financial aid to "the proposed English Association for North Wales".⁶ There were six northern counties: Flintshire, Denbighshire, Carnarvonshire, Anglesey, Merionethshire and Montgomeryshire.⁷ Their 1871 population of 452,710 was served by over 340 Congregational churches, with 20,323 members, 24,852 hearers and 25,600 scholars of all ages. The English proportion was unknown but small: occasional or regular English services and classes sought both to retain the young people and to cater for the rising numbers of tourists or new settlers. Anecdotal evidence suggested that English workmen in Welsh districts easily neglected chapel attendance, favouring what was seen as morally degrading activity: others preferred the apparent "ease, sweetness and light of state-aided establishments". Existing English churches, often originated

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3. For Peter Darnton (1834-1913), see *CYB*, 1914, p.165. During his first pastorate in Newport, Monmouthshire (1862-70), Darnton served on the organising committee for the South Wales Society.
 4. *Dictionary of National Biography* (1921-22), Vol. 48, pp.208-210.
 5. This may be the meeting which the *Christian World* of 14 August 1884 mentions as having been held at Bache Hall, the Chester home of Robert Spear Hudson (for whom see note 13 below).
 6. F.J. Powicke, *A History of the Cheshire County Union of Congregational Churches* (Manchester 1907), p.56. For some years, the cover of the North Wales Union's Annual Report carried a quotation from the Cheshire Union's Seventy-First Report "greeting the advent of the Sister Association and ... [commending] ... it to the sympathy and aid of the Churches in Cheshire". Holywell, Mold and Buckley had successively become members of the Cheshire Union, the earliest in 1865: Mostyn and Ruabon had applications deferred (1876), these deemed simply to precede requests for financial support.
 7. Within the text of this article, the first mention of local churches notes their county abbreviated as: Flint, Denbigh, Carnarvon, Anglesey, Mer. and Mont. respectively.

by Welshmen, were felt in danger through an isolating independence caused in part by the lack of a society such as sustained flourishing churches of sister denominations: ten or more Montgomeryshire causes might, for example, be at particular imminent risk. Against this background, the first aim was to sustain and encourage immediate English-speaking wants; and then to move towards missionary aggression, but without overchurching any single town. The cry was for Wales; not for Welshmen, but for Englishmen in their invasion of Wales. The Union's work would be to make not proselytes but saints; not Congregationalists but Christians.⁸

The subsequent discussion involved participants from both England and Wales, together representative of their denomination's two languages. The various hopes, reservations and suggestions expressed included the opinion of the Revd. J.C. Gallaway of the English Congregational Chapel Building Society that continued assistance for the region was likely from his Society: it had previously granted some £8,000 towards the erection of eighty-eight chapels in North Wales.⁹

The initial progress of the Union owed much to its first Secretary, Daniel Burford Hooke. Born in Bristol and trained privately rather than at college, he served briefly at Tabernacle, Norwich, before his ordination at Mold (Flint) where he ministered from 1870 to 1881. Hooke would return to the county at Rhyl in 1883 for five further years: meanwhile, he had already attained denominational prominence as Secretary of the Congregational Union's Jubilee Fund, established primarily to aid Home Missionary work. His remaining ministry was based entirely in London, where until 1917 he served the wider denomination in major Secretarial and Editorial posts. He was for twenty-three years the Secretary of the Colonial Missionary Society and during this period was temporarily recalled to North Wales as Chairman for the 1900 Assembly: Dr. Hooke occupied the Chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1916. His wide-ranging administrative success suggests that the North Wales Union was fortunate to be so well served by this particular local ministerial leader.¹⁰

Hooke's second successor was Thomas Lloyd from Tredegar, Monmouthshire who trained at Carmarthen before commencing in 1883 his forty-year (and sole) pastorate at Colwyn Bay (Denbigh). The cause here exponentially outgrew its temporary iron building, itself provided by the Union, to occupy a two-storey

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8. The October 1876 founding title of the Union notwithstanding, the two initial *CYB* entries call it the English Association for North Wales. *CYBs* then, from 1880 to 1965 inclusive, name it the North Wales English Congregational Union (hereafter, *NWECU*), three further titles subsequently appearing in the eight remaining *CYBs*.
 9. Much of the material in these opening paragraphs is drawn from the *Chester Chronicle*, 21 October 1876. The titles of the various Congregational bodies are as described there.
 10. For Daniel Burford Hooke (1847-1933), see *CYB*, 1934, pp.264-5. *Who Was Who 1929-1940* (1941), p.660 varies slightly on some of the salient dates. His Canadian doctorate is first listed in *CYB*, 1910, p.424: some *NWECU* Reports then, however, "backdate" it.

School-Church built in 1885 which was then greatly extended in 1903: a membership of 220 in 1923 exemplified both a successful ministry and the English work's needs and growth. Lloyd was a County Councillor and greatly involved in educational matters: his North Wales Union secretarial years from 1891 to 1923 found him described as "a true Father in God, both to churches and to ministers".¹¹

The Union's first Chairman was Robert Spear Hudson of Chester. A West Bromwich chemist and druggist, Hudson had by the 1840s invented a dry soap powder: the resultant two-generation family firm of R. S. Hudson Ltd. enjoyed phenomenal business success before becoming in 1908 a subsidiary of the larger Lever Brothers who retained its name and particular products. In 1875, its Congregational founder and son of a manse who was now a manufacturing chemist made Chester his home when the company expanded its operations to Liverpool: there, the Bank Hall factory at Bootle employed about one thousand workers.¹² Hudson's very considerable personal wealth had already been used generously in support of the South Staffordshire Congregational Union and, more widely, the Home Missionary Society.

From 1875, Hudson worshipped at Chester's Northgate church: he now found new local interests, for example part-financing a replacement church in Handbridge where he also paid much of the minister's stipend, and the challenge of the bold and national Jubilee Fund to which he pledged £20,000; this and some other promised donations remained incomplete at his unexpected death in 1884.¹³ Although generous also to the London Missionary Society,¹⁴ his main interest was in Home Missions with donations to the Cheshire Union and the funding of two local mission enterprises from Northgate besides his major North Wales commitment.

It may not have been uncommon for such a body as the North Wales Union to choose as its Chairman someone as successful and wealthy in commerce or industry as Hudson: perhaps rather less usual was for such a person to have had his own practical experience of local church founding and development. This Hudson also had: he was among the prime movers in the founding in 1873 of High Street Church, West Bromwich, which emerged as a secession from the older

11. For Thomas Lloyd (c1858-1934), see *CYB*, 1936, p.656.
12. H.L. Kershaw, "Mr. R.S. Hudson - Chemist - High Street, West Bromwich" in *The Blackcountryman* (1989), Vol. 22, No. 2, pp.64-5; J. S. Hunt, "A Short History of Soap" in *The Pharmaceutical Journal* (1999), Vol. 263, No. 7076, pp.985-989 (via Pharmaceutical Society Website).
13. For Robert Spear Hudson (1812-1884), see *Chester Chronicle*, 9 and 16 August 1884; *Cheshire Observer*, 9 August 1884; *Christian World*, 14 August 1884; C.E. Surman, *A Congregational Six-Thousand. Some Representative Congregational Laymen* (Typescript Volume in the collection of the Congregational Library at Dr Williams's Library, 1966), p.199; and *CYB*, 1886, p.12. Hudson's estate was valued at £295,167.19s.6d.
14. *Manual of the Northgate Congregational Church, Chester*, 1884, p.12.

Mayers Green cause following criticism of a minister's pulpit integrity.¹⁵

Congregationalists from the English side of the border consistently occupied the Chair of the Union until 1892 when C.R. Jones, J.P., from Llanfyllin (Mont.), was the first with a Welsh address:¹⁶ Welsh ministers, who from the inauguration of the Union had invariably filled the Secretary's post, were with their lay fellow countrymen dominant thereafter in the Chairman's role with occasional reversions to the English connection, as for example in 1902 with Thomas Huxley.

Huxley, a wheelwright-turned-contractor from the Cheshire border village of Malpas, was prominent in his own county's Congregationalism for some four decades; he was called to the Chair of the Cheshire Union in 1900.¹⁷ He subscribed to, and attended the Annual Assemblies of the North Wales Union almost from its inception, displaying a particular commitment to its rural causes.¹⁸ Huxley designed chapels for Gwersyllt and Rhosrobin, colliery villages near Wrexham, and both planned and erected that at rural Lavister (all in Denbigh): these were among at least fourteen chapels which he built in the border counties between 1868 and 1891. In Flintshire, his generous contribution at the 1898 Rivertown, Shotton's stonelaying illustrated a long-standing friendship with its first and pioneering minister, Joseph Davies: these part-contemporaries shared an evangelical zeal for chapel extension and separately showed financial benevolence towards many new causes.

Davies, however, never held the most prominent offices in the North Wales Union despite his continuous membership from its early years. Born on a farm near Buckley, a heavily industrialised area of Flintshire famed for its firebricks and pottery, his early financial success in the grocery trade enabled him to devote the four decades following his 1878 ordination to furthering the cause of English-language Congregationalism.¹⁹ Whilst seven settled, sometimes brief, and not always immediately consecutive, pastorates are recorded between 1877 and 1917, the unfilled years include five when Davies was the Union's Evangelistic Agent (1887-88) and then its Financial Secretary (1889-91): the former seemingly describes a roving, innovative role beyond even his pioneering work in five distinct areas of Flintshire although only an 1884 Report notes Davies as active

15. A.G. Matthews, *The Congregational Churches of Staffordshire* (London 1924), p.233.

16. North Wales English Congregational Union, *Report for 1891* (hereafter, e.g. NWECU Reports 1891), p.2: *CYB*, 1892, p.333 lists Revd. J.J. Poynter of Oswestry as Chairman. If this latter is correct, then the first Chairman from Wales was Revd. D. Roberts, D.D., of Wrexham in the following year.

