

RESTORING THE REFORMATION: BRITISH EVANGELICALISM
AND THE 'REVEIL' AT GENEVA 1816-1849

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF EDINBURGH IN CANDIDACY
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

SEPTEMBER, 1991



UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

ABSTRACT OF THESIS (Regulation 7.9)

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Address:

Degree: PhD.

Date: September, 1991

Title of Thesis: Restoring the Reformation; British Evangelicalism and the 'Réveil' at Geneva 1816-1849.

No. of words in the main text of Thesis: 100,000

The foreign missionary impetus generated by Britain's eighteenth century Evangelical Revival included a concern for Francophone Europe. Seeds of this concern had been sown by the influx to Britain of Huguenot refugees after 1685, royalist sympathizers after 1789 and prisoners captured in conflicts with Napoleonic France. British supporters of agencies for Gospel extension, whether missionary, tract or Bible societies, viewed Francophone Europe as blighted successively by political absolutism, Enlightenment scepticism and Revolutionary upheaval. Viewing its indigenous Christianity as downtrodden and largely nominal, they embarked on schemes to renovate Francophone Christianity.

In these initiatives, some British persons and agencies mistakenly proceeded on the assumption that their own efforts were the solitary reliable efforts underway in pursuit of evangelical renewal. In fact, a considerable segment of Francophone Protestantism, aided by Pietism and Moravianism, had retained a vital Christianity; spiritual awakening was in progress in advance of any British initiatives. The failure of some British individuals and agencies to accept this reality ensured that a substantial portion of their endeavour would tend to sectarianism.

While the outflow of British aid to Francophone Christianity in the period 1816-1849 was massive, British Christianity itself received the impress of a renewed Francophone Protestantism. Preachers, dogmaticians and historians from within France and Switzerland became highly influential voices in Britain's Victorian era.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....1

Chapter

I. THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL IN RETROSPECT.....4

English Religion in Decline
Sources of the Evangelical Revival
Calvinism and the Evangelical Revival
The Transmission of the Evangelical Impulse
Scotland and the Evangelical Revival
Pan-Evangelicalism in England and Scotland
The Perceived Dangers of Evangelical Dissent
Divergent Outlooks on the Christian Future

II. DECLINE AND RESURGENCE IN FRENCH-SPEAKING
PROTESTANTISM 1685-1815..... 79

Francophone Protestantism 1685-1815
British Interest in French-Speaking Europe Before
and after 1789
Robert Haldane's Individualistic French Mission;
1816-1819

III. GENEVA'S 'REVEIL' AND THE AWAKENING OF FRENCH
EUROPE.....170

Geneva's Position of Precedence
Events in Geneva 1816-1831
Events in Geneva 1831-1849
Geneva's 'Réveil' Crosses Borders
The 'Réveil' and Theology

IV. BRITISH RESPONSE TO THE 'REVEIL'.....273

The Formation of a British Outlook on the
'Réveil'
The Rise and Fall of the Continental Society
Britain's Churches Respond to the 'Reveil'

V. GENEVA AND EARLY 19TH CENTURY BRITAIN.....367

The Peculiar Veneration of Geneva
Genevan Evangelism in Britain
Genevan Theology in Britain
Geneva and Evangelical Ecumenism

CONCLUSION.....414

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....417

INTRODUCTION

Britain's ecclesiastical relations with the Continent in the first half of the nineteenth century constitute a subject which has been little explored. Yet this was a period when the initiatives of British Christianity in Europe were numerous and powerful. By contrast, such relations in the Reformation and post-Reformation era continue to be the subject of fruitful study.¹

As to the nineteenth century, we have been furnished to date mainly with the histories of major Christian institutions, such as the British and Foreign Bible Society, which were active in Europe (among other places) in the period.² General surveys of the period have been far too broad to be truly helpful.³ There has also been a persistent tendency to treat British Christians, active in Europe in this half-century, as so many "great men" of

¹So, for instance, the volume edited by Derek Baker, Reform and Reformation: England and the Continent 1500-1750, Studies in Church History, Subsidia 2, (Oxford, 1979). Also Menna Prestwich, ed. International Calvinism 1541-1715. (Oxford, 1985).

²e.g. William Canton, History of the British and Foreign Bible Society. (London, 1904). William Jones, Jubilee Memorial of the Religious Tract Society 1799-1849. (London, 1849).

³H.M. Waddams, "The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries", in C.R. Dodwell, ed. The English Church and the Continent, (London, 1959), pp. 95-117. Max Warren, The Missionary Movement from Britain in Modern History, (London, 1965).

history; their personal activity on the Continent is implied to have provided the mainspring for considerable subsequent development.⁴ Writers who have approached this subject from a strictly nationalistic perspective have in effect also pursued the "great man" approach, but emphasized the aggregate influence of persons of a single nation upon Continental Christianity.⁵

All of this is due for review. Britain's position in the world of the early nineteenth century both facilitated such bold initiatives in Continental Europe (whether institutional or personal) and gave rise to the somewhat ethnocentric records of them passed down to us. The latter have proved very potent in the shaping of ideas about Europe in the English-speaking Christian Church even in the present era. Yet, as these lines are

⁴The principle is illustrated supremely by the biographer of Robert Haldane, active in French Europe 1816-1819. See Alexander Haldane, The Lives of Robert Haldane of Airthrey and of his brother, James Alexander Haldane. (Edinburgh, 1855). The assertion of pivotal influence has been taken up in such works as A.L. Drummond, "Robert Haldane at Geneva", Records of the Scottish Church History Society, IX (1947), pp. 69-82, John T. McNeill, The History and Character of Calvinism, (New York, 1954), p. 369 and James H. Nichols, History of Christianity 1650-1950, (New York, 1956), p.140. Recently the focus has been turned on this solitary individual once more; cf. Deryck Lovegrove, "The Voice of Reproach and Outrage; The Impact of Robert Haldane on French-Speaking Protestantism", in D.W.D. Shaw, ed. In Divers Manners, (St. Andrews, 1990), pp. 74-84.

⁵e.g. Henry M. Cowan, The Influence of the Scottish Church in Christendom, (London, 1896). See for example pages 128,129. A.L. Drummond, The Kirk and the Continent, (Edinburgh, 1956). See for example pages 180,203.

written, Britain's role in Europe, not as great power but as member state, is very much a matter of discussion. The British missionary movement originating in the nineteenth century surveyed the needs of Europe with those of China, Africa and the south Pacific; that movement is now much reduced.

Not only has the world order changed in the last one hundred and fifty years, but thoughts about the expansion of Christianity. It has become common to appraise whether missionary enterprise has shown sufficient respect to local culture and custom and to ask to what extent Christian expansion has followed on the heels of military and economic initiative. Were the initiatives of British Christianity in nineteenth-century Europe simply part of a current British cultural ascendancy? Was the British Christian estimate of European Christianity at the time of this expansion just and fair? And was British Christianity a purely "active" agent in Europe in this era, or was there a reciprocity by which European Christianity was also active in Britain?

The British involvement in the Francophone religious awakening ('le réveil') emanating from Geneva after 1816 provides an instance of Christian initiative awaiting appraisal along such lines. The natural vantage point from which to begin a survey of this era is that of Britain's eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival. To this we now turn.

CHAPTER ONE

THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL IN RETROSPECT

Edward Bickersteth (1786-1850), Anglican rector of Watton, Hertfordshire and William Jay (1764-1853), minister of Argyle Chapel, Bath were virtual contemporaries and had many things in common.¹ Both had entered the Christian ministry without a University education, both had gained great renown as preachers and devotional authors, both were indefatigable advocates of Protestant foreign missions (the Church Missionary Society and London Missionary Society respectively) and both were exponents of the evangelical Calvinism which had been the underpinning of the Evangelical Revival. Further, both were men of pan-Protestant sympathies; Bickersteth poured his final years into the formation of the Evangelical Alliance while Jay recalled in his old age that he had long regarded the Anglican periodical, ^{Christian} the Observer, as part of his standard reading. Yet for all this, Bickersteth and Jay could hardly have differed more in their estimations of where British Protestantism stood as they surveyed it late in their lives.

Bickersteth, notwithstanding the insatiable public demand for his devotional writings and collections of hymnody and irrespective of the dramatic advance of his

¹T.R. Birks, Memoir of Edward Bickersteth, 2 vols. (London, 1851). William Jay, Autobiography, (London, 1854).

beloved C.M.S., could still claim in 1836:

even in Great Britain, while the confessions of faith are retained, there has been a grievous departure from those confessions and we have to mourn in all our churches that the great mass have the form of godliness but are denying the power... On the Continent, the true Protestant faith, whether in Lutheran or Reformed Churches, has been almost uprooted.²

Jay on the other hand, reminiscing in the 1840's over a long, busy career, could opine:

I do not believe that in this earth misery preponderates over good. I have a better opinion of mankind than I had when I began my public life. I cannot ask "what is the cause that the former days were better than these?" The state of the world has been improved and is improving... We also rejoice in hope. We have many and express assurances in the Scriptures, which cannot be broken, of the general and universal spread and reign of Christianity.³

The fact that these two contemporaries, both sons of the Evangelical Revival, could differ so markedly about the religious prospects of Britain and the world surely demands explanation. Surely there must have existed a common appreciation that the United Kingdom's churches were aggregately stronger in the 1830's and 1840's than a century before? But in fact there was no such common perception.

The Anglican Establishment of Edward Bickersteth had reaped a very inequitable portion of the spiritual harvest taking place in the preceding decades precisely because it had never (with some local exceptions)

²Edward Bickersteth, The Religious State of Europe Considered, (Glasgow, 1836), p.6.

³Jay, Autobiography, p. 159.

embraced the Evangelical Revival. Conversely, Nonconformity (Independent, Baptist or Wesleyan) had proliferated dramatically in direct proportion to the adoption of methods aimed at the re-Christianization of Britain's masses. The methods adopted to this end had been itinerant preaching (often beyond the bounds of stated places of worship), a conscious directing of the Christian gospel to the burgeoning segments of society which had hitherto received scant notice, and the proclamation of an aggressively conversionist message emphasizing the need for personal repentance and faith in the Son of God.

