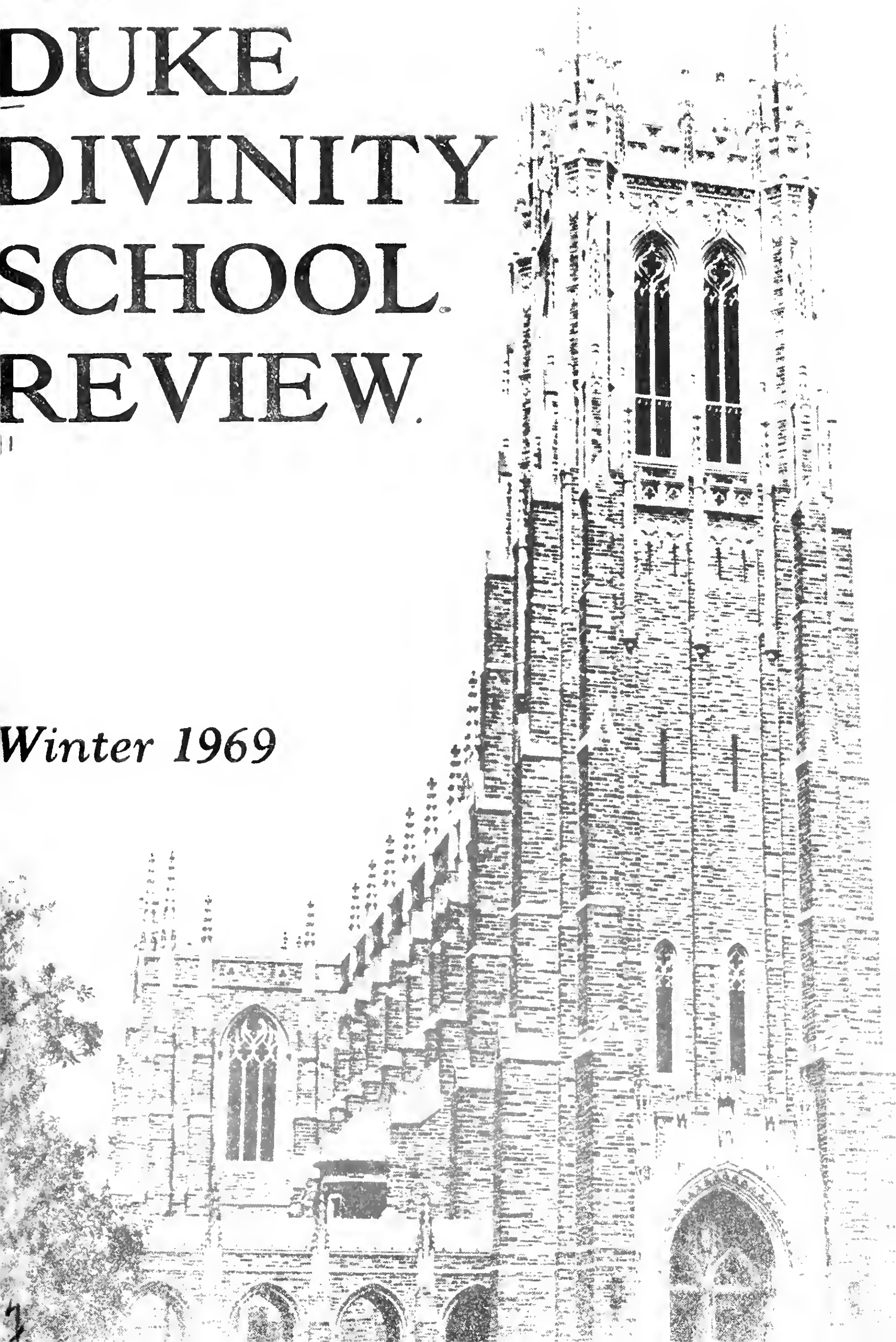
THE DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL REVIEW

Winter 1969



For Braver Patterns

God
This sickening world
The anguish in our streets, the pain of war
Scourges, Scorn, Scars—all ours, not Yours, to cure.
But we cannot tell the young in words.
Help us to forgive their love of the absurd
Their search for perpetual ecstasy.
Help us to trust them as You trust them and to forgive them their
resenting the Holy.
Their wrathful charges indebt us to them as Your Church is in-
indebted to them
And all our congregations are indebted to them
As we take measures to answer.
Help them to re-invent a word for hope and to know the truth is
truth.
Grant them grace when their sons are born, and the government
is upon their shoulders.
Show them Your face when their time comes and their turn comes
to respond to their own moment
in their own homes, their own neighborhoods,
their own cities, their own nation.
In all their world, help them to invent braver patterns
Groping toward Your own design
Help them to care and not break promises as infants who play with
toys,
Help them to choose life and know
the inwardness that pulses in the garden is also in the ghetto
the roots of their cafe songs and poems are in psalms and prophets.
Help them to read the whole Book, not purloin a few phrases
nor float upside down like free riders
who do not carry their own weight
in the limitlessness of all Time.
Now help us as Time runs out
To sift high speech, honoring tributes
from the grime and dust of the work we must do
as we endure what must be endured as others have endured before
For love of Your own love—in Absence or in Presence.

Amen.

by Dorothy K. Goldberg
Prayer Calendar 1968, pp. 110-111
United Methodist Board of Missions

THE DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL REVIEW

Volume 34 Winter 1969 Number 1

Contents

A Prayer ....Inside Front Cover
by Dorothy K. Goldberg

Thoughts on Tradition and Traditions 3
by Robert E. Cushman

A New New Curriculum 11
by Creighton Lacy

Ordained to Word, Sacrament, and Order 20
by Joel Cooper

Looks at Books 33
including a Festschrift for Kenneth W. Clark

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Thoughts on Tradition and Traditions

Robert E. Cushman

I

The opening convocation of the Divinity School is a celebration. It is a celebration of our common purpose, our common life, and our common Lord. As a corporate act, our convocation is meant to be, I suppose, a public sign of our acceptance of vocation. Annually, it is the dean's duty and privilege to welcome the whole community to renewed acceptance of vocation and to renew his own.

Yet the welcome which I extend, on behalf of the faculty, to both returning and entering students is no less earnest because it is also traditional. In part, this welcome to acceptance of vocation is traditional because this is the anniversary of like occasions, reaching into a past peopled by other celebrants. These were students and faculty of whom we are successors. These were persons who, in differing contexts and with varying capacities, sought, as I trust we are seeking, to understand and accept their vocation for their time and place.

So we are heirs of a tradition. As the celebrations of yesteryear were prophetic of our celebration today, so ours today, in God's patient endurance, may be a foretaste of other celebrations—better than ours—tomorrow. In any case, it becomes apparent that this annual opening convocation, with its call to acceptance and renewal of vocation, is a carrier of tradition. It is a vehicle that unites yesterday and tomorrow in a moment of appropriable experience. The faculty hopes it may be for entering, as for returning, students a high moment of personal realization. We may all hope it may be an unfolding moment, an entrance upon a future to be enriched by enlarging and discriminating appropriation of our Christian heritage.

It is, therefore, to this appropriation that I gladly welcome you. To entering students, especially, I would like to say that you will really be welcome, that is well-come, if, in the brief span of your stay here, you do in fact succeed, not simply in probing our Christian

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Opening Convocation Address by the Dean, September 19, 1968.

heritage, but in finding those ways in which you can actually identify with it. For, if you do not experience some identification, you will hardly have attained to acceptance of Christian vocation.

The reason is manifest: Christian ministry is not something anyone inaugurates; Jesus Christ did that! And Christian ministry is always living participation with him in his ministry. Christian vocation, then, is something received. It is a mission by which we are grasped. It is a tradition by which we may be fed and led in the measure that we comprehend it and partake of it or, in the language of the day, "identify" with it. If, then, we are to have a Christian ministry, I believe it must be by discriminating identification with the tradition of which we are heirs.

Today, therefore, I venture a few reflections on the subject of tradition and in support of Tradition. I wish to think of it, basically, as heritage, even as the matrix and carrier of distinctively humane history. We may think of tradition as the thread of history. I myself would go so far as to claim that tradition is what makes the difference between nature and history, between process and vocation, between necessity and freedom, between compulsion and morality. Tradition is not just preface; it is destiny.

To suggest that the subject of tradition is timely is, I recognize, not to say that it is in vogue or that the word "tradition" rates high among the "in-words" of our era. On the contrary, at no time since the Enlightenment has anti-traditionalism enjoyed wider patronage, either secular or religious. One may even surmise that at no time in recorded history has the tide of revolt against traditions risen so high. At no time have traditional mores, or religion, or politics, or just plain "earning a living" fallen under the reproach of so many anti-traditionalists.

This negativism may not, to be sure, exist without much justification. Yet there is a needful distinction in all this: It is one thing to resist traditional religion, traditional mores, and traditional political arrangements and quite another to abjure Tradition itself. For it is an urgent question whether Tradition and humanity, as such, are not inseverable. In fact, I offer the thesis that to repudiate Tradition is, precisely, to negate man's own humanity. In so far as this tendency is widely current today, it seems to me to be the chief clue both to modern man's loss of his identity, on the one hand, and his frantic search for it on the other. It has become quite plain now, I think, that, in the absence of a living tradition with which he identi-

fies, man not only loses but cannot recover his identity and, therewith, his dignity as man.

To employ a comparison, tradition, I believe, can no more be repudiated than the musician can dispense with sound ordered by the chromatic scale or some other. If the musician departs from the chromatic scale for his own "tone row," he invites unintelligibility, however much he may purvey sound experiences. Tradition, like the continuum of sound ordered by the chromatic scale, may be variously composed. It may accent the major or minor. It may accord greater place to consonance over dissonance, or the reverse. It may favor melody over modal arrangements. Tradition, like music, may be written in many scores and different idioms. But tradition is as surely indispensable as the chromatic scale or some alternative structuring of sound is fundamental to there being any music at all.

As the history of music is the deposit of many composers and innumerable compositions, so tradition is the variegated fabric of humanity's harvest of response to the pulse of humane experience. Thus, Tradition, with a capital "T", is also the harvesting of human culture or, to shift the figure, it is the granary that conserves and purveys the harvest of human achievement and default.

In so far as Tradition conserves a mixture of wheat and chaff, it is not quite like the harvest in Jesus' parable of "the wheat and the tares." Unlike that harvest, Tradition conserves without a separation of wheat from tares. At least experience teaches that every tradition is not without an admixture of weeds. For this reason, Tradition is prone to recurrent crises of obsolescence. It is subject to judgment and open to revision. Then Tradition—or better, traditions—must submit to a winnowing process in order that what is good may continue to be wholesome for men and what is dross discarded.

This, plainly, is the plight of various traditions in our day. Some have been the bearers of great riches but riches admixed with dross. Yet these traditions are the treasures of our humanity. And our humanity is rooted in them. Our predicament is that, as we cannot repudiate them wholly, neither can we honestly conserve them whole without refinement.

And this, of course, is the plight of the present-day churches. These, too, embody traditions, many of which will stand but many of which must be refined, revised, or some quite abandoned. Herein, therefore, is the abiding insight of the sixteenth-century Reformers: "The Church is always in need of reformation." But reformation is

not just simple negation; it is conversion and transformation. It is transfiguration. It is discrimination between husk and kernel. It is, as in the parables of Jesus about the Kingdom, a sorting process. It is a gathering of the "good" and casting away of the "bad" (Mt. 13:47-48). No one more than Jesus faced the problem of Tradition and traditions. So he recognizes the "scribe," who has been made a disciple of the Kingdom but who is also deeply conversant with traditions, as him who *can* bring forth "out of his treasure things new *and* old" (Mt. 13:52).

Surely the responsible contemporary theologian and practicing churchman will be one who, like the scribe in the parable and with a comparable reverence for Tradition, has, nevertheless, learned to discriminate between what is precious and what is expendable. If so, then the aim of theological education, at its best, will be *the art of discrimination.* As the discriminating Christian is rooted in Christian tradition, so he must also be alert to those acculturated accretions which, in not belonging to the essential core, rightly fall under the judgment of history. And, herewith, let me express the conviction that the judgment of history is not separable from the judgment of God!

To be able, then, to discriminate between Tradition and traditions —as between kernel and husk—is the mark not only of the educated Christian, but of the educated man. With immense justification it can be claimed that this was the principal teaching aim shared in common by both Jesus and Socrates, albeit with quite different traditions behind them. So far, then, I have drawn the first and perhaps, central consequence of this address on Tradition and traditions. I might stop here, assured thereby of the maximum satisfaction of all, yet I have somewhat more to say respecting the current widespread dispraise of tradition.

III

Here I want to press further the case for the indispensability of Tradition with a capital "T." This becomes plausible when Tradition is seen as the carrier of human culture, the raw material of truth itself, and the chief bastion for the preservation of man's distinctive humanity. The anti-traditionalism attending the present outbreak of moralistic activism in all spheres ought to be sobered up to the realization that the values which are championed in the name of being "truly human" are rooted in age-old and deathless insights of prophets and priests, seers and wise men. It should realize that, in reality,

these insights and norms struggle today for reincorporation in the ferment of a vastly altered world society for which older class and political structures have outlived their adequacy. That is, they have become in varying measure obsolete. Old values seek new vehicles of expression. Somehow, if civilization is to be preserved, we must learn to distinguish between the transient vehicles of culture and Culture itself, that is, between varying traditions and the Tradition. We must retain unshakable loyalty to the latter while "sitting loose" to the former.

Unless this distinction is learned and accepted, the prospect for Western Society seems to me to be dark with the possible domination of one or the other age-old disastrous confusion.

Either we shall be ruled by the *reactionary Right,* with its illusory identification of transient traditions with Tradition and its obscurantist defense of obsolescent traditions in the name of the Tradition, or we shall be overwhelmed by a *resurgent Left.* The latter is regularly contemptuous of the Tradition and fanatically subverts all liberality for the sake of some utopian "brave new world."

The resurgence of the Left is lately and dismayingly visible in Czechoslovakia. It may also be visible in Parisian student turbulence or in the iconoclastic fury of Columbia or Illinois student dissent. The resurgent Left can be either the declining gasp of a disintegrating totalitarian orthodoxy or the recklessness of anarchistic utopianism bred upon the truculence of prolonged frustration. And, whether the resurgent Left is ideological orthodoxy or utopian fervor, the ways of each are similar. For either, the envisioned ends justify almost any means, and resort is made to "the power of the stronger."

The resurgent Right is equally perilous. It pretends great veneration for the Tradition, but, having never really discriminated between the Tradition and its obsolescent vehicles—the various traditions—it defends the latter by dissembling loyalty to the former. It is characteristically pharisaical, for it exchanges the traditions of men for the Tradition of God. So, as Jesus saw, it surreptitiously or ignorantly contrives to place the traditions above the Tradition. It is, therefore, addicted to the *status quo ante* with respect to class and structure and the arrangements of men. In the interest of the old order it extols the "law." Today the resurgence of the obscurantist Right is actual in some quarters and a potentiality with every political party in the United States. This is the dismaying impasse confronting every discriminating person at the time of elections. And these are the Scylla and Charybdis—the resurgent Left and the

resurgent Right—between which society must steer successfully if it is not to be shipwrecked.

When, therefore, we speak about a distinction between Tradition with a capital "T" and traditions, and a way of discriminating between them, we are manifestly talking, at the same time, about the relevance of philosophical and of theological education. The latter is an art of discrimination, as is also the former. And my second principal point would be this: If you desire to know what your business is in theological education, then I would urge that you really study the Tradition in order properly to discriminate between it and its transient vehicles or its dated and expendable accretions or its alleged surrogates.

Only by so doing will you be able to discharge a ministry in Christ's name. For with our Lord it was a principle that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." Translated, this means that traditions are subordinate to the Tradition. Only, then, if you come to know the Tradition, can you hope to discover those revised and even new vehicles which, to mix the figure, can convey the wine or the ferment of the Gospel, that is, *the* Tradition. "New wineskins" are recurrently needed.

But surely this spirit roots in a recovery of Tradition in continuity with the long line of enobling vision and holy aspiration bequeathed to the ages by prophets and kings of men, as the legacy of those who will receive it. Anti-traditionalism is right in rejecting the traditions or in seeking their radical transformation. But men cannot fulfill their humanity and subvert the Tradition. The Tradition I refer to is not just the hand of a vanished past burdening the present with the pall of its dead weight. Rather, the Tradition I refer to transcends every tradition and both judges and justifies the various traditions of men in so far as they are justifiable at all. You may call this Tradition the thread of history. Perhaps you may call it the nerve of history, or still better, the impulse that nerves the heart for justice and the will to righteousness. This Tradition itself has a history peopled by a noble line of prophets, saints and martyrs. It is cumulative. It is a resident cumulative impulse within history. More exactly, it is the momentum of history itself. Thus, it is a power, the power of humane as distinguished from inhumane culture. Some men of successive generations add momentum to it. Conversely, others obstruct and check its progress. And, as it issues from the past, so it is also the promise of the future, that is, any future in which men can invest truly humane loyalties. As this Tradition is

the cumulative momentum of humane culture, so it is also a variegated harvest. It is never complete; it is always to be completed. It is the destiny of the ages. It is the eschaton. To believe it is to believe in the power of God over the Adversary.

Issuing out of the infinitude of the past and gaining momentum in every living present, this Tradition is the bearer of culture. As this Tradition gives birth to every present, so, just as truly, it alone assures to every present whatever survival it deserves. Thus, in some mysterious way, Tradition is the shape that Providence itself takes as the very momentum of history. Therein it works for the enactment and conservation, as St. Paul saw, of "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable; whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure; whatsoever things are lovely . . . and of good report" (Phil. 4:8).

What it comes to, what I am struggling to convey about Tradition with a capital "T," and what constitutes my third and final point is this. I may state it badly but here it is: The Tradition to which I point, and with which, I believe, all men are called to "identify" as the condition of realizing their own humanity, is more than the cultured harvest of the years. Verily, in another perspective, it is God in history! Tradition, as the momentum of history, is likewise the power of God in history. This power may be spoken of, perhaps, as the *temporality of God.* Thus, the Tradition I point to is God immanent, but immanent not merely *in* history but *as* history, that is, as the axiological momentum of history. This is God as creator and recreator—God at work for the redemption of the creation.

You hardly need to be told that, for the Christian understanding of *the Tradition,* Jesus Christ is the pinnacle, the decisive moment, of that redemptive work in history. What he reveals in his person and work is that the name above every name in history is God the Father; that God the Redeemer is the momentum of history; and that God at work in history is *the Tradition* to which all human traditions, as imperfect vehicles, are subject and by which they are judged.

It is my conviction that if, in the days and months ahead, you can appropriate something of this Tradition, can "identify" with it in such a way as to relate its abiding wisdom to the particular corrugations of your world and time, through cultivation of the art of discrimination, then your investment in theological education will not have been in vain. But when we have learned to discriminate Tradition from traditions, we pass beyond research to prayer, and after prayer —and only after prayer, of course— prayerfully, to action.

A New New Curriculum

Creighton Lacy

In most educational institutions curricular revision appears to be a continual (i.e. "very prolonged in succession, recurrent") process. At Duke Divinity School over the past four years or more it has been a continuous (i.e. "uninterrupted, without cessation") involvement of most of the faculty and many students. Building on the changes instituted in the fall of 1967, a committee has presented the following outline, which was formally adopted by the faculty on January 22, 1969.

All those most directly concerned are acutely aware that the increased flexibility, adaptability, and individualization of this program will demand maximum creativity and cooperation between students and advisors. Achievement of the goals set forth will also require understanding and support from conference officials, field education supervisors, and other alumni and friends. The specific content and approach of each element in the curriculum ("core courses," area concentrations, internships, field education, Ministering-in-Context, etc.) will need to be worked out experimentally and revised with experience. To this end, the editors of the Review and the members of the various academic committees sincerely solicit comments and suggestions from our readers.

* * * *

For many months an *ad hoc* committee has been struggling with the meaning of "professional theological education" as discussed in the Feilding Report, by the American Association of Theological Schools' "Task Force" (see *Theological Education,* Spring 1968, *et passim*) and by Dean Cushman in the opening Convocation address of 1967 (see Duke Divinity School Review, Vol. 33, No. 1, Winter 1968). We have been aware—sometimes acutely so—of the tensions between traditional content and new forms of ministry, between the claims of Tradition and the needs of students who do not understand or do not acknowledge it (see also "Thoughts on Tradition and Traditions," in this issue of the Review). Although we have reached large areas of consensus about the purposes of theological education, we do not pretend to have achieved any

clear, unanimous agreement as to the implications or applications of these principles.

One by one we have examined a number of specific proposals for a curriculum: from the A.A.T.S. "Task Force," from the Sewanee Consultation, from some of our sister institutions. One by one we have laid these aside—but not before recognizing elements in each that might prove exciting, challenging, practicable for our own situation. Out of these discussions the following proposal emerges, not as a panacea for all our ills, not as a solution to all our problems, certainly not as a model which will satisfy everyone. Rather, we offer a few guidelines which seem to us valid for Christian ministry today, followed by a minimal base for formal theological education. On this foundation, we believe, it is possible to construct a creative and flexible curriculum to meet the needs of individual, questing students and of Christ's Church in the modern world. That task will require from the faculty sensitive and imaginative pedagogy, from the students a responsible (and "response-able") analysis of their calling, from both together continuing collaboration in mutual trust.

Three motivating principles came repeatedly to the surface in lengthy discussions:

1. the need to provide for the integrity of both tradition and contemporary context, recognizing the importance of each in the classroom and in learning experiences outside;

2. an awareness of the manifold but specific tasks toward which "professional" education must lead;

3. the necessity for individualized training which can take account of the diversity of ministries and the diversity of men.

In the effort to accomplish these broad aims, the committee finally focused on four goals, four areas of personal and curricular responsibility, four life-long tasks which should be unequivocally encouraged during seminary.

1. *The Christian Tradition*—acquiring a basic understanding of the Biblical, historical, and theological heritage;

2. *Self-Understanding*—progress in personal and professional maturity: personal identity, life style as an instrument of ministry, major drives, handling of conflict, resources, professional competency, etc.; coupled with a sensitivity to the world in which we minister: its social forces, its power structures, its potential for humanization—and dehumanization;

3. *Thinking Theologically*—ability to reflect about major theo-

logical and social issues, to define current issues in theological terms and theological issues in contemporary "secular" terms;

4. *Ministering in Context*—ability to conceptualize and participate effectively in some contemporary ministry.

Obviously goals of such scope cannot be neatly "programmed" in any curriculum, and the degree of achievement (in seminary and beyond) will vary widely with the individual and his own motives and incentives. The following basic paradigm seeks to provide a groundwork on which each student, in consultation with faculty and his peers, can build a program which will help to prepare that particular person for his particular ministry within the larger Christian community and the still larger human society.

The Curricular Paradigm

A. Junior Year

Fall Semester

Course	Hours
Old Testament (or OT elective for Advanced Standing)	4 sem. hrs.
Historical Survey I (or CH or HT elective for Advanced Standing)	4 sem. hrs.
Church and Ministry Seminars	2 sem. hrs.
Junior Colloquium I (see Note 10)	
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
	13

Spring Semester

Course	Hours
New Testament (or NT elective for Advanced Standing)	4 sem. hrs.
Historical Survey II (or CH or HT elective for Advanced Standing)	4 sem. hrs.
Person and Society Seminar	2 sem. hrs.
Junior Colloquium II	
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
	13

B. Middler Year

Fall Semester

Course	Hours
Systematic Theology	4 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
	13

Spring Semester

Theological or Ethical Issues	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
	12

C. Senior Year

Fall Semester

Ministering in Context I (see Note 9)	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
	12

Spring Semester

Ministering in Context II	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
Elective	3 sem. hrs.
	12

Explanatory Notes

1. Each student is required:
   a. to complete the equivalent of 75 semester hours of academic work (see Note 3)
   b. to participate in a Junior Colloquium through the first year (without academic credit)
   c. to demonstrate competence in the utilization of one "Research Tool" (see Note 4)
   d. to engage in some field education under approved supervision (see Note 5)

2. In addition to the required core curriculum listed on the paradigm:
   a. Students are encouraged to elect one course in each of the subdivisions not represented by required courses, selected with a view to the individual's vocational direction or interest—

American Christianity	History of Religion
Biblical Exegesis	Pastoral Psychology

Christian Education
Christian Ethics
Care of the Parish
(including Church and Community)
World Christianity and Ecumenics
Worship and Preaching

b. On the other hand, students are also encouraged to concentrate, ordinarily in not more than five advanced courses in any one sub-division of the curriculum, in an area directly related to their vocational interest and direction.

3. Most Divinity School courses are listed in the catalogue as three semester hours. In the paradigm of the new curriculum five core courses (two in Bible, two in Church History, one in Theology) are accorded 4 hours per week, with the understanding that at least one of these is to be used for discussion in small sectional groups. Any student choosing, by virtue of Advanced Standing, to substitute an elective course of 3 semester hours for the "Core Course" of 4 semester hours will have his total academic requirement (of 75 hours) reduced by one hour for each such substitution. Junior Seminars (Church and Ministry, Person and Society) will be given 2 semester hours of academic credit. Colloquia, which are required of all students in the Junior Year, will not receive academic credit because they entail no assignments or grades. (see Note 10)

4. Each student is required to demonstrate competence in one Research Tool, e.g., Biblical language, ecclesiastical Latin, modern language, statistics and research design, sociological sampling and community survey, local church self-study, or a cognate course in the University which can be shown to have direct relevance to his proposed ministry. Such competence must be demonstrated by making significant use of the tool in one or more courses within the theological curriculum or in a field education or internship project.

a. In cases where the tool is acquired *prior* to seminary matriculation or in some extracurricular program of study, the student must make formal application to be allowed to demonstrate his competence by employing the tool for reading or research in an appropriate course or in a field education or internship project.

b. In cases where the tool is acquired *after* matriculation but through some other school of the University, academic credit of not more than 3 semester hours may be given for such work under a Divinity School course designation of "Research Tool," provided the student subsequently demonstrates competence by using the tool, as specified above.

5. Each student would be required to complete one *approved* assignment in field education (with or without remuneration) under supervision.

> Such assignments might include an internship, a summer of full-time work, two semesters of part-time work, or involvement in church or community service of direct pertinence to the student's intended ministry. The essential criteria for graduation credit would be that the amount and quality of supervision be approved by the Field Education Office, and that the student be required to evaluate and correlate the experience directly or through his Ministering-in-Context.

6. The new curriculum will *not* apply to rising Seniors, who will be expected to meet the requirements of the program in effect since the fall of 1967. However, a Pilot Project for Ministering-in-Context will be instituted in 1969-70 for approximately a dozen selected Seniors who have completed all their requirements for the first two years and who have been or will be engaged in some significant and clearly defined internship, field education or other ministry which may be used as the basis for this initial experiment.

7. The new curriculum will go into effect in the fall of 1969 for all rising Middlers, on the understanding that before graduation they will have completed all course and hour requirements for the Junior Year under the present curriculum.

8. Students entering in the fall of 1969 or thereafter will follow the new curriculum as outlined herein.

9. Ministering-in-Context

a. Purposes

The aim of Ministering-in-Context is to assist each student to synthesize and integrate his seminary training with his professional ministry: theological and empirical, theoretical and applied, interdisciplinary and inter-personal. It should help to provide continuity between his preparation and his future vocation and an opportunity to test his readiness and capacity for ministry. It should enable the student to develop a felt competence in some particular area of ministry, and at the same time a professional role which transcends traditional and specific settings. It should enable him to identify individual styles of ministering and at the same time to match his own personal resources with the pluralism of demands put upon him. It should stimulate a creative ability

to provide conditions whereby a vital church and a meaningful ministry can come into being through his training, insight and commitment.

b. Suggested Contexts

(both structured and unstructured, although preference should be given to settings which provide opportunity for structuring or restructuring)

inner city	evangelism-mission	juvenile court
industry	rural group ministry	leadership training school
politics	overseas mission	physical rehabilitation
medicine	suburbia	retirement home
campus	local church	institutions for care and rehabilitation
coffee house	higher education	training school

c. Proposed Schedule

Middler Spring:

brief prospectus: context, major issues, bibliography
selection of advisor

Senior Fall:

4-5 page outline of particular ministry
collection of literature, research data, etc.
first draft of project report

Senior Mid-Year:

evaluation of project paper (by advisor and two faculty members from other divisions)
counseling in regard to spring semester program

Senior Spring:

completion of project paper
participation in seminar to discuss issues
final evaluation of professional preparation (by student and committee)

10. The new curriculum includes continuation of an innovation introduced in the current academic year, known as the Junior Colloquium. The faculty considers this experiment of such significance that we wish to share with readers "a statement of intention" by Donald Williamson, Associate Professor of Pastoral Psychology and director of the program:

The Junior Year in seminary is a turbulent year, and for many reasons:

a. First, each student continues to reflect upon and review his individual life-style, belief and value-system and personal destiny. While this is often fruitful, it is often also painful, and particularly if it occurs without thoughtful community support.
b. There is an awareness that this is for most the last sustained period of moratorium this side of "the world out there." There are choices to be made now that will not easily be undone. Freedoms of choice now present will not re-occur.
c. The Junior Year is (among other things) a period of disillusionment—with self, fellow-seminarians, the faculty, the curriculum, the "system," the church.
d. For some, this is an occasion when personal difficulties (e.g. relationships to parents and wives, sexuality, love-life) find opportunity for more open expression, often in the hope of resolution. Personal disorganization may occur as (in part) an attempt to re-organize at a higher level of integration.
e. The first year is an occasion for intensive vocational review and decision. Some will choose to stay, some to leave, some to delay the decision, or to avoid a decision, or to accept someone else's decision; some to let circumstances make the decision.
f. Local social and community crises, as well as national issues of war, race, poverty and freedom, will at times add to the excitement.

All of this does not make the academic year 1968-69 a unique year. What is different this year is an innovation in this school's response to these personal and community crises and dramas.

Heretofore, these needs and issues have been dealt with in private dreams and fantasies, in bull-sessions, in car-pool rides, in coffee-breaks, in the offices of individual faculty members—and so on. This year, as an experimental pilot project, we are programming into the curriculum of the Junior year, weekly ninety-minute group discussion periods called Junior Colloquia. This is an attempt to provide a structure, a time, a small and responsive community, and a sensitive leadership. Together these will offer the opportunity for students to help each other cope with and master everything which put together comprises "The Junior Year."

There are no class requirements or assignments beyond a regular participating attendance at group meetings. Every student is assigned

to a group of eight or ten, led by a member of the faculty or instructional staff of the Divinity School. The processes and methods of this venture are discussed and determined in detail within each individual group. That is where a contract is forged and where each member has an opportunity to commit himself to the hopes and intentions and ambitions of his own group.

These groups are intended to be relatively unstructured, free-floating dialogue groups. The group members have the freedom and responsibility to decide which issues and which concerns will form the content for discussion at a particular meeting. The three over-arching goals are: (a) to achieve conflict-resolution (whether the current conflict be personal, family, community, educational, ideological, vocational or whatever); (b) to identify, elicit, support and confirm the existing and potential strengths and competencies of each group member; and (c) to engage in a process of compassionate sensitization towards the humanness of self and others.

By implication, this process, although therapeutic, is not group therapy. The focus of conversation is upon the conscious attitudes towards current situations and demands. The function of the leader is to encourage and facilitate communication and response. The request made to each member is that he be as honestly involved in the dialogue as he feels free and able to be, at any given moment. The search is to find not pathology but personal strengths. The orientation is not towards the past but towards the future.

Ordained to Word, Sacrament, and Order

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I have been asked to address myself to "the challenge of the ministry in the light of my experience and understanding of its changing shape and need in the current situation"—a formidable assignment, reminiscent of other assignments in other days by other men, but in this same place.

I would like to speak a simple word about the challenge which I am still able to feel in the ministry after these twenty-five years, in the midst of these teeth-rattling times, and before—who knows what?

Now, you must understand that I speak from the prejudice of an ordinary parish preacher. I am not a specialist in preaching, administration, counseling, prophecy, evangelism, education—what Bishop Kennedy calls "The Seven Worlds of the Minister." But I know a little bit about all of these worlds, and I know where to refer people who want to know more. Furthermore, while I have had short experiences as an executive secretary of Town and Country, as a teacher of New Testament in a college, and as a district superintendent, the Lord has forgiven me and delivered me. And while I would encourage young men and seminaries in most of the experimental ministries I have heard about, I do not think that the future of the church depends upon what happens in those innovative situations. Rather, I think that the future of the church depends upon what happens in ordinary local parishes, and I think that as a parish preacher I am working where the action really is. (I wrote that before Bishop Kennedy appointed himself to a local church with the comment that *he* was going where the action really is.) Of course, I make a place for every ministry, but I lament and challenge any depreciation of the role of the parish preacher. In my wicked mo-

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The Alumni Address at the Duke Convocation, October 29, 1968.

ments, I am tempted to say to the drop-outs from the parish ministry, "You didn't have the guts, did you?"

Now, I have a pre-supposition about the posture of the church which has direct bearing on what I shall say about the challenge of the ministry. For the moment, the church is on the defensive. It is under attack both from the inside and from the outside.

The inside attack comes from two rather clearly defined and opposite directions. First, there are many members of local churches who feel fervently that the church today is sticking its nose in matters which are not its business. Second, there are many members of the church who feel just as fervently that the church is sticking its nose into the air, spouting pious words about love and involvement but never getting its nose dirty. (There must be better ways of describing these rebellions than a mere reference to the position of the church's proboscis, but I think you read me clear and loud.)

The outside attack upon the church comes from the cultured despisers (with apology to Schleiermacher) and from the not-so-cultured. This attack is concerned not so much with the question of the proper task of the church (i.e. where it puts its nose) as it is with the question of the church's credentials (where it gets its authority). Is the church what it claims to be, i.e. of God? When you slip the pocket cross into the metaphysical scanner, will it turn on the green light?

I know that this is a much too simplified and unsophisticated description of the problems which the church faces, but I can't do much better. This is the kind of a church I think I am serving in, i.e. divided within on the question of its essential mission and attacked from without on the question of its validity. So what I say about the challenge of the ministry is said against this understanding of the position of the church today. This does not mean that I am unaware of the many other challenging aspects of the ministry; it is just that I want to address myself here to the stance of the minister as a pastor in a local church and community in which the above described attacks upon the church are presently being launched.

What is the stance of the parish preacher as he faces the divisions within his parish on the question of the church's essential mission? It is prophetic, eschatologically, i.e. in the end. He must lead the local church as rapidly as he can toward the acceptance of its task as he (under God) understands it to be. This does not mean, however, that his leadership is to be so rapid, unrelenting, one-track, pompous, unloving that it leaves behind or completely alienates large

segments of the church membership. His task is to move the whole community of faith. And he does this, not simply by ex-cathedra "Thus saith the Lord" but by living and laboring and loving within the tension between those who see the church's task as worldly engagement and those who see its task as worldly disengagement, in some form or other. As a person and as a prophet, the preacher may have convictions so very strong that they cry out for uncompromising expression. But as a pastor of a local church, charged with the care of all the souls therein, he must exercise restraint, speak the truth in love, help the conflicting groups to understand each other, retreat at times, and somehow develop an acceptance of ground rules for living together in the same church with different ideas. If you want something challenging, you just try this. It would be much easier to curse the establishment and die.

Now I know that this stance of the pastor can be fiercely attacked by free-lancing prophets. And if such a posture slumps into that of a minister who meekly lifts a wetted finger to determine the prevailing wind, it ought to be attacked. But it doesn't have to be that way. A pastor can live and labor consciously within the tension, never losing sight of the direction he wants to move with his congregation, but never losing touch with those who have to be dragged screaming-kicking into the modern world.

What is the stance of the pastor as he faces attacks upon the church from *without,* attacks upon its credentials, upon its reason for being, upon God Himself? The stance is apologetic. The pastor is a defender of the faith. The theologian may furnish the ammunition for the defense, but the pastor must aim the gun and fire the rounds.

This is a very difficult time to be trying this. For one thing, theology is a bit muddled today. The way in which we are going to theologize tomorrow is not yet clear. Some would theologize from "up" to "down," others from "down" to "up," some from "past" to "present," others from "future" to "present." It does matter how it is done, I am sure, but the burden upon the pastor is to do it, one way or another. Our hang-up is—our minds are not quite made up and the most convincing apology comes from the most convinced. Personally, a minister may be wrestling with all sorts of theological problems, may be entertaining all kinds of doubts, but as a pastor he is an apologist, a defender, sustainer, strengthener of the faith.

Furthermore, it is a difficult time for apologists because the climate in which we theologize has changed. The preacher always

over-simplifies, so here goes. In the ancient world, the real things were the unseen, that which was behind and underneath the visible. So the accepted authorities were the philosophers and priests. Today the real things are the seen, that which can be observed, measured, handled. So the accepted authorities are the scientists. The Russian Cosmonaut said it, "I did not see God out there, therefore, he does not exist."

The point is: the pastor has the difficult task of talking God in a climate which is not suitable for classical God talk, and doing it every blessed Sunday morning.

Don't you theologs think this would probably demand all you have to offer, and then some?

Thus far I have talked about the stance of the pastor in a church divided within on the question of its essential mission and attacked from without on the question of its validity. What I now want to do is to show what this stance might mean in the context of the proclamation of the Word, the administration of the Sacraments, and Order of the church.

Ordained to Word

The pastor has been called of God and set aside by the church to proclaim the Word of God. I take this to mean proclamation by preaching and personal example. While there is much emphasis today upon the importance of a minister just "being around" in the secular places, i.e. apartment buildings, bar rooms, industrial centers, etc., I am among Bishop Ward's old ministers who believe that preaching is still the main way in which most of us can proclaim the Word most effectively.

My bishop thinks I lean a bit toward liturgy, but I hope I do not do this at the expense of a real emphasis upon preaching. I take my stand with those who feel that it is possible to be altar-oriented at the same time and place and in fairly equal degree. I was called to preach.

Now, when this call to preach has thrust a man into a church which is divided on the question of its essential task, i.e. worldly engagement or worldly disengagement, what does he do? Does he find out who is on what side in the congregation? The prophet wouldn't, but the preacher had better. Does he weigh his words? The prophet wouldn't, but the preacher had better. Oh, I know all the reasons for prophetic preaching, for letting the chips fall where they may. Amos is still my hero. But the responsible pastor pro-

claiming the Word to the same congregation Sunday after Sunday will have to take into consideration some things other than the raw Truth, as he sees it.

One, he will take into account the length of time he has been pastor of that parish. No brand new preacher has a right to clobber a congregation. But when he has preached to them Sunday after Sunday, has prayed with them in their hours of need, has buried their dead, and baptized their young, and married their sons and daughters, and broken their bread, then the preacher can begin to be prophet.

Two, the preacher will take into account where the congregation is in its understanding of mission. That may depend upon where the congregation is located geographically or sociologically or theologically. The prophet wouldn't take this into account, but the preacher had better. He should attempt to move his congregation step by step—"heaven is not reached by a single bound." Yes, he keeps in sight the goal toward which he wants to move, but he keeps in touch with his people. He lives and preaches in this tension.

Three, the preacher will take into account the matters of technique and timing. A constant barrage from the pulpit on the same subject will not accomplish what he wants to accomplish. The preacher hits, disengages, hits again, waits, hits again. Sometimes he spells out clearly the implications of the Gospel in reference to mission, and sometimes he leaves it open-ended.

I know the desire of every preacher's heart—to "tell it like it is," to "let it all hang out." And there may come a time when he can do no other. But when that time comes, he must be fully aware that it has come, must be certain the issue is clear and specific, must approach the moment with a broken heart because of the alienation which will result, and must be ready to accept the consequences.

Let me illustrate from my own partial failures. I was appointed to a church in Little Rock, Arkansas, in June of 1961, three years after the Little Rock integration crisis. Before I was unpacked, I received an anonymous letter which told me in no uncertain terms that the church to which I had been appointed was not fixing to integrate. This was the first of a long string of letters. The church was located within a few blocks of a Negro area and a Methodist college for Negroes. I did not begin immediately to preach about these matters. Of course, I talked about the brotherhood of man. Who objects to that? And I probably talked about God loving everybody and that therefore we ought to love everybody. But no-

body gets worked up about that. I did get a letter from a man who said he and his family were tired of hearing those "nigger" sermons. But then one Sunday morning it happened—some Negro college students came to worship with us and our ushers turned them away. This was followed by a long series of individual and committee contacts, but we were on high center and couldn't get off. From my study window each Sunday morning I could see some of my members patrolling the sidewalk in front of the church to intercept any Negro who might want to worship with us. I have had demoralizing experiences in the ministry, but nothing to equal that. This was intolerable. So the prophetic proclamation of the Word had to come. I did not do it early in that pastorate; I knew full well that Little Rock had not recovered from the 1957 experience, and thus weighed my words. But the time had come, the issue was specific, and I knew the possible consequences.

This is not a success story, as I said in the beginning. Yes, finally the Negroes were seated, but we lost many members and thousands of dollars, and the fellowship was broken a hundred times. I still ask myself, "Was there a better way? If I had preached longer in the tension, would I have been more effective in leading the congregation to a higher sense of mission?"

But let us look at the attack upon the church from outside? What does the proclaimer of the Word do about this?

I recognize that the pure outsider doesn't often expose himself on Sunday morning to the fire of our homiletical guns; he just ain't there. But many of his ideas, his doubts, his questions, his anti-institutional and anti-theistic concepts are there. And we are ordained to preach the Word in that kind of a setting.

Some time ago I was asked to preach on television early on a Sunday morning on one of those marathon television programs set up to raise money for the United Fund. The whing-ding had been going on for hours and hours. Sunday was coming up and the management thought it would be good to have a Protestant, a Catholic, and a Jew speak—not about the United Fund but about religion. The program was held in a large gymnasium-type room. I stood up to speak, a TV camera looking down my throat. Sound trucks and the paraphernalia of TV production were on the floor in front of me. Men were running here and there performing their technical tasks. To my right was a choir preparing to come on right after my "Amen." The Jew and the Catholic were somewhere nearby. To my left was a hill-billy band getting set for its part. There was

a kind of an audience—smoking, drinking coffee, somewhat interested in everything happening, but not particularly interested in hearing the Word. From outside came the noises of traffic and a screaming ambulance. It was not the kind of setting in which I like to preach, but it struck me in that moment that this was exactly the kind of setting in which I preach every Sunday. In the minds of the pew-fillers is the clutter, the dis-interestedness, the disenchantment, the distraction, the technical concern, the sounds of music and business and pleasure and disaster. Try preaching against that! And if you are preaching today, you are.

Now, I don't mean to say that the preacher of the Word is apart from and unaffected by the world. Personally, he may be as "goofed up" as any person in the congregation, but his job is to defend the faith against unfaith and to do it as skillfully as he can.

And that means he must start where the people are. Some of our people are not yet as "come of age" in the sixties as Bonhoeffer thought they were in the forties. Not all people understand our theological jargon. I know some people who don't know the difference between Uppsalalia and glossalalia. Both words sound like foolish babbling to them. Some of our people missed God's obituary notice in the Atlanta papers. Some still think God really (classically) is. On the other hand, there are those moderns who assume a cause-effect world and find little place for a God that matters, i.e. a God who has dealings with persons and history. The preacher's job is to fling the Word against the world in such a way that the world might believe.

Ordained to Sacrament

Let us look now to the second area to which a minister is ordained—to Sacrament. In this area, too, it seems to me, the pastor faces that division within the church which I have called worldly engagement vs. worldly disengagement. We know that there are those within the church who look upon Holy Communion, for example, as the opportunity for individual renewal alone, i.e. forgiveness of sins, guidance, power. They want soft organ music, subdued lights, a stained-glass voice from the pulpit, and everything of the world shut out. Sometimes I think they do not want to be aware even of their neighbor on their left or right at the communion rail, and certainly they do not want to be made aware of the needy man across the street or world. We have individual cups (for sanitary purposes, of course) and individual wafers instead of a shared loaf.

We kneel at the communion rail engrossed in our individual needs. This sacramental concept is an expression of worldly disengagement which some think is the function of the church.

On the other hand, we are aware of some new approaches to Holy Communion which are beginning to be accepted by the church. There seems to be a new emphasis upon Holy Communion as the Eucharist, the great thanksgiving. When understood, this changes the mood of the service. We would no longer move through the ritual in a funereal mood but with jubilance. Would such a mood of celebration open the possibility for the use of new rituals, new rhythms, and new instruments?

Then, of course, there is a new emphasis upon participation by the congregation. It is not "what's up front that counts"; the pastor is not *the* celebrant. The whole community of faith celebrates. The pastor's role has been described as being like that of a prompter who throws in the cues to keep the drama moving.

This suggests another emphasis: that which takes place during a service of Holy Communion is an action, something which is done by God's people. It is a drama, a congregational re-presentation of God's redemptive action in Christ Jesus. And through this action, which is really Christ's action through the community of faith, the individuals find not only the answer to their personal problems but the impetus to worldly encounter. In this drama there begins a Celebration of Life which is carried into the streets and homes and factories and offices of the community. This concept of Holy Communion is an expression of worldly engagement.

The pastor's stance in this divided situation is "living in the tension." He need not run with the ball every time it is snapped; he can hand off, now and then, to the associate pastor, who will be forgiven because he is young and good looking. But the pastor never forgets his goal. He wants to lead his people as fast as he can toward an understanding of Holy Communion which takes into account both the individual's and the world's need.

Now, where we get the static is at the point of form. About a year ago we did that communion service entitled "Rejoice." And a couple of months ago we did "The Mass for the Secular City." If you have heard "Rejoice," you know that it incorporates new tunes, new rhythms, new instruments. We used it on Sunday night; I didn't dare use it on Sunday morning. The congregation of the curious, the casual, the old faithful, and the newly interested went through it without many hitches. And then came the visitors and

letters to my study. The objections were to the rhythms and the guitars. To some it seemed inappropriate to pick a guitar in front of the high altar. Others missed the soft organ music which puts them into a "holy" mood. I tried to say to those who objected: "We do not intend to make this service a pattern for every Communion Service, but I do think there is value, occasionally, in using new forms and structures, if for no other reason than to show our young people that the church is not as inflexible as they think."

On World-Wide Communion Sunday we used the majestic ritual from the hymnal. In my sermon I tried to help the people feel that we were celebrating something, rejoicing in something, doing something together. Our sanctuary has a divided chancel with an altar far removed from the people. So we have placed the Communion Table between the pulpit and the lectern to get it as close to the people as possible. At this table we break the loaf. In the 8:30 service the people come to the altar, kneel to receive the elements into their cupped hands. At the 10:45 service the loaf is broken, but squares of unleavened bread and the cups are passed in the congregation. So the people have a choice of the type of service most meaningful to them.

But back to the new. This summer our young people, and perhaps yours, did something their fathers and mothers just couldn't understand. They had a Communion Service using as elements coke and fritos. To some this seemed like a sacrilege, and with righteous indignation they said so.

Here again the minister stands in the tension. He need not buy the whole package—coke, fritos and all, but he will have to be ready to say something. He might try to explain to the outraged that Jesus used common foods when he instituted the Lord's Supper, and that it is the commonness of the elements and not the composition of them that is important. Is wine a common food?

The goal of which the pastor must never lose sight is this: to help the people of God understand that they come together on Sunday in Holy Communion in a dramatic thanksgiving for what has been done by the "man for others" so that they can scatter on Monday to be the men for others.

But what of the pastor, Holy Communion, and the attack upon the church from the outside? Here, as in preaching, the role of the pastor is apologetic. He is a defender of that which the drama of Holy Communion proclaims. It follows—does it not?—that the pastor must do his best to make that drama understood and accepted by

those who question the credentials of the church. Of course, I try through preaching and teaching to deal with the hesitancies of church members to be involved in the Eucharistic drama, but I have done little to help the rank outsider understand and accept this drama. It has taken about all I have to keep the "saints" coming to communion as faithfully as they attend other worship services. But, if Holy Communion is a re-presentation and proclamation of God's redemptive action in Christ Jesus, then it is very important for the outsider to be able to see the sense of it, and that is quite a challenge for any minister.

The church of which I am pastor broadcasts its Holy Communion service. It may be that a few skeptics listen. If so, we want them to hear a congregation of God's people dramatizing the saving grace of God and doing it in an understandable and acceptable fashion. The sermon, the participation by the people, the rejoicing mood of the music, the invitation to the radio listeners to be a part of the cast by receiving their self-prepared bread and liquid—these are the ways we try to apologize for Holy Communion. Think what you young ministers could do in this area, if you set your minds to it.

Ordained to Order

Finally, let us look to the third area to which a minister is ordained—to Order. This is the area of teaching, pastoral over-sight, and general administration. What is the stance of the pastor in this area as he faces a church divided within on the question of its essential mission.

"Live in the tension," I have been saying. As we teach, pastor, administer, we keep our goal in sight and our people in touch.

Within many local churches today, good men are in disagreement about the extent of the church's involvement in the dynamics of our social life. Take the matter which has been labeled civil disobedience. Most church members agree that obedience to God is the primary responsibility of the Christian. And yet, when this principle is set in the framework of dissent from the usual patterns of life, severe disagreements arise in the church membership.

When I returned from General Conference, I was questioned immediately about the civil disobedience resolution. The Finance Commission hit me first. No one had read the full resolution, but they had seen the newspaper comments and had jumped to the conclusion that the United Methodist Church had sided with the rioters. And they wanted to know how I had voted on the resolution. It

might have helped some if I had been able to complain that I was out-voted. But I had to tell them I voted for the resolution. The matter was brought up again at the Charge Conference and again in the Administrative Board. There was considerable debate which I did not enter, for my position was already known. But I had sent to every board member a copy of the resolution, had explained the way in which the resolution came to be, had pointed out how each local church could express itself to the next General Conference, and had encouraged the board to do whatever it felt it should do. The Administrative Board instructed its chairman to appoint a committee to study the resolution and to bring a recommendation to the board. At the close of the debate I complimented the board on the excellent way in which it had discussed the matter, and took the opportunity to say that this "give and take" was the appropriate approach to be made to such issues.

For the next board meeting, I presented a paper on "How to deal with differences in the church." I pointed out that disagreements in the church about the church's mission are inevitable, and that we must find some way of living with disagreements. My assumption and hope was that dissenting Methodists were not going to solve differences by organizing splinter churches, by boycotting World Service, or by joining the Baptists. I tried to make the point that members of the United Methodist Church must perfect guidelines and techniques by which they will handle differences. I exhorted them to flexibility. I tried to encourage them to discuss with me the points at which they disagree with the stance of the United Methodist Church. And, again, I pointed out the importance of free debate in the Administrative Board.

I am not going to tell you that everything came out happily. The committee did return to the board with a recommendation of "no further action," but not everyone was pleased. However, I believe we have made some progress in learning to live together with our differences. I have not lost sight of what I think is the mission of the church—worldly involvement. I am trying to lead the people of my parish to this understanding, but much of the time I must live in the tension.

Finally, what is the pastoral-teaching-administrative stance of the pastor as he faces attacks upon the church from the outside? It is apologetic with an ecumenical twist, at least.

Part of the unfaith outside the membership of the church is related to the scandal of the brokenness of the Body of Christ. It must

be difficult for the rank secularist to believe that in Christ everything is held together, when His Body is flying apart. It seems to me that this is one of the great challenges facing the pastor today, i.e. to labor for better understanding of—and closer cooperation with—groups other than his own and, occasionally, to put his best thoughts and efforts into plans of merger.

It is commonplace now, but it was only five years ago that I had the privilege of having a Roman Catholic speak from my pulpit. Both of us were a bit nervous. It was a first for us and for Little Rock. A number of priests, sisters and other Catholics were in the congregation. The experience was richly rewarding. While this sort of thing is not unusual today, it does not happen without the initiative being taken by someone.

Last year in Fayetteville we planned an ecumenical hymn-sing. Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Disciples were invited to join with us on a Sunday night. We asked each group to select a hymn which it enjoyed. These were sung, plus some others. I was surprised to learn from the Catholics that one of their favorite hymns is "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." Special singing groups had been invited, including a group of Catholic sisters. We had a great time; we celebrated—which is worship at its best.

In conclusion, there has never been a day in Christian history when the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ was more challenging than today. There have been days when it was more dangerous, more simple, more certain of its direction and methods, more acceptable by society, more productive of visible results, but there has never been a day when the parish ministry demanded more of the minister than today. Sometimes, when the going is really rough, we are tempted to drop out. In my mind, I have quit a hundred times. But, somehow, I didn't make the break. Some do. Some of you are thinking about it right now. You may drop out of the parish ministry because you haven't been called to preach, or because you can't stand the strain, or because you are fitted for some specialized ministry, but you have no grounds for dropping out because the job isn't challenging. To preach the Word, to administer the Sacraments and Order of the Church, and to do this responsibly and prophetically within the tension between conflicting concepts of the church's mission —to preach the Word, to administer the Sacraments and Order of the church, and to do this apologetically and effectively against all attacks upon the credentials of the church—these are the challenges formidable of the parish ministry today.

LOOKS at BOOKS

Studies in the History and Text of the New Testament: in honor of Kenneth Willis Clark, Ph.D. Edited by Boyd L. Daniels and M. Jack Suggs. (Vol. XXIX, *Studies and Documents.* Edited by Jacob Geerlings) University of Utah Press, 1967. 187 pp. $12.50 paper.

Kenneth Clark's professional colleagues, former students and friends will be most grateful to Boyd L. Daniels and M. Jack Suggs, who played the major role in the conception, planning and execution of this volume published in his honor. The editors and contributing scholars have produced a volume worthy of its purpose. Its publication as volume XXIX in the distinguished series, *Studies and Documents,* testifies to its overall quality. The seventeen individual contributions range over a wide variety of subjects, difficult to bring within the purview of any one thematic scheme for purposes of review. Rather than selecting a few chapters for more extended treatment, I will endeavor to provide the readers with a brief account of the general content of each chapter in order to convey some impression of the rich variety of subject matter.

It is most appropriate that nine of the chapters should deal with problems of textual criticism. Among the many scholarly interests and contributions of Kenneth Clark, it is certainly in his role as one of the most distinguished modern textual critics that he has made his major and lasting contribution to scholarship.

The opening chapter of the volume, "External Evidence and New Testament Textual Criticism" by E. C. Colwell, is programmatic in design. While acknowledging the importance of internal evidence for textual criticism, he stresses the pressing need for external evidence as a necessary control over subjectivity, and he expresses his belief that the major task for textual critics in the immediate future is the reassessment of external evidence. His major concern is to point out the immediate urgency to get on with the task of reassessing and sharpening the tools appropriate and adequate to the genealogical method; he is convinced that a more accurate identification and reconstruction of text-types is not only possible but absolutely necessary as a supplement and corrective to the considerations of internal evidence. Dr. Colwell offers important, concrete suggestions regarding tools and procedures, but his broader concern is the call to scholars to further development and refinement of the tools necessary to the employment of the genealogical method in textual criticism.

Another article is essentially programmatic in scope. E. J. Epp, writing on "The Claremont-Profile-Method For Grouping New Testament Minuscule Manuscripts," provides a detailed explanation of the method developed by the staff of the International Greek New Testament Project at Claremont to deal with methodological problems confronting scholars who seek to evaluate the witness of the hundreds of Greek minuscule manuscripts. Dr. Epp relates the story of how the Claremont staff arrived at a methodological program for the identification of distinctive group-readings, making possible the isolation of the most valuable representatives. Aside from the intrinsic value of the proposals, if they continue to demonstrate their validity, one of the principal barriers to further progress toward the completion of the International Greek New Testament Project will have been overcome.

Jacob Geerlings, in a chapter entitled "Codex 1867," seeks to identify the

text-type of this manuscript—containing a large portion of Acts beginning from 4:26—which at present is in the Greek Patriarchal Library in Alexandria. On the basis of his collation of the text with the Textus Receptus, and a collation of a sampling of the text (Acts 4:27-5:52) with the uncial codices cited by Tischendorf, Geerling arrives at a conclusion regarding the text-type of Codex 1867 which is at variance with the earlier identification of von Soden.

C. L. Porter in his study, "An Analysis of the Textual Variation Between Pap 75 and Codex Vaticanus in the Text of John," reaches important conclusions which move beyond the general acknowledgement of the close textual relationship between Pap 75 (Bodmer Papyri, John 1-14) and Codex Vaticanus. On the basis of an examination of the most significant singular readings of Pap 75, and of a selection of readings in Pap 75 which vary from Codex Vaticanus, he concludes that: (1) while Pap 75 provides valuable evidence for the text of John, the text cannot be considered definitive solely on the ground of its antiquity; (2) very probably a text similar to Pap 75 stands behind Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus, lending some support to Hort's view that the latter two texts have descended from a common original by separate and different ancestries; (3) there are textual relations between Pap 75 and the Coptic, and between Pap 75, Codex Sinaiticus, the Freer Gospels and the Old Latin which have implications for re-evaluation of textual variations where the text of Pap 75 is missing.

One of the questions confronting textual critics in establishing the text of the New Testament is the extent to which the stylistic changes by later editors or scribes have influenced the text. It is generally acknowledged that there were stylistic changes to remove Semitic idiom, and non-literary koine was corrected to meet the standards of more literary koine. G. D. Kilpatrick in his study, "Style and Text in the Greek New Testament," gives consideration to another possible influence in stylistic change: alterations intended to make the text conform to the standards of Attic Greek. Drawing upon the resources of recent studies dealing with the Atticizing movement which gained momentum in the second century A.D., Dr. Kilpatrick suggests that there is evidence to support the view that Atticizing tendencies were at work in the first century which probably affected the text of the New Testament. He supports his thesis by analysis of a selected group of syntactical constructions, word-spellings, and word usages which he believes reflect the influence of Attic style. It is his conviction that there is great need for further research and study directed toward a better understanding of the relation of style and text in the New Testament, especially a more adequate understanding of the distinction between those stylistic changes that resulted from the influence of literary koine, and those changes resulting from the application of Attic standards.

According to Jean Duplacy in his chapter, "La Provenance Athonite des Manuscrits Grec Légués Par R. Bentley à Trinity College," there are about 950 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament in the library at Mount Athos. He believes that there are about 200 more manuscripts, now scattered around the world, which at some time in their history were located, or actually copied, at Mount Athos. The yet-to-be-written history of the New Testament manuscripts and texts associated with Mount Athos Duplacy believes would be a most interesting story. His article is offered as a contribution to that history: the study of a Greek uncial manuscript in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, England, designated by Gregory, 1031, preserving the remnants of a harmony of the Gospels. If the rest of the yet-to-be-written history turns up anything similar to Dr. Duplacy's study, "interesting" is an understatement to describe the history. It has the ingredients of a good detective story. Dr. Duplacy's venture with 1031 was one long pursuit and interpretation of

enigmatic clues such as: tell-tale bindings, missing pages, a man's last will, book accession lists, monastery lists, marginal notes and numerical figures in manuscripts, unique variations in the text of 1031, manuscripts similar to 1031. Apart from the interesting history of 1031 which unfolds, Dr. Duplacy's study illustrates one more variety of the many tasks of the textual critic where a relentless, probing eye, and a lively but controlled imagination are the necessary ingredients for fruitful discovery.

Three of the contributions, while concerned with problems of text, in a special way show the importance of textual criticism for responsible interpretation of the New Testament. Kurt Aland in the introduction to his essay, "Uber die Bedeutung Eines Punktes," takes a healthy and too often deserved jab at exegetes and theologians who spin out their interpretations without serious attention to textual problems. As if to provide a potent follow-through to his jab, he deals with what might appear to be the most insignificant sort of problem: the exact location of a punctuation mark—a period—in a sentence. The biblical verses in question are John 1:3-4. The prevalent reading of the text punctuates so that the end of vs. 3 reads, "and without him was not anything made that was made." In this case, vs. 4 begins, "In him was life . . ." Dr. Aland points out that there is evidence to suggest that the period in vs. 3 should come after "was nothing made." In this case vs. 4 should begin "What was made in him was life." Dr. Aland proceeds to offer evidence to demonstrate that the second mode of punctuation is to be preferred. In the course of doing so he illustrates the unusual significance that neglected patristic witnesses may have for solving textual problems. Beyond this he endeavors to show the important differences in theological interpretation which arise from the alternate readings of the text, and the role of theological tendencies in the shaping of the divergent traditions of punctuation in early Christian history. Any exegete or theologian who reads this article conscientiously will certainly have the edge taken off any glibness toward the problems of texts and their interpretation, particularly the text of John 1:3-4.