17. For Thomas Huxley (c1821-1903), see N. Lemon, "Thomas Huxley of Malpas: Contractor and Congregationalist" in *Cheshire History* 43 (2003), pp.133-147; C. E. Surman, *op. cit.*, p.202; and *CYB*, 1905, p.51.

18. *NWECU Reports* 1903, p.13.

19. There is no *CYB* Obituary for Davies, nor did the NWECU's 1922 Annual Report note his death in the preceding year. But see N. Lemon, "A Very Late Obituary: The Revd. Joseph Davies (c1844-1921)" in *Congregational History Circle* (2004) Vol. 4, No. 6, pp.402-406; also *CYB*, 1921, p.345 and *CYB*, 1922, p.96.

outside his native county, giving temporary oversight at Pentre'beirdd and Sarney (Mont.).²⁰

Thomas Minshall, Treasurer of the Union for its first eleven years, had a long history of committed activity to Shropshire Congregationalism. Its Chairman on several occasions, he was a frequent choice for the formal positions of stone-layer, chairman or speaker at chapel openings or after-meetings and as a trustee of new or replacement chapels: he was also involved in Sunday School or worship leadership at various churches and, with others, in tours to encourage and stimulate members in the weaker causes.²¹ He was Chairman of the North Wales Union for 1885, the immediate successor to Hudson who had just died.

As for the working life of the Union, this is now best seen through a snapshot of its first five decades provided by a discontinuous set of Annual Reports dated from 1879 to 1927.²² Here is evidence of a necessarily optimistic but also realistic appraisal of the successes and difficulties facing its dispersed, frequently struggling and never numerous churches.

Rule 1 of the Union sought "The Establishment of English Congregational Churches". This main aim was attempted in various ways. Unlike many other Unions, the North Wales body provided grants to help local committees to build churches: new and replacement chapels and schoolrooms usually received financial help towards their construction - examples included the introductory Iron Churches for Colwyn Bay, Bagillt (Flint) and Caergwrle, Cromwell's Hill (Flint). What was then termed "Aggressive Work" aimed to implement the Union's second Rule, "The promotion of Evangelistic work in the English language". Thus, following campaigns in 1880 by agents from the Evangelisation Society at Welshpool (Mont.) and amongst the north coast towns, Hudson subsequently suggested Union-sponsored preaching tours: in 1883 fourteen evangelistic sermons were delivered in Merioneth when the Assembly was held at Dolgelly (Mer.), but the Union's continual and repeated calls for similar outreach suggest a limited capacity or even an unwillingness to commit to widespread action.

One particularly distinctive, if temporary, work was undertaken for seven years from 1881 at Llanwddyn (Mont.) among workmen constructing Liverpool Corporation's Lake Vyrnwy reservoir and aqueduct. The Union declined an offer of £50 from public funds towards this mission because, in true Dissenting fashion, it would not accept ratepayers' money for particular religious activity. New wooden buildings were put up at the sole expense of the Union; Liverpool

20. *NWECU Reports* 1884, p.16.

21. E. Elliot (Ed.), *A History of Congregationalism in Shropshire* (Oswestry 1898), *passim*.

22. More correctly, two sets. Twenty-eight such Annual Reports are held in the University of Wales Bangor Library, and nine others by the Congregational Library: the specific details quoted hereafter concerning churches, finances and membership etc. are all taken from these papers. Only three Reports relate to years later than 1927. The Minutes of the NWECU have yet to be located.

Congregationalists made generous donations throughout; other evangelical agencies also participated; and the newly formed church of thirty-one members made its own first mission donations in 1884.

Most grants enabled churches to call ministers or to pay acceptable stipends: others aimed to stimulate initial, or special summer, work. A realistic view, however, was taken of value for money: support was discontinued in the holiday areas of Abergele (Denbigh) in 1880 and Beddgelert (Carnarvon) in 1885: the Cromwell's Hill cause, never strong, saw its iron building sold after 1907; and the year-round English services at Rhosneigr, unique on Anglesey, lasted only through the War period. More lasting success, however, attended the work at Pwllheli (Carnarvon), leading to the Church's formation in 1899.

Assemblies regularly suggested that churches consider the desirability of grouping, seeking "greater efficiency and more fitting maintenance of the ministry". The 1894 Report recognised that such plans challenged the cardinal principle of Independence, but also that churches had "no claim on outsiders to support them in an unwise exercise of their rights". To particularise the issue, Bagillt, which had twice shown an unhelpful independence, was granted £50 in 1895 only on the understanding that its pastor also took oversight of Flint. Periodically, Reports offered appraisals of advance and problem: after the Union's first five years, twenty-six causes were aided, thirteen of them established through the specific efforts of the Union; the silver jubilee figure of forty-seven English Churches included eleven formed since 1879; the fiftieth report, however, which again encouraged grouping, carried the unwelcome news that twenty-five of the fifty-one churches were then without Pastors.

The Union's funds had three distinct sources: substantial personal donations; monies from individual churches; grants from denominational funds. All were potentially variable. At the Inaugural Meeting in 1876, Robert Spear Hudson pledged £200 for each of five years, a munificence extended in 1882 for a further period; Samuel Morley similarly gave £200 annually. Hudson also regularly responded generously to many individual building appeals, more than once financing an actual site, and providing £25 towards each new manse.²⁴ The deaths of Hudson in 1884 and Morley in 1886 caused serious financial concern: the North Wales Union had an interest in the legal appeal by Hudson's executors for release of the balance of monies already promised to various Congregational bodies; this was rejected by the High Court in Chancery. The ordinary membership contributed from across the Union's wide geographical area: sixteen Welsh causes in Anglesea, for example, provided local contributions in 1904, the individual subscribers listed by name and amount with most gifts of one or two shillings. The Coward Trust, the English Congregational Chapel Building Society and the Church Aid Society were other supporters, although the last named itself

23. *Chester Chronicle*, 16 August 1884, quoting *The Congregationalist* of September 1882.

24. A substantial report, although without mentioning the NWEUCU, is found in *The Times*, May 4 1885.

faced financial problems in 1893.

Debts on new buildings were a continual burden: at £1500, Penmaenmawr (Carnarvon) had the largest in North Wales in 1880 but this was destined to grow in three years to £2400; Barmouth's (Mer.) similarly rising figure of £2916 in 1904 required Special Committees to oversee the local work and efforts. A Debt Extinction Fund was mooted in 1880, the imminent Jubilee Fund of the Congregational Union then facilitating the liquidation of £5000 worth of North Wales church property debt in the four years to 1886: the later 20th Century Fund decreased the burden by a further £2258. But immense though these achievements were, both locally and nationally, they gave the impression of running to stand still.

A particularly beneficial effect of the Union was in its ability to ensure a minimum though modest stipend for ministers of aided churches: the grant from the Church Aid Society in 1896 set that figure at £70; it was £100 in 1911 and, again following a Central Fund requirement, £120 in 1918. This last figure however was in effect itself increased in 1919 through the operation of the War Bonus, a minimum £10 to the unmarried, £15 to the married, and £3 for each child. By 1923, a survey noted that only in Montgomeryshire were stipends still below £200 per annum. A Building Fund was separated from the General Fund by the 1890s, ensuring both maintenance and growth: the provision of £2010 for Church Extension through the 20th Century Fund was particularly welcome; but until reorganisation in 1900, the necessarily high level of expenses, due mainly to the size of the Committee and the large distances travelled, caused considerable concern.

Other distinctively denominational matters included two decisions not to recognise serving ministers for inclusion in the Year Book; repeated pleas to ensure the safe keeping of Trust Deeds; and the expressed wish of the 1919 Assembly that, in the scheme proposed for CUEW Areas and Superintendents, North Wales should be joined to Lancashire and Cheshire rather than to a single Area for the whole of Wales with Monmouthshire. The map of the NWECU already covered vast open spaces, often with isolated villages and dispersed communities: this was not helpful to pastors whose ministerial neighbours were rarely close at hand and where denominational lay preachers were few; it perhaps also contributed to the statements of regret that larger churches in England continually took away their ministers; it would not be best served by being linked with other and yet more extensive similar surroundings.

Almost every mention of individuals is of men until a 1914 discussion about "The Place of Women in the Churches": a successful 1920 resolution then stated "That in the opinion of this Assembly it would add greatly to the efficiency of our Churches if suitable women as well as men were chosen to hold official positions in the Church". In both instances, the matter was raised by Mrs R.A. Lloyd, J. P., a member of the local Board of Education, and wife to the Union's Secretary.

The North Wales Congregational Union, by no means isolationist, frequently discussed matters external to its own life and was, in turn, affected by other outside events. Unsurprisingly, there were repeated references to traditional Dissenting platforms such as the disestablishment of the Church of England, sometimes specifically in Wales; for undenominational public education; and

seeking stricter controls over the Liquor Trade and Sabbath Opening. But concern for the wider church through a universal Christian ethic also brought remembrance of the massacre of fellow Christians in Armenia and celebration of the centenary of Christianity in Madagascar. There were hopes for tolerance and peace, whether in the Russo-Japanese War or in nearer Ireland; and protests about the evils of indentured Chinese labour in South Africa or the far-eastern opium trade. Christian discipleship recognised barriers of neither country nor language.