How was it that the Evangelical Revival, which in its early days had had so much to do with Oxford college life, Establishment-approved praying societies in London, and the High Church piety of William Law,⁴ tended in the end to serve the interests not of the Establishment but of Nonconformity?

English Religion in Decline

It has become commonplace to view English religion, whether Anglican, Dissenting, or Catholic, as largely moribund in the decade of the 1730's. Political changes in the preceding decades had contributed materially to the decline. Dissent and Catholicism had suffered

⁴J.D. Walsh, "The Origins of the Evangelical Revival", in G.V. Bennett and J.D. Walsh, eds., Essays in Modern English Church History, (London, 1966), pp. 138 ff.

disintegration and disorientation after the restoration of Stuart rule in 1660. Charles II's earlier affectations of sympathy for Presbyterianism and assurances of forthcoming religious liberty showed themselves to be insincere when he consented to the 1662 Act of Uniformity. More than 2,000 ministers of the English Establishment resigned their livings rather than subscribe to the legislation.

This development meant that these numerous clergymen of Puritan outlook were thereafter looked upon as potentially seditious. Ministers and congregations which only a few years before had found themselves in the religious mainstream were now marginalized and rendered sectarian. English Catholics had still cherished the hope that royal policy might yet return England to Rome. They saw their final hopes dashed when James II fled to France in 1688, thus making way for the unambiguously Protestant William of Orange. Puritan Dissent and Catholic Recusancy therefore had come to share the fate of social marginalization; there had come to be a clear 'stigma' attached to the practice of religion outside the Establishment.⁵ The bearing of this stigma was a thing made all the more unpalatable in view of the grand aspirations both had so recently held.

The Church of England, which might have re-asserted

⁵A.D. Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England, (London, 1976), p.15.

itself as a pastoral and societal force after the Restoration, was inhibited from responding as it might by the endemic shortage of clergy and the malady of unevenly distributed church revenues. The latter two factors combined to make clerical pluralism and non-residency necessary evils. The removal of some 2,000 clergy had merely exacerbated an already tenuous situation.

The National Church entered the Restoration not only deficient in manpower, but deficient in facilities and accommodation as well. The deficiency was most apparent in the metropolis, where if the parish of St. Martin in the Fields may be taken as representative, there was in 1660 one place in the church pews for each hundred persons in the parish.⁶ Although by 1680 three subsidiary parishes had been formed in the area, what were these among some 40,000 inhabitants? There was in fact very little church-building in the eighteenth century Establishment despite that fact that the population of England and Wales expanded during the century from five and a half millions to nine millions.⁷

The chronic shortage of accommodation in the Establishment may not have been readily seen in its full proportions in the decades immediately following the Restoration period because of a temporary dramatic

⁶E.G. Rupp, Religion in England, (Oxford, 1986), p.41.

⁷T.S. Ashton, The Industrial Revolution 1760-1830, (Oxford, 1948), p.2.

upsurge in the activity of Nonconformists; these had stood apart since 1662. The latter development provided a convenient explanation for the observable decline in attendance at Establishment services. Indeed, following the provisions granted by the Toleration Act of 1689, Dissenters proceeded to obtain licenses for 2,356 places of worship in the capital before the year 1710.⁸ Yet the Establishment's fixation on the unsettling tendencies of urban Dissent only served to divert it from facing one harsh reality: the number of citizens attending Christian worship in any form was declining relative to a rising population.

The Establishment's capacity to adapt to the changing society was actually hampered by its state connection. When the minor alteration of parish boundaries required a parliamentary Act preceded by many preliminary rounds of consultation, there was clearly no manner by which the Establishment could expand promptly in response to the new social trends. The government's suspension of the Convocations of Canterbury and York in 1717 meant that even consultation by clergy within the Establishment was irreparably hampered.

Thus, upon entering the second quarter of the eighteenth century, English religion in general was characterized by numerical decline relative to the population. Over and above the socio-political and

⁸Rupp, Religion. p.55.

demographic factors alluded to, additional contributory causes for the decline included the increase in moral permissiveness in the decades following the Restoration, the unforeseen license given to absolute irreligion by the liberties granted under the Act of Toleration, and the effects of current rationalism and deism upon the Christian pulpit.⁹ What could not be denied was that Christian belief and practice were waning.

A study of attendance at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Oxfordshire parish churches during the period 1738-1810 has shown a steady decline of twenty-five percent to the year 1802 and only a slight recovery between 1802 and 1810.¹⁰ In rural areas the Established Church did tend to remain in a position of ascendancy and retain its hold on the community. This was often because of a tacit alliance between clergy, local landowners and magistracy, through which pressure was exerted on tenants and labourers to attend the parish church.¹¹ Very often, the clergyman himself was the local magistrate¹² but this combination of religious leadership and social control carried with it many negative implications in an era when

⁹T.S. Ashton, Industrial Revolution, p.3. Basil Williams, The Whig Supremacy, (Oxford, 1962), p. 133.

¹⁰ Gilbert, Religion and Society. p.27.

¹¹ Gilbert, *ibid.* p.12. Elie Halevy, A History of the English People in 1815, (London, 1924), p.392.

¹² Halevy, A History, p.41.

the lower classes were growing more assertive. The National Church was not alone in its growing inability to retain the allegiance of the lower orders. In An Inquiry Into the Reasons For the Decline In The Dissenting Interst (1731), the Dissenting leader, Philip Doddridge (1702-1751) pinpointed Nonconformity's lack of influence upon these same segments of the population as a major failing.

Sources of the Evangelical Revival

The Evangelical Revival, far from being a merely localized upsurge in religious interest, was international in scope. The dramatic response of churchgoers in Bristol and London (1737) and of the colliers at Kingswood (1739) to the preaching of George Whitefield (1714-1770) is usually reckoned as marking the genesis of the English awakening. But in fact these events had been preceded by similar developments in Wales some years earlier. These Welsh developments (of which Whitefield was fully cognizant) had themselves been anticipated by religious stirrings in the colony of New Jersey in 1719 and 1726¹³ and in Easter Ross, Scotland in the year 1724.¹⁴ The first "surprising conversions" of

¹³ Malcolm Watts, The Dissenters, (Oxford, 1978), p.394.

¹⁴ J.S. Wood, The Inextinguishable Blaze, (London, 1960), p.117. John MacInnes, The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland, (Aberdeen, 1951), pp. 156ff.

which the Massachusetts preacher, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) would write, had occurred in the period 1734-5. The English manifestations of this awakening did not emanate exclusively from the Oxford "Holy Club" circle which had provided an early link between John (1703-1791) and Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and Whitefield. Quite independently of the Oxford circle, there were persons engaged in pastoral ministries in such disparate areas as Cornwall and Yorkshire for whom evangelical conversion proved the great catalyst in attaining pastoral usefulness.¹⁵ It is significant that the principal leaders of the religious awakening in England, Wales, and New England had all had extensive exposure to the pastoral ideals and writings of August Hermann Franke^c (1633-1727), the German Lutheran pietist, who had visited England and dealt extensively with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in preceding decades.¹⁶

For some time, one school of historians has argued for a distinction between the early Methodist itinerant movement centring around George Whitefield and John and Charles Wesley and another more "churchly" Evangelical movement. The latter is said to be distinguishable not

¹⁵ G.C.B. Davies, The Early Cornish Evangelicals; 1735-1760, (London, 1951), pp. 58 ff. Frank Baker, William Grimshaw, (London, 1963), pp. 43 ff. J.D. Walsh, "Origins of the Evangelical Revival", pp. 134,5.

¹⁶ Geoffrey Nuttall, "Continental Pietism and the Evangelical Movement in Britain", in J. Van Den Berg and J. P. Van Dooren, eds. Pietismus und Reveil, (Leiden, 1978) pp. 208 ff.

along denominational lines (inasmuch as the three Methodists named had received episcopal ordination) but by the latter movement's observance of the Establishment's regulations against itineration and lay preaching.¹⁷ The distinction is overdrawn, at least in the earliest decades of the Revival period, and is only transparently evident by late century. Such "churchly" evangelicals there certainly were and they existed quite independently of the Methodists. Yet they were subject to the same formative influences as those less fastidious than themselves; they were also well acquainted.

Any fair comparison between Whitefield, the Wesley brothers and more 'regular' clergy in the early period must give weight to the fact that Whitefield and the Wesleys, though episcopally ordained, were without fixed pastoral charges and therefore were free to circulate in Britain and abroad in a way quite impossible for a parish minister. Their itinerant preaching, often in the out of doors, had certainly been preceded by some years by that of Griffith Jones, Anglican rector of Llanddowror, Carmarthenshire whose example in so doing much encouraged Whitefield.¹⁸ Whether knowingly or unknowingly, this pattern had certainly been followed by William Grimshaw

¹⁷ Michael Hennell, John Venn and the Clapham Sect, (London, 1957), pp. 16,17. J.D. Walsh, "Origins of the Evangelical Revival", pp. 134,135. Kenneth Hylson-Smith, Evangelicals in the Church of England, (Edinburgh, 1989), p.13.

¹⁸ Nuttall, "Continental Pietism", pp. 213,214.

of Haworth, an alleged example of independence from Methodist patterns. The allegedly Methodistical procedure of organizing zealous converts into societies or bands seems to have been universal among the circle of Revival leaders in the early period, in keeping with the noble pre-history of the practice which extended back to post-Restoration London.¹⁹ Pre-existent societies often formed the settings in which the spiritual awakening took hold. If a difference of practice existed with regard to the regulation of these societies, this was shown in the reluctance of some clergymen, such as Walker of Truro, to relinquish direct supervision of the gatherings into the hands of laymen.²⁰

Having recalled the antecedents of the Revival in America, Scotland and Wales, the activity of roaming clergymen as well as those who nurtured evangelical piety within the strict boundaries of their parishes, we may ask whether the existing Protestant Nonconformity had any contribution to offer the cause of religious awakening. It has grown fashionable to depict Nonconformity as being anemic, demoralized, and retreating in that period and to draw the conclusion that it too gasped on until provided

¹⁹ Rupp, Religion in England, p.327. Halevy, The Birth of Methodism in England, (Chicago, 1971), p. 41. Walsh, "Origins", p. 138. Davies, Early Cornish Evangelicals, p.66.