With equal vigor, Moody Smith in his essay, "Ho de Dikaios ek Pisteos Zesetai," challenges the contemporary preference to translate the Habakkuk (2:4b) quotation in Romans 1:16 as follows: "He who through faith is righteous shall live." He also questions the assumption that Romans 1:16 is the singular and programmatic theme controlling the development of thought in all or most of the remainder of the letter. Dr. Smith prefers the alternate translation of the text, "The righteous shall live by faith," and the substance of his chapter is the forceful presentation of the evidence to support this translation. He builds on the foundation that the Jewish interpretation of the Habakkuk verse overwhelmingly supports his position. In a careful analysis of the immediate context of Romans 1:16 he seeks to show that "faith" (not righteousness) is the dominating theme, and that in this context the phrase "from faith" more cogently modifies "life" (live) than "righteous." He strengthens his position by his exegesis of Galatians 3:1 where the same verse of Habakkuk is quoted. Then he broadens the base of his argument by pointing to the cogency of his thesis in the light of theological themes in the later chapters of Romans. Dr. Smith's contribution is significant not only for the translation and interpretation of Romans 1:16, and for the discussion of the relation of 1:16 to the rest of the letter. It augments the growing body of contemporary literature which, while acknowledging the importance of righteousness and justification by faith in Pauline thought, questions any effort to make them the exclusive key to Pauline theology.

The fifth verse of the short New Testament writing named *Jude* has for a long time given nightmares to scholars endeavoring to establish the original

text. In a brief chapter, "Some Problems in Jude 5," Allen Wikgren proposes an hypothetical reconstruction of the text. Drawing upon his rich knowledge of textual criticism, enhanced particularly by his expertise in the syntax of Hellenistic Greek, Dr. Wikgren is able to throw a fresh light on the discussion of the issues. Since he suggests the possibility of alternative English translations of his reconstructed text, without always making clear his preference, the reader wishes that he had accompanied his Greek text with his own translation. Perhaps he wished to leave us with a challenge—along with the probability of a few more nightmares for the venturesome.

While the subject matter of the chapters so far discussed is related in various ways to the problems of textual criticism, the contents of those remaining are much more diversified. Kenneth Carroll, writing on "Tatian's Influence on the Developing New Testament," continues his research in an area that has absorbed his scholarly interests since he wrote his dissertation under Dr. Clark: the history of the transmission and collection of the New Testament documents. Following a suggestion taken up from E. Goodspeed, having pursued the examination of the relevant second century literature for the purpose of testing the suggestion and formulating a thesis, Dr. Carroll provides a fresh, provocative and persuasive evaluation of the role of Tatian in the creation of the four-fold Gospel and the expanded collection of Paul's letters. While acknowledging with others the recognized role of Marcion in the process, Dr. Carroll more fully elaborates the issues involved in the response to Marcion, and offers a reinterpretation of the full ingredients of that response. And he makes a strong case for the central role of the church in Rome in the development of the canon, especially in relation to the work accomplished by Tatian. Dr. Carroll's theory of the role played by the Pastoral letters in the movement toward the canonization of the Pauline corpus, and his emphasis on the later influence of the apocryphal writings on the emergence of the New Testament canon, are interesting aspects of a well defended and comprehensive interpretation of this enigmatic phase of early Christian history.

Three of the remaining chapters of the volume are dedicated to Gospel studies. J. Merle Rife writes on the topic, "Matthew's Beatitudes and the Septuagint." In the effort to provide background material from Jewish thought to assist in the interpretation of the Beatitudes, he has brought together those passages from the Septuagint which are relevant to each of the Beatitudes. His compilation provides a helpful resource for the study of this important Matthaean passage.

Milton P. Brown contributes another study in the Gospel of Matthew, "Matthew As Eirenopoios." While affirming the recent emphasis on the importance of the role of scribe to the author of Matthew, he stresses the necessity to recognize equally the importance of the role of "peacemaker" in arriving at an adequate portrait of the author and a proper understanding of his writing. "If he has the mind and hands of a *grammateus* (scribe), he has the heart of an *eirenopoios* (peacemaker) ; he goes about his scribal duties, not as a mere collector of traditions or impartial redactor of ecclesiastical law, but as a churchman sensitive to the varying winds of doctrine blowing among his fellows and as one eager to reconcile the factious and to preserve the unity of the church." Dr. Brown goes about the defense of his thesis by way of exegesis of selected passages in the text, and the result is an impressive contribution to a better understanding of the intentions and thought of the author of Matthew.

The third chapter dealing with Gospel studies, William Farmer's "The Problem of Christian Origins: A Programmatic Study," calls for study and research which will lead to a better understanding of the *Sitz im Leben* of the Gospel writers. This is important not only for the purpose of gaining better

understanding of their writings, and the church out of which their writings emerged, but also to advance the critical study of the preaching of Jesus as later accretions become more identifiable. The theology of the authors of the Gospels, Dr. Farmer points out, "reflects the influence of the social, political, cosmological, anthropological and theological language of their immediate intellectual and liturgical environment." Dr. Farmer sees the intensification in the study of these environments as one of the most important tasks in the immediate future of Gospel studies.

Three of the remaining chapters are provocative exegetical studies. James L. Price brilliantly attempts a fresh defense of the unity of Second Corinthians in his study, "Aspects of Paul's Theology and Their Bearing on Literary Problems of Second Corinthians." Uneasy with the exclusive attention presently given to partition theories, and the psychological and theological arguments which support these theories, he poses a fresh analysis of Paul's relation with the Corinthians, and of the theological themes and the moods of Second Corinthians. He is particularly insightful and persuasive in the challenge he lays down to those who would expound partition theories on the basis of divergent theological motifs and psychological states of Paul reflected in various sections of the letter. He counters with the thesis that while theological themes, as well as Paul's psychological state, may vary in mode of expression and emphasis in various sections of the letter, there is a unity and continuity throughout. Some readers may feel that Dr. Price has accomplished a *tour de force*. But most readers, I believe, will be grateful for his having made the effort to budge the treatment of literary problems in Second Corinthians off dead center, and for his success in achieving an exceedingly fresh, clear and insightful interpretation of Pauline thought.

Savas Agourides, in his chapter, "The Purpose of John 21," takes up a problem that has continuously been a source of puzzlement. On the basis of a detailed exegesis of John 21 he emerges with an interpretation that differs decidedly with traditional interpretations of both Protestant and Roman Catholic scholars. With the latter he agrees that the primary purpose of John 21 has something to do with Peter. However, Dr. Agourides parts company with them when he proposes the thesis that the chapter was not written primarily to affirm or establish Peter in some distinctive role of leadership among the apostles or in the church. Its principal purpose is that of dealing with the repentance of Peter and his restoration to his apostleship which he had lost through his denial of Jesus. If this interpretation seems too novel to the reader, he should take time to read the exegesis which undergirds it. If he does, whether he agrees with Dr. Agourides or not, he will never read chapter 21 and come out quite the same again.

The third remaining exegetical study, by Ernest Saunders, entitled "The Colossian Heresy and Qumran Theology," is a welcome contribution to the large body of literature dealing with the New Testament writings and the Qumran sect. For many years it has been generally accepted that the heretical teachings combatted in Colossians derive, in part at least, from some esoteric expression of Jewish thought. Since the discovery of the Qumran literature efforts have been made to understand the strange teachings of Colossae in relation to the beliefs of the Qumran sect. On the basis of a careful exegesis of Colossians, Dr. Saunders compares the heretical teachings reflected in Colossians with the teachings of Qumran under three categories: (1) the concepts of mystery, revelation, knowledge and perfection; (2) the doctrine of angels; (3) ritual and ascetic practices. He concludes that the differences are so pronounced that they defy any simple identification between the heretical teaching combatted at Colossae and the thought and practices of Qumran. The

Colossian heresy derives from a form of syncretistic Judaism which reflects certain beliefs and practices held in common with the Qumran sect, but not directly borrowed. Dr. Saunder's judicious and well-balanced analysis of the evidence is a welcome corrective to some of the enthusiastic efforts to identify simply and directly the Colossian heresy with the Qumran sect.

The final contribution to be discussed illustrates the fascinating little bonuses that accrue to textual critics in their incurable attraction to texts—New Testament or otherwise. In his short study, "A Magical Amulet For Curing Fevers," Bruce Metzger introduces us to an inhabitant of the third or fourth century through his or her charm-piece—a little strip of papyrus on which was scribbled in a crude hand mysterious words of incantation, along with a prayer to angels and powers for protection from disease. The owner could have been a Christian. As Dr. Metzger explains, it was the widespread use by Christians of such magical charms which evoked repeated remonstrances from the church fathers and frequent synodal pronouncements. There is a sort of poignancy about the little text—at least partially revelatory of versions of popular Christianity in that ancient world. The papyrus was found folded in the small container in which the bearer could wear it close to the body, a powerfully comforting text. Or was it?

In addition to the seventeen essays contained in the volume, one can also find here Kenneth Clark's *Curriculum Vitae* and a complete bibliography of his writings. For readers who are interested in essays expressing personal appreciation to Dr. Clark, the editors refer you to the Spring, 1967, issue of The Duke Divinity School Review, an issue largely devoted to the recognition of his retirement. In the meantime, here in Durham, Kenneth Clark continues his work with the same enthusiasm, lively interest, and diligence which has characterized his whole career: a career for which this fine volume successfully expresses appreciation.

Franklin W. Young

A Survey of Christian Ethics. Edward LeRoy Long, Jr. Oxford. 1967. 342 pp. $6.50.

To the growing literature on the typology of Christian Ethics, Professor Long of Oberlin has added this valuable comprehensive survey of the main trends. It gives well-documented evidence of a remarkable range of acquaintance, both historical and contemporary. Most every thinker of consequence in Christian reflection on the meaning of the Christian life, from Wycliffe to Fletcher, finds his place in Long's gallery.

He sorts them out by use of a somewhat complex typology, making sense of the variety of *theories* of Christian morality through a division between those who adopt a "deliberative motif," a "prescriptive motif" or a "relational motif." Long also attempts the more hazardous task of a typology of the ways of implementing ethical decision by a delineation of the "institutional motif," the "operation motif" and the "intentional motif," based on essentially a refinement of the Troeltschian distinction between church and sect. This second part comes off less plausibly, partly because of the confusion of several polarities.

The merit of this way of surveying Christian ethics is that it does make sense of the variety. The converse peril, as Long acknowledges in his preface, is that a "type" may become a box or a bin into which thinkers are sorted, however intently the author may try to treat a "type" as a *motif* or "prism," with any one thinker representing several motifs. A good deal of time is spent in figuring out how closely a certain thinker does fit the type, and giving less attention than need be to the distinctive genius of his thought.

Long has a nodding acquaintance with so many Christian ethicists that he may be forgiven a minor goof about one or another (e.g., p. 48 "eternal" law is not the same thing as "divine" law in St. Thomas).

Long's concluding case against polemical exclusion" and for "comprehensive complementarity" is cogent and convincing. In these ecumenical days, one could hardly defend *a* school of thought as *the* way of salvation.

—Waldo Beach

Apartheid: Its Effects on Education, Science, Culture and Information. UNESCO (317 East 34th Street, N.Y. 10016). 1967. 205 pp. $1.50.

It is easy to be smug and self-righteous when reading about *apartheid* in South Africa. The majority-minority roles are reversed; the restrictive laws are so much more severe; the identification of the dominant church with government policies seems abhorrent. But a perusal of this official UNESCO report offers sober warning and self-examination. When one realizes the stifling effects on science and culture and education, not to mention on the human spirit, one can substitute any kind of "discrimination" or "prejudice" for "apartheid" and recognize that in our own society too "the implementation of the policy of apartheid has been accompanied by an abuse of police power, a disregard for the integrity of the individual and by the censorship of the press" (p. 18). Looking beyond our own daily headlines, the Secretary-General of the United Nations warned nearly five years ago: "There is the clear prospect that racial conflict, if we cannot curb and finally eliminate it, will grow into a destructive monster compared to which the religious or ideological conflicts of the past and present will seem like small family quarrels. . . . This, for the sake of all our children, whatever their race and colour, must not be permitted to happen." (p. 205)

—Creighton Lacy

Christ in India. Bede Griffiths. Scribner's. 1967. 249 pp. $4.95.

Founding a monastic community in India may sound like "carrying coals

to Newcastle". What makes the difference is Christ—Christ and a Benedictine monk who is thoroughly convinced that Christianity can and must be as fully acclimated to Asian and African modes of thought and culture as it has been to the Graeco-Roman world. Still further, he believes that India's "spirituality", its recognition of the sacred in all of life, can provide an essential corrective to the materialism of the West.

Deeply sensitive to the values of Indian tradition, Dom Bede tends to idealize not only Hinduism, but the "beauty" and "security" of village life. Committed to a truly universal Catholicism, he has adopted the Syrian rite for Kurisamala Ashram and looks hopefully to a Church which will be indigenous for Japan and China and India, in theological interpretation as well as thought patterns and liturgical forms. Most significantly, he deals with "the salvation of the unbeliever" and the "new theology of mission" which holds that redemption *in Christ* extends to all creation "under the cosmic revelation, the primeval Covenant of God with man."

Because it is compiled from assorted speeches and articles, the book suffers from discontinuity and from repetition. One though which recurs: "What is needed is some kind of ecumenical movement among the world religions comparable to that which already exists among Christians."

—Creighton Lacy

Protestant Crosscurrents in Mission. Edited by Norman A. Horner. Abingdon, 1968. 224 pp. $4.50.

Among the treacherous crevasses of contemporary theology and mission one of the deepest seems often to be that between conciliar, ecumenical Protestants and conservative evangelicals. This chasm Norman Horner tries to bridge by asking three noted mountaineers from each camp to speak, respectively, to motives, objectives, and strategies in world mission.

Harold Lindsell, Jack Shepherd, and Arthur Glasser; James Scherer, Richard Shaull, and David Stowe are experienced, trustworthy guides over uneven terrain. Motives and objectives occasionally set up repetitious echoes, and both sets of strategy are weighted down with heavy gear. But for the most part the voices are clear and penetrating in the cold air: "If (men) die without the knowledge of Jesus Christ, they perish." (p. 57) "(The church) must move beyond the religious limitations of Christendom to participate more fully in Christ's redemptive work in all spheres and structures of the secular world." (p. 97)

Unfortunately this book builds no bridge. Horner offered his team members some common ropes, but most of them are too worn to bear much weight: whether the church *has* mission or *is* mission? is church growth a valid or basic criterion? are functional services mission *per se* or "adjuncts to a more basic evangelistic approach"? If these and other vital strands had been *inter*woven by the spokesmen themselves or the editor, they might have provided a swaying but traversable link above the canyon. In these six essays we can see each other, perhaps even recognize each other as fellow-Christians, but we have not crossed the gap.

—Creighton Lacy

A Song of Ascents. E. Stanley Jones. Abingdon. 1968. 400 pp. $4.95.

"A Spiritual Autobiography" may be read in many ways. Taken as a factual account of one man's eventful and influential life, this one tends to become tedious and repetitious. For long passages the reader will totally lose track of the chronology, or will grow impatient for the narrative to move along.

Taken as a revealing self-portrait of a Christian world statesman, this meandering assortment of recollections

will be familiar to many, impressive to even more. Some of the vivid and forceful anecdotes, the neat aphorisms (some cute, some corny, some genuinely redemptive), the testimonials, the powerful preaching, will be recognized by faithful readers and hearers of this famous evangelist. Although publicity may emphasize the outstanding world figures he has known, this is ultimately the inner story of one person—E. Stanley Jones.

No, that is not quite true. Another person occupies more space and more attention than Stanley Jones. That person is Jesus Christ. For there is at least a third way to read this "spiritual autobiography"—as a devotional classic, a compilation of all the inspiration and spiritual guidance with which the author has blessed millions through his earlier books. A few pages a day, taken with prayer and gratitude, will restore hope, enlarge horizons, and envigorate faith.

Those who have heard or read Stanley Jones during his long, world-wide ministry (which still continues actively) will *want* to read this last testament. Those who have never felt the radiance of this "modern saint" *ought* to do so.

—Creighton Lacy

Theology and Ethics in Paul. Victor P. Furnish. Abingdon. 1968. 304 pp. $6.95.

If the reader wishes to purchase one of the better works in the area of New Testament studies in general and Pauline studies in particular, this book is a *must*! The author sets out to investigate the Pauline ethic and finds that such an investigation necessarily leads to the study of Pauline theology because the two areas are *not* distinct and separate but integral to one another. "What, then, is the essential character and structure of the Pauline ethic? In particular, what are the theological presuppositions, if any, of Paul's ethic and the ethical implications, if any, of his theology? These are the concerns which have prompted the present investigation." (p. 8)

In his pursuit of this goal Furnish limits himself to a study of the following letters as "authentic" Pauline writings: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, I Thessalonians, and Philemon. Other disputed writings such as the Pastorals, Colossians, Ephesians, and II Thessalonians are treated as deutero-Pauline for good and cogent reasons. (Perhaps in a later volume the author will apply his findings to these letters as well.)

The book itself is divided into four main chapters. First there is an excellent discussion of the "Sources of Paul's Ethical Teaching," which culminates in the ". . . modest conclusion that the apostle's background is pluralistic and complex." (p. 65) Secondly there is a chapter on the "Pauline Exhortations" where the author argues that no ethical *system* can be drawn from Paul's exhortations—and that there is no attempt on the part of Paul to be original; he draws from pagan, Jewish, and Christian sources. Chapter three is entitled, "The Themes of Paul's Preaching," in which a discussion of Paul's theological themes is undertaken with eschatology being viewed as the central theme with all others related to it.

In chapter four the "Character of the Pauline Ethic" is set forth. Furnish argues that Paul's is a *theological* ethic compounded of his ". . . *theological, eschatological,* and *christological* convictions." (p. 213) To the author the crucial problem in interpreting Paul's ethic is in the relationship between the "indicative" and the "imperative," ". . . the relation of 'theological' proclamation and 'moral' exhortation. . . ." (p. 9) He concludes that the ideas of indicative and imperative are closely and necessarily associated but not identical. "God's *claim* is regarded by the apostle as a constitutive part of God's *gift*. The Pauline concept of grace is *inclusive of* the Pauline concept of obedience. . . . The Pauline imperative is not just the re-

sult of the indicative but fully integral to it." (p. 225)

Furnish has done an excellent job of viewing the problem, sifting the evidence, and drawing conclusions. It is the opinion of this reviewer that this is one of the best books on Paul to be written recently and is worthy to be read and placed permanently in one's theological library. There are various aspects and implications of the work which one would like to have explained more fully, but this is an excellent book partly because the author does not attempt to find one *sure* key to unlock the mysteries of Paul's teaching—and thus it seems to do justice to the great apostle's genius. One is able to see the complexities of the problems involved in interpreting Paul from this work. Furnish's basic conclusions may be partially summarized by the following quotation:

"The apostle does not strive for uniqueness in his exhortations and does not hesitate to commend universally accredited morality to his Christian congregations. If, on the other hand, one has reference to some sort of *characteristic* Christian style of life, the answer can be clearly affirmative, for love is without question the hallmark and urgent imperative of Christian existence. . . . In Paul's view, the uniqueness of the Christian's new life in Christ does not consist in the forms his concrete actions take in the world, but in the nature and the power of the word by which he has been redeemed from sin and death and recreated for righteousness and life." (p. 241)

The work concludes with an appendix which surveys the interpretation of Paul's ethic during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and with a valuable bibliography of fifteen pages. These are of great value to the student of Paul. We are indebted to Professor Furnish for this study of Paul, and this book is recommended by the present reviewer to all who wish to understand Paul better.

—James M. Efird

A History of Christian Thought. Paul Tillich. Edited by Carl E. Braaten. Harper & Row. 1968. 300 pp. $8.

Recently there have appeared several short histories of Christian thought, e.g. Bernhard Lohse, *A Short History of Christian Doctrine, From the First Century to the Present,* tr. by F. Ernest Stoeffler, Fortress, 1966; Bengt Haegglund, *History of Theology,* tr. by Gene J. Lund, Concordia, 1968; and Friedrich Heer, *The Intellectual History of Europe,* tr. by Jonathan Steinberg, Doubleday Anchor pb. 1968, 2 vols. Mention also could be made of Otto W. Heick, *A History of Christian Thought,* Fortress, 1965, 2 vols. (a revised edition of the similarly entitled work co-authored with J. L. Neve and first published in 1943—but still quite uneven in its quality); Adolf Harnack, *History of Dogma,* tr. by Neil Buchanan, reprint Dover, 1961, 7 vols in 4, paperback, and Reinhold Seeberg, *Textbook of the History of Doctrines,* tr. by Charles E. Hay, reprint Baker, 1952 (both still unsurpassed, but the last particularly useful for immediate reference).

What then is distinctive about Paul Tillich's contribution (first edited by Peter H. John and published privately in 1953 and 1956)? In the present volume (the complementary work entitled *Perspectives on 19th and 20th Century Protestant Theology* appears in a separate edition and is not considered in this review) 300 pages sum up the major highlights of Christian thought up to the nineteenth century. Since the editor has followed the original transcript, the intense lecturing tone of Paul Tillich allows the reader to become a listener—almost as if he were in the classroom where the text was originally delivered.

Moreover, it needs to be noted that Tillich was deeply concerned not only with the content but above all with the contemporary meaning of ancient insights. Thus the yield is actually double: we are not only introduced to

the history of Christian thought, but also allowed to see how Tillich himself understood it. And because Tillich's contribution to contemporary thought has been so basic, every one concerned with theology—and not merely curious about Tillich—should find the great master's insights and evaluations highly interesting and instructive.

At the same time, however, it needs to be openly acknowledged that Tillich's lectures are now almost twenty years old. There has been some progress in the study of historical theology since his day. Therefore it is in order also to inquire about some of the more obvious limitations of this work. In order to focus my observations more specifically, I propose to comment only on chapter V, "The Theology of the Protestant Reformers."

It has been mentioned already that Tillich was concerned not merely to transmit what the Reformers said and did. Rather, Tillich seeks to describe their thoughts in such a way that would suggest the contemporary relevance in a vivid and persuasive way. Thus while a certain amount of time is actually spent in recording, e.g., Luther's various doctrines, what emerges is not a statistically balanced table of contents, but a vivid portrait of those ideas which were epoch-making then and ought to speak to the reader now. Namely, while Tillich notes that Luther had precursors who also disagreed with the Catholic Church, he hastens to underscore that Luther was the first one to achieve a genuine "breakthrough." Such a way of approaching the Reformation allows us to see Protestantism as a new creation which is in fact radically different from the matrix out of which it emerged. The essence of Protestantism, as Tillich sees it, is the re-shaping of "personal relationship between man and God"—from "objective, qualitative, and relative" (p. 228) to truly "personal" (p. 229). Borrowing Martin Buber's terminology, Tillich proclaims that over against Roman Catholicism Luther viewed the "relation to God" as "personal": "It is an I-thou relationship, mediated not by anybody or anything, but only by accepting the message of acceptance, which is the content of the Bible." (p. 229) Consequently, in speaking about Catholicism—both past and present—he does not hesitate to employ such pejorative adjectives as "magical" and "legalistic." (cf. pp. 229-232) To be sure, elsewhere in the volume Catholic Christianity is evaluated more positively, yet the statement on the Reformation appears to have a central role.

Can we be satisfied with such an evaluation? Without seeking to deny that there may be some rather crucial differences between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, Reformation scholarship has become increasingly more aware of the positive continuity between the two. Thus there is a large Catholic element in Luther's thought which is more than a mere residue and has a central and highly constructive role. While some such observations were available already in Tillich's time, today they have been reinforced by numerous excellent studies (e.g., Karl Forster, ed., *Wandlungen des Lutherbildes*, Echter, 1966; Kenneth G. Hagen, "Changes in the Understanding of Luther: The Development of Young Luther," *Theological Studies,* XXIX, 1968, pp. 472-496; Thomas M. McDonough, *The Law and the Gospel in Luther?* Oxford University Press, 1963; Harry J. McSorley, *Luther: Right or Wrong? An Ecumenical Study of Luther's Major Work, The Bondage of the Will*, Paulist Press and Newman, 1968; Jaroslav J. Pelikan, *Obedient Rebels, Catholic Substance and Protestant Principle in Luther's Reformation*, Harper & Row, 1964; Otto H. Pesch, *Theologie der Rechtfertigung bei Martin Luther und Thomas Aquinas,* Matthias Gruenewald, 1967; Stephanus Pfuertner, *Luther and Aquinas on Salvation*, Sheed & Ward, 1965, and others). Therefore from a contemporary point of view, Tillich's evaluation of the

Reformation looks almost hopelessly one-sided and hence inaccurate.

It also seems to me that despite Tillich's observable desire to be objective and fair, he does not escape from introducing a traditionally pharisaic accent. Namely, Tillich seems to be prepared to compare Catholicism at its worst with Protestantism at its best. While there is value in Tillich's almost passionate warning not to identify Luther with his followers, still, the problem of how much any thinker is responsible for his thought cannot be avoided. To put it another way, it would appear to me that we should not ever seek to forget that Luther was a human being who lived in a historic context. His ideas did become incarnate in concrete social structures. And while in this process the sole responsibility does not rest with Luther alone, it may not be out of place to observe the continuous tension between what a man seeks to accomplish and what he in fact has accomplished.

Most unfortunate are Tillich's attempts to elevate Luther by belittling some of his great contemporaries. E.g., describing the conflict between Luther and Erasmus, Tillich says: "Luther could not stand Erasmus' non-existential detachment, his lack of passion toward the religious content, his detached scholarly attitude toward the content of the Christian faith. He felt that in Erasmus there was a lack of concern for matters of ultimate concern." (pp. 237 f.) While such a statement does not claim to be an exhaustive analysis, standing without a balanced and insightful description of the genuine profundity of Erasmus' faith, it becomes but a caricature. (For a learned and very compassionate evaluation, cf. the forthcoming book by Roland H. Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom,* Scribners, 1968). Similarly, the so-called "Evangelical Radicals" are referred to only in conflict and contrast with Luther. The rich, variegated, and exceedingly profound piety of this movement is not sufficiently even hinted at. (cf. George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation,* Westminster, 1962). And Zwingli's theology is occasionally evaluated—and by implication declared inferior to Luther's—by the use of Marxist categories; viz., Tillich says that Zwingli's idea of salvation is "similar to the bourgeois ideal of health" (cf. p. 257).

Tillich's treatment of John Calvin is much more acceptable. But then, this summary is much shorter, appears to be secondary in emphasis, and has only a few evaluative comments. But even here one can discover the kind of prejudicious statement that was familiar around the turn of this century: "It is remarkable how little Calvin had to say about the love of God. The divine glory replaces divine love." (p. 270) Had Tillich taken seriously the contributions of recent Calvin research available to him, he would have had to argue for his case much more seriously. (For some most recent statements, cf. Jean Cadier, *The Man God Mastered, A New Biography of John Calvin,* Eerdmans, 1960; Kilian McDonnell, *John Calvin, the Church, and the Eucharist,* Princeton Univ. Press, 1967; Francois Wendel, *Calvin: The Origin and Development of His Religious Thought,* Harper & Row, 1963).

In short, although many of the recent studies referred to above were not yet available to Tillich, the sort of concerns that they express were available in the preceding decades. Certainly the sources themselves were always complex and pointed in several directions. That instead Tillich so often has followed superficial generalizations and crass prejudice, raises the question of his own serious encounter with the Reformers. But to say this, however, is not to accuse Tillich of factual ignorance. James Luther Adams in a recent study "Paul Tillich on Luther" (in: Jaroslav J. Pelikan, ed., *Interpreters of Luther, Essays in Honor of Wilhelm Pauck,* Fortress, 1968, pp. 304-334) has collected and evaluated Tillich's concerns with Luther. Obviously, Tillich knew a great deal more

about the Reformation than he preferred to reveal on this one occasion. Therefore at least a qualified word of warning remains: while always brilliant, often very insightful, and many times accurate, the newly re-published lectures tell us more about Paul Tillich than the Reformation.

—Egil Grislis

Franz Hildebrandt. *I Offered Christ in Sacrifice and Proclamation.* A Protestant Study of the Mass. Fortress Press. 1967. 342 pp. $5.50.

Those of us who have valued the numerous books of Professor Hildebrandt from Drew University might not want to commit ourselves to an agreement with every major statement which he makes, but very likely could readily acknowledge the timeliness of his careful investigation. In an ecumenical age what are we to do with the traditional disagreement over the meaning of eucharistic sacrifice? To pronounce the Catholics to be wrong, and ourselves so right—or *vice versa*—has been of course a familiar approach. But unresolved disagreements often have a way of not going away. Professor Hildebrandt then has courageously reponded to the need and undertaken to inquire; (1) what Roman Catholics mean by eucharistic sacrifice; (2) what the Protestants have taught on this subject; and (3) what is the scriptural teaching.

A judicious but apparently pessimistic Catholic scholar Edward J. Kilmartin, S. J. (*Theological Studies*, XXIX, 2, June, 1968, pp. 345-347) concludes his review with two very critical observations: first, "this book could have been written many years ago," and, second, the author "has simply attempted too great a task at this stage of his research." Namely, the study presents conflicting views without a final resolution acceptable to all sides; hence with the completion of the book the problem has not been solved. Now in a sense this might be a perceptive and perhaps an even irrefutable critique. But it certainly ought not to be the last word. Precisely when we admit that the field is immense and the difficulties so great, we should be grateful for an honest and detailed survey in a generally reliable manner. At the very least, Professor Hildebrandt has provided a highly useful starting point for further inquiry and discussion. And as a matter of fact, this is all that the author has intended. His opening statement reads: "The study presented here is really no more than a first collection of material for a proper study, and it inevitably bears all the marks of a novice's venture into strange territory." (Preface, p. viii) Yet, we must insist, a learned and devout theologian at the end of his teaching career is not just a novice. At least he really knows the bitterness of the ancient conflict and therefore can recognize the sense in which today "the climate is new." For his thoughtful and exciting guidance in this direction we can be only appreciative.

—Egil Grislis

Systematic Theology: A Historicist Perspective. Gordon D. Kaufman. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1968. pp. xvii, 543. $8.95.

Science, Secularization and God. Kenneth Cauthen. Abingdon. 1969. pp. 237. $5.50.

We are presently in a time of theological exploration, of a search for meaningful presentation of the Christian faith; a time of little theological consensus, but also of possibility and, I think, promise.

To pursue the current developments, I want to review these two books together. In part because they share a common intention and in part because they diverge radically. Both volumes are by systematic theologians, both are concerned to develop a distinctive method of approach, and both attempt to relate the biblical foundations of Christian faith to dominant sensibilities of contemporary man. At the same

time, there are fundamental differences and in the present scene they offer two viable options for theological construction.

In one way, my discussing these books together may distort the intention of the authors. Kaufman represents a more thorough and comprehensive effort to explore a full range of theological issues. Cauthen presents a methodological prolegomena with more restricted explication of specific doctrine. Nevertheless, I think it is of value to see these books side by side so that alternative possibilities of revealed and natural theology are more clearly set forth. (It is with some regret that works which represent political and phenomenological theology are not also immediately available, as I see these as filling out the range of the more important directions of contemporary American theology.)

Kaufman's book is one of the more important publications in American theology in the past several years. Theologians will discuss it; ministers will find it extremely helpful for teaching and proclamation; persistent laymen will find it provocative and instructive.

Its positive qualities are numerous. The work is characterized by a clearly established norm and with unusual tenacity it explores the implications of that norm. The content is extremely comprehensive of current theological interests and inherited doctrines. Further, it is written with clarity and evidences candor at every point. The author's rootage in American church life and theology is obvious. The volume is contemporary, systematic and historical and as such reflects balance as well as serious engagement with specific issues. I know of no other recent one volume systematic theology I can more readily recommend.

The historical perspective from which Kaufman begins is revelational and Christocentric. In this sense, he understands Jesus to be the normative source of Christian interpretation, although he does not claim that Jesus is the exhaustive source of content of man's apprehension of God. Rejecting natural theology and independently derived metaphysical beginning points, the author focuses on the New Testament description of Jesus and develops a rigorously controlled Christological theology.

Setting his task as that of interpreting theology from within the limits of history alone (p. xiii), Kaufman rigorously interprets the content of Christian faith from this perspective. The consistency and persistence of his effort are perhaps the most distinctive features of his work. Among the more striking dimensions of the book is the development of an historically based ontology (see for example, pp. 25, 32, 37, 62, 95). Hence, the concept of an historical revelation has definite and specific metaphysical implications and these are carefully delineated. Upon the basis of this historico-ontological norm (*analogia Christi*, p. 125) Kaufman develops his doctrinal interpretation.

As an illustration of the way this explication works, Kaufman describes God normatively by exploring the implications of Jesus Christ as revealer (pp. 87f.). On this basis the personal, trinitarian and transcendent qualities of God are explicated. Also, with rigorous circumscription, he develops on this ground doctrines of creation, providence and the eschaton. Not only is this study important for its methodological clarity, it is also valuable for numerous insights in regard to the content of doctrine.

Cauthen's book is another of the important contributions to the development of process theology. After analyzing the ethos of contemporary western life, Cauthen proposes to build a natural theology which will at least show the possibility, if not the necessity, of a theocentric interpretation of life. In complete contrast to Gordon Kaufman's revelational theology, Cauthen joins Schubert Ogden, John Cobb and others in developing a rationally persuasive interpretation of life and

religious experience. The author is to be commended for careful consideration of scientific materials, philosophical awareness and theological insight.

Scientific and secularistic influences set the context for Cauthen's thought. "Theology must be able to demonstrate that Christian faith is credible in the light of a proper understanding of the findings of modern science and relevant to the worldly fulfillment of human existence." (p. 42) Moreover, the approach to this goal is "by way of a biblically informed, metaphysically elaborated and scientifically relevant doctrine of creation, in which Christ is seen as the clue to cosmos as well as to history." (p. 43)

Having stated his intention, Cauthen pursues his task with vigor. As a Protestant theologian with a particular outlook he seeks to correlate the present day scientific description of the world with a philosophical possibility which interprets meaningfully such purpose as is found in nature. (p. 92) On this basis, he argues for a reasonably based belief in God, mentioning especially its roots in existential-institutional experience, historical-revelational encounter and metaphysical-theoretical interpretation. Hence, a basic intuition leads to the postulation of God as source of being, meaning and value. But this awareness is rendered problematic by the vagaries and ambiguity of existential experience. Hence, revelational-historical experience clarifies the understanding of God as historically present in man's existential situation. At the end, these elements are drawn together by a metaphysical interpretation of the processional nature of reality (God). (pp. 131-158)

The role of Jesus is that of one who clarifies and confirms the pattern and purpose of divine activity (p. 203). Hence, "Christianity is the clarification of creation and consummation." (p. 211) The argument closes with reference to the permeative presence of the Holy Spirit.

Cauthen is convinced that it is the scientific mentality with its secularistic implications which most clearly confront modern man. Further, he is convinced that a process philosophy best affords opportunity to meet this challenge in a theoretically and theologically acceptable manner.

The approaches of Kaufman and Cauthen are radically divergent. Kaufman takes the modern sensibility to be a restriction of perspective to a this-worldly-historical dimension and concentrates here. Cauthen takes the modern situation as reflecting a this-worldly scientific orientation and concentrates here. Beginning with historical revelation, Kaufman develops his ontology and rational construction insofar as it expresses this norm. Cauthen begins with a philosophical commitment and utilizes historical events insofar as they support and clarify that perception. The importance of methodology may be seen in the great differences in the content of doctrine as this is developed by each of the authors.

Both theologically and philosophically, I personally am more congenial to Kaufman's position. I think the Christocentricism is essential for correct development of Christian understanding. More, I think Kaufman has developed his norm in a way which balances the biblical-historical text with the situational context in a more open and suggestive manner. At least, it seems to me, he could take the process character of Cauthen's thought adequately into account and potentially is better able to emphasize the role of man's eschatological responsibility. Finally, I find Kaufman's conclusions more congenial to the historically dominant interpretation of Christian theology.

To make this judgment between the books is not to recommend one and exclude the other. For the minister, to work through both of these books would be a helpful introduction to major issues in contemporary theology. It should also provide new suggestions

for his teaching and preaching ministry.

—Thomas A. Langford

Guaranteed Annual Income: The Moral Issues. Philip Wogaman. Abingdon. 1968. 158 pp. $3.50 cloth, $1.95 pb.

In this helpful volume, Philip Wogaman, associate professor of Christian social ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., introduces the reader to an issue that will be increasingly important in the coming years. Noting that the guaranteed annual income is now economically possible in the United States and that both conservative (e.g. M. Friedman) and liberal (e.g. R. Theobald) economists favor some such program, Wogaman states that the focus of coming debate will be on the moral issues. This book is his attempt to analyze the issues from an ethical stance "broadly based upon interpretations of the Hebrew-Christian tradition." (p. 16)

Chapter one sets forth the background to guaranteed annual income programs in a changing attitude toward poverty and wealth. Seven types of proposed programs are described: Theobald's "Basic Economic Security," the negative income tax (supported by Friedman), the social dividend, family allowances, guaranteed income "in kind," guaranteed opportunity to earn income, and categorical assistance. The main structural outlines of the programs to provide basic economic security are sketched.

In the second chapter, Wogaman introduces the basic moral objections to any such program of "income without work." The cultural background of these objections is seen to lie in the American tradition of economic individualism and the religious tradition of the "Protestant ethic" which glorifies work as "man's fitting response to God's grace." (p. 42) Five principal objections are raised: (1) the injustice of income without work, (2) the erosion of human creativity, (3) the undermining of social fulfillment, (4) the incompetence and immorality of the poor, and (5) the need to overcome selfish inertia. The concern for human creativity and social fulfillment play a prominent part in Wogaman's later discussion of correctives to overly optimistic economic security programs.

The next two chapters contain Wogaman's arguments in support of the idea of guaranteed annual income. He begins by examining the "Protestant ethic." Asking the Christian understanding of economic good, he concludes, "the root economic question for every Christian . . . must be this: How can we structure the material conditions of life so that every man can find fulfillment in God's intended human community?" (p. 52) The concepts of work and leisure are examined. Wogaman suggests that a creative use of leisure may constitute "work" in the Christian perspective as well as employment for wages. The proposition is made that the Christian doctrines of creation and grace make the question of "deserving" economic security improper. Wogaman urges that while incentives may be legitimate within a society as a stimulus to action, it is immoral to use them to make a man "earn" his way into that society. He concludes, "The whole point of economics is to create and maintain the material conditions which best *serve* man's true humanity.—Guaranteed income as a secure economic floor will make it possible for men to become what God intended them to become by free response." (pp. 77, 79) Chapter four reexamines, from a Christian ethical perspective, the basic programs suggested in chapter one and offers moral guidelines for the implementation of any such policy.

In the final three chapters, Wogaman discusses questions and problems raised by the guaranteed annual income. Topics included are the matter of inequality of income, the moral economic birthright of the young, private and public income, the relation of the guaranteed annual income to the pres-

ent welfare system, and the political possibility of implementing this ideal. Despite recognized practical problems involved in implementation of a guaranteed annual income, Wogaman is convinced of the moral worth of such a program and therefore urges Christians to support the idea.

The issue faced in this book is complex. Wogaman's treatment is brief and non-technical. Though this could be considered a fault in light of the ambiguity of the problems involved, it is also its strength. It is because of the importance of the issue that the technically untrained reader must be given a basic introduction to the topic. To this end Wogaman's book is very well suited. Not all readers will agree with Wogaman's conclusions. But it cannot be said that he treats the "other side" unfairly. Even in his support of the guaranteed annual income, he shows reserve and balance of judgment, evidence of his appreciation of opposing arguments. In the light of the coming growth of discussion of this issue, the reader should avail himself of this useful first tool to dig into the complexities of the arguments that will soon be raging.

—Paul R. Johnson
Graduate Student

If Man is to Live. Beverly Madison Currin. Abingdon. 1969. 174 pp. $3.50.

Once upon a time—all the best stories start that way—there turned up in the Divinity School an entering student who was to prove himself Mr. Interdenominationalism, *par excellence*. He arrived a Methodist, flirted with Congregationalism, collected a doctorate at a Presbyterian seminary, and became a priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church, where, in no time at all, he rose to the rank of Dean of a Cathedral in the South. Practically single-handed, though with the quiet approval of his superior, he integrated that bishop's chair. Having had his fill of dean-ing, *pro tem.*, he now serves a Florida parish.

Matt Currin has written his second book, with an enigmatic title, which *may* be somewhat clarified by the subtitle: "A Rediscovery of the Meaning of the Atonement." He approaches his subject in a homiletical manner, reminiscent of the Textual Expository I pattern, which suggests that Currin, at heart, is a pulpiteer.

His introduction ("The Prologue") lets us know what he plans to do: an analysis in terms of Exegesis, Exposition and Application. Part I is "The Event," focusing on the death of Jesus; the attitude of Jesus to his death; and the forces which brought about his death. Part II is "The Interpretation of the Event"; with Paul as the primary expositor: a look at his background, at the Damascus Road experience. The conclusion is that for Paul "to live is Christ." Part III is "The Application of the Event," a serious inquiry as to what all this means for us. Theoretically, if we believe it, it would mean transformation. Then by developing Moffatt's paraphrase of Phil. 3:20, Currin does an exciting piece of work with the idea that the local parish is "a colony of heaven." We are not in the mother country yet, but God gives the colony "power in the interim," as guaranteed and sealed in baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The conclusion is styled "The Epilogue: Easter," which is a confidence both in Jesus' resurrection and also in ours, the foretaste of which may be experienced right now.

It may well be that because of his experience of opposition by his parishioners in the matter of integration, in reaction to his views on Viet Nam, in his fear that the parish church is the country club at prayer, Currin focuses on the death of Jesus as the central fact in any valid theory of the Atonement. And I know one colleague who will shout an "Amen," while wagging an admonitory finger at me. For him and for the author, "there

can be no Easter Day without a Good Friday" (169). You know my answer: For Jesus and for Paul and for me, there would be no Good Friday without Easter. There would be a very bad Friday. Therefore, for me, the Epilogue of this book ought to be the Prologue. And Currin somewhat understands this, because on the first page of his Prologue he links "the death and resurrection of Jesus as a midpoint of human history"—though I do not see how he can make this the midpoint of B.C. and A.D. (9).

Currin, with occasional bows to the Resurrection, focuses on the Cross for his theory of atonement, as "the actual event through which God transformed the world" (14). He is in good company. He claims to stand alongside Abelard, Ritschl, Schleiermacher, and Anselm (113-5). He admits that Aulen needs the Resurrection to make the Cross victorious (116). But is Currin Pauline? And Paul is his primary expositor. What does Currin make of the fact that the Damascus Road experience was a Resurrection appearance? What does he do with I Cor. 15:14 and 17, where if Christ be not raised our preaching is vain, and our faith is futile? Is the Resurrection only a validation of the Good Friday atonement theories? Or is it part and parcel, an essential portion, of an atonement theory? I am a Resurrectionist who is willing to hyphenate Good Friday and Easter, as indissoluble. I think Currin is, too. But we place the primary emphasis on different days.

The best writing in this book is homiletical. The pulpit, rather than the rostrum, is the author's forte. His style is oral, staccato, repetitious—qualities in a sermon, which are not always pluses in a book, unless one is fortunate enough to recall the writer's voice.

Moreover, is he accurate in his analysis of the Pharisees (68-71)? I am almost ready to swear that this description of them as defensive, reactionary, sterile and dying is more applicable to the Sadducees. Did they separate religion and life into different compartments? If they "could not tolerate change" (70), why did they believe in the resurrection? What were his sources?

There are other signs of a slapdash haste about this book. He theoretically tries to separate exegesis, exposition and application, but, quite tumultuously, he scrambles them, and this makes both untidiness and redundancy. He spends some time on the baptism, but side-steps the tough question as to why Jesus was baptized by one who was preaching "the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins" (Mk. 1:4). Did Paul assert the "divinity" of Christ (84)? I suppose so, since "divinity" is not defined. But I'm a wee bit dubious that he knew "what it meant that our Lord was 'born of the Virgin Mary'" (86). Is God never love in the Old Testament (36, 107)? Is Paul the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (107, 140)? Is justification a "declaring righteous" (107)? There is much to be defined and elucidated.

On the minus side, you may use this book as a yardstick to measure yourself. On the plus side, it will be both a helpful primer for devotional snatches of reading as it lies on your bed-side table, jarring your own sermonic mind into action. It did mine: Easter meditation (168-174). Currin recently asked me if he should leave the parish for the classroom. This book answers him: Stay in the pulpit, teaching. He is a pulpiteer, and a good one, who will be better.

—James T. Cleland

THE DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL REVIEW

Spring 1969

The Lord's Prayer

(as tentatively proposed for ecumenical use by a committee composed of representatives of the Joint Commission on Worship of the Consultation on Church Union, the Roman Catholic International Committee on English in the Liturgy, and the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship.)

Our Father in Heaven:
Holy be your Name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
  on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
  as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial,
  and deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, the power,
  and the glory forever. Amen.

THE DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL REVIEW

Volume 34 Spring 1969 Number 2

Contents

The Lord's Prayer .... Inside Front Cover

Introducing Hermeneutic 51

Toward an Old Testament Hermeneutic 53
by Gene M. Tucker

Authority, Hermeneutic, and Church 67
by D. Moody Smith, Jr.

Historical Methodology and Biblical Hermeneutic 81
by Charles K. Robinson

History, Hermeneutics and Homiletics 93
by Thor Hall

Black and White Together? 113
by Frederick Herzog

The Dean's Discourse 119
by Robert E. Cushman

The 1969 Convocation 125

Looks at Books 127

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Introducing Hermeneutic

In this issue of the REVIEW we have brought together a collection of articles on the common—if broad—problem of hermeneutic, which in recent years has moved to the center of the theological discussion. Hermeneutic has become a critical issue for the various theological disciplines in part because the term itself has undergone redefinition. The word no longer refers simply to the discipline which reflects upon the theory of exegesis. Some of the original connotations have been recaptured and have provided new approaches to issues important to all theologians, whether they work in the classroom or the parish. Many understand hermeneutic as interpretation itself, or the translation of meaning from one language and culture to another. Or the word is used, perhaps even more broadly, to describe the method of understanding. (Cf. Frederick Herzog's *Understanding God: The Key Issue in Present-Day Protestant Thought* [New York, 1966].)

The issue of hermeneutic then not only raises for the biblical scholar and student both the theological and historical problems of the interpretation of biblical material. It may also open and focus the theological problems of language and understanding, the questions of tradition and authority, issues in historical methodology, and the theological and practical problems of communication, among others. With this rich variety of issues before them the contributors to this issue of the REVIEW have approached the question of hermeneutic from their respective disciplines: Old Testament, New Testament, Philosophical Theology, Homiletics, and Systematic Theology.

The first paper, "Toward an Old Testament Hermeneutic," raises the general questions of the possibility and the point of making sense of the ancient biblical language in our time. It approaches these queries by first sketching the limits within which one may raise the issue of the "authority" of the Bible, and of the Old Testament in particular, moving then to the questions of the nature of biblical interpretation and the place of historical criticism in interpretation. The paper then argues that the Old Testament actually presents itself as hermeneutic or interpretation, thus suggesting a paradigm for the contemporary interpreter.

D. Moody Smith has approached the issue by searching for the loci of authority in the early church and pointing out some of the

ramifications of the New Testament's understanding of authority for hermeneutic. He suggests that the main loci were the kerygma of the cross and resurrection, the tradition of Jesus' words, spirit-inspired prophecy, and the Old Testament scriptures. The need for a distinctly Christian norm, already at work in the actual formation of many New Testament books, led to the eventual establishment of the New Testament canon. Thus the hermeneutical problem must not be separated from the question of authority in the church, for "whoever would come to terms with the New Testament must take account of its intention to speak an authoritative word to the church."

In "Historical Methodology and Biblical Hermeneutic" Charles K. Robinson has raised the questions of the nature and importance of historical knowledge for the man of faith. He argues that on the one hand historical knowledge—as all knowledge and experience—is mediated and interpreted, and on the other hand there is no "mere" interpretation, but always interpretation with some reference. In historiography the reference is "a contextual interconnection of events as involving and involved in human life." He then examines the relation of historical interpretation to biblical hermeneutic, setting out some principles to help clarify the relation between rejection of alleged events and theological significance. He argues that "a reconstruction involving rejection . . . of the event of the life of Jesus of Nazareth would invalidate Christian religion in any of its historic forms," and that indeed, we daily base our actions on interpretations of the past.

Thor Hall argues that the problems presented by history, hermeneutics and homiletics cannot be examined in isolation, but rather the interaction and interdependence between the three disciplines must be emphasized. He next outlines the history of recent developments in the areas of historiography, hermeneutics and homiletics, showing their convergence at crucial points. He then spells out the implications of such developments for homiletics in terms of a set of principles for Christian preaching.

In the last paper Frederick Herzog has presented his definition of hermeneutic as understanding, in particular, the grasping of personhood, and from the perspective of Systematic Theology applied that definition to the problem of "understanding" in the recent crisis at Duke University involving its black students.

Gene M. Tucker

Toward an Old Testament Hermeneutic*

Gene M. Tucker
Assistant Professor of Old Testament

Do the ancient biblical traditions have any significance in our time, and if so, how can that significance be shown? The issue before us is the one posed by Bultmann: How are we going to make sense out of the biblical language in the modern world? That this is a central and decisive question for biblical studies is obvious. The importance of finding an answer to this question for the sake of Christian preaching is equally obvious. Furthermore, especially in recent years, the question has been recognized as a basic issue for historical and dogmatic theology.

Viewed from the perspective of Old Testament criticism and biblical theology, the issue has several sides which may be put in the form of questions. To the extent that these are questions which I must ask myself, they are personal, existential questions; but they are also more than personal—indeed, they are ultimate questions—in that they have a direct bearing on the possibility of speaking and hearing the Word of God in our time. The questions are: 1. Does the world need the Bible, including the Old Testament? This is the question of the authority of the Bible. 2. Does the world need biblical theologians? This is the central hermeneutical question itself. 3. Does the world need biblical criticism and biblical critics? This is the question of the place of historical critical exegesis within the broader spectrum of biblical interpretation. We shall attempt here to find the appropriate way of raising the issues, and suggest some tentative answers. Finally, we shall turn to the Old Testament itself, where most of these issues already have been raised. The Old Testament confronts us with an answer to the hermeneutical question which, I believe, supports the answers we are able to work out by posing the issues theologically and historically.

All our questions taken together, under the general rubric of the possibility of interpreting the biblical traditions in our time, add up

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* This paper was originally presented at Duke Divinity School in a student-sponsored lecture series.

to the broad issue of hermeneutic. At the outset, then, it is necessary to state what we mean by "hermeneutic," or by the phrase "the hermeneutical question." A definition is necessary and useful on the one hand because the traditional definition of the problem of hermeneutics has been called into question in recent times, and on the other hand because it is the new understanding of hermeneutic which has opened up new horizons in biblical interpretation and theology.

Traditionally "hermeneutics"—note the artificial plural—has been the discipline which reflected upon the theory of exegesis. The development of a specific science of hermeneutics since the Renaissance and the Reformation meant the division of biblical interpretation into theory—hermeneutics—and practice—exegesis. This development finally resulted in such a compartmentalization of the various aspects of interpretation that the relationship between biblical studies and theology was distant and obscure. It is not too surprising, then, that by the beginning of this century there was little interest in hermeneutics, removed as it was at least two steps from the biblical text itself.[1]

But recently the hermeneutical question has moved to the center of theological and biblical discussion as the problem of hermeneutic. The return to the etymologically correct singular is part of the attempt to grasp the original meanings of hermeneutic (the Greek *herméneia*) and to apply those meanings to the problem of interpreting the biblical tradition. Hermeneutic may refer to something both broader and deeper than reflection on the theory of exegesis. It may mean interpretation itself in the broadest possible sense, including making clear what is unclear, the translation of meaning from one language and culture to another, and commentary upon, e.g., the biblical texts.[2] Primary here is the understanding of language as the mode of interpretation, and as that which is interpreted. Hermeneutic so conceived seeks to unify the biblical and theological disciplines for the full task of interpreting the Word of God itself. It is this renewed understanding of hermeneutic as interpretation itself which has made it possible for "hermeneutic" to "become coterminous with Christian theology as the statement of the meaning of Scripture for our day."[3]

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1. James M. Robinson, "Hermeneutic Since Barth," *The New Hermeneutic*, James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr., eds. (New York, 1964), pp. 7-15.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 1-7.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

I. The "Authority" of the Old Testament.

Does the world need the Bible? In particular, does it need the Old Testament? This is one way of asking what is usually called the question of the authority of the Bible. Our query opens up the entire issue of the nature of revelation, and therefore is far too broad to be treated comprehensively here, but we must be able at least to state what we mean by the question itself and draw the limits within which an answer might be found. The issue may be narrowed somewhat arbitrarily at the outset by considering—at least for the moment —not whether or not "the world" needs the Old Testament but whether or not the Christian faith needs it.

The proper context for asking this question is the Christian view of revelation through the Word of God. To assert that the Bible— including the Old Testament—is authoritative is to say that the Bible is in some sense the Word of God, that is, through this book Christians have encountered God in a particular way. For reasons which I hope to make clear, I think it is best to talk about the authority of the Bible as ". . . its power to originate and further the coming of the Word of God and faith,"[4] to use the words of Gerhard Ebeling.

But simply asserting that the Bible is the Word of God, or that the Bible has the power to originate and further the coming of the Word of God and faith does not make it so. This would appear to be especially true with regard to the Old Testament, for from the very beginning to the present day the Christian community has debated the question of the authority of the Old Testament. The uncertainty of the early church about the proper authority of the Old Testament is reflected in its debate about the place of the Old Testament law in the Christian life, and the broader debate has continued down to the present day in various forms, with many from Marcion to Harnack insisting that the Old Testament should be considered in no sense binding upon Christians. And the uncertainty about what to do with the Old Testament is reflected by the very presence of several different historically conditioned canons of the Old Testament in the different Christian churches.

The fact that the Church has, however, overwhelmingly asserted that the Old Testament along with the New is holy Scripture—authoritative, Word of God, written for us—gives us a point of departure. This history of the Bible in the church does not *prove* the

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4. Gerhard Ebeling, *Word and Faith*, translated by James W. Leitch (Philadelphia, 1963), p. 427.

authority of the Bible, just as the debate about the status of the Old Testament does disprove its authority. But the history of the Bible in the church does demonstrate the *possibility* that it can be the Word of God. That possibility, then, must be the point of our departure. To pursue that possibility the following points must be kept in view.

1. To assert that the Bible is holy Scripture cannot mean that it is some objective, external and absolute authority which is a criterion or *the* criterion for Christian faith and life. It would clearly be an unbiblical way of viewing the Bible to think of it as the final, complete Word of God, handed down from heaven. The words of the Bible point to the Word of God, above all in Jesus Christ. The Bible of itself, then, is not to be equated with revelation. At most, it is that which makes revelation possible; it is a means for us to experience the Word of God.

Therefore, there is no sense in talking about the Bible as means of revelation except to talk of the Bible read, heard, and proclaimed. It has no meaning, and hence no authority, in and of itself, but only as it encounters men. Words, including the Word of God, must have hearers to be words at all. For these reasons the phrase "the Bible is the Word of God" must be taken to mean that it has the power to originate and further the coming of the Word of God. This conclusion is consistent with the biblical assertion that the revelation of God is a living Word. Hence, one can talk about the Bible as the "source" for theology only in the sense that the Word of God may come to expression in the encounter of the Christian hearer with the words of this particular book, not as a source in the sense of a reference work from which the theologian derives his dogmas.

2. A basic affirmation of the Christian faith to which our ideas about biblical authority must be bound is "the radical historicity of the word of God."[5] Therefore to speak of the biblical words as "treasures in earthen vessels" is consistent with the central Christian affirmation that the Word of God became flesh. It is our faith in the incarnation of the Word of God, then, which reminds us that the words of the Bible are human words. Therefore it would be idolatry to take them as *more* than symbols. They are human words which point to the reality of God but must not be identified with the reality which they may reveal.

5. Robert W. Funk, "The Hermeneutical Problem and Historical Criticism," *The New Hermeneutic*, James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr., eds. (New York, 1964), p. 182.

But neither—if it is indeed our faith that the Word of God became *incarnate*—should they be considered *less* than symbols. And at this point we are confronted by the basic Christian paradox of the incarnation which extends to the entire question of the Word of God. This Word is fully human, and yet at the same time it is the very Word of God. With regard to the question of the Bible, this means that while these are human, historically conditioned words, they may reveal the Ground of history himself, who is not only transcendent beyond but also genuinely immanent in history. So two dangers are present in this paradox: first, that the historical biblical symbols will become idols, that they will replace the reality which they may reveal, and second, that they will be less than symbolic, that they will cease to convey the real presence and living sovereignty of God, becoming meaningless or trivial.

3. The possibility that the Bible may originate and further the coming of the Word of God and of faith exists, further, because these human words are addressed at every point to the question of being: What is "ultimate reality," the most intensely and enduringly "real being" as relevant to our own reality? They are serious words, which talk about the reality of God and his ways with men. That is, the prophets and the apostles and the historians and the poets of the Bible, by being bold enough to say that God has acted, take us to the point where the question of God's activity may be asked again and again. They deal with what is absolute in and through all relativities and therefore enable us to do the same. But the possibility that the Bible may further the coming of the Word of God can become an actuality only if we take it seriously. A prior dogmatic commitment to the Bible is not required, or we would be begging the question. All that is required is for the reader or hearer to take seriously the question which the Bible addresses, the question of our own being. It is at this point that our question "Does the Christian faith need the Bible?" may be broadened. In-so-far as men raise and must raise the question of being, the Bible is needed.

4. And now the question of the authority of the Old Testament itself must be raised. To what extent, if at all, can our assertions about the authority of the Bible include the Old Testament? If they do it is because there is a certain kind of unity of the Bible. The New Testament church understood the history of Israel and the words of the Old Testament as preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ. But what link between Old and New enabled them to do this?

One way of talking about the continuity of the Bible is to speak

in terms of the history of traditions. This conception of the relationship of the Old Testament to the New is a major contribution of Gerhard von Rad to biblical theology.[6] This perspective shows how it was inevitable that the traditions of the Old Testament would be absorbed by the New Testament, which continued and culminated a process which was taking place in Israel's faith. In Israel the old theological traditions were continually reinterpreted in the light of new events, always with an openness to the future. The history of the Old Testament traditions is a history of promise and fulfilment, with each fulfilment opening up new promises. But the Old Testament ends open to the promise of God's new events. The New Testament continues to interpret the old sacred traditions in the light of the new, but now it is the radical new event in Christ. The New Testament was able to use the Old because the latter was already hermeneutically headed in this direction.

But we must look deeper for the underlying basis for this common history of tradition, for the reason why the Old Testament leads to the New, and why the early church needed the scriptures of ancient Israel to respond to the new event in Christ. That basis is to be found in the understanding of revelation which is common to both testaments, the persistent awareness that God's Word is an historical word. This means that God addresses himself to men both in historical events and in words through and to men. Such an awareness has meant that the biblical faith always expressed itself in historical symbols, usually by telling a story. In the Old Testament it is the statement of God's past and future saving acts, and in the New Testament it is the story of Jesus.

But while Old and New Testaments belong together, they are not the same. This is clear enough on historical grounds. The Old Testament arose out of the faith of ancient Israel, just one of the nations of the ancient Near East, while the New Testament arose out of the early Christian church in Roman times. The testaments are written in different languages and their specific content is different. This is equally true on theological grounds. The Old Testament does not "everywhere speak of Christ," as Wilhelm Vischer has said. And even though it has a bearing on the revelation in Christ, it does not everywhere have the same relationship. But this statement applies to all the parts of the Bible, including the New Testament. Not every part has the same relationship to the center.

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6. Cf. especially his *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. II, translated by D M. G. Stalker (New York, 1965), pp. 319 ff.

This implies that it is possible, even necessary, to make value judgments about the various words which comprise the Bible, to be discriminating. And this is not a radical statement at all, but it is a point which has been recognized by many, including Luther when he called the book of James "an epistle of straw."