However remote, the Churches in North Wales were never immune from the effects of social and economic circumstances elsewhere in the country, too frequently a general "terrible depression in trade". Poverty within its particular area also derived from a variety of specific circumstances: at Mostyn (Flint) or Cefn Mawr (Denbigh), it was the closure of nearby collieries; at Trevor (Carnarvon), the immigrant quarrymen from Leicestershire lost their jobs when cities found alternatives to granite setts for paving their streets. The continual reports from Montgomeryshire of the "migrative nature of most of our English congregations in North Wales" involved Berwydd and Cefnfaenor through agricultural depression, or Llandysilio whose largest portion of any membership increase was regularly transferred away to churches in large towns. And amongst the coastal regions' experience of a fluctuation of visitors and residents, Barmouth suffered from some false press statements in English newspapers about that "Gibraltar of Wales" with adverse consequences for the growth of its new cause.

Religious intolerance continued to affect the rural churches. At Llandysilio, all children necessarily attended the local Church of England Day School, making them subject to another religious tradition: but with some pride, the Report asserted that "we have most of the children on Sunday". And in the heart of another country district at Cefnfaenor, preference was given to Anglican rather than Dissenting attenders when it came to the re-letting of farms. More encouragingly, the last quarter of the nineteenth century and its successor found hopes for inter-denominational Christian fellowship in an expressed wish for closer sympathy between the English and Welsh churches in North Wales; in the attendance at Assemblies of deputations from other Nonconformist churches, their ministers on occasion preaching or sharing in leading Communion Services; and in a first consideration of the 1920 Lambeth Conference's "Appeal to All Christian People". By contrast, Anglicans in nearby Deaneries declined *en bloc* the invitation to attend Conference and Revival Services when the 1922 Assembly was taking place at Colwyn Bay.

In April 1915, the Chairman's Address at the Barmouth Assembly surveyed the known and potential effects of the European War on the churches, Annual Reports subsequently charting those frequently changing circumstances and opportunities. No Assembly seemingly criticised the purpose or the conduct of the war, but alternative means to military force were urged by a 1915 resolution in favour of a Concert of Nations: later, the embryonic League of Nations is supported as a means towards a universal peace with, in 1922, each Church being urged to aid the founding of local branches. War affected the North Wales churches in different ways. Some, as with both at Wrexham, faced the temporary loss of premises

commandeered by the military whilst others knew increased work: the renewed vigour of Shotton's larger weeknight services perhaps suggests it might be prayerful concern or reflect Sunday attendance problems for workpeople on overtime; the Colwyn Bay, Rhos-on-Sea (Denbigh) and Llandudno (Carnarvon) area had some five to six thousand servicemen billeted there in early 1915, bringing increased Church Parade numbers and other work among the troops. Some ministers left for service with the forces: the Rhyl pastor accepted an Army Chaplaincy for the duration; Cefn's served two days each week at the YMCA Hut at Whittington Camp (Salop), but his health prevented overseas work; and pulpit supply proved generally difficult if the minister were not present. April 1918 found eleven Pastorates vacant, the most recent removals and deaths not compensated by any accessions during the previous year.

Ordinary working life also knew major changes. More quarries closed, as did the brickworks near Cefn Mawr and Johnstown (Denbigh): men moved away and the area received fewer visitors. Conversely, the newly built Garden City's additional sixty-six Sunday School scholars (Flint) lacked teachers as many members worked Sunday shifts at the munitions factories. And 458 men from thirty-nine churches were reported at the 1916 Assembly at Rhos-on-Sea as having volunteered for the forces: fifteen had been killed. These figures pre-date both Lord Derby's "Pals" Scheme and the Military Service Act: two years later, the reported fatalities rose to at least twenty-three. Meanwhile, practical aid was given to victims of war: Colwyn Bay and Llandudno supported Belgian refugees with clothing, and in 1919 a resolution urged help for the starving people of central Europe, through an immediate end to a blockade. A final but unusual response comes from Llansantffraid (Mont.) which reported that "The strain of war has produced a deeper spirit of worship".

Two major events with considerable significance for North Wales appear to have made surprisingly little impact on the Reports or the Annual Meetings of the Union. Following the Liberal success in the 1906 General Election, the 1906 and 1907 Resolutions to the Prime Minister about alcohol, disestablishment and denominationalism in education do no more than repeat the past. Slightly more visible was the Revival of 1904-5: perhaps the one hundred new members at Rhyl, new work at Brymbo and renewed activity at Bryn-y-gar, Caergwle, provided evidence of the effects of the Revival in the north.²⁵ And the preacher of the 1906 Assembly's Annual Sermon, the Revd. Howell Elvet Lewis ("Elfed") of London who had been ordained at Buckley in 1880, also addressed the meeting on the abiding results of the recent Revival in Wales, its causes and the increased demands on ministers and churches. In any event, the Union's Meetings are reported more in the detail of their administration than in the effect of largely external phenomena or activities.

Congregationalism's strength in the industrial areas was by the twentieth century beginning to cede its prime place to the northern coastal strip which was attracting

25. *CYBs* 1904 to 1906 inclusive show increased membership not only at Rhyl but also, of almost fourteen per cent, across the NWEUCU as a whole.

the English retired or the successful Manchester businessman. When Year Books started in 1900 to record membership figures, industrial Buckley was the largest English church (170) with residential Colwyn Bay already in second place (138) closely followed by rural Bwlchlyfridd (131) near Newtown (Mont.). By the time of the post-World War Two resurgence, the largest memberships in 1957 of Rhyl (383), Shotton (300), Buckley (250) and Rhos-on-Sea (245) would show a more even distribution between the coastal towns and the older industrial areas.²⁶

Potentially, the Union embraced all six northern counties of Wales: in reality, Anglesey was mostly unrepresented and the later Year Book headings indeed imply that county's self-exclusion.²⁷ In 1885 the member churches totalled forty-nine: fourteen in Montgomeryshire, twelve in Denbighshire, ten in Flintshire, seven in Carnarvonshire and six in Merionethshire; eight churches shared pastors with neighbouring Welsh congregations whilst two in Salop, their pastors joint with Montgomeryshire causes, were in both Unions. In 1926, the total was fifty-one; in 1933, fifty-three; in 1957, forty-eight; and in 1972, forty. In that year, thirty-one of those English churches opted to join the United Reformed Church, including seventeen churches and two preaching stations noted in the initial 1878 Year Book list: four other early churches remain with the Congregational Federation. Meanwhile, the Union of Welsh Independents, which was inaugurated in 1871 and continued to uphold its particular banner of Congregationalism a century later, would be distinguished from the United Reformed Church by both church order and language.

This brief and chronological set of statistics is, however, necessarily complemented by two opposing understandings about the development of English-language work across the Nonconformist denominations: its proponents saw themselves as ministering to people otherwise in danger of spiritual neglect where mainly Welsh prevailed; many late nineteenth-century Welsh-language Independents, and others, meanwhile saw the English work, notably where undertaken by the Welsh, as in effect an act of linguistic and cultural imperialism, or of surrender, designed to overcome with an imported voice a Welshness expressed both socially and religiously through the vernacular.²⁸

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26. R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in Wales*, ed. R. Pope (Cardiff 2004), pp.222f. compares 1919 and 1955 membership figures in Wales: against a national decline of over 12 per cent in the English work, he notes for this period the "considerable growth in the English-speaking North Wales Congregational Union (30 per cent)".
27. E.g., "Population (five Counties), 1901, 442,517" in the headings for the NWECU, *CYB*, 1905, p.354. Rhosneigr, however, is included as a Church in the Union for the four years from 1915.
28. R. Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914*, ed. R. Pope (Cardiff 2004), pp.39-40, 395-396. I owe to Dr. Pope both this reference and the important suggestion for noting a Welsh perspective in an otherwise English focussed article. See also E. Hodder, *The Life of Samuel Morley* (London 1887), pp.295-296, where Henry Richard in retrospect summarises the opposing views at the time when the South Wales Society was formed.

This article's selective kaleidoscope of events, changes and experiences in the North Wales English churches during their first half century together illustrates not simply the ordinary ongoing life of local congregations: equally important is the attempted cooperative existence of disparate and scattered communities whose uniting social feature was in their adherence to the English language.²⁹ The tensions between independence and a disciplined co-operation surfaced at times towards breaking points: but the common cause of Christian witness and evangelism, frequently recognising its links to a distant world and to a universal social concern, served to strengthen a particular family of Dissenters in the face of a perceived indifference and a barrier of language.

Congregationalism's County Unions, Associations and Districts did not necessarily observe the English-Welsh border at the north-east of the Principality, nor the specific Welsh county borders: the Cheshire and Salop Unions embraced Welsh churches, a Flintshire church might find itself in the Denbighshire Union, Colwyn Bay was in the Carnarvon District and even grant-aid might pass from one county or country to another despite apparently restricting regulations. But perhaps the most notable cross-border activity was when the English churches responded to Welsh hopes and fears to lead the movement for an English-speaking North Wales Congregational Union. It was to the credit of English Congregationalism in Wales that the task of sustaining and forming churches was then largely taken up by the indigenous population, both financially and actively.³⁰

NIGEL LEMON

I am most grateful for the assistance received from: Revd. Dr. Robert Pope; the University of Wales Bangor Library; Dr Williams's Library. Professor J.C.G. Binfield also made helpful suggestions in relation to an earlier draft of this paper.