²⁰ Davies, Cornish Evangelicals, p.69.

with the tonic the Revival furnished.²¹ Yet, while allowing for the colossal numerical decline of English Presbyterianism in that century from two-thirds to one twentieth of all Protestant Dissent,²² we may note that the churches of both Independent and Particular Baptist orientation resisted numerical decline on this scale in part because they resisted the theological decline which underlay the Presbyterian demise.

Even if so socially marginalized as to be incapable of serving as catalyst for the Revival,²³ some Dissenters were at least labouring to that end before the awakening was considered to have dawned. Isaac Watts (1674-1748), minister of the church at Mark Lane, London from 1702, was the correspondent of Jonathan Edwards and the encourager of George Whitefield. Thomas Cole (1672-1740), the Gloucester Independent pastor and itinerant evangelist, had preached through the countryside after 1716 and had been the butt of Whitefield's disruptive boyish pranks. In the late 1730's Whitefield's own

²¹ Compare on this point, J.D. Walsh "Methodism at the End of the Eighteenth Century", in R.E. Davies and E.G. Rupp, History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain, Vol. 1, (London, 1965) p. 263, with Rupp, Religion in England, p.486. The clearest available summary of Nonconformist vitality in this period is that of Geoffrey Nuttall, "Methodism and the Older Dissent", in Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society, Vol. 2, No. 8, 1981, p.248 ff.

²² Halevy, Birth of Methodism, p.48. Gilbert, Religion in Industrial Society, p.36.

²³ Michael Watts, The Dissenters, (Oxford, 1978), pp. 438, 439.

itineration in the area enabled the aged Cole to gather groups of persons whose newly aroused spiritual concern found no welcome in local parish churches. After Cole's death, his place was filled by the like-minded John Oldring who came recommended for the task by his theological mentor at Northampton Academy, Philip Doddridge.²⁴

While it is too much to claim that Doddridge's arrival at Northampton in 1729 in the dual capacity of pastor to Castle Hill Chapel and Academy tutor marked "the beginning of the Evangelical Movement"²⁵ his importance as a bridge-builder cannot be overestimated. His devotional work, The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul (1745) was standard fare for evangelical converts in the period.²⁶ He wrote to the Oxford undergraduate, Whitefield, to assure him of his prayers on his behalf, and welcomed both Whitefield and John Wesley to address his ministerial students. The case of Doddridge demonstrates clearly that some Dissenters saw

²⁴ Geoffrey Nuttall, "George Whitefield's Curate: Gloucester Dissent and the Evangelical Revival," in the Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XXVII, pp. 369, 375, 381.

²⁵ A. Everett, The Pattern of Rural Dissent: The Nineteenth Century, (London, 1972), p.16 quoted in Malcolm Deacon, Philip Doddridge, (Northampton, 1980), p.14.

²⁶ Frank Baker has, for instance, noted the extensive use made of the work by William Grimshaw. Grimshaw, p.81. Also note A.S. Wood, Thomas Haweis, (London, 1957), p.36. Ernest A. Payne, The Free Church Tradition in the life of England, (London, 1944) p. 69 provides still additional examples.

in the Revival's dawn that for which they had prayed and laboured. While the whole question of the relation of Dissent to the Revival has been too little understood,²⁷ it is plain that the Revival's numerical impact upon the Independent and Baptist communions was only discernible after mid-century.

Upon reflection, therefore, we should conceive of the origins of the Revival not in terms of denominational influences, but in terms of a milieu of beliefs and ideas commonly accessible to those who sought a recovery from the religious decline affecting all churches in a rapidly expanding society. Such a common milieu of influences understandably made for a largely coherent proclamation. The awfulness of sin, the wonder of the cross of Christ, the possibility of present forgiveness of sins through the placing of faith in Christ who suffered and rose - these were the common themes of the preaching.²⁸ The personal enjoyment of these realities was inextricably connected with a renewed emphasis upon a Scriptural teaching earlier recovered for English theology by John Colet (1466-1519) - the entering into new birth.²⁹ Though this characteristic emphasis of the Revival has usually been attributed to John Wesley and the Moravians,

²⁷ Nuttall, "George Whitefield's Curate", p. 370.

²⁸ There is a helpful discussion of the commonality of these themes in David Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, (London, 1989), pp. 42 ff.

²⁹ Rupp, Religion in England, pp.419-20.

who influenced him so deeply at a critical stage in the late 1730's, the earliest and most persistent herald of the teaching seems to have been Whitefield.

Calvinism as a Force In the Evangelical Revival

Such a common theology as the Revival had may be said to have been overwhelmingly Calvinistic.³⁰ But even this assertion must at once be qualified. Walsh³¹ has correctly emphasized that many of the early leaders of the Revival had, at the time of their conversions, really no sense of theological identity and were in need of finding a doctrinal framework. For very many this framework was provided by the Calvinist system. But in what forms was Calvinist doctrine available in the early eighteenth century?

One must look very hard and long to find an eighteenth century figure who could claim to have read the writings of the Genevan reformer. Whitefield, whose painful differences with John Wesley over the doctrine of predestination precipitated a permanent breach in the Methodist movement, had not. John Wesley's own convictions on the question had never been illuminated by

³⁰ Rupp, Religion in England, p.325 speaks of Wesley's Arminian theology as being "plainly the odd one out" in light of the overwhelming Puritan and Calvinist orientation of the awakening.

³¹ J.D. Walsh, "The Cambridge Methodists", in Peter Brook, ed., Christian Spirituality; Essays for E.G. Rupp, (London, 1975), p.261.

reading continental Reformation theology at first hand, but were an amalgam of ideas worked out in exchanges with his mother, Susannah. He had also gained a familiarity with the early writings of John Gill (1697-1771), the Baptist theologian whose supralapsarian views would inhibit the free preaching of the Gospel in his own circles for decades.³²

That Calvin's writings were neglected in eighteenth-century England was not simply part of the reaction against things Puritan. Calvin's influence had not been predominant among the English Puritans of the seventeenth century or English Reformers of the sixteenth century. The names of Martyr and Bullinger evidently carried more weight in the century of the Reformation and gave way in the next to Beza, Junius, Danaeus, Ursinus and above all Zanchius.³³ In that same seventeenth century, William Perkins and William Ames, native theologians, had taken their places among the European Reformed theologians reckoned as of the front rank. Thus any discussion regarding influence of Calvinist theology in eighteenth-

³² George Whitefield, Works, I. pp. 205, 442, 495 quoted in Wood, Inextinguishable Blaze, p.180. Rupp, introduction to History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain, I. xxxi and Religion in England, p.371. One of the few "fathers" of the revival known to have read Calvin was the Welsh preacher, Griffith Jones (1683-1761). See R. Tudur Jones, "The Evangelical Revival in Wales", in James P. Mackey, ed., Introduction to Celtic Christianity, (Edinburgh, 1990), p.242.

³³ Patrick Collinson, "England and International Calvinism 1558-1640" in Menna Prestwich, ed. International Calvinism 1541-1715, (Oxford, 1986), pp. 214,215.

century England must reckon with the fact that the use of such a term may not be understood to imply a predominance of the Genevan reformer's own distinctive thought.

"Calvinist theology" had become a generic term descriptive of all European Protestant theology emanating from the South German and Swiss Reformation. English participation in this trans-national work of formulating a Protestant dogmatics had in fact produced a definable hybrid strain of thought which one perceptive modern writer has termed "Anglo-Calvinism", and another has found distinctively displayed in the writings of John Bunyan.³⁴

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century England, there is evidence that such international Reformed theology had fallen distinctly out of favour within the Anglican Establishment. John Edwards (1637-1716), said to have been the last Calvinist don at Cambridge, had found it necessary to retire from both college life and the pastoral ministry by 1683, so unpopular were his views. His extensive polemical writings, composed in this subsequent period of withdrawal, were of use to friends of the Revival after 1740.³⁵ Bebbington³⁶ has surely been correct to insist

³⁴ Rupp, Religion in England, pp. 325,483. Richard Greaves, John Bunyan, (Appleford, 1969).

³⁵ s.v. "John Edwards", in The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, (Grand Rapids, 1974), p.334. Rupp, Religion, p.326.

that the hypothesis of an unbroken Calvinistic succession within the English Establishment fails for lack of evidence.

The Calvinistic theology taught in the Nonconformist Academies in the early eighteenth century seems to have been a blend of the writings of seventeenth century Continental dogmaticians such as Johannes Wollebius (1586-1629) of Basel, Francois Turretin (1623-1687) and his son Jean Alphonse Turretin (1671-1737) of Geneva, Benedict Pictet (1655-1724) of Geneva, John Marck (1655-1731) of Leyden, and of native writers such as William Ames (1576-1633) and Richard Baxter (1615-1691).³⁷ Links were maintained with the Continental faculties of theology and it was not uncommon for ministerial students in English Academies to spend a year or more at Leyden or Geneva. In the latter location they encountered what was termed the "sane orthodoxy" of the younger Turretin.³⁸ A major innovation within the Academies was the move by Philip Doddridge of Northampton to use English rather than Latin as the language of theological instruction. This move paved the way for the use of English texts, among which were Doddridge's own Lectures on

³⁶ Bebbington, Evangelicalism, p.36.

³⁷ H. McLachlan, English Education Under the Test Acts, (Manchester, 1931), pp. 22, 300, 302, 303.

³⁸ McLachlan, English Education. p.29. David Bogue and James Bennett, History of Dissenters, III, (London, 1808) pp. 333, 361.

Pneumatology, Ethics, and Theology (published posthumously in 1763) and the Baptist, John Gill's Body of Divinity (1767).

Yet, even when allowance has been made for the individual efforts of a Thomas Cole or a Doddridge, it is apparent that Nonconformist theology was in a doldrum period. The Salter's Hall Synod controversy (1719) which failed to resolve a growing crisis over the doctrine of the Trinity and the person of Christ indicated a growing theological polarization with Nonconformity.³⁹ Independency seemed to offer more doctrinal stability than Presbyterianism in this period and so there were some "theological refugees" from the latter to the former. But Independency was clearly no uniform force for the spiritual recovery of the nation.⁴⁰ Moreover, we seem to look in vain within England in the 1730's for any indigenous Calvinism which can explain the pervasive influence the theology exercised once the movement was in progress.