We all indulge in the same practice in various ways. Our concern here is with finding the appropriate means of or standard for making these judgments.

It is possible to make judgments about the validity of religious symbols on theological grounds. First, they must really point to and effectively mediate the presence of what they symbolize. And second, they must include their own *self-criticism,* the mark of their origin in a human milieu which is not only finite and creaturely but also sinful and self-distorted. By these standards, the cross is the central and basic Christian symbol.

All this implies that one cannot use the New Testament itself as the sole yardstick by which to measure the Old, nor even the central Christian symbol, the cross, for that purpose. For the preeminent standard of all religious symbolism is the ultimate reality of God—in Christian particularity, the ultimate reality of the self-giving God proclaimed most completely in the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But the Old Testament does have special contributions to make toward understanding that reality. Those contributions stem in large measure from the awareness of the Old Testament word as preparation. It was written by and for and to men looking toward a fulfilment, toward the fuller Word of God. And the Old Testament will remain with us to the extent that we still look forward to the full coming of the Word in our lives, in our time and beyond our time, which means tomorrow, and next year, and the day of the Lord.

II. Biblical Theology as Interpretation

We may turn now to the question of hermeneutic itself by asking again: does the world need biblical theologians? I should make it clear at this point that I understand biblical theology as the discipline which seeks to interpret the symbols of the biblical faith. Thus, if we are correct in concluding that the proper way of speaking of the Bible as the Word of God is to talk about the possibility that the Word of God may come to expression through *hearing* the biblical word, biblical theologians, interpreters, are needed. If the Word of

God is to come to life through the bible, the conditions for that life must be provided by the process of interpretation.

The need for interpretation, as well as the basic problem of interpretation, stems from the recognition that the world of the text is different from our world. This includes the awareness that the text at least in one sense belongs to the past, in that it arose in a different time and environment from our own, and that its language is not our language. Since the Renaissance and Reformation, and especially since the rise of historical critical exegesis, this recognition has led to an effort in biblical theology to distinguish between what the Bible said in its own time and what it says in our time. Such a distinction has by now achieved widespread acceptance.

To distinguish in interpretation between what the text said and what it says is both right and wrong. It is right because it recognizes the difference between the text and the interpreter, allowing the Bible to stand over against its reader. It recognizes the fact that the biblical words are historically conditioned, time-bound words, and thereby makes interpretation both necessary and possible. This awareness makes it possible for the interpreter to submit himself to the text, to see it as something which is different from his own subjective thoughts or feelings.

The positive side of this distinction between past and present word is that it shows that interpretation must always mean translation, that is, the search for the appropriate contemporary equivalent to the ancient expression. By translation here we mean something deeper than rendering the Hebrew and Greek words into the correct English equivalents. Translation becomes the attempt to render the proclamation of the Bible itself into contemporary modes of expression which have the same force and power as the original. There are then two poles in interpretation to which the interpreter is bound: The text itself, including its full historical and theological context, and the contemporary situation. One must not think in terms of mastering these two poles, but of being under them, bound by them. No translation—not even just rendering Hebrew into English—is possible unless one is willing and able to listen, and to listen seriously, to both these poles.

But the distinction between what the text said and what the text says now is also wrong. Too often it has led, especially within the biblical disciplines, to a view of the Bible as an object to be mastered and used. And the understanding of exegesis as the discipline which deals only with the historical or past meaning of the text has pro-

duced commentaries filled with little more than trivia, and a kind of biblical scholarship which is concerned only with a description of what once was, with little or no thought about the contemporary relevance or meaning or truth of the text. Biblical criticism which limits its activity to the past meaning of the text has, of course, made possible a kind of interpretation of the Bible, but all too often it has been a superficial translation.

It may be simply that the distinction between the past and present meaning of the text must be retained, but only if the two poles are held together at every stage of interpretation, from that of technical biblical criticism to dogmatic theology.

The most meaningful way to unite the past and present meaning of the Bible is by approaching it with our theological questions. The most important consideration in hermeneutic is posing the questions which are appropriate to the subject matter. Since the Bible is at every point religious literature, the appropriate questions are theological ones. One cannot even uncover the essence of the past meaning of the text without posing such questions, that is, existentially relevant, serious questions. If one asks of each biblical text what it means to be saying about its particular aspect of the ultimate question, then he will be in a position to move to theological formulation on the basis of the text. If there is a correlation between our theological questions and the biblical tradition, then real translation of meaning may take place.

These questions may inform every stage of the enterprise, even the attempt to date a particular document or book. The search for the date, which at times of necessity must be a very technical pursuit, has more than antiquarian interest if it is part of the search for the full theological and religious context of the material. One example should illustrate the point. Once one recognizes that the books Joshua through II Kings comprise a single history work, it is not difficult to date the final composition of that work to approximately 550 B.C., in the Babylonian exile. But then if we are interested in interpretation we want to know the particular theological crisis the exile created for Israel and for the writer of this work in particular, in order to understand the point of his work. That the exile was a theological crisis for Israel is abundantly clear from the literature of the period. The temple and the holy city were in ruins, and the chosen people of God had been uprooted from their land, the land promised to the patriarchs and given by the grace of God. The historian wanted to know the meaning of this catastrophe, and he set

out to explain it in the light of his particular theological perspective and on the basis of the old theological traditions. Then he wrote his history of Israel from the time of Moses to the exile to show that the exile was the judgment of God in response to a sordid history of sin. In spelling out the problems and the assumptions which informed this work and this historian's particular proclamation—his kerygma, if you will—we have not completed the process of interpretation, but we have begun to provide the framework in which interpretation is possible.

III. The Place of Historical Criticism in Interpretation

Does the world need biblical criticism and biblical critics? If the world needs the Bible, and if the biblical word comes to life through interpretation, then it does need biblical criticism. The main question then turns on the particular role which historical critical methods play in the entire process of interpretation. While we have suggested that all aspects of interpretation, including historical critical exegesis, must be brought together by being informed by theological questions as the point of departure and not only as the goal, there *are* distinctions between various facets of interpretation. There are differences between criticism and theology and proclamation itself. What, then, are the special contributions which criticism makes to interpretation?

On the one hand, its contribution is *constructive*, that is, historical criticism is able to clarify and understand the ancient biblical text in the light of its full context. It is able to say that the text deals with one thing and not with another, and that it stems from one situation and not another. It assumes that the text has integrity, that it has its own word. The first means of access to this word is a knowledge of the linguistic and literary characteristics of the Bible, and a reconstruction of the ancient historical situation. This knowledge and this reconstruction can be achieved only through the rigorous application of the methods of the historical and critical disciplines, including textual criticism, language, literary criticism, form criticism, traditio-historical work, historiography and archaeology.

And on the other hand, criticism has a *critical* role. By insisting upon the integrity of the text, criticism rules out some possibilities of interpretation. That is to say, the interpreter is bound and limited by the results of literary and historical investigation. Criticism thus guards against dishonesty or eisegesis. Criticism is useful and necessary, then, for the good theological reason that if the Bible is in any

sense authoritative, it is the biblical meaning of the Bible which is is authoritative, and not some meaning superimposed upon it or read into it.

Furthermore, criticism performs its critical role by making clear the historical relativity of all the biblical symbols. This does not mean that criticism undermines the authority of the Bible, but it does mean that criticism is inconsistent with a particular understanding of the Bible, the one which insists upon the "absolute inerrancy" of the Scriptures.

What, then, is the relationship of criticism to the other facets of interpretation? Our preceding remarks should have made it clear that one can no longer think of the biblical critic preparing and handing over his data to the theologian and preacher. The traditional and still predominant understanding of exegesis which tried to do this simply has not been very successful, and the fault must be laid at the feet of biblical studies. The failure of this approach can be demonstrated by an examination of the Old Testament commentaries available in English.[7] The pages of the *Interpreters' Bible*, for example, are divided by a line which separates the exegesis from the exposition; and separate them it does. The reason for this separation was not that the expositors were unwilling to read the exegesis, but that when they did they found so little that was helpful, so little that contributed to the translation of the text. Unfortunately, this one example of exegesis without theology could be multiplied many times.

The distance between proclamation and theology and criticism may be narrowed by conceiving of biblical criticism as a theological discipline. This does not imply that the critic must begin with a given set of theological assumptions, or else he gives up his striving for objectivity and dulls the knife of criticism, but it does mean that he is informed at all stages by the theological questions which are appropriate to the material before him. To be so informed and guided implies that the critic ought to unfold the message, the proclamation of the Bible, what is said explicitly. The critic, then, is not interested in reconstructing the history of Israel just for the sake of knowing that history, or in the literary questions for the sake of literature, or in the assumptions and world view of the writers for the sake of a history of thought. We are not denying the great importance of all these disciplines—interpretation is lost without them

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7. Cf. especially B. S. Childs, "Interpretation in Faith: The Theological Responsibility of an Old Testament Commentary," *Interpretation*, 18 (1964), pp. 432-49.

—but if one's goal is interpretation, these disciplines are important only insofar as they help to unfold the proclamation of the Bible.

All the technical disciplines of historical critical exegesis, then, may provide the conditions for interpretation. They may be in a sense "preparation" for interpretation and understanding. But criticism can become preparation for interpretation only if it is willing to approach the text with the questions which the text is trying to answer, with theological questions.

IV. The Old Testament Basis for an Old Testament Hermeneutic.

In a sense, the entire Old Testament itself is already hermeneutic, or interpretation. The biblical words are interpretations of the revelation of God in word and event. The biblical writers at all stages see and hear in the history of Israel, in the traditions of the community of faith and in their own experience events and words which they perceive as the self-revelation of God, and they are bold enough to interpret them as such by spelling out their particular meaning. We are saying that there is good biblical precedent for understanding theology as hermeneutic, and therefore it is useful to spell out the general features of the Old Testament's hermeneutic.

We may begin where Israel herself began, with the history of salvation traditions preserved in the Hexateuch. Literary criticism has shown that these books do not contain just one version of the history of salvation but many, various different "sources" and traditions from different times. In other words, the Hexateuch is a veritable history of hermeneutic, of the interpretation of word and event. At the beginning of this history there stands the basic credo of Israel's faith which was a simple recital of what God had done. This credo itself was already interpretation of God's revelation. In the course of history this little credo was expanded both freely and creatively until it finally became the detailed history which we have before us now. It is possible to distinguish some of the stages in this process and see how various men of faith interpreted the words given to them. When the work of the Yahwist, for example, is disentangled from the other material, it becomes clear that he has interpreted the traditions very freely, bringing them to bear on the questions of his own time. Indeed, his work is even more radical, for he has extended the scope of the saving history. In his own time, that history began with the promise to the patriarchs, but to this canonical tradition he has added the primeval history in order to make clear his understanding of the Word of God. Each successive

layer of the tradition approaches the ever-expanding body of material in its own way, always using the old interpretations as the basis for new statements.

In this history of interpretation, the work of Deuteronomy may be the most radical. The concerns of Deuteronomy are those of the preacher who stands before a people generations removed from the saving events, who brings the word to life through preaching on texts from the old historical and legal traditions. When he speaks of the saving events themselves, he is able to talk about them as both past and present. The events happened to your fathers, he says, but they are also *our* events. He wants every successive generation to be able to say, "*We* were Pharoah's slaves in Egypt; and the Lord brought *us* out of Egypt with a mighty hand . . ." (6:21). Furthermore, he is willing and able to re-interpret the old laws for his own time with freedom and independence, often to the point of distorting the original specific meaning of the law for the sake of what he understands to have been the original intention of the law. Even when he does not find it necessary to change the laws he is not content simply to pass them on, but interprets them in the light of his new situation and explains why and how they are to be obeyed.

But this process of hermeneutic, of being bound to *both* the past word and the present reality, is not limited to the Hexateuchal traditions. It is seen also in the historical books of the Old Testament. The existence of these books as documents of faith reflects Israel's awareness that the period of God's activity and revelation did not come to an end with the conquest. Thus new events and new words continually are taken up as symbols of that faith. Even the Chronicler, who writes his history in the period which sees the rise of a kind of legalism, re-interprets the old traditions radically. We might even say that he distorts them under the pressure of his particular theological perspective.

And the prophetic announcements should also be seen as interpretations of the Word of God. The prophets stand rooted in the old words and give a new word, in particular a word for the future which has come to them in their own lives and experiences. They are therefore more than interpreters of tradition; they are interpreters of the Word of God on the basis of tradition. They, even more than the others, understand that the Word of God is a living word, not a dogma. So they hold what has been handed to them, but interpret it freely. And this process of free and often poetic interpre-

tation and actualization of the old words is seen in the Psalms and even the wisdom literature.

So the process that produced the Old Testament was a process of interpretation. The writers from beginning to end were not content simply to pass on what they had received without interpreting it in the light of new situations, new needs, and new ways of posing questions. Neither were they willing to discard what was received. The old existed for them for the purpose of the new, for the sake of the new word which could come to expression through the old. This implies that the Bible is with us for the sake of interpretation, for the purpose of allowing the Word to come to expression in our time.[8]

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8. Cf. Gerhard Ebeling, *Theologie und Verkündigung*, Vol. I of *Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie*, 1962, pp. 14ff., and James M. Robinson's translation in *The New Hermeneutic*, pp. 67 ff.

Authority, Hermeneutic, and Church: An Essay on New Testament Interpretation

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Frequently the New Testament is characterized as the literary expression and deposit of the life and faith of early Christianity. This assessment is true and, indeed, obvious to anyone who has reflected upon the matter. But such a statement does not suffice to explain the New Testament. Although some of the New Testament books are occasional writings, that is, letters or tracts addressed to certain specific situations, by no means all of them are. Moreover, the individual writings cannot be viewed as if they were just what we would normally expect from a religious community with many outposts scattered over a broad geographical area. There is something typically Christian about them. Or, to put it another way, their very existence represents motives and interests which we have come to recognize as typically Christian.

For one thing, the concern for authority, the felt need to speak or hear an authoritative word, is a pervasive characteristic of the New Testament writings, whether they be considered as individual documents, analyzed into their respective components, or taken as a collection. No mode of interpretation which fails to grasp this elemental intention can do justice to the New Testament. For reasons that are both historically and theologically sound, the recent Faith and Order (World Council of Churches) study of the problem of hermeneutics has led now to a consideration of the question of biblical authority.[1] The latter question is, of course, of considerable significance for Christian faith and its theological clarification in our own day, but the linking of hermeneutics and the question of author-

1. See P. C. Rodger and L. Vischer, *The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order* (New York: Association Press, 1964), esp. pp. 50 ff., and *New Directions in Faith and Order: Reports-Minutes-Documents* ("Faith and Order Paper," No. 50; Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), esp. pp. 32 ff., for the background of the present Faith and Order study on the authority of the Bible.

ity is justifiable also on purely historical grounds because of the very nature of the New Testament materials. Our purpose in this essay is to review certain aspects of the question of authority in the New Testament and to point to some ramifications for the hermeneutical enterprise, especially as they pertain to the place or role of the church.[2]

1. Sources of Authority in Early Christianity

Although the letters of Paul are the earliest written communications which have survived from the primitive church, one has only to read any salutation to learn that they are more than friendly or business letters from one partner in an enterprise to another: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God . . ." Paul addresses his readers as a man commissioned with a task and invested with authority. When he talks of visiting them, he asks his readers how they wish him to come, "with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness." When he is challenged, he does not hesitate to speak of the basis of his authority: "Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord?" Paul regards the Christians to whom he has preached and the churches which he had founded as his peculiar province and responsibility, given him by God, and as an apostle he accepts the responsibility of speaking authoritatively to the question of what the gospel is.

In earliest Christianity there were several possible answers to the question of the nature of the gospel. Some early Christians doubtless thought it was the good news that Jesus would soon return in order to establish his kingdom on earth. At least a few evidently felt the prospect of Jesus' imminent return meant this world and its tasks were no longer to be taken seriously. Some probably saw the chief significance of Jesus' coming in its meaning for Israel: he was indeed the Messiah, as God had shown by raising him from the dead. Since Jesus had taught, and his disciples had cherished his teaching even before his death and resurrection, many continued to see in his teaching the most important factor. Perhaps others were impressed with his power to heal and cast out demons; there were those in the early church who felt that they were also possessed with such remarkable powers.

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While all these views were represented in early Christianity, missionary preaching, especially in the Gentile world, tended to concentrate upon Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.[3] Doubtless the conviction that God had vindicated Jesus by raising him from the dead, and with him the hopes of his followers, was predominant among most Christians from the beginning. And yet one could scarcely speak of Jesus' resurrection without taking account of his death. Why did he die, and what did his death accomplish? Such questions are not unfamiliar to those who have mourned the apparently pointless assassination of important public figures.

Early Christians understood Jesus' death in at least two ways. First, it was an event which God in his inscrutable wisdom had ordained. Thus passages from the Old Testament were used to interpret Jesus' death. In the second place, it was a vicarious sacrifice, that is, a sacrifice made on behalf of others, his immediate followers initially, but ultimately all mankind. What appeared to be, and at one level actually was, the tragic work of evil or mistaken men turned out to be an event of far-reaching importance for the salvation of humanity. Thus not only the resurrection of Jesus, but also his death, assumed an authoritative significance and function.

In the New Testament Paul appears as the leading exponent and interpreter of the death or, as he puts it, the cross of Jesus. It is the negation of the pride, power and wisdom of this world, the sign of God's mercy and goodness toward those who are willing to give up any claim on such pride, power and wisdom and live by faith.

> For since in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (I Cor. 1:21-25 *RSV*)

Paul's eloquent meditation upon the meaning of the cross sheds light backward on the antecedents of Christianity and forward upon the

3. On the universality and unity of the kerygma see C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1936). Bultmann takes a compatible view with respect to the centrality of the cross and resurrection in the Hellenistic community, *Theology of the New Testament*, Vol. I, trans. K. Grobel (New York: Scribner's, 1951), p. 86. Cf. also O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, trans. F. V. Filson (London: SCM, 1951), pp. 81 ff. That the unity of the kerygma throughout early Christianity

shape of the New Testament and of Christian preaching and theology. It also reveals his own insight into the authority of the gospel.

Paul characterizes Jews as demanding signs and Greeks as seeking wisdom. Exactly what he means by "signs" and "wisdom" may be subject to debate, but the general thrust of his statement is clear enough.[4] "Signs" is a term used elsewhere in the New Testament and in the Old of miracles or other especially significant deeds or events. To say that the Jews seek signs may mean that they seek miracles to validate religious claims. In point of fact, Jesus encountered the demand for signs from some of his countrymen. Paul apparently means that the Jews seek some clear indication that the claims made about Jesus by his followers are true. This is the most obvious sense of his statement.

When Paul speaks of the "Greeks," he probably means Gentiles in general, since Greek language and culture were the common coinage of the day. (But it is not beside the point to note that the Corinthians, to whom Paul was writing, were nominally Greeks, so the contrast of Jews and Greeks rather than Gentiles in general would have been appropriate in I Corinthians.) The important question, however, has to do with the meaning of wisdom. There was a tradition of theological and human wisdom in Judaism (cf. the Old Testament books of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes). But Paul has in mind here a general orientation, and it would be wrong to describe the general orientation of Judaism in terms of wisdom. It is rather the Greek or the pagan who seeks salvation through wisdom or knowledge. This trait is by no means confined to the phenomenon we have called Gnosticism, although it is perhaps best represented there. There is impressive evidence of the search for salvation through a quite different kind of wisdom or knowledge in the Greek

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is not an indubitable assumption of New Testament criticism and interpretation, however, is amply attested in present discussions of theological variety in early Christianity, as well as by the recent re-publication and forthcoming translation of W. Bauer, *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum*, appendix to the 2nd edition by G. Strecker (Tübingen: Mohr, 1964).

4. On Wisdom in I Corinthians see R. W. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 275-305, who is appreciative yet critical of U. Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit: Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu 1. Kor. 1 und 2* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1959). A different approach to the interpretation of the first four chapters of I Corinthians may be seen in N. A. Dahl, "Paul and the Church at Corinth According to I Corinthians 1:10-4:21," in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox*, ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, and R. R. Niebuhr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 313-35.

philosophical tradition, especially from Socrates down. Apparently the mystery religions pre-supposed knowledge of the mysteries as necessary for salvation. At a more primitive level one thinks of the knowledge of magical formulations and charms. From the East, astrology, the knowledge of the stars, had an impact upon the Greek mind. The statement that the Greeks seek wisdom is true in a variety of senses.

If Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, what do the two have in common? One might think very little. But over against the cross of Christ the common factor in the demand for signs and the quest for wisdom stands out. Both signs and wisdom put a premium on what is controllable or calculable. The demand for a sign is the demand that a given claim to authority or righteousness be validated publicly in a generally recognized way. The search for wisdom is a search for certainty. Both are in different ways efforts to make the divine accountable and to control the relation to it so that man's best interest is served. The sign makes the one who receives it the judge of its validity. Wisdom is power in any time and in any relationship. Over against signs and wisdom Paul puts the cross of Christ, which he describes as weakness and foolishness. It is important to remember that he means weakness and foolishness by the world's standards, and the world's standards of power and wisdom are false. Yet the contrast which he makes is valid, for the cross upsets all efforts to make the divine reality subject to human calculation and control. It implies the reversal of ordinary standards of evaluation. The one sent from God is crucified and dies, and because he dies God's will is not thwarted, but carried out. By setting the cross over against the religious quests of both the Jew and the Greek, Paul presents it as the symbol of the authoritative and self-authenticating power of the gospel.

Paul's word shows the contrast between the Christian message and the standards and expectations of an unbelieving world. He takes up the theme of the cross, which was given him by history and by the earliest tradition, and develops its meaning theologically. Paul thus represents the course that the main stream of Christian teaching and preaching was to take. His central emphasis upon the cross recurs again and again in the New Testament. One finds it in all the Gospels, in the speeches of Acts, in I Peter and in Hebrews. Paul effectively defined the center of the Christian message, that in the cross of Christ God was acting for the salvation of mankind. This emphasis existed and would probably have prevailed without

Paul, but Paul immensely deepened and enriched the Christian tradition at its source.

Yet the needs of the church could not be entirely satisfied by repeating the message of the cross. From the days of Jesus' public ministry his disciples had remembered and passed along many of the things he said. Thus alongside the proclamation of the cross there existed a tradition of the sayings of Jesus himself. These were regarded in some Christian circles as authoritative words, carrying the weight of divine revelation. Although Paul does not tell us much about Jesus' teaching, on the rare occasions when he quotes a word of Jesus he obviously regards it as decisive. Only after Paul's death, however, were the central proclamation of Jesus' death and resurrection and the traditions of his teaching (and healing) ministry combined in literary works, producing the documents we call Gospels. In principle at least these Gospels represent the two principal foci of authority in the early church and in the New Testament.[5] We, therefore, can infer that in the process of the composition of apostolic letters and the transmission of the Jesus tradition, and in the later stage which saw the combining of their principal motifs, there was a single fundamental motivation, namely, the desire to give authoritative utterance to the Christian message.

Another important locus of authority in early Christianity was the prophet. Paul speaks of the prophet and ranks him second only to the apostle. The Book of Revelation seems to be the work of at least one such prophet. In the Didache we learn that some prophets were beginning to present problems. What was the extent and basis of their authority? Some of them obviously felt empowered to speak in the name of the Lord, as we see in Revelation (cf. esp. 1:17-3:22). Similar prophetic words of the Lord are probably found also in the Gospels. The author of Revelation did not fall out of touch with the reality of the earthly and crucified Lord and surely the evangelists did not. Still, the danger that the prophetic inspiration or imagination would simply run wild was always present, so it became necessary not only to test every spirit (I John 4:1), but to establish definite norms by which the true, and therefore authoritative, could be separated from the specious. Paul already distinguishes utterances which can only be inspired by the Spirit from those which cannot possibly be (I Cor. 12:1-3).

5. Implicit in this analysis is the acknowledgment of an important distinction between the message *of* Jesus and the message *about* Jesus. Whether Bultmann has drawn this distinction too sharply is a good question, but of its existence and importance there can be little doubt.

The problematic position of the prophet reflects the larger issue of the role of the Spirit as an authority within early Christianity.[6] This problem had reached critical proportions by Paul's time, as the Corinthian correspondence shows. On the one hand, possession of the Spirit and charismatic deed and utterance were widely regarded as evidence of the activity of God or Christ within the community (I Cor. 12-14). On the other, it quickly became obvious that the authorization of the Spirit could be claimed by anyone for anything. The Spirit was the sensible ground of a new sense of power and authority in the church and at the same time a potential danger to the unity and tranquility of the community. Paul attempts delicately to balance the positive empowering and assuring role of the Spirit against its obvious liabilities and abuses. While the Spirit was doubtless a primitive and powerful factor in the early Christian missionary preaching and community, its utility or helpfulness in resolving conflicting claims and urgent needs which arose in the life and thought of the church as a developing institution in the world was decidedly limited.

2. The Beginnings of the Canon

Together with the kerygma of the cross and resurrection, the tradition of Jesus' words, and spirit-inspired prophecy, there was a fourth locus of authority in early Christianity, namely, the scriptures which Christians now call the Old Testament. By means of these writings the early church sought to understand the event of Jesus Christ, which it regarded as the revelation of God's word. Although the precise limits of the Hagiographa at the time of Christian origins is a debated question, clearly the Law and the Prophets were firmly established as authoritative and holy Scripture in Jesus' day. The use of the Psalms in the New Testament shows that there was also no doubt of their canonicity. The Jamnian (Protestant) canon is a rough, but not misleading, guide to the early Christian view of the extent of the Old Testament.[7] From the letters of Paul

6. On the tension between spiritual and institutional authority in early Christianity see H. F. von Campenhausen, *Kirchliches Amt und Geistliche Vollmacht in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (2. Aufl.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1963).

7. A. C. Sundberg, *The Old Testament of the Early Church* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), disputes the commonly held view that the early church followed a Hellenistic Jewish Old Testament canon, predominant in Alexandria, instead of the Palestinian canon confirmed by Jamnia. Rather, he thinks that the canonical usage of both Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism was relatively broad and loose with respect to the Hagiographa, and that this state of affairs is reflected in the New Testament.

one receives the distinct impression that the Jewish Bible constituted the most easily accessible and applicable source of authority next to the Apostle's own preaching of the cross of Christ. Indeed, the fact that he seeks to support the truth of the kerygma from these writings (cf. I Cor. 15:3 ff., which, although traditional, surely reflects Paul's own view) shows that he acknowledged the prior claim of their authority.

Nevertheless, the need for a distinctly Christian norm or rule (Greek, *kanon*) of faith and life was becoming apparent, and it was already at work in the writing of many of the New Testament books. During the period of the formation of the New Testament, as various books were sifted and collected, this need only became more explicit. At that time, some early writings were eliminated because they were manifestly not the work of apostles or authors with apostolic connections; others fell into disuse, or were considered less profitable, unsound or even dangerous. Gradually a consensus developed on the need for a canon and on the books to be included in it.

Two approximate dates, the end of the first century and the end of the second, are important for understanding the development of the New Testament. By the end of the first century, or soon thereafter, most of the books now in the New Testament had been written. By the end of the second century the principal books of the New Testament were already recognized as part of a canon. We learn from a number of different sources dating from about the end of the second century that Christians throughout the world were using the same authoritative books: the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the thirteen Pauline letters, and at least two of the Catholic or general letters, I Peter and I John. The Muratorian canon, which lists the books accepted by the Roman church; Irenaeus, representing Gaul and the West; Tertullian, the fiery North African; and Clement, the learned bishop of Alexandria, all testify that by and large the same books were in use. A list of canonical books identical with the twenty-seven accepted by almost all churches does not appear until the latter half of the fourth century, but after A.D. 200 the differences were minor compared with the basic agreement among most Christians.

The stages in the development of the New Testament canon from the end of the first century to the end of the second, or from the writing of the individual books until the emergence of an agreed

upon collection at about the end of the second century, are, however, difficult to discern. During this period the history of the canon would seem to be mainly the history of its two primary parts, the Gospels and the letters of Paul. But concerning the collection of these two sets of documents we actually know little.

Some of the letters of Paul seem to have circulated during his own lifetime and at his direction (cf. Col. 4:16). How soon after his death an effort was made to collect his letters is uncertain. We know that about the middle of the second century Marcion, who espoused doctrines the church condemned as heretical, had a canon consisting of the Gospel of Luke and ten of Paul's letters. Yet this bit of information is not too helpful, for it is uncertain whether Marcion's canon was the first ever to have been put forward or merely an adaption of a churchly canon. What does seem certain is that between the end of the first century and the middle of the second Paul's letters began to circulate and that they were regarded as fruitful for reading, if not holy Scripture. Ignatius the bishop of Antioch (flourished ca. 115) mentions "all the letters of Paul" in his own letter to the Ephesian church (12:2) and all Paul's letters are also spoken of in II Peter 3:16 (written ca. 125-50). In the early second century Paul's letters were apparently known as a collection.

As for the Gospels, we again know little about the circumstances of their collection. Although the canonical Gospels (or Gospel traditions) were widely quoted by second-century writers, as late as the last quarter of the second century Irenaeus wrote at some length about the four Gospels and made a point of the appropriateness and the necessity of that number, four. It is as if he were addressing himself to some who thought that four were unnecessary or superfluous. In all probability, Marcion, whose canon contained only one Gospel, reflects the practice of an earlier period in which an individual church, or even a geographical area, had only one. A multi-Gospel canon could have come into use only as the Gospels of various churches were combined. In the process of combination some Gospels doubtless fell by the wayside. In the early Christian writers we catch glimpses of some of these other Gospels, which for one reason or another were rejected in the process of sifting and choosing which led to the formation of what we know as the New Testament.

3. The Significance of the Canon for the Hermeneutical Problem

The New Testament as a collection of authoritative books, a

canon of holy scripture, was born out of a combination of theological convictions and practical needs. But these interests and needs were not simply imposed from without upon the New Testament books. It is true that the Apostle Paul, for example, did not think that he was writing holy scripture when he wrote to the Corinthians or even to the Romans. Yet he was quite consciously asserting his apostolic authority to say what distinctively Christian faith was and what it implied for the life of believers under certain specific circumstances. By the same token, those who preserved the sayings of Jesus may not have thought of themselves as setting up a rival to Moses. Nevertheless, they believed that the sayings of Jesus were faithful guides to the will of God and applied them like holy Scripture to the situations which arose in the life of the church. The impulse to establish a canon and thus provide resources for the guidance and enrichment of the church did not begin with the writing of the last New Testament book, but in some form actually preceded and motivated the writing of most of those books. In this sense, and thus at a fundamental level, there is a unity in the New Testament.[8]

The New Testament as a whole, and in its total historical development, is an effort on the part of the early Christian church to define the faith and indicate its consequences for life. It is intended to lay down certain directions and boundaries, for it is not simply a random or even a representative specimen of opinion. It goes beyond, but does not contradict, the purposes of the individual authors in writing. When we think of the meaning and authority of the New Testament, therefore, we must concern ourselves not only with what the authors intended, but with the meaning of the canon as a whole. Although trite, it is nevertheless true and important that the New Testament is the church's book—inconceivable apart from the early church. It speaks to that church's needs and was composed in and by that church. The New Testament also intends to point to a ground of authority, the good news, beyond the church. This purpose

8. Of course, the various New Testament books do not all say the same thing. In fact, there are real differences and apparent disagreements among them. For the most part, however, *the New Testament books* show an interest in what is apostolic, authoritative, and original. They attach importance to the earthly life and ministry of Jesus, even if—as in the case of Paul—that interest concentrates mainly upon his death. They regard the death and resurrection of Jesus as the central saving event. They look upon Christ and the church as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and they look forward to the final revelation of God's power and glory. Moreover, they agree in attaching fundamental importance to the moral life.

is implicit in the process of canonization, active in the writing of the individual books, and present even in the pre-literary period of the tradition's development.

Whoever would come to terms with the New Testament must take account of its intention to speak an authoritative word to the church. This authoritative intention manifests itself, not only in the fact that the New Testament canon was formed with such a purpose in view, but in a variety of other ways. As we have already noted, the New Testament presents a three-dimensional perspective in which several loci of authority appear. In addition to the proclamation of the kerygma, the traditioned word of Jesus, Spirit-inspired prophecy, and the Old Testament, one must reckon with the closely related, but nevertheless distinguishable authoritative structures of the church from the apostolate to the ordained ministry, which emerge in the New Testament and through which the authority of the New Testament gospel was mediated. Furthermore, within individual documents, such as the Gospel according to Matthew, multiple layers of authority can be discerned. Beginning with the kerygma of the cross and resurrection and the tradition of Jesus' words and deeds already combined in Mark, Matthew added a collection of Jesus' words, which, judging from its character as well as its use in Luke, already possessed considerable authority in early Christianity. He included also material peculiar to his Gospel, much of it probably traditional, and therefore already regarded by some Christians as authoritative. His final production was intended not only to be authoritative in and of itself, but to convey the authority of Jesus. (Note that in a somewhat less complex literary form Paul's letters convey the apostolic authority vested in him and his proclamation of the cross and resurrection, but based upon the authority of the Lord.) In a work like Hebrews, which does not claim apostolic authority, the situation is somewhat different. Yet it can scarcely be maintained that the author does not wish to convey a definitive and "authorized" message. In this case, however, the Old Testament comes into play more extensively and in a unique way so that it rather than the Jesus tradition or the apostolic kerygma grounds the author's theological exposition. In the Book of Revelation, on the other hand, Old Testament authority seems to be combined with Spirit-inspired prophecy.

There is also the further consideration that between the completion of the New Testament books by their respective authors and the establishment of the canon other stages intervened. As has been

noted, Gospels and letters were collected. Earlier, fragments of Pauline letters were perhaps joined together (*e.g.* II Corinthians and Philippians).[9] Conceivably some books were augmented or altered editorially (*e.g.* the Gospel according to John). Thus in the New Testament we are dealing with multiple layers and modes of early Christian expression which represent the efforts of the early church to preserve and mediate the authoritative truth it believed God had revealed in Jesus Christ.

4. Church and Hermeneutic

In view of the churchly authority of the New Testament in its historical origin and development, the contemporary discussion of the problem of hermeneutics should not be separated from the question of authority in the church (a broader concept than "ecclesiastical authority"). Therefore the Faith and Order Commission study of biblical authority has quite naturally and rightly arisen out its consideration of the hermeneutical problem. Without implying that this range of questions has been bypassed by those who have already devoted very careful attention to the hermeneutical problem,[10] we now advance several observations or questions on the relation of hermeneutic, authority, and church.

In the first place, if the New Testament writings, in their formative stages as well as their later canonical status were intended primarily as an authority for or within the church,[11] something is thereby implied for the scope and range of the hermeneutical effort. Historically viewed, it would appear that the primary hermeneutical task is always the interpretation of the New Testament to the church itself. If this task cannot be, or is not, accomplished, the question of authority becomes a hollow one. In fact, this conclusion is not out of accord with the hermeneutical efforts of the past two decades. Bultmann, for example, has really addressed himself to the

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9. Partition theories concerning II Corinthians are widely held. Recently there has been a growing tendency to regard Philippians as a composite document. Cf. H. Koester, "The Purpose of the Polemic of a Pauline Fragment," *NTS*, 8 (1962), 317-332.

10. In a sense the whole hermeneutical discussion of recent years has centered about the problem of the church's speaking of God or the church's interpretation of Scripture. Interest in the question of the nature or identity of the church has not, however, been commensurate with the tacit acknowledgment of the church's role.

11. While it cannot be maintained with certainty that all of the New Testament books were written as church documents, the drift of modern study (form-criticism, etc.) is to see them in that light. Perhaps the most notable exception is Luke-Acts, where apologetic motifs are most conspicuous.

broader constituency of the church, especially to Protestant Christendom, as well as to those actively participant in some arm of the institution. Yet in undertaking to address the total constituency of the church, one does not avoid the necessity of addressing modern man, who, in all his various shapes and forms, is to be found within the parish and, indeed, within the walls of the sanctuary. While Bultmann's conception of modern man and the necessities under which he lives may be subject to debate, his assumption that the gospel must speak to this man, whether in the church or out, is not.

Thus in the second place, we may ask whether the New Testament itself does not in some very basic and essential sense intend to address man in general as well as the church. The answer is certainly yes. More precisely, the gospel enshrined in the New Testament is preached and understood as God's word to the world—Jew and Greek. (The distinction between church and world tends, however, to rigidify in the later New Testament documents.) Still there is some reason to distinguish between the scope of the gospel, certainly universal, and the intended function of the New Testament writings and canon. In its totality, as well as in the intention of most of its individual authors, the New Testament is directed to the church, and is thus not primarily a missionary tract. Therefore, one may with some justification distinguish the hermeneutical task within the church, which always appropriately begins with the canonical scriptures, from the task or proclamation and interpretation of the gospel to the world, which does not—least of all in our day—take the form of the interpretation of these documents. While this distinction may not be fundamental, since the historically intended function of the New Testament writings and canon cannot be separated from the purpose and scope of the gospel, it has a penultimate validity. Perhaps the matter may be stated as follows: the church interprets its scriptures to itself in order that it may understand the gospel and interpret it to the world.

Such considerations raise a third issue germane to the hermeneutical task, namely, the identity and authorization of the interpreting church. The hermeneutic of the Bultmann school, for all its alleged "radicalism," has operated on the very Protestant principle that the scriptures rightly interpreted continually constitute the church or bring it into being. Yet Bultmann and his heirs differ from precritical Protestants in acknowledging that from stem to stern the canon is the product of an inner-churchly process, and reflects not only the unity of the gospel and church, but early diversity in understanding and practice. Canonization of such diverse documents was

only possible in the wake of historically unjustifiable harmonization of their differences. Therefore, although for the Bultmannians the word spoken on the basis of scripture constitutes the church, the understanding of scripture as canon is rejected in principle. As a consequence, secondary or negative theological weight is attached to the church and churchly processes which produced the New Testament writings and canon. Naturally, then, the present church does not legitimate itself by asserting or proving its historical continuity with the early church, nor can it discover its authority and unity on the basis of the New Testament canon *per se*, which is to a considerable degree the basis of its diversity. It is not surprising that from the Catholic side this perspective seems to be a sure way of opening the door to subjectivity and chaos.[12] On the other side, Protestants can scarcely overlook apparent discrepancies between the bearing of the New Testament and the ecclesiastical doctrine and practice of Roman Catholicism, a matter concerning which many Roman Catholics are now confronting their church. At the same time, it ought to be acknowledged that the Protestant position regarding the nature and authority of scripture, as well as church, is in a state of irresolution, largely as a result of modern historical criticism. While this situation continues a diversity of hermeneutical methods and results, not only between Protestant and Catholic, but among Protestants can reasonably be expected. For the moment one can only say that while diversity can be unproductive and degenerate into polemics, it is doubtless to be preferred to uniformity for uniformity's sake.

The present state of affairs in the discussion between Bultmannians or post-Bultmannians (who might better be called "radical Protestants"—although not "Protestant radicals") and Roman Catholic theologians serves to illustrate the interdependence of questions of church, hermeneutic, and biblical authority, an important problem area in which further discussion and clarification is desirable and necessary. Presumably the current Faith and Order study, which includes a sizeable Roman Catholic representation at all levels, will be able to delineate the complex interrelation of these issues, although a resolution of all major points of conflict still seems to lie in the indeterminate future—or, theologically speaking, in God's hands!

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12. Cf. H. Küng's strictures against E. Käsemann's position in *Kirche im Konzil* (Freiburg: Herder, 1963), pp. 125-155. Note also the different positions on "Unity and Diversity in New Testament Ecclesiology," *Novum Testamentum*, 6 (1963), of the Protestant Käsemann (pp. 290-97) and the Catholic R. E. Brown (pp. 298-308).

Historical Methodology and Biblical Hermeneutic

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Historical knowledge (or "belief," if you prefer) is mediated. It is never simply "given" immediately or directly. The historian, in his methodological attempt to reconstruct history, has *no immediate*, direct *access* to that which he wishes faithfully to reconstruct, whether this be acts of God, divine revelation, miracles, human acts, human intentions, human experiences, facts, or events. This statement holds even for my own attempt to do my own "historiography," if for no other reason than that I must rely upon my own fallible memory supported by other ambiguous evidence.

There are *no uninterpreted* acts of God, divine revelations, miracles, human acts, human intentions, human experiences, facts or events. All the items in this list (which could, of course, be indefinitely expanded) are interpretive categories. To assert that there are instances which appropriately fall under one or another of these categories (or "classes," if you like) already involves a human act of interpretation.

If it is objected that some experiences may be "self-interpreting," the answer is that while the givenness of some experiences may be highly suggestive as regards its own appropriate interpretation, *no experience*—at least no human experience—is *entirely self-interpretive* inasmuch as subjective agency (through active organization and/or through some concrete mode of passive receptivity) affects the meaning-form of the experience. Experience is never mere givenness. Any interpretation at all goes, in some manner, beyond mere givenness.

Again, it might be objected that "facts" and "events," at least, do not necessarily involve interpretation. Otherwise how could we avoid lapsing into subjective Idealism? How could we legitimately allow for the occurrence of events utterly unknown to us and our own continuous search for new facts which are as yet unknown to (hence certainly uninterpreted by) us? This objection may be accepted if the point is merely that we have good empirical-rational

justification for the belief that reality vastly transcends that of which we are aware. There are surely (humanly) unknown realities. However, to hold this view, which I do, is already to assert than an interpretation holds, even though in this case the interpretation is a very general ontological-epistemological one. The evidence for it is overwhelming, but the historical fact that philosophical theories which reject it have been formulated will alone show that the evidence is not entirely "self-interpretive."

In any case, however, the ordinary use of the terms "fact" and "event" involves a partially specifiable degree of definiteness: "fact" usually includes the meaning "unit of knowable reality"; "event" usually includes the meaning "unit of process (or becoming) in a relational (including temporal) context."

The domain of human history is the domain of events insofar as these involve and are involved in the interconnectedness of human life. Historiography is an effort at empirical reconstruction determined in part by rational (namely, methodological, including hermeneutical) principles accepted as immanently governing the discipline, setting certain of its conditions and thereby certain of its limits. If historiography deals with events and if there are no uninterpreted events, historiography is involved part and parcel in interpretation. Styles, modes, categories, dimensions, and emphases of historical interpretations may vary. Historiographical interpretation is, in any case, not the only mode or facet of possible historical interpretation. But historiography is itself involved in interpretation throughout. (Hereafter the reader may read "interpreted" as qualifying every instance of "event." I need not repeat *ad nauseam*: "there are no uninterpreted events"!) And a relatively "meaningless" interpretation of history is no less an interpretation than is a highly "meaningful" interpretation.

However, there is no such thing as "mere" interpretation. Interpretation is always interpretation "of . . .," with some *reference*, at least in intention. The intentional reference of historiography is a contextual interconnection of events as involving and involved in human life. The goal of historiography is the relevant interpretive reconstruction of these event-connections in their appropriate contexts. The questions to be asked in arriving at this goal are: what contextual reconstruction is most plausible and relevant? and what event reconstruction is most plausible? (Insofar as any event may constitute part of the context for some other event or events, the question of "relevance" is also relevant.)

We may now begin to look at the relation of historical interpretation to biblical hermeneutic.

In my attempted historiographic reconstructions of contexts and events I reject (on various grounds) some of the alleged events which were included within some other, earlier traditional (e.g., literal biblical) reconstructions. It is my thesis that *theological significance* may be *altered* by the reconstructing rejection of previously believed events (as also, of course, alternatively, by the reconstructing "acceptance" or "discernment" of other alleged events which are novel to some prior reconstructions: e.g., the conviction that Jesus held some version of ultimate universal salvation). Yet only the most extreme form of biblical literalism imaginable would attempt to hold (and I think the internal consistency could be easily challenged) that the rejection of any alleged event has precisely the same effect upon theological significance as the rejection of any other alleged event.

Let us next look for some *principles* which may help to clarify the relation between *rejection* of alleged *events* and *theological significance.*

(1) In cases in which it seems most relevant to view a number of alleged events as instances of an interpretive class (e.g., extraordinary bodily healings), there is a distinction, as regards theological significance, between rejecting *some* alleged events and rejecting *all* alleged events of that class.

(2) If one finds oneself disposed to reject *all* alleged events of an interpretive class, one should examine the question whether one's rejection is based entirely on empirical evidence or lack thereof, or on some features of one's world-view commitment functioning *a priori* in relation to any possible historical evidence—and if so, whether this prior view-commitment is itself adequately grounded. (The same questioning is, of course, equally relevant for one who finds himself disposed to accept all alleged events of an interpretive class.)

(3) Rejection of some/all alleged events of *one class* does not necessarily involve the same implications for theological significance as the rejection of some/all alleged events of *other classes*: e.g., extraordinary physical events; extraordinary biological healing; extraordinarily important "coincidences" of connections in historical events; extraordinary repentance and conversion; extraordinary steadfastness of faith, love, trust, obedience, and worship; extraordinary experiences of awareness of the intention of God; extraordinary

experiences of the presence of God. (The repeated use of "extraordinary" is not intended to suggest that the "ordinary" is devoid of theological significance, but rather merely to recognize the fact that we are not ordinarily disposed to question or reject the ordinary!)

(4) Interpretive classes (categories) are *not* simply *self-evident* (entirely self-interpretive). On historical and scientific as well as theological grounds, the understanding of the *most relevant interpretive categories* ought on principle to remain open to conceptual reformulation. This is not, however, equivalent to saying that a man—historian, scientist, theologian, or what have you—ought always, for his own personal integrity's sake, to remain in psychological doubt about everything of importance, including his commitment through, and employment of, basic interpretive categories.

(5) Rejection of an alleged *unique* event may involve different implications for theological significance than does the rejection of some/all alleged events of a class—though it is logically closer to rejection of all members of a class (or of the applicability of a category) than to the rejection of some instances of a class. I am here employing the term "unique" analogically and therefore relatively rather than absolutely. On my view every concretely existing reality is in some measure and manner unique—however small the "degree" —at least as regards its relational context. (Only abstractions can be totally general.) And, on the other hand, no concrete reality is absolutely unique. (If even God were absolutely unique vis-à-vis us and our experience, there could on principle be no such thing as "theological significance" of any kind for us).

(6) Whether or not a particular alleged event (or connected series of events), such as the exodus or the life of Jesus, is best regarded as unique, will be a partially ambiguous question, dependent in part upon relative emphasis upon its *contextual significance for other* events and connected series of events. Insofar as an event or connected series of events seems to be most appropriately regarded as exercising a relatively *irreplaceable* significance for other events and series of events, it is, in that respect, taken as *functionally unique.* Thus the question as to relative contextual uniqueness is a very high-order interpretive question in integrating historical interpretations and theological significance. (The two-edged cut of the "one-ness" of God in monotheism, including Trinitarian monotheism, gives equally basic thrust to the questions of universal God-dependence and of uniquely particular God-dependence.)

(7) The more emphatically *unique* the potential *contextual significance* of an alleged event or series of events, the greater the implications for *theological significance* involved in its rejection (or acceptance or reinterpretation). Intrinsically considered, the alleged event of Jesus' miraculous conception is "more unique" than the alleged event of the exodus out of Egyptian slavery of (some of) the ancestors of the Hebrew people. However, considered in terms of contextual significance for other series of events, just the reverse holds: (some sort of) exodus has an irreplaceable theological significance for the whole life of the Hebrew; whereas the same can scarcely be said for the miraculous conception in relation to the whole life of Christians. (After all, a Chalcedonian or even monophysite Christology does not *per se* involve any view one way or another as to the mode of Jesus' biological conception.)

(8) The *rejection* of *all* the events alleged in the *Bible* would *neither logically* entail nor necessarily *existentially* compel the *abandonment* of theism. (Some men have been, apparently, theists of some sort without any contact with either the alleged biblical events or the traditions about them.)

(9) However, the work of linguistic analysis should alert theism to the possibility of "death by a thousand qualifications." While it is not possible to lay down a logical (or even loosely "methodological") rule as to just which alleged events or interpretive categories of events would have to be rejected before theism becomes rationally and/or existentially untenable, it should at least be clear that (inasmuch as theism—unlike deism or pantheism—involves the view that God is at some—whatever—times and in some—whatever—ways a transcendent Agent immanently involving himself in history, influencing, directing, and re-possible-izing some courses of historical events) an individually and culturally variable "limit" does *function*, "beyond" which the *gradual evacuation* of contents has left the form of theism (if indeed even the form remain) *empty* of living existential *relevance*. A "God who acts," but never, apparently, in any actual instances, is for every practical human purpose "dead."

(10) The rejection of some events within historical reconstruction would necessarily invalidate some *historic* types of theism.

A reconstruction involving rejection of (not mere agnosticism about) the exodus event (broadly taken as the emergence from Egyptian slavery of some of the ancestors of the Hebrew people) would invalidate Hebraic religion in any of its historic forms—including, be it well noted, classical Christianity, whose alleged status

as a "New Israel" presupposes in some sense the validity of the theological concept of a "prior Israel." (The movement within contemporary Judaism whose point of departure is a radical rejection of any sense of divine "election" is—in this context—appropriately self-designated as "Reconstructionist." It has historically reconstructed itself out of any distinctly theological sense of "Judaism.")

A reconstruction involving rejection of (not mere agnosticism about) the event (the having been actually lived) of the life of Jesus of Nazareth would invalidate Christian religion in any of its historic forms.

Not everyone will agree with that statement. I once put to Paul Tillich the following question in a Kearns Seminar at Duke: "Dr. Tillich, I would like to ask you a question regarding a possibility which you as well as I will consider historically unlikely but which may perhaps serve to clarify certain implications of your system. Suppose, at some time in the future, documents presently unknown to us should be discovered which, in the judgment of the overwhelming majority of biblical scholars, pointed inescapably to the conclusion that—not merely was the life of Jesus of Nazareth not of such-and-such a kind, as we had thought—there was no actual living man at all to whose life the New Testament documents witness; but that rather the entire set of New Testament documents was composed *de novo* by a secret religious brotherhood and successfully perpetrated into the tradition stream of history: would this in any way whatever affect the *essence* of Christianity as you understand it?" Tillich's answer (not unexpected by me) was one word: "No." Then he went on for about fifteen minutes to talk about "the new being."

This anecdote at least illustrates that my thesis is not necessarily persuasive to all theologians—nor even necessarily to the great ones!

The question I posed to Tillich was formulated in terms of a possible historical reconstruction: would your understanding of the essential theological significance of one (New Testament) reconstruction be affected by another (Jesus never actually lived) reconstruction? And it is certainly true that the only way (in this life at least!) in which we could ever "get at" the occurrence or nonoccurrence of alleged past events is through some form of *historical reconstruction*: we do not have any direct, immediate access to the "pure" occurrence or nonoccurrence of past "events-in-themselves" with which we could "then" compare our reconstructions to see whether or not the two "correspond."

Nevertheless—to carry the "skandalon" (theological and other-

wise) still farther—I hereby lay down the thesis that the ontological-epistemological-existential question still remains as a distinguishable, meaningful, and important question (sometimes even in terms of theological significance): *whether or not* an event or series of events sufficiently like our attempted event-reconstruction was (in some cases, especially as regards theological significance, also "is" and even "shall be") *actually taking place.* This question does indeed involve a "double" use of "event" (though, be it noted, neither use "separates off" an "event-in-itself" from interpretation).

Ontologically, the intentional-structure of any belief in an alleged event includes within its intention a reality-reference. At the "gut level," everyone of us knows this—otherwise we could never even distinguish between believing that such and such really has happened and merely imagining or wishing that such and such might have happened.

Epistemologically, our finite fallibility involves the risk of error in all our would-be cognitive acts. The price we human beings have to pay—like it or lump it—for even the possibility of being right is the possibility (with its accompanying epistemological risk) of being wrong.

The distinctive meaning-status of the so-called "historicist" language: *"wie es eigentlich gewesen"* ("how it actually happened") may be of more than "merely philosophical" (ontological and epistemological) import. Let me illustrate.

I receive a desperate emergency call from home. I need to get home quickly. I know that many of the Durham streets are torn up and impassable due to work on the expressway. A colleague comments that he heard that the work on the X Street bridge was due to be finished yesterday. X Street is the only direct route home. I get in my car and dig out for the X Street route. What am I doing as I zip along ?

I am taking a more (or less) well-calculated existential risk regarding my present and future as well as the present and future of some of those I love . . . on the basis of what? On the basis of an interpretive reconstruction of past history: I believe (with whatever degree of psychological assurance) that the bridge has actually been finished and I am committing myself to acting on the basis of that belief. Now I am right or I am wrong. My "thinking cannot make it so," as regards either the past events or their relation to me in my present and future.

This belief, as I concentrate on operating the car, shapes, guides,

and possible-izes my present. (The emergency is a desperate limited-time situation. If I did not believe in this moment that I could get home in time, I would be frozen in impotent despair.)

As I drive I reflect also upon the fact that I didn't get a chance to ask my colleague about the source of his report. And I know full well that, in any case, promises for work-completion are sometimes kept and sometimes not. I also see, as I move along, some evidence that counts in favor and some that counts against my belief. Some parallel parts of the road work look completed, but others still appear in disarray. And I am also aware that before I even reach the allegedly completed bridge I may come to a decisive sign which says "DETOUR—NO THRU STREET" to me. Or I may come to a different decisive sign which says "THRUWAY AHEAD" to me. Logically, of course, I could in principle ignore any and all evidence. But I do not ignore the evidence, because I am dead serious. I am not just playing a game.

However, "whether or not an event or series of events sufficiently like my attempted reconstruction was actually taking place" in the past (the finishing of the bridge yesterday) affects not only my present, as I drive, but also, even more decisively, my future (and the future of others). If when I get there, there just ain't no bridge across, I (and they) have "had it."

Yes, I do regard Jesus of Nazareth as a Bridge: his life, death, resurrection, and exaltation as the series of events through which that Bridge (he himself) was actually "constructed and completed."

No, I am not as clear as I might like to be about the "how." But as mediating the transcendent mystery I now see as relevant interpretive categories something like the following:

The only way in which I or any other human being can become ready for everlasting life *as* blessedness is through becoming so perfectly *steadfast* in the basic interpersonal modes of relationship (worship, faith, love, trust, obedience) as to be *beyond downward transformation by any possible temptation* whatever. The perfecting of finite interpersonal life through free individual selfhood cannot but be an uphill battle: the more so inasmuch as tempting-trials for self-centered freedom are constituted not only by experience of evil, lack or "poverty," with the temptation to ultimate despair and blasphemy, but also—and not less so—by experience of good, fullness or "abundance," with the temptation to self- or group-deifying pride and idolatry.

(If God *had* created "us" as angels in heaven or men in paradise,

we *would* have "fallen," because maturating experience and decision-making responsibility cannot be created *de novo*, even by God. Blessedness, not less than cursedness, is for finitely free selfhood a tempting-trial through the experience and conquest of which alone can possibly come a steadfastly mature selfhood for whom neither abundance nor poverty, neither goodness nor evil, can lead away from steadfastness toward the love of God and love for the neighbor.)

Accordingly, by way of what might be called "modified apocalyptic thinking," I see our present moving toward a future in which we shall experience such evil, lack and "poverty" as has not before been seen (as intensely) by corporate humanity and also such good, fullness and "abundance" as has not before been seen (as intensely) by corporate humanity.

I can sum up the over-all interpretive context for the theological-interpersonal-historical significance of this life, as I see it, in one sentence: Human life is a *battle* (which God has *already* perfectly won through *one* man, the *Bridge*-man, Jesus) for the achievement and perfecting of worship, faith, love, trust, and obedience in and through an existential context which (in its *good* abundances as surely as in its *evil* deprivations) *predominantly militates against* this achievement, but through which (or through some basically similar context) *alone* such achievement can possibly come to be and to be eternally *steadfast*, so that finitely free personal creatures are *individually* and *corporately ready* for everlasting life as God's consummation of blessedness *beyond temptation*, and hence beyond ultimate *tragedy*. (The universalism of this interpretation indicates why I call it a "modified" apocalyptic thinking.)

Now this interpretive context has its own merits. It keeps me somewhere this side of complete insanity. Its application in life keeps me busy, and not merely busy but helps me to help my neighbor in the struggle against distortions of both evil and good, in the radically serious battle for the *theistic-humanizing* of life in which man does not destroy his own personalization through blasphemy or idolatry.

I think I am sensitive to relevant "evidence" (though no man can comprehend all the evidence). I have been through crises of non-verification and verification. These crises have contributed very substantially to the shaping of the view I now hold. As of now, I act with conviction. I do believe this vision of life is, ultimately, valid and true. I do not wait merely for "eschatological verification." I believe this view is being verified in my life day by day. Yet I also

know that, while I do not in fact believe it is so, it is in principle possible that all this "verification" of the theistic and Messianic dimensions of this view is somehow auto-suggested by the view itself.

Hence I acknowledge full well that "*whether* or *not* an event or series of events sufficiently like my attempted reconstruction was *actually* taking place" in the *past* (God's completion of the bridge through Jesus, the One for all) is the *most decisive condition* of my *future*, and the future of all humanity. I believe that I am, both retrospectively and proleptically, "linked" with that Bridge even now. But there will come an utterly decisive time in which EITHER there will be no Bridge across/OR I will find the true Pass-over.

Hence my own answer to the question I once put to Tillich is: "Yes."

We have for several pages been considering some issues involved in the Christian theological interpretation of history. Let us now return to a more general context of historical interpretation.

The key issue, as I see it, regarding the over-all interpretation (whether religious or secular) of history is the issue of *lawfulness* vs. *creativity* and, correlatively, *closed system* vs. *open system*. Let me sketch in something of what I mean by these terms.

By "lawfulness" I mean existent-becoming through the "immanence" of "principles" within processes. The stress on "immanence" involves emphasis upon "continuity" and "outwardness" (including external accessibility). The stress on "principles" involves emphasis upon "invariance" and "entropy" (as the inertially-ordering tendency of principles to exclude novelty).

By "creativity" I mean existent-becoming through the "transcendence" of "agencies" interactively supervening within the ongoing continuities of processes. The stress on "transcendence" involves emphasis upon possible "discontinuities" (logical, epistemological, ontological, and existential "gaps") and "inwardness" (as distinguished from mere publicly accessible "outwardness"). The stress upon "agencies" involves emphasis upon "indeterminacy" (which, of course, points to only one aspect of the significance of human "freedom") and "novelty."

Now neither the logic nor the ordinary human experience of "lawfulness" as sketched above excludes the concept or the reality of "creativity" as sketched above. *A priori* analysis as well ordinary human experience indicates that the lawfulness of immanent principles and the creativity of transcendent agency may reciprocally complement one another.

The predominant interpretation of "reason" has been to see it as man's autonomous capacity (through the immanence of principles within his own mind) to discern "rationality" (in turn, defined as the "lawful immanence of principles"). In the form of thoroughgoing determinism this prevalent concept of "reason" and "rationality" has allied itself with an alleged "empiricism" (the driving aim of which was to control physical causal predictability and hence to control physical causation) to theoretically-legislate creativity out of the universe. The *a priori* disciplines of logic (including mathematics) and the *a posteriori* successes of classical physics had, already by the time of Hume and Kant, so reinforced this predominant Western cultural *Weltanschauung* as to drive the proponents of genuine creativity into tour-de-force dualisms and reactionisms.

In terms of a world-view which sees the lawfulness of immanent principles as radically excluding any supervention from the creativity of transcendent agency, the universe is seen as an (essentially) one-level *closed* system. All processes in their smallest detail are predetermined and simply unwind (inertially) in time. Any "incursion" of the creativity of any agent (whether the "agent" be a wave-particle, or you, or God) which transcended the invariant, totally-determinate continuity of the one-level process-system would, accordingly, have to "violate inviolable laws" and "rip asunder the very fabric of nature."

That was the "hang-up" (humanistically and theologically) our forefathers were "stuck in." Given their cultural context, that hang-up was inevitable.