29. As late as 1964, an Annual Report notes the ever-present problems of distance and lack of "unity": recent participants at Youth Conferences in Rhyl and Shotton, numbering 60 and 20 respectively, came from only Flintshire or a handful of neighbouring churches.

SNAPSHOT SURVEY OF LISTED URC CHURCHES

The Autumn 2004 edition of English Heritage's *Conservation Bulletin* stated that there were "well over 18,000 listed places of worship in England, nearly 13,000 in the care of the Church of England". That implied there were over 5,000 in the care of other Churches, and other faiths. Last August, when queried, English Heritage suggested that the total was more likely to be closer to 16,000, but even that was only a broad estimate, though a definitive figure was "getting nearer". As that still seemed vague, I decided to undertake a snapshot survey.

In 1999 I had carried out a similar survey in England and Wales, to provide a working understanding of the picture regarding Catholic churches, and a comparison with known figures for two other Churches. This time, I decided to carry out the exercise for all six churches operating their own approved schemes of listed building control in England and Wales (the Church of England, the Church in Wales and the Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed Churches), assuming that these would be certain to know their figures. The hope was that it would be completed by November 2005.

To keep the survey simple, three questions were asked of each Church.

- 1) What is the number of listed churches belonging to your Church in each of the Grade categories?
- 2) What is the total number of churches belonging to your Church?
- 3) What is the percentage of the total listed to all your churches?

No itemised schedule of listed buildings was sought. In each case, a central agency was asked. However, with the United Reformed Church, advice was followed to ask each Synod, despite the increased possibility of variance and delay.

I hope that the notes beneath the formatted figures are self-explanatory. It will be seen that the percentage of listed URC churches is approximately 22% for England; 25% for Wales. That is higher than for either Baptists or Methodists, and only slightly lower than for Catholics. Inevitably, the Church in Wales, and above all the Church of England have considerably higher percentages; the latter's is almost as much as the URC's unlisted.

Several responses raised questions about the extent and purpose of the exercise, and about what should be included. Inevitably, the figures raise a number of questions: why the regional differences in percentage? do they indicate actual differences in significance and quality? or differentiated listing criteria? What percentage would be expected?

The formatted figures have not been returned to respondents for comment. They are only intended to provide a provisional profile of the present situation, to help inform interested parties, including English Heritage. The figures for all the Churches have been published in the March/April edition of *Church Building*.

PAUL D. WALKER

SNAPSHOT SURVEY OF LISTED CHURCHES IN ENGLAND AND WALES
United Reformed Church

Synod	Grade 1	Grade II*	Grade II	Total	All Churches	All Churches	Percentage	Percentage
					<i>Year Book</i>	<i>Synod</i>	<i>Year Book</i>	<i>Synod</i>
1. Northern	0	2	20 [a]	22	101	78 [b]	21.78	28.21
2. North-West	0	2	23	25	144	152	17.36	16.45
3. Mersey					[95]			
4. Yorkshire	1	2	30	33	115	115	28.70	28.70
5. East Midlands	0	2	28	30	151	150	19.87	20.00
6. West Midlands	0	0	21	21	146	141	14.38	14.89
7. Eastern					[149]			
8. South Western	1	4	39	44	132	114 [c]	33.33	38.60
9. Wessex	0	1	44	45	151	151	29.80	29.80
10. Thames North					[148]			
11. Southern	0	0	20	20	175	173	11.43	11.56
ENGLAND Total	2	13	225	240	1115 [A]	1074	21.53	22.35
Extrapolated Total				(330)	1507 [B]		21.90	
12. WALES	1	3	28	32	128	120	25.00	26.00
Total Combined	3	16	253	272	1243 [A]		21.88 [D]	
Total Combined				272		1194		22.78 [E]
Total Combined including extrapolation				(362)	1635 [C]		22.14 [F]	

[a] *Plus one local ecumenical partnership, where the building is owned by the Methodist Church*

[b] *Plus 8 local partnerships in which the building is owned by another denomination, and 6 congregations that meet in another building*

[c] *Plus 18 local partnerships in which the building is owned by another denomination, as part of 38 partnership sharing schemes*

[A] *Excluding bracketed totals for non-responding Synods*

[B] *Including bracketed totals for non-responding Synods*

[C] *Total for all churches belonging to all 12 Synods [i.e. including bracketed totals] as published in the URC Year Book 2005*

[D] *Percentage of combined totals for all churches as published by responding Synods in the URC Year Book 2005*

[E] *Percentage of combined totals for all churches as supplied by responding Synods*

[F] *Percentage of combined totals for all churches as published by all 12 Synods in the URC Year Book 2005*

REVIEWS

Reformation Pastors: Richard Baxter and the Ideal of the Reformed Pastor. By J. William Black. Studies in Evangelical History and Thought. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004. £19.99. Pp. xxii + 308. ISBN 1-84227-190-3.

It has been said that “Queen Mary’s persecutions made the Reformation heroic; and young preachers, trained by Martin Bucer, were glad to take their lives in their hands if they could only win their countrymen to acknowledge the scriptural creed of the reformers.” That wave of Reformation spread like the proverbial pebble in a pond. A century after Bucer’s remains were dug up in an attempt to erase him from the public memory, his influence figured large through the work of a Reformed pastor in the West Midlands town of Kidderminster. Richard Baxter’s influence on the practice of Christian ministry has clearly endured with one present-day review of his work stating: “Today, Baxter’s principles, drawn from Scripture, and re-applied in terms of modern circumstances, will provide both ministers and other Christians with challenge, direction and help.” It is Bucer’s influence on Baxter’s pastoral thought and practice which lies behind many of the insights contained in this book.

J. William Black has written a scholarly and informative volume on Baxter’s Treatise, *Gildas Silvianus: The Reformed Pastor* (1656). With this book, Baxter changed the way in which the English Puritans exercised ministry and influenced subsequent thinking on pastoring the Protestants of England. Dr Black’s account is divided into three parts – The Reformed Pastor; The Reformed Ministry; The Reformed Heritage. The first section places Baxter’s work in its historical context by viewing it in contradistinction with, and as a development from, writing on pastoral ministry stretching back to 1550. These opening chapters demonstrate that Baxter’s thinking was deeply rooted in Reformation thought and was particularly influenced by Bucer’s emphasis on ecclesiastical discipline. The second section enquires after the extent to which Baxter was able to put his theories on pastoral ministry into practice. Here Dr Black navigates the reader around the broad roots of Baxter’s contemporaries and context. A thematic rather than chronological approach is employed here to the benefit both of the argument and the reader’s understanding. For Baxter, conversion is at the heart of ministry. Nevertheless, we here encounter the essential paradox which continues to inspire and to burden ministers, namely that while Baxter believed that conversion is solely dependent on God, he behaved as if it depended solely on the pastor. The third section enquires about the extent of Baxter’s influence on subsequent thinking.

This book is undoubtedly essential reading for anyone embarking on a serious study of Richard Baxter and the seventeenth-century church in England. It is well researched and lucidly written. While it is not necessary to re-read *The Reformed Pastor* before surveying Black’s book, I have no doubt that another look at Baxter’s call to clerical responsibility will be found enlightening alongside a

review of *Reformation Pastors*. Dr Black has much to tell us about history, but has much also to tell us about pastoral ministry. His conclusions, which are balanced and cogently argued, give a fresh insight into the background of one who saw himself as called to “burn himself out for in working for God”, but they also have much to say about the exercise of pastoral ministry today. For while “Baxter’s example was widely hailed, less widely followed, and finally, perhaps more often than not, simply abandoned even before the Restoration made it redundant”, his belief, with Bucer, that the church must evangelise its own nominal adherents, and that pastoral negligence was crippling the church, may have a contemporary resonance as we, too, look to engage in mission and seek “godly reformation”.

JASON ASKEW

Evangelicals and Education: Evangelical Anglicans and Middle-Class Education in Nineteenth-Century England. By Khim Harris. *Studies in Evangelical History and Thought*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004. £24.99. Pp. xvii + 421. ISBN 1-84227-329-9.

This volume, in Paternoster’s *Studies in Evangelical History and Thought*, has a foreword by David Bebbington, in which he states “Khim Harris has authoritatively filled a major gap in the historiography of the Victorian period”.

Harris claims that his book, a re-working of a Ph.D. thesis, complements the work of Brian Heeney, in his 1969 study of the Woodard Schools with their Tractarian ethos, and of John Honey’s *Tom Brown’s Universe* (1977) which describes the development of schools associated with the Broad Church. His claim that the work of the Evangelicals in this field has been overlooked is clearly true, though their significance was certainly not as substantial as the Woodard Schools.

These middle-class schools, or private foundation schools, arose in the Victorian period for the rising middle classes who considered the parochial schools to be beneath them, and the first-grade schools to be far too expensive. They equally dismissed the endowed grammar schools with their “degenerate classical teaching”. Nevertheless, even these middle-class schools were ranked in three classes (as were the fees), from the sons of professional gentlemen to those of the upper artisans. The schools noted in this book are of the first and second category. Cheltenham College, for example, did not admit the sons of tradesmen as pupils.