Having noted earlier that the Revival leaders seem to have acquired a doctrinal framework subsequent to the experience of conversion, it is fascinating to note the sources relied upon for this purpose. Whitefield had early been given the writings of August Francke by John

³⁹ Payne, The Free Church Tradition, p.63.

⁴⁰ Geoffrey Nuttall, "Calvinism in Free Church History", in the Baptist Quarterly, 22, p.421.

Wesley, but seemed to benefit most of all by a reading of the devotional work of the Scottish theologian, Henry Scougal (1650-1678), The Life of God in the Soul of Man. Whitefield's most recent major biographer has also drawn attention to the evangelist's additional indebtedness to Scots divinity, especially Thomas Boston's Human Nature in Its Fourfold State and Ralph Erskine's Sermons.⁴¹

Walker of Truro placed into the hands of the young convert, Thomas Haweis, Boston's Fourfold State as well as the sermons of Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine. These were no doubt familiar to him through the offices of the Aberdeen schoolmaster George Conon who had recently been transplanted to Cornwall. Grimshaw of Haworth, under deep impressions of sin late in his first pastoral charge, found great relief upon reading the Puritan, John Owen's Justification by Faith.⁴² Calvinistic writings of an earlier generation seem to have been standard fare among the awakened.

In this situation in which the Puritan theology of the previous century had largely fallen into disrepute, appeals to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion also seem to have fallen on deaf ears. It is not therefore

⁴¹ Dallimore, Whitefield, I. p.405.

⁴² Wood, Haweis, p.36. Baker, Grimshaw, p.44. Such proofs of indebtedness provide interesting corroboration for an assertion made by High Churchman E.B. Pusey in the next century. Speaking of evangelicalism within his communion, he complained in his Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, (Oxford, 1842), p.50, that it had borrowed its theology in the previous century from Nonconformity.

surprising that the Calvinism connected with the Revival should be found to be somewhat unsystematic and piecemeal in its initial period. Such Calvinism as was found in the Articles of Religion had always been recognized as being modestly expressed, lacking (for good or for ill) the elaboration of the consolidative Protestant creeds and confessions of the seventeenth century. There was in fact nothing to be gained by the generation of Whitefield in espousing a Calvinism any loftier than that which could be defended out of the Establishment's neglected articles.

A similar factor served to exercise restraint over the direction Calvinism would take during this period among Dissenters; these were granted license to assemble under the provisions of the Toleration Act (1689) provided their preachers maintained conformity of teaching to the Thirty-Nine Articles (articles 34,35,36, excepted).⁴³ While the Establishment itself seems to have been remarkably lax in enforcing internal conformity to the Articles and with Nonconformity following suit, the Articles may be said nonetheless to have served the purpose of setting some boundaries for theological discussion in an age when the more elaborate Calvinist

⁴³ H. Gee and W.J. Hardy, Documents Illustrative of English Church History, (London, 1896), p.654. Deacon, Philip Doddridge, p. 150, n. 27. An interesting study of the conserving influence of the Anglican liturgy upon Nonconformity through this era is found in A.E. Peaston, The Prayer Book Tradition in the Free Churches, (London, 1964).

creeds of the seventeenth century had fallen into neglect.⁴⁴

Against such a backdrop we may consider that it has been widely asserted that the predominant theological tendency of the Revival was one of moderate Calvinism.⁴⁵ The inherent difficulty with such terminology is that the meaning of the term "moderate" must always be determined by the extremes it seeks to avoid. A refined terminology

⁴⁴ i.e. the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Savoy Declaration, the London Baptist Confession. The latter two represent minor modifications of the former.

⁴⁵ J.S. Reynolds, The Early Oxford Evangelicals, (Oxford, 1953), p.3. Davies, Early Cornish Evangelicals, pp. 154-56. Davies uses the term as an apt designation of a view which held that saving grace, though sovereignly and discriminatingly given to men, also provided for the consent of an enabled human will. Moderate Calvinism this may be; it is also the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith, X.i. A.S. Wood, Inextinguishable Blaze, p. 176 contrasts the moderate Calvinism of the regular Church evangelicals with the "more emphatically Calvinist position of the party of Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon". This is judiciously said. J.D. Walsh, "Methodism at the End of the Eighteenth Century", p.289 contrasts the moderate Calvinist clergy who held to predestined election with "others", (e.g. Toplady) who did not hesitate to affirm reprobation". This makes one valid distinction while skirting the more basic and fundamental one posited by Wood, above. Bebbington, Evangelicalism, p.63 utilizes the "moderate" terminology emphasizing the eighteenth century determination to weigh Calvin's teaching carefully - a definition which means relatively little given both the inaccessibility of Calvin's writings and the practical displacement of Calvin in English Reformed theology. R.H. Martin, Evangelicals United, (Metuchen, New Jersey, 1983). pp. 17 ff. uses the term to describe Charles Simeon, Andrew Fuller and Edward Williams when Fuller himself indicated his distaste for the position implied by the term moderate. Fuller styled himself a "strict Calvinist"; see John Ryland, Life and Death of Andrew Fuller, (London, 1816), p.56. Kenneth Hylson-Smith, Evangelicals in the Church of England, (Edinburgh, 1989), p.52, uses the moderate terminology without any serious attempt to define more extreme views.

is needed both to encompass the different denominational settings in which these questions were agitated and the various controversies which surfaced during this Revival of religion.

The creeds of England's seventeenth century, while certainly more elaborate and detailed than the Thirty-Nine Articles, were themselves moderate statements of the international Reformed dogmatics current in the mid to late seventeenth century. A close comparison of the seventeenth century creeds of Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist churches with the Articles of the Synod of Dordt (1618) indicates that the English creeds show restraint where that Synod was expansive. A close study of the minutes of the Westminster Assembly (1643-1647) reveals that there were speculative Calvinist views aired which were never incorporated into the Confession of Faith.⁴⁶

In post-Restoration England, these creeds became the legacy of minority parties, while the Articles of the Established Church received only minimal attention. Perhaps as a reflection of their minority status, some Dissenting Calvinists (both Baptist and Independent) were evidently moved to hold what one historian has called "a doctrine of the salvation of the few".⁴⁷ By 1737, the

⁴⁶ A.F. Mitchell and J. Struthers, Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly, (Edinburgh, 1890).

⁴⁷ Geoffrey Nuttall, "Calvinism in Free Church History", p.418.

idea had gained currency among such "high Calvinists" that if Christ had died for the elect alone, then only the elect had the power to repent and believe.⁴⁸ This view, so restrictive to the free preaching of the gospel, had by the eighteenth century come to be known as hyper, high, or false Calvinism. But not all Calvinists concurred. Such men as John Ryland Jr. and Andrew Fuller affirmed that Christ's atoning death implemented a particularistic design, but they insisted that free offers of salvation should not be restricted on account of this particularism.

If some Baptists and Independents in the 1730's embraced this strain of dogmatic thought which was so inhibitive of unfettered gospel preaching, there also existed in the West of England and Wales a wide grouping of those whom Rupp has called "aggressive predestinarians"; these combined close belief in the doctrine of election with an aggressive evangelism.⁴⁹ It was such listeners as these who took immediate and strong offence when John Wesley challenged their views in 1739. This constituency, which had been rallied by such ministers as Thomas Cole (d. 1742) Howell Harris (1714-1773) Griffith Jones (1683-1761) and Daniel Rowland (1713-1790) held to the Calvinism of the previous

⁴⁸ Geoffrey Nuttall, "Northamptonshire and the Modern Question", in the Journal of Theological Studies, XVI n.s. (1965), p.102.

⁴⁹ Rupp, Religion in England, p.370.

century. Philip Doddridge's Northampton Academy, often criticized for the proportion of graduates forfeited to rational Dissent, still provided a number of students such as Risdon Darracott who perpetuated this emphasis.⁵⁰

Just as there were such discernible strands of Calvinist emphasis within Nonconformity, so there were also within that element of the Establishment quickened by the Revival. While there were those like Walker of Truro whose concern was to maintain the Reformation doctrines without regard to "system" and then only as the doctrines emerged from the consecutive study of the Bible, there were also not lacking more militant persons such as William Romaine, Martin Madan, and Thomas Haweis, who were quite unafraid to contend for Calvinist doctrine as the system taught in the Articles of the Church.⁵¹ Yet another stance was taken by the polemicist and hymnwriter, Augustus Toplady (1740-1778). Converted under the labours of a Methodist lay-preacher, Toplady became John Wesley's greatest detractor. Responsible for the translation of sixteenth century dogmatician, Girolamo Zanchius' tract, Absolute Predestination, Toplady contended for a rigorous Calvinist reading of the Articles of the Church of England.

What then was the "moderate" Calvinism that typified

⁵⁰ Davies, Cornish Evangelicals, p.171. Bebbington, Evangelicalism, p.32.

⁵¹ Wood, Haweis, p.240. Rupp, Religion in England, p.483.

so much of the preaching and teaching of the Revival? It emphasized the doctrines of man's utterly depraved nature, his need of divine mercy, the cross of Christ as the divine provision for human sinfulness, the sovereign operation of the divine mercy in keeping with an eternal election of grace, and the preserving power of this grace upon the believer. If this Calvinism was often presented as Scripture truth rather than as systematic dogma, this should be understood as the strategy for an age when all systems and articles of faith had fallen into oblivion or contempt. If this approach to dogma did not treat as equally important every detail of the high orthodoxy of the preceding century, this may simply be understood as a strategy based upon the new pastoral realities. John Wesley's determination to know and teach the "way to heaven" was, in reality, the objective of many other preachers. Anglican friends of the Revival had no dogmatician of their own and at the century's end were still depending heavily upon Doddridge's Lectures.⁵²

All this being said, it seems that recent efforts to portray the Evangelical Revival's legacy as one of a dampened concern for doctrinal distinction involve a serious oversimplification.⁵³ Even leaving the polemical writers aside, there is not lacking abundant evidence of tenacious doctrinal concern. But this tenacious advocacy

⁵² Bebbington, Evangelicalism, p.87.