Today, however, that hang-up is quite "evitable." For many decades, now, that hang-up is as dead as Marley and the "doornail." Twentieth-century physics, the most fully developed and most precise of all the sciences, has radically overthrown the deterministic, one-level, closed-system conceptuality of the earlier classical (Newtonian-Laplacian) physics, and replaced it with a revolutionary new conceptuality, which brings back in, as utterly essential, precisely those concepts which earlier generations of physicists had labored so hard to exclude: multi-leveled processes with reciprocally transcendent and immanent interrelations and flexibly open interaction between levels; intra-level and inter-level gaps within continua; complex multi-dimensional (non-Euclidean) spheres of relationality (which transcend our biologically-adaptive three-dimensional capacities of perception, and of imagination rooted in perception, but which have a conceptual precision far greater than the precision of percep-

tion and which are found to be necessary to understand *reality*—even at its merely physical levels); sub-unit inwardness or "interiority" of organization and response, which is only partially accessible outwardly (by measuring-instrument procedures); indeterminacy of spontaneous agency at the very foundations of microphysics (which is, however, an indeterminacy "within limits"—boundary function of Planck's constant—that functions in complementary relation to invariant principles, with the result that microphysical behavior fulfills lawful conditions even though partially indeterminate); appearance of creative novelty within the entropic tendencies of systems (especially as manifest in the capacity of microphysical realities to remain open toward energy-utilization by biological organisms, which sustain contra-entropic processes without in any way "violating" the Second Law of thermodynamics).

The universe, as seen with the vision of modern physics, is a multi-dimensional system of flexible, mediated functionalities in which the lawfulness of immanent principles is flexibly open to complementary interaction with, redirection by, and higher-level fulfillment through the creativities of transcendent agencies.

This may be "news"* but, after fifty years, it can scarcely qualify as "new news." The sooner some biologists, psychologists, sociologists, historians, and (ah, yes) theologians get the message the better—unless one just likes to enjoy his hang-up because that's his "bag."

Now, as I said earlier, the key issue in over-all historical interpretation is the issue of lawfulness vs. creativity, correlated with closed-system interpretation vs. open-system interpretation.

Historical methodology, *as* a *methodology*, aims at the *lawfulness* of immanent principles, not creativity (though any sensitive employment of methodology always requires creativity). However, historical methodology, as a methodology, does not involve any assumption or ontological-assertion one way or the other as to whether the lawfulness of history is that of a closed system excluding creativity

* If the news of the revolution really hasn't reached you, read (read it anyway!) Ian G. Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion*, Prentice-Hall, 1966. (Note Barbour's favorable quotation from Robert E. Cushman's criticism of Bultmann on p. 434.) If you've had introductory college physics read Milic Capek, *The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics*, D. Van Nostrand, 1961. If you're still breathing and interested in mind "expansion" without the necessity of drugs read Edwin A. Abbott, *Flatland*, Sixth Ed., Revised with Introduction by Banesh Hoffmann, Dover (Pb), 1952. (Note also—and here the Editor speaks—that Ian Barbour is to be the James A. Gray Lecturer for 1969.)

or that of an open system in flexibly complementary interaction with the creativity of transcendent agencies (human, divine, or other).

If the historian takes modern physics as a partially suggestive model, he will operate with the latter conceptual assumption. If he takes scientific *methodology* as (explicitly or implicitly) *legislative* over the possible content of reality (as did the earlier classical physics, and as do, still, many non-physicists among the scientists of today, and as encouraged by Scient*ism* generally), he will (try to) restrict his operations to the former conceptual assumption, thus attempting to keep his concepts of possible historical reality within the limitative confines of what is methodologically accessible.

Although the creativity of interpersonal-historical life is not accessible to historical methodology, it is *accessible to the historian*, because the historian is a man, and a man as a man may be *personally engaged* in history. The immanent principles of the lawfulness of any methodology are impersonal and require for their application a measure of *impersonal disengagement* from history (as well as a measure of creative judgment if they are to be relevantly applied).

The key issue of lawfulness vs. creativity and closed system vs. open system focuses, in the domain of history, into the issue of impersonal vs. personal and interpersonal categories for the understanding of "historical event." The key *historical* questions are the impersonalizing/personalizing questions: what/who are we, individually and communally, becoming? may we become? ought we to become? The same questions are the key *theological* questions . . . transformed by being brought into a subordinated relation of dependence upon the ultimate (Impersonalizing/Personalizing) question: What/Who is God?

Hence, in this or any other cultural setting, insofar as history is disengaged, the personal face of God is disengaged. On the other hand, insofar as history is engaged, the personal face of God is at least potentially engageable.

Historical methodology as such requires relative historical *disengagement*. Every methodology, as a methodology, involves (relative) autonomy. Insofar as the relative autonomy of historical methodology functions *alone*, the inevitable result is a cumulative tendency toward *disengagement* from *history* and from the apperceivability of the personal face of *God*.

Once the apple of historiographical knowledge has been eaten, there is an invisible flaming sword which forecloses re-entry into any prior innocence. To attempt to turn back now from the relent-

less employment of historical methodology—far from enabling us with a reclaimed innocence to engage history and the personal face of God—would arbitrarily depersonalize us in our history and in our relation to God. For the lust for *truth*—even *if* it kills us—is an integral part of our fullest human personhood, our richest historical endeavor, and our openly receptive relation to the God to whom we may be committed through Jesus the Messiah.

On the other hand, insofar as historical methodology and its historiographically resultant reconstructions (in all their tentativeness, ambiguity and relativity) are employed not purely autonomously but as *complemented* by and holistically *integrated* with personal and interpersonal historical *engagement* in receptively sensitive openness toward possibilities of creative fulfillment and re-creative disruption through transcendent agency (our own, others', and perhaps an Other's) functionally mediated into the ordinariness of life, then historical methodology may help lead us to historical wisdom—and even to recognition of and engagement with the living Lord of history.

History, Hermeneutics and Homiletics

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Homiletics, the study of the principles of preaching, is closely related to the study of history and to hermeneutics, the study of the principles of interpretation. There is, in a sense, a trinitarian relationship between the three disciplines: unity and interdependence balanced by differentiation and non-uniformity. It may be argued that historical understanding is impossible without the influence of some interpretive stance, and that it is meaningless without some form of homiletical purpose. Similarly, one can show that any consideration of the principles of interpretation must be pure abstraction if divorced from the actualities of history, and that it must run into sheer aimlessness if separated from the concern for the contemporary communication of faith. In the same way, one can easily demonstrate that preaching, if it is torn loose from history, will lose its reality, and that sermons that have no background in the understanding of interpretation have neither depth nor relevance. It falls on those who will describe the achievements of modern scholarship to analyze the processes by which the recognition of this close interaction of history, hermeneutics and homiletics has slowly come to be recognized. It is our purpose here to relate the story of how the concerns of homiletics have increasingly come to the forefront in the modern study of history and hermeneutics, and at the same time to make certain that the contemporary developments in these diciplines are taken into consideration in modern homiletics and in the understanding of the preaching event itself. We shall consider each of these facets of contemporary scholarship in turn, and in each case our interest will focus on those developments which point toward an increasing interaction and interdependence between the three disciplines.

In general, one may describe the developments that have taken place in each of these disciplines during the twentieth century by way of logical antitheses and a movement toward synthesis. On the one hand one will discover strong tendencies toward empiricism, realism,

atomism, even agnosticism. On the other hand the pendulum tends to swing over toward speculation, idealism, monism and metaphysics. In recent decades, however, each of these dialectical alternatives has become increasingly unsatisfactory both to historians and to theoreticians in hermeneutics and homiletics, and a number of significant attempts have been made to find a synthesis that involves both a responsible recognition of historical realities and an honest acknowledgment of the dimensions of meaning and value. This process has not been without tension and contradiction, and the results are not free from distortion and confusion. But there can be no doubt about the importance of these attempts to integrate events and values, the past and the present, fact and faith.

I

We shall consider first the development of a synthesis involving both the analysis of events and the recognition of values in contemporary philosophy of history. This synthesis has been a long time coming. The twentieth century inherited from the nineteenth a perspective which made it difficult to think that such a synthesis was possible—or even desirable. The legacy of the nineteenth century philosophy of history was in the form of a sharp dichotomy between the historical-critical methods of research and the speculative-idealistic schools of thought. In a sense, the nineteenth century passed on two myths which the twentieth century has not until recently been able to demythologize: On the one side is the idea which was propounded by Hegel, and to a certain extent by Mills, concerning the possibility of identifying certain objectively given universal laws by which historical events are governed and in reference to which they are incorporated into a meaningful whole. On the other hand is the principle which was developed by the proponents of a scientific study of history, concerning the necessity of assuming an attitude of presuppositionless objectivity in relation to historical facts. Characteristically, both of these myths show clear tendencies away from subjectivity. The thrust of the nineteenth-century philosophy of history was toward objectivism, whether it be the objectivism of idealistic metaphysics or the objectivism of historical positivism. There were, as we shall see, certain other tendencies within nineteenth-century philosophy of history also, but these are undoubtedly the two determining poles in the historiological perspective that was inherited by the twentieth century: idealism and positivism.

One should note, of course, that the predominant interest in the

nineteenth-century centered on the scientific respectability of historical study. In this sense, Lessing must be considered more typical of the age that were Hegel and Mills. Hegel's grand universal schemes were, in fact, judged as preposterous speculations from the perspective of critical scholarship; and Mill's idea that historical study functions to explain scientifically the hitherto unknown universal laws, of which particular phenomena are mere instances, was flatly rejected by those who defined history as an empirical science. Lessing's categorical statement that contingent historical facts cannot contain absolute truths of reason expressed well the prevailing notion that the legitimacy of interpreting history from the standpoint of traditional metaphysical presuppositions was now preempted. It cleared the ground for manouvering historical consciousness away from the philosophy of history and toward the scientific study of history. The strongest aspect of the legacy of the nineteenth century was thus definitely the tradition of historical-critical research.

The extent to which the historians of the twentieth century have been informed by the nineteenth-century perspective is evident in the chasm which exists between those who consider history an exact science and those who are still interested in developing a synthetic understanding of historical laws and meaning. The latter group is now a pitiable minority; the myth of scientific objectivity has been far more persuasively argued—and is more immediately acceptable to the modern mind—than is the myth of transcendent patterns and eternal laws. So strong is the tradition of historical-critical research that modern historical scholarship is for the most part directed toward highly specialized and intensely concentrated fields of study, the typical historian being a scholar who buries himself in detailed research and precise investigations. The material for historical study is so vast that no one can justifiably claim complete comprehension or overall understanding; any such claims must inevitably stand discredited when confronted with the modern standards of scientific respectability. Typical is the reaction to the few twentieth-century historians like G. M. Trevelyan, Arnold Toynbee, Will Durant and Carl Grimberg who continued to make attempts at comprehensive history writing. These men's work is no longer taken seriously from a scientific point of view. It is considered significant in the sense that it popularizes the historical perspective, but it is clearly more in line with art or preaching than with scientific history. The modern historian is urged to abstain from such fanciful endeavors in comprehensiveness. He is taught to resign himself to the study of his-

torical facts and to regard his discipline as a subsidiary of and a supplement to the empirical sciences.

Representative of the two sides of the modern historiological chasm are on the one hand Maurice Mandelbaum, and on the other Collingwood and Jaspers. Mandelbaum, in his book *The Problem of Historical Knowledge* (1938), argues in strict observance of the myth of scientific objectivity against all "relativism" in historical interpretation. In his view, history is a given reality which constitutes the object of scientific research; there is no room for subjective evaluation, or for the development of a transcendent monism by which all contingent events are incorporated in a unified system of meaning. Against relativism, Mandelbaum sets historical objectivity; against monism he presents a theory of historical pluralism which focuses the scholar's attention on actual events and defines historical research as the study of the complex conjunction of factors involved in each event. Collingwood, the idealist, and Jaspers, the existentialist, do not consider individual events or objective facts meaningful in themselves. History has significance, rather, in terms of the ideas behind it or our response to it. The work of the historian, therefore, is not at all an exact science; it is more like philosophy or—less elaborately—personal awareness.

In the chasm between these opposing positions, several significant moves have recently been made, clearly aimed at establishing a synthesis between history as fact and history as idea and meaning. The inspiration is not taken out of thin air. The nineteenth century itself gave room for voices of mediation and for efforts at integrating research and reflection. Neo-Kantian historians like Rickert and Windelband worked in the interest of such a synthesis. So did Soren Kierkegaard and Wilhelm Dilthey. But it remained for the twentieth century to free these men's work from the obscurity of its nineteenth-century setting. Through the mediation of Martin Kähler, for example, Dilthey's analyses of the concept of history were applied to the problem of the relationship between history and *Heilsgeschichte* and were thus passed on to Christian thinkers in the present. Similarly, Martin Heidegger absorbed the Kierkegaardian concept of historical contemporaneousness and built upon it a fully developed ontological-epistemological principle which in turn came to have fundamental importance for Rudolf Bultmann and his followers. In a sense one may say that the form-critical approach to hermeneutics was conceived as a modern synthesis of the traditional antitheses, history as fact vs. history as value and meaning.

We shall return to the hermeneutical question in a moment. Here we should note that the synthesis we have referred to does not appear as an isolated event which has no point of contact in the two camps it seeks to bring together. Significant things have happened to the two myths which for a long time dichotomized historical research and historical interpretation, and as a result the twentieth-century understanding of history and historical interpretation has been radically changed. The myth of scientific objectivity has come under close scrutiny recently. Michael Polanyi, in his book on *Personal Knowledge* (1958), argues for example that there is no such thing as a presuppositionless objectivity in the approach to historical or empirical facts. As long as one is talking about knowledge, one must take the knower into consideration. One discovers that when the knower is confronted with an object of knowledge, he is never entirely passive or receptive in relation to it. Knowledge is a personal activity, and there are always tacit, evaluational and commitmental components at play in the act of knowing. Polanyi's "post-critical" perspective represents an important corrective to modern positivism and scientism; it signals a significant recovery of the subjective, evaluational factors in historiology, factors which the nineteenth-century myths of objectivity went to war against.

At the opposite side of the spectrum, purveyors of the myth of the transcendent laws determining historical order and meaning have undertaken a parallel softening of the earlier, more extreme standpoints. Historical idealism, under the influence of Whitehead and Hartshorne and Theilhard de Chardin, has clearly moved toward more realistic concepts of transcendent principles. It is the modern emphasis on the dynamic nature of the universe that has provided a point of contact for an idealism of less abstract and less static orientation. The objective laws of history are now spoken of in terms of process and development, and meaning has become a question of relating to an inclusive environment, natural and supernatural.

It is clear that the modifications that appear on both sides of the historiological dichotomy have had the effect of narrowing the gap between positivistic and idealistic perspectives. There is emerging a new readiness to recognize that history is a many-faceted concept and that historical meaning is a relative and rather personal thing. For theology, this growing consensus has had importance, as in the work of H. R. Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, Alan Richardson, Herbert Butterfield and Oscar Cullman. All convinced Christians, these men attempted to hold together a critical historical orientation and a

theocentric interpretive perspective. However, the movement toward a synthesis of fact and value did not reach maturity until it was undergirded by the philosophy which more than any other single factor has contributed to interdisciplinary understanding, namely logical or linguistic analysis. Itself a child of nineteenth-century criticism and twentieth-century logical positivism, analytical philosophy soon began to challenge the narrow concepts of reality and meaning which characterize logical positivism. Focusing on the meaning of language, the new philosophers learned that there are many dimensions in the human awareness of reality. Language is organized in a variety of "games," each determined by its own specific criteria of sense. There are empirical-indicative, aesthetic-axiological and ethical-imperative language games, and each one is equally valid. Applied to the understanding of history, this means that factual description and evaluative interpretation are two principally different and independently legitimate endeavors, and that they may therefore be held together without conflict within an integrated view of man's historical awareness.

Again we discover that where the synthesis appears, philosophy of history and hermeneutics are closely related. Furthermore, the cencerns of homiletics are clearly involved. Theologians who are interested in the problems of communicating Christian faith in the present have found themselves drawn into the discussion of historical fact vs. historical interpretation, and for many the modern understanding of language has become the basis of a new synthesis, clear and understandable to the modern mind. Facts and evaluation can now be understood and held together logically, and when something is understandable it is also communicable. It demands, in fact, to be communicated; interpretation presupposes a standpoint and issues in a conviction, and one who is committed to a conviction has a message. Among many contemporary theologians who represent such an integration of history, interpretation and preaching, Carl Michalson may be considered typical. In *History and Hermeneutics* he sought to synthesize event and interpretation; in *The Hinge of History* interpretation clearly developed into preaching.

The comparative ease with which contemporary theologians can now move from historical fact through interpretation to Christian proclamation ought not, however, to make us blind to the problems involved. The old historiological dichotomy between fact and value is largely overcome, but the sharp distinction between knowledge and faith cannot be ignored. Van Austin Harvey, in *The Historian and the Believer* (1966), is concerned about this. He argues that there is

a basic distinction between the "morality" of historical knowledge and the "ethic" of Christian belief. There is in the modern mind a fundamental conflict between the will to truth and the will to believe. In the latter, faith is celebrated as a virtue, and doubt is regarded as sin. In the former, one considers methodological scepticism sound, and one is distrustful of passion in matters of theoretical inquiry. When Christian theologians tend to "think Christianity and history into each other," they confuse these two orientations, thus confounding both the conscience of the historian and the conviction of the believer. To avoid such confusion, it is necessary to have a clear conception of what is what: what is historical fact and what is faithful interpretation. By first distinguishing between them and then holding them together, says Harvey, it is possible to avoid playing timeless truths and historical events off against one another. One can "think together symbol and history" in a way that is sensible and meaningful, i.e., it is respectable from a historical point of view, understandable from a hermeneutical perspective, and communicable from a homiletical standpoint.

The modern developments in the contemporary understanding of history provide the modern preacher with a significant opening for the Christian message and an important means by which he may move out and take advantage of the possibilities. Yet preachers must learn that history and *Heilsgeschichte*, fact and interpretation, are not identical. The synthesis which the modern philosophers of history are constructing is not a confusing sum of two opposing myths. The modern reintegration of events and values presupposes the critical perspective, the analysis of the dimensions of human perception and human language, and it presupposes the willingness to allow each dimension of life full play on its own terms. It is on these presuppositions that contemporary preachers must also approach their task of preaching Christian faith in the present and thus being faithful to their calling while yet being men of common sense. We shall see, in a moment, what this means for contemporary preaching.

II

The second area of our concern has to do with recent developments in hermeneutics. The twentieth century has brought out several new features in the profile of this discipline, and once again the new is in the form of a synthesis that is designed to smooth over the antinomies of earlier hermeneutical discussions and bring theo-

logians to an understanding of faith which can be communicated sensibly to contemporary man.

The influence of nineteenth-century theology has obviously created certain problems for recent generations of theologians. As in historiology, the legacy of the nineteenth century took the shape of a sharp polarity. On the one hand were the text-critical methods of biblical criticism, and on the other the religious simplicity of evangelical pietism and the dogmatic authoritarianism of orthodox systematic theology. In a sense, the nineteenth-century theological community was split in two large camps: On the one side, the disciples of Strauss, Bauer and Wellhausen, scholars who led theology in the direction of responsible biblical interpretation based on historical-critical and text-critical research; and on the other side, the multitude of preachers and systematic theologians—from Spurgeon to Marheineke—who considered biblical interpretation a matter of spiritual inspiration and theology a pronouncement of transcendent truth. In one respect the two camps were at one, however; both critical exegetes and biblical-systematic theologians were distrustful of subjectivity. The main thrust of nineteenth-century theology—in clear parallelism to nineteenth-century philosophy of history—went in the direction of objectivism, either the objectivism of scientific textual research or the objectivism of doctrinal or revelational absolutism. We shall identify certain other trends in the theology of that age in a moment, but the basic form of the heritage to which twentieth-century theologians were the heirs is the antithesis between biblical criticism and theological dogmatism.

It is only fair to note at this point that the most characteristic—and most significant—nineteenth-century tradition was undoubtedly the endeavor to apply the scientific methods of historical criticism to biblical exegesis, all in the interest of theological reorientation and reinterpretation. So predominant was the emphasis on biblical criticism, in fact, that the critical scholars confronted the theological community with an inclusive criterion by which the validity of theological constructions were to be tested, namely the historical-critical analysis of their textual bases. The aim was this: By setting the particularity and the relativity of the biblical writings over against the universality and the absoluteness of dogmatic speculation, critical theologians hoped to dig through the cumulated layers of theological-interpretive symbolism and get at the factual essence of historical Christian religion. In their view, it was precisely the function of

theology to rediscover the historical foundations of Christianity and to recover the simple religion of Jesus.

Obviously, twentieth-century theology has been seriously affected by the fact that it came out of a split home. In large circles within the theological community, the old conflict between historical-critical exegesis and biblical-theological reflection still prevails. One cannot, for example, talk of twentieth-century theology without considering the mutual exclusiveness and dialectical tension between fundamentalism and liberalism. No synthesis seems possible in that complex of antitheses. On the contrary, the strange conflict—anachronistic from any enlightened standpoint—seems to have extended itself both in depth and in frontline in recent decades. Mainline fundamentalism, having once and for all defined its position in terms of an absolute and infallible Bible, considers all theology that tends to relativize the content of biblical revelation and seeks to make sense of faith on the presuppositions of the modern mindset as heresy. Radical liberalism, on the other hand, claims that only those elements of faith that can be made understandable in terms of present categories of thought are relevant to modern theology at all. Biblical criticism, in this camp, serves the purposes of theological eclecticism.

There are other examples of the consequences of the nineteenth-century heritage on the contemporary theological scene. Not far from the surface of the continuing debate lies the old problem of the relationship between scientific biblical research and systematic theological construction. Closely related to it is the question of the relationship between religious tradition and contemporary existence, or between the past and the present meaning of faith. Strange as it seems from a more inclusive point of view, twentieth-century theology provides numerous examples of a complete dichotomy between scientific biblical scholarship and constructive systematic-theological reflection. From the point of view of the former, the theological enterprise is exclusively a matter of idea-historical or motif-genetic analysis of the biblical traditions of faith. From the point of view of the latter, theology is primarily an exercise in theoretical-religious speculation built on the traditional categories of church theology or on the existential situation of modern man. The possibility of a closer integration of these opposing commitments seems often quite remote.

When all is counted, however, it is in no way true to say that these opposing camps represent the mainstream of twentieth-century

theology. Several important events have occurred in the theology of our time, and together they form the basis for a new advance toward the integration of history and experience, the past and the present, critical scholarship and constructive theology. It is all a part of the modern developments in hermeneutics. The hermeneutical renewal which has taken place within this century has provided a new meeting place for theologians of different backgrounds and various persuasions—a place for dialogue and reunification, where neo-orthodox and neo-liberal theologians can come together across the lines of old controversies. There are sharp polarities still in the picture, of course; one may not reasonably speak of a hermeneutical consensus as yet. But there is a steadily broadening highway of methodological unity that runs through the landscape of contemporary theology, and most responsible theologians find themselves drawn to it. Few biblical scholars will now claim that detailed text-analytical or historical-critical work will by itself uncover the essential meaning of Christian faith. By the same token, few modern preachers will suggest that the Bible is such a document as to require faith but not research. The theological community no longer falls into the simplistic error of separating between theological research and theological reflection; it has discovered the hermeneutical principle that to set the two in opposition to each other is to misunderstand both.

We should observe that the synthesis of textual research and theological construction had its proponents already in the nineteenth century. Kierkegaard, Schleiermacher and Ritschl all attempted to integrate past traditions and present meaning; and significantly, all these men made the attempt on the basis of a critical historical orientation coupled with a clear emphasis on religious subjectivity. Their results may not in all respects have been satisfactory, but their method points toward the future. It is precisely the combination of historical criticism and religious existentialism which has provided the key to the development of a modern hermeneutical synthesis.

We shall not need to trace the full story of the development of modern hermeneutics here, but some important steps in the process must be marked. It got its start when Albert Schweitzer presented his study of the historical-critical tradition in Christology, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1905). Schweitzer undertook to show the impossibility of the endeavor to understand Jesus of Nazareth by way of strict historical-critical research. Taking seriously the new understanding of the nature of the biblical sources developed by the text-critical scholars, he proceeded to prove that the historical Jesus

would not only be impossible to identify; he would be a total stranger to our time—a direct liability to Christian preaching—if transferred directly from the first to the twentieth century. The only meaningful relationship we can have to Jesus of Nazareth is a present, personal or "eschatological" one. Karl Barth, in his *Commentary on Romans* (1921), confessed that the consequences of Schweitzer's work must be taken seriously. He therefore focused on the task of developing a genuine understanding of the Christian message, placing the text-critical approach to biblical exegesis in explicit servitude to systematic theology. Barth purposely chose to study the most systematic-theological document of the New Testament, thus indicating both the biblical character of systematic theology and the theological nature of biblical interpretation. Martin Dibelius, in the meantime, studied what appeared to be the most genuine historical material in the New Testament, namely the sermons of the Book of Acts, and he came to the conclusion that the message of the early church was characterized by certain definite kerygmatic patterns. It represents, he said, history and proclamation joined together according to traditional Hebraic principles of interpretation. This became the starting point of the form-critical school. With Rudolf Bultmann, the perspective was greatly enlarged. Not only the Book of Acts, but the entire New Testament tradition was seen to be structured around a kerygmatic framework. Moreover, the content of the biblical message was found to be so identified with a typically first century religious symbolism as to require translation—"demythologization" and "remythologization"—in order to be understandable and communicable in the present.

Less radical than Bultmann in details of biblical interpretation, but equally convinced of the theological character of the biblical sources, other scholars have followed up and broadened the impact of the new hermeneutic. It is sufficient here only to mention the work of Old Testament scholars like H. Wheeler Robinson, William Albright, and Gerhard von Rad, and of New Testament interpreters like C. H. Dodd, Oscar Cullmann, and John Knox. Systematic theologians have also contributed to the closer integration of biblical study and constructive theology. We need only refer to the influence of Anders Nygren, Karl Heim, and Heinrich Ott in this connection. In recent decades, Bultmann's own disciples, often in the interest of correcting certain aspects of their teacher's work, have advanced the form-critical hermeneutical perspective significantly. Theologians like Ernst Käsemann, Ernst Fuchs, Günther Bornkamm,

Joachim Jeremias, Gerhard Ebeling and Herbert Braun typify the strength of this tradition.

As a consequence of the wide influence of these developments in modern hermeneutics, twentieth-century theology can no longer be described by way of the dichotomy of biblical criticism and theological construction. Theologians generally have come to realize that the biblical sources are themselves precisely theology, the product of a faithful interpretation of historical events for kerygmatic purposes. In von Rad's words, the biblical record represents a "Wechselwirkung zwischen Gegenwartereignis und überliefertem Kerygma" (interaction between contemporary experience and traditional proclamation). Biblical exegesis, therefore, can no longer be divorced from biblical theology; textual criticism must itself be recognized as a theological discipline. Biblical scholarship is essentially the study of biblical message or of the religious intentions behind the biblical correlation of history and kerygma, and it uses the scientific tools of historical and textual criticism—both "lower" and "higher" criticism—in the interest of understanding the essential meaning of biblical faith.

At this point it is becoming evident that the developments in modern hermeneutics tie in with the movement toward a synthesis of fact and value in modern historiology as well as with the concerns of contemporary homiletics. We shall turn to the homiletical question in a moment. It remains to be pointed out here that the new hermeneutic, in clear correlation to the perspectives of the new historiology, is operating with a multidimensional concept of history: First, there is history in the sense of events and facts; secondly, there is history in the sense of history writing; and thirdly, there is history in the sense of historical existence. The first is a function of historical actualities; the second involves a principle of selection and interpretation; and the third has to do with personal decision and application. The new hermeneutic makes it clear that the Bible is not concerned with history in the first sense; its perspective is that of historical interpretation and existential application. This may, of course, seem confusing, particularly in view of the fact that the biblical writers tend to express their interpretations in the symbolism of factual narration. However, the new understanding of the biblical message presupposes two methodological principles that are designed to eliminate such confusion: First, the critical approach to historical sources and empirical facts; second, the explicit recognition of the role of interpretation and decision—the existential or

subjective dimension—in faith. It is the critical differentiation between the factual and the interpretive perspectives, coupled with the consistent correlation of the two as differing dimensions of historical existence, that constitutes the genius of modern historiology and modern hermeneutics, and this important methodological discovery has significant implications also for modern homiletics. The purpose of preaching is to present the Christian message in such a way that it makes sense and becomes meaningful to contemporary man. With the new understanding of history and hermeneutics by its side, contemporary homiletics has a bright new possibility to renew itself for its particular task in our time.

III

Twentieth-century preaching has followed the same general pattern of antitheses and synthesis which we have observed in historiology and in hermeneutics, but in none of the other disciplines have the modern methodological presuppositions come so slowly into general recognition as in homiletics. This may have many causes, yet the consequences are very distinct: both the theological community and the modern society in general regard preaching as increasingly outdated. It is riddled with internal contradiction and confusion, beset by contextual problems and tensions; it has fallen upon bad times. Obviously, a great deal of work is needed to bring homiletics into step with its times.

The heritage of the nineteenth century has influenced twentieth-century preaching in several different ways. The prevailing tendency among preachers has been to fall in line with one tradition or another and to follow the available alternatives with the single-mindedness of the simple-minded. In vast circles, the predominant emphasis has been on the social gospel, but here and there one can find equally strong emphases on individual and spiritual salvation. Preaching has been understood by many exclusively in terms of exhortation; by other groups it has been considered entirely a matter of inspiration. Evangelistic preaching has taken an entirely different form from that of the pastoral ministry of preaching. At times one can find the kerygmatic concept of preaching dominating, at times the didactic. All these contrasting views have of course been subjects for debate. Perhaps the most fundamental contrast of all—and one which for a long time tended to split preachers into two opposing factions—was the polarity between the so-called "life-situation" preaching and the "textual" orientation. The controversy had several facets: It

set the concerns of truth and relevance against each other, or it contrasted the absolute and the relative. At times it was conceived as a conflict between the eternal and the contingent, at other times as a contrast between the static and the dynamic. Occasionally the discussion centered on the question of the Word of God vs. the words of men, and on other occasions it had to do with the relationship between biblical exposition and contemporary application. Homileticians were divided also on the practical problems; discussions were lively over the relative values of call vs. theological education, the gift of the Holy Spirit vs. logical and theological understanding, or on revelation vs. skills in communication.

In spite of all the confusing checks and balances that appear in twentieth-century homiletics, there is still one clear dividing line that runs through the picture, namely the question concerning the use of the Bible in contemporary preaching. Even on the superficial level there are distinct differences between the commitments of conservatives and the attitude of liberals—not to speak of fundamentalists and modernists—on this question. But the real issue lies deeper. Both of these groups were confronted with a problem, a new situation, and they were forced to take a stand. Obviously, the understanding of preaching would be affected by modern developments in the hermeneutical and historiological fields; a new understanding of history immediately involves a new understanding of biblical history, and a new approach to the understanding of the Bible must inevitably influence both theology and preaching. The basic problem for homileticians—both theorists and practitioners—was this: What consequences does biblical criticism have for contemporary preaching? It was a problem of principle as well as of practice. The principal question was whether or not the various branches of biblical criticism are at all compatible with the preacher's role as a servant of the Word of God, and the practical question was to what extent one should allow the results of modern biblical scholarship to affect the sermon itself.

Strange to say, this problem created more difficulties for the vast majority of middle-of-the-road ministers than for extremists on the left or on the right. Fundamentalists solved the problem by definition: The Bible is the Word of God, and any historical criticism of its clear and literal meaning is an act of unfaith. To preach the results of such biblical criticism is heresy. Modernists at the other end of the spectrum dissolved the problem also: To them, the church is an instrument for the progressive development of mature individ-

uals and a good society; the preacher must find the Word of God not in the past, but in the ongoing revelation, in the dynamics of history and in the evolving future. Between these standpoints, however, there is a big gray area, where the many who desired to hold together biblical knowledge and biblical faith easily lost their way and found it difficult to establish their identity. With their theological education, preachers were generally given the basic information on the nature and history of the biblical canon. Insights into questions of authorship, dates, readers, literary genres, terminological characteristics, grammar, motif-genesis, etc. were available in a confusing multitude. There appeared to be no end to the research required to understand the biblical sources. Furthermore, as new information came into view, it was increasingly apparent that the meaning of the Bible was quite different from what was the common conception of it. The popular understanding of the Bible, whether devotional, allegorical, moralistic or "spiritual," became more and more difficult to hold on to. A chasm opened up between what was commonly considered biblical faith and what was clearly the biblical truth; critical exegesis even revealed that most of the traditional homiletical material was the result of *eisegesis*, pure and simple. Yet it was precisely the traditional "faith in the Bible" that mainline Protestant congregations seemed to demand. No wonder that the most prevalent question, in seminary classroom as in the preacher's study, was "How do I preach this?"

There were several favorite solutions to the dilemma, some intellectually dishonest, some theologically irresponsible, most of them unsatisfactory. One could, for example, take the side of traditional biblical faith, simply utilizing the results of scientific exegetical scholarship in so far as this does not disturb one's own or the congregation's biblicistic commitments. Many neo-fundamentalists found a certain peace of mind in such eclecticism, but the position is not easily defended. On the other hand, one could side with historical-critical scholarship and make the pulpit a platform for teaching interesting historical lessons concerning and on the basis of the Bible. Vast numbers of liberals managed to convince congregations of their biblical orientation by such means, but the approach is not particularly enriching from a religious point of view. Perhaps the most common way for preachers who desired to do well in the church and at the same time retain some degree of intellectual self-respect was to move the weight of their preaching away from the problems of biblical interpretation or of theology, focusing instead on personal

religious experience and on the consequences of Christian faith in contemporary social contexts. This, of course, solved the hermeneutical dilemma, but only by way of postponement. Under the influence of such experiential and activist—but anti-theological—preaching, a generation or more of churchmen have perhaps had their hearts warmed and their wills trained, but their understanding has not been enlightened.

In view of this crucial homiletical dilemma, it is rather disappointing to discover that homiletical teaching during the first forty years of this century directed itself primarily toward helping preachers master the techniques of effective pulpit performance. Batsell B. Baxter's *The Heart of the Yale Lectures* (1947) is illustrative in this connection. Here, a predominant definition of preaching is one which describes it, in Henry Ward Beecher's terms, as "the art of moving men from a lower to a higher life." The discipline of homiletics, correspondingly, is defined as the study of such elements of public speaking which make for "success in preaching," "influence over people," or "power in the pulpit." The main emphasis, characteristically, falls on "the power of persuasion," and the one element which more than any other is said to be the secret of persuasion is "the power of personality." Ralph S. Sockman, in fact, goes so far as to say that "Not what is said, but who says it—that is the consideration which gives weight to what we hear." The power of personality has to do primarily, according to the Yale lecturers, with such characteristics as "personal attraction," "magnetism," and "character," i.e. "personal piety," "general righteousness of life," or "demonstration and example of the type of life which he would have others attain." Only secondary emphasis is given to "mental abilities" or "knowledge." Says Baxter, "Fewer than twelve of the Lyman Beecher lecturers spoke specifically of the preacher's need for a good intellect. Only two spoke of the matter with any thoroughness." The thrust of these lectures may well be summed up in Augustine's famous statement:

"It is more by the Christian fervor of his sermons than by any endowment of his intellect that the minister must hope to inform the understanding, catch the affections, and bend the will of his hearers."

As the lecturer Freeman said at Yale, "Youthful zeal and enthusiasm may often be more effective than more mature learning with its tempering of enthusiasm."

For a long time, then, twentieth-century homiletics, both theoreti-

cal and practical, has turned away from the questions which the modern philosophy of history and the new hermeneutic have put before it. But by doing so, it has also missed significant opportunities to advance toward the solution of the contemporary homiletical problem. Homileticians have tended to isolate themselves from the very disciplines which could be of most significance to them. They have not always done so by default; more often the preachers isolated themselves from contemporary philosophical and theological movements by design, claiming that it was these movements that created problems for the modern preacher. However, questions concerning the use of the Bible in contemporary preaching or concerning the relationship between critical scholarship and biblical preaching are not simply academic, a result of advancing historical-critical disciplines which those can ignore who are not interested in the theories of modern scholarship. They are problems built into the modern situation itself. Any preacher who is aware of the historical nature of faith must ask the historical question, and any man concerned to address the mind of the times must be involved in the problems of hermeneutics. To refuse these questions is to isolate oneself not only from the scholars of the age, but from the modern age itself.

We should note that homiletics has undergone a significant reorientation during the last thirty years. Responding to and following up the theological recovery during the nineteen-thirties and forties, homileticians like George A. Buttrick, Paul Scherer, James S. Stewart and H. H. Farmer wrote important books for preachers. Later, relating more explicitly to the modern theological situation, Donald G. Miller, Theodore O. Wedel, Gene Bartlett, James T. Cleland, Helmut Thielicke and Reuel L. Howe undertook to help the preacher come to terms with new trends in biblical and systematic theology, in ecclesiology and psychology. Occasionally, systematic theologians also published sermon collections with a clear contemporary orientation and a high degree of theological sophistication, Paul Tillich, Karl Barth and Emil Brunner among them. And most recently, active teaching homileticians like Edmund Steimle at Union, Merrill R. Abbey at Garrett and Morgan Edwards at Claremont have given explicit attention to the correlation of the contemporary cultural, intellectual and sociological situation and a positive Christian affirmation of faith.

Slowly, then, an attempt is made to integrate the old message and the new times. Preaching is now generally understood as a "bifocal" endeavor, a combination of biblical truth and contemporary

concerns, or of revelation and relevance, the eternal and the now. It concerns itself both with the individual and with society, with the inner and the outer man; and it brings together both faith and knowledge in the interest of kerygmatic proclamation, didactic teaching and paracletic exhortation. This new synthesis of traditional homiletical dichotomies is most promising; but it is also problematical, for it raises again the principal methodological problems which preachers have sought to avoid for a long time. The crucial question now is whether homiletics will be able to relate to the new developments in modern philosophy of history and in hermeneutics, thus developing into a modern discipline of thought, or whether it will continue its intellectual isolation and remain behind in relation to its time and to modern scholarship. In practical terms, the question may be stated this way: Are contemporary homileticians, in seeking to hold together the historical Christian message and the modern situation of man, fully informed of the problems involved in such an undertaking, and are they guided by the significant new solutions that have come into view in correlative disciplines of thought? Or, in more specific language yet, the challenge of the moment is this: Is the preacher of today prepared to identify himself with the methodological presuppositions that are gaining recognition both in the philosophy of history and in hermeneutics, namely the critical differentiation between the dimensions of fact and faith, and the explicit acknowledgement of the existential, commitmental and interpretive nature of faith?

We have observed how historiology in the twentieth century has moved away from the objectivism—idealistic and positivistic—which it inherited from the nineteenth century, and to historical criticism. For homiletics, this is important. Philosophical idealism always had difficulties recognizing the historical particularity of Christian proclamation, and positivistic historicism refused consistently to accept the idea that historical facts have revelational value. In the new critical-historical orientation, however, these problems are solved. One differentiates between fact and value, and proceeds to relate the two as differing dimensions of one and the same event. By this operation—the demetaphysicalization of history and the deobjectification of faith—it is possible for a man to be both a factual observer and a Christian believer, and the Christian preacher has thus found a way to function with complete intellectual honesty as well as in full identification with Christian faith. Furthermore, when the contemporary hermeneutic undertakes to analyze the relationship of historical reality and religious interpretation in the writings of the

Bible, this is again significant for homiletics. It was always problematical for people with a modern mindset to accept the curious mixture of facticity and transcendence which is typical of the biblical sources. But in the new hermeneutical perspective, this difficulty finds its solution. One distinguishes between event and interpretation, and then relates the two as different dimensions of man's involvement in reality. This procedure—the demythologization of biblical symbolism and the radicalization of Christian faith—opens the door for a meaningful involvement in both historical research and theological reflection, and the preacher has thereby gained the possibility of being at one and the same time a man of common sense and a bearer of Christian convictions.

What all this means in the practical context of sermon planning and pulpit procedure cannot be spelled out here.[1] Some principles are becoming clear, however:

1. The purpose of Christian preaching is to bring persons to accept and apply the message of the Old and the New Testament as the framework of meaning for their life in the present.
2. Christian preaching consists in the proclamation of the content, the explanation of the intentions, and the application of the consequences of the Christian message in the present situation of persons and societies.
3. The Christian message consists of a specific interpretation of a particular series of historical events, and Christian faith is formed in interaction with—and is therefore inevitably related to—these particular events.
4. The Christian message is applicable to the present historical situation in the form of a symbolic framework from the perspective of which the Christian believer interprets contemporary existence and relates to it.
5. It is the preacher's task to present the Christian message in such a way that it is neither identified with past history nor torn loose from its historical anchoring.
6. The direction of Christian preaching is twofold: to the biblical tradition, seeking to deepen the understanding of the meaning of Christian faith symbols; and to the contemporary situation, seeking to nurture a greater acknowledgement of the meaning of Christian faith in the present.
7. Christian preaching thus concerns itself with Christian history, and with history from a Christian point of view; the first is a function of the second, and the second is a function of the first.

Reduced to its most essential factors, homiletics is a discipline which must stand with one foot in the Christian message and the other in the situation of contemporary man. This means that the homiletician must relate himself to those disciplines of study which

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1. For a fuller discussion of the nature of the sermon, cf. my article "Let Religion Be Religious," *Interpretation*, April, 1969.

can help him understand both of the foci of his orientation. He must be especially observant of such new developments in these disciplines which tend to clarify the relationship between the realities of human experience and the meaning of Christian faith. He must not ignore or minimize the problems involved in holding the two dimensions of his involvement together, and thus too easily "think Christianity and history into each other." The preacher must learn to distinguish, both in his tradition and in the present context of life, between what is common knowledge and what is faithful interpretation; and by holding the two together as different but interacting dimensions within the experience of believing men, he will be able to "think together symbol and history"—faith and fact—and to communicate in the present the same meaning which the Christian gospel had in its original setting.

Black and White Together?

Frederick Herzog
Professor of Systematic Theology

It has been on my mind for some time that I had promised The Duke Divinity School Review a systematic theology piece on hermeneutic for the spring of 1969. After all the noise I have been making at Duke about hermeneutic for nearly a decade I probably should be one of the first to deliver a goodly stack of sheets on the subject for publication. But I will probably be the last one to turn in a contribution, and not a very lengthy one at that. Let me hasten to add that this does not reflect lack of concern for the total project so well prepared by Gene Tucker. It also does not mean that I have not made preparations for the writing of the article. But in the past six weeks since February 13, 1969, many of my theological words have broken to pieces. I have had to face unprecedented difficulties of communication, hermeneutical "hang-ups." I notice that others have had similar difficulties. At the core of my communication difficulties lies the realization that if people cannot understand one another, they certainly cannot understand some subject matter in common, say, the Bible. Understanding some common subject matter in the event of understanding one another, this is what hermeneutic is all about. But here on Duke campus in the spring of 1969 we are further from understanding one another than at any time in my memory during the nearly ten years of my stay at this University. It may well be that it now merely became unconcealed how little we really understood one another before, when all was suffused in a glow of fellowship and friendly dialogue. But this insight is cold comfort when we need understanding *now*. Handwringing over the past will not help us on in the task of understanding. So where do we turn?

In preparation for this paper I read *The Pornography of Power* (Chicago, 1968) by Lionel Rubinoff, who in this book works with as clear a definition of hermeneutic as anyone I know of. At least he uses the word the way I have used it in my teaching and writing. His basic idea is as follows: "As opposed to 'causal' or 'scientific' analysis of behavior, which seeks primarily to *explain* particular events by subsuming them under empirically verifiable laws, a her-

meneutic analysis seeks rather to disclose the subjective significance or 'meaning' of human behavior. . . . As Sartre has argued, the substitution of *in order to* for *because* (or as a result of) is a matter of the utmost importance. It illustrates once again the difference between the phenomenological approach, which is essentially hermeneutic and which seeks to disclose the human significance of a phenomenon, and the naturalistic approach, which is essentially causal-explanatory." (pp. 86f.) I find significant in this description of hermeneutic especially the emphasis on the role of the person. Hermeneutic is not a mere matter of taking apart a text and putting it back together again. It is a grasping of personhood, human or divine, often mediated through a text, but with the text always functioning as the medium that reveals personhood.

Systematic theology, as I understand it, evolves as a hermeneutic. It is definitely a phenomenological approach to a particular subject matter. It cannot subsume its ultimate subject matter—God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit—under empirically verifiable general laws. It cannot strive for attaining objective scientific knowledge. What it must aim for is personal understanding. In order to arrive at this understanding there must first of all be a disclosure of the meaning of present human behavior, especially in the church. Where I teach theology—at Duke—some human behavior has become enigmatic and puzzling. Systematic theology must try to grasp the dynamics of this behavior as the matrix of its theological work. Underneath the antagonisms between black and white there must be some common human core that offers the basis for new understanding. Understanding is not found by brushing off the differences. It appears as one faces together some hard truths about one another. One must suffer through the differences together. The common solidarity of pain and suffering in the face of misunderstanding is probably the first stage through which we must pass in order that theological understanding may arise.

It may be that in new obedience to our common Lord, Jesus Christ, an overriding reality may compel us to understand one another better. But we have mouthed so many theological phrases without probably ever really seeing each other that the demand of the hour is to take a new look at each other, so that we can engage in a hermeneutic of changing the conditions that made us move apart.

[I want to use the following ideas also in a different context with fellow students and colleagues. So if one of my readers finds in the

pages of the REVIEW what he has already read somewhere else, may he be undismayed: repetition is also the mother of understanding.]

I had initially planned on sharing these thoughts with the Concerned Students of Duke Divinity School [a spontaneous, unofficial organization which sprang into being immediately after the campus disturbance—Ed.]. But I had to be out of town during some of their meetings. The comments reflect several conversations I have had with black and white students in our midst (some of whom are now alumni) about the black-white tensions.

In one or two instances I got the impression that a black student simply felt crushed by the predominantly white setting of our Divinity School. Events following February 13 here on campus underscored the impression time and again.

One thing became clear to me over the past year: integration as such is no immediately effective solution to the race issue, also not in the Divinity School community.

The difficulty in terms of the educational process seems to be lodged in the fact that white Christianity has not identified with black history at any significant point. When the Reformation was developing in Europe, some of the blacks' ancestors were already being shipped across the Atlantic. When Schleiermacher wrote his *Speeches on Religion*, black history in the United States was still slave history.

With what is the black to identify? Before he can identify with white church history he must identify with his own history. But he has no chance to study it in courses alongside white church history.

So in plunging into a white educational setting apparently a tremendous identity crisis develops for a large number of black students. What is more, the crisis is aggravated by the increasing stress on black power in the black community. A white seminary does not specifically discuss black power as a course topic, as little as black history or black culture.

As a consequence we have to face the question of what black students in white seminaries are trained for. A black alumnus said, "Remember, you are training people for jobs, not certificates." Does a black student who has been trained by Duke Divinity School still fit into the average black congregation?

In the encounter with the black student—I will never want to forget—we meet a unique struggle for personhood. It is not that the black does not acknowledge that the white also has a struggle for personhood to contend with. The issue seems to be whether there is

any real outlet for discussing the special "hang-ups" of the black struggle. All counsellors and professors are white.

Some blacks have the impression that there is race prejudice among both students and professors, the unconscious prejudice being even worse than the conscious.

One black student indicated that a professor (whose name he did not mention) told him at the very beginning of his studies that he should face up to the fact that this is Duke and that he could not expect to get the same high grades here that he got in his college. The student seemed rather perplexed about the well-meant advice.

As to social contacts, black students feel that they have hardly any social outlet at Duke. Black tables, etc., are demands that are simple corollaries of this lack of social outlet.

White girls occasionally chat with black students on campus, I was told. But when white boys come near, many of them prefer to move on.

Perception of situations depends on who we are. It is never absolutely objective. So we must deal with the one who perceives the situation and must take his word at face value.

All in all, we should probably make the race issue less central in our conversations. The whites have a responsibility here that may be overlooked most of the time. One black student said: "In seminary, I became an authority on race relations. And that is about all I became an authority in." Obviously the black student wants the white student to converse with him also about things other than race.

"It may be that we are hypersensitive right now as blacks," I was told. But the situation has to be faced by all as it is. The fact of the perception of the black-white antagonism is there. Said one black: "When I came to Duke, I knew Duke had accepted me. But had the white students accepted me?"

If I understand a little of what is being said right now, the struggle seems to be about personhood, human dignity. The black has to find his past—in order to know his personhood. He has to come to know also his present—in order to become a fuller person. So the comment of yet another student remains a judgment: "We get a middle-class, upper-class training at Duke Divinity School." The judgment should be obvious: we are more trained for status than for personhood

Many of the new dilemmas we are facing are related to the increasing consciousness of being black. One black alumnus, who felt that at the beginning of integration at Duke these difficulties had not

been as pressing, explained: "Just when the blacks were about getting what they wanted, they said: 'We don't want to be white.'"

There is at the same time the feeling that the white Divinity School community is taking integration too lightly. It does not struggle enough with the implications of integration for the whole person. A former black student summed up the issue: "Integration at the foot is just as bad as or worse than segregation at the side." If you are allowed into the same room, but the other person does not really see your face and acknowledge you as a person, segregation might still be the lesser of two evils.

I realize full well that the problems at Duke go far beyond reflections like the foregoing. Righting the wrongs of a slave society will take more time than a generation. Feeling guilty does not help at all. What we need to do is to work creatively at new models of better future relationships.

On the surface the turmoil of our University is centered in the right use of power, that is, in the possibility of the student's share in the power lodged in the academic structure. But as I try to look beyond the surface appearances, I begin to ask whether in the Christian context of the Divinity School we must not raise other issues as well. This context is never simply one of scrambling for power, prestige and status. It also contains the criterion of truth that unconceals our foibles and stupidities. The time has come to face some hard truths about ourselves.

In order to give integration a Christian rationale some of us have been appealing to St. Paul's idea that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. Accordingly we have been claiming that in Christ there is neither white nor black. But in reality there is still very much black and white in Christ—white and black churches, for example. In our religious pollyanna attitude we often fail to see that the hurts and wrongs of the exploitation of the blacks continues unabated, right in the midst of Christian people (as does the exploitation of whites, I know). Our black students often have families and friends that do not receive an ounce of benefit from our liberal opening up of the University to the blacks. The hurts and wrongs done to their loved ones and their people are ever before their eyes. Becoming color-blind—in which I have prided myself—easily can mean becoming blind to the savage struggle those of the other color are still caught in.

Just how much real charity we spend on the downtrodden or the outcast in our society, I do not know. There are still many who

can only be reached by some charity, especially many physically handicapped. But many of us are merely *concerned* about the disadvantaged. And concern is not action. I was appalled to see how quickly the hustle and bustle of our concern during the 1968 Vigil dissipated into doing nothing. Fine attitudes do not make any difference unless they are translated into changing wrongs. Political activity is the main possibility for introducing change. To be merely concerned is a sin against the Holy Spirit.

Finding a new sense of my "white sins" does not mean that I should look away when it comes to the faults of the other color. I am beginning to revolt more and more against making me conscious of the color of my skin as the cause of how sorry conditions are. I did not make the conditions. It does not help to make no distinctions between black and white. We need to see one another as persons, individuals who are responsible for their particular wrongs. There is a saying among some blacks that to the white all blacks look alike. The time has come to tell some blacks that apparently to them all whites look alike. With the present kind of attitude nobody will be the wiser in the long run.

For years many of us have been singing, "We shall overcome." It came to express our Civil Rights theology. We should have known all along that it is poor theology. In any case, I am learning more and more that ultimately *we* will not overcome. God must overcome. *We* are messing things up. But God bears the cross of the present, of black and white alike. We have to open our eyes to what he can do to change our ways and the condition of society. God will overcome.

This does not mean that we should fold our hands and sit back and do nothing. To see what God can do to change our ways means to become more open to what is already happening in society. What begins to puzzle me more and more is the discrepancy between the kind of life we live as a Divinity School community and life as a whole, between the Divinity School culture and secular culture. On all sides we agree that the purpose of theological education is no longer simply and solely to train ministers for the local parish. The times are probably compelling us to see that the Divinity School is the place where a model community must be built, approximately also representing the ratio of the population segments of the area, so that those who are trained here can have a full experience in how the new community that is developing is being shaped and can become leaders who are able to share in the building of new community everywhere.

Trite as it may have become to say so, it is painfully true that to live and work in the American, as well as the European, university today is to live and work in the midst of revolution. The cult of disarray is only the outward sign, ugly as it is, of the inner revolt against established values—even hygienic ones.

Because of its connotations, ignoring those of 1776, the word "revolution" is misleading. The newsprint and television comprehend and purvey only canned excerpts of the revolution's spectacular symptoms or, if possible, its violent *exempla*. The fact is that the Student Vigil of 1968 at Duke was too reserved and self-disciplined to gain the attention of the mass media, while the *melée* of February 13 was portrayed as far as Australia in a matter of hours. I was a ringside witness of both. I esteem the rebirth of conscience that, for the most part, animated the Vigil. I entertain only repugnance and consternation for the events of February 13. Their dynamics are vastly too complex to relate here, but the black students were, in my judgment, intolerably in the wrong morally, legally, and prudentially. So are any in civilized society who seek to impose their will by usurpation or by extortion through threat of violence. It is obscurantism and pure sentimental antinomianism that obscures the issue by appealing to three hundred years of wrong. Explanation is never justification. The blacks capitulated at the last moment, but they inadvertently, no doubt, set the stage for a half-in-earnest student showdown with the police, powered by the now endemic animus against the Establishment. This became spontaneously overt in the passion or, better, hysteria of the moment. Except for a few lacerations, the gas seemed to be exhilarating, and the excitement was rather much enjoyed by all. It was a "happening" declared on the spot to be "historic."

As for the police, the unexpected took them by surprise. In their moment of unwanted duty, they were the luckless surrogates, the symbols, of *the Authority*, smolderingly resented and, on the spur of the moment, defied. But, in truth, *the Authority* which they had the misfortune to stand in for is the whole spectrum of authorities, ranging from parents to President and Congress and not excepting the Pope nor overlooking the Dean. As for the university president, he is only the front-man, in the stereotyped revolutionary imagination, for the power-structure whose sinister resistance to change manifests the intransigent will of absentee lords, known as trustees. But the police stood in for all of those authorities that evening and took the brunt of the repressed dissent that is, in part, the revolution.

Manifestly, this is not the whole story about the revolution in our midst. This is only the phenomenon; the substance behind the appearances needs further probing. Basically, I believe, the revolution is a gradually crystallizing transformation of values. Revolution involves a *metanoia,* a mental about-face, a change of mind. It is bent on disestablishment. It is the product of pervasive disillusionment. This revolution is a revolt against both the satiety and the emptiness of bourgeois, sensate, technologically controlled culture. The Beatniks, the Hippies, the Yippies and the Blacks are its more visible apostles; but they are only the vanguard of a restless generation that finds its ecstatic moments in "happenings" which break through the monotony of a spiritless *status quo* that cannot extricate itself from the fatal absurdity of Viet Nam.

This is the revolution, a revolution of *ethos.* When it becomes "political" it seeks, often with undiscriminating frenzy, the overthrow of established priorities, orders, values, and powers. Become "political," revolution can follow "due process." More often it resorts to varying degrees of militant action, from lawful protest, as in the civil rights era, to change by harassment or by force. In the latter case, revolution becomes manic and in the measure that it feeds on desperation. Respecting, then, the revolution of our time, including that affecting the university, one must distinguish between the revolution of *ethos* and its political expressions; and, among its political expressions one must distinguish between those relying upon "due process" and those disdainful and defiant of the same.

Of this revolution against Establishment or the Authority the American university is a microcosm of the nation, perhaps of the world in our time. In the university, as society's weakest member, the dynamics of disestablishment surface most quickly and flourish because of minimal built-in resistence. The inherited freedoms and orders of academic society were based upon the Western European code of "the gentleman," and now there are only "guys." The university itself, including Duke University, is responsible in part for the fact that it has become very "big business" and, hence, subject to the same tensions that have polarized labor and management in commerce and industry. Among many, the university is interpreted as a tool of "the military-industrial complex" and, perhaps, not without some justification. Subsidy and sale of academic talent to business and government, the fattening of coffers for research, have undoubtedly, since the Second World War, lost to "the academy" a great measure both of its objectivity and immunity, to say nothing of its

gentility. Silently this has happened; more and more Alma Mater has ceased to be, through increasing external dependency, the mistress of her own virtue. And gradually the students have come to comprehend the change of temper and *ethos* in university life, and the university has declined in their respect. Meanwhile, they are themselves the pampered offspring of an affluent society by which they have been deprived of the arduous rigors of either personal survival or strenuous achievement.

All in all, it can be argued that the university has itself greatly participated in the destruction of "the academy," and it is now a sobering question whether the academy can be at all preserved. The real academy is never for sale, but indefatigable American enterprise has contrived at length to justify the resources of the university by finding them, after all, marketable commodities. To say, among other things, that every professor has his price, if true, would be at once a symptom of the disease of the university and a prophecy of the end of the pursuit of truth for its own sake; but such pursuit was "the academy."

The closed universities of Europe have raised the question of the survivability of the university. One can be prematurely pessimistic. Certain it is that militant usurpation, harassment and intimidation are incompatible with the essence of university existence. One or the other must go. The overthrow of lawful authority or the turning of the order of authorization up-side-down in the interest of uncritical democracy hardly comports with the ontological priorities of demonstrated attainment, ripened experience, and garnered wisdom.

At the bottom of it all, I suspect, is this, that until the futility of Viet Nam is retired, with its violation of conscience, the scepticism of youth toward the wisdom of their elders and the propriety of established orders will not recede. Viet Nam is the stubborn and internationally scandalous symbol of the bankruptcy of capitalistic democracy's way of meeting the future or dealing with human destiny by stereotyped and outworn patterns of response. More than anything it epitomizes, sums up, the frustration of the young with the sheer inertia of the Establishment. Unless creativity replaces inertia, Viet Nam may turn out to be the fatal *nemesis* of the American way of life—its dissolution of confidence.

And this has a direct bearing upon the theological school in its role as pedagogue of the Church's ministry. We are engaged, I suspect, in receiving and investing in a growing segment of students whose main reason for matriculation is more nearly despair with

and concern for disestablishment of *the Authority* than with positive commitment to the renovation, reformation, and renewal of the established Church. But theological schools exist for the training of ministers not for purposes of general education. In my mind it has lately become an insistent question whether, let us say, conscientious dissent (*sic*!) and its counterfeit will not erode the integrity of theological education and its schools. The disparity between the professional commitment of the schools and the uncommitment of some students and some faculty constitutes a present crisis in theological education. To say that the prevailing vector of motivation is *disestablishment* is not far from saying that we work in an era of iconoclasm. The Protestant Reformation did not, whatever its surviving positives, avoid iconoclasm as one of its phases. One may hope that some values of the Tradition may be conserved.

Robert E. Cushman

The 1969 Convocation and Pastors' School

The annual Divinity School Convocation and North Carolina Pastors' School, together with the James A. Gray Lectures, will be held at Duke University, October 27-29, 1969.

The James A. Gray Lecturer is DR. IAN G. BARBOUR, Chairman of the Religion Department and Professor of Physics at Carleton College. He is author of *Christianity and the Scientist* and *Issues in Science and Religion*, and editor of *Science and Religion: New Perspectives on the Dialogue*. His four Gray Lectures are to deal with Religion and Science.

The Frank S. Hickman Lecturer is DR. BROWNE BARR, Minister, First Congregational Church, Berkeley; formerly Professor of Homiletics, Yale Divinity School. He has published *Parish Back-Talk* and numerous articles and sermons. He will lecture twice on contemporary Parish Ministry.

The Convocation Preacher is DR. ROBERT A. RAINES, Minister, First United Methodist Church, Germantown. He is author of *Reshaping the Christian Life, New Life in the Church, Creative Brooding,* and *The Secular Congregation.* He will preach in the three Convocation Services of Worship, and will lead a Seminar on Tuesday afternoon.

The Bishop's Hour Lecturer is BISHOP JAMES S. THOMAS, Iowa Area, the United Methodist Church; formerly Professor at Gammon Theological Seminary, and one of the Secretaries of the Division of Higher Education, Methodist General Board of Education. He will give the opening address on Monday afternoon, and will lead one of the Tuesday afternoon Seminars.

The Tenth Annual Alumni Lecturer is DEAN VAN BOGARD DUNN of the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, author of *God With Us,* Part 2 of the Methodist "Foundation Studies in Christian Faith" for Adults. Dean Dunn earned both the B.D. and the Ph.D. at Duke University. He is a member of the Divinity School Board of Visitors.