Nathaniel Woodard, then a parish clergyman in the East End of London, was convinced that the middle classes were estranged from the Church, “and that schools for the labouring poor would never be successful so long as the employers remained ill-educated and opposed to the Church”. He thus formed the Woodard Foundation, divided into five divisions, with each division having at least one school for each of the three classes. By the time of his death in 1891 there were eleven schools, all for boys, with fees ranging from 15 guineas to £100 per annum.

The Woodard Schools were Tractarian in tone and teaching, and the

Evangelicals became concerned they had no schools of their own. Harris is careful to suggest that the Evangelicals imitated the Woodard Schools rather than saw their own schools as an antidote to their influence. He quotes, for example, a statement that "the Woodard schools furnish us with a magnificent imagination". While it is clear the Evangelicals saw these schools as a pioneering venture, worthy of imitation, the evidence Harris presents qualifies his second statement.

I note the following. The evangelical Church Association, at its May 1868 conference, was addressed by James Bateman, who gave a brief outline of the Woodard Schools "in order that [one] may be better able to appreciate the gravity of a movement that is, I am convinced, fraught with the utmost danger to the welfare and integrity of our Protestant Church". The Association's annual report of that year noted its desire to establish such schools, so that "the youth of the Middle Classes in this new country should be saved from the pernicious practices of auricular confession, priestly absolution, the celebration of masses for the dead, and Romanising principles inculcated at the schools established by some of the Ritualistic party in the Church of England". In 1882, for example, at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Union of Clerical and Lay Associations, the need for evangelical middle-class education was discussed, similar to that offered by the Woodard schools. A paper, circulated at this meeting, noted the history of the Woodard schools, and urged greater evangelical efforts to combat them. While Harris explains the attacks made by Evangelicals on the Woodard schools in the 1890s as occasioned by fears about the ritualistic controversy, one of the objects of the Church of England Evangelical College and School Company, as quoted in its 1904 Report, was "to provide a good, sound religious education on public school lines, and on the principles of the Reformation". Surely this reiterates, in a more positive way, the negative statements of earlier writers? While Harris is right in suggesting that the founders of the various Evangelical schools never attacked the Woodard schools for their ritualistic tendencies, it is clear that many of their supporters did so, including Dean Close towards the end of his life.

After a substantial and informative introduction, of just over a third of the text, about the Church of England and Middle-Class Education in the Nineteenth Century, Harris examines a number of individual Evangelical initiatives. These relate to the foundation of Cheltenham College, Weymouth College, Trent College and Monkton Combe School. The first ceased to be an Evangelical foundation within twenty years of its opening, and Weymouth School closed as a result of the Second World War. In his third section, Harris deals with a number of corporate Evangelical initiatives. Some of these, the Church Association being one example, failed to materialise, but two, established by local Clerical and Lay Associations, resulted in the foundation of Dean Close Memorial School, Cheltenham, and Ramsgate College. Harris also notes how a number of these schools came under the auspices of the Church of England Evangelical College and School Company.

Although hints are given, there is no discussion as to why the Woodard Schools were so successful, and the Evangelical schools far less so. Was it because of Woodard's personality and his ability to raise money, or because he had captured

the market? Why was the Evangelical response so weak? Might it have been because they were involved in too many other controversies and strategies to give priority to this work of education, or because they were more concerned with the education of the lower classes?

As might be expected from its title, this book has little reference to Wales. It does note a proposed Clerical and Lay Association of Evangelicals for south Wales in 1884, but the biographical reference to Bishop Perry, in the first appendix, ignores the fact that after his retirement from episcopal duties in Australia, he accepted Bishop Ollivant's offer of a canonry at Llandaff, where he spent three months of each year between 1878 and 1888.

This remains a book to be highly recommended.

ROGER L. BROWN

A Victorian Feminist Christian: Josephine Butler, the Prostitutes and God. By Lisa Severine Nolland. Studies in Evangelical History and Thought. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004. £24.99. Pp. 291. ISBN 1-84227-225-X.

This fascinating book about a truly astonishing woman is gripping and inspiring to read, which cannot be said for many books adapted from a Ph.D. thesis. The scholarship is as careful and detailed as doctoral work demands, but this turns out to be a book hard to put down. It combines analysis of Victorian society and thought with the compelling story of one strong and outstanding individual. It asks the questions which often face us when confronted with a distinctive person: why did she, and why could she, do it? What inspired one person so strongly to defy the cultural expectations of her time in pursuit of a cause and what kept her going in the face of such opposition? What is it that makes it possible for such a sharp "crack" to emerge within a culture that something so significant can change? This book takes up a universal fascination with "saints" or pioneers to look for answers to the questions we all ask, and not only in seeking historical "truth", but in looking for models for our own lives. Lisa Nolland has written a beautiful testimony to a human being and given her the true courtesy of seeking to understand her in her own terms, as well as within the terms of the various discourses which evidently shaped her.

The main thesis of the book is that not enough attention has been paid in previous studies of Josephine Butler to the significance of her Christian faith in shaping her convictions and spurring her campaigning and practice. She has been portrayed as a (Victorian) Feminist, and as a Liberal, but her faith has tended to be disregarded – most Butler scholars taking a "secular" view of her, seeing her faith as an irrelevant oddity. Nolland shows how, despite the fact that Butler was influenced by many different political theories as well as personal experiences, her Christian faith was consistently evident in her writing and reflecting about her own work. She frequently quoted the Bible, particularly texts about "letting the oppressed go free" and spoke of how Christ himself identified with "the harlot". She relied on Christians for much of her support, particularly Quakers and

Nonconformists. And it was a combination of her own mystical experience as well as her theological views about the value of each individual which gave her the kind of certainty and courage which anyone would have needed to surmount the opprobrium and censure she received from her opponents.

However, while Nolland makes a good case for the centrality of Christian faith in Butler's inner life and thought, she also makes it evident, even if inadvertently, why it is that so many studies of her have largely ignored it. For, while for Butler herself the figure of Christ and Christian theology were key inspirations, the prevailing Christian teaching and the Christian establishment of her time were not in evidence as motivating forces for political change in terms of the public understanding of prostitution. If anything they were often used to underpin and reinforce the kind of thinking which enabled the Contagious Diseases Acts, which Butler so successfully opposed, to gain public support. While Butler saw prostitutes as victims, most Christians of her time seem to have seen them as sinners. While Butler had a "high" view of the worth of each individual, much contemporary Christian discourse took a strong line on sin and depravity. While she thought "a woman is always a beautiful thing", much Christian teaching still viewed woman either as "temptress" or "angel". It seems that while it is true that for Butler herself Christian faith was very important, it has to be said that the Christian faith she held was idiosyncratic for her times. Nolland herself admits that Butler's theology was strikingly different from current trends; she had an overwhelmingly optimistic view of human nature, she was her own kind of "mystic", interested in saints like Catherine of Siena who would have seemed alien to Butler's own supporters, and she rarely attended church herself. She was in terms of faith, as she was in political commitments, a strikingly unusual individual. So it seems that, though her own faith inspired her, it is regrettably not so possible to make many connections between the prevailing Christian discourse of the times and the particular campaigns in which Butler engaged. She needed, and she had, a very unusual form of Christianity to back up her cause. From the point of view of today's prevailing Christian discourses she would not seem so idiosyncratic, but for her time she was bravely odd. Today she would sit happily with the "Original Blessing" reading of the Christian tradition, with the ecumenical willingness to celebrate evangelical fervour alongside medieval mystics, and with the strong social justice agenda of liberal Christianity. But in Victorian times you needed to be made of sterner stuff.

It may be that it was, after all, the discourse of Feminism, which gave Josephine Butler the intellectual armour she needed to brave the opposition of culture and church in the cause she took up. Her sometimes fragile, and certainly individual, faith seems hardly strong enough to bear such a weight. Where her Christian talk seems sometimes ambiguous, muddled, and even fragile, her grasp of Feminism seems clear and more resolved. As Nolland writes: "Josephine placed male domination over female sexuality as institutionalised by the CDAs within a wholesale feminist critique of patriarchy which targeted the misogyny and oppression of women at every level of society". For this reason I would suggest, that though Nolland is right to place the emphasis she does on the psychological

force of Christian conviction in inspiring Josephine Butler, it would be right to suggest that it was actually Feminism which provided the strongest and most consistent intellectual underpinning for her astonishing work.

I read this book while in Latin America, where the very things which horrified Josephine Butler about her own society then are still very much in evidence today. We can only be grateful that, whatever the mix of her motivations, she acted and was successful.

SUSAN DURBER

Pentecostal Origins: Early Pentecostalism in Ireland in the Context of the British Isles. By James Robinson. Studies in Evangelical History and Thought. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2005. £29.99. Pp. xxvii + 360. ISBN 1-84227-329-9.

This is a substantial book both in terms of the extensive historical period that it covers and in terms of its detailed integration of a range of historical and theological sources. It uncovers the roots of Pentecostalism in Britain going back to Edward Irving and the Catholic Apostolic Church in the early nineteenth century but also taking in the Keswick Convention after 1875. Equally, early Holiness preachers, like Phoebe Palmer, were influential in spreading a revised form of Methodist teaching on sanctification that prepared the way for a theology of subsequence that became normative in Pentecostal circles. For her, there was a "shorter way" to entire sanctification through an attainable crisis experience within reach of every sincere believer. Later the Welsh Revival of 1904-5 spilled over on to the Irish scene and revitalised what was already a thriving mixture of religion and culture. Shipbuilding in Belfast generated class divisions resulting in both poverty and wealth while the city's religious heritage could boast a confusing mix of Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican churches and independent mission halls. In this world, the social and religious backgrounds of future Pentecostal leaders like Robert Kerr, Alex Ferguson, William Boyd and James Arnold can be placed.