⁵³ Martin, Evangelicals United, p.10.

is, given the circumstances of the period, offered on behalf of central matters of the Christian faith. It is somewhat paradoxical that such contenders as there were for creedal Calvinism in the decades following the advent of the Revival were Anglican and not Nonconformist.⁵⁴

Subscription under the Toleration Act to the modified Thirty-Nine Articles suggested to some Nonconformists (who could not be unaware of the disparagement of these Articles within the Establishment) that creed subscription was utterly futile. They were certain they could maintain their Calvinism without formulas.⁵⁵ Even without creeds to contend for, the non-Wesleyan supporters of the Revival, whether inside or outside the Establishment, shared a common sense of theological direction. Stoughton, the nineteenth century Nonconformist historian, justifiably wrote:

they leaped back over a hundred years to get at the time of Goodwin and Owen, Baxter and Howe, Bates and Charnock, Gurnall and Flavel...The wells whence the Evangelicals drew their inspiration were not Patristic, not Anglo-Catholic, but they were Protestant works of the sixteenth and Nonconformist works of the seventeenth century.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Augustus Toplady, Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England, (London, 1774). Thomas Haweis, The Church of England Vindicated, (London, 1801).

⁵⁵ Bogue and Bennett, History of Dissenters, II. p.26.

⁵⁶ John Stoughton, Religion in England Under Queen Anne and the Georges. (London, 1878), p.93.

The Transmission of the Evangelical Impetus

We have noted already the insufficient response offered by the Church of England to the challenge offered by an expanding London metropolis. Yet it would be misleading to assume that this metropolitan situation pinpoints correctly the setting in which the Evangelical Revival helped to address England's social and spiritual need. In point of fact, the cause of the Revival was not warmly taken up by the London Establishment, and were it not for the early existence of societies there (such as the Moravian society meeting at Aldersgate St. or the society organized by John Wesley at the Foundery) the Revival might not have gained a foothold in that city.

William Romaine (1714-1795) is generally recognized to have been the first beneficed Establishment evangelical in the city. But this appointment as rector in St. Anne's, Blackfriars in 1766 came only after Romaine had held lectureships in the city since 1748. Patronage arrangements in the Establishment made it initially very difficult for any ordinand known to be supportive of 'enthusiasm' to gain nomination to a pastoral vacancy. This difficulty, especially in the capital, ensured that several consequences would follow. The major of these is that various private initiatives were resorted to to ensure that 'Gospel' clergy would gain a hearing in the city. Whitefield himself, finding preaching venues in the city increasingly hard to come

by, used the Moorfields 'Tabernacle' (a wooden structure erected for his use by Dissenters) regularly from 1741 and had another facility, Tottenham Road Chapel erected in 1756.⁵⁷ The chapel at Lock Hospital, itself the creation of a Christian philanthropist, became the venue for the city ministries of Martin Madan and Thomas Haweis. The same problem of access to city pulpits for evangelicals in the Establishment would eventually lead the Countess of Huntingdon to open chapels in London and elsewhere in order that the message of the awakening might be heard from Church of England preachers. This urban difficulty goes far to explain why many prominent father figures in the move for spiritual renewal in the Established Church did their work in rustic or isolated settings.

Young candidates for the ministry these pioneers may have gathered, but it was completely beyond their power to ensure safe passage through an Oxford or Cambridge college and beyond for such hopeful young men. When the Methodist sympathies and associations of six young Oxford men became known in 1768, they were sent down from the University. Aspiring men who sought ordination without university education invariably faced the same obstacles if it became known that they were connected by sympathy to the Revival. John Newton of Liverpool (1725-1807), dramatically converted from a life of slave-trading, had

⁵⁷ Dallimore, Whitefield, II. pp. 49, 280.

after his private preparation for ordination seriously to consider ministry with various Dissenting groups when it appeared that no Bishop would ordain him. Cornelius Winter (1742-1807), privately trained for the ministry by Whitefield, met with a simple flat refusal from the Bishop of London when he sought ordination for continued service in the Georgia orphanage his late mentor had begun.⁵⁸ This episcopal recalcitrance in the face of what Walsh⁵⁹ has termed the problem of the "eloquent convert" ensured that twenty candidates were inadvertently provided for the ministry of the Dissenting churches by three evangelical clergymen who could not obtain episcopal ordination for them.⁶⁰

Members of the Established Church sympathizing with the Revival faced similar difficulties. An evangelical Churchman's removal to another charge could allow unsympathetic patrons to choose a successor-minister of very different sympathies. As well, an evangelical Churchman's itineration around his broad parish could create the nuclei of future congregations for which an Evangelical ministry could not be ensured. Both tendencies were illustrated in the case of the energetic Grimshaw of Haworth; at his removal from his initial

⁵⁸ Wood, Haweis, pp. 98 ff. William Jay, ed., Memoir of Cornelius Winter, (London, 1809), pp. 134,135.

⁵⁹ J.D. Walsh, "Methodism at the End", p. 294.

⁶⁰ Watts, Dissenters, p.452.

charge of Todmorden, five-sixths of those who had gathered to hear his preaching declined to support the ministrations of his otherwise-minded successor. Grimshaw's own extensive itineration in the massive parish of Haworth led to the eventual founding of five Nonconformist congregations.⁶¹ The Yorkshire ministry of Henry Venn produced the nuclei of four Congregational churches. The preaching labours of John Berridge of Everton, both within his own parish and beyond, served to found or revive thirteen Dissenting churches.⁶²

By the close of the eighteenth century, Establishment friends of the Revival came to take great umbrage at such tendencies. Charles Simeon, for one, lamented, "the Clergyman beats the bushes and the Dissenter catches the game".⁶³ But in point of fact, Church of England evangelicals were quite impotent to overcome these difficulties and the resolution of them awaited such early nineteenth century developments as the consecration of the first evangelical bishop, Henry Ryder (1777-1836), to the see of Gloucester in 1818, and the purchase of advowsons by the patronage trust established

⁶¹ Baker, Grimshaw, p.51. Martin, Evangelicals United, p.7.

⁶² Watts, Dissenters, p.452. C.H. Smyth, Simeon and Church Order, (Cambridge, 1940), p.266.

⁶³ W. Carus, Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. Charles Simeon, (Cambridge, 1847), p.139, quoted in Martin, Evangelicals United, p.7.

by Charles Simeon.⁶⁴ But improvement of the situation came with time. By 1800 it was estimated that evangelical clergy in the Establishment numbered 500; by 1830 they were thought to comprise between one eighth and one quarter of the entire ministry.⁶⁵

However, for the eighteenth century, this aggregation of difficulties having to do with limited access to the major cities, the difficulty of training future ministers and the uncertainty of satisfactory ministerial succession definitely limited the contribution of evangelicalism in a time of great stress and upheaval. England's population was shifting gradually from the lowland south to the highland zone of the western Midlands, Lancashire and Yorkshire - a shift related to the availability of coal, metals and waterpower there. Yet the National Church was both insufficiently attuned to the country's demographic upheaval and resistant to the efforts of this energetic party whose contribution might have been much larger.

The genuine gulf which gradually opened between friends of the Revival within the Establishment had not to do with differences of conviction on the doctrines of salvation (though these did exist) but with differences of attitude regarding the excusability or inexcusability

⁶⁴ Hylson-Smith, Evangelicals in the Church of England, pp. 69,75.

⁶⁵ Hylson-Smith, *ibid.* p. 68.

of crossing parish boundaries in order to preach the Gospel.⁶⁶ To be sure, there were those such as Joseph Jane of Oxford who shared Wesley's Arminianism but not his zeal for itineration. There were as well, on the other hand, those like Henry Venn, John Berridge and Thomas Haweis, who distanced themselves from Wesley's doctrinal peculiarities, yet joined him in preaching the gospel without geographical limit.

But in point of fact, the itineration of the Wesleys was a slightly different item than the itineration of the others. Both the Wesleys had begun the practice with considerable misgiving over its irregularity (and 'vulgarity' when out of doors), but soon devised a legitimation for it based upon liberties they believed to be inherent in their status as fellows of an Oxford college. Parish ministers who crossed parish boundaries to preach could hide behind no such subterfuge. Thus the number of Establishment clergymen who would do so was strictly limited. The Wesleys, having made the decision to itinerate, were soon forced to make another expedient decision; they came to rely on lay preachers to assist them in what rapidly became an expanding movement.

John Wesley is reputed to have claimed the world as his parish. In fact, his massive itineration throughout England seems to have been concentrated in the areas of the west and north. It is hardly coincidental that this

⁶⁶ Wood, Haweis, intro. p.15.

region was the one undergoing rapid industrialization and a resultant influx of population.⁶⁷ While it may have been believed that Wesley's movement was primarily comprised of miners and menial labourers, in fact the mainstream of the movement also included artisans, shopkeepers, and small manufacturers.⁶⁸

The fact that Wesley's "helpers", preaching laymen of whom he expected five hours study per day, were drawn from these same classes illustrates that Wesley understood his constituency well. The principle of selection also demonstrates the man's realism in assessing what type of leadership might be recruitable for a Christian movement cut from a coarser social fabric⁶⁹ than that of the Establishment. This corps of preachers included masons, soldiers, apprentices from the building trades, schoolteachers, textile workers, clay china factory employees and a tin miner.⁷⁰

The first membership statistics available, those of 1767, indicate a following of 22,410 persons; the numbers grew to 56,605 by the year of Wesley's death (1791).⁷¹ A

⁶⁷ Williams, Whig Supremacy, pp. 92-97.

⁶⁸ Rupp, Religion, p.446. Gilbert, Religion and Society, pp. 59ff.

⁶⁹ the felicitous phrase is that of Rupp, Religion in England, p.391.

⁷⁰ Watts, Dissenters, p.408.

⁷¹ Gilbert, Religion and Society, p.31.

movement which multiplied so rapidly had surely done something right, even if its relationship to the Establishment was lichen-like. From 1744, an annual conference of supporting preachers (ordained Anglicans and lay) was held under Wesley's presidency. From 1746, Wesley's scattered societies were arranged in circuits under the supervision of the carefully chosen "helpers".