Tuesday Afternoon Seminars:

1. BISHOP JAMES S. THOMAS—on Ministry in the Changing Church.
2. DR. ROBERT A. RAINES—on The Minister and the Congregation.
3. DR. W. D. DAVIES, George Washington Ivey Professor of Advanced Studies in New Testament and Christian Origins, Duke Divinity School, will lead a Seminar on The Sermon on the Mount. He is author of the current study book, *The Sermon on the Mount*, and of *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* and other scholarly works.

Acting Director of the Convocation and Pastors' School for 1969 will be Dr. Thor Hall, Associate Professor of Preaching and Theology. The Divinity School Choir will participate in the Chapel services. Other features include a Ministers' Wives Luncheon, the general Alumni Association Luncheon, and the annual Alumni Reunion Dinners, which this year will bring back the Classes of 1934, 1939, 1944, 1949, 1954, and 1964.

Officers of the Board of Managers of the North Carolina Pastors' School for the quadrennium are the Reverend Paul Carruth, Chairman; the Reverend Jerry D. Murray, Vice-Chairman; the Reverend Herman S. Winberry, Secretary; and the Reverend Harley M. Williams, Treasurer. Other members of the Executive Committee are the Reverend James W. Ferree, the Reverend H. Langill Watson, the Reverend S. T. Gillespie, and the Reverend Robert H. Stamey.

McMurry S. Richey
Director on Leave

LOOKS at BOOKS

The Bible and History. Edited by William Barclay. Abingdon. 1968. 371 pp. $6.50.

The purpose of this work, as set forth in an "Introduction" by the editor, is to ". . . present Bible history within the setting of contemporary [i.e. contemporary with the biblical writings] world events" (p. 17). The various writers attempt to view biblical history against the broader back-drop of world history as that affected and influenced the growth and development of the Hebrew nation and its religious thinking.

There are four contributors to this volume: the late John Paterson, who discusses the "Old Testament World" to the exile in 587 B.C.; Edgar Jones, who discusses the "Exile and Post-Exilic Period: 587-175 B.C."; Hugh Anderson, who discusses the "Intertestamental Period"; and Gordon Robinson, who discusses the "New Testament World."

As with any work on multiple authorship, there is uneven value in the four sections. The best section by far is that by Anderson dealing with the period between the Testaments. In fact, it is so far superior to the others that one questions whether it should be in the same volume. Much of the other work is characterized by oversimplification to the point of being misleading. Numerous examples could be cited, but the tone was already set by the editor in the "Introduction," when in discussing the biblical view of history he says: "All history, on this view, is God rewarding those who obey him and chastising those who disobey him." (p. 14) Every student of the Bible knows that this is the Deuteronomic "theology" of history (it is not named in the text of the book), but most also know that this view was seriously questioned and does not represent the thinking of the latter period of Old Testament history or the New Testament view.

A further example can be taken from the section dealing with the New Testament period. In discussing Jesus' ministry and teaching we read that "Mark is a fairly plain, straightforward presentation of the Good News as it was first unfolded" (pp. 284-285). The author does mention the fact that the Johannine account of Jesus' ministry has found greater "historical" acceptance today than in former times. But there is no reference directly, as there does seem to be a need, to the new discipline of Redaction-criticism and/or to the emphasis (now as old as Wrede) that Mark's gospel is highly theological and not simply a "straightforward" presentation of Jesus' life and teaching.

The most unsatisfactory section is the first, dealing with the "Old Testament World." There is here an almost naive acceptance of the biblical record with no discussion of the problems involved, and permeating the entire section is the idea that somehow "archaeology proves the Bible." Coupled with this is a curious selection of persons, incidents, and terminology to illustrate the points made (cf. especially pp. 51, 54, 83).

Each section is accompanied by a time chart, maps, and a selected bibliography which *can* be of value to the beginning student. It must be admitted that the choice of books cited in the various places leaves one, to say the least, puzzled. Why were these selected and others omitted? Why were B. W. Anderson's *Understanding the Old Testament* and Kee and Young's *Understanding the New Testament* not cited in their revised

editions? Why was not Hugh Anderson's abridgement (of his larger *Jesus and Christian Origins*) entitled *Jesus* listed in the New Testament bibliography? It would be more appropriate for the readers of this particular work than the larger more technical one.

The reader will know by now that the present reviewer is quite disappointed in this book. Something like it is desperately needed to re-emphasize the positive importance of history in biblical studies. Unfortunately this book does not fill this need. It is hoped that Professor Anderson will expand his section and publish it separately; otherwise his fine work may be buried along with the rest of this book!

—James M. Efird

Jesus and The Zealots: A Study of the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity. S. G. F. Brandon. Scribner's. 1968. 413 pp. $7.95.

Professor Brandon, who is perhaps best known for his work *The Fall of Jesusalem and the Christian Church* (1951), has now made another provocative contribution to the study of Christian origins. *Jesus and the Zealots* raises again the question, dormant now for several decades, of the political involvement of Jesus of Nazareth.

The book falls into seven chapters, with an appendix on Josephus' witness to Jesus. In the first chapter Brandon raises the problem of Jesus' relation to the political events of first century Palestine, on which the New Testament sources are strangely and suspiciously silent. The second chapter is a brief history of the Zealots. Brandon maintains (Chapter 3) that their importance in Jewish history from the time of Judas the Galilean (A.D. 6) to the self-destruction of the Jewish garrison at Masada (A.D. 73) was greater than is often supposed. For their own good reasons Josephus, Philo, and the New Testament have minimized or disparaged the role of the Zealots in Jewish history. While the sources give little direct information connecting the Zealots with primitive Jewish Christianity, Brandon argues that a proper recognition of the importance of the former and the similar ideological and eschatological views of the latter makes some affinity between them not only plausible, but probable. This affinity, which becomes a main pillar of Brandon's total argument, is suggested in the third chapter and further elaborated in the fourth. It involves, among other things, the assumption of a radical discontinuity between the Pauline version of the gospel and that espoused by Jewish Christians, especially the Jerusalem Church under the leadership of James. The fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and the concurrent demise of the Jerusalem Church has meant that we are bereft of documents and direct information concerning this most important segment of early Christianity. For Brandon, however, this situation is no reason for agnosticism. Rather, on the basis of the sources and in the light of the putative political situation of first century Palestine, he proceeds to reconstruct a picture of a militantly "Zionist" primitive Jewish Christianity, which, he believes, somehow had its roots in the political attitude of Jesus himself. Although its messianic hopes had been fundamentally challenged by the death of Jesus as a Jewish martyr, they were revived at the resurrection and focused thenceforth upon his expected return as the Redeemer of Israel and the judge of her enemies.

Against such a background, Brandon proceeds in the final three chapters to explain the relative silence of the Gospels on all these matters. In chapter five he deals with Mark, and the chapter's subtitle already indicates his understanding of that document: *apologia ad christianos romanos*. Mark was written for the church in Rome and was intended to explain Jesus' ministry and death in such a way as to conceal their seditious over-

tones. The author portrayed Jesus (esp. in 12:12-17) as approving the Roman government. The picture of the "pacific Christ" was developed further by Matthew, Luke, and John (chapter 6). Yet there are still traces in these Gospels, as well as in Mark, of a sterner Jesus, whose ministry and death took place within the context of fierce political struggle and national, patriotic hope. In the final chapter Brandon stops short of claiming that Jesus was a Zealot. For example, he says the fact that one of his disciples, Simon the Zealot, bore such a sobriquet shows Jesus' sympathy with Zealot ideals, but at the same time indicates that he did not identify with them. Otherwise, Simon would not have been distinguished in this manner. Yet Jesus' willingness to undertake violent measures (i.e. the cleansing of the temple) to purify and prepare his nation for the coming kingdom of God shows that he was much more the revolutionary and much less the purely religious leader or divine being than traditional scholarship and piety have supposed.

Really to engage the multifarious argumentation of Brandon would require a considerable treatise, if not a comparable monograph. His book is worthy of such a response, but for obvious reasons it cannot be given here. The remainder of this review will consequently be limited to a couple of observations about possible reactions to the book, followed by the notation of some important points of strength as well as vulnerability.

The reaction of traditional Christian faith (and scholarship) will likely be outright rejection of Brandon's thesis (supported by historical and exegetical arguments against it). Modern radical churchmen, however, may see in Brandon's portrait of Jesus confirmation of their own views of the proper and necessary role of Christianity in a revolutionary age. Both reactions are natural and understandable. Nevertheless, Brandon's thesis, which is advanced on purely historical grounds, deserves to be tested on the basis of consonant, historical criteria before theological considerations are allowed to intrude themselves.

Brandon's views are grounded upon a number of considerations or judgments which can scarcely be gainsaid. Jesus was a Jew. His life and ministry occurred during a time of foreign oppression and consequent political ferment in Israel. In the New Testament he appears as the Jewish Messiah, and he was crucified by the Roman authorities as a messianic claimant. Nevertheless, the relevant New Testament sources tend to shift the blame for his crucifixion from the Romans to the Jews. This shifting of the blame had an apologetic interest, namely, to exonerate Christianity of the suspicion of political sedition in the face of a Roman authority which was none too friendly already. Add to this the fact that Jesus' own proclamation centered upon the kingdom of God, a concept that at least sounds political, and there seems to be ample basis for Brandon's thesis.

Yet Brandon's effort to relate Jesus to the Zealots and to portray him as a proponent of violent revolution faces two distinct orders of difficulty. In the first place, it is in some measure dependent upon a view of the Judaism of the period A.D. 1-50 in which the Zealots occupy a more prominent role than the contemporary sources explicitly indicate or most modern scholars have supposed. Similarly, the alleged affinity of Jewish Christianity with Zealotism is maintained on the basis of a series of inferences drawn partly from the sources, but very largely from the political situation as previously portrayed.

The second order of difficulties has to do with the interpretation of New Testament texts and the understanding of the inner development of early Christian thought. Several examples may be cited. The supposed disjunction of Pauline and Jesusalem Christianity, which enables Brandon to make short shrift of the lack of evi-

dence for his general thesis in Paul's letters, is dubious at best. In instances where Paul refers to tradition, it is apparently tradition shared with the Jesusalem Church (I Cor. 11:23ff.; 15:3ff.), and Paul goes out of his way to maintain the unity of his own preaching of the gospel with that of the Jerusalem apostles (Gal. 2:1-10). Differences there surely were, but the fact that Paul affords no evidence for the differences Brandon imputes to the Jerusalem Church is of greater significance than he allows. Although certain sayings of Jesus (e.g. Lk. 12:49ff.; Matt. 10:34; Lk. 13:36ff.), as well as the cleansing of the temple, imply that Jesus was a vigorous man who expected rigorous trials for himself and his followers, this evidence is not sufficient to support Brandon's portrayal of Jesus as a Zealot sympathizer. Moreover, Brandon either ignores the much larger tradition of Jesus' sayings, in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere, in which he renounces violence or categorizes it under the rubric of the "pacific Christ," and implies that it is predominantly a creation of the early church or the evangelists. This procedure is indicative of a crucial methodological deficiency. Brandon neither sets forth nor adopts any objective analysis of the tradition, but eclectically embraces one item from the tradition as historically genuine and dismisses or downgrades another, apparently on the basis of no other criterion than its usefulness for his thesis. There is as great a *Tendenz* in this method as there is in the Gospels! In dealing with the Evangelists, particularly Mark, Brandon is equally arbitrary, setting forth his view of the apologetic purpose of the Gospel for a Roman audience of the period shortly after A.D. 70 with little regard for alternative interpretations or, for that matter, judgments regarding time, place and circumstance of authorship. Finally, although Brandon makes an intensive effort to view Jesus in the light of his historical setting, he ignores the negative implications of the one positive point of connection for which there is very concrete evidence, namely, John the Baptist. For all his eschatological fervor and ethical vigor, John does not appear, either in the New Testament or in Josephus, as an advocate of violent revolution or a chauvinist whose eschatological hopes were inflexibly bound to any *national* group (cf. esp. Matt. 3:9; Lk. 3:8). Was Jesus more closely bound to Jewish nationalistic hopes than John?

I am sure that Professor Brandon would be able to make short work of an objection such as this last, so skillful is he in sifting and evaluating the evidence to the end that it supports rather than undercuts his position. Precisely this skill, however, gives cause for some wariness or skepticism. Without impugning the motives of so distinguished a scholar, this reviewer must nevertheless conclude that his brilliant dialectic and considerable erudition lead him up to, and sometimes across, the limits of credibility.

—D. Moody Smith

A Theological Approach to Art. Roger Hazelton. Abingdon. 1967. 158 pp. $3.50.

This book is not easily reduced to content resumé or interpretive summary. Its very charm is in its elusiveness: not the skittishness of unresolved thought but the forthrightness that escapes easy banality. The subtleties and nuances really give the book its character, but they emerge in relation to a workman-like organization and to an evaluation of art as disclosure, embodiment, vocation, and celebration. Do not expect me to outline all of this by way of a review. That is what the book and the experience of art are about.

Roger Hazelton is a gentle and perspicuous person. He can be sharp and even devastating on occasion. He is not verbose or merely chatty. True, he quotes artists, sometimes, but, best

of all, he is true to their honesty in themselves and to the theological insights they so richly convey. Occasionally they do this all unaware, or in spite of themselves; sometime precisely by way of being themselves.

Here are a few examples of the author's insight and expressiveness. On page 20 he says: "Art, then, is disclosure. What is at stake in it is man's inveterate desire to shape the substance of his vision of the world for someone else to see." Again on page 76 he remarks: "A work of art is Christian if it bodies forth and so conveys or opens up the gospel to men and women of any age or place." Furthermore, "There is no virtue in trying to conceive art and faith as two separate things between which some kind of relation may be said to exist. . . . My thesis here is simply that these ways may be seen to come together in the artist's own vocation, as we traced their convergence earlier in his works" (p. 112). And quite luminously: "Art is the bestowal of significance upon the raw materials of our existence; it is celebration in the sense of making known with praise what being human means." (p. 153)

I have been greatly helped by this little book. It is true to art as I know it. I have recommended it to my Sunday School class, largely laymen and laywomen, as also to my University classes. I commend it to you also.

—Ray C. Petry

The American Churches in the Ecumenical Movement, 1900-1968. Samuel McCrea Cavert. Association. 1968. 288 pp. $9.95.

No single person has been more intimately and continuously involved with the ecumenical movement in America than Samuel McCrea Cavert. Students of church history in this century (which category should include every wide-awake churchman) will be permanently in his debt for bringing together these significant developments (if only the retail price were not so high!). To combine clear chronological order with the interweaving of intricately complex agencies, personalities and events is a stupendous accomplishment. From the nineteenth-century background, through the tribulations and triumphs of the Federal Council, to the expanding horizons of the National Council of Churches, Dr. Cavert leads his readers with scholarly accuracy and sensitive understanding.

As a reference book for the period this volume provides extensive bibliography, careful footnotes, "thumbnail" biographical sketches, and an index to every important participant, individual or organization. More valuable still is the author's sweeping perspective over fifty years, enabling him to point out the problems frankly, the achievements joyously, the prospects hopefully. "What has actually taken place within the memory of living men represents such a marked advance that there is no reason to set limits to the possibilities that lie ahead. . . . We may even discover that what we have thus far witnessed in the ecumenical developments of the twentieth century is only a prologue to one of the most creative periods in Christian history." (p. 271)

—Creighton Lacy

A Church Truly Catholic. James K. Mathews. Abingdon, 1969. 160 pp. pb. $2.45.

To have the James A. Gray Lectures for 1967 available so promptly in an "original paperback" for wider circulation is a rare opportunity. Bishop Mathews has inserted one chapter on "Ministry and Mission" in the midst of his treatments of the contemporary context, United Methodism and ecumenism, worship, and attitudes toward other faiths. The style is vivid, personal, full of illustrations and quotations—eminently useful for discussion groups or elementary introductions to ecumenical challenges.

Not every reader will agree that—

"the gospel *is* revolution, if we allow it to be" (16);

"no man anywhere can nowadays live as if Vatican II had never happened" (53);

"indeed, COCU confronts us with the most creative possibility in American Protestantism today" (64);

"there exists in Methodism something less than universal and uninterrupted enthusiasm for COCU and for church union in general" (72);

"the Christian missionary undertaking . . . for wholehearted obedience to the gospel, for the building up of people, is without parallel in history" (79);

"the role of the clergy is to equip the layman *for* the world" (90);

"the average layman is neither informed about the Christian faith, nor, according to his own admission, is he guided by it to any great extent in his daily decisions" (92);

"renewal of the church . . . must not be understood as being for the sake of the church; rather, it is for the sake of the world, for mission in the world" (106);

"Christianity aims not at making the map more Christian but at making Christ more widely known" (146);

"the same God who has prompted us has also prepared our counterpart for dialogue" (156);

"a willingness finally to risk even the loss of our heritage in the service of God and man is to find it" (160).

But it is exciting and refreshing to find a Methodist bishop saying these things. We are proud that he said them at Duke two years ago and that a wider audience can now read and ponder them.

—Creighton Lacy

Christianity in World Perspective. Kenneth Cragg. Oxford, 1968. 227 pp. $4.95.

With *The Call of the Minaret* and *Sandals at the Mosque* Kenneth Cragg emerged as the foremost Christian interpreter of Islam in our day. (See "Islamic Reflections on Contemporary Theology" in The Duke Divinity School Review, Vol. 31, No. 2, Spring 1966). His more recent writings establish him as a brilliant exponent of a broader mission theology and of dialogue with men of other faiths.

Christianity in World Perspective is a thoughtful and thought-provoking analysis of our ecumenical responsibilities—in the broadest, deepest sense of "ecumenical." In three probing, illustrative studies the very chapter titles suggest Cragg's sensitivity to points of contact and potential conflict (or would he prefer us to say "points of traditional conflict and potential contact"?): "Christian Church and Jewish Destiny," "Christian Creed and Islamic Worship," and "Christian Symbolism and the African Mind."

But non-specialists will find even more exciting the foundational treatments of "Nineteenth-Century Mission in Twentieth-Century Perspective," "New Testament Universality: Precedents and Open Questions," and "A Theology of Religious Pluralism." Here he deals gently, perceptively, always biblically, with the tensions between conversion and co-existence, between "superficial neutrality" and "syncretistic disloyalty," between openness and conviction.

Likewise in evaluation, Cragg offers a concise and devastating critique of secular theologies, while affirming the truly human demands of the Gospel. And in the final appraisal of "Identity and Diversity: The Contemporary Church" he boldly calls into question an exclusive insistence on creedal, doctrinal, ecclesiastical conversion, inquiring whether "a re-orientation of personality into the Christ dimension . . . may not come to pass apart from the formal recognition of Christian dogma" and whether the Christian community may not provide, by deed and word, the "sanction of this newness of life . . . if need be vicariously, for all men."

Many a line or paragraph in this book demands—and deserves—rereading, not because its language is confused or confusing (on the contrary, Cragg uses a poetry of expression that is striking), but because of its depth of theological insight and its breadth of human understanding.

—Creighton Lacy

Black Power and Christian Responsibility. C. Freeman Sleeper. Abingdon. 1969. 221 pp. $4.50.

On both the jacket and the cover of this book *Black Power* and *Christian Responsibility* are in different type. Whatever the publishers meant to imply by the contrast, this reviewer would analyze the contents as composing two distinct books. No, three, for Christian Responsibility is approached primarily through biblical exegesis, but there are a couple of chapters and scattered references to the bases and processes of ethical decision-making. Each of the three topics has merit, each contains some valuable and timely insights, but the "cement" does not hold the pieces together.

Amid a plethora of contemporary writings the treatment of black power is clear, concise and to the point. In the final, briefest chapter (after affirming as his purpose "to develop criteria for evaluating strategies" rather than "to formulate strategies") Sleeper offers a few pages of very specific guidelines for congregations and for individual Christians. His ethical principles reiterate the ecumenical formula of a "responsible society" but do not alway relate, convincingly or durably, to either biblical exegesis or white racism. The interpretation of ethics in the Old and New Testaments is never new, seldom profound, not wholly clear, and almost always cluttered with scriptural citations which require parallel study (more useful for a sermon preparation than intelligible reading).

Those who (like students in this critical semester at Duke) yearn for biblical and theological foundations for their moral choices in racial dilemmas will find here some solid aids to formulating their own correlations between black power and Christian responsibility. But the book suffers from superimposed structure and careless statement. At least twice (pp. 186-188) "faith" and "faithfulness" (defined as accountability, loyalty to the community) are used interchangeably. . . . The assertion that "within the Christian tradition *freedom from institutional structures is illegitimate*" (p. 175, italics his) may be true, but if so, it requires fuller elaboration and more relevant targets than "monastic perfection," hedonism, anarchism, and "the false view that individuals are free to destroy and create structures at will". . . . The reader is told repeatedly that "we cannot pursue the issues here. . . ." (though the author occasionally does), sometimes on such tantalizingly crucial questions as the relation between mutual and sacrificial love, the "moral functions of secular communities," or the role of consequences in ethical evaluation. . . . One of the best sections (on "The Phenomenon of Power in the New Testament") affirms that "there is no ultimate dualism" between positive and negative uses, explicitly avoids discussing "ways in which different writers hold the two forms of power together" (p. 137), but outlines the "distortions" first in such a "powerful" way as to suggest that the creative types are the derivative ones, instead of *vice versa*.

Such negative reactions may be due in part to disappointment at promises unfulfilled. Not for "answers at the level of policy or strategy" (these the author disavows for himself and the Bible), but for original, helpful insights into the meaning of Christian responsibility (response to God's action and to community). Sleeper reduces many of the complex problems to neat typologies or five-point out-

lines, but he fails to prove the interconnectedness of selected exegesis and racism as clearly as he apparently assumes. Would that even the criteria for ethical decisions toward black power—or anything else—were that simple!

—Creighton Lacy

Christ and the Moral Life. James M. Gustafson. Harper and Row. 1968. 275 pp. $8.

Any book on the subject of Christian Ethics by Richard Niebuhr's successor in that chair at Yale Divinity School is bound to be an important work because of the position held by its author. Fortunately, *Christ and The Moral Life*, by James M. Gustafson, deserves much of the attention it will undoubtedly receive, for it is (as a cover blurb by James Luther Adams declares) "a superb book [which] will obviously become a standard volume in Christian ethics."

In content, the book is a survey of the conceptions of Christ as Creator/Redeemer, Sanctifier, Justifier, Pattern and Teacher in the ethical writings of major figures in the history of Christian ethics. The balance of emphasis on these various notions of Christ as Lord of the moral life in the work of Barth, Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, and a number of other modern ethicists as well as giants such as Augustine, Thomas (and the Thomistic tradition), Calvin, Luther and Wesley is cogently sorted out. The great merit of the book, then, is its scholarly contribution to our understanding of what a host of the most important theological ethicists have said about the place of Christ in the moral reasoning of the Christian.

The methodological contribution of the book is more problematic, but it is at least reasonably clear what Gustafson is attempting to do. Proceeding on the assumption that "the basic methods and procedures of theological ethics are no different from the methods and procedures of other ethics," he organizes his material around the three questions which he contends are central to any ethical inquiry: "What criteria, principles, models, or values do I turn to for guidance? . . . How is my answer conditioned or determined by what I have become and am as a person? . . . [and] What is the nature and locus of value, of the good?" (pp. 1-2) The final chapter offers Gustafson's own ideas about "the differences that faith in Jesus Christ *often does make, can make* and *ought to make* in the moral lives of members of the Christian community" (italics in the original) as they look to Christ for illumination on the perspective, the disposition, the intention and the norm of the moral life. Throughout the book, and especially in the final chapter, the author is revealed as a man of strong moral passion as well as a scholar of commendable diligence and perspicacity; indeed, those passages in which Gustafson tells us what he really thinks loyalty to Christ calls for are among the most thought-provoking in the entire book.

So much for an evaluation of the book within the circle of givens which it assumes. But if the reviewer were allowed an evaluative word about the approach to Christian ethics present in this book and the function it will serve in the community of Christian intellectuals to whom it is addressed, the assessment would be very different. The investment of academic endeavor in historical scholarship has a much higher priority among religious professionals than it deserves, and when the most respected men in the most prestigious institutions continue to give us more of the same, they perpetuate this deplorable misallocation of mental energy by causing lesser schools and lesser scholars to copy them. Thus the subject of conversation among seminary students interested in ethics continues to be about the latest Writer of an Important Book's interpretation of what Barth

derived from Luther's version of Augustine's doctrine of so-and-so—and the weightier matters of the moral law and ethical action (which are much more difficult to define and analyze) get lost in the shuffle.

Not once, for example, is the question honestly and searchingly raised, "Who is this 'Christ' about whom the theologians speak?" No mention is made of the findings of biblical scholarship, linguistic analysis and the phenomenology of religion which impinge upon this question and suggest, in fact, that it ought to be phrased, "Exactly what sort of phenomenon is Christ-mythology, what function is it playing in our society at the moment, and what function might or should it play?" Of course not—to expect such a question to be raised by the Professor of Christian Ethics at Yale Divinity School is absurd; furthermore, to raise it in a review is, quite literally, *obscene*: "off-stage." Posing such a question is a violation of professional etiquette and common interpersonal decency, for it is a culpable *faux pas* to question publicly (on stage) the roles people perform in front of the significant others who form the audience without whom they cannot play their chosen part. Yet failing to raise it would be, for this reviewer, a violation of something far more important than good manners, i.e., his understanding of the authenticity called for in the moral life by the anointed one whose contagious freedom started the movement we call Christianity.

—Henry Clark

THE DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL REVIEW

Autumn 1969

A Prayer for Methodist Preachers

Almighty God and heavenly Father, who of thine infinite love and goodness towards us hast given to us thy only and most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our redeemer and the author of everlasting life; who after he had made perfect our redemption by his death, and was ascended into heaven, sent abroad into the world his apostles, prophets, evangelists, doctors, and pastors, by whose labour and ministry he gathered together a great flock in all the parts of the world, to set forth the eternal praise of thy holy name; for these so great benefits of thy eternal goodness, and for that thou hast vouchsafed to call these thy servants here present to the same office and ministry appointed for the salvation of mankind, we render unto thee most hearty thanks, we praise and worship thee; and we humbly beseech thee, by the same thy blessed Son, to grant unto all who either here or elsewhere call upon thy holy name that we may continue to show ourselves thankful unto thee for these and all other thy benefits, and that we may daily increase and go forward in the knowledge and faith of thee and thy Son by the Holy Spirit. So that as well by these thy ministers, as by them over whom they shall be appointed thy ministers, thy holy name may be for ever glorified, and thy blessed kingdom enlarged, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

[From "The Form and Manner of ordaining of Elders" in John Wesley's *Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America: with other occasional services*, London, 1784.]

THE DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL REVIEW

Bicentennial of The American
Methodist Preacher
1769-1969

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Contents

A Prayer for Methodist Preachers............Inside Front Cover

The Methodist Preacher.................................. 139

Wesley's Early Preachers in America...................... 143
by Frank Baker

The Early Native Methodist Preachers..................... 163
by Norman W. Spellmann

Enthusiasm vs. Education? Early Methodist
Preachers in New England................................ 188
by Douglas R. Chandler

The Theological Heritage of the Early Methodist Preachers.... 196
by Charles A. Rogers

Methodist Preachers, Slavery and Caste: Types of
Social Concern in Antebellum America.................. 209
by William B. Gravely

The Methodist Preacher Today: "A New Church
for a New World".. 230
by W. Kenneth Goodson

The Journal of Joseph Pilmore.......................... 243

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The Methodist Preacher

Two hundred years ago a new species of religious worker was transplanted to the American continent. He was to have as much importance as any and more importance than most both in consolidating religious observance in settled communities and in developing religion on the expanding frontier. He was familiarly known as "The Methodist Preacher." The title has tended to stick, even though the battle has long been won in favour of those who claimed that Methodist ministers should fulfil all the ecclesiastical roles of the episcopalian clergyman. When John Wesley first called the itinerant Methodist preacher into existence in England nearly 230 years ago, however, he felt it essential clearly to distinguish him both from the ordained minister of the Church of England (such as Wesley himself) and from the layman whom Wesley authorised to preach to his neighbours in his spare time—the "local preacher." The term "Methodist preacher" was in general applied to the layman who gave himself full time to a preaching and pastoral ministry, and was supported by the societies whom he served, but who both by tradition and by theology was not authorised to administer the sacraments. America constituted the laboratory in which the Methodist preacher was first and most clearly transformed into the Methodist minister, though he has never quite lost the spirit of evangelical adventure, of Christian brotherhood rather than fatherhood, that tended to cling to the old term.

When I suggested to the editorial committee of our *Divinity School Review* that we should devote this issue to the Methodist preacher in America through two hundred years they heartily agreed, perhaps the more heartily because they then proceeded to impose upon me the fate of many proposers of resolutions—I was asked to implement my own suggestion by serving as "Guest editor." Here is the result, for which I now express in public print to the contributors what I have already expressed in private letters—my warm gratitude for their articles, especially as they were prepared amid the many difficulties of very busy lives. All the contributors live in different states, though most are alumni of Duke or have some other close affiliation. This, however, was not the basis of the invitation extended to them, but rather their competence in the particular field

of study upon which they were asked to write. You will find here articles by Professor Norman W. Spellmann of Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas; Professor Douglas R. Chandler of Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D. C.; Professor Charles A. Rogers of Evangelical Theological Seminary, Naperville, Illinois; Professor William B. Gravely, of the University of Denver, Denver, Colorado; and Bishop W. Kenneth Goodson, Bishop of the Birmingham area of the United Methodist Church.

A bicentenary celebration is normally the occasion for some emphasis upon history, and this special issue is no exception. Nevertheless we have tried to touch upon various aspects of the history of the Methodist preacher, and to deal not only with his preaching but with his theology and social concerns, at least through representative sampling. We end on a prophetic note, offering an example of a Methodist preacher of today issuing a challenge to his contemporaries.

It was on October 21, 1769, that Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmore landed at Gloucester Point, New Jersey, and speedily made their way to Philadelphia en route to New York. They were the first two itinerant Methodist preachers sent by John Wesley in answer to appeals for help from New York. The opening article describes something of the origin of this appeal, briefly characterises "Wesley's Early Preachers in America"—ten in all—and tries to assess the value of their contribution to American Methodism. Perhaps I should warn you that the writer is a Britisher, though I do not believe that it is British prejudice that causes him to place a higher value than has sometimes been placed upon these pioneer labours in guiding an ebullient ecclesiastical infant.

Professor Norman Spellmann follows with an article on "The Early Native Methodist Preachers," those who received their training and eventually took over control from the first group sent by Wesley. From among the many he has singled out four who made special contributions, and whose names should be familiar to all students of American Methodist history. William Watters is claimed as the first native American Methodist itinerant. In many things similar to Watters was Philip Gatch, the second to serve in this capacity. Better known to many from his autobiography and other studies is the somewhat more romantic figure of Freeborn Garrettson. These three were born in Maryland, the first two in 1751, the last a year later. Dr. Spellmann's fourth selection is Jesse Lee, the first native Virginian to enter the Methodist ministry, born in 1758.

He became not only a great leader, the apostle of New England, but the church's first historian.

Professor Douglas R. Chandler has prepared a charming little study which also touches upon Jesse Lee, entitled "Enthusiasm vs. Education? Early Methodist Preachers in New England." In this he takes up the problem which Wesley had faced in old England—how far could preachers with a limited education be acceptable in an area accustomed to learned if not always moving sermons? A nummer of thumbnail sketches of southern preachers who invaded the educated territory of New England with their "energetic pulpit manner" brings to life the typical Methodist preacher of long ago, who has not quite disappeared from the modern scene.

In "The Theological Heritage of the Early Methodist Preachers" Professor Charles Rogers demonstrates how closely they were linked with the evangelical teaching of John Wesley in their emphasis upon the doctrines of original sin, salvation by faith, and sanctification. He also points out that this was not merely a general theological atmosphere which they breathed but a deliberately adopted doctrinal code. This was first crystallized into a systematic theology in Asa Shinn's *An Essay on the Plan of Salvation*, published in 1813, but the major theological influence upon the Methodist preachers of the first half of the nineteenth century was the British Methodist Richard Watson, whose *Theological Institutes* first appeared in the United States a decade after Shinn's book.

In America as well as in Britain and elsewhere the Methodist preacher has been characterised throughout his history by a strong concern for social service and for social justice. Professor William Gravely draws our attention to one aspect of this in a brilliant study entitled: "Methodist Preachers, Slavery and Caste: Types of Social Concern in Antebellum America." This outlines Methodist attitudes to slavery from 1784 onwards, encompassing the rise of the great Methodist black denominations. Professor Gravely traces the shift within white Methodism from a challenge against slavery as an evil social institution to a religious concern for the slaves within an imperfect system reluctantly accepted—a concern which often found vent in revivalism aimed at the spiritual regeneration of the slave, on the assumption that his liberation was impossible. He demonstrates how in the 1840's this acquiescent attitude was fiercely challenged and as fiercely defended, the conflict forming one of the major causes of the division between north and south, in the Methodist Church as in the nation as a whole.

With the closing article we have a change of pace from the lecture to the sermon, from the academic to the devotional, from the study of the past to the challenge of the present. We are fortunate in being able to reveal in action one of the prophetic Methodist preachers of our own day. We present excerpts from an address delivered by one of our own distinguished alumni, Bishop Kenneth Goodson, on the present quadrennial theme of the United Methodist Church—"A New Church for a New World." Those who know Bishop Goodson will recognize his racy style and individual accent in this lightly edited version preserved by means of recording tape from an occasion at which I myself was present. I can personally witness to the great emotional impact originally made by our colleague upon a huge gathering, and I believe that some of his anecdotes and examples of somewhat unorthodox types of ministry tailored for modern need may well provide a healthy stimulus to all of us. Thus our study of the Methodist preachers of yesterday, reinforced by a living document furnished by one of today, may enable us to be more nearly the devoted, enthusiastic, and adventurous Methodist preachers who are needed for the different world of tomorrow.

Frank Baker.

Wesley's Early Preachers in America

FRANK BAKER
Duke Divinity School

The scattered Methodist societies which arose in America during the 1760's owed their birth and initial sustenance not only to individuals but to a general movement of pietism and revival which had long been spreading over Europe and America, being known here as The Great Awakening. One of the chief carriers of the religious infection was a member of the Wesleys' Holy Club at Oxford, George Whitefield, and some American pockets of Methodist fellowship retained direct though tenuous links with his wide-ranging evangelism. The individuals who formed the focal points of these pioneer Methodist societies, however, were for the most part local preachers who had emigrated from Britain for personal reasons—men of limited intellectual and administrative gifts, but eager to reproduce in as close a replica as possible the spiritual surroundings which they had regretfully left behind in their home country.

Both in Great Britain and in other countries Methodism has usually propagated itself by means of converted laymen, who from telling others of their own experience of salvation have graduated to preaching from a text, the exhorter thus becoming the preacher. At first these men were "local" preachers, exercising a "spare time" ministry in the area where they lived and worked. From their ranks emerged the specialists, the itinerant preachers—still laymen—who under Wesley's direction served various circuits, itinerating week by week within the circuits, and travelling year by year from one circuit to another, all the time supported financially by the Methodist people. A local preacher whose livelihood (or lack of it) took him to another area or country frequently gathered around himself a group of sympathizers and converts who met regularly for Christian fellowship—a Methodist society. This society the local preacher tried to oversee as best he could, but usually came to realise that this task demanded different talents and much more time than that of evangelical preaching. He thereupon appealed to Wesley or to one of his itiner-

ants to supply the leadership and organization necessary to keep alive the spiritual glow.

This was in effect what happened in the American colonies. After emigrating from England to New York, Thomas Taylor discovered an infant Methodist society which had been raised by Philip Embury (an Irish local preacher)and strengthened by Captain Thomas Webb (an English local preacher). After five months among the New York Methodists, who accepted him sufficiently to make him one of the trustees of the land which they had purchased for building a permanent headquarters, Taylor realised that expert help was highly desirable. On April 11, 1768 he wrote direct to Wesley, asking for guidance in drawing up a trust deed for the proposed preaching house, and making the convincing point that although financial help would not be refused this was not their main need:

> We want an able, experienced preacher; one who has both gifts and graces necessary for the work. God has not despised the day of small things. There is a real work begun in many hearts by the preaching of Mr. Webb and Mr. Embury: but although they are both useful, and their hearts in the work, they want many qualifications necessary for such an undertaking, where they have none to direct them. And the progress of the gospel here depends much on the qualifications of the preachers. . . . We must have a man of wisdom, of sound faith, and a good disciplinarian; one whose heart and soul are in the work.

If such a man could be sent, Taylor continued, "I doubt not but by the goodness of God such a flame would be soon kindled as would never stop until it reached the great South Sea."[1]

Wesley presented the gist of Taylor's letter to his preachers meeting in Conference at Bristol that August, accompanied by a note (probably from Thomas Webb) about "a few people in Maryland who had lately been awakened under the ministry of Robert Strawbridge," and who added their own "pressing call" for help.[2] Wesley left the matter for their consideration until the following Conference. Joseph Pilmoor, for one, was "deeply impressed with a longing desire to visit America."[3] A month or two later, reinforced by the pleas of the Swedish chaplain from Philadelphia, Dr. Wrangel,[4]

1. *Methodist History* III, 3-15 (January, 1965), especially pp, 3, 14.
2. John Atkinson, *The Beginnings of the Wesleyan Movement in America*, (New York: Hunt & Eaton, 1896), pp. 101, 109.
3. Atkinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 101, 108-11; cf. W. W. Sweet, *Men of Zeal* (New York: Abingdon, 1935), p. 89.
4. John Wesley, *Journal*, Standard Edition (London: Epworth Press, 1938), V. 290.

Wesley printed Taylor's appeal as an eight-page pamphlet entitled "A Letter, &c." A copy of this he sent to each of his Assistants—the itinerant preachers in charge of the various circuits—with instructions to read it publicly and to receive subscriptions for the brethren in New York. He continued to drop hints to individual preachers such as Christopher Hopper: "If Joseph Cownley or you have a mind to step over to New York, I will not say you nay. I believe it would help your own health and help many precious souls."[5]

At the Conference which met at Leeds on August 3, 1769, Wesley finally issued the open challenge to which all this had been leading: "We have a pressing call from our brethren at New York (who have built a preaching-house) to come over and help them. Who is willing to go?" Although several, including Pilmoor, had almost certainly resolved to volunteer, they diffidently remained silent. It seems certain that Wesley canvassed for two men rather than the one requested by Taylor, as he also did on subsequent occasions, and looked for two men who could work amicably as senior and junior partner. John Pawson stated that "several of the brethren offered to go if I would go along with them."[6] On the following day the call was repeated.[7] The volunteers were forthcoming, and the Minutes record Wesley's choice: "Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor."[8]

Altogether from 1769 to 1774 Wesley sent over eight of his itinerants in matched pairs, with one each time as the recognized leader. All were young men in their early thirties except for the two chosen in 1771, Francis Asbury and Richard Wright; Asbury was only 26 and Wright apparently younger still. Following them in 1773 were two very experienced men to face increasing problems, Thomas Rankin and George Shadford. In 1774 came two men with lesser experience, James Dempster and Martin Rodda. After the successful Revolution Wesley sent two more, preachers with many more years and experience to their credit than any of their predecessors, and ordained to boot, in order to salvage whatever might remain of Methodist traditions and discipline in the liberated colonies. To a greater or lesser degree each of these ten men helped to impress Wesley's

5. John Wesley, *Letters*, ed. John Telford (London: Epworth Press, 1931), V:123.

6. *Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, ed. Thomas Jackson, 6 vols. (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), IV:37.

7. Sweet, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

8. *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1862), I:86.

ideas upon American Methodism, though the key period for this process was the first decade, and the key figure the man who remained behind when his loyalist brethren left for England, Francis Asbury.

One important element in American Methodist progress during the 1770's was the struggle for power between the pioneer local preachers and their absent leader, acting through these itinerant preachers dispatched with delegated authority to guide the fortunes of the new societies. Regarded in another way this was a struggle also between a tendency to somewhat formless revivalism and organized churchmanship. It is true that the immigrant local preachers, notably Robert Strawbridge in Maryland, warmed enthusiastically to the growing community of converts looking to them for leadership, and strove to organize them into a self-sufficient church complete with ministry and sacraments. It is also true on the other hand that neither Wesley nor his itinerants despised emotional evangelism. Nevertheless on the issue of revivalism versus church order there existed a clear line of demarcation between the emigrants and Wesley.

Out of the resulting tension, and to some extent arising from it, was forged a vigorous new denomination, tautly disciplined and closely organized, yet at the same time flexible enough to grasp every evangelical opportunity presented by the American frontier. Upon the expanding frontier, therefore, Methodism proved a formidable rival to the Baptists, about whom Asbury made the comment: "Like ghosts they haunt us from place to place."[9]

Before leaving London the first two British itinerants, Boardman and Pilmoor, sought and received additional advice and blessing not only from Charles Wesley but also from that veteran missionary George Whitefield, whom John Wesley had asked to keep an eye on them when he embarked on what proved to be his last visit to America.[10] Both in organizing the societies and in tempering the eager outcroppings of undisciplined emotionalism they were far more successful than was sometimes acknowledged, either by their contemporaries or by some later historians. After a very stormy passage they disembarked at Gloucester Point, New Jersey on October 21, 1769, and were surprised to discover in nearby Philadelphia another Methodist society, which was already receiving the friendly succour of Captain Webb and of Robert Williams. Williams had recently arrived from Ireland, where he had served for three years as an itin-

9. *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*, ed. Elmer T. Clark (Nashville: Abingdon, 1958), I:176.

10. Atkinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 119, 125-6; Wesley, *Letters*, V:184.

erant preacher in a subsidiary probationary capacity; Wesley had accepted his offer to work in America on a completely voluntary basis on condition that he would subject himself to the authority of the regular itinerants who would soon follow him out.[11]

Boardman, who was the senior by a few months and had served six years as an itinerant (at least four as an Assistant) against Pilmoor's three (none as Assistant), was now Wesley's Assistant in charge of Methodism throughout the American continent—Circuit No. 50 in the British *Minutes* for the following year. After discussion he decided that the two of them must divide forces; leaving his junior colleague to organize the work in Philadelphia he went on to their original destination of New York.

Pilmoor proved himself fully adequate to this first major responsibility. He attended worship at St. Paul's Church and secured the cooperation of the local Anglican clergyman, the Rev. William Stringer; he preached in the open air; he introduced the good British Methodist practice of a preaching service at 5.0 a.m. before people went off to their work; he publicly read and explained Wesley's *Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies*, of which a new edition (making at least nineteen thus far) had just been published. Soon he was introducing prayer meetings and the love feast, visiting the local prisoners (and preaching a charity sermon for them), attempting a preaching itinerary in the rural areas, and helping to secure Old St. George's as a permanent building for the parent society in Philadelphia, and settled upon the type of trust officially recommended by Wesley.[12] Once established in Old St. George's Pilmoor publicly nailed his Methodist colours to the mast, so that his hearers would all know what he as Wesley's agent stood for:

1. That the Methodist society was never designed to make a separation from the Church of England, or to be looked upon as a church.
2. That it was at first and is still intended for the benefit of all those of every denomination who, being truly convinced of sin and the danger they are exposed to, earnestly desire to flee from the wrath to come.
3. That any person who is so convinced, and desires admittance into the society, will readily be received as a *probationer*.
4. That those who walk according to the oracles of God, and thereby

11. W. C. Barclay, *Early American Methodism, 1779-1844* (New York: Board of Missions, 1949), I:29-32; cf. Atkinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 130, 141-2, and *Arminian Magazine*, 1784, p. 163; for Williams's visit to Philadelphia in September 1769, see A. W. Cliffe, *The Glory of our Methodist Heritage* (Philadelphia, 1956), pp. 72-3.

12. J. P. Lockwood, *The Western Pioneers* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1881), pp. 83-92; cf. Atkinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-160, 166-7, 172-5.

give proof of their sincerity, will readily be admitted into full connection with the Methodists.

5. That if any person or persons in the society walk disorderly and transgress the holy law of God, we will admonish him of his error; we will strive to restore him in the spirit of meekness; we will bear with him for a time; but if he remain incorrigible and impenitent, we must then of necessity inform him that he is no longer a member of the society. . . .[13]

After five months Pilmoor claimed: "In Philadelphia there are now 182 in society to whom I have given tickets, and they meet in class and attend to all the discipline of the Methodists as well as the people in London or Bristol." That same entry was preceded by a prophetic note: "If we had more preachers—men of faith and prayer who would preach Christ Jesus the Lord—'tis probable the American Methodists would soon equal, if not exceed, the Europeans."[14]

Meantime Boardman was tracing a similar path in the New York area, though (one suspects) with not quite the vigour and finesse displayed by Pilmoor, to whom it was left later to introduce the love feast to the New York society and (more important) to straighten out the legal tangles over the new building there.[15] Like Pilmoor, Boardman seems to have made limited preaching itineraries around his headquarters, and to have been genuinely concerned about the rural areas. His first letter to Wesley reported: "There appears such a willingness in the Americans to hear the word as I never saw before. They have no preaching in some parts of the Back Settlements. I doubt not but an effectual door will be opened among them."[16]

Boardman and Pilmoor, however, suffered from the common human failing of not being able to do everything at the same time. To this was apparently added the complication that the man in charge, Boardman, was somewhat less able and forceful than his colleague, and was also living under the shadow of the recent death of his wife and young daughter.[17] Nor was Pilmoor inclined to undermine the

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13. Atkinson, *op cit.*, pp. 159-60; this is largely a summary of Wesley's *General Rules.*

14. Lockwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-6. N.B. Robert Williams seems already to have printed class tickets, and issued them to the members in New York; see J. B. Wakeley, *Lost Chapters recovered from the early history of American Methodism* (New York: 1858), pp. 195, 414-5, 424. (Wakeley is in error in describing them as love feast tickets.)

15. Atkinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 175, 178-181, and Wakeley, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-206; see also my notes on the legal problems in *Methodist History* III (January, 1965), pp. 12-13.

16. *Arminian Magazine* (1784), p. 164.

17. Lockwood, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

authority of Boardman and take over the reins for himself. In spite of their eagerness to preach the gospel in the "back settlements," New York and Philadelphia clearly constituted key areas upon which initially they must concentrate. Successfully they introduced or re-inforced most of the features appropriate to large city societies, and pleaded with Wesley for more trained helpers. Pilmoor wrote on May 5, 1770:

> Brother Boardman and I are chiefly confined to the cities, and therefore cannot at present go much into the country, as we have more work upon our hands than we are able to perform. There is work enough for two preachers in each place, and if two of our brethren would come over I believe it would be attended with a great blessing, for then we could visit the places adjacent to the cities.[18]

There seems little doubt that the appeals for help which reached Wesley from both Boardman and Pilmoor were not only on account of the magnitude of the opportunity but because of the problem of maintaining the traditional Methodist discipline in view of the increasing independence of the local preachers. Embury in New York (until he left for Ashgrove in 1770) and Webb as preacher-at-large and pastor in his own Long Island estate were apparently content with their lot. Williams was more ambitious. He was in any case a little more than a local preacher, though a little less than a regular itinerant; as a tireless evangelist and colporteur he seems to have acted as a free lance, and his not uncommendable activities in publishing Methodist literature were eventually regarded as an overstepping of his powers. Williams had arrived a few weeks before Pilmoor and Boardman. Some months later came John King. He had never served as an itinerant in England, but as a local preacher Wesley regarded him as "stubborn and headstrong," and he gained a reputation for "screaming" while he preached. In view of his lack of credentials Pilmoor allowed him to serve some of the country societies only, and even then with extreme reluctance.[19] In his 1770 *Minutes* Wesley did indeed append the names of both Williams and King to those of Pilmoor and Boardman (in that order) on the American circuit, but they were dropped from the *Minutes* of 1771, almost certainly because of complaints from the regular itinerants.

Yet so overwhelmed did Boardman and Pilmoor find themselves by the problems and opportunities of New York and Philadelphia that they left Webb and Williams and King almost unsupervised.

18. *Arminian Magazine* (1784), p. 224.
19. Wesley, *Letters*, VI:166-7; Lockwood, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

When Pilmoor heard Williams preach a few times in Philadelphia he admired his sincerity, but noted: "His gifts are small, yet he may be useful to the country people, who are in general like sheep without shepherds."[20] Unfortunately Williams was preacher rather than pastor, and the country people largely remained without a shepherd, as did those in the other cities. Williams had preached in Baltimore before Pilmoor, as probably had King, but not until Pilmoor's visit in June 1772 were the *General Rules* expounded and a society organized.[21] Similarly Williams had landed in Norfolk, Virginia, and preached there subsequently, but it was left to Pilmoor to organize the first Methodist societies in Portsmouth and Norfolk in November 1772.[22] Pilmoor's extended journey into the south, however, during which he accomplished such consolidation, was not possible until Wesley had answered the call for reinforcements.

Far more dangerous—at least from the ecclesiastical standpoint of Wesley and his itinerants—was the status of Robert Strawbridge in Maryland. No one is yet absolutely certain just when he arrived from his native Ireland, where he had been one of Wesley's local preachers, but it is almost certain that he had been established as an evangelical leader for several years before Wesley's helpers arrived. He had been very effective in forming societies, building a log meeting house, inspiring his converts themselves to exhort, and had even begun to baptize and (apparently) to administer the Lord's Supper to his followers. Although Boardman may have attempted a preaching foray into Maryland, neither he nor Pilmoor undertook any serious supervision of Strawbridge's work. Pilmoor heard him preach "a plain, useful sermon" during a rare visit to Philadelphia in January 1770.[23] So far, so good. But he returned to be a law unto himself. Success naturally fed his self-confidence if not his self-esteem, and every year of his continued independence made the deferred but inevitable power struggle likely to be the more severe.

Wesley's mail contained not only appeals from Boardman and Pilmoor but complaints about them. Pilmoor had from the outset resisted Boardman's demands that they should change places three or four times a year, visualising himself as what he eventually became, an evangelical parish clergyman with settled headquarters—though

20. Lockwood, *op. cit.*, p. 86.
21. Atkinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 333-343.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 354-62; cf. W. W. Sweet, *Virginia Methodism* (Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, 1955), pp. 53-7.
23. Atkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

in his zeal to "do good in the itinerant way" he did indeed refuse the possibility of ordination and a living in the West Indies.[24] Under the warmth of American generosity, both in praise and in money, even Boardman came to share Pilmoor's desire to spend most of his time as the pastor of a large society, with occasional preaching excursions into the country.

For whatever reason, help was clearly needed in America. On several occasions Wesley seriously pondered coming over himself. At any rate in 1771 he released two more men from his stations, out of the five who volunteered. They were both young men, apparently better designed to supplement than to supplant the labours of their predecessors. Richard Wright, who had been admitted on trial only the previous year, and even then not given a regular station, proved a broken reed, though during the two and a half years that he remained he did a little good. His head, also, seems to have been turned by American generosity and flattery.[25] The senior of the pair, Francis Asbury, was only 26 years old, and had had only four years' experience in country circuits, even then not as an Assistant. The choice did not seem unduly promising.

Asbury, nevertheless, whether so commissioned by Wesley or not, believed himself capable of doing a better job than his two seniors, and was prepared to shake things up, cost what it might. Less than a week after joining Boardman in New York his *Journal* noted:

> I remain in New York, though unsatisfied with our being both in town together. I have not yet the thing which I seek—a circulation of preachers, to avoid partiality and popularity. However, I am fixed to the Methodist plan, and do what I do faithfully, as to God. I expect trouble is at hand. This I expected when I left England.[26]

Two days later came a similar complaint:

> I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way. I am in trouble, and more trouble is at hand, for I am determined to make a stand against all partiality. . . . I am come over with an upright intention, and through the grace of God I will make it appear: and I am determined that no man shall bias me with soft words and fair speeches. . . .[27]

The following spring Asbury's mind was somewhat eased by Boardman's plan that the two younger men should take over New

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24. Lockwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 119, 125, 199-211; cf. Wakeley, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-8.
25. Asbury, *Journal*, I:37, 116.
26. *Ibid.*, I:10.
27. *Ibid.*, cf. p. 16.

York and Philadelphia for three months, while Boardman himself visited the Boston area and Pilmoor toured Virginia.[28] He was greatly disturbed, however, when he reached Philadelphia for the first time since his arrival there four months earlier, to find society discipline (as he thought) unduly relaxed, especially in the matter of strangers being given unlimited access to the private gatherings of the society. He found the same kind of thing when he took a tour of duty in New York, and put forward an agenda of sixteen points "for the better ordering of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the society." In this tightening of discipline he was supported by a letter from Wesley, and much strengthened on October 10 by a further letter appointing him Assistant in place of Boardman.[29] Already he had heard a whisper which seemed to imply that his senior colleagues were being recalled to England, and he had clearly added his own to other complaints about them.[30] Boardman took the news of Asbury's promotion over him with good grace, but Pilmoor felt that he had been betrayed, and was furious.[31]

As a matter of fact Asbury's added responsibility was for a short time only, and he must surely have known it. At the Leeds Conference in August 1772 Thomas Webb had stirred the assembly with an appeal for more preachers for America, and there appears to have been no lack of volunteers. For almost two years Wesley had been pleading with Thomas Rankin, one of his most experienced men, to help straighten the tangled American skein. Webb's appeal was just sufficient to tip the scales in America's favour, even though Rankin was wise enough to make allowances for Webb's "lively imagination."[32] Rankin, a man of 35 who had been an itinerant preacher for eleven years, at least seven of them as an Assistant, had even spent the year 1770-71 on the London circuit—when Wesley earmarked him for America. He chose as his companion George Shadford, who was a year younger, had begun his ministry as Rankin's junior colleague in Cornwall, and had now itinerated for four years, the latter two as Assistant.

It was arranged that the two men should each take charge of an English circuit until the spring, when they would leave for America with Webb. They sailed on Good Friday, April 9, 1773, accom-

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28. See Wakeley, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-4, for notes on Boardman's introduction of Methodism into New England ahead of Jesse Lee.

29. *Journal*, I:41, 46; both letters have disappeared.

30. *Ibid.*, I:39, 41, 45.

31. *Ibid.*, I:48, 57.

32. *Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, V:183-4.

panied by Webb's new bride and another English local preacher, Joseph Yerbury—his name is spelt in several different ways. Webb had persuaded Yerbury to try his hand at the American itinerancy, but the young man found that he was not cut out for the task and returned to England with Richard Wright.[33] The party arrived in Philadelphia on June 1, 1773.

Rankin, of course, being appointed "General Assistant" by Wesley, immediately took over responsibility from Asbury, and Asbury seems to have been genuinely happy to give place to such an obviously experienced disciplinarian.[34] Even Pilmoor and Boardman seemed to turn over a new leaf, though by December both had determined to return to England.[35] Although somewhat austere and even domineering in character, contrasting greatly with Shadford's warmth and spiritual informality, on the whole Rankin merited Asbury's gratitude. Asbury was cautious, however. In such a pioneering situation it was still frequently necessary for him to make his own working decisions, but he was very careful to add the proviso—"unless Mr. Rankin has given orders to the contrary."[36] As General Assistant Rankin in effect exercised an episcopal role, stationing the other preachers in their circuits, but limiting himself to none.[37]

Within six weeks of his arrival Thomas Rankin had summoned the preachers to America's first General Conference, designed to set the tone for a more tightly organized connection. By this the authority of Wesley and the British Conference was explicitly extended to America, and their doctrine and discipline as contained in their *Minutes* was accepted as the American norm. Any preachers who proved disloyal to the *Minutes* were no longer to be regarded as in connection with Wesley. Wesley's writings were only to be reprinted with his consent or that of his authorized itinerant representatives; Williams, who had erred at this point, was warned that he might sell what he had, but must reprint no more. No preacher was to administer the sacraments. The printed rule on this point was inflexible, but Asbury's manuscript account shows that an exception

33. *Ibid.*, V:185, and Rankin's MS diary (at Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois), for 5 June, 1774.

34. Asbury, *Journal*, I:82.

35. Rankin, MS diary for August 29, December 2, 1773.

36. Asbury, *Journal* III:19.

37. *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, held annually in America, from 1773 to 1794, inclusive* (Philadelphia: Tuckniss, 1795), pp. 14-15; see also the much fuller MS minutes kept by Philip Gatch, copied from the *Western Christian Advocate* of May 19 and 26, 1837 by the Baltimore Conference Methodist Historical Society (1964), pp. 2-3; cf. Asbury, *Journal* I:246.

was made in the case of Strawbridge, who had been doing it for years, a practice winked at by Boardman and Pilmoor, so that even Asbury had felt "obliged to connive . . . for the sake of peace."[38] Strawbridge, however, was only to administer "under the particular direction of the Assistant." To Asbury was allotted the task of bringing Strawbridge to good old-fashioned Methodist wisdom. At the Maryland Quarterly Meeting on August 2, Asbury reports:

> I read a part of our minutes, to see if brother Strawbridge would conform; but he appeared to be inflexible. He would not administer the ordinances under our direction at all. Many things were said on the subject; and a few of the people took part with him.

A firm beginning had at last been made, however, and at least Strawbridge now knew that in Wesley's eyes he was clearly a renegade, only able to continue in defiance at the cost of a schism, which in a few years almost took place.

The names of Williams and King (as mentioned above) had been dropped from the British *Minutes* in 1771, clearly because these two were by Wesley regarded simply as local preachers assisting the regular itinerants. Nor were their names reinstated until 1773—there had just been time for an assurance to reach England that these two, at any rate, were prepared to toe the connectional line. The name of Strawbridge never appeared in the British *Minutes*, and in 1774 was dropped from the American *Minutes* after appearing in 1773, and dropped surely as an implied threat to his precarious status. In 1775 he was once more stationed, but then dropped completely. The reason is clearly illustrated in Asbury's *Journal* for August 27, 1775, describing a Virginia Quarterly Meeting: "Mr. Strawbridge discovered his independent principles, in objecting to our discipline. He appears to want no preachers: he can do as well or better than they." For better or worse the government of the Methodist societies *as a connection* was to remain firmly under the control of Wesley's official itinerant preachers and those who were loyal to them.

By the time of that first American Conference there had begun a trickle of British and native local preachers who were regarded as barely acceptable for the full-time itinerancy. In the 1773 *Minutes* ten preachers were stationed in six circuits. Of these men four were British itinerants—Rankin, Shadford, Asbury, and Wright. Five were British immigrants, all apparently formerly local preachers—King, Strawbridge, Yerbury, Williams, and Abraham Whitworth.

38. *Minutes*, 1773, pp. 5-6; Asbury, *Journal*, I:60, 85.

One only was a native American—William Watters, a promising young man of twenty-one, a product of Baltimore County, Maryland, though brought into the ministry by Williams rather than by Strawbridge.[39] Within a few years the four British-trained itinerants were to be reduced to one, and the American-raised to be greatly multiplied. By the standards of their most competent leaders, Rankin and Asbury, the latter were not too promising.

After an extended journey into the south in 1772 Pilmoor had noted—and if Rankin and Asbury ever read these words they would have said, "Amen!":

> God has undoubtedly begun a good work in these parts by the ministry of Messrs. John King, and Robert Williams, and Robert Strawbridge, but there is much danger from those who follow a heated imagination rather than the pure illumination of the Spirit and the direction of the Word of God. Wherever I go I find it necessary to bear testimony against all wildness, shouting, and confusion in the worship of God, and at the same time to feed and preserve the sacred fire which is certainly kindled in many hearts in this country.[40]

Eight years later a sympathetic evangelical clergyman confessed his fears to the great friend of the Methodists, the Rev. Devereux Jarratt of Bath parish, Dinwiddie County, Virginia: "The Methodists . . . countenance so many illiterate creatures void of all prudence and discretion that I have no expectation of any good and lasting effects from their misguided zeal." Jarratt's reply showed that he was in general agreement, though he pointed out: "Surely [Wesley's] preachers from Europe are not such lame hands as those among us."[41] Asbury himself frequently marvelled how such poor tools could be so greatly used: "The Lord hath done great things for these people, notwithstanding the weakness of the instruments, and some little irregularities."[42] In 1773 he pointed out to his parents in England that being stationed in Maryland he was "in the greatest part of the work," where they had "many country-born preachers and exhorters."[43] They exercised him greatly. On 25 August that year he licensed two exhorters; on the 28th he met Philip Ebert, who had begun to itinerate, but of whose fitness Asbury doubted; on the 29th

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39. *A Short Account of . . . William Watters. Drawn up by himself* (Alexandria, 1806), pp. 18-30.