Having established in four chapters the complicated and multi-faceted background to fervent Protestant religious life in Ireland, and particularly in Northern Ireland, Robinson is ready to move to three substantial chapters on the Elim Pentecostal Church that began in a small way in 1915 with the tent campaigns of the young Welsh evangelist, George Jeffreys. Jeffreys is given space to become a real figure within these pages. We sense his organisational ability, his dignified and persuasive rhetoric, his hard work and his astuteness. At the same time we begin to glimpse the potential for conflict between Jeffreys as a powerful revivalist preacher and the local elders within the churches he inspired or planted. As part of his strategy Jeffreys set up an Evangelistic Band, men and women who committed themselves to working with the new or revived congregations and who formed a vital caucus of ministerial personnel that eventually became the Elim ministerial list. We see the initiation and training of members of the Band, we watch the growing influence of Elim through its publications and its ability to negotiate a way past the "Troubles" that followed Irish partition. By the mid

1920s, Jeffreys was the most substantial force in Pentecostalism throughout the British Isles.

A final chapter takes us to the Apostolic Church in Ireland. This Pentecostal group contrasts with that of Elim. Whereas Elim saw charismatic gifts as part of the armoury of the evangelist, the Apostolic Church was much more inclined to see charismatic gifts as focused on internal issues of church government. This contrast is not absolute in the sense that Elim certainly expected prophetic utterances to occur within their congregations and, conversely, Apostolic ministers certainly preached evangelistically in the open air, especially in Ireland. Yet, the Apostolic Church, by elevating the authority of local prophets, produced a form of church government that was much less predictable and less obviously strategic than the method used by Elim. Jeffreys would go from place to place and preach, gather converts, leave elders in charge, send members of the Band to minister and report back to him; the Apostolics would resort to meetings at which the local prophet would speak, often with surprisingly detailed instructions about who should do what and in which circumstances. Contentions over prophecy inevitably arose. Could an elder go to another congregation and look for prophetic guidance from the prophet there, or should he only consult his own prophet in his own congregation? Rules were formulated to prevent stray prophets exercising authority outside their own geographically determined bounds. So, although there were remarkable instances of prophetic accuracy that appeared to justify Apostolic usage of charismata, there were also anomalies. For, if prophecies were divinely given by the Holy Spirit, why should it matter which congregation a prophet considered to be his home? And, if prophets were inspired by the Holy Spirit, what authority did constitutional rules have to hem them in? Such considerations resulted in criticisms of Apostolic governance by other British Pentecostals.

This is a good book. The balance between background and foreground, between the life of individual congregations and the religious ethos of Ireland, is well maintained. The text is clear and well referenced. Robinson has a respect and affection for the people he describes and empathises with their problems and circumstances. This is not a critique of Pentecostal oddity but a sober and sympathetic account of serious men and women who, against the odds, formed churches and denominations that survive to this day.

WILLIAM K. KAY

Prisoners of Hope? Aspects of Evangelical Millennialism in Britain and Ireland, 1800-1880. Edited by Crawford Gribben and Timothy C.F. Stunt. Studies in Evangelical History and Thought. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004. £19.99. Pp. xiv + 206. ISBN 1-84227-224-1.

Generally speaking, this book is a contribution to scholarship on millennialism, a topic that attracts popular readers by the million – as the *Left Behind* series shows only too well. Scholarly study of millennialism or millenarianism was

pushed to the sidelines until Moltmann put it firmly back on the theological agenda with his *Theology of Hope*. The taxonomy of the subject may be expressed by the familiar terms “premillennial”, “postmillennial”, and “amillennial” all of which refer to the timing of the return of Christ. The premillennial view anticipates Christ’s return before, and in order to set up, the millennium, that period of a thousand years of peace and justice upon the earth described in *Revelation 20*. The postmillennial view anticipates that the gospel will be powerfully propagated across the world to the extent that, continuing on its upward trajectory, the current age will joyously be transformed into the millennium – at the end of which Christ will return. The amillennial view presumes that the thousand years in the book of Revelation are merely symbolic.

Sociological analysis of millennialism by Brian Wilson produced a classificatory system that connected the believer’s theological hopes with expectations about contemporary culture. Moltmann effectively added another strand to this perspective by proposing “political millenarianism”. This book, while it is concerned with the genesis and progress of millennial, and particularly premillennial, doctrine, is also focused on the accompanying political and ecclesiastical beliefs of the various protagonists.

The eight excellent chapters – there is not a bad one among them – are arranged in a chronological order beginning with an introduction to millennialism and Apocalypticism in historical scholarship (Douglas Shantz). Two chapters are devoted to J. N. Darby (Timothy Stunt and then Gary Nebeker). The first of these argues that Darby’s belief in the two-stage premillennial second coming of Christ was already in development as a result of his trip to France in 1830 and *before* the influence of Edward Irving or the controversial prophecy of Margaret McDonald in Scotland. Darby’s eschatological beliefs were odd in that, though he was a staunch premillennialist, he had “no millennial object of hope either for himself or the church. The enjoyment of the millennium would be restricted to Israelites and those Gentiles who had come to faith after the rapture”. Edward Irving (Tim Grass) is shown to have developed his eschatological views not only as a result of reading the Jesuit commentator Lacunza but also once he lost faith in the establishment principle of the Church of Scotland. He had believed that the Church of Scotland was the crucial defender of the nation’s spiritual life but, seeing the General Assembly to be in the final stages of apostate decay, he radically reviewed his position and came to believe that God’s judgement rested upon the Scottish church and that, instead, the restoration of charismatic gifts and apostolic church government was indicative of the imminent return of Christ.

Kenneth Stewart deals with the Continental Society, a promising missionary agency that eventually lost support as a consequence of infighting between pre- and post-millennialists. Andrew Holmes investigates the interpretation of prophecy among Ulster Presbyterians and is able to demonstrate that, despite the political radicalism of the 1798 rebellion fuelled as it was by millennial rhetoric, it was post-millennial evangelicalism that drove forward the great bulk of Ulster Presbyterian believers. And the 1859 revival, when it came, seemed to indicate that the millennium indeed could be brought about by preaching. The world was

not getting worse and worse prior to the return of the Lord but, on the contrary, the bright light of revival spoke of the imminence of "the blessed hope". Finally, an examination of Andrew Bonar (Crawford Gribben) shows how he challenged the traditional identification of the papacy with the Antichrist in a way that depended upon very rational hermeneutics that laid the foundation for subsequent fundamentalism.

There is a great gulf between the Ulster Presbyterians who saw the spread of the gospel as triumphing within a postmillennial scheme and Edward Irving who saw divine judgement falling upon a decaying church as the power of Rome increased. This valuable and scholarly collection of essays demonstrates not only how careful interpreters of Scripture must be when coupling their particular eschatological understandings to contemporary events but also how important millennial expectations are in propelling political attitudes and evangelistic energy.

WILLIAM K. KAY

Parliament and Dissent. Edited by Stephen Taylor and David L. Wykes. Edinburgh University Press for The Parliamentary History Yearbook Trust, 2005. £16.95. Pp.156. ISBN 0 7486 2195 4.

Parliament and Dissent is one of a series of special volumes sponsored by the journal *Parliamentary History*, and consists of eight essays, to which David Wykes has added a substantial introduction. The papers were originally presented at a conference at Dr Williams's Library in 2002. They range from the period of the Restoration to the early twentieth century, in other words from the creation of Dissent (by parliament) as a legal entity to the last parliament (1906-10) in which Dissent could be identified as a distinct interest. The essays are well spaced chronologically: two focus on the late seventeenth century, three on the eighteenth, and three on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most of the contributors will be well known to readers of this journal, especially David Wykes, director of Dr Williams's Library and Trust.

The Introduction by David Wykes provides a comprehensive overview of the changing relations between parliament and Dissent. After the passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1662, and more particularly after the Toleration Act of 1689, Dissenting efforts were at first concentrated on campaigns organised outside parliament for the removal of their legal disabilities, especially the Test and Corporation Acts. This process was not finally completed until 1880 with the passing of the Burial Laws Amendment Act (though minor restrictions lingered on into the twentieth century). But after the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, Dissenters were able to make a positive contribution to national political life, while at the same time continuing to campaign for the removal of disabilities. In the middle years of the nineteenth century the campaign to disestablish the Church of England took centre stage. Dissent as a political force reached the climax of its influence, numerically at least, in the election of 1906, though David

Bebbington demonstrates that this was deceptive, and that the links between Dissenters and Liberals were weakening. Dissent as a specific political interest now began to disappear.

Some contributors to this volume concentrate on a theme. Thus Mark Knights looks at occasional conformity and examines the ways in which the parties to the argument characterised each other, demonstrating that religious terminology was often used to cloak aspirations to power. Timothy Larsen, in what is in some respects the most illuminating of these papers, looks at two competing definitions of both "Nonconformist" and "the Nonconformist Conscience" during the nineteenth century. The Evangelical Revival in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had changed the face of religion in England and Wales, influencing all Protestant denominations, and eventually producing a strong Methodist movement whose roots were different from those of historic Dissent. Larsen proposes that much of what has traditionally been attributed to a "nonconformist conscience" should more properly be called an "evangelical conscience", while the term "Nonconformist Conscience" is more appropriately understood in relation to the movements for religious equality for all, not only for Nonconformists.