By 1755, the founder was having to respond to an undertow of interest among these "helpers" in ending the dependency upon the Church of England with a declaration of separation. This tendency Wesley resisted with very mixed emotions, knowing that the possibility of his lay preachers ever being granted ordination by the Establishment was highly unlikely. In the same period, he also resisted an appeal from Establishment clergy in Cornwall, friendly to the Revival, asking that any Methodist societies lying in their parishes be placed under their own direction. This proposal Wesley rejected as it opened the possibility that at some future date a change of local clergy would place his converts under unsympathetic pastoral direction. Though Wesley's societies and their meeting houses were not licensed under the Toleration Act until 1787 and the administration of both sacraments not permitted within the societies until 1795, it is plain that the founder had early on come to settled conclusions about the dangers awaiting his societies through any process of

comprehension within the Establishment.⁷²

Meanwhile, the prolific growth of the Wesleyan movement held out lessons which were not missed by some of the Dissenting bodies. In 1773 the aggregate number of Dissenting congregations in England (Presbyterians included) totalled 1,080 - over 100 fewer than half a century earlier. Yet a recovery of Independent fortunes was plainly underway in the period beginning 1750, for between that year and 1799 two hundred and sixty-nine new meeting places were registered. Among the Baptists, there was an increase of five hundred ^{and} thirty-two registrations in the period 1751-1808.⁷³

The explanation for this reversal is manifold, yet reducible to a neat summary provided by Gilbert, who spoke of the sections of Dissent "metamorphosed by the Methodist revival".⁷⁴ It is important to note the benefit bestowed by Whitefield upon Dissent in general. First and foremost, many leaders of the renewed Dissent had come to evangelical conversion under Whitefield's preaching. Second, Whitefield had taken the step of registering both Moorfields Tabernacle and his Tottenham Road Chapel as Independent Meeting Houses as early as 1764; the step was taken subsequently in his other

⁷² See the Walker of Truro - Wesley correspondence of 1757 published in Davies, Early Cornish Evangelicals, p.126.

⁷³ Gilbert, Religion and Society, pp. 35,36.

⁷⁴ Gilbert, *ibid.* p.36.

preaching stations. And this cementing of a cordial, though unofficial link between Whitefield and Dissent was far from unusual. From 1742, Calvinistic Methodist societies in Wales, standing in the same relationship to the Establishment as Wesley's societies, began to register themselves as Independent Dissenting chapels.⁷⁵

Shortly, Independency was active in utilizing this external assistance. Bogue and Bennett, writing in 1808, believed that the phenomenal growth of Independency in their lifetimes was due to an appropriation of Methodism's style of preaching, worship, and hymnody; the judgement was shared by their contemporary, William Jay of Bath.⁷⁶ Such chroniclers wrote in retrospect; but long before such recollections were ever penned, it was plain that Dissent had fresh wind in its sails.

The evidence of this change was at least three-fold. There was first, for Independents and Particular Baptists, a decidedly different theological strategy followed in the articulation of the Gospel message. If before 1750 there had been hesitation by many Calvinist preachers in commending the offer of divine mercy and pardon through Christ due to a combination of factors including a Dissenting remnant-psychology and the

⁷⁵ Walsh, "Methodism at the End of the Eighteenth Century", p.293. Dallimore, Whitefield, II. p.49. Watts, Dissenters, p.452.

⁷⁶ Bogue and Bennett, History of Dissenters, II. p.355. Jay, Autobiography, p.141.

mistaken inference that human sinfulness freed all but elect sinners from the responsibility of responding to the Gospel, this rapidly changed. Welsh, American, and Scottish awakening preaching early demonstrated its freedom from such mistaken constraints. The unfettered offers of the Gospel regularly made by John Wesley and Whitefield, while proceeding from non-identical theological premises, were at least seen to share in common the confidence that Christ's death for sin was of inexhaustible worth and therefore the warrant for a bold request for divine forgiveness.⁷⁷

Moreover, a theology which addressed directly one of these major theological hindrances to evangelization was shortly available in the pages of Jonathan Edwards' Freedom of the Will. The latter argued that a sinful man's moral responsibility to respond to the Christian Gospel remained undiminished even while his natural ability to do so was grossly impaired. Ministerial biographies from the latter half of the eighteenth century repeatedly attest the significance of this

⁷⁷ That the unrestricted offer of the gospel based on the inestimable value of Christ's atonement for sin was clearly recognized in seventeenth century Calvinism is evident even in the Canons of Dordt (1618), Head II, Articles 3,4. The entire text is found in P.Y. DeJong, ed. Crisis in the Reformed Churches, (Grand Rapids, 1968), p.240. Thus restrictions of the gospel based on supposed Calvinist inferences have a most uncertain pedigree.

volume.⁷⁸

A second hallmark of the expansion of Dissent was the extension of itinerant preaching. Such was the concern to see it take place on the widest possible scale as the means of Gospel extension that co-operative interdenominational organizations such as the 'Societas Evangelica' were founded in 1776 in order to promote and extend it. It is difficult to determine which came first in order of time: the itinerant movement or the rise of the new preparatory academies - the third feature of the "new Dissent". It seems safe to say that the growth of the movement required the creation of these academies and that the enlarged supply of preachers through the academies spurred on the itinerant movement further.

Of course, some prominent itinerants entered the work without benefit of any formal ministerial training. George Burder (1752-1832), later to figure so prominently in London Missionary Society and Evangelical Magazine circles, had begun preaching to farm workers in 1775-6 and was so well received that he was soon preaching twice each Sunday. "Thus I began my ministerial career in the methodistical way", he later recorded. The "methodistical way" meant for Burder that simple preaching would first be learned in rustic settings with the study of theology and biblical languages only coming

⁷⁸ E.g. John Ryland, Life of Andrew Fuller, pp. 58ff. James Bennett, Life of David Bogue, (London, 1825), p. 124.

later.⁷⁹ Cornelius Winter, who later maintained a small academy of his own, had begun his own work as an itinerant in the 1760's, combining his trade as a metal worker with occasional forays to rural churches in need of pulpit supply. On the basis of such efforts, John Berridge of Everton wrote a commendatory letter on his behalf to Whitefield, who thereafter retained him as secretary and ministerial understudy. Entirely self-educated, Winter gathered remarkable learning and at his decease left, from his small academy at Painswick, Gloucestershire, a library of eight hundred and fifty books to the existing academy of David Bogue.⁸⁰

Such academies had been in existence ever since the two universities had been closed to Dissenters in connection with the Act of Uniformity (1662). Many of the earliest academies had operated as true alternatives to the universities, offering not only instruction in the classics, philosophy and theology, but also mathematics and the physical sciences. In this latter respect, such institutions broke new educational ground and contributed materially to the industrial and scientific advance of England in the eighteenth century. However, both because of their impermanent existence (subject to the migratory

⁷⁹ Henry F. Burder, Memoir of George Burder, (London, 1833), pp. 23-30.

⁸⁰ Jay, ed. Memoir of Winter, pp. 52, 62, 249. Chester Terpstra, David Bogue, (Edinburgh University Ph.D thesis, 1959), p. 60.

careers of their tutors, who were most often Dissenting ministers) and the tendencies of very many academies' theological instruction to foster the 'rational' forms of Dissent, the older academies tended after mid-century to give way to new foundations. The latter were specifically inaugurated to train itinerant preachers for the expanding Independent and Baptist forms of Dissent.

Such academies usually enrolled fewer students and, as they aimed exclusively at the preparation of preachers, placed much less emphasis upon the sciences and mathematics and much more upon theology and pastoral preparation.⁸¹ The tutors of such academies, quite naturally, were not expected to be the polymaths so often in evidence in the older institutions, but primarily exemplary preachers renowned also for their theological stature.⁸² Most importantly, the practice and conduct of preaching in the surrounding towns and villages was very much encouraged among the students early in the shortened curriculum of two or three years.

The new trend in the preparation of preachers seems to have been set in motion by the foundation in 1768 of

⁸¹ So, for instance the Academy at Newport Pagnell, cf. McLachlan, Education Under the Test Acts, p.242. Deryck Lovegrove, Established Church, Sectarian People, (Cambridge, 1988), p.69.

⁸² It is evident that the small academies operated by Independents such as David Bogue, Cornelius Winter, and William Bull derived their reputations from the orthodoxy and usefulness of their tutors.

Trevecca College by Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.⁸³ Though ostensibly created to prepare preachers for Welsh Calvinistic Methodism, the college in time contributed many preachers both to the Countess of Huntingdon's own connexion of chapels and wider Independency.⁸⁴ In the wake of the founding of Trevecca, there can be observed the emergence of similar institutions from about the year 1782.

The itinerating movement, aided and abetted by the new academies, spread dramatically in the period 1750-1840. Regional examples make this growth evident. The Independent churches within Hampshire formed themselves into a county association in 1781 and shortly thereafter founded an affiliate "Society for Propagating the Gospel in Hampshire". Before the death of David Bogue, the instigator of the scheme, in 1825, the original ten congregations of the county association had been supplemented by twenty-one new chapels and three congregations meeting in renovated buildings.⁸⁵ David Bogue and James Bennett, writing in 1808, were personally aware of five hundred Dissenting congregations which did not exist thirty-five years before.⁸⁶

⁸³ Lovegrove, Established Church, p.69.

⁸⁴ Watts, Dissenters, p. 453.

⁸⁵ Terpstra, Bogue, pp. 197ff.

⁸⁶ Bogue and Bennett, History of Dissenters, IV, pp. 327,328.

National statistics tell a similar story. The Independent churches are reckoned to have had a membership of a mere fifteen thousand in the year 1750; this had increased to twenty-six thousand in 1790 and thirty-five thousand in 1800. Particular Baptists grew from ten thousand to twenty-four thousand in the same fifty year period. It was in the same era that other connexions also grew dramatically. Selina, Countess of Huntingdon left at her death in 1791 a loose-knit connexion variously numbered at between fifty-five and eighty chapels, with a further seven under direct control of her executors. Whitefield similarly established a loose-knit connexion of congregations in London, Bristol and Gloucestershire.⁸⁷ The majority of Independent and Baptist churches had truly been quickened by the Evangelical Revival. By the 1790's, it was plain that these churches were comprised chiefly of the very artisan classes which had found a home in the Wesleyan societies.⁸⁸ Increasingly English Dissenters sang the Wesley hymns (though sometimes with suitably altered lyrics) along with the hymns and paraphrases of Watts and Doddridge.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Walsh, "Methodism at the End" p.292.