40. Quoted from his journal for Nov. 16, 1772 in W. W. Sweet, *Men of Zeal*, p. 103.

41. Asbury, *Journal* III:24-5.

42. *Ibid.*, I:50.

43. *Ibid.*, III:18.

Daniel Ruff broached the subject of his own call to the ministry while he and Asbury slept in the same bed, which shook under them because of his agitation; on September 1 Asbury lamented:

I was in company with Brother Whitworth [who was expelled the following year] and Brother Strawbridge, . . . but was much distressed on account of so few preachers well qualified for the work, and so many who are forward to preach without due qualifications.[44]

Small wonder that there was erosion in the ranks of the American Methodist itinerancy. It is impossible to secure adequate information about many of the preachers, not even the date and place of their birth, or whether they were immigrants or American-born. Between 1773 and 1778, however, the American *Minutes* record the names of over sixty men, quite apart from the British itinerants. Of these only 28 remained in 1778—including ten admitted on trial that very year! A few were very young, like William Duke, who was accepted into the itinerancy when he was sixteen. Many of these left to get married, or the better to support a wife and family. In some instances a lack of aptitude was clearly demonstrated; others became "worn out," still others simply weary. One of the technical terms contributed by American Methodism was applied to the men thus lost to the itinerancy—they "located." Some of them became men of substance whose homes were thrown open as preaching centres, such as Colonel John Beck; others helped to raise important churches, as did William Moore, one of the founders of Lovely Lane Chapel, Baltimore. Upon the tough and courageous residue was soon to descend the destiny of staffing and steering a new denomination, fortunately under the supervising eye of Francis Asbury.

Rankin's second American Conference, held in May 1774, continued the work begun in the first. His journal recorded: "We proceeded in all things on the same plan as in England, which our Minutes will declare."[45] Travelling south from the Conference, he noted:

I met all the societies as I rode along, and found many truly alive to God. Nevertheless, I saw the necessity of enforcing our discipline strongly wherever I came. I found a degree of slackness in this respect in almost every society. I am more and more convinced that unless the whole plan of our discipline is closely attended to we can never see that work, nor the fruit of our labours, as we would desire.[46]

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44. *Ibid.*, I:91-2.
45. *Lives of Early Methodist Preachers,* V:200.
46. MS Journal, July 29, 1774.

The British Conference that year sent replacements for Pilmoor and Boardman, who had returned in January—James Dempster, an itinerant of ten years' standing, eight of them as an Assistant, and Martin Rodda, who had been an itinerant intermittently for seven years, the last as Dempster's colleague in Cornwall.

The new men came at a difficult period. Such was the anti-British atmosphere that within a year Rankin wrote telling Asbury that both Rodda and Dempster were returning to England, and he with them. In his reply Asbury apparently stated his opinion that to desert the Americans would be "an eternal dishonour to the Methodists," and shamed them into remaining for at least the time being.[47] For the time being they all stayed, and worked faithfully, and seemed to be giving special attention to training the American preachers who would soon be taking over the reins.[48] The declared policy of the British preachers was to remain neutral in political matters, and some of them were avowed pacifists. Yet their sympathies were naturally with the mother country. Martin Rodda apparently seems to have given them a bad reputation by injudicious loyalist propaganda, but in his favour it should be noted that he shared with Rankin the credit for bringing Freeborn Garrettson into the American ministry.[49]

In 1776 James Dempster left the itinerant work, though for a time he seems to have served the Methodist cause in beleaguered New York.[50] In September 1777 Rankin and Rodda left en route to England, though in fact they were not able to sail until the following spring. In March 1778 Shadford also gave up the work, leaving Asbury, in spite of attempted persuasion and admitted nostalgia, alone.[51]

In view of this eventuality there had been tearful farewells, allied with careful preparations, at the Conference of 1777, which had been preceded by a preparatory caucus. Question 11 (not reproduced in

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47. Asbury, *Journal* I:161, 163.

48. Asbury at least was concerned about this. On an earlier occasion he had chided Williams for what he felt was faulty doctrine, and it seems fairly certain that he similarly passed on his opinions about their preaching technique to other rising preachers such as Samuel Spragg, who spoiled a good sermon with "a few pompous, swelling words," and Richard Webster, whose language contained "some little inaccuracies." (See his *Journal* I:97, 188, 195-6.)

49. *The Experience and Travels of Mr. Freeborn Garrettson* (Philadelphia: Hall, 1791), pp. 44-7, 82. See also below, pp. 176-7.

50. Barclay, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

51. Asbury, *Journal* I:228, 234-5, 243, 249, 263-9.

the printed *Minutes*) was one of the most significant in its acknowledgment of the past and its looking towards the future:

Q. 11. Can anything be done in order to lay a foundation for a future union, supposing the old preachers should be, by the times, constrained to return to Great Britain? Would it not be well for all who are willing to sign some articles of agreement, and strictly adhere to the same till other preachers are sent by Mr. Wesley and the brethren in conference?

The twenty preachers present resolved: "We will do it." Their document (to which in fact 25 signatures were appended) was almost word for word a copy of that signed by the preachers in the British Conference in 1769, 1773, 1774, and 1775, pledging allegiance to their evangelical task and to the doctrines and discipline of Methodism as set forth in the *Minutes*.[52] The American version went on to add a fourth point: "To choose a committee of Assistants to transact the business that is now done by the General Assistant and the old preachers who came from Britain." The committee consisted of three native Americans—Daniel Ruff, William Watters, and Philip Gatch—together with two British immigrants who had fully thrown in their lot with America—Edward Drumgoole and William Glendenning.[53] Whatever the duration or the fortunes of the war, the preachers in conference were convinced that British Methodism must remain their model, and that if at all possible they must remain under Wesley's wing. The deep emotions of the leavetaking were undoubtedly caused not merely by sentimental attachments but by a catastrophic sense of the loss of spiritual guidance entailed by the break. Asbury's *Journal* noted:

When the time of parting came, many wept as if they had lost their first-born sons. They appeared to be in the deepest distress, thinking, as I suppose, they should not see the faces of the English preachers any more. This was such a parting as I never saw before.[54]

Perhaps we should view the occasion also through the eyes of one of those same native preachers, William Watters:

I never saw so affecting a scene at the parting of the preachers before. Our hearts were knit together as the hearts of David and Jonathan, and we were obliged to use great violence to our feelings in tearing ourselves asunder. This was the last time I ever saw my very worthy friends and fathers, Rankin and Shadford.[55]

52. *Minutes* (1862), I:88, 110, 116, 121.
53. MS Minutes of Philip Gatch (see Note 37); cf. Watters, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-7.
54. *Journal* I:239.
55. Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

The last two years had seen an even greater swing to the south in the expansion of Methodism. During 1775-76 a wildfire revival had spread through much of Virginia, spilling over into North Carolina, so that by this time two-thirds of the American Methodists lived within the orbit of the evangelical Episcopalian, the Rev. Devereux Jarratt. Jarratt had co-operated heartily with Robert Williams and his colleagues because he was assured that like their founder they "were true members of the Church of England," whose "design was to build up and not to divide the church." George Shadford sponsored a petition to the General Convention at Williamsburg to dissociate the Methodists from the Baptists, pointing out that they were "not Dissenters, but a Religious Society in communion with the Church of England." Like many of Wesley's Anglican colleagues, Jarratt even agreed to attend the deliberations of the Methodists' conference. Williams himself died before the revival reached its climax, but his task was eagerly taken up by Shadford, and (somewhat less eagerly) by Rankin.[56]

The Virginia revival added to the dimensions of Methodist opportunity, but also of the difficulty, especially as the Episcopalian clergy, who were theoretically needed to administer the sacraments to Methodists, were in increasingly short supply—or in increasingly hotter water with liberty-minded Americans. After lengthy discussion of the problem the members of the 1777 Conference unanimously agreed not themselves to begin administering, but "to lay it over for the determination of the next Conference."[57] When that Conference came round Asbury had prudently but sadly gone into semi-retirement in Delaware until his way should open up for a fuller itinerancy —though at least he had remained in America, to do what little he could. Upon the committee, therefore, was thrown the responsibility of guiding affairs at the Leesburg Conference. Watters reports:

Having no old preachers with us, we were as orphans bereft of our spiritual parents, and though young and unexperienced to transact the business of conference, yet the Lord looked graciously upon us, and had the uppermost seats in all our hearts, and of course in our meeting.

As the consideration of our administering the ordinances [was] at the last conference laid over till this, it of course came on and found many advocates. It was with considerable difficulty that a large majority

56. Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists* (Baltimore: Magill and Clime, 1810), pp. 51-9; cf. Sweet, *Virginia Methodism*, pp. 76-7, and Asbury, *Journal* I:178.

57. Watters, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

was prevailed on to lay it over again, till the next conference, hoping that we should by then be able to see our way more clear in so important a change.[58]

For the 1779 Conference a preparatory meeting was held at Judge Thomas White's in Delaware, mainly for the convenience of Asbury, whose headquarters this was. William Watters came in the hope of persuading Asbury to attend the regular Conference planned to meet in Fluvanna, Virginia, but without success. Asbury and those of the northern circuits felt it unwise to court danger to their cause by going into Virginia, and Watters was deputed to carry their greetings and opinions. When the more numerous southern brethren met at the appointed time they were inclined to regard this preliminary gathering as a conspiracy to defeat their position on the sacramental issue, and accordingly refused to endorse the northern proposition that in succession to Rankin Asbury should be regarded as "General Assistant in America." Claiming that "the Episcopal Establishment is now dissolved, and therefore in almost all our circuits the members are without the ordinances," they appointed a presbytery of three preachers to ordain themselves and the others in order that they might duly administer the sacraments. Interestingly enough, this same group which thus made a daring ecclesiastical innovation was extremely conservative in other ways, reinforcing the authority of the Assistant in each circuit, and insisting that the local preachers and exhorters should not get out of line. That lesson at least they had well learned from the British itinerants, and the ordination proposals were considered as carefully and prayerfully as even John Wesley could have wished—though he could hardly have agreed with the conclusions reached.[59]

Watters' chief reason for attending both conferences was his fear that if steps were taken to administer the sacraments "an entire division" might result.[60] Others also were anxious to prevent this. In 1780 the northern preachers again held a separate Conference, which on this occasion was attended not only by Watters but by two of the ordaining presbytery of the south, Philip Gatch and Reuben Ellis. Asbury and his colleagues were adamant that only the complete cessation of administration of the sacraments could prevent a schism between the northern and southern Methodists. Asbury, Garrettson, and Watters were asked to attend the southern Conference

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58. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-9.
59. Gatch's MS Minutes, pp. 9-11; cf. Watters, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-4.
60. Watters, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-2.

to present this point of view. The ultimatum in fact seemed to harden the issue. And then suddenly the matter was resolved by Asbury's suggestion that his brethren should simply suspend administration for one year. This first delay led to others, and matters stood in pretty much the same shape when the war ended in 1783. Asbury and others urged upon Wesley that it was now up to him to help them out of their dilemma.

It was at this stage, after a decade's enforced delay, that Wesley sent over his last pair of itinerants, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey. Each was older than any of his predecessors. Vasey had been born in the same year as Asbury, and was now nearing forty, having been an itinerant for nine years. Whatcoat was forty-eight, and had been an itinerant for sixteen years, and frequently an Assistant. He was regarded by Wesley as an admirable successor to Asbury as General Assistant, and eventually like him was in fact elevated to the American Methodist episcopacy. These men were the first exemplars of the precious gift of Holy Orders so long impatiently awaited by American Methodism, and they assisted Thomas Coke in ordaining Asbury. Through these years of waiting, however, Asbury had grown steadily in stature among his American colleagues, as they had in his eyes (helped partly by the training which he strove to furnish), so that when the time came he refused vicarious ordination from Wesley's hands alone, but sought and received the mandate of the American itinerants. Thus was born a church which had been strangely preserved to make the best of two worlds, the old and the new, the episcopal and the presbyterian, of ordered worship and revival meeting, of city and frontier.

In a sense, however, Asbury's ordination and the official setting up of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784 were only the icing on the cake. The main task had been accomplished by those eight pioneer preachers rather than by their two belated successors. It is true, as William Warren Sweet has pointed out, that the departure of the British itinerants to leave the work in the hands of native preachers can hardly be regretted; it was one of the better by-products of the sad conflict between a repressive mother country and a vigorous, virile, colony. It is doubtful, however, whether their return should be described as an "unmixed blessing."[61] It was certainly not so regarded by the native preachers themselves. Another important point must be made. Although American Methodism had not been

61. W. W. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840. Vol. IV. The Methodists* (University of Chicago Press, 1946), p. 36.

unduly hurt by the withdrawal of the British preachers, especially as they regretfully left Asbury behind, it would have been immeasurably hurt had they never come. They came with a purpose; they fulfilled that purpose, and they left, albeit sooner than either Wesley or they had intended, and under far different circumstances than any of them could have wished.

They had fulfilled their purpose. This first decade constituted the period of securing church order for the Methodist societies in America, the second that of securing Holy Orders. Had the American Methodists been without the oversight of Wesley's delegates in either quest Methodism would not have developed along the same lines that it did, and one suspects that it might have evaporated into a formless and dwindling revivalist sect. Not that the actual Methodist discipline in all its details so earnestly inculcated by Boardman and Pilmoor and their later colleagues was all that important in itself. A living organism needs periodically to discard its tissue that it may be renewed, needs also to adapt itself to a different environment. Many of the prominent features of early Methodism, both in Britain and America, have become outmoded, notably the early morning services, the love feasts, the class tickets (at least in America), and even the class meeting itself. The chief value of the work and witness of the early British itinerants was that they helped to ensure that the scattered American Methodist societies did indeed learn to function as part of a living organism, a connectional unity, instead of developing at random. The Methodist Episcopal Church, for all its seeming dissociation from Wesley's British Methodist societies, was in fact their vigorous extension into a new area and a new era, and owed a great debt to those agents of his who struggled against prejudice and persecution to help set it on its feet.

The Early Native Methodist Preachers

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"I was the first American who had gone out amongst the Methodists to preach the Gospel," wrote William Watters,[1] whose claim to be the first native American Methodist itinerant has been traditionally acknowledged.[2] Born in Baltimore County, Maryland, on October 16, 1751, to Godfrey and Sarah Watters, William was among that distinguished band of young preachers produced by the preaching of Robert Strawbridge and Robert Williams. Although his parents were members of the Church of England and his father a vestryman, young Watters complained that the only two ministers he knew "were both immoral men, and had no gifts for the ministry." In contrast, the Methodists "lived in a manner I never had known any to live before." In his autobiography Watters gave a detailed account of the "memorable change [which] took place in May, 1771, in the twentieth year of my age," a "change from darkness to light, from death to life," so that he then "enjoyed experimental religion in its native life and power."[3] Illustrating the vital contribution of lay witness to the Methodist revival, Watters wrote:

In one sense we were all preachers; . . . On the Lord's Day we commonly divided into little bands, and went out into different neighbourhoods, wherever there was a door open to receive us; two, three, or four in company, and would sing our hymns, pray, read, talk to the people, and some soon began to add a word of exhortation. . . . The little flock was of one heart and mind, and the Lord spread the leaven of his grace from heart to heart, from house to house, and from one neighbourhood to an-

1. *A Short Account of the Christian Experience and Ministerial Labours of William Watters* (Alexandria: S. Snowden, 1806), p. 33. Hereafter cited as Watters, *Short Account.*

2. Cf., Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists in the United States of America; etc.* (Baltimore: Magill and Clime, 1810), p. 45; Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America* (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1884), I, 175; and Emory S. Bucke, Editor, *The History of American Methodism* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), I, 139. Hereafter cited as Lee, *Short History*; Stevens, *History*; and HAM, I.

3. Watters, *Short Account,* pp. 1, 3, 16, 17.

other. . . . it was astonishing to see how rapidly the work spread all around.[4]

In less than nine months Watters' seven brothers and two sisters "all professed to know the Lord."[5] In the Fall of 1771, when one of the earliest Methodist chapels in Maryland was built on his brother Henry's farm,[6] William was appointed class leader.

Our meetings, both private and public, became lively and well attended to, and one and another were daily obtaining the blessing, and for several weeks I could do little more than attend to our meetings and the families that were setting out for the kingdom.[7]

Of particular interest to this study of the early Methodist ministry is Watters's account of his increasing sense of call to the itinerancy.

From my first finding peace with God I found my mind much affected with a sense of the danger poor sinners were in, and my heart drawn out with fervent desires and prayer for their salvation, and from time to time have thought that nothing was so near or dear but what I would willingly part with to be an instrument of spreading the glorious gospel through the earth, but did not think it possible that I should ever be able to contribute any thing towards this desirable end in a public way; but finding that God had indisputably owned and blest my feeble endeavours in the conversion of several in different neighbourhoods and houses, . . . and above all felt a continual conviction on my mind that this was the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning me. . . . It was my deliberate opinion that if I ever was a preacher I must be one of the Lord's own making, as my natural and acquired abilities forbid any thoughts of the kind. . . . I began with fear and trembling once in a while to give a few words of exhortation, but frequently was afraid of running before I was sent, . . . Yet the divine comfort I found in speaking to and inviting precious souls to seek the Lord! . . . Yet the word of the Lord would be as fire in my bones, and I dare not refrain from declaring his loving kindness to my fellow sinners.[8]

Whatever hesitation remained was overcome in October of 1772 when Watters "cheerfully accepted the invitation of that pious ser-

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4. Watters, *Short Account*, pp. 18-19. Cf., Frederick A. Norwood, "The Americanization of the Wesleyan Itinerant," *The Ministry in the Methodist Heritage*, ed. Gerald O. McCulloh (Nashville: Board of Education of The Methodist Church, 1960), pp. 35-47.

5. Watters, *Short Account*, p. 21.

6. Wm. B. Sprague, Editor, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1865), VII "The Methodists," 49; and *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*, ed. Elmer T. Clark (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), I, 50-51. Hereafter cited as Sprague, Annals; and Asbury, *Journal and Letters*.

7. Watters, *Short Account*, pp. 20-21.

8. Watters, *Short Account*, pp. 21-23.

vant of the Lord, Robert Williams," to accompany him on a preaching tour in Virginia, "and set out with him and under his care . . . being just twenty-one years of age, having known the Lord seventeen months, and been exhorting about five or six."[9] In Virginia, the young preacher was also closely associated with Joseph Pilmoor and began a long friendship with Devereux Jarratt.[10]

In July, 1773, Watters was appointed by the first Methodist Conference in America to the "Kent circuit on the Eastern shore of Maryland."[11] Watters apparently did not attend this conference, for he dates his first meeting with Rankin and Asbury in September or October of 1773.[12] Of Francis Asbury he wrote: "We rode afterwards in company for some miles. He made particular enquiry about the parts I had been in, as well as the preachers who had preceded and succeeded me there."[13] And having heard Rankin preach, he said:

I was much pleased with him. He continued to shew me every mark of his particular esteem to the end of his stay in America. I always thought him qualified to fill his place as general assistant amongst us, notwithstanding his particularities. He was not only a man of grace, but of strong and quick parts.[14]

Watters described his next appointment in 1774 bluntly: "My friends wishing me in Baltimore circuit, where I should be amongst them, were indulged."[15] Those were critical days for colonial America.

The dreadful cloud that had been hanging over us continued to gather thicker and thicker, . . . I was in Trenton when Hancock and Adams passed through on their way to the First Congress, in Philadelphia. They

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9. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-34, 58. In 1792 Jarratt suggested that Watters receive episcopal ordination in the interest of reviving the declining fortunes of that church. W. W. Sweet, *Virginia Methodism: A History* (Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1955), pp. 115-116.

11. Watters, *Short Account*, pp. 30, 35-36. Actually it was November before he arrived at his appointment, being delayed first by his commitment to Williams in Virginia and later by illness. According to the *Minutes*, Watters and John King were appointed to New Jersey. *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, Annually Held in America, From 1773 to 1813, Inclusive* (New York: Daniel Hitt and Thomas Ware, 1813), p. 6.

12. Watters, *Short Account*, pp. 34-35. Could Watters' "good friend G. P---y" be George Prestbury in Asbury, *Journal and Letters*, I (Sept. 7, 1773), p. 93?

13. Watters, *Short Account*, p. 35.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

were received with great pomp, and were much caressed by the inhabitants of the Town.[16]

But "wars and rumours of wars all around us" did not hinder the spread of the Methodist revival. Appointed to the Frederick circuit in Maryland in May, 1775, Watters reported:

In July we were blessed with a gracious revival in the lower part of the circuit, which spread all around and continued increasing to the end of my stay. . . . I often preached, prayed and exhorted till I was so exhausted that I have been scarcely able to stand.[17]

After six months Rankin sent Watters to Fairfax circuit, where "In less than a quarter, we had the greatest revival I had ever seen in any place. . . . We had several very astonishing instances of the mighty power of God, . . . in five or six months were added to the society 'upwards of one hundred souls.' "[18] By 1778 Watters noted that the war "often checked the vital flame," even in Fairfax circuit, which had suffered little.

Yet it is not more astonishing than true, that the work continued to spread, in all those parts where we had preachers to labour, and I doubt whether, at any time before or since, the work has been more genuine amongst us, than it was through the war.[19]

One effect of the war, of course, was the threat to the English missionaries sent over by Wesley. This was a major concern faced by the conference that met at Henry Watters' preaching house at Deer Creek in May, 1777.

There appearing no probability of the contests ending shortly, between this country and Great Britain, several of our European preachers, thought if an opportunity should offer, they would return to their relations and homes in the course of the year; and to provide against such an event, five of us, Gatch, Dromgoold, Ruff, Glendining and myself, were appointed as a committee, to act in the place of the general Assistant, in case they should all go before next conference.[20]

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16. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57. Both Barclay and Arthur Moss state that Watters was chairman of this committee, but unfortunately neither gives supporting reference. Barclay, I, 57; HAM, I, 140. There is no such indication in Watters' account or in the records of Asbury, Garrettson, or Gatch.

The only clear evidence of any activity on the part of this committee is that of Watters' presiding at the next conference at Leesburg, Virginia, May, 1778. As Nathan Bangs explained the situation:

Mr. Asbury not being present on account of ill health, and Mr. Rankin and his British brethren having departed for England, Mr. William Watters, being the oldest American preacher, was called upon to preside.[21]

Watters also played a significant part in healing the schism over the sacraments. In both 1777 and 1778 the question was debated whether with so few ordained ministers left in America the American preachers should administer the sacraments. These two conferences only postponed the problem, and Watters approached the conference in 1779 in deep consternation.

From my particular knowledge of all the preachers, I foresaw what would be the consequences of the subject of the ordinances which had been so warmly debated the two preceding conferences, and which I was fully satisfied a number of them were determined to adopt at the ensuing conference, though it were at the expence of an entire division. My great concern was not whether we should or should not adopt them; but on account of the division that I was satisfied would take place at their being adopted. I could freely and without hesitation have agreed either way to have prevented what I considered one of the greatest evils that could befall us. . . . I finally came to a determination to endeavour by every means in my power to prevent a division: or if that could not be done, to stand in the gap as long as possible.[22]

Accidentally hearing of a conference to be held by Asbury and the preachers east of the Potomac a few weeks before the annual conference, Watters planned to go despite his weakness from illness. He hoped to persuade Asbury to attend "the regularly appointed conference" to be held in Fluvanna County, Virginia, but it was still considered unsafe for Asbury to leave the area where he was well known.[23]

All I could obtain, was the opinion and determination of this little conference, on the matter in debate, and a few letters from Mr. Asbury to several of the oldest preachers. I was the only preacher in connection who attended both Conferences. I felt a heavy heart at both, and could not but wonder at seeing some of the best men that I ever knew so little concerned, to appearance, at what to me was one of the greatest matters

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21. Bangs, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: Mason and Lane, 1840), I, 129.

22. Watters, *Short Account*, pp. 72-73.

23. Watters, *Short Account*, pp. 72-73. All Englishmen were suspected to be Tories.

in the world. Several of the southern preachers complained that there had been an illegal conference held to keep as many of the northern preachers from conference as possible, lest they should join with them in adopting the ordinances. After much loving talk on the subject all but a few determined on appointing a committee to ordain each other, and then all the rest. The few who did not agree to what was done, who were not confined by families, came in company with me, and took their stations more to the north.[24]

When the northern preachers held their conference in April the following year (1780), "two of our brethren from below, Gatch and R. Ellis who had adopted the administering ordinances, attended to see if any thing could be done to prevent a total dis-union, for they did not wish that to be the case. They both thought their brethren were hard with them, and complained that I was the only one who did not join them that treated them with affection and tenderness."[25] The conference denounced "the step taken by our brethren in Virginia," declaring: "We look upon them no longer as Methodists in connexion with Mr. Wesley and us till they come back." The condition for union was that they "suspend all their administrations for one year, and all meet together in Baltimore." Asbury, Garrettson and Watters were instructed "to attend the Virginia conference, and inform them of our proceedings in this, and receive their answer."[26] Watters was sceptical: "I awfully feared our visit would be of little consequence; yet I willingly went down in the name of God—Hoping against hope."[27]

We found our brethren as loving and as full of zeal as ever, and as fully determined on persevering in their newly adopted mode; for to all their former arguments, they now added (what with many was infinitely stronger than all the arguments in the world) that the Lord approbated, and greatly blessed his own ordinances, by them administered the past year. We had a great deal of loving conversation with many tears; but I saw no bitterness, no shyness, no judging one another. We wept, and prayed, and sobbed, but neither would agree to the other's terms.[28]

After two days of unsuccessful negotiations Watters and his colleagues decided to leave early the next morning.

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24. *Ibid.*, p. 73. The most complete account of this entire matter is found in Leroy M. Lee, *The Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee* (Charleston, S. C.: John Early, 1848), pp. 72-87. Cf., HAM, I, pp. 176-180, 189-95.
25. Watters, *Short Account*, p. 79.
26. *Minutes*, I, p. 26.
27. Watters, *Short Account*, p. 80.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

But late in the evening it was proposed by one of their own party in conference (none of the others being present), that there should be a suspension of the ordinances for the present year, and that our circumstances should be laid before Mr. Wesley and his advice solicited in the business, also that Mr. Asbury should be requested to ride through the different circuits and superintend the work at large. The proposal in a few minutes took with all but a few. In the morning instead of coming off in despair of any remedy, we were invited to take our seats again in conference, where with great rejoicings and praises to God, we on both sides heartily agreed to the above accommodation. I could not but say it is of the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes.[29]

This appeal to John Wesley must have been as influential as any other in bringing about his decision to ordain ministers for America once the peace treaty was signed.[30]

Although Watters married Sarah Adams on June 6, 1778, he continued to travel until December, 1783, when he located because of ill health. He moved to his farm near Washington, where he continued to assist the preachers nearby. He shared in "two or three considerable revivals of religion," and at times "rode as much in the Circuit as the preacher who was appointed to it."[31] Except for a brief period in 1786 Watters continued as a local preacher until he returned to the itinerancy in 1801.[32] His journal reflects his concern that these two ministries be supplemental, each making its distinct contribution.

Although a travelling ministry is in my estimation one of the greatest blessings, the greatest honor ever conferred on mortal man; yet a local ministry has undoubtedly its use. . . . I have found that a local preacher's sphere of action is much more extensive than I thought it was before I tried it. And though I much prefer that of a travelling preacher; . . . there ought to be the greatest attention in the government of every Church, so to unite and settle these two particular spheres of action in such a manner as for neither to clog, much less destroy the other.[33]

Between 1801 and 1805 American Methodism's first native itinerant once again received appointments as a travelling preacher: Alex-

29. *Short Account*, pp. 80-81. Cf., Asbury, I, pp. 348-350 and John McLean, *Sketch of Rev. Philip Gatch* (Cincinnati: Swormstedt and Poe, 1854), pp. 58-85. Hereafter cited as McLean, *Gatch*.

30. Cf., HAM, I, pp. 192-195, 197-204.

31. *Short Account*, pp. 99-100; and D. A. Watters, *First American Itinerant of Methodism*, William Watters (Cincinnati: Curt and Jennings, 1898), p. 140. Hereafter cited as Watters, *First Itinerant*.

32. *Minutes*, pp. 59, 261.

33. *Short Account*, pp. 117-119.

andria, Georgetown, and "Washington City."[34] Looking back over his ministry in 1806, Watters wrote:

> As to the doctrines held and espoused by the Methodists, I have not only embraced them all, but to the present day continue established in them; . . . As to the discipline of the Methodist Church, though I have no doubt but it has its defects, yet I do think that it is by far the most scriptural and the most primitive, of any I have ever seen, and the best calculated to spread the genuine Gospel, and to keep up the life and power of godliness in the Church of Christ. . . . There is no other people with whom I could be so happy, nor with whom I could do as much good.[35]

Very little is known of his last two decades. The family Bible records the date of his death as "the 29th day of March 1827."[36] His grave is a few miles from Washington, D. C., in Fairfax County, Virginia, marked by a simple veined marble shaft.[37]

Philip Gatch

There are many striking similarities between the careers of William Watters and Philip Gatch, the second native American to become an itinerant Methodist preacher. Both were born in 1751 in Maryland of parents who were members of the Church of England. Both experienced long periods of religious turmoil in their youth, finally finding peace among the Methodists. Watters and Gatch began to preach in 1772 and were admitted to the Methodist Conference in 1774.[38] They were married in the same year, 1778, later suffering ill health and locating. Both were members of the committee of five appointed in 1777 to continue the work of the departing missionaries. Both were involved in the controversy over the sacraments.[39] In his extensive journal Philip Gatch described a severe religious crisis when he was seventeen:

> The subject of death and judgment rested with great weight upon my mind . . . and what was still worse, a never-ending eternity of pain and misery were constantly before me. . . . I felt that I had lost my standing in the Established Church by not performing the obligations of my induction into it, and this was a source of great distress to me.[40]

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34. *Short Account*, pp. 133-139.
35. *Short Account*, pp. 140-141.
36. Watters, *First Itinerant*, p. 154. It is difficult to explain the incorrect date of 1833 given in Barclay, Simpson, Sprague, and Stevens, much less the absence of any record in the *Minutes* or *Christian Advocate*.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
38. *Minutes*, p. 7.
39. McLean, *Gatch*, pp. 6, 7, 9, 22, 24-5, 29, 30, 56, 59.
40. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

At this point, in January, 1772, Nathan Perigo[41] began preaching in that part of Maryland. Gatch attended the first meeting but became alarmed at Perigo's praying.

> I never had witnessed such energy nor heard such expressions in prayer before. . . . I attempted to make my escape, but was met by a person at the door who proposed to leave with me; but I knew he was wicked, and that it would not do to follow his counsel, so I returned.[42]

Although forbidden by his father to attend the Methodist services, Gatch continued to seek release from his anguish of soul. In April he went to a prayer meeting where he was overwhelmed by "a grateful sense of the mercy and goodness of God."

> I felt the power of God to affect me body and soul. It went through my whole system. I felt like crying aloud. . . . Ere I was aware I was shouting aloud, and should have shouted louder if I had had more strength. I was the first person known to shout in that part of the country.[43]

Later that evening when Philip returned home, his father threatened to drive him away: "he [had] heard me in my exercises near three-quarters of a mile, and knew my voice."[44] With the assistance of his eldest brother, Philip persisted until his family and nearby neighbors were meeting for prayer regularly. Perigo soon formed two Methodist class meetings in the neighborhood and encouraged Gatch to share in the "exhortation." These efforts, however, led the young man into a new state of despair. "I felt such great weakness that to proceed appeared to be impossible. . . . I labored under a sense of want, but not of guilt. I needed strength of soul." After finding helpful guidance in John Wesley's sermon on Salvation by Faith, Gatch received his desired "blessing of sanctification" in a family prayer service.

> The Spirit of the Lord came down upon me, and by faith I saw Jesus at the right hand of the Father. I felt such a weight of glory that I fell with my face to the floor, and the Lord said by his Spirit, "You are now sanctified, seek to grow in the fruit of the Spirit." . . . This was in July, a little more than two months after I had received the Spirit of justification.[45]

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41. Sometimes spelled "Perigau," he was yet another of those energetic preachers "raised up" by Robert Strawbridge.
42. McLean, *Gatch*, p. 10.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
45. McLean, *Gatch*, pp. 17-18. Cf., HAM, I, pp. 301-307.

In the Fall of 1772, Francis Asbury "formed and traveled a circuit" that included the Gatch neighborhood. "I found in Mr. Asbury a friend in whom I could ever after repose the most implicit confidence."[46] Under the encouragement of both Asbury and Perigo, Gatch began to preach as far away as Pennsylvania. At the quarterly meeting for the Baltimore circuit in 1773,[47] Thomas Rankin, Wesley's "General Assistant" in America, asked Philip Gatch to "travel in the regular work."

> This was altogether unexpected to me, but I did not dare to refuse. He then asked me if I had a horse; I answered that I had. Mr. Asbury then asked me if my parents would be willing to give me up. . . . I found that I had no way of retreat, but had to make a full surrender of myself to God and the work. Mr. Rankin then replied, 'You must go to the Jerseys.'[48]

At the second annual conference, held in May of 1774, Gatch is listed along with William Watters as being "admitted"; both are also listed among the Assistants.[49] Since there is another question concerning those "admitted on trial," the activities of Gatch and Watters during 1773 must have been counted as their service "on trial." Gatch's appointments for 1774 were to Frederick circuit and Kent circuit, the regular tour of duty being six months on each appointment.[50] Frederick circuit proved to be one of the centers of opposition to the Methodists because of their suspected ties with England. In the late Fall or Winter of 1775-76, while Gatch was serving his third appointment to this circuit, he was tarred by a mob. "The last stroke made with the paddle with which the tar was applied was drawn across the naked eyeball, which caused severe pain, from which I never entirely recovered."[51]

In 1776 Gatch was appointed to the Hanover circuit in Virginia.

> The congregations on the circuit were very large, so that we frequently had to preach in orchards and in the grove. . . . which made it necessary

46. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

47. See Asbury, *Journal and Letters*, I (August 2, 1773), p. 88.

48. McLean, *Gatch*, pp. 24-25. This appointment to New Jersey is especially interesting since the *Minutes* of the conference held in July, 1773, record that William Watters and John King were appointed to New Jersey. As seen earlier in the discussion of Watters' career, Watters did not reach his appointment until November of that year. From this it appears that although William Watters was the first native American to be *appointed* as a traveling preacher, at an annual conference, Philip Gatch actually was appointed and went to that same appointment two or three months ahead of Watters. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

49. *Minutes*, p. 7.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

51. McLean, p. 46.

to extend the voice, my health failed; and my lungs became so affected that for some time I was entirely unable to preach. . . . While in the north, I had to contend with persecution; now bodily affliction attended me.[52]

Gatch praised Devereux Jarratt, who "lived within the bounds of this circuit."

He labored extensively, and was very useful. Several preachers were raised up under his ministry, who became connected with our society, and some of them itinerated. He fitted up his barn for our accommodation, and it became a regular preaching-place, where quarterly meetings were occasionally held. The hospitalities of his house were generously conferred upon us, while he was truly a nursing father to Methodist preachers.[53]

While traveling the Sussex circuit in Virginia during the conference year 1777-78, Gatch once again suffered persecution.

One Sabbath morning, while on my way to my appointment, . . . I was met by two men, of whom I had no knowledge, of a stout and rough appearance. They caught hold of my arms, and turned them in opposite directions with such violence that I thought my shoulders would be dislocated; and it caused the severest pain I ever felt.[54]

His lungs also continued to give him such pain that he was given a smaller circuit north of the James River. In May, "the conference thought it not advisable to appoint me to a circuit, but left me to do what I could where my services might be most needed."[55]

This year I undertook, by farming, to raise a support for my family. We had not in those days the relation of supernumerary or superannuated preachers. When one left the field of labor, either from choice of necessity, he had to do the best he could.[56]

Despite his "retirement" from the traveling ministry,[57] Gatch was apparently the leader of the southern preachers who desired to administer the sacraments.[58] Since the official *Minutes* of the conference that met in Fluvanna County in 1779 omit the steps taken concerning the "ordinances," we are dependent upon Gatch's ac-

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52. McLean, pp. 51-52.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 85. Gatch had married Elizabeth Smith of Powhatan County, Virginia, in January, 1778.
57. The *Minutes* do not record Gatch's location; his name simply disappears from the lists.
58. Sweet, *Virginia Methodism*, p. 81.

count. The eighteen preachers present chose and empowered a committee of four to supervise them. Three of the same men were appointed to be "the presbytery": Philip Gatch, Reuben Ellis, and James Foster. They were authorized "to administer the ordinances themselves; and to authorize any other preacher or preachers, approved by them, by the form of laying on of hands."[59] A year later, as we have seen, this plan was "suspended" and an appeal sent to Wesley to solve the problem.[60]

Gatch remained in Virginia until 1798 when he led a small party of relatives and friends to a new settlement in Ohio some twenty miles east of Cincinnati.[61] The main reason for this move was Gatch's increasing dislike of slavery. Although he had freed his own slaves in 1780, he was determined that his family should not live in a land of slavery.[62]

Besides continuing to work extensively as a local preacher, Gatch became active in politics and was elected in 1802 to represent Clermont County at the convention to form a constitution and state government for Ohio. Thereafter he served for more than twenty years as an Associate Judge. His home was a center for Methodist preachers, Francis Asbury making numerous visits. Gatch particularly cherished the memory of a visit made by Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat in 1805.[63] He also corresponded with his old colleagues, William Watters and Edward Drumgoole.[64] He died on December 29, 1835.[65]

Freeborn Garrettson

"I have an ardent desire to be useful, and it greatly rejoices my heart when I see or hear of precious sinners embracing the overtures of mercy."[66] In these words, Freeborn Garrettson summed up his basic philosophy and motivation. The reader of his autobiography will find convincing evidence that Garrettson was truly obsessed with this pragmatic evangelism. "Of all the early native preachers," wrote William Warren Sweet, "Freeborn Garrettson undoubtedly

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59. McLean, *Gatch*, pp. 67-68.
60. According to Gatch, this proposal was submitted by Asbury. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 94-99.
62. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-95.
63. McLean, *Gatch*, pp. 119-150.
64. *Ibid.*, pp. 145-152; Sweet, *The Methodists*, pp. 150-157.
65. *Gatch*, p. 173.
66. Garrettson, *The Experience and Travels of Mr. Freeborn Garrettson, Minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church in North America* (Philadelphia: John Dickens, 1791), p. v.

stands at the head of the list in total influence exerted on the development of American Methodism."[67]

A third generation native of Maryland, Garrettson was born on August 15, 1752.[68] Describing his religious training, he wrote: "I was early taught the Lord's prayer, [apostles'] creed, and the ten commandments, together with the catechism of the Church of England."[69] The death of his mother and an older sister and two narrow escapes from accidental death himself caused him such deep concern that he bought a collection of the best religious books he could find. "I frequently read, prayed, and wept till after midnight; and often withdrew to the woods, and other private places for prayer."[70] When he was about eighteen years old, Freeborn heard his first Methodist sermon when Robert Strawbridge came through Baltimore county: "I have never spent a few hours so agreeably in my life."[71] In 1772 he heard Francis Asbury preach.

> His doctrine was as salve to a festering wound. I . . . heard the sermon with great delight, bathed in tears. I was not much disturbed in my mind, but sweetly drawn. . . . I followed him to another preaching place. . . . He began to wind around me in such a manner that I found my sins all around me. . . . I was ready to say within myself, how does this stranger know me so well?[72]

Garrettson found himself strongly attracted to the Methodists; "but it was like death to me; for I thought I had rather serve God in any way than among them; at the same time something within would tell me they were right."[73] Like many a proud man before him, young Freeborn struggled to find security in outward acts of piety, fasting, praying, and strictly observing the Sabbath. Then he would attend a Methodist service: "often under Methodist preaching my poor foundation would shake, especially under [that] of dear brother

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67. Sweet, *Men of Zeal: the Romance of American Methodist Beginnings* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1935), p. 136.

68. Nathan Bangs, *The Life of the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson*: Compiled from His Printed and Manuscript Journals and Other Authentic Documents (New York: Emory and Waugh, 1832), p. 25. Hereafter cited as Bangs, *Garrettson.*

69. *Experience and Travels,* p. 9.

70. *Ibid.,* p. 17.

71. Bangs, *Garrettson,* p. 29. This incident is not mentioned in *Experience and Travels.*

72. This passage is taken from Garrettson's manuscript journal, which was edited for microfilming by Robert D. Simpson. The original journal is in Rose Memorial Library, Drew University. Cited hereafter as Garrettson, Journal.

73. *Experience and Travels,* p. 24.

George Shadford."[74] Finally his struggles came to a climax in June, 1775, after hearing Daniel Ruff[75] preach.

On my way home, being much distressed, I alighted from my horse in a lonely wood, and bowed my knees before the Lord: I sensibly felt two spirits striving with me. . . . Lord, spare me one year more, . . . The answer was, 'Now is the accepted time.' . . . I had not rode another quarter mile, before the Lord met me powerfully . . . 'I have come once more to offer you life and salvation, and it is the last time: choose or refuse.' I was instantly surrounded with a divine power: heaven and hell were disclosed to my view, and life and death were set before me. . . . I threw the reins of my bridle on my horse's neck, and putting my hands together, cried out, Lord, I submit. . . . now, for the first time, I . . . felt that power of faith and love that I had been a stranger to before.[76]

A few days later he attended a Methodist class meeting on Deer Creek and found his heart "more than ever united to this community." Garrettson began to visit his friends and neighbors to witness to his new faith. Eventually he held religious meetings in several places, and "a blessed work of God broke out." Forming a society of those thus converted, he invited Martin Rodda,[77] a Methodist preacher whom he had met, to come and take charge of the society. In turn, Garrettson then spent some nine days traveling with Rodda: "he preached and I exhorted after him." Rodda clearly intended to recruit Garrettson for the traveling ministry and asked him to assist by taking Rodda's circuit alone for a period. "I attended every appointment for which I was engaged," wrote Garrettson, "and we had precious seasons." But he was so afraid of the traveling ministry that he hurried home without meeting Rodda as agreed. "I was willing to do anything about home to promote the cause of religion: but it was like death to me to travel."[78]

Nevertheless, Daniel Ruff persuaded Garrettson to go to the Methodist conference held in Baltimore in May, 1776. "I attended, passed through an examination, and was admitted on trial: and my name was, for the first time, classed among the Methodists; and I

74. *Experience and Travels*, p. 25.

75. Ruff was another native American preacher recruited by Robert Strawbridge. Ruff had been admitted on trial in 1774 and appointed to the Chester circuit with Joseph Yearby. In 1775 he was appointed to Trenton with John King. *Minutes*, pp. 7-9.

76. *Experience and Travels*, pp. 29-31.

77. Martin Rodda, one of Wesley's missionaries, had come to America in 1774 along with James Dempster. His appointment in 1775 was to Baltimore. *Minutes*, p. 9.

78. *Experience and Travels*, p. 45. Cf., pp. 46-47.

received of Mr. Thomas Rankin a written license."[79] Appointed to assist Martin Rodda on the Frederick circuit in Virginia, Garrettson still felt an unwillingness to be a traveling preacher.

> One day on my way to my appointment my difficulties appeared so great, that I turned my horse three different times toward home. . . . Sometimes when I have been at the appointed place, and the people assembling, I have been tempted to hide myself, or wish that I was sick. . . . My Bible, at particular times, would appear so small that I could not find a text.[80]

These doubts and uncertainties continued at least until the year 1779.[81] Looking back on the experience in later years, he wrote: "I believe I had a more severe travail of soul before I submitted to be an itinerant preacher, than I had gone through for justifying grace."[82]

Not all of Garrettson's afflictions were inner. In a letter to John Wesley, written in April, 1785, he summed up his experience in a pattern reminiscent of the Apostle Paul.

> Once I was imprisoned; twice beaten; left on the highway speechless and senseless; once shot at; guns and pistols presented at my breast; once delivered from an armed mob, in the dead time of night, on the highway by a surprising flash of lightning; surrounded frequently by mobs; stoned frequently: I have had to escape for my life at dead time of night.[83]

Two concerns of Garrettson's brought much of this suffering upon him. "Two things were a great distress to my mind: (1) the spirit of fighting; and (2) that of slavery, which ran among the people. I was resolved to be found in my duty, and keep back no part of the counsel of God."[84] In 1775 he was court-martialed and fined for refusing to answer the call to muster "to learn the art of war."[85] In 1777 he was harassed in Virginia because he refused to take the loyalty oath.

> I was informed I must either leave the state, take the oath, or go to jail. I told those who came to tender the oath to me, that I professed myself a friend to my country. . . . I think the oath is too binding on my conscience; moreover I never swore an oath in my life.[86]

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79. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
80. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.
81. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.
82. Bangs, *Garrettson*, p. 51.
83. Quoted in Bangs, *Garrettson*, p. 168.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
85. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

Garrettson described 1778 as "a season peculiarly trying to Methodist preachers." The very fact that the first Methodist preachers were from England, under the direction of John Wesley, who had written a pamphlet against the Americans, "was enough in itself to excite suspicions in the ruling party here against the preachers." Moreover, Martin Rodda was spreading the king's proclamation on his circuit before he fled to the British fleet. Worst of all, "a backslidden Methodist" named Chancey Clowe, "once a pious man of considerable note in the society," had actually raised a band of three hundred men and attempted to join the British fleet in Chesapeake bay.[87]

Garrettson's attitude toward slavery was another cause of his persecution. During a family prayer service in 1775, he received a command from his Lord: "It is not right for you to keep your fellow creatures in bondage; you must let the oppressed go free."

> I paused a minute, and then replied, "Lord, the oppressed shall go free." . . . I told them they did not belong to me, and that I did not desire their services without making them compensation: I was now at liberty to proceed in worship. . . . It was God, not man, that taught me the impropriety of holding slaves. . . . I believe it to be a crying sin.[88]

It is not surprising that Garrettson was once beaten by a slave-owner in a violent rage, swearing that "I would spoil all his negroes."[89] Later, in 1777, while on the Roanoke circuit, he wrote:

> Many times did my heart ache on account of the slaves in this part of the country, and many tears did I shed, both in Virginia and Carolina. . . . I endeavoured frequently to inculcate the doctrine of freedom in a private way, and this procured me the ill will of some who were in that unmerciful practice. I would often set apart times to preach to the blacks, and adapt my discourse to them alone.[90]

In 1781 on the Sussex circuit in Virginia, Garrettson declared that he was, "in a particular manner, led to preach against the practice of slave holding. Several were convinced and liberated their slaves."[91]

While it did not result in physical persecution, the charge of "enthusiasm" was also thrown at Garrettson. This was an offensive term in those days, and Methodists disclaimed such practices.

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87. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.
88. *Experience and Travels*, pp. 36-37.
89. Bangs, *Garrettson*, p. 45.
90. *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 139. Cf., pp. 151-152.

Individuals thought me an enthusiast, because I talked so much about feelings, and having impressions to go to particular places. I know the word of God is our infallible guide, and by it we are to try our dreams and feelings. I also know, that both sleeping and waking, things of a divine nature have been revealed to me.[92]

At times Garrettson's dreams were visions of sinners suffering the torments of hell;[93] at others they related to Garrettson's struggles for faith and assurance.[94]

Although space does not permit a full account of Garrettson's appointments during these years, the two selections following illustrate the manner in which he sought to be "useful." The first comes from Sunday, July 5, 1779:

I preached in Dover a little after sunrise, then rode four miles and preached at brother B.'s at nine, to hundreds who stood and sat under the trees . . . I rode on six miles and preached at one o'clock to a listening multitude. . . . I rode five miles and preached again at brother W.'s. . . . This day I stood upward of six hours in the four sermons, and concluded about sunset.[95]

Summarizing his work, in 1781, Garrettson wrote:

During the year, I travelled about five thousand miles, preached about five hundred sermons, visited most of the circuits in Virginia and North Carolina, and opened one new circuit in which the Lord began a blessed work, so that many, both rich and poor, joined the society.[96]

A comment that appears only in his manuscript journal explains his attitude toward such work. After three or four pages of detailed descriptions of trials encountered in traveling through snow and ice, Garrettson wrote: "Who would take all this pain that really believed in ye Doctrine of Unconditional Election & Reprobation."[97]

Since Garrettson participated in so many of the crucial conferences between 1776 and 1824, his journal is of primary significance to the historian. For some events, however, his record is frustratingly brief—the conference in 1779, for example: "Wed., & Thurs. We confered together. There wasn't one jarring string. Blessed be God, Jesus was with us Every moment. We seemed to be knit together."[98] For the famous "Christmas Conference" his account is more helpful.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
93. Bangs, *Garrettson*, pp. 50, 77-87, 124, 143-144.
94. *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 40, 51, 118, 122-123, 130.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
97. Garrettson, Journal, January 28, 1784.
98. Garrettson, Journal, April 28-29, 1779.

After indicating his surprise at hearing Wesley's new plan for ordination, Garrettson wrote: "I thought I would sit in Silence," and continued:[99]

I thought it expedient to return with him [Dr. Thomas Coke] to a Qt. Mt. held in Kent County, where I expected to meet Mr. Asbury, and a number of ye Preachers. About 15 Met, we sat in Conference, it was thought expedient to call a General Conference to Baltimore, and . . . I was appointed to go and Call ye Conference—I sit [*sic*] out to Vergenia [*sic*] and Carolina—and a tedious Journey I had. My dear Master inabled me to ride Near one Thousand Miles in about 5 weeks, and preached going, and returning Constantly.[100] The Conference began on Christmas day—We with one Consent fell in to Mr. Wesley's plan—16 were ordained, and I was appointed for ye Spreading of ye Gospel in Novascotia [*sic*], instead of going to ye South which was a considerable Cross. Nevertheless I was willing to take it up in Conformity to ye Voice of Conference.[101]

Garrettson was in Nova Scotia from mid-February, 1785, to April 10, 1787,[102] returning just in time to attend the conference at Baltimore which declared its independence from John Wesley. The American preachers were angered because Wesley had changed the date and place of meeting for the conference and appointed Richard Whatcoat a joint superintendent with Francis Asbury.[103] According to Jesse Lee, Wesley had also "Given directions for brother F. Garrettson to be ordained a superintendent for Nova Scotia."

When the business was taken under consideration, some of the preachers insisted that if he was ordained for that station, he should confine himself wholly to that place for which he was set apart; and not be at liberty to return again to this part of the country. Mr. Garrettson did not feel freedom to enter into an obligation of that kind, and chose rather to continue as he was; and therefore was not ordained.[104]

Garrettson, however, claimed that he had expected to be reappointed to Nova Scotia. "What transpired in the conference during my ab-

99. Garrettson's published version of the journal *is* silent about his scepticism! Cf., *Experience and Travels*, p. 217. The manuscript journal gives more details about the Christmas Conference.

100. Thomas Coke's imagery is *tradition* by now: "Him we sent off, like an arrow, from north to south, directing him to send messengers to the right and left, and to gather all the preachers together at Baltimore on Christmas eve." *Extracts of the Journals of the Rev. Dr. Coke's Five Visits to America* (London, G. Paramore, 1793), p. 16.

101. Garrettson, Journal (January, 1784, to June, 1785), pp. 40-42.

102. *Experience and Travels*, pp. 218, 239.

103. Cf., Wesley's letter to Thomas Coke, Sept. 6, 1786: Asbury's letter to Whatcoat, March 25, 1787; and Thomas Ware, *Sketches of the Life and Travels of Rev. Thomas Ware* (New York: Mason & Lane, 1840), pp. 129-131.

104. Lee, *Short History*, p. 126. Cf., HAM, I, 424-428.

sence, I know not; but I was astonished when the appointments were read, to hear my name mentioned to preside in the Peninsula."[105] Apparently, Garrettson's "appointment" suffered the same fate as Whatcoat's; the objection was to Wesley's interference, not to the persons so named.

Garrettson spent most of the years between 1787 and his superannuation in 1817 as a presiding elder[106] in Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New England. He attended every General Conference from 1792 to 1824; therefore, the detailed outline of church polity written in his Journal is particularly interesting. According to Robert Simpson, "It was Garrettson's wish that it would be published when Bangs edited his Journals, but Bangs suppressed the plan."[107] Garrettson advocated the dividing of the whole connection into annual conferences, each to have its own bishop who would be amenable for his conduct to that conference. In making out the appointments within his conference, the bishop could call upon any of the elders for counsel, and he would read the finished plan to the conference "two days before it rises," provided that "if it should be necessary to put any thing to vote, it shall be done without debate." All of the active bishops would "have a seat in the General Conference," but only one would be elected chairman. The other bishops and elders, then, would compose "the grand College of Presbiters [*sic*], with a Cyprean [*sic*] Elevated at head." The General Conference would "station the superintendents."[108]

The reader of Garrettson's Journal is struck by his close friendship with Francis Asbury. One incident will have to suffice: During the course of a visit to Garrettson's home at Rhinebeck on the eastern shore of the Hudson River,[109] the two became engrossed in a discussion of Asbury's attitude toward the Methodists in America. Garrettson told Asbury, frankly, that he must give up the idea that he was an American John Wesley. "Further, he cautioned Asbury that his belief that all his conference appointments were made by Divine

105. Bangs, *Garrettson*, p. 191. See also Garrettson's letter to John Wesley, Sept. 25, 1787; *ibid.*, pp. 180-182.

106. See HAM, I, pp. 465-471, for a brief but excellent discussion of this office.

107. Robert Drew Simpson, "Freeborn Garrettson: American Methodist Pioneer," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Drew University, 1954, p. 209.

108. Garrettson, Journal, May 1, 1824.

109. Garrettson married Catharine Livingston on June 30, 1793. They had one child, a daughter born in 1794. This home was built in 1799. Bangs, *Garrettson*, pp. 240-242.

inspiration was not only erroneous but also harmful. In spite of such frankness, they remained true friends."[110]

Freeborn Garrettson died on September 26, 1827, in New York City, where he had gone as a guest preacher to "the Duane Street Church."[111]

Jesse Lee

The first native Virginian to enter the Methodist ministry, Jesse Lee became not only one of the most distinguished leaders of American Methodism but also its first historian.[112] William Warren Sweet ranked Lee along with Watters, Gatch and Garrettson as the "four most important leaders in Virginia Methodism during the trying years of the Revolutionary War,"[113] and he is generally acclaimed "the Apostle of Methodism in New England."[114] Nathan Bangs considered him to be "the ruling spirit of the Church in his day."[115]

> He had a fine intelligent face . . . an almost intuitive perception of the workings of the human heart; and no man knew better than he how to adapt his measures to the ends they were designed to accomplish. . . . There was scarcely anything to which his shrewdness and energy proved inadequate. . . . It was significant of the high estimation in which he was held by the Church at large, that he came within a single vote of being chosen Bishop.[116]

Laban Clark also noted that Lee's "countenance was marked by a high degree of intelligence, and almost always wore a genial smile, that betokened a fountain of kindly feeling within. He had great energy of mind and purpose, as well as deep insight into the springs of human action."[117]

Bangs described Lee as "an earnest, vigorous and faithful preacher. His manner was characterized by great fluency, and his thoughts which were in themselves always weighty, were clothed in plain, though appropriate, language, well fitted to impress the heart and

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110. Mary Rutherford Garrettson (his daughter), quoted in Simpson, "Freeborn Garrettson," pp. 174-175.

111. Bangs, *Garrettson*, pp. 322, 327.

112. Sweet, *Virginia Methodism*, p. 92.

113. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

114. Sprague, *Annals*, p. 85. George C. Baker, *An Introduction to the History of Early New England Methodism 1789-1839* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1941). 138 pages.

115. Quoted Sprague, op. cit., p. 85.

116. Sprague, *Annals*, pp. 85-86.

117. Quoted in Sprague, p. 86.

conscience."[118] Laban Clark noted Lee's "remarkable power in the pulpit"; and although he spoke effortlessly, he "had a prodigiously powerful voice. His preaching was in a very familiar style; but it was pithy, pungent, and sometimes exceedingly striking. He seemed fond of surprising his audience by things which they did not expect."[119] Lee was also remembered for his imposing physique: he weighed more than two hundred and fifty pounds.[120]

Born in Prince George County, Virginia, on the 12th of March, 1758, Jesse was the second son of Nathaniel and Elizabeth Lee.[121] As a young man he experienced religious anxieties that were beyond the reach of the Established Church of his parents. Robert Williams began forming Methodist societies in that part of Virginia in the Spring of 1774. The entire Lee family responded to Williams' invitation, and their home became a regular preaching place on the newly established Brunswick circuit and a home to the itinerant preachers. The following year George Shadford, Edward Drumgoole and William Glendenning travelled the Brunswick circuit and a great revival swept the area. In 1777 Jesse moved to North Carolina to assist a widowed relative. Here he was appointed a class leader on the Roan Oak circuit in 1788 and made his first attempts at exhorting, at least once at the invitation of Freeborn Garrettson. In 1799 he began preaching and took John Dickens' place on the circuit for a few weeks. Drafted into the militia for three and a half months in 1780, he preached to the soldiers at every opportunity.[122]

During this period of his life, and especially in 1781, Jesse "experienced many severe exercises of mind [as] he was led towards the

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118. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

119. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

120. On May 4, 1779, Lee wrote in his Journal: "After we had finished our business in conference, four of the largest preachers amongst us went to a friend's store, and were weighed. My weight was 259 lbs., Seely Bunn's 252, Thomas Lucas' 245, and Thomas Sergent weighed 220; in all 976 lbs. A *wonderful* weight for four Methodist preachers, and all of us travel on horseback." Quoted in Minton Thrift, *Memoir of the Rev. Jesse Lee, with Extracts from His Journals* (New York: Bangs and Mason, 1923), p. 249. Cited hereafter as *Memoir.*

121. Leroy M. Lee, *The Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee* (Charleston, S. C.: Published by John Early, 1848), p. 19. Cited hereafter as *Life and Times.*

122. Because he refused to bear arms, Jesse was assigned to drive a baggage wagon and later to be the sergeant of the pioneers (some type of noncombatant work). *Memoirs*, pp. 15-35.

Methodist itinerating ministry."[123] In April, 1782, he attended the conference held at Ellis' Chapel and

> was permitted to sit in the room while the preachers were transacting their business. . . . The union and brotherly love which I saw among the preachers exceeded every thing I had ever seen before, and caused me to wish that I was worthy to have a place amongst them.[124]

Nevertheless, when Francis Asbury urged him to take a circuit, he declined, being "very sensible of [his] own weakness" and "afraid of hurting the cause."[125] The Methodists persisted, however, and in November Jesse responded to a request from Caleb Pedicord[126] to accompany Edward Drumgoole to form a new circuit in northwest North Carolina. This work was soon accomplished with the generous assistance of the Anglican "Parson" Pettigrew,[127] and was called the Campden circuit.[128]

Jesse Lee finally consented to take a full-time appointment at the conference in 1783. He was admitted on trial and sent to Caswell circuit in North Carolina.[129] "Notwithstanding I have had ten years experience as a Christian, and have been a public speaker more than five years, I trembled at the thought of the station I was about to fill."[130] The following year, 1784, he was appointed to Salisbury circuit in North Carolina. During this year, Lee noted a characteristic of his preaching that was to remain with him.

> While I was speaking of the love of God, I felt so much of that love in my own soul, that I burst into a flood of tears, and could speak no more for some time, but stood and wept. I then began again; but was so much overcome, that I had to stop and weep several times before I finished.[131]

On December 12, 1784, Lee received "an official note" informing him of the arrival of Dr. Coke, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas

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123. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
124. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
125. *Memoir*, pp. 42-43.
126. Pedicord, a native of Maryland, was admitted to the conference in 1779. He died not long after attending the Christmas Conference: "a man of sorrows . . . acquainted with grief . . . dead to the world, and much devoted to God." *Minutes*, pp. 18, 53. This is Thomas Ware's "pathetic Pedicord." *Sketches*, p. 85.
127. Charles Pettigrew, a native of Pennsylvania, was one of the few Church of England clergy who extended active cooperation and appreciation to the Methodists. Cf., Asbury, *Journal & Letters*, I, pp. 450-451.
128. *Memoir*, pp. 45, 48.
129. *Minutes*, p. 38.
130. *Memoir*, p. 52.
131. *Memoir*, pp. 64-65.