Other contributors discuss specific events as illuminating wider trends. Thus Grayson Ditchfield looks at Dissenting petitions to parliament in the years 1772 and 1773 and finds them revealing a growing recognition of the need for proper toleration. James Bradley illustrates the contribution which Dissenters made to public political debate by examining the context of the work of the Dissenting Deputies between 1732 and 1740. Andrew Thompson looks at extra-parliamentary groups campaigning for the abolition of the Test Acts through the pages of two journals – *The Occasional Paper* (1716-19) and *The Old Whig* (1735-8). Clyde Binfield recalls four generations of the Whitworth family, from the early nineteenth century to the First World War, thus illustrating the changing shape of the Dissenting interest and its interaction with politics. David Bebbington examines the record of the Free Church MPs elected in 1906 and reveals their diminishing influence.

The contributors to this volume are more aware than some historians of the *differences* between Dissenting denominations as well as of the changing character of the Dissenting interest as a whole. There is a wealth of detailed material here which will reward the reader by illuminating the changing pattern of Dissent through over two and a half centuries. It will also help the reader to understand that Dissent has contributed not insignificantly to the development of our standards of justice, liberty and equality.

ELAINE KAYE

Grey Pastures. By W. Haslam Mills: London: The Chapels Society, 2003. Pp xxii + 74.

This small book consists mainly of a reprint of articles which appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* in 1924. They constitute a lightly fictionalised account of the life of Albion Chapel, Ashton-under-Lyne, around the 1880s. An introduction sets the scene and describes the genesis of the work, preceded by a preface by Clyde Binfield commending it as a classic. A list of characters identifies the fictional with the historical actors.

Classic or not, it is a pleasure to read, with persons and events brought to life, often with a gentle humour.

Some of the chapter headings in themselves conjure up a vision of Nonconformity in its Victorian golden age: *Bazaar; Annual Tea Party; The Sermons*. Others are less explicit, but in content no less evocative. *Ritualists!* begins “We were under the impression at Wycliffe Chapel that we were opposed to all ritual”, but then notes the degree to which the chapel possessed its own unacknowledged rituals. *The Cloisters* tells how the immediate surroundings, visible through the “row of six large windows” served like the cloisters of a more venerable establishment. *Remember That Thou Keep Holy* recalls the sacred Sabbath of now distant days, ironically noting that the commandment to observe the Lord’s Day “had a curious character of being the one on which my elders and betters insisted the most, and yet the only one to which they could be caught admitting to large and flagrant exceptions” – especially in the demands made on servants.

Albion, Ashton, has continued into the future as a piece of architecture remarkable among Nonconformists, not least as set in the midst of an industrial satellite of Manchester. Its Victorian atmosphere is splendidly recalled in this slim volume.

STEPHEN MAYOR

Reformed Theology and Visual Culture: The Protestant Imagination from Calvin to Edwards. By William A. Dyrness. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Pbk ISBN 0 521 54073 9; £19.99; Hbk 0 521 83323 X; £55.00. Pp. xvi + 340 illustrated.

In a recent publication, the novelist and sociologist Andrew Greeley suggests that Catholics, in general, possess an analogical imagination (in David Tracy’s phrase), based on their sacramental sense of God, the divine, or the Holy, being present in creation. This is to be contrasted with the “Protestant imaginatio”, characterized as “dialectical” and emphasizing God’s transcendence over and above his creation. The former gave rise to the use of imagery as part of the religious life; the latter tended to emphasize the second commandment and equated imagery with idolatry as a result. With “plain and unadorned churches”, and worship centred on the proclamation of the Word (understood in the Western

rationalistic tradition as primarily speaking to the intellect as the locus of the *imago Dei*), it is hardly surprising that Protestants have been perceived as lacking in imagination, even if this is to misunderstand the nature of their theological and aesthetic standpoint. William Dyrness's book takes issue with such perceptions, demonstrating effectively that the basic theological presuppositions of Protestantism inspired a different kind of imagination which revealed itself both in mental habits and in cultural practices.

William Dyrness traces the development of religious imagery in an ecclesiastical context during the medieval period before offering an account of Calvin's belief that God was "seen" in the proclaimed word. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England is examined (particularly in the work of the Puritan divines William Ames and John Cotton) as are Geneva and Holland, and finally eighteenth-century New England and the work of Jonathan Edwards comes in for scrutiny. This erudite study argues that a specifically Protestant imagination, or "way of thinking about the world", developed during this time. This was, by and large, an "interior spirituality", which believed that God was to be experienced within (in the heart, for example) and that only when this interiority was not highly tuned was it necessary to go beyond that to exterior forms, bodies and images. Such teaching is a reflection of Calvin's view that when Scripture is faithfully proclaimed, "Christ is depicted before our eyes as crucified". The work of "seeing" is done in the mind, which, the Protestants concluded, is a more fruitful way of seeing than that provoked by the use of images. Indeed, for Calvin the creation of images to reflect the glory of God was unnecessary because God has already done this in our neighbour. In serving our neighbour and creating a new world the splendour of God is revealed. It is, then, in the life of faith that "images" are created. Nevertheless, argues Professor Dyrness, this inspired a visual culture which had as its goal the creation of a new society which reflected the Protestants' understanding of Scripture. This is represented in the book by the inclusion of over forty illustrations.

Perhaps what becomes most clear in the book is the way in which attitudes towards the imagination, in all its guises, have changed over time. Imagination has always been identified as that faculty which enables the shaping of mental images of things not present to the senses. As such its creativity can be helpful, but it can also be misleading and ensnare people in illusion and fancy. For much of history this propensity to illusion has led to the distrust of imagination. But this has changed in recent times. The author writes: "while in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries such creativity is precisely its problem, this is for us its virtue". Consequently, those divines mentioned here recognized that imagination could enhance or highlight grace, but it could not create a true experience of grace. For the Reformed, the true experience of grace comes through hearing the Word proclaimed. Professor Dyrness agrees with this, but argues also that this was embodied in structures that were in fact visual.

With much theological interest currently being shown in the imagination, not to mention in our visual culture, this excellent book is a timely reminder that Protestants, and Reformed Protestants in particular, have never been devoid of

imagination. It is delightful to read, and worthy of notice. However, it is particularly important that we do not get sidetracked by its emphasis on imagery. Of course imagination is vital in the fine arts, but the point surely is that the life of Christian faith has always required a degree of imagination. For without it, preaching itself would have had little effect. This is something this book points to, but something about which much more could be said.

ROBERT POPE

Enlightenment, Ecumenism, Evangel: Theological Themes and Thinkers, 1550-2000. By Alan P. F. Sell. Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2005. ISBN 1 84227 330 2; £29.99. Pp. xviii + 421.

In recent years Paternoster Press has done much to ensure that Nonconformist history is not lost and this volume is a valuable and welcome addition to its list. Alan Sell has collected thirteen discrete though not unrelated chapters of which six were specially written for incorporation in this book. As the title suggests, the content is wide-ranging, not just in the three-fold emphasis on reason (Enlightenment), the need to work for unity in the Church which already exists in Christ by the Holy Spirit (Ecumenism), and the fact that the gospel must always be good news (Evangel), but also in the fact that the subject matter ranges over four centuries (1550 to 2000). Nevertheless, there is a connection between the chapters as they all seek to respond to the following "composite question":

What is the heart of the Christian Gospel and what is its most appropriate mode of expression (theology); how may we more satisfactorily articulate it - especially in face of intellectual challenges to it (philosophy of religion/apologetics); what happens on the ground when Christians take their beliefs seriously (history); and how may we best heal the inner-Christian divisions which our history has bequeathed to us (ecumenism)?

These are, of course, fundamental issues whose implications stretch into virtually all the theological disciplines as well as reaching deep into the heart of Christian living. To deal in detail with each issue would require a whole library of books and, in the hands of a less competent scholar, this volume could easily have slipped into a cursory and superficial treatment of complex issues, doctrines and historical figures. However, Alan Sell's extraordinarily wide scholarship brings a historian's grasp of theological development, a theologian's understanding of historical occurrences, a philosophical mind and an ecumenical passion to the task, and, as a result, the reader is left feeling that something important has been said.

It will be possible only to give a flavour of the book's content. The first chapter connects the Cambridge Platonists with the Puritans as it seeks to consider the locus for authority in the church whether it be in reason, in scripture or in the "inner light". Chapter two brings to light the life and work of John Gratton,

Quaker. If the previous chapter is the theologian and philosopher bringing to light a historical question of contemporary relevance, this is the historian using a particular story to speak to modern times. The third chapter considers the effect of the enlightenment specifically on the ideas of scriptural authority and special revelation. Alan Sell declares his preference here for “orthodox doctrine purged, as it can be, of grotesque adhesions and informed by modern biblical scholarship”, though he adds the qualifier that “orthodox doctrines formally and hypocritically assented to” may be found wanting when weighed in the eternal scales of judgment. Chapter four explores the contribution of Andrew Fuller’s work *contra* deism and particularly the work of Thomas Paine. The fifth chapter explores the dilution of Calvinism within English Congregationalism and ends with a telling quotation from E.R. Conder that “I doubt if we equal the Christians whose characters were shaped and toughened by a severer creed in a more wintry social, civil, moral and religious climate”. The chapter reveals the author’s capacity to look at the sweep of doctrinal history rather than just at the specifics of a particular thinker or particular controversy.