⁸⁸ Gilbert, Religion and Society. pp. 61,62.

⁸⁹ Note the splendid essay, "The Hymnody of the Evangelical Revival" in Louis F. Benson, The English Hymn, (Atlanta, 1964), pp. 315ff.

Scotland and the Evangelical Revival

One writer has remarked that the decade of the 1790's found Scotland's evangelical movement far behind the corresponding movement in England.⁹⁰ This opinion, which is almost certainly mistaken, nevertheless highlights the difficulty inherent in any attempt to correlate the ecclesiastical life of the two nations in that age when contacts between the two were sporadic and made difficult by virtue of the rigours of travel.

The distinctiveness of the two nations must be recognized. Eighteenth century English visitors to Scotland too often made this recognition belatedly. George Whitefield is said to have been taken aback at the great rustle generated by the turning of Bible pages once his text was announced in a Dunfermline congregation in 1741.⁹¹ John Wesley is said to have been surprised at the biblical literacy of his hearers in Scotland, a circumstance which made it difficult for him to teach them anything new.⁹²

In point of fact, the visits of the two celebrated English itinerants to Scotland (Wesley making twenty-two visits and Whitefield fifteen) provided a factor of

⁹⁰ J.H.S. Burleigh, A Church History of Scotland, (Oxford, 1960), p.310.

⁹¹ Dallimore, Whitefield, II, p.88.

⁹² A.S. Wood, "Methodism in Scotland", in Davies and Rupp, eds., History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain, III, pp. 266ff.

commonality and would seem to lie at the root of attempted correlations between religious developments in the two nations in the period. But it is important to note that religious awakening in Scotland preceded that in England.⁹³ Whitefield's first visit to Scotland in 1741 preceded but was in no evident way connected with the great religious awakening at Cambuslang, which came in the aftermath of long activity by local ministers and parish prayer societies.

The very rapturous welcomes which Whitefield received bears important testimony to the continued existence in the 1740's of a virile evangelicalism native to Scotland. This is not to say that the spiritual fortunes of Scotland were enviable. In fact, among men like James Robe of Kilsyth and William McCulloch of Cambuslang there was a very clear perception of religious decline in the society of their day. But their very determination to overcome this decline indicates their solidarity with an older Christian outlook. And that this outlook had in fact persisted is not a matter of conjecture at all.⁹⁴ We have already noted the pervasive influence in southern England of the doctrinal and devotional writings of Thomas Boston and the brothers,

⁹³ a point we have made in this chapter at pp. 11,12.

⁹⁴ Stewart Mechie, "The Theological Climate In Early Eighteenth Century Scotland", in Duncan Shaw, ed. Reformation and Revolution, (Edinburgh, 1967), pp 258- 272, has indicated that an evangelical Calvinism was one of ~~for~~ distinguishable Presbyterian outlooks in this era.

Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine.

What is more, the state of the Church of Scotland in this period bore mottled testimony to the continuance of an older Puritan evangelicalism in the Kirk. While distancing ourselves from any simplistic suggestion that the Secession movement of 1740 led by Ebenezer Erskine was motivated purely out of a concern for the preservation and continuation of the Christian Gospel, we may still recognize that some of the aggregate concerns behind the Secession stood in clear connection with that great end. Full satisfaction had never been granted in the controversy over the Christological views of Professor John Simson of Glasgow. There was a similar sense of grievance at the General Assembly's repudiation of the sentiments of The Marrow of Modern Divinity, that Puritan work, reprinted in 1726, advocating an unrestrained offer of the Gospel. Of greatest import of all had been the Seceders' resolute opposition to the abuses re-introduced with the restoration of patronage to the Kirk.

The Secession Church movement was not simply a manifestation of the new evangelical impulse of the eighteenth century. After all, the Secession castigated Whitefield for his consorting with the Kirk in his Scottish visits and even attributed some of the manifestations which had appeared at Cambuslang to the

work of the devil.⁹⁵ Yet having said this, it is necessary at once to stress that there existed certain continuities between the Secession and the rising movement of evangelical Dissent in England.

First, in spite of its emphasis upon a continuing role for the the National Covenant of 1638 and its insistence upon the obligation of government to support the Protestant religion, the Secession in reality took up a position of 'de facto' voluntarism and existed without State aid and jurisdiction. This was the position of all English Nonconformity, though without any of the limitations imposed upon the English by the Toleration Act legislation of 1689. Second, as to theology, the Secession stood in relation to the prevailing theological and philosophical climate of the eighteenth century approximately where English evangelical Dissent stood; this involved holding fast to the Puritan divinity of the late seventeenth century. By a process of self-imposed distancing from the Scottish university faculties of Divinity, the Secession began to rely upon the "academy" system of ministerial preparation.⁹⁶

The points of similarity between the Relief Presbytery (founded 1761) and English evangelical Dissent are plainer still. Thomas Gillespie, former Kirk minister

⁹⁵ Dallimore, Whitefield, II, p. 131.

⁹⁶ One distinction, however, being that Seceding Scots continued to take a university Arts degree preliminary to the study of theology in an Academy setting.

of Carnock and leader of the "Relief" was a graduate of Philip Doddridge's Northampton Academy and had brought with him not a few ideas current among the English Nonconformists. Hardly coincidentally, Relief Synod folk were the first Presbyterians in Scotland to enjoy the use of hymns; a 1794 ruling of their Synod regularized a practice already instituted in its Anderston congregation.⁹⁷

The Secession and Relief Churches grew phenomenally. In a 1766 appeal to the Church of Scotland General Assembly termed the "Overture on Schism" it was estimated that divisions of congregations over church patronage had alienated, to date, one hundred thousand persons now organized into one hundred and twenty congregations.⁹⁸ Champions of conformity to the law of patronage argued that a variety of religious organization and expression was a desirable thing. Yet it is difficult to believe that such a position could have been long maintained if the true costs of the patronage policy were computed. Relief and Secession growth, to be sure, had not been solely by evangelistic ingathering but also by a regrouping of the previously affiliated. Yet it took dramatic action: nearly on the scale of then-current

⁹⁷ Interesting details of Gillespie and the origins of Relief are found in Hugh Watt, "Thomas Gillespie", in Records of the Scottish Church History Society, XV, pp. 89ff. Benson, The English Hymn, p.155.

⁹⁸ John MacInnes, The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland, p. 83.



itineration in England, to accomplish what was by 1820 the ingathering of twenty-nine percent of the national and thirty-two percent of the lowland population into Presbyterian Dissent in its various forms.⁹⁹ This growth rate far surpassed that of English evangelical Dissent in the same period.

As in England, this ingathering had a marked class orientation about it. In the eighteenth century, the Secession in its Anti-Burgher manifestation was predominantly rural. Yet the Burgher Secession groups and the Relief Synod were largely comprised of tradesmen such as masons, wrights, and butchers along with some groups of textile workers.¹⁰⁰

Burleigh's suggestion that the decade of the 1790's found Scottish evangelicalism in a position behind that seen in the nation to the south is not only overthrown by an examination of the proliferation of Presbyterian Dissent, but by an appraisal of the constituency of the Kirk, 'vis a vis' the Church of England. Evangelicalism in the Kirk - its struggles with ascendant moderatism and defections to Presbyterian Dissent notwithstanding, was never reduced to the position of weakness of its counterpart in the southern Establishment in the same period.

⁹⁹ Calum Brown, A Social History of Religion in Scotland, (London, 1987), p.31.

¹⁰⁰ Brown, *ibid.* p.4.

One of the major reasons for this evangelical resiliency in the eighteenth century is that the Scottish Kirk, while also a territorial establishment, assumed a different posture towards seventeenth century theology than did the Church of England. In Scotland, the Westminster Confession of Faith and other theological literature of the preceding century continued to exercise an immense influence - never suffering by association the supposed connection with regicide and social disruption which haunted Puritan theology in England after the Restoration. Appeals even to the thus-unstained Thirty-nine Articles may have been in vain in England's early eighteenth century; not so in Scotland where debates took place as to what the Confession of Faith taught, rather than as to its authority in the Church.

When seen in this light, the Scottish Kirk's ongoing links with the theology of the preceding century indicates that Scotland's theological affinity continued to be with the international Calvinist world. Moreover, from the 1662 Act of Uniformity forwards, the Scottish university faculties of divinity had become a major force in the shaping of English Nonconformity and this role continued until well into the nineteenth century.

It was common for English academy students to complete their study with a year at a Scottish university (most often Glasgow or Edinburgh) so as to take a degree;

a good proportion of those who obtained this certification later occupied English academy lectureships themselves. Furthermore, the Scottish faculties of divinity plainly kept abreast of the published works of the leading English Nonconformists and were ready at regular intervals to recognize excellence with the award of the D.D. degree. King's College, Aberdeen awarded the degree in 1728 to Thomas Ridgely, tutor in theology at Hoxton Academy. The same college similarly honored Philip Doddridge in 1737 - but it had been bested by one year by its cross-town rival, Marischal College. Edward Williams, tutor in theology at Rotherham Academy received the honor in 1791 from the University of Edinburgh. A myriad of examples might be given, but these can suffice to demonstrate the common bond in operation during the century.¹⁰¹

Within the international Calvinist "orbit" then, of which Scotland never ceased to be a part, Calvinistic evangelicalism continued to be a defensible and formidable theological position. In Scotland, as elsewhere, however, there were varieties of Calvinistic thinking to be found. The biographer of the evangelically-minded John Erskine (1721-1803) of Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh -- the 'doyen' of his party in late eighteenth century -- remarked of him that "while

¹⁰¹McLachlan, Education Under the Test Acts, pp. 30, 33, 118, 149, 199.