Vasey, and of the calling of a conference to be held in Baltimore beginning December 25. Being five hundred miles from Baltimore and with less than two weeks to travel that distance in winter weather, Jesse Lee decided not to attempt to attend the conference. This was a great disappointment to him. As early as January, 1778,[132] he had begun to keep written accounts of every meeting he attended and to obtain all the information he could about the progress of Methodism. It must have been a lasting and exceedingly painful memory that he was not given adequate notice to participate in the constituting convention of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Two events of Jesse Lee's career in 1785 had life-long significance for him. The first was his close friendship with Francis Asbury that developed during a month-long tour he made at Asbury's invitation. The second was the chance conversation with a young man from Massachusetts, from whom he learned about the customs and people of New England. Lee determined to preach the gospel to that people.[133]

Although he immediately informed Bishop Asbury of his ardent desire to be sent to New England as a missionary, Lee had to wait four years for that appointment. In May, 1789, he was appointed to Stanford circuit in Connecticut. With this appointment, according to George C. Baker, "New England Methodism became permanent."[134]

On June 17, after being refused the use of a house, a deserted building, and an orchard, Lee preached his first sermon in New England. His welcome to New Haven was more encouraging.

> At 5 o'clock we met at the state-house, at the ringing of the bell, but some of the influential men insisted on my going into the meeting house. . . . At first I did not feel very well satisfied, being raised in a high pulpit with a soft cushion under my hands, but in a little time I felt the fire from above; my heart was warmed, and drawn out in love to my hearers. . . . Some told me they were much pleased with the discourse.[135]

From this time until 1797 a recurring phrase in Lee's journal begins: "I am the first preacher of our way that has ever visited this part of the country."[136] A passage from 1790 is also typical:

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132. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
133. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
134. George C. Baker, *Early New England Methodism*, p. 7. Cf., Asbury's comment: "New England stretcheth out the hand to our ministry, and I trust thousands will shortly feel its influence. My soul will praise the Lord." *Journal and Letters*, I (May 1789).
135. *Memoir*, pp. 114-115.
136. *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 128, 220, 240.

It is now sixteen months and eight days since our last conference, and in this time, I have travelled several thousand miles, and preached in six states, and in chief parts of the large towns in New England. In most places, I have met with a much kinder reception than I could have expected, among persons holding principles so different from mine; but yet, I have been opposed, and have been under the disagreeable necessity of spending much of my time on controverted points.[137]

Clearly, the experience in New England convinced Jesse Lee of the need of ordination, and he finally was ordained in October, 1790, at the New York conference.

Although Lee was reappointed to New England in 1796, in August of 1797 he received a letter from Bishop Asbury asking him to become Asbury's traveling assistant. For the next three years Lee traveled with Asbury or held conferences in Asbury's place.

At the General Conference held at Baltimore in May, 1800, Bishop Asbury insisted that another bishop be elected because of his continuing ill health. The conference agreed, and an election was held, Richard Whatcoat and Jesse Lee receiving the most votes. According to Asbury, Whatcoat was elected by a majority of only four votes.[138] This loss must have been a disappointment for Lee, because Asbury had encouraged him to expect election.[139] Also, Lee believed that his chances of being elected had been harmed by a false rumor that Asbury had been critical of him. At Lee's request Asbury spoke to the conference denying the report and praising Lee for his past services. Lee wrote: "We traced the report until we fixed it on T.... L...., and he did not clear himself."[140]

Jesse Lee is significant for his contribution to the development of the delegated General Conference. His letter to Asbury in July, 1791, is possibly the earliest proposal for such a conference. Asbury wrote:

This day brother Jesse Lee put a paper in my hand, proposing the election of not less than two, nor more than four preachers from each conference, to form a general conference in Baltimore, 1792, to be continued annually.[141]

As Professor Frederick Norwood has written: "This proposal is remarkable in that it contains the germ of the system that was finally

137. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
138. *Journal and Letters*, II (May 18, 1800), p. 231.
139. *Journal and Letters*, III (Sept. 12, 1797), p. 164.
140. *Memoir*, pp. 268-269.
141. *Journal and Letters*, I (July 7, 1791).
142. HAM, I, p. 435.

achieved in 1808."[142] Lee was also responsible for the third restrictive rule adopted by the General Conference in 1808: "The General Conference shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away Episcopacy, or to destroy the plan of our itinerant general Superintendency."[143]

Jesse Lee's prestige is illustrated by the fact that he was elected the chaplain of the United States House of Representatives for five terms, 1809 to 1813, and chaplain of the Senate in 1814. He was also a delegate to the General Conference in 1812 and in 1816. At the latter conference, he took part in the procession when Bishop Asbury's body was brought to Baltimore to be buried in the Eutah Street Methodist Church.[144]

Jesse Lee's last appointment was to Annapolis, Maryland, and his last sermon was preached at a camp meeting on the eastern shore of Maryland on August 24, 1816. He became ill that evening and lingered until September 12. Almost his last words were: "Give my regards to Bishop M'Kendree, and tell him that I die in love with all the preachers; that I love him, and that he lives in my heart."[145]

While many other men could have been presented here among these early native Methodist preachers, these four stand out for their distinctive contributions: *Primus inter pares.*

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143. Lee, *Life and Times*, p. 443.
144. *Memoir*, pp. 326-338.
145. *Memoir*, pp. 340-341.

Enthusiasm vs. Education? Early Methodist Preachers in New England

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The Virginia Methodist, Jesse Lee, wrote to Ezekiel Cooper in 1789, "I think the time is come to favor New England, and if I had acceptable preachers with me I believe we should soon cover these states." Lee had been appointed in May to Stamford Circuit. "I am the first," he said, "that has been appointed to this state, by the Methodist conference." Bishop Asbury, in making the appointment, had apparently overcome his earlier reluctance to invade a section he had said (in 1788) was "sufficiently provided for in the way of religious privilege." Now he wrote, "New England stretcheth out the hand to our ministry and I trust thousands will shortly feel its influence." This was, perhaps, a little too optimistic, but when the first reports came in the Bishop wrote in his *Journal*, "I felt glad in my soul notwithstanding Brother Lee is on forbidden ground."

Key words here are "*acceptable preachers*" and "*forbidden ground*"; they almost summarize the Methodist invasion of New England. Whether or not they were "acceptable preachers," the Methodist itinerants had unshaken confidence that they were first and always preachers called by God, and chosen by Wesley. He had named them preachers from the first and had ordained them so, defending by Scripture and terse logic their right to be such. Moreover they were *travelling* preachers, and in New England, against the long, settled congregational pastorates, this wandering enthusiasm was particularly suspect. It recalled too painfully the irregularities of Whitefield's revival forty years before, a revival now frozen into solemn rigidity. In that day, the Connecticut pastors had given their "testimony and advice" on such preaching, doubting, as they said, Whitefield's orderly call and his conversion, and urging the churches to reject him. Such a ministry as he claimed needed proof, they added, "by a miracle or some other equivalent attestation from

Heaven that may fairly satisfy a rational and impartial mind." Their wail, that "numbers of illiterate exhorters swarm about us as locusts from the bottomless pit," was to be echoed with only small variations after Lee's and Asbury's optimistic predictions of 1789. Perhaps if Richard Whatcoat's *Journal* had been read by the New England pastors of the 1790's they could have concluded that Methodist illiteracy was not confined to the exhorters. A few random excerpts from an extant fragment of 1792 will illustrate the literary "style" of one soon to be elected bishop:

Feb. 8 . . . met the subsc/ribers who unanimously elected John Staples, John Black as a commitey to form rules to regulate the carying on the Liberay.

Feb. 19 . . . I preached the deddecation sermon (at the New Church). Bro Mann preached at night and the Black people sung two hymns.

Mar. 28 . . . it Rained, Thundred and Litned Smartly so that few attended Prayer meeting . . . It was a sollom time.

May 9 . . . We had a Comfortable and refreshing time at our Love feast: but poor .... was thrown into a terable Fit of ystericks which continued til morning.

June 3. We had a gentle brees.

June 7. Was very sik. Took a puke.

Being a preacher acceptable to John Wesley (or to Jesse Lee) was not the same as qualifying to "proclaim the Savior's name through Connecticut's farthest bounds." The good qualities recognized by Wesley in the first itinerants underneath such scholastic limitations he must have seen in Whatcoat and in many others, but they tended to go unnoticed by the Yankees who expected in their ministers some intellectual accomplishments.

One of the first signs that the Methodist preachers in New England had come to "forbidden ground" arose out of the obvious fact that they were Southerners. What natural gifts and attractive manners they had (and there is no question about their having these) were overlooked because of that suspicion of the South noticeable even in the 18th century among New Englanders and so easily matched, we know, by Southerners. Jesse Lee and his brother, John, were Virginians, as also were Jeremiah Cosden and Christopher Spry. From Maryland came George Roberts, Fredus Aldridge, Robert Green, George Pickering, Ezekiel Cooper, Peter Moriarty

and that Shadrach Bostwick whom Thomas Robbins of Hartford once called "a dangerous character."

The one comment President Ezra Stiles of Yale made when he heard Francis Asbury preach was that the Bishop "came from Maryland," and, after hearing Jesse Lee, his entry for March 21, 1790 ("Ldsdy") was "The Methodist preacher is come from the Southward again and preached a lecture at V this afternoon." In 1793 the Reverend Nathan Williams of Tolland, Connecticut, in an April Fast Day Sermon, spoke out the "Standing Order's" resentment of the itinerant intrusions: "Shall we disbelieve our ministers whom we know and whose moral characters have never been impeached . . . and at the same time be obliged to give full credit to strangers who were born and brought up hundreds of miles from us?" The Methodist, George Roberts, answered immediately in his *Strictures*: "Is it a sin to be a stranger in New England or to be born a few hundred miles distant from it? If so I am sorry for it. . . . It is reported no man should come to Boston to preach without coming through Cambridge. And how dare any man come and offer himself in Connecticut for a minister unless he comes through New Haven?"

George Roberts was touching a particularly sensitive spot. Being from the South was not the Methodist preachers' worst handicap, of course. It *was* pretty clear that the appointed itinerants were not formally educated men and some of them went so far as to boast of this. The standards and goals set by Wesley for reading and study had never been well realized in America. Apparently Wesley himself had waived these requirements when he saw genuine piety and natural gifts in men like Richard Whatcoat. By the felt urgency of the revival, and the drive to "spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land" the emphasis had long been put on the Conference answer to Question 36 in the *Minutes*: "What is the best general method of preaching? A. (1) to invite. (2) to convince. (3) to offer Christ. (4) to build up; and to do this in some measure in every sermon." Promptness and regularity ("Be sure never to disappoint a congregation, unless in case of life or death, [and] Begin and end precisely at the time appointed"), simplicity ("choose the plainest texts you can.") and skill in "extemporizing." ("Let young preachers often exhort, without taking a text")—all these were important advices in the *Minutes*, practical directions easier to obey than the injunctions to read the recommended books. Billy Hibbard confined his reading for the most part, he said, to Fletcher's *Checks*, *Christians' Pattern*, *Saint's Rest*, Law's *Call* and Alleine's *Alarm*, a fair example

for most of the itinerants and a striking contrast to the complete theological training insisted on by the Congregationalists.

Hibbard once said that, while he was struggling, because of his shortcomings in education, against the call to preach, he received the "sweet impression" that the people to whom he would go "did not consider a college education as the essential qualification for a minister." This is debatable, but Hibbard's "sweet impression" was shared by many of his fellow preachers and by many of their successors for several years. As late as 1848, Dr. Thomas E. Bond, Jr. in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* took a firm stand on the principle that "Methodism is a religion without a Philosophy." He wrote,

> The first germ of rationalism was in Cain . . . . who was the first philosopher, the first man who rejected revelation to follow reason. . . . Philosophy has proved itself absolutely fruitless and must be considered hopeless by every man who has made himself acquainted with the history of intellectual effort. . . . In their pride and perverseness the learned saw in Christianity a means of reviving rationalism . . . a new science, a sort of composite intellectual architecture, arose which they named Theology, or the Science of God! . . . and this theology took the sap and vigor of the church. . . . But Wesley perceived the true spiritual nature of Christianity, seeing in it God's plan of saving sinners, not making savans [*sic*] . . . Methodism is plain truth for a plain people.

Ideas like the above were not representative of all the leaders of Methodism in the early 19th century, but they reveal a majority opinion among them and an issue especially sharpened in New England. The *Methodist Review* for October 1842 resented the charge, however, that Methodists were ignorant both in the ministry and in the laity, and pointed to the work of Wesley, Watson, Clarke, Benson, Fisk, Emory, Ruter and others but added "we freely admit the Methodists as a people are and have been comparatively unlearned in human sciences. . . . As a church she was not raised up to promote the progress of science and literature" but "to spread Scriptural holiness over the earth."

These were criticisms that only Methodists could gracefully make. When the *Christian Spectator* in 1835 said that the watch cry of Methodism had long been "away with books and education and let the Lord send us ministers who have graduated in the third heaven," the *Christian Advocate* retorted, "This is double-distilled falsehood."

Criticism smarted. There was enough truth in the Congregational charges to be embarrassing, and the 1820's and 1830's witnessed action. The New Market Wesleyan Academy (now Wilbraham), Wesleyan University at Middletown, and the Boston School

of Theology were the first steps—plain answers to the New England critics. At the same time these schools earned some denominational justification by offering an education free from "the poison of Calvinism" and without an "adventitious bias to habits of thinking."

But champions for college and theological training for the preachers had rough going. *Zion's Herald* cautioned in 1824 that "we also need ministers content with being great only as they are good. . . . If many of our theological students would leave their Hebrew, their French and their grammar and study with more attention the Book of Providence, the book of nature, the heart of man and the Book of God, none would be ready to despond."

When the *Christian Advocate* ventured to print, in 1834, a number of articles favoring theological seminaries, a local preacher wrote to the editor accusing him of being "anti-Methodistical, not to say anti-Christian"; for "Congregational and Presbyterian plans for ministerial education would not suit Methodism," he wrote, "any more than Saul's armour would fit David." Whereupon the editor promised to be more careful, at the same time cautioning his readers not to interpret the *Advocate*'s use of the word "education" as meaning "theological education."

The *Methodist Magazine* that year was a little bolder. It ran the risk of displeasing many readers when it printed an article by Rev. LaRoy Sunderland in support of "A theological education." This article had first been offered to the *Christian Advocate* but the senior editor had thought it inadvisable to insert it since such a subject had not been discussed in that paper. In fact, even some articles on "an educated ministry among us" had had to be discontinued because of the unpopularity of such ideas.

For printing Sunderland's plea the *Methodist Magazine* had to deny the charge of being both "anti-Methodistical" and "anti-Wesleyan," it had to defend Mr. Sunderland, and it had to quote many paragraphs from Wesley's sermons in support of a sound theological education. Mr. Sunderland, at the same time, cleared himself by laboriously explaining that his Essay "did not plead for theological *schools* but only to show the importance of theological *learning*." Moreover, before going to the press, his paper had been read and approved, he said, by Dr. Fisk, Dr. Olin, Dr. Bangs, the Rev. Mr. Durbin and the Rev. Mr. Merritt—an impressive endorsement by several of the "firsts" in American Methodist theological education.

In the first years, however, of the Methodist invasion of New England the preachers had no leaders nor models of the intellectual

stature of Fisk, Olin or Durbin. But they did have men who could easily, perhaps unconsciously, attract attention and respect by manners, speech, good sense and wit—much as John Wesley himself had done.

The amiable Jesse Lee (the "apostle" to New England) was an immense man, more than six feet tall, weighing over two hundred and fifty pounds. He was thirty-one years old when he began his wayside preaching in Fairfield County, Connecticut. His rather handsome features, large gray eyes, fair skin and black hair were well set off by his Quaker-like dress and erect military bearing. He was a good singer, an eloquent speaker and a jovial companion. Quick at repartee (sometimes too quick), he was able to fascinate all who talked with him by alternative flashes of wit and dramatic seriousness. Such gracious manners, commanding personality and gallantry with a flourish made a strong appeal to the hearts of New England country men and women.

Ezekiel Cooper, twenty-nine when he came from Maryland to be the Presiding Elder of the Boston District in 1792, was not so handsome. A large wen on his right jaw was too prominent and he was inclined to be a little careless about his dress. But he had a commanding appearance with his six feet, three inches of stature and "heavy frame." He was not quite so heavy (one could almost say corpulent) as Lee, and no doubt surpassed the latter in preaching ability. Cooper had an amazing voice, was unequalled in debate and was called Lycurgus by his fellow preachers because of his "attainments" in scholarship.

When he was twenty-four, George Roberts came from Maryland to the Stratford Circuit and spent six years in Connecticut, Rhode Island, western Massachusetts and Vermont. This was a stocky, puffy-cheeked man with a double chin and long black beard. He gained some distinction for his stolid, deliberative type of preaching and was in considerable demand among those who liked an instructive, methodical and plain sermon.

Then there was Daniel Smith of Philadelphia, who was sent in 1790 when he was twenty-one, to be with Lee in the vicinity of Boston. Smith was more popular in the cities of eastern Massachusetts than were his fellow laborers. Perhaps this was because he immediately gave the impression, a correct one, that he was a gentleman. His soft voice, "good to conciliate, persuade and soothe," had not the quality, says Stevens, that would "excite violent emotions in the

pulpit." He, too, was a "large, well-built, fine looking man," of gentle earnest manner, and evidently a sincere student.

What the earlier Methodist preacher lacked in education, which was much, he made up for in a certain gallantry and energetic pulpit manner that could not fail to impress simple people. There was no question as to his earnestness; the fire in his eye, the tears on his cheek, the emotion in his voice spoke of his love for souls and his burning zeal for Methodism. When New England young men joined the ranks, as lay exhorters or licensed preachers on trial, they were quick to imitate the style of their southern leaders. Such freedom of gesture, virility and humor were not common in New England pulpits. The Congregational ministers were not given to telling sad or funny stories in sermons, but the itinerant Methodist had no end of anecdotes to help his application. He often spoke with pride of the practical nature of his sermons and pointed to the metaphysical lectures of the established ministers with ridicule. Lee said he gave the people "no velvet mouth preaching," but talked "loud and plain." Billy Hibbard preached noisily at Newtown and "left Calvinism bleeding." The uneducated hearers, even the illiterate, whose minds could not grasp such subjects as "The Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin," "A Dissertation on the History, Eloquence and Poetry of the Bible," or lectures on natural and moral ability, had little difficulty in understanding the Methodist whose favorite texts were "Ye must be born again," "The wages of sin is death," and "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found." At Weston Jesse Lee attacked election for two hours from the text, "Many are called but few are chosen." Timothy Merritt, at Durham, Maine, defended Methodism by dramatic allusion to the words, "By whom shall Jacob arise? For he is small," and Lee, at Tolland, Connecticut, preached on "These that have turned the world upside down."

Those colorful qualities of diversity, energy and enthusiasm can be accounted for partly by the nature of the revival with which the preachers were so intimately a part, and partly by the genius of John Wesley in coupling, among his first missionaries to America, men of different qualities and temperament. His choice, at the same time, of Thomas Rankin the disciplinarian, and George Shadford, the evangelist shows how the movement was directed by seemingly incompatible types. Jesse Lee tells us how these two cooperated at Bushill's Chapel in Virginia, in 1776. Rankin preached first.

He gave us a good discourse in the forenoon, and tried to keep the people from making any noise while he was speaking, and at the close of the meeting, he thanked the people for their good behaviour, and told them he was much better pleased with them at that time, than he was when among them before. He then went to a friend's house to get his dinner, and was to return and preach again in the afternoon. As soon as he was gone, the people felt at liberty, and began to sing, pray and talk to their friends, till the heavenly flame kindled in their souls, and sinners were conquered, and twelve or fifteen souls were converted to God, before the preacher returned from his dinner; and many of the people were sorry that he returned at all, knowing that he was not fond of so much noise. It was with much difficulty that he prevailed on them to be quiet enough for him to begin to preach. He gave us a good discourse, and I was pleased with it. Yet the people did not hold in till he was done, but some of them began to cry and pray aloud for mercy on their poor souls. He tried again to stop them; but he could not. After that he sat down, and asked Mr. Shadford, who had been preaching among them for some months before, to speak to them, which he did with pleasure, and in a little time cried out in his usual manner, "Who wants a Saviour? the first that believes shall be justified." In a few minutes the house was ringing with the cries of broken hearted sinners, and the shouts of happy believers. It was an awful time indeed; and several souls were justified, and many Christians were lost in wonder, love and praise.

It is clear that the Bushill Virginians wanted more of Shadford's rousing shouts and less of Rankin's restraining decorum. Rankin seems to have had no choice but to "cooperate with the inevitable"; he let them have the kind of meeting they wished for. This was a capitulation which the New England clergy could not permit when this kind of religious excitement accompanied Methodist preachers northward. Not many of the itinerant appointees from the south had the quiet reserve of Rankin; and their arrival in Connecticut and Massachusetts sharply defined their unique ability to arouse, set as it was in uncomfortable contrast to the sedate intellectualism of the Congregational domain. As a chapter in American Methodist expansion it still invites exploration, but the theme, as set forth by Asbury and Lee, will probably remain unchanged: "acceptable preachers on forbidden ground."

The Theological Heritage of the Early Methodist Preachers

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What did the Methodist preachers in America preach? Those preachers, that is, *back then* when Methodism was just beginning, and in the early nineteenth century when it was developing into a large and influential denominational institution? Were the "Fathers" so concerned with "getting members," or keeping up with the westward expansion, or Methodism's institutional soundness that they neglected the enterprise of theological investigation and expression? Theological neglect there has been, but it was not their neglect. Rather it is ours, in not seeking out and coming to terms with Methodism's theological heritage. For there is such a heritage, vast in quantity of writing and subject matter, and significant because of its influence in informing the teaching and preaching of Methodist ministers.

The Beginnings of an Indigenous Theology

The theological heritage of American Methodism began, appropriately enough, with the dissemination of some of the writings of John Wesley. In 1741, the year after it was first published in England, Benjamin Franklin printed Wesley's sermon on "Free Grace"—that vigorous rejoinder to the predestinarian views of George Whitefield.[1] Thereafter a number of Wesley's theological writings or extracts were published and circulated in America: *The Nature and Design of Christianity* in 1744, *The Scripture Doctrine Concerning Predestination, Election and Reprobation* in 1746, *A Dialogue Between a Predestinarian and His Friend* in 1770, and *Thoughts Upon Slavery* in 1774.[2] Even though in these years Wesley's views on certain issues were known to some extent, it was not until the arrival of the Methodist preachers from England, beginning in 1769, and the

1. Frank Baker, *A Union Catalogue of the Publications of John and Charles Wesley* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Divinity School, 1966), #11.

2. *Ibid.*, ##17, 27, 24, and 298 respectively.

formation of societies that the theological content of Methodist preaching began to take more definite form.

The primary emphasis of Methodist theology in this formative period was the doctrine of salvation. In May, 1774, William Duke, one of the early Methodist preachers, in the course of some reflections on a sermon wrote in his "diary": "When I began to speak I found the assistance of the Divine power in a great measure, while a solemn sense of my subject filled my heart, which was these words: 'And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.' "[3] The seeking and attaining of salvation in this life in order to escape punishment in the next, and the way of repentance, faith, conversion and holiness in which salvation is to be sought are central theological motifs in early Methodist preaching.[4] While there are no extensive statements of doctrine by American Methodists prior to 1800, a number of themes receive frequent treatment with the self-conscious intention of remaining faithful to the views of Wesley.

Man is guilty in God's sight, declare many of the early preachers, because of original sin. He is also depraved in nature by inheritance and, in consequence, is actively sinful in heart and life. Of himself, man is unable to merit forgiveness for the guilt of sin, to earn freedom from bondage to sinful nature, or to secure inward and outward holiness.[5] The ministry and death of Jesus Christ is the sufficient meritorious cause for man's pardon from guilt. That atoning work is also the basis on account of which men may, through further gifts of grace, be brought to regeneration—an inner change involving release from bondage to sinful nature and the beginning of a process of becoming inwardly and outwardly holy.[6]

The condition for obtaining this three-fold "first blessing" is com-

3. William Duke, Manuscript Diary, 1774-76. The holograph original is in The Diocesan Library, Peabody Institute, Baltimore, Maryland.

4. See *Minutes of Several Conversations between the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D., the Rev. Francis Asbury and Others* (Philadelphia, 1785), pp. 6-8, 13, 20. Also see Thomas Coke, *A Sermon on the Witness of the Spirit. Preached at Baltimore, Before the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on Sunday, November 4th, 1792* (Philadelphia, 1792); William Duke, "Thoughts on Repentance" (Baltimore, 1789), and Ezekiel Cooper, Manuscript Letter, January 15, 1790, in Garrett Theological Seminary Library.

5. See William Duke, Manuscript Sermon on John 2:15 (1773), in the collection of papers at The Diocesan Library, Peabody Institute, Baltimore, Maryland.

6. See Philip William Otterbein's treatment of the atonement in his 1760 sermon *Die Heilbringende Menschwerdung und der Herliche Sieg Jesu Christi . . .* (Germantown: 1763), in Core, Arthur C., *Philip William Otterbein* (Dayton, Ohio: E. U. B. Church, 1968), pp. 77-90.

plete trust in the total sufficiency of Christ. Through preaching the demands of the law, men may be brought to an inward awareness of their sinful, impotent condition—an awareness which creates anxiety in the face of the knowledge of an inevitably ensuing punishment should they continue in a sinful state. "The law," says Thomas Coke, "is a hammer to break hearts with," a breaking which produces despair and leads to a neutralization of dependence upon self and makes possible the beginning of trust in the merits of Christ alone.[7] Such trust brings pardon for the guilt of sin and a new birth in the soul as the foundation for moral decision and action, and for growth in holiness.[8] In this conversion there is given men by the Spirit "a clear sense and evidence of their pardon and acceptance" with God.[9]

The proper responsibilities of men *before* conversion are the constant and careful attendance on all the means of grace, because through these means convicting, pardoning and renewing grace is mediated.[10] Diligence in these duties, and in all good works, is required also *after* conversion as the means through which sanctifying grace is bestowed, enabling the Christian man to grow in holiness toward the goal of the "second blessing"—the gift of entire sanctification.[11]

This "salvation-theology" with its emphasis on the law, repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, good works and the constant use of the means of grace in pursuit of sanctification is singularly apparent in the homiletical-theological writing of early American Methodism. It has the support, furthermore, of certain of the theological writings of John Wesley as well: particularly his first four volumes of published sermons and the *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (1755) expound at length these same doctrinal motifs. It is important to note the presence and authority of these Wesleyan materials in America.[12] In 1763 Wesley drew up and executed a "Model

7. Thomas Coke, *Sermon on The Witness of the Spirit* (1792), p. 8. See also Marjorie M. Holmes (ed.), *The Life and Diary of John Jeremiah Jacobs, 1757-1839*. (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Duke University, 1941), pp. 211f, 226.

8. See M. M. Holmes (ed.), *The Life and Diary of John Jeremiah Jacobs*, pp. 212-13. See also Ezekiel Cooper, Manuscript Sermon on I Thessalonians 5:19 (1790), in Garrett Theological Seminary Library.

9. Thomas Coke, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

10. M. M. Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 211f.

11. Edward Dromgoole, Manuscript Diary for June 26 and July 2, 1784, in the Dromgoole Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

12. The first known American printing of Wesley's four volumes of sermons was in 1783. The *Notes* were first published in 1791-92. It is certain, however, that both sermons and *Notes* were available in this country in British editions.

Deed" for all the Methodist Chapels in England, which he published in the "Large Minutes" of 1763. Among other things, this deed restricted the use of these preaching houses to those men who would preach "nothing contrary to the doctrines contained in Mr. Wesley's *Notes Upon the New Testament* and four volumes of sermons."[13] Methodists in America knew this and at the first conference in this country in 1773 minuted in the records their acceptance of this doctrinal authority. The conference of 1781 was more explicit about its position in relation to Wesley's doctrine. The first question in the minutes asks: "What preachers are now determined, after mature consideration, close observation, and earnest prayer, to preach the old Methodist doctrine, and strictly enforce the discipline, as contained in the *Notes*, sermons and minutes published by Mr. Wesley?" This loyalty to Wesleyan standards was re-confirmed at the Spring conference of 1784. The famous Christmas conference of 1784 did not mention this matter, but did approve Wesley's revision of the *Book of Common Prayer*, including twenty-five "Articles of Religion" adapted from the *XXXIX Articles of the Church of England.* In these ways the influence and authority of Wesley's theological emphases were prominent in early American Methodism.

In addition to these standards, there are a number of doctrinal writings which illustrate further both the distinctive nature of early American Methodist theology and Wesley's influence on it. The minutes of the conference of 1785 included three brief sections of theological importance taken from Wesley's "Large Minutes." The first was the account "Of the Rise of Methodism" which underscores the necessity for salvation of striving after holiness, and adds the point that "holiness comes by faith." A second section declares against "antinomianism," but on the positive side, insists on the need for good works before and after justification. The third section "strongly and explicitly" exhorts believers to "go on to perfection" meaning "salvation from all sin, by the love of God and man filling our heart." Such perfection is attainable before death. Beginning with the moment of justification, there may be a gradual "growing in grace, a daily advance in the knowledge and love of God," through man's being watchful against sin, zealous of good works, and punctual in attendance on "all the ordinances of God." But while the process is gradual, the cessation of sin in a believer is instantaneous: "there must be a last moment wherein it does exist,

13. See *The Works of John Wesley* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), Vol. VIII, p. 331.

and a first moment wherein it does not." Expectation of this increases the carefulness of the faithful to grow in grace. "Whoever would advance the gradual change in believers should strongly insist on the instantaneous."[14]

Three important doctrinal items intended to portray distinctive Methodist teaching appeared in the enlarged Discipline of 1788: the *XXV Articles of Religion*, together with Wesley's treatises on *The Scripture Doctrine of Predestination, Election and Reprobation*[15] and *Serious Thoughts on the Infallible, Unconditional Perseverance of all that have once experienced Faith in Christ.*[16] The latter two essays were intended as theological answers to certain points of Calvinist doctrine. They present the doctrinal views on crucial issues held and taught by early Methodists.

The treatise on predestination defines that notion as "God's foreappointing obedient believers to salvation," and all "disobedient unbelievers" to damnation. Men are elected to salvation because of faith in and obedience to Christ, and none is elect until he so believes and obeys. The death of Christ is the *cause*, the hearing of the gospel followed by believing and obeying are the *conditions*, of salvation. This work of Christ was not for a chosen few only, but for all mankind. Even though, because of original sin, man once had no freedom or power to do good, God on account of Christ has "restored to mankind a liberty and power to accept of proffered salvation."

If it is understood that through the power given by grace a man is enabled to believe and obey, and thus come to election, the possibility still remains that such a man can "fall-away." This is not the question whether believers commit sins; that they do so "backslide" is taken for granted. The essay on perseverance makes the still stronger point, in opposition to Calvinism, that even those who are "endued with the faith that purifies the heart" may make "shipwreck" of their faith and "so fall from God as to perish everlastingly." It is therefore of critical importance that all believers watch diligently and endure in the faith to the end.

To these statements on the way of salvation was added, in 1789,

14. These three items were retained in the 1787 *Discipline* as sections 1, 16, and 22 respectively.

15. An edition of this treatise had already been published in America in 1746. It is not one of Wesley's original writings, but an extract taken from William Wogan (1678-1758), an Anglican priest and correspondent with John Wesley.

16. The title is an alteration of Wesley's original one: *Serious Thoughts Upon the Perseverance of the Saints.* See Wesley, *Works*, X, 284-298.

Wesley's *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection.* The definition of perfection as the "purity of intention" to love God above all things and all things in God, together with the more detailed treatment of the questions of gradual and instantaneous perfection worked in men by the Spirit, were significant supplements to the brief statement of 1785. The *Discipline* of 1790 included, in addition to the writings already mentioned, an extract "from a late author" entitled *A Treatise on the Nature and Subjects of Christian Baptism.*[17] This marked the first time in American Methodism that a sacramental observance had been singled out for special theological attention. The treatise defined baptism as a washing away of original and actual sin, as a dedication of the baptized person to Christ, and as a means of grace. Its particular concern, however, was to defend the validity of the practice of infant baptism.

All of these tracts remained in the *Discipline* in succeeding editions until 1798 when they were replaced by "explanatory notes" on the *Discipline* composed by bishops Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury. The General Conference of 1800 reversed the situation, omitting the notes and restoring the tracts. In 1808 the Church made a momentous decision: it created a restrictive rule setting up as inviolable the "present existing and established standards of doctrine." The standards thus established included the *Articles of Religion*, Wesley's *Notes* and sermons, and the doctrinal tracts printed in the *Discipline.*[18] Four years later, in 1812, the General Conference decided to remove the doctrinal tracts from the *Discipline*, publishing the former in a separate volume. They approved also the enlargement of the collection of authoritative standards to include other essays by Wesley deemed theologically significant and appropriate.

This new volume was entitled *A Collection of Interesting Tracts, explaining several important points of Scripture Doctrine.* By the time it was published in 1814 the number of items included had grown considerably. Methodist opposition to Calvinism, and its own position on predestination and election, were made overpoweringly clear by the supplementation of the previously published treatises on predestination and perseverance with no less than six additional writings on the same subject. Among these was Wesley's 1740 sermon on

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17. The author was Moses Hemmenway. The treatise was first published in Philadelphia in 1788. In 1790 the Rev. John Dickins published a lengthy extract. See Evans microcard #22944.

18. The details of these changes and the fuller history of the doctrinal tracts in the *Disciplines* can be found in Frank Baker, "The Doctrines in the *Discipline*," *Duke Divinity School Review*, 31 (Winter, 1966), pp. 39-55.

"Free Grace," in which he attacks the doctrine of predestination as making God "worse than the devil," and claims that the grace of God is not limited to a few chosen elect. Rather it is freely given to all men, so that all have the possibility of salvation. Included also was Wesley's long essay, *Predestination Calmly Considered*, with its unrelenting arguments that predestination, as the Calvinists view it, is unscriptural; that election to salvation is conditional, based upon faith, and that every man, though fallen, has *some ability* through grace to participate in coming to faith and salvation.[19]

Two other Wesleyan writings were included in the volume. One was his *Thoughts on the Imputed Righteousness of Christ* in which it is argued that while Christ is the "sole meritorious cause" of man's justification and sanctification, and that while man is in God's sight accounted righteous in Christ because of faith, nevertheless the personal righteousness of Christ is not given to the man of faith in such a way as that he is freed from the law and freed to all ungodliness. The second writing was *A Blow at the Root; or, Christ Stabbed in the House of His Friends*. Wesley here declares that men must not make the righteousness of Christ "a cover for the unrighteousness of man." The faith which works through love is a central emphasis in Christianity and men should not think of this as legalism. They are to show their love to Christ by "keeping his commandments," attending his ordinances, and imitating him in all things.

There is one other tract in the volume—a non-Wesleyan one—which is of importance for understanding the thought of early Methodism. It is entitled *A Plain Definition of Saving Faith*. According to the anonymous author, faith is properly viewed as "believing the saving truth with the heart unto internal, and (as we have opportunity) unto external righteousness." This believing is the "gift of the God of *grace*" in the same way that breathing and moving are "gifts of the God of *nature*." God's gift of free grace partially removes the total blindness which is our legacy from Adam. Free grace also through various agencies or means sends to us the truth, disposes us to perceive and understand it, and blesses us with power to consider, assent, consent, and resolve to believe it. But withal, believing is, with the help of God, our own act. All sinners may, through the "help and power of the general light of Christ's saving grace,"

19. The other essays on this subject include *Serious Considerations concerning the Doctrines of Election and Reprobation*; *Serious Considerations on Absolute Predestination*; *The Consequence Proved*; and *A Dialogue Between a Predestinarian and his Friend*.

receive some truth of the gospel. If they believe that truth, they may go on "from faith to faith" until they attain the goal of salvation.

Some changes and additions were made in the subsequent editions of the *Collection of Interesting Tracts*, but in the main the treatises here discussed were retained. They are significant because they are illustrative of the kind of salvation-theology that characterized early American Methodist preaching.

Asa Shinn: Early Methodist Systematician

By the early nineteenth century American Methodist theology had developed to the point where its authoritative foundations and characteristic doctrinal motifs were clearly identifiable. In 1813 the scholarly Asa Shinn, an itinerant preacher, published a volume which perhaps qualifies him as the first Methodist "systematic" theologian.[20] It is an important book primarily because it stands as the systematic expression of theological views which were present in the official doctrinal standards and which were worked out in the business of itinerant preaching in America. It is important also because it contributed to the further development of Methodist theology, particularly through its influence on such men as Nathan Bangs and Daniel D. Whedon, as well as on countless numbers of preachers.[21]

Shinn begins his *Plan of Salvation* with a declaration of his understanding of the authority and method for determining Christian truth. A basic assumption for him is that man is a being with faculties of conception and reason. Such a rational creature is under necessity "to regulate his belief by evidence and by nothing else." (p. 12) There are three kinds of evidence: (1) the evidence of intuitive certainty which pertains to immediately self-evident truth, such as that I exist; (2) the evidence of reasoning which deduces truth from observable data; and (3) the evidence of revelation in which certain truths are made known to the mind by the "supernatural influence of the Spirit." (p. 54) Truths made known by revelation are accompanied by self-evident conviction in the knower. There are, however, external evidences for the truth of revelation, namely the Scripture records of miracles and prophecy.

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20. Asa Shinn, *An Essay on the Plan of Salvation: in which the Several Sources of Evidence are Examined, and Applied to the Interesting Doctrine of Redemption, in its Relation to the Government and Moral Attributes of the Deity.* (Baltimore: Published by Neal, Wills and Cole, 1813).

21. See, for example, Nathan Bangs, *Errors of Hopkinsianism Detected and Refuted.* (New York: J. C. Totten, 1815), and Daniel D. Whedon, *Freedom of the Will as a Basis of Human Responsibility* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1864).

Scripture is the written account of God's revelations to man. Since it is "impossible for God to be deceived, or to deceive others," the writings of the Old and New Testaments have a "real and true meaning." (p. 60) The revealed will of God in Scripture consists in the doctrines which constitute the meaning of Scripture, not merely in the external letter. It is possible for the human mind to distinguish the essential doctrines of Christianity in the Scriptures when "its faculties are rightly exercised under the guidance of the Holy Spirit." (p. 68) Reasoning is necessary to enable men to perceive and understand the evidence of revelation in Scripture.

On the authority of revelation and by a method of interpretation involving the exercise of reason, Shinn speaks about the fallen condition of mankind and the scripture "plan" of salvation. He accepts the traditional doctrine of the historicity of the adamic fall, viewing Adam as the Divinely appointed *representative* of all, upon whose decisions the welfare of all depended. (p. 292) All men share in the consequences of Adam's disobedience, though *not* in the guilt appertaining to his act. They derive from him a depraved nature prone continually to evil. There is a "native degeneracy" in men that is a "natural consequence" of the Adamic fall. The immediate effect of the fall on Adam was the advent of the inward propensity to sin, and "as the goodness of God spared him to multiply his kind, we are all born in a disordered state because it was impossible for him to propagate any other nature than his own." (p. 298)

The proneness to evil, however, is not itself a sin involving culpability. Sin is a transgression of the law. Insofar as the term "sin" refers to an original corruption, propensity may be called sin, and all infants inherit it. But this original sin does not imply guilt. Guilt is chargeable only on the basis of a man's deserving to suffer, and such deserts apply when one knowingly and willingly transgresses a law which he had the power to keep. (p. 300)

In consequence of the Fall, man has by nature no ability to recover himself. He has not, however, since the Fall been separated from grace. He has not been left in a state of mere nature. The grace of God brings about and maintains personal existence. Further, admitting that man has no natural power to do good, nevertheless such power has been restored to all men through Jesus Christ. Those who abuse this gracious liberty are justly culpable. (p. 331)

The atoning work of Christ is the meritorious cause of man's forgiveness with God and of his ultimate salvation. Because of Christ's perfect obedience God is disposed to pardon man's guilt. It is also

for the sake of Christ that God grants freedom to do good. But if man is to be pardoned for his sins, and his corrupt nature purged and made holy so that salvation can be realized, the fulfillment of certain conditions is necessary. One of those conditions is faith in Jesus Christ. This is the "ground instrument" of pardon, sanctification, and final victory. Saving faith is not mere intellectual assent. (p. 374) It is rather an inward directing of the whole man to God, a "united exercise of the understanding and the affections in the embrace of the Truth." (p. 377) This faith leads man to abandon vice and submit himself "to the gracious government of the Redeemer." (p. 378)

To speak of faith as the "gift of God," for Shinn, means that Jesus Christ as the "object" of faith is God's gift, that the *power* to believe is the gift of God, and that the spiritual influence which assists man in believing is the gift of God. But believing itself, "faithing," is a voluntary act of man's mind and affections. Because of the Divine presence and influence a man can believe when he pleases. (p. 380) When he does submit himself in faith the Holy Spirit comes to indwell him, leading him into all good works and sanctification, and providing assurance of his progress toward salvation.

There may be some question whether this is an accurate representation of the thought of John Wesley on these matters. What it does represent is the way in which American Methodists, in their own historical context, were coming to understand Wesleyanism.

The Theology of Richard Watson

One of the most influential theologians in American Methodism was a British Methodist—Richard Watson. His major work, *Theological Institutes; or A View of the Evidences, Doctrines, Morals, and Institutions of Christianity*, first appeared in the United States in the late 1820's.[22] For over fifty years it was to remain standard reading for all Methodist preachers in this country. Unlike John Wesley, Richard Watson was, by intention, a systematic and apologetic theologian. His theological aim was to articulate the essential truths of the Christian faith and, so far as possible, to justify them on rational grounds.

The sole source of Christian doctrine, for Watson, is divine revelation in Scripture. The Scriptures contain a theological system; they are the "revelation of infallible truth." (I, p. 263) But this claim

22. 2 vols. (New York: published by T. Mason and G. Lane, 1829).

of authority has to be justified. The use of reason is essential in order to demonstrate to an increasingly skeptical world that the Scripture and its teaching is true, trustworthy, and therefore authoritative. Accordingly, Watson offers a heavy concentration of various kinds of rational evidence to establish that authority and, along with it, the veracity of Christian doctrine. (I, pp. 70f) Having satisfied himself on that question, Watson turns to the business of exegeting Scripture doctrine. The hermeneutical tools for interpreting revelation are, once again, reason, supplemented by commonsense, tradition, and experience. (I, pp. 96, 263)

The first man Adam, according to Watson, was a "public man," established and considered by God as the representative of the whole race. (II, pp. 51f) Because of this legal relationship, the disobedience of Adam brought consequences not only upon him, but upon all his descendants. There are three principal consequences of the Fall. One is physical death. A second is spiritual death—a condition of alienation from God and the inward reality of a corrupt nature. Man's nature is depraved; he is inwardly disposed to evil. The condition of depravity has come about because the Spirit of God has withdrawn from man. For Watson, depravation is deprivation of the inward presence of the Spirit. The third consequence of the Fall is the possibility of eternal death unless the separation from God is overcome.

The person and work of Jesus Christ, and their relation to man's salvation, are central in Watson's theological understanding. Appealing to the authority of Scripture, Watson asserts and proves the Divinity of Christ on the basis of the testimony to His pre-existence and of the application of Divine titles and attributes to Jesus. From such evidence he concludes that Jesus Christ is the same essence with the Father. (I, pp. 504f) He is also the same essence with man, the two essences being perfectly and fully united.

Watson's view of the atonement indicates the reasons for his concern with the doctrine of the person of Christ. The necessity of the atonement is related, first of all, to God. Because of sin God is alienated from man. Further, God is the ground of all justice and moral order or government in the universe, and these principles require strict enforcement in the face of the evil in the world which threatens to destroy them. For this reason man's injustice and immorality are offensive to God himself, and the maintenance of justice and order requires punitive measures. The law of God cannot be transgressed without some recompense being made. Even if man

never sinned further, this would not suffice as payment for past transgressions. He is still guilty in the sight of God and deserving of punishment. The demands of Divine justice must be satisfied.

The ministry and death of Jesus Christ was such a satisfaction. Only Christ in his divinity could satisfy Divine justice, and in thus overcoming the cause of alienation between God and man re-establish the possibility for pardon. But it was only as fully man that Jesus could perform that obedience and penalty adequate for the satisfaction of justice. In his humanity Jesus took upon himself the humble rank of the guilty, making himself vulnerable to all suffering. The willing sacrifice of Jesus was offered on behalf of mankind and the merit of his suffering was placed to the account of all men. Accepting that substitute penalty, God is now disposed and able to remit the punishment due to all while still maintaining justice and moral government.

If the necessity of atonement is related first of all to God, it is no less related to man. There are, for Watson, benefits of the atoning work of Christ which apply to man in his fallenness. Because of that work man is, as we have seen, delivered from the punishment justly due him. He is also freed from the necessary dominion and pollution of corrupt nature, and is introduced into the favor of God in this world. Further, he is introduced to the promise of happiness in the next world. (II, p. 208) Beyond these benefits, man is given the continual presence and influence of the Holy Spirit to assist him in understanding the gospel and fulfilling the conditions of salvation. The Spirit strives with man to make him aware of his sin, produce a desire for forgiveness, and convert him to God. (II, pp. 211-12)

What this means is that the Spirit of which man had been deprived as a consequence of the Fall is now, in virtue of the atonement, universally and preveniently restored. The restoration of the Spirit is the source of all good desires in man and of an ability to know and choose the good. It is also the source of a measure of freedom through which man is able to respond to grace, leading finally to the reception of justifying faith. (II, pp. 59f) And the man of faith is empowered and strengthened by the Spirit to be obedient in all good works and to grow in that inward and outward holiness requisite for the attainment of salvation.

Conclusion

This statement of the theological heritage of the early Methodist preachers is intended to be descriptive and illustrative. While the

writings and men discussed are perhaps the major expressions of that heritage in the early period, providing insight into the content of Methodist preaching and teaching at that time, they are only part of a large and influential literary tradition extending over the two hundred year history of American Methodism. Many writers could be added to those discussed: James O'Kelly, John Ffirth, Timothy Merritt, Stephen Olin, Wilbur Fisk, Randolph S. Foster, Borden Parker Bowne, Olin A. Curtis. These are only a few of those contributing to this heritage. In 1818 the *Methodist Quarterly Review* began a publication history which continued for well over a century, making available sermons and essays by preachers, teachers and laymen. In all this literature there is contained the evidence of what Methodists believed and taught in the past. As such it indicates the sources from which we sprang, and from which contemporary Methodism may receive some insight into the theological condition of its present as well as the direction of its future.

Methodist Preachers, Slavery and Caste: Types of Social Concern in Antebellum America

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At the Christmas Conference of 1784 in Baltimore when the Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) Church was formally organized, the preachers asked, as John Wesley had done during the first conference in London forty years earlier: "What may we reasonably believe to be God's design in raising up the Preachers called Methodists?" The bold reply was a reaffirmation of the answer first given in 1744: "To reform the Continent, and to spread scriptural Holiness over these lands."[1]

The conviction that national reformation was part of God's design for the Methodist movement reveals that the early American preachers expected to deal with the moral problems of society in fulfilling their divine mission. Their focus was, to be sure, primarily upon an evangelical understanding of Christianity as the answer to the existential plight of individuals burdened with guilt. The preachers convicted men of their sinfulness, proclaimed pardon as God's free gift of grace, and urged growth in holiness by obeying the divine will and increasing love of God and man. This orientation to the Christian life meant that the early Methodists dealt more effectively with sins committed one by one than with collective evils. The Christmas Conference promoted this form of morality by adopting Wesley's General Rules and by adding its own condemnation of "Gossiping, Evil-Speaking, Tale-bearing" and "Love of the world."[2]

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1. *Minutes of Several Conversations between the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D., the Rev. Francis Asbury and Others, at a Conference, begun in Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, on Monday, the 27th. of December, in the Year 1784. Composing a Form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers and Other Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America* (Philadelphia: Cist, 1785), 4.
2. *Ibid.*, 6-7, 11, 26.

But the evidence is clear that the first preachers also believed that a social conscience accompanied a vital Christian faith and that responsible Christianity wrestled with social issues as well as with the conflicting impulses of the human heart. Hence, at the organizing conference they also spoke on social questions like slavery, "Smuggling, buying or selling uncustomed Goods," and "Bribery . . . for voting in any Election."[3] Thus, they laid the basis for a tradition of social concern in American Methodism.

The social problems with which Methodist preachers have been involved over the past two centuries have already been surveyed by denominational historians.[4] As new research is done on religion and social reform in America, a more comprehensive perspective on the complex relation of Methodism and society will be forthcoming. Contributing toward that end, this essay takes one perennial social issue—the racial problem—and offers a critical assessment of varied responses which preachers in the larger Methodist movement made to chattel slavery and racial caste in the antebellum era. In our time under the forms of black power and white backlash, urban riots and demands for reparations, the issue of race has posed new threats to the national community and new dilemmas for white and black Methodists. This analysis explores one angle in the historical background of our contemporary conflict by focusing on ways in which representative preachers interpreted racial relations in the nation and the church prior to the Civil War.

In 1769 when Wesley's preachers, Joseph Pilmoor and Richard Boardman, arrived in America, existing Methodist societies in New York and Maryland already had multiracial memberships. Negroes were often set apart in separate classes and meetings, however, as the new sect conformed to prevailing social distinctions. Nonetheless, the blacks responded enthusiastically to Methodist preaching so that by the end of the century they composed one fifth of the members in the societies.[5]

The real test of the racial policy of the new religious movement came over the issue of American slavery—the system of perpetual

3. *Ibid.*, 11.

4. See especially Richard M. Cameron, *Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective* (New York: Abingdon, 1961) and Wade Crawford Barclay, *Early American Methodism 1769-1844, Vol. II, To Reform the Nation, Part I of History of Methodist Missions* (New York: Board of Missions, 1950).

5. The Minutes for 1799 report 12,115 "coloured members" of the 61,351 Methodists. *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences annually held in America: From 1773-1813 Inclusive* (New York: Hitt & Ware, 1814), I, 226. See also Barclay, II, 52-55.

bondage to which white men subjected African captives and their descendants. The first official response of the Methodist preachers in 1780 revealed that some laymen and clergymen were slaveholders. A conference held in Baltimore condemned lay members "who keep slaves" but only advised emancipation instead of adopting a mandatory rule against all enslavement. Preachers were required to end their ties with slavery, but the problem of enforcing a strict standard, particularly among the local preachers, was difficult.[6] At the regular conference of 1784 the rule requiring ministers to free their slaves was restricted to "the states where the laws admit it." The preachers officially opposed slavery as "contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature . . . , to the dictates of conscience and pure religion," and to the Golden Rule, but their efforts to set and keep an antislavery norm for the church were subverted by concessions to churchmen who owned slaves.[7]

The Christmas Conference marked the first comprehensive effort to deal with the presence of slavery in the church. There the preachers provided for the expulsion of all Methodists who bought or sold slaves. They set a new standard for membership, requiring compliance with a program for gradual emancipation of all bondsmen owned by Methodists.[8] Six months later, reaction against this antislavery stance, particularly in the South, forced suspension of the new legislation, except for the prohibition against buying or selling which had become one of the General Rules. Eleven years passed before another attempt was sponsored to set aright the church's position on slavery.

Meanwhile the practice of making racial distinctions within Methodism produced quasi-independent black churches in Philadelphia in 1787 and in New York in 1796. Responding to the growing numbers of Negroes who attended services, white leaders at St. George's Church in Philadelphia rearranged seating on the main floor to separate the races. Later all blacks were consigned to the gallery. At a Sunday service in November, 1787, Richard Allen (an ex-slave turned preacher), Absalom Jones (also a local preacher) and a layman sat in "white" pews only to be forcibly removed from their knees during the opening prayer. The three men, joined by other Negroes, immediately walked out of the church and later formed a

6. See the Minutes for 1780 and 1783 in *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences*, I, 25-26, 41.
7. Minutes for 1784 in *ibid.*, 46-47.
8. *Minutes of Several Conversations*, 15-17.

new Methodist organization solely for blacks. In 1816 the congregation aligned itself with other Negro Methodist societies to form the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church.[9] The Zion Society's secession from the John Street Church in New York was also partly motivated by Negro reaction to caste distinctions. Again, three local preachers and an exhorter were among those who formed a new society for Negro Methodists. By 1821 a second black denomination, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (A.M.E. Zion) Church, had grown out of this movement.[10]

Another concerted drive to expel slavery from the M. E. Church came at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1794 and 1795 Bishop Francis Asbury urged southern preachers to sign covenants with him agreeing to disassociate themselves from slavery and seek its removal in church and state.[11] Preachers in the General Conference of 1796 followed Asbury's lead by resurrecting a program of gradual emancipation, which, though less strict than the plan of 1784, sought to put Methodist slave-holding on the road to extinction.[12]

Four years later as Asbury continued to push for a consistent antislavery standard, the General Conference approved a new sociopolitical strategy which directed annual conferences to draw up addresses to state legislatures asking for gradual emancipation.[13] Before this time individual preachers like Bishop Thomas Coke, Ezekiel Cooper, James O'Kelly, Allen and Asbury had tried to influence political decisions and public attitudes affecting slavery, but no national Methodist conference had ever formally advocated direct political action on the issue.[14] The new strategy was embodied in an

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9. Carter G. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington: Associated Publishers, 1945), 62-67. Allen was the first active A. M. E. bishop. See *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labors of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen, To Which Is Annexed the Rise and Progress of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Containing a Narrative of the Yellow Fever in the Year of Our Lord 1793. With an Address to the People of Color in the United States* (New York: Abingdon, 1960), 7-8, 24-25, 30-31, 35. Hereafter cited as *Autobiography*.

10. Woodson, 67-73. A similar development took place in 1805 when black members of the Methodist church in Wilmington, Delaware withdrew to form the Union Church of Africans. See Barclay, II, 59.

11. Elmer T. Clark, *et al.*, eds., *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury* (New York: Abingdon, 1958), II, 33; "1795 Articles of Agreement amongst the Preachers on Slavery," manuscript in the South Carolina Conference Papers, Wofford College Library. See also Barclay, II, 78-79.

12. *Journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1796-1836* (New York: Carlton & Phillips, 1855), I, 22-23.

13. *Ibid.*, 40-41. See Asbury's *Journal*, II, 105, 151, 156.

14. Barclay, II, 64, 68, 74. See O'Kelly, *Essay on Negro-Slavery* (Phila-

address from the General Conference of 1800, signed by three preachers (including Cooper) and the bishops and published for distribution to the annual conferences. The address attacked the institution of slavery both as a deprivation of the natural rights of man and from "the light of the Gospel." Its passage was the last positive antislavery action of a General Conference in the M. E. Church until 1864![15]

Strong opposition in the South and the failure of the annual conferences to carry out the new socio-political attack on slavery marked the general reaction to the Address of 1800. In alarm, the General Assembly of South Carolina enacted stringent laws to prohibit religious meetings among slaves except under closely supervised circumstances. Mobs in Charleston seized and burned copies of the address, manhandled one preacher, George Dougharty, whom they tried to drown under the town pump, and threatened John Harper, another preacher, with violence.[16] In the face of such reaction the preachers cancelled their campaign to petition state legislatures in behalf of legal emancipation. When the ministers gathered for the General Conference of 1804, the retreat from direct action against slavery was fully underway. The rules of the church were again altered to favor the interests of slaveholding. Preachers were asked to "admonish and exhort all slaves to render due obedience to the commands and interests of their respective masters." The rules on slave trading were made so permissive that they nearly contradicted the prohibition against buying and selling contained in the General Rules. The conference made the legislation requiring emancipation apply only as civil laws and "the circumstances of the case" admitted. As a final blow to a uniform ethic against slavery, the preachers approved publication of an expurgated edition of the Discipline without the section of slavery for use in conferences below Virginia.[17]

Four years later, the General Conference made still further concessions. No longer did regulations on slavery pertain to lay members of the church. All attempts to design programs of gradual

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delphia: Prichard & Hall, 1789); Samuel Drew, *The Life of the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D.* (New York: Soule & Mason, 1818), 133-139, 180-184; George A. Phoebus, ed., *Beams of Light on Early Methodism in America* (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1887), 316ff. for Cooper's work; Allen's *Autobiography*, 69-76.

15. *Journals of the General Conference*, I, 40-41.

16. Phoebus, ed., *Beams of Light on Early Methodism*, 328-334. Donald G. Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism: A Chapter in American Morality 1780-1845* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 19-20.

17. Journals of the General Conference, I, 44, 60. Copies of the two versions of the Discipline for 1804 are in the Rare Book Room of the Perkins Library, Duke University.

emancipation were given up, and annual conferences gained authority to legislate on slave trading. Moreover, the preachers decided to continue printing two editions of the Discipline.[18] Relevant opposition to slavery in the church had been effectively defeated. A year later, Asbury admitted as much when he mused in his journal that perhaps "an *amelioration* in the condition and treatment of slaves [would] have produced more practical good to the poor Africans than any attempt at their *emancipation*." He had decided that the salvation of the slave's soul was more important than his "personal liberty." If Methodist preachers were to have access to the slaves, Asbury reasoned, they would have to work within and at least not directly against the system.[19]

By 1816 Methodist accommodation to the institution of slavery had spawned a mood of surrender and futility. The committee of preachers who reported to the General Conference confessed that "little can be done to abolish a practice so contrary to the principles of moral justice." They regretted "that the evil appears to be past remedy." While they accused some Methodists of being too easily contented with laws "unfriendly to freedom," nevertheless, they argued that the General Conference had no power to change the civil code.[20]

At the end of the first half-century after Wesley's first official preachers came to America, a general pattern of accommodation to slavery and racial caste had been set in the Methodist movement. Occasionally, as vestiges of the antislavery spirit of the Revolutionary era, there were examples of voluntary manumission among Methodists which conflicted with the pattern. But the presence of slaveowners in the membership and ministry of the M. E. Church pointed up to failure to set and enforce an antislavery standard for all Methodists. Two Negro denominations testified to the inability of the societies to practice Christian equality among blacks and whites. The attempt to extirpate the evil of slavery as a social institution in American life had also been frustrated. In its place arose a humanitarian concern for the condition and welfare of the slaves but at the price of acquiescing and sanctioning the system.[21]

The shift in early Methodism from a challenge against the col-

18. *Ibid.*, I, 94.

19. See Asbury's *Journal*, II, 591.

20. *Journals of the General Conference*, I, 169-170.

21. See the writer's article, "Early Methodism and Slavery: The Roots of a Tradition," *The Drew Gateway*, XXXIV (1964), 150-165.

lective structure of slavery to a religious concern for slaves within the system laid the basis for a new understanding of Christian social responsibility. Methodists, North and South, divorced their Christion concern from the demands of justice which required that the institution of slavery be eliminated. The social philosophy which merged with this pattern of social concern was the individualism of the American revival movement. According to that tradition, social change and the solution to social problems depend upon the spiritual regeneration of individuals. Social evils are not overcome by reordering institutional structures but by changing individuals. At the General Conference of 1816 when the demise of antislavery was assured in the church, Bishop William M'Kendree articulated this social philosophy as he addressed the preachers on the mission of Methodism. "We believe God's design in raising up the preachers called Methodists in America, was," he stated, "to reform the continent *by* spreading scriptural holiness over these lands."[22] The bishop transformed the similar statement of the Christmas conference by merging the original two-fold purpose—"to reform the Continent, *and* to spread scriptural holiness over these lands"—to fit a religious orientation which increasingly cultivated private piety and morality but disavowed social and political responsibility.[23] The recovery of the earlier emphasis upon social reformation, as far as the racial problem was concerned, awaited the new antislavery impulse of the 1830's.

During the 1820's there were no frontal attacks against the institution of slavery by white preachers in the Methodist movement. The one exception was the action by clergy in the United Brethren in Christ—a denomination which was actually independent of mainline Methodism. In 1821 the ministers of the small German immigrant church prohibited slavery and demanded emancipation.[24] Among the large majority of Methodist preachers, however, other expressions of social concern replaced direct opposition to slavery. The dominant response built upon Methodism's antislavery failure. It was a conservative coalition of northern and southern preachers who coupled the social orientation of revivalism with a confident view that gradual social progress was inevitable in America. They

22. Robert Paine, *Life and Times of William M'Kendree, bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1893), 262. Emphasis added.