Chapter six takes up the theme of authority once again, and explores it through the work of Joseph Priestley, Robert Vaughan and J. H. Newman. Chapter seven looks at the “perennial peril of pantheism”, while chapter eight gives some welcome insight into “Reformed” spirituality. Chapter nine offers a biographical and bibliographical sweep of Nonconformist theology in the twentieth century, while chapter ten gives a synopsis of the bilateral discussions of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches over the period 1970 to 2002. Here Alan Sell offers his considered opinion (after many years of service to WARC) that the fundamental question on which inter-ecclesiastical agreement should be sought is the atoning work of Christ and his cross. Once that has been agreed upon, all else, he contends, will fall into place.

Chapter eleven looks at the role of the Holy Spirit in Ecumenism. It is the Spirit, asserts the author, who creates the church and thus all are one “whether they like it or not”. Chapter twelve is perhaps the one that has the most contemporary ring to it. Here the author analyses three slogans which have “become part of the frequently argued currency of religious or theological discourse”, namely (1) the church must take its agenda from the world; (2) all theology must be contextual (3) inclusivism is good, exclusivism is bad. He concludes, “When inclusivism becomes so open-ended that things of importance drop out, we have lost the Gospel and weakened the Church. When exclusivism turns sectarian, we have lost the Gospel and betrayed the Church”. This is no appeal for a *via media* or for a post-modern fence-sitting that would ultimately disable us from having any meaningful discussion and reaching any meaningful conclusion. Rather it is a call to be less dogmatic about contemporary culture’s popular philosophies, especially when scrutiny of them reveals that they will back us into corners from which all escape routes have been blocked. Alan Sell shows that such stubborn adherence to currently favoured ideologies lacks both reason and theological justification. He goes on to make some incisive and sensitive comments about two of the hottest issues which face the church today, namely homosexuality and inclusive

language, comments which need to be heard in the church if we are to have a reasonable, theological discussion on these issues, a discussion which we need to undertake whatever our own preferences may be regarding outcomes of the debate.

The final chapter asks "May we still glory in the cross", arguing the case that we see all aspects of Christian faith, teaching and living in the light of God's gracious atonement, effected in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

What is perhaps most noteworthy about this collection, from a historical perspective, is the author's use of the work of British Nonconformists, those who represent a theological tradition which has been all but forgotten. Alan Sell's knowledge of British theology, particularly that produced among the Nonconformists, is encyclopaedic and used here to full and good effect. Some names appear throughout the book, such as Joseph Priestley, Henry Grove, P. T. Forsyth, Richard Baxter, John Locke and Robert Mackintosh, and they are set alongside insights into the work of other, possibly better-known and certainly better-lauded Reformed theologians such as Tillich, Barth and, supremely, Calvin. While the names recur time and again, the book is not repetitive because Alan Sell is a master of his sources as the copious footnotes amply demonstrate. The author is determined to think theologically, stemming from his belief that the Gospel of Jesus Christ can never be anything but good news and should never be accompanied by other sectarian claims which would fetter its adherents and exclude those unwilling to accede to extra-evangelical demands. It would be true to say that no chapter offers history for its own sake. Rather they all tell a story with a message which speaks boldly to the contemporary church.

As part of the blurb on the back cover, Gabriel Fackre writes that "P. T. Forsyth lives again in the witness of Alan Sell". For those who know and admire Forsyth's work this is, of course, nothing more than the highest of compliments. Alan Sell contributed much to the rehabilitation of Forsyth in the late twentieth century and for good reason. Forsyth, he writes, "of the twentieth-century theologians seems to me to have struck most deeply to the heart of the Gospel". If that is true (and I suspect that it is) then Fackre's greeting to Forsyth's successor is at least one reason – and not one to be dismissed lightly – to commend this volume wholeheartedly to this *Journal's* readership. For Alan Sell bases his historical analysis and theological insights on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and him crucified. And in the end this is no more than an exposition of the good news.

ROBERT POPE

Early Congregational Independency in Lowland Scotland, Volume I. By William D. McNaughton, Glasgow: The Congregational Federation in Scotland, 2005. ISBN 0 900304 99 5. £20.00 (plus £5.00 p.&p.) Pp. xvi + 681. (Available from URC Synod of Scotland, 340 Cathedral Street, Glasgow, G1 2BQ.

Early Congregational Independency in Shetland. By William D. McNaughton, Lerwick: The Shetland Times, 2005. ISBN 1 904746 05 5. £9.99. Pp. 151 illustrated.

It is a pleasure to welcome the first part of *Early Congregational Independency in Lowland Scotland*, a companion volume to Dr. McNaughton's *Early Congregational Independency in the Highlands and the North-East of Scotland* (reviewed in *JURCHS*, May 2005, pp. 398-401). In all of his volumes the author is concerned with Congregationalism down to about 1867, by which time its youthful evangelistic zeal (this, rather than ecclesiology, being Scottish Congregationalism's *raison d'être*) had waned. He also takes account of early Evangelical Union causes, which were established in most of the counties here under review: Fife, Angus, Kincardineshire, Dunbartonshire, Stirlingshire, Clackmannanshire, West Lothian, Midlothian, East Lothian, Berwickshire, Wigtonshire, Kirkcudbrightshire, Dumfriesshire, Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire and Peeblesshire. He proceeds county by county and church by church.

On 20 December 1797, two years after the founding of the London Missionary Society, Scottish Christians established the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home. This body, and Robert and James Haldane, were prominent in early evangelistic efforts in the region here under review. Among other prominent names in the story are those of Ralph Wardlaw and Greville Ewing, both of whom combined pastoral charge with theological teaching; John Aikman and John Campbell. Of the founders of the Evangelical Union, James Morison, formerly of the Secession Church and John Kirk the erstwhile Congregationalist and former student of Wardlaw, take their rightful place in this record.

Like its predecessor, this book is the product of an immense amount of work, and there are many quotable passages, of which the following is a very small sample. When a lady complained to Matthew Wilks that the evangelist Francis Dick "is so rough," Wilks retorted, "Rough! Madam, what of that? A rough diamond against polished glass any day!" At the height of the atonement controversy of the 1840s Ralph Wardlaw, determined to uphold limited atonement and to nip Arminianizing tendencies in the bud, faced his students with this question: "Do you hold, or do you not, the necessity of a special influence of the Holy Spirit, in order to the regeneration of the sinner, or his conversion to God, distinct from the influence of the Word or of providential circumstances, but accompanying these means, and rendering them efficacious?" Nine students were expelled because of unsatisfactory answers and of these, seven who applied to the Congregational Union for preaching credentials were refused. When the Revd John Watson of Musselburgh, who was also Secretary of the Union and suffered frequent bouts of ill health, married into money, tongues wagged, and

W. L. Alexander decreed in print that "as a general rule, no man of independent income should occupy the place of pastor in a Christian church." At Innerleithen, William Dobson's ministry was hindered in a different way: "The Free Church minister uses his influence to prevent people attending Mr. Dobson's meetings."

Readers of this *Journal* will be interested in a quotation from W. B. Selbie's biography of A. M. Fairbairn, himself a product of the Evangelical Union. Recalling Fairbairn's Bathgate pastorate the writer, Andrew Law, reveals within a few lines something of Fairbairn's character, of the reactions to James Morison and the Evangelical Union, and of the degree of suspicion in which foreign theology was held:

Living on the verge of the town and with easy access to the quiet hills, the Rev. A. M. Fairbairn was rarely seen in the public street. A hard student, a recluse, even then a great scholar, he naturally lived apart from the ordinary life of a country town. Sectarian lines were sharply drawn. The three Presbyterian ministers were friendly enough with each other ... but the sect who called themselves the E.U.'s and who were called by their neighbours Morisonians, were outside the pale of brotherhood. As for their pastor, he was known to be a student of German theology, and [*sic*] proof in itself that he was dangerous. He was suspected of knowing something of Hindu philosophy, and it was even whispered that he had quoted in his pulpit passages from the Vedas. Plainly a man to avoid.

The attractively-printed and illustrated book, *Early Congregationalism in Shetland* is, as we might expect, smaller in scale. It is organised as a chronological narrative. Once again the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home is in evidence, and in 1799 James Haldane was among the early preachers in Shetland. The population of 26,000 occupied "thirty scattered parishes, placed under the care of twelve ministers, of whom not more than two or three preached the Gospel." George Reid, who arrived in Shetland in 1806 and served there for thirty-three years, travelled the islands during the summer months and preached in Lerwick in the winter. In July 1808 a Congregational church was gathered in Lerwick comprising eleven men and five women. The Congregational Union of Scotland sent itinerants to Shetland, and by 1860 there were "twelve chapels, in ten of which are churches more or less prosperous. Over these churches there are five pastors ..." of whom three were Shetlanders. Gradually expansion ceased and decline set in. The Union was never able to supply sufficient funds or trained pastors. Whereas in 1867 there were seventeen Congregational places of worship on Shetland, today there are two, at Lerwick and Reawick.

Dr McNaughton is to be congratulated on having produced these carefully referenced works. He is on a very worthwhile rescue mission. I very much look forward to volume two of Lowlands, and I hope that his work on *Early Independency in Orkney* will soon see the light of published day.

ALAN P. F. SELL