23. Barclay, II, 8.

24. John Lawrence, *History of the United Brethren in Christ* (Dayton: United Brethren Printing Establishment, 1861), II, 143-144.

discouraged all social radicalism which threatened orderly progress. Most bishops, editors, book and tract agents and leading preachers took the position that the evangelical success of Methodism vindicated their conservative social philosophy. The mission of the church was to preach the gospel and save souls. When that mission was fulfilled, in the providence of God, social problems would be solved.[25]

Applied to slavery, there were northern and southern versions of conservative social thought in Methodism. In the South beginning in the late twenties, the social concern of the preachers was manifested in the promotion of a more vigorous program for evangelizing slaves. Preaching to the slaves and their masters became the alternative to preaching against slavery. The most notable "apostle to the slaves" was a South Carolinian, William Capers, but there were other less well known preachers whose ministries were dedicated to Negro bondsmen. They endured ridicule as "nigger preachers" and sometimes risked their own health to carry the gospel to blacks on the rice and cotton plantations.[26]

From the first, the Methodist mission to the slaves functioned as a religious alternative to antislavery, but it was characterized by ambiguity. On the one hand, the missionaries insisted that Negroes, like other men, had immortal souls and that they deserved the right to religious teaching. This recognition of the humanity of the black man conflicted with the omnipresent system of bondage which turned persons into property. But the preachers generally held back from correlating the principle of equality implicit in their religious teaching with social realities. In order to have access to slaves, the Methodists had to assure the owners that their preaching did not promote social revolution and that they held an orthodox attitude toward the peculiar institution. As a result the missionaries mediated a truncated version of Christianity which emphasized "obedience to God, and faithfulness to the interest of [the slave's] earthly master."[27] The religion of the slaves lacked a Christian understanding of human freedom, equality and responsibility. By producing better

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25. The most discerning discussion of Methodist social thought in the national period is Milton Bryan Powell, "The Abolitionist Controversy in the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1840-1864," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1963, chs. I-IV.

26. Donald G. Mathews, "The Methodist Mission to the Slaves, 1829-1844," *Journal of American History*, LI (1965), 615, 618, 622-623.

27. The quotation is from a letter from a white missionary in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 12, 1836, as it appears in *ibid.*, 625.

disciplined and more docile slaves, the Christian faith, thus interpreted in sermons and special catechisms, served the interests of social control within the system of involuntary servitude.[28]

Capers and his colleagues were convinced that piety was more important than the abolition of slavery—that, to use Asbury's word, "amelioration" was more practical than emancipation. But for one factor, this response to slavery would have been only a moral paradox between "a noble effort to give men new life" and "an ignoble effort to keep other men in bondage."[29] The same men, however, who championed the cause of slave missions, including Capers, James O. Andrew and other leading southern preachers, were themselves slaveholders. According to the census of 1850, thirty-four of the forty-seven southern clergymen present at the General Conference of 1844 owned 422 slaves. The link between Methodist slaveholding preachers and the mission to the slaves produced not a paradox, but a moral contradiction.[30]

The enterprise of slave missions became the normative pattern of Christian social concern on racial matters in the antebellum South. Evangelization of the slaves was called "the crowning glory" of southern Methodism by Bishop Andrew whose possession of slaves touched off the sectional controversy in 1844 that led to the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (M. E. Church, South).[31] By the time of the Civil War statistics for the work showed how successful the venture had become. In 1861 when more than $86,000 was appropriated for the program, there were 329 slave missions served by 327 preachers in the southern church.[32]

As a final consequence, the conservative social philosophy of the southern preachers justified Methodism's failure to condemn the institution of slavery. In 1837-1838, preachers in the Georgia and

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28. See Joseph R. Washington, Jr., *Black Religion: The Negro and Christianity in the United States* (Boston: Beacon, 1964), 193-199. See Capers' *A Catechism for Little Children* (Charleston: Burges, 1833).

29. This is Mathew's conclusion in his "The Methodist Mission to the Slaves," 630-631.

30. Joseph Mitchell has done the creative statistical research on slaveholding interests in southern Methodism in his "Traveling Preacher and Settled Farmer," *Methodist History*, V (1967), 3-14. His findings confirm William Wightman's statement in the *Southern Christian Advocate* of July 26, 1844, that "the Methodist ministry in the Southern Conferences are for the most part slaveholders."

31. Alfred Mann Pierce, *Lest Faith Forget: The Story of Methodism in Georgia* (Atlanta: Georgia Methodist Information, 1951), 78-80.

32. W. P. Harrison, *The Gospel Among the Slaves* (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1893), 323, 325.

South Carolina Conferences, for example, declared that slavery was not "a moral evil" but merely "a social and domestic institution . . . with which, as Ministers of Christ, we have nothing to do, further than to ameliorate the condition of the slave, by endeavoring to import to him and his master, the benign influences of the religion of Christ, and aiding both on their way to heaven."[33] On these grounds, the M. E. Church, South gradually removed from its Discipline all legislation having to do with slavery. In 1858 when the preachers repealed the rule against buying and selling which had stood since 1784, the southern bishops rejoiced that the church "at last stands disentangled from this vexed and vexing question, erect upon a scriptural basis. . . . We have surrendered to Caesar the things that are his. . . ."[34]

The pattern of withdrawing from opposition to the institution of slavery in favor of evangelism of masters and slaves within the system culminated in Methodist sanction of human bondage. The preachers' moral admonitions were directed only to the mutual duties of owners and bondsmen.[35] Though the Methodist clergy never officially adopted positive proslavery legislation, as individuals, several eminent southern pastors, including Samuel Dunwody, William Wightman, William A. Smith, Augustus B. Longstreet, Capers and the Methodist Protestant leader, Alexander M'Caine contributed substantially to the southern claim that, as Smith stated in his lectures on the subject, "slavery, *per se*, is right."[36]

Social conservatism among northern Methodist preachers did not differ significantly in rationale from the southern response to slavery. Most northern clergymen uncritically supported the church's

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33. *Southern Christian Advocate*, January 5, January 26, 1838.

34. *Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, XII (1858), 423.

35. Examples are Holland N. McTyeire in *Duties of Masters to Servants: Three Premium Essays* (Charleston: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1851) and *The Duties of Christian Masters* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1859); and William A. Smith, *Lectures on the Philosophy and Practice of Slavery, As Exhibited in the Institution of Domestic Slavery in the United States: With the Duties of Masters to Slaves* (Nashville: Stevenson & Owen, 1857), 276ff.

36. Smith, *Lectures*, 11. See also Dunwody, *Sermon Upon the Subject of Slavery* (Columbia: Wier, 1837); Longstreet, *Letters on the Epistle of Paul to Philemon, or the Connection of Apostolical Christianity with Slavery* (Charleston: Jenkins, 1845) and *A Voice from the South* (Baltimore: Western Continent Press, 1847); M'Caine, *Slavery Defended from Scripture against the Attacks of the Abolitionists* (Baltimore: Woody, 1842); Harmon L. Smith, "William Capers and William A. Smith: Neglected Advocates of the Pro-Slavery Moral Argument," *Methodist History*, III (1964), 23-32.

expanding mission to the slaves. Moreover, they enthusiastically seized upon the new scheme of African colonization as a way to deal with the problem posed by white prejudice against free Negroes.[37] Motivated partly by the Protestant missionary impulse of the period and partly by prejudice and fears of racial mixture, the colonization idea was, like the mission to the slaves, a contradiction. Clearly many Methodists hoped that through the program of the American Colonization Society (founded 1816) "civilization, science, and Christianity, [would] pour their blessings over a suffering and degraded continent," as Nathan Bangs expressed it in 1824.[38] But Methodist philanthropy was complicated by the belief that blacks and whites could not co-exist in the same society under conditions of freedom. Exportation of Negroes, the preachers reasoned, would circumvent racial strife, prevent amalgamation and end the embarrassment over the slaveowning reputation of democratic America.[39]

The response to slavery among conservative northern churchmen determined the denominational policy of the M. E. Church. Prior to the sectional division in 1844, northern and southern preachers united to crush antislavery sentiment in the councils of the church by yielding to the interests of slaveholding Methodists. At the General Conference of 1840, for example, the preachers approved a resolution declaring that "the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property . . . constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers." Answering the British Conference's fraternal address which had called for antislavery action, the bishops stated emphatically that the American preachers had no intention of adopting new rules on the subject. They asserted that it would be "a sore evil to divert Methodism from her proper work of '*spreading Scripture holiness over these lands.*' " The conference also advocated the work of the American Colonization Society and

37. D. D. Whedon, "An Address Delivered before the Middletown Colonization Society, at their Annual Meeting, July 4th, 1834," *Methodist Quarterly Review*, XVII (1835), 129-138; "African Colonization. Address Delivered in Zanesville, Ohio, at the Request of the Colonization Society, July 4, 1830," in *Works of Rev. Leonidas L. Hamline, D.D., Late one of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, ed., F. G. Hibbard (Cincinnati: Hitchcock & Walden, 1871), II, 239-270.

38. "Miscellaneous. American Colonization Society," *Methodist Quarterly Review*, VII (1824), 29-30. See also articles in XIV (1832), 313-334 and XVI (1834), 1-17. The best extensive treatment of Methodist colonization sentiment is Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, ch. IV.

39. For examples of these sentiments see the following articles in the *Methodist Quarterly Review*, IX (1826), 31-35, 178-185; XV (1833), 111-116, 344-357; XVI (1834), 353-359, 412-422.

passed a resolution prohibiting the reception of testimony in church trials from black members in states where Negroes were denied that privilege by law.[40]

Even after the secession of the southern conferences northern Methodists refused to declare all slaveholding sinful or to alter the denomination's ineffective antislavery legislation which had been basically unchanged since 1816. During the final decade before the Civil War northern preachers were increasingly divided over the presence of slaveholding ministers and members in border conferences. But the conservative majority won the crucial battles at the General Conferences of 1856 and 1860, justifying, according to apostolic practice, the inclusion of Christian slaveholders in the church.[41]

After 1845 however, Methodist preachers, even of conservative persuasion, had to come to grips with the reality of slavery and the sectional impasse which grew more critical each year. In the late forties Nathan Bangs turned his attention from theological and ecclesiastical controversy, missionary work, editing church periodicals and writing the history of American Methodism, to address the problem. On the grounds that the whole nation, North and South, was implicated in the system of slavery, he proposed a plan of compensated and gradual emancipation directed by the federal government. His argument, like other similar programs of compensation, was never seriously considered by most Americans. Their states' rights political philosophy and unwillingness to tax themselves to free southern slaves undercut any federal action on the issue. Nevertheless, Bangs' attempt stands out as one response which tried to provide, in the best of the conservative tradition, for orderly change

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40. *Journal of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Held in the City of Baltimore, 1840* (New York: Carlton & Phillips, 1856), 59-60, 134-137, 151-157, 159-160, 167-171.

41. Besides numerous articles in the church press, the following illustrate these developments: Gershom F. Cox, *Matter for the Times. Three Questions Answered. What Is Slavery? Were Slaveholders Members of the Apostolic Church? Shall the Church Adopt the Apostolic Standard of Discipline, or Make a New One?* (Boston: Magee, 1856); *Speech of Rev. Henry Slicer Delivered in the General Conference at Indianapolis, 28th May, 1856, on the Subject of the Proposed Change in the Methodist Discipline, Making Non-Slaveholding a Test or Condition of Membership in Said Church* (Washington: Polkinhorn, 1856); Abel Stevens, *An Appeal to the Methodist Episcopal Church Concerning What Its Next General Conference Should Do on the Question of Slavery* (New York: Trow, 1859). See also Powell, "The Abolitionist Controversy," ch. VI.

and rational solution to the problem of slavery.[42] Other moderately antislavery essays began to appear in the official church publications in the fifties, as Methodist conservatives, along with the rest of their fellow countrymen, were swept into the current of sectional polemics and forced to choose between opposition to and support of slavery.[43]

The one unequivocal response to slavery taken by a minority of Methodist preachers was the radical alternative of Christian abolitionism which cut across moral contradiction and compromise inherent in the conservative position. The fundamental argument of abolitionist churchmen was to define slavery as a sin *per se* regardless of circumstances.[44] Having adopted that principle, Methodist abolitionists struck at the foundation of the slave mission enterprise. They interpreted as irrelevant the social concern of southern preachers who sought to improve the relations of masters and slaves. The institution was wrong in principle, they argued, because, as Orange Scott, the leading Methodist abolitionist in the 1830's, put it, slavery "possesses not one redeeming quality."[45]

Christian abolitionists did not fail to allow, as some historians have wrongly charged, that southern slaveholders, as individuals, might be good, moral men. In fact, their unique ethical contribution was to recognize that good men, North and South, were the bulwarks of the system of slavery. They claimed that northern churchmen, who refused to condemn slaveholding as a sin in itself, and southern conservatives, whose Christian concern was directed toward reforming rather than eliminating the peculiar institution, lent their sanction to an immoral human relationship. Anticipating the social gospel later in the century Christian abolitionists expanded the dimensions of ethical responsibility beyond the boundaries of a private morality and diagnosed the corporate character of evil and the subtle ways that good men become implicated in social wrong.[46]

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42. *Emancipation; Its Necessity, and Means of Accomplishment: Calmly Submitted to the Citizens of the United States* (New York: Lane & Scott, 1849).

43. For several years prior to 1852, for example, the *Methodist Quarterly Review* published no articles on slavery, but see the *Review*, XXXIV (1852), 361-382; XXXIX (1857), 260-280, 437-464, 513-542, 634-644; XL (1858), 363-382.

44. See Clifford H. Johnson's "The American Missionary Association, 1846-1861: A Study in Christian Abolitionism," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1957, ch. I.

45. *Zion's Herald*, February 24, 1836, as quoted in Donald G. Mathews, "The Abolitionists on Slavery: The Critique Behind the Social Movement," *Journal of Southern History*, XXXIII (1967), 172.

46. For a very perceptive analysis of abolitionist social thought see Mathew's article, *ibid.*, 163-182.

Methodist abolitionism arose in the early 1830's as one phase of a general societal trend in the North. A decade later, most abolitionists in the M. E. Church withdrew because the conservative coalition in the denomination effectively defeated all antislavery reform in the General Conferences of 1836 and 1840. The seceders organized in 1843 the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America, a new denomination which explicitly prohibited fellowship with slaveholders and those who apologized for slavery. Led by outspoken preachers like Lucius C. Matlack, Luther Lee, Cyrus Prindle and Scott, the Wesleyans had despaired that the M. E. Church could be reformed from within.[47] On the other hand, they did not consider withdrawal from "pro-slavery Church relations" to be sufficient unless a new church was formed on the basis of Christian abolitionism, pledged to the extirpation of slavery from the church and the national life. The eighty Wesleyan preachers, who, with 6,000 laymen, were charter members of the new church thus disagreed with William Lloyd Garrison who demanded secession from all churches and non-participation in politics. The Wesleyans joined religious reformation to political action, and they became leaders in movements like the Liberty, Free Soil and Republican parties.[48]

As they had done before leaving the M. E. Church, the Wesleyan abolitionists united with other radical antislavery churchmen in interdenominational conventions to abolish bondage "on Christian principles and by Christian influences."[49] From the Wesleyan publishing house and independently the preachers issued essays, ser-

47. Scott, *The Grounds of Secession from the M. E. Church* (New York: Prindle, 1848); *Autobiography of the Rev. Luther Lee, D.D.* (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1882), 230-246; Matlack, *Narrative of the Anti-slavery Experience of a Minister in the Methodist E. Church, Who Was Twice Rejected by the Philadelphia Annual Conference, And Finally Deprived of License to Preach for Being an Abolitionist* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Thompson, 1845), 22-24.

48. Matlack, for example, was secretary of the Radical Political Abolitionist Convention in 1855. See *Proceedings of the Convention . . . Held at Syracuse, N. Y., June 26th, 27th, and 28th, 1855* (New York: Central Abolition Board, 1855); Matlack, *The History of American Slavery and Methodism* (New York: Matlack, 1849), 266-268; William Goodell, *Slavery and Anti-Slavery; A History of the Great Struggle in Both Hemispheres: with a View of the Slavery Question in the United States*, 3rd ed. (New York: Goodell, 1855), 541-555.

49. *The Declaration and Pledge against Slavery, Adopted by the Religious Anti-Slavery Convention, Held at the Marlboro Chapel, Boston, February 23, 1846* (Boston: Devereux & Seaman, 1846); *Minutes of the Christian Anti-Slavery Convention, Assembled April 17th-20th, 1850.* Cincinnati, Ohio (Cincinnati: Ben Franklin Book and Job Rooms, 1850); Goodell, pp. 488-489, 492.

mons and ethical treatises against slavery.[50] In their denominational paper the Wesleyans exposed slaveholding in other churches. One instance came in 1848 when *The True Wesleyan* accused United Brethren in Virginia of permitting slaveowners to remain members in good standing. Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner admitted that there were slaveholders among the Brethren, but he pointed out the difficulties of maintaining an abolitionist standard in the South. Of his fellow Virginians he could only express the hope that "those few isolated cases may yet see their way clear to emancipate those found in their possession."[51]

Gradually abolitionists among the United Brethren followed the example of the Wesleyans. At the General Conference of 1853 they commanded sufficient influence to have the church demand immediate emancipation or expulsion for "twelve cases of legal connection with slavery" among members in Virginia. Two outspoken antislavery preachers, David Edwards and John Lawrence, led the assault. In the church's magazine for children Edwards included something against slavery in every issue. His periodical, *Unity With God and Magazine of Sacred Literature*, also espoused "Immediate abolition of slavery," because "the holding of property in man," the prospectus read, "is sinful, necessarily sinful, under all possible and conceivable circumstances." Lawrence provided antislavery arguments for his fellow preachers, particularly in his book, *The Slavery Question*, which was in its fourth edition by 1857. He took a thoroughly Christian abolitionist viewpoint, requiring "no fellowship with slaveholders," damning the proslavery character of several of the American churches and explaining the political duties of Christians to abolish bondage throughout the whole world. "Individual and na-

50. Lee, *Slavery: A Sin Against God* (Syracuse: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1853); Lee, *Elements of Theology, or an Exposition of the Divine Origin, Doctrines, Morals and Institutions of Christianity* (New York: Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1856), 431-479; Lee, *Slavery Examined in the Light of the Bible* (Syracuse: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1855); Edward Smith, *An Inquiry into Scriptural and Ancient Servitude, in Which It Is Shown That Neither Was Chattel Slavery* (Mansfield, Ohio: Western Branch—Book Concern of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America, 1845); George May, *A Sermon on the Connection of the Church with Slavery* (Lowell, Mass.: Stevens, 1845). Cyrus Prindle, *Slavery Illegal. A Sermon, on the Occasion of the Annual Fast, April 12, 1850. Delivered in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Shelburne, Vt.* (Burlington: Tuttle & Stacy, 1850).

51. *The Religious Telescope*, April 5, 1848, as quoted in Dorothy M. Drain, "The United Brethren in Christ and the Slavery Issue," unpublished paper, University of Michigan, May, 1962 (Microfilm copy, E. U. B. Archives, Dayton, Ohio), 13.

tional repentance and reformation only can avert the terrible judgment of an offended God," Lawrence warned, because "God is on the side of the oppressed."[52]

During the final decade of the antebellum era a new generation of Christian abolitionists revived the battle against slavery in two other denominations within the larger Methodist movement. In 1857 Methodist Protestant antislavery men challenged the conservative sectional compromise which had prevailed in that church since its beginning in 1830. They organized a special convention to demand that the church take some antislavery action. In the circular calling for the meeting, two preachers, Ancel H. Bassett and Jonathan M. Flood, exposed "the gloomy record" of Methodist Protestantism on slavery and requested their fellow churchmen to find "some means of relieving [themselves] of a great reproach." A year later the convention reassembled to suspend relations with all "conferences and churches, within the Methodist Protestant Association, as practise or tolerate slaveholding and slave-trading, . . . until the evil of slavery complained of be removed." The delegates also reconstructed the constitution of the church by striking out the word "white" which had always excluded Negroes from official membership and by inserting a declaration of antislavery sentiments. Immediately, the Wesleyans, who had been absorbing Methodist Protestant abolitionists for more than a decade, opened fraternal relations with the new antislavery denomination.[53]

In the M. E. Church during the 1850's abolitionist preachers persistently denounced slavery but they did not persuade their fellow clergy to adopt an uncompromising antislavery rule for the church until 1864. In New York state William Hosmer, editor of the *Northern Christian Advocate*, and Elias Bowen, a presiding elder, led Methodist antislavery forces. Hosmer's stinging attacks cost him his editorial post in 1856, but he immediately inaugurated an inde-

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52. *The Slavery Question*, 4th ed. (Dayton: Conference Printing Establishment, 1857), 165, 217, 223; Drain, 16-17, 21; John H. Ness, Jr., *One Hundred Fifty Years. A History of Publishing in the Evangelical United Brethren Church* (Dayton: Board of Publication of the E. U. B. Church, 1966), 321, 336.

53. In 1846, for example, the entire Champlain Conference of 800 members went into the Wesleyan Church. Ancel H. Bassett, *A Concise History of the Methodist Protestant Church, from Its Origin*, 3rd ed. (Pittsburgh: McCracken, 1887), 184-194, 220-221, 226-228; Edward J. Drinkhouse, *History of Methodist Reform Synoptical of General Methodism 1703 to 1898 with Special and Comprehensive Reference to Its Most Salient Exhibition in the History of the Methodist Protestant Church* (Baltimore: Board of Publication of the Methodist Protestant Church, 1899), II, 348, 435-437.

pendent Methodist paper which promoted Christian abolitionism.[54] In 1859, Bowen published abolitionist views which he had preached for several years. A year later, after the M. E. General Conference failed to legislate slavery out of the church, several of his associates withdrew in protest and set up the Free Methodist Church on Christian abolitionist principles.[55] On the southern border other preachers risked their ecclesiastical standing by revealing the extent of slaveholding among ministers and members. In the Philadelphia Conference John D. Long, an ex-slaveholder who had become an abolitionist, was tried for attacking the ministerial character of some of his colleagues whose clandestine connections with slavery he had made public.[56]

In New England Methodism Gilbert Haven was the leading abolitionist. Throughout the pre-war decade he preached politically oriented sermons urging churchmen to Christian social responsibility which required, in his view, that the national government be rescued from the "slave power." Despite criticism for preaching on political questions, Haven interpreted from his pulpit each new development of the sectional conflict which touched on the slavery question.[57] He laid bare the moral complacency of political compromise disguised under appeals to "popular sovereignty." But Haven's abolitionist sermons were more than a religious sanction of the sectional battle. He understood that racial caste was "the cornerstone of American slavery," and that northern racism supported the bondage of black men in the South.[58] More explicitly than some

54. See L. C. Matlack, ed., *Proceedings and Debates of the M. E. General Conference Held in Indianapolis, Ind., 1856* (Syracuse: Matlack, 1856), Appendix, 1-21. Many of Hosmer's editorials ended up in two volumes, *The Higher Law, in its Relations to Civil Government: With Particular Reference to Slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law* (Auburn, N. Y.: Derby & Miller, 1852) and *Slavery and the Church* (Auburn, N. Y.: Moses, 1853).

55. Bowen, *Slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Auburn, N. Y.: Moses, 1859) and *History of the Origin of the Free Methodist Church* (Rochester: Roberts, 1871).

56. See his *Pictures of Slavery in Church and State* (Philadelphia: Long, 1857). Two other volumes relate to this controversy. See J. Mayland M'Carter, *Border Methodism and Border Slavery* (Philadelphia: Collins, 1858) and J. S. Lame, *Maryland Slavery and Maryland Chivalry* (Philadelphia: Collins, 1858).

57. For his sermons on the Fugitive Slave Law, the Kansas-Nebraska controversy, Preston Brooks' attack on Charles Sumner, John Brown's raid, and the election of Abraham Lincoln see *National Sermons. Sermons, Speeches and Letters on Slavery and Its War: From the Passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill to the Election of President Grant* (Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1869).

58. See especially his sermon on "caste" in *ibid.*, 123-152.

abolitionists, Haven articulated an equalitarian viewpoint which was expressed religiously because of "the foundation principle of humanity—the oneness in blood and destiny of the human race" and politically through the Declaration of Independence.[59]

One other distinctive pattern of Methodist social concern over the racial problem can be identified among Negro preachers. The story of black churchmen in the antebellum South has been largely obscured, so that the social response of those slaves who became local preachers and exhorters in Methodist churches can only be inferred. In most cases they demonstrated sufficient obedience and loyalty to their masters to be trusted not to foment rebellion, but it is not impossible that among black Methodists there were slave preachers who worked covertly to undermine the system of bondage. Certainly white South Carolinians linked the African Methodist congregation in Charleston to the Denmark Vesey insurrection in 1822. Later Negro preachers and exhorters were imprisoned for breaking the state's law prohibiting independent meetings among blacks which was passed in the wake of the Vesey affair. Civil suppression virtually destroyed, therefore, the A. M. E. organization for the remainder of the pre-Civil War period.[60]

Negro Methodist churchmen in the free North were naturally antislavery but there were fewer preachers involved directly in the abolitionist crusade than among black Baptist and Presbyterian clergymen. The energies of most Negro Methodists were employed in the successful operation of independent black organizations like the African Methodist denominations whose existence was an implicit protest against white racial attitudes.

The writings of Richard Allen and Daniel Coker against slavery and colonization early set a pattern of black religious protest against racism in America.[61] During the first decade of the new abolitionist

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59. *"Te Deum Laudamus." The Cause and the Consequence of the Election of Abraham Lincoln; A Thanksgiving Sermon Delivered in the Harvard St. M. E. Church, Cambridge, Sunday Evening, Nov. 11, 1860* (Boston: Hewes, 1860), 23. See also the writer's study, "Gilbert Haven, Racial Equalitarian," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1969, ch. I.

60. See Vincent Harding's excellent study, "Religion and Resistance among Antebellum Negroes, 1800-1860," in August Meier and E. M. Rudwick, eds., *The Making of Black America* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), I, 179-197 and U. B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (Baton Rouge, La.: L. S. U. Press, 1966), 420-421.

61. For Allen's antislavery and anti-colonization sentiments see Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States* (New York: Citadel Press, 1951), 70-71, 104-107. Coker's *A Dialogue Between a Virginian and an African Minister* (Baltimore, 1810) is discussed

thrust of the 1830's two important attacks on slavery and caste which came from black Methodist preachers deserve mention. In 1839 Daniel A. Payne, who had been forced to close his school for free Negroes in South Carolina four years earlier, delivered an impressive speech on slavery before the Franckean Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The recent graduate of Gettysburg Seminary argued that "*American Slavery brutalizes man—destroys his moral agency, and subverts the moral government of God.*" Previously, Payne had decided against becoming an abolitionist lecturer. Instead he turned to organizing a program of systematic education for Negro ministers in the North, particularly through the A. M. E. Church which he joined in 1841 and led as a bishop and educator for the next half-century.[62] His hatred of slavery, however, did not decrease nor his desire of freedom for his enslaved brothers in the South grow dim. Once he expressed his sentiments in a poem written in the pulpit of the Mother Bethel Church in Philadelphia.

> Here let the thunders of thy law resound,
> Its lightnings flash an omnipresent pain
> In tyrants' hearts—till ev'ry slave unbound
> Shall shout for joy; and crush th' oppressor's chain.
> O here let holy freedom speak aloud,
> And freemen plead the cause of freedom's God.[63]

A pastor in the A. M. E. Zion Church, Hosea Easton of Hartford, Connecticut, composed in 1837 one of the most remarkable analyses of the racial problem in America. His treatise dealt with the environmental effects of slavery upon the intellectual capacities of black men. First, he contrasted the culture of Negroes in ancient civilizations with the "intellectual and physical inferiority of the slave population" in America. "The slave system is an unnatural cause," he contended, "and has produced its unnatural effects, as displayed in the deformity of two and a half millions of beings, who have been under its soul-and-body-destroying influence, lineally, for near three hundred years. . . ."[64] Then Easton showed how the

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in Daniel A. Payne, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville: A. M. E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 90.

62. Douglas C. Stange, ed., "Document: Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne's Protestation of American Slavery," *Journal of Negro History*, v. 52 (1967), 59-62; Payne's *Recollections of Seventy Years* (Nashville: A. M. E. Sunday School Union, 1888), chs. IV-VII.

63. "A Sacred Ode," *African Methodist Episcopal Church Magazine*, I (May, 1842), 21-22.

64. *A Treatise on the Intellectual Character and the Civil and Political*

principle of slavery was "the true cause" of "the malignant prejudice of the whites against the blacks" in northern society, evidenced in restricted public accommodations, segregated education, political discrimination and "nigger pews" in white churches. Concluding his essay, Easton appealed to the conscience of white America in behalf of his own "colored people":

They ask priests and people to withhold no longer their inalienable rights to seek happiness in the sanctuary of God at the same time and place that other Americans seek happiness. They ask statesmen to open the way whereby they, in common with other Americans, may aspire to honor and worth as statesmen—to place their names with other Americans—subject to a draft as jurymen and other functionary appointments, according to their ability. They ask their white American brethren to think of them and treat them as American citizens, and neighbors, and as members of the same American family. They urge their claims in full assurance of their being founded in immutable justice. They ask them from a sense of patriotism . . . [and] from the conviction that God, the judge of all men, will avenge them of their wrongs, unless their claims are speedily granted.[65]

In their official capacities black Methodist preachers voiced their loudest protests against slavery and caste after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850. In 1854 A. M. E. ministers in New England resolved to "wage a life-long and sleepless warfare with the principles of slavery in all its varied forms," confident "in the promises of God to deliver the oppressed nations of earth from the thraldom of sin and slavery, and to establish righteousness and truth, life and liberty, to all the human race."[66] Two years later in an official address the A. M. E. bishops expressly noted that racial caste was "the dark spirit of slavery" in the North which denied "the doctrine of the unity of the human race" and declared "that the man of color is nothing more than the connecting link between the man and the brute."[67]

Ironically, however, even black Methodists were not immune from internal controversy and inconsistency over denominational policies on slavery and caste. In 1853 Bishop Payne stood firmly against discrimination toward a white woman who attended the Bethel

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Condition of the Colored People of the U. States; and the Prejudice Exercised Towards Them (Boston: Knapp, 1837), 8-20, 22, 24.

65. *Ibid.*, 27-36, 49-50.

66. Quoted in Payne's *History*, 307-308. Other examples of anticolonization, anticaste and antislavery action in A. M. E. conferences are given on pages 129-130, 203, 205, 237-239, 250-252, 258-259.

67. *Ibid.*, 329-330.

Church in Philadelphia. The next year the bishop refused to reappoint the pastor after he had expelled the woman on racial grounds. Payne charged that a minister "who would turn away from God's sanctuary any human being on account of color was not fit to have charge of a gang of dogs."[68] A more embarrassing situation developed at the A. M. E. General Conference of 1856 where unexpected testimony produced evidence of occasional examples of slaveholding among members of the black church. Following two days of vigorous debate the preachers called for an enforcement of existing legislation on the subject and rejected the claim that slavery in the apostolic church justified Christian slaveowning in America. They refused, however, to follow the abolitionist minority in the conference and adopt a more strongly worded rule against all ecclesiastical slaveholding.[69]

By the time of the Civil War slavery and racial caste had divided Methodist preachers white and black, North and South, abolitionist and conservative. There was no single pattern of social concern, therefore, but several types of response determined by racial identity and sectional loyalties as well as by Christian ideals. In a few instances Methodist preachers did transcend prevailing racial attitudes and customs. Christian abolitionists like Orange Scott, Gilbert Haven and John Lawrence consistently opposed those northerners who held proslavery sympathies and justified segregation and discrimination against free blacks. They disavowed both the narrowly individualistic ethic of many of their fellow churchmen and the secular perfectionism of abolitionists who opted out of the American political process and withdrew from all churches. Bishop Daniel Payne's stand against racism in the A. M. E. Church was an eloquent witness to Christian equality just as his protest against slavery was a poignant appeal to white churchmen in America. Even proslavery Methodists like William Capers, who insisted that chattel slaves were heirs of salvation and proper subjects of baptism and Christian instruction, stood against some fellow southerners who considered all Negroes as inferior beings below the status of man. The social witness of these prophetic individuals stood out from among their contemporaries and pointed the way to a transracial human community, the realization of which, thus far, has eluded the American people and all their churches.

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68. Payne's *Recollections*, 115-117.
69. Payne's *History*, 335-345.

The Methodist Preacher Today: "A New Church for a New World"

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(An abridgment of an address delivered by Bishop Goodson on 13 June, 1969, at a public rally in Knoxville, Tennessee, during the sessions of the Holston Annual Conference, on the general theme of the United Methodist Church for the quadrennium 1968-1972. Acknowledgments are made to the Rev. Eugene Kirk, who kindly made available the taped record of the address, and to Bishop Goodson, who has examined and approved the text.)

I want to begin with two texts. I think you can do a good sermon with one, but I think tonight I need two—and you can draw your own conclusions. In the New English Bible, in II Corinthians 5:17-18, it says, "When any one is united to Christ, there is a new world; the old order has gone, and a new order has already begun. From first to last this has been the work of God. He has reconciled us men to himself through Christ, and he has enlisted us in this service of reconciliation." The second text comes from Revelation 21:5, "He who sat on the throne said, Behold! I am making all things new!"

Opening New Doors

Quadrennial emphases are not new to the life of the Methodist Church, and as a background for what I want to say to you tonight about the current one, let me go back to an experience of thirty years ago when I was the assistant minister of the West Market Street Methodist Church in Greensboro, N. C. It was a large church where an unusually brilliant man was the pastor. I was sent to be, in a sense, his man Friday, but he had an infinitely higher conception of the multiple ministry than the man Friday concept, and out of his great and rich and mature soul there came into my young one some forms of richness which have been unparalleled in my life. We had a church with the Akron plan, and in the pastor's study there were

sliding doors into the wall through which you went into the prayer meeting room—that shows you how old the church was! But the doors were never opened. We had a fine woman working on the staff who sometimes seemed to be unhappy when everything was going all right. One day the minister wanted to go out of his study into the prayer meeting room and down into the educational building, and he pulled back those doors. She came out of the sanctuary about that time, saw them open, and called out in a frightened voice, "Doctor, don't open those doors!" He stood there in perfect amazement—but not for long, for he was never short for words. And he said, "Please tell me why." And she said, "Those doors have never been opened before." And then, I recorded on the side of my mind his words. He said, "My dear woman, a church that is afraid to open doors that have never been opened before isn't going to open much of anything else."

I think that's about what I came to say to you tonight. The church that is afraid to open new doors in the 20th century really doesn't have any significant thing to say in our generation. If all that we really have to say to this distracted, frustrated, and distraught kind of world is, "Don't open that door; it has never been opened before," then there aren't going to be very many people hanging around to find out what it is we've come to do. Bishop Arthur J. Moore, now almost eighty and running around over the Southland preaching, is still saying in a positive, though shaky voice, "If the only thing the Church has got to say in our generation is, 'Hold the fort!' it isn't going to be very long before there isn't any kind of a fort to hold."

Quadrennial Themes

Quadrennial themes are as old almost as the Methodist Church, and I've lived through a great many of them. The first one I remember was in 1944, when there was an ash heap of a world that had been torn asunder by the ravages of war. Against the brokenness of a society when men were trying to say something decent and the Church was trying to say a significant word, the General Conference came out with a slogan. We called it "The Crusade for Christ." Methodism was called upon to raise $25,000,000 to rebuild the broken cisterns of the houses of God around the world and to put the church together again. I remember they gave our little country church down in Anson County, N. C., a quota of $1500. That was pretty good, but being a Methodist I was supposed to think

it was too much, so I planned to see the presiding elder, who at that time was the man under whom I had served as associate pastor. I said, "You've given us too much of a quota." And he said, "You'd better go raise it, or I'll double it!" I knew him pretty well, and I went back and took a layman named Tom Little and we went throughout that whole rural county talking about the thrill of rebuilding a world of love that had been torn to pieces by man's bitterness to his fellow man. We not only raised our $25,000,00; we raised $28,000,000. Out of that first quadrennial interest came the Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief (MCOR)—an organization which I believe to be the most significant that American Protestantism contains, serving emergency situations all around the world. Also out of it came the Crusade Scholarship program, a program which will eventually alter and remake the intellectual climate of Africa and Asia.

From 1948-52 we were in a new one; we called it "Advance for Christ and the Church." We started talking about "Advance Specials" (this came out of the minds of Bishop Paul Kern and Bishop Costen J. Harrell). "One Great Hour of Sharing" was introduced to give individuals an opportunity to make personal investment of their means in Kingdom enterprises at home and abroad. From that day to this we have raised $133,000,000 for general and advance specials, $70,000,000 for conference and district specials. We live in the kind of a world that if tonight we were to withdraw our advance specials one-half of the World Division missionaries would have to be withdrawn. Pray God we never shall.

Then we came to the third theme. Do you remember? In 1952-56, we called it "For Christ and the Church." Our aim was to encourage local congregations to re-examine their spiritual and material potential for a more effective and a more extensive Christian witness through the stewardship of possessions, and through youth programs and church extension. Across America we began to strengthen our lines and to extend them, and to do something significant. We were marching under banners: first, "Crusade for Christ," then "Advance for Christ," now "Christ and the Church."

The fourth theme was in 1956-60, when we said, "We will continue to strengthen the local church with an emphasis upon Christian higher education." In that quadrennium and from that day until this we have been able to raise over and above our World Service apportionment more than $150,000,000 for Christian higher education.

The fifth theme, you remember, in 1960-64, was "Jesus Christ is Lord." And we started off across the world with a new emphasis and a new enthusiasm and a new theme. We said, "Jesus Christ is the Lord of our home," and "Jesus Christ is the Lord of our Life." He is the Lord of our mind, He is the Lord of our spirit, He is the Lord of our life. But it was the creed of the first Church. We put it up as a banner, and we moved out across the world.

Then in 1964-68 we came with a sixth quadrennial theme. We called it "One Witness in One World." There were a lot of people who didn't like it. They still liked a divided witness. We began to coin a new word—the "ecumenical movement." I received a letter from a man in a little Alabama community not very far from Birmingham—one of the nicer letters he had written to me. All he said was: "Dear Bishop, Whose idea was the ecumenical movement?" and he just signed under "Sincerely yours" his name. I wrote him back, "Dear John Doe, I didn't. Sincerely yours." But it wasn't the kind of answer that he really wanted, so he wrote another letter: "Dear Bishop, Who did? Sincerely yours." So I thought as long as we were "going steady" through the mail I ought to keep the thing going and I wrote him back the second time, "Dear Mr. Doe, If you've got a copy of the 17th chapter of John, why don't you read it yourself?" It wasn't my idea at all. I didn't think up "One Witness in One World." It was God's idea. And one night against the brokenness of the first century a man sat down and prayed, "That they all might be one." The great phenomenon of 20th century Christendom is that it is now beginning to discover that it can no longer afford the luxury of its own divisions; and the great phenomenon of our day is the emergence of the world Christian community. Some day, please God, we will quit arguing about the World Council of Churches and become involved in its creation. Thus we Methodists came in with this ecumenical thrust. We were one witness. And what was that witness? That Jesus Christ is the Lord of all life. We were living in one world. We didn't really believe we were in one world. I'm not dead sure that we believed it until on Christmas Eve last year three boys happened to be out on a lark, and from 287,000 miles in space they saw what we've been trying to be told all our days, that in the final analysis we're not nearly as big as we might think we are. And we were seen to be, in the words of the poet, as "riders together on the same speedway." And everywhere we went we told it, "One Witness in One World." We talked about personal evangelism and all the things that need

to be done in involving the world in our day in the "nitty-gritty" of its own life. When we came to the end of the quadrennium we had a feeling that whatever else we had done the pattern of American Methodism for the rest of your lifetime and mine had been set.

In 1968 we came with a new theme: "A New Church for a New World." What is this? Only another theme? Somehow or other I have the feeling that this isn't really what it means. If the only thing we are saying is that we have another theme, another banner, another something else under which to march, then may the good Lord forgive us for even being irreligious about the whole business.

A New Church

"A New Church." This has been your merging Annual Conference. You have brought together a community of people in the creation of something new. Across the centuries we have been talking about a new church. What are we talking about now? There was a day in England when Wesley read a letter from those Wesleyan preachers in America, saying, "We're running around over the country converting people, and we don't have any ordained men here to baptize them; and the Baptists and the Presbyterians are taking them in." (It's a practice that hasn't altogether been discontinued.) "We want you to send somebody over here to help us." In 1784 in Lovely Lane, in Baltimore, they got together, and out of the Lovely Lane Chapel there came a new church for the new world. Our fathers rocked along with it until about 1828. Then there were a group of people who believed that there was too much authority vested in the church, even in the bishops (and I believe that neither has that thought been dissipated altogether up till this moment). So they pulled out and said, "We don't really believe that you are giving laymen enough opportunity of expression"—and they were dead right about it. They went down into Baltimore and they organized themselves a new church, and they called it the Methodist Protestant Church, and now Methodism was divided into two sections. We rocked along with the two of us until 1844, or thereabouts, and we came across the greatest social crisis that America has known in the history of all republics. The General Conference looked with great disfavor upon a Georgia bishop, a native of Alabama, and it said, "You can't keep these slaves, even though you have inherited them, and want to free them." There was almost an excommunication, and these southerners pulled out and went on to Louisville where our fathers organized a new church, and called it the Methodist Episcopal

Church, South. And now there were three of us. The first thing that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, did, was to form a commission on Church Union, to find out how they might be able to get home again. For more than 70 years they met annually talking about how we might be able to put the family together again. I remember at the Uniting Conference in 1939 a little man named John M. Moore coming out to meet an even smaller man named James H. Straughn. They called together an even tinier man named Edwin Holt Hughes and they stood in the middle of a platform, put their arms about each other, and repeated the words of the founder of our church: "I declare to you that in all the world the Methodists are one people." It was a new church in a new kind of world.

But all the time there was a group of fellows whose background was as is mine, German and Dutch. They had been to Mr. Asbury away back yonder, more than 150 years ago, and they said to Francis Asbury, "We want to get into the Methodist movement, too." And Mr. Asbury said to them, "We don't have any German-speaking preachers and we can't do this." Reluctantly and sadly they walked away, Philip William Otterbein and Jacob Albright, and they organized themselves into two communions. They stayed apart, because of the language barrier, for almost a century, though they were Wesleyan in their background. They, too, had their problems and their own differences. They, too, longed for unity and dreamed of oneness. A quarter of a century ago followers of Otterbein and Albright united. It was a good union in Wesleyan tradition but it was an inadequate union. Conversations with the Methodist communion continued. Finally in Dallas, Texas, in the spring of 1968, the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist Church came together for merger to form the United Methodist Church. Today we have a new church for a new world.

A New World

What kind of a place is this new world? First, it is a *small world*. My generation grew up in a large world, except for a privileged few. The other continents of the world were out of our experience. Europe and Asia and Africa were names but not experiences. Today no place on earth is more than 50 hours from the local airport, and modern methods of communication have put a large world into an intimate relationship and we are all neighbors on Main Street. Dra-

matic examples of our nearness to any place can be multiplied without limit.

In the second place, it is a *hungry world.* We live in a world, dear friends, where 68% of the people went to bed hungry tonight, where every two minutes in Biafra a child starves to death, where every single night on this earth 12,000 adults die on the streets from hunger. A friend of mine came out of the hotel at Calcutta at three o'clock in the morning, going out to the airport. He was a little late and came running down the stone steps into the street and stepped over something to get in a cab to go on to the airport. Then he stopped and said, "What was that I stepped over?" He turned around and looked back, and there was a beautiful woman crouched down on the sidewalk, her knees pulled up almost under her chin. There was a little thing in its nakedness sucking from her breast, and couched in the warmth of her lap was another child about three years of age. The panting heart of the mother was losing her last breath. And that night we had a steak. Every night in Calcutta, as soon as the Superintendent of Sanitation comes to his office, they get the trucks and the bulldozers and go out and get the bodies of those who have starved on the streets. Last year they averaged 1122 a night.

It is a small world, and it is a hungry world. In addition to that, it is a *scared world*, and don't you ever doubt it. Bishop Kennedy went down one day to see his friend, Dr. Harold Urey, who is an eminent Professor of Physics in California. This is the man who won the Nobel prize for physics a few years ago. When Jerry got down there he went into the office and said to the secretary, "Where is Professor Urey?" She answered, "In the lab." So he walked down and found Dr. Urey, one of the world's greatest physicists, sitting down and working on some things. He walked up behind him, put his hand on his shoulder and asked, "How's it going?" And that brilliant physicist looked up at him and said, "We're scared to death." That afternoon Dean Rusk and Harold Wilson landed in Berlin for a meeting of the Prime Ministers. When they landed, Maurice de Courville, the Premier of France, was there to meet them, and when Dean Rusk came down the narrow plane steps to the ground and was met by the Premier of France he said, "Mr. Prime Minister, how is it going?" Maurice de Courville replied, "We've got our fingers crossed." We live in a scared world, scared to death; it has its fingers crossed. And it has a wall square down the middle of it. And if all the Church has to say is: "Don't open

that door; we have never done it before," God pity the Church!

Not only is it a small world, not only a hungry world, not only a scared world; it is a *dangerous world.* We live in a society that has enough explosive power at the moment to blow the human family to bits. It's all right that we have the bomb. It wasn't all right when Russia got it. It's horrible that China has it. We aren't scared of the bomb; we are only scared of the hands in which the bomb gets. What have you got to do to get the message through? The 21st century tonight is hanging upon the character of the 20th. There's your problem.

It is a dangerous world in what is happening to young people. I come in and go out of the community at all hours of the day and night. Mine is a crazy type of a job. I came into Birmingham not very long ago, about 3:30 in the morning. Downtown, in a distance of about four blocks, I counted 16 children under 15 years of age. We have three children, and that worried me. So I pulled the car up alongside the curb and called one of those dirty little things. I said, "Come here," and I rolled down the window of the car. He looked at me through eyes that were big and scared, and I said, "Son, what's your name?" He asked, "Who are you?" And I replied, "I am a Methodist preacher and I am on my way home. It's 3:30 in the morning and your mother is worrying about you." "She ain't never," was his response. "How old are you," I asked. He said, "Thirteen." When asked where he lived, he said, "No place." I said, "Your father—I know, for I am a father—is walking the floor tonight wondering where his boy is." "No, he ain't," he answered, "He's out with that woman." When I offered to take him home, he said, "Mister, I ain't going home." And I said, "You know, I'll make you another deal. My little boy is now a big boy, back in North Carolina in his own home. If you get in here and go home with me, I need a boy of thirteen, I'll take you." And he looked down at me through his big eyes, turned around and ran up an alley, into the night. And at Birmingham we decided to put together a night ministry for those 16 kids on the street. We have two preachers who go to work every night at 10 o'clock, and they are supposed to work till very late. You see, we decided to open some doors. If you don't open doors in this day, there isn't going to be anybody left that cares whether you open them or not.

The First Methodist Church in Birmingham is one of the most distinguished pulpits in the South. George R. Stuart was there—we got him from you; Bishop Arthur Moore was elected a bishop from

there; Bishop Paul Hardin was elected a bishop from there; Bishop Angie Smith spent his last year there on his way to Texas; it has been one of the great pulpits of southern Methodism. And if the newspaper advertisements are correct, one of the most questionable night spots in Birmingham is within a hundred yards of that pulpit. The community lives out in suburbia, where I live. But three nights a week, we have a team of laymen to work there, and one of the preachers goes down to that night spot and talks about Jesus Christ. Oh, some people in the church got real mad about it—you know, this isn't the way nice people are supposed to act. So they wanted to withhold World Service—I'm not quite sure I understand the connection, but Alabama is a bit like Tennessee: you don't always have to have a connection to do some of these fool things we do. So they said, "We just don't believe that this is where our preacher ought to be." *Where* do you think he ought to be? Where do you think John Wesley would have been? He heard the same things when he began a movement in the smelly slums of London—to open some doors, when the Church of England had said, "Don't open that door; it has never been opened before!" And if he hadn't opened them, we would never have gotten here. It reminds me of what somebody said when they were going to put a cross in the new church. Carlyle Marney said they were building a new church, and they wanted to put a cross over the altar and somebody said, "My God! Spill all that blood on our new rug!" So we had better not open these doors. We are going to get into trouble.

It's a dangerous world, but it's an *exciting world*. And if you are looking for somebody to come tell you that the Church has about had it, you have got your wrong boy! In all the years I have known the Methodist Church, and I've been a member of it for 52 years, this is the finest chance it has had to be the church. It has a chance to open more doors than any other ecclesiastical organization on earth. If the only thing we can do in the 20th century is argue about the literal interpretation of the Scriptures, God help us! You've got a world on fire, you've got a world hungry, and scared, and upset, and disillusioned. God is looking around to find somebody to be the agent of reconciliation in a world that is coming apart at the seams. And in the middle of that crazy sort of a world Methodism has the boldness to stand and say, "Here am I. Send me."

The Service of Reconciliation

A new church; a new world. But it has to be more than this. It

has to be a new person, in the new church, in the new world. What does he have to have? Two or three things. He has to be more compassionate than he has ever been in his life. He has to be more understanding than he has ever been in his life. He has to be more conscious of the ills and the hurts and the anxieties of men than he has ever been before in his life. He has to be more dedicated than he has ever been before in his life. He has to be more committed than he has ever been before in his life. And if somebody doesn't rise up in the middle of the 20th century America and say to the great dispossessed community of America that we *care*, that we want to do something about it because Christ wanted to do something about it, and if the church doesn't rise up and say this NOW, then five years from now it is going to be too late.

At the height of the racial strife in Alabama, when my mail was averaging about a thousand letters a day, and 900 of them were the sort of letters that should have been investigated, I guess, one night I received a call—about midnight—when I was weary and tired. I had been through this thing for weeks and weeks and weeks, but I got out of bed and went to the phone. On the other end of the line the voice said, "This you, Bishop Goodson?" And I answered, "Yes." He said, "I just wanted to call and say one thing." I said, "What is it?" He said, "I just wanted to call and say that I care."

"I care." What is the Fund for Reconciliation? It is the Methodist Church calling out to the ghetto, it is the Methodist Church calling out to the world parish, it is the Methodist Church calling out to America, "I care." A real crisis exists in America. I know the urban crisis, but there is a growing crisis in the rural church, and in the Methodism of the South, that can break us if we don't do something about it. And the thing I see in the Fund for Reconciliation is the honorable voice of the Methodist Church calling out to a distressed world and saying, "I care; and because I care, I'm going to do something about it." When the General Conference introduced the Fund for Reconciliation, an official of one of the largest churches in the South went to the preacher and said, "Don't you use that word 'reconciliation' again in this pulpit. Where did you get it?" The preacher replied: "It belongs to Jesus; he used it first." Paul Tillich said that the great sin, the great pain, the great sickness of the 20th century is *brokenness*. Reconciliation is a healing of the brokenness. The Fund for Reconciliation isn't a racial fund; it is a fund having to do with broken relationships among people, the rich and the poor, the

black and the white, the city dweller and the man who lives in suburbia.

I have heard that when Carl Sandburg came to the end of his life, the editor of a Richmond paper wanted some last words from him before he died, so he went to Hendersonville. They talked briefly and finally the editor said, "Mr. Sandburg, I have only one more question. What is the saddest word in the English language?" And Carl Sandburg answered, "The saddest word in the English language is 'excluded.'" Left out! Nobody cares!

I want the Methodist Church in the new world to care, to get on with its true business. What are your projects? You can trust your committee to work out your projects. I wish you could have been in one of mine not long ago. We went into an inner city mission in Mobile, Alabama, on a Saturday night, at about 11 o'clock. There was a group of kids in what they called a "halfway house." They were playing pool. When they were told that this was the bishop, they couldn't have been less impressed. That shows you how dumb they were, you know! So they looked up at my wife and said, "Can you shoot pool?" Horrible question to ask the bishop's wife! Except that we happen to have a pool table in our basement. That's an awful confession. She said, "Yes, I can shoot pool." And she scared them when she held the cue stick all right. And then she scared herself when she got the ball in the pocket. Well, I left her shooting pool with that little boy. At five minutes to twelve, we closed the thing and everybody went home. Then when our people opened it up on Monday morning the stuff had been stolen. So we went down and bought a whole new set. And the kids came and played with it. The same little boy came back the next Saturday night. And that Monday morning all the stuff had been stolen. So we bought some more, and opened the place up again. And Saturday night we closed it up, and Monday morning for the third straight time everything had been stolen. And for the fourth time we went back. By this time the owner of the pool hall thought that the Methodist Church was probably the best customer he had in Alabama. We went back and bought some more, and we opened it up a fifth Monday morning, and it was there. Nobody had stolen it. And I said to the preacher, Fred Toland, "How do you account for it?" "Oh, well," he said, "You know the strangest thing happened over the week-end. We knew who was stealing. On Sunday morning as we gathered together across the street for Sunday School, we looked out in the yard, and that kid was standing there." He continued, "I went out and

said good morning to him." He said, "Mr. Toland, would it be all right if I came in?" Would you have said to Mr. Toland, "Don't open that door; it has never been opened before?"

We have a place in Pensacola where I was three or four weeks ago on Saturday night. We call it "The Establishment." It used to be a beerhall in that end of Pensacola and they abandoned the thing because they got tired of it being raided. We rented it and have a boy down there named Carl Carnley who graduated from Boston School of Theology. Carl worked his way through Boston in the inner city and he came down to Pensacola and took charge of the beerhall, and put a sign on the front of it, calling it "The Establishment." They asked me if I wanted to go to The Establishment, and I did, so we went. It's right across the street from the University of West Florida. When we went in, about 100 college students were sitting around the tables and on the floor. There were three kids up front playing guitars, called the Joe Jackson Trio. I was sitting there drinking some hot cider with the kids and in a little while Joe Jackson said, "I understand that *the Establishment* has come into The Establishment and we want to play a hymn for him." They began to play and sing, "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound." Long hair, sure! They played it, not like I would play it; sang it, not like I would sing it. But when it was all over with, I went up and asked them to come to the Annual Conference and play it all over again, every day. Should I say to them, "Don't open those doors; they've never been opened before?"

So the General Conference pledged $500,000 for the Fund for Reconciliation, and the bishops pledged $100,000 for the Fund. The other day the First Methodist Church in Birmingham brought their first pledge card; it was for $11,000. And should I have said, "Take it back; don't open those doors; they have never been opened before?" Well, I heard somebody say, "Behold, I am making—(not 'I have made')—I am making all things new." So tonight we are going to make our pledges here.

I fly in and out of Birmingham a lot. Birmingham, Alabama, at night is the most beautiful city in America. When you are flying into it, it is as if you were flying into heaven. The open face furnaces belching fire to the sky, and the lights that are flickering—a magic city, indeed. Well, one night about a couple of years ago I was taking the midnight plane from Mobile to Birmingham. When we went down the runway I looked around and there wasn't a living soul in the airplane but me. It is the first time Eastern ever ran a flight just

for me! There were two or three stewardesses on it and one of them said to me, "There isn't any one on but you." I said, "The pilot's on, isn't he?"—I wanted to get that thing straight. "Yes," they answered, "he's here." Then I said, "I'll tell you what we'll do. Let's eat up everything that's left." So they went up and got all the Coca-colas and Tab and the sandwiches and came back. We spread them out, and those three stewardesses and I had a time; we cleaned the thing up, too. In a little bit one girl said, "We've got to get ready to go into Birmingham." And I said, "All right." So they went away. In a few minutes one of them came back and said to me, "The captain wondered if you wouldn't like to come up and stand in the cabin door as we go into Birmingham." She said, "You can't get up there with him, but there's a little thing you pull out, and you can sit there. So I went to the door, and pulled that little thing out of the side, and I sat down on it, and said, "I don't see Birmingham," and she said, "It's over yonder against the dark." And I just sat there while we were flying into the dark. And I kept saying to the captain, "Where is it?" He said, "It's against the darkness." And in five minutes, against the darkness, I saw the emerging glare of the city. And I said, "Captain, I'm a Christian. And we are flying against the darkness, beginning to see the light. Would it be all right if I quoted a little Scripture?" He said, "I'm a Christian, too, Bishop." So I quoted what came to my mind: "And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." And I saw the holy city emerging out of the darkness, because the church cared. And I said, "Hallelujah! The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." And I heard Him say, "I am making all things new." And He never said a word about not opening new doors. And He never will. Amen.

The Journal of Joseph Pilmore, Methodist Itinerant, for the years August 1, 1769 to January 2, 1774. Edited by Frederick E. Maser and Howard T. Maag. Philadelphia, Message Publishing Co. for the Historical Society of the Philadelphia Conference of the United Methodist Church. 262 pp. (Obtainable from the Historical Society at 326 New Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106, price $5.00 in hard covers, $2.00 paper.)

This long-awaited volume was published October 24th, 1969, at a Bicentennial Banquet commemorating the arrival at Gloucester Point, New Jersey, of the first two Methodist itinerant preachers sent by Wesley to America—Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmore. On Saturday, October 25th, in connection with the same celebrations, a commemorative monument was unveiled at Gloucester Point.

As Dr. Maser points out in his preface, Joseph Pilmore has seldom been accorded his rightful place in the story of early American Methodism. Richard Boardman was in charge of the tiny but momentous missionary expedition, both men were worthy samples of Wesley's younger lay itinerants, but Pilmore was the better educated and the more able of the two. One reason for Methodist neglect of Pilmore is furnished by the circumstances of his subsequent ministry. He left America in 1774 not only because of the threatening war but as the victim of a whispering campaign implying with insufficient justification that he was "soft" on Methodist discipline. Returning to England he was stationed in British circuits, and then in 1784 passed over (along with other senior preachers) when Wesley listed one hundred men to constitute the legal conference nominated to assume control of Methodism after his death. It is likely that this had much to do with his decision to leave British Methodism and return to his beloved Philadelphia, where in November 1785 he was ordained by Bishop Samuel Seabury a deacon and priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He remained in close and friendly touch, however, with Charles Wesley (until his death in 1788) and with the local Methodists in Philadelphia, where he was buried in 1825 at the age of 85. Nevertheless Methodists (in common with those of other denominations) have remained a little suspicious of any man who left their own fold, even though it was for John Wesley's own Anglican church.

Another reason why justice has not been done to Pilmore was the comparative difficulty of securing access to his manuscript journal, and even then of having to wander unaided through hundreds of pages of material fascinating in itself, but possibly not fully related to the main subject of the inquirer's research.

Now both these obstacles have been removed. The journal itself is available at an extremely attractive price, enriched by many explanatory notes by Dr. Maser and Mr. Maag, and with an index of the multitude of persons and places mentioned by Pilmore. (A handful of subjects are also noted in the index, but in general this much more complex task of the index-maker has not been attempted.)

This manuscript journal covers only a brief chapter in the life both of Pilmore himself and of early American Methodism, but it is a formative and most important one. It contains many sidelights on the life of New York and Philadelphia and of their immediate surroundings in the co-

lonial period, and over sixty pages describe Pilmore's itinerant ministry (stretching from the summer of 1772 to that of 1773) in Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. More important still are the glimpses of persons and events both important and incidental in the life of early American Methodism. For most of the period this journal is unique, and it serves both as a supplement and a corrective where it overlaps the later and better known *Journal* of Francis Asbury, and the still later journal of Thomas Rankin.

The volume contains a biographical sketch of Pilmore by Dr. Frank Bateman Stanger, the President of Asbury Theological Seminary, whose unpublished doctoral dissertation was prepared for Temple University, Philadelphia, on this subject. As Dr. Stanger points out, in those days when English spelling was even more fluid than now, Pilmore's name appeared in several different forms, even from his own pen, including the well known "Pilmoor," which some may still prefer. A copy of Pilmore's will is added, transcribed by Dr. Harold C. Koch, and the illustrations include a facsimile page from the manuscript journal and maps of Pilmore's travels.

Dr. Maser and his colleagues in the Historical Society of the Philadelphia Conference have placed all students of Methodist history greatly in their debt, and those readers who are more interested in recapturing the life of two hundred years ago or in the perennial foibles and fancies of human nature will also find here much to fascinate them.

—Frank Baker