Calvinistical, his was not the vulgar Calvinism which exhausts itself in intricate and mysterious dogmas".¹⁰²

In sum, we may say that Scottish evangelicalism cannot in any sweeping sense be described as lagging behind that in England in the last decade of the eighteenth century. With respect to the growth of evangelical Dissent, numbers of evangelical clergy, and its size in proportion to the national population, it may well have surpassed that of England. Conversely, it trailed its southern counterpart in its demonstration of hearty co-operation across denominational lines; Presbyterian divisions in the 1740's and 1760's (with eventual re-divisions) meant that mis-trust would characterize the relations of these churches for decades to come. The founding of the Edinburgh Missionary Society in 1796 marked a partial reversing of this tide; it was a cause involving both Establishment and Dissenting supporters.¹⁰³ Apart from this, Scottish evangelicals were often left to demonstrate their solidarity by supporting schemes which had originated

¹⁰² Henry Moncrieff Wellwood, Account of the Life and Writings of John Erskine, (Edinburgh, 1816), p.380.

¹⁰³ Dudley Reeves, The Interaction of Scottish and English Evangelicals; 1790-1810, (Glasgow University M. Litt. thesis, 1973), p.69. John Kilpatrick, "The Records of the Scottish Missionary Society (1796-1848)", in Records of the Scottish Church History Society, X, pp. 196ff.

south of the border.¹⁰⁴

Pan-Evangelicalism in England and Scotland

Writing in 1830 of the late Alexander Waugh (1754-1827), the long-time minister of the Wells Street Presbyterian (Seceding) Chapel in London, his biographers recalled a period in the 1790's when evangelical Dissenters had begun to form voluntary associations for the extension of the Evangelical movement throughout England.¹⁰⁵ Of greatest import to our present concern was the formation of four enterprizes: the Evangelical Magazine (1793), the London Missionary Society (1795), the Religious Tract Society (1796) and the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804).

Such enterprizes would never have been launched without the existence of a "common front" evangelicalism spanning a considerable range of Protestant opinion. Waugh's biographers detailed Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Independent and Calvinistic Methodist participation in the founding of the magazine.¹⁰⁶ A

¹⁰⁴ Thus the Missionary Societies of Edinburgh and Stirling forwarded funds for the support of William Carey, Baptist Missionary Society worker in Bengal. The Scottish visits of the B.M.S. representative, Andrew Fuller, from 1799 regularly gathered similar support. cf. Reeves, Interaction, pp. 26, 28.

¹⁰⁵ James Hay and Henry Belfrage, Memoir of the Rev. Alexander Waugh, D.D., (Edinburgh, 1830, reprinted 1839), p.150.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*

substantial Scottish involvement was also integral to the origins of each. The creation of the "common front", contrary to some suggestions, did not indicate the increasing sway of a reductionist evangelical theology, but instead a willingness to work together as co-belligerents.¹⁰⁷ The Scottish involvement, while capable of being given an exaggerated importance, was none the less real. In the launch of the Evangelical Magazine, two of nine original trustees (Robert Simpson and David Bogue) were of Scots birth; both as it happened were tutors in English Independent academies. In the case of the London Missionary Society, no fewer than ten of an

¹⁰⁷ Both Martin, Evangelicals United, pp. 17ff. and Walsh, "Methodism at the End", p.298, have argued that the Calvinism of this pan-evangelical era was increasingly undogmatic. It is so very easy to show this to be untrue even among the inner circle of pan-evangelical leaders that the assertions must be weighed very carefully. Andrew Fuller, (see note 45 above) spoke of moderate Calvinism with obvious disdain, yet is named as a representative of this very tendency. Thomas Haweis, also a central figure, upon learning of the suspicion that his commentary, the Evangelical Expositor had been modelled rather too extensively on the famous commentary of the Presbyterian, Matthew Henry, retorted, "I am no Baxterian (i.e. he believed Henry to be a "low " Calvinist) but decidedly and consistently Calvinist", cf. Wood, Haweis, p.116. Again, David Bogue, source of the famous "death of bigotry" oration of 1795, had held to a very strict Calvinism from his Edinburgh university days and this he evidently communicated to his Gosport pupils without reliance on creeds, cf. Bennett, Life of Bogue, p. 17. It is not necessary to maintain that all or even most leading pan-evangelicals held to such strict views in order to demonstrate the unfairness of the sweeping generalizations about Calvinism's supposed "decomposition" (Walsh). The judgement of Waugh's biographers (p.150) that this cooperation among leading ministers took place "without compromising their peculiar principles" is a more trustworthy assesment of the mind of pan-evangelicalism.

original thirty-six "fathers" of the society had Scottish links.¹⁰⁸

While this pan-evangelicalism must be seen as a direct outgrowth of the Evangelical Revival, embodying most particularly the ideals of Whitefield,¹⁰⁹ it is also necessary to say that in the unfolding of its missionary and publishing aspirations outside Britain, it very much reflected the broad horizons provided by the expansion of British investment, technology and trade. A great stimulus to missionary aspirations for the South Pacific had been provided by the publication of the nautical journals of Captain James Cook. Thomas Haweis, a "father" of the London Missionary Society, had privately pursued the idea of a mission to Tahiti as early as 1791; in that year he had met Captain Bligh who had returned to England after the famous mutiny on the *Bounty*.¹¹⁰ The continent of Europe itself, which would figure largely in the schemes of both the Missionary Society and Bible Society, was increasingly the theatre of growing British economic and diplomatic activity. Missionary activity in India, Africa, and Asia, equally followed the contours of this expansion, though at times over the objections of

¹⁰⁸ cf. Martin, Evangelicals United, pp.42,3 and John Morison, Fathers and Founders of the London Missionary Society, (London, 1844). The ten, among thirty-six described by Morison, were Bogue, Waugh, Love, Simpson, J. Steven, Hunter, Jerment, Graham, Smith and R. Steven.

¹⁰⁹ Martin, Evangelicals United, p.9.

¹¹⁰ Wood, Haweis, p.177.

powers such as the East India Company.

It was in this very decade of pan-evangelical enthusiasm that a key figure in our narrative, Robert Haldane (1764-1842) first crosses the stage. Like his younger brother, James Alexander Haldane (1768-1851), he had made a career at sea. Robert had served the Royal Navy while his brother had risen to the rank of captain in service of the East India Company. Through periodic calls at the naval base in Southampton, Robert gained the acquaintance of David Bogue at nearby Gosport. Haldane received some tutoring in theology in Bogue's ministerial academy during shore leaves after 1782. Only in the year 1795, however, did Robert Haldane believe himself to be a converted man. Yet by the following year, we find that Haldane had sold his sizeable estate at Airthrey, Stirlingshire with a view to utilizing the proceeds in Christian enterprizes. With Bogue's assistance, he had also joined the circle of pan-evangelical leaders; from 1796 he was listed among the directors of the fledgling London Missionary Society.¹¹¹

Moving regularly in the overlapping circles of the supporters of the latter society, the Evangelical Magazine, and the Religious Tract Society, Haldane was introduced to prominent men such as George Burder, Rowland Hill (1744-1833) and Andrew Fuller (1754-1833).

¹¹¹ Reports of the London Missionary Society, (London, 1796-98). Martin, Evangelicals United, p. 210. Haldane continued as a director until 1804.

All of these would eventually fill the pulpit of the Tabernacle he would erect on Edinburgh's Leith Walk. In this same period, Haldane became known as the benefactor of the ministerial academies directed by David Bogue and Cornelius Winter.¹¹² A Scots acquaintance of Haldane, John Campbell (1766-1840) was then also moving in these same London circles. This Edinburgh ironmonger came away from London especially impressed with what he had seen; he shortly thereafter undertook major initiatives in tract distribution and Sunday School organization.¹¹³

A Haldane "circle" was in process of formation. Two young Church of Scotland ministers, William Innes of Stirling and Greville Ewing of Lady Glenorchy's Chapel, Edinburgh (the two were also brothers in law) shared the missionary concerns of Robert Haldane and John Campbell. Influenced by reports of what William Carey was accomplishing in Bengal by the divine blessing, they -- in company with David Bogue -- proposed in 1796 to go to Bengal on a missionary enterprize; the venture was to be funded 'in toto' by Robert Haldane. Opposition within East India Company and Government combined to ensure that permission to enter the region would never be given.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Bennett, Bogue, p.119. Terpstra, Bogue, p.106.

¹¹³ J.A. Haldane, Lives of Robert and James Haldane, (Edinburgh, 1855) pp. 190-91, 230-233. Reeves, Interaction, p.118.

¹¹⁴ Robert Haldane's known lack of enthusiasm for the proposal to raise local militia to guard against invasion by France's revolutionary armies lay behind this combined

This rebuff in an attempted foreign mission caused the same energies to be focussed upon the homeland. A successful itinerant preaching tour through Scotland by the Cambridge clergyman, Charles Simeon in 1796 suggested interesting possibilities. The Haldane 'circle' formed itself into the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home" in 1797 and there followed a flurry of itinerant preaching and launching of Sunday Schools. James Haldane, brother to Robert, conducted his own extensive preaching tours of the Highlands from that year and in his train went out forty catechists who were assigned to distinct districts for summer seasons.¹¹⁵

Acting on a suggestion of John Campbell, the Edinburgh merchant, Robert Haldane in 1798 rented the Edinburgh "Circus"; the building had then recently been put to temporary use as home of a Relief Presbyterian congregation.¹¹⁶ He then called on the services of the preachers whose acquaintance he had made in London pan-evangelical circles; in short order David Bogue, Andrew

opposition.

¹¹⁵ Reeves, Interaction, pp. 107,144. See also Donald Meek, "Evangelical Missionaries in the Early Nineteenth Century Highlands", in Scottish Studies, 28, pp. 1ff. and A. MacWhirter, "Early Days of the Independents and Congregationalists in the Northern Isles", in Records of the Scottish Church History Society, XVI, pp. 63ff.

¹¹⁶ Robert Philip, The Life, Times and Missionary Enterprises of John Campbell, (London, 1841), p.164.

Fuller, James Bennett, Rowland Hill and Matthew Wilks¹¹⁷ could each be heard preaching the gospel for a series of Sundays to the poor and curious - for the "Circus" charged no pew rents. The "Circus" ministry drew crowds of two thousand and more and soon shifted to a permanent edifice, the Tabernacle at the head of Leith Walk. Purpose built, it was at completion Scotland's most capacious church building. This success, like that encountered by the catechists and travelling evangelists of the Society For the Propagation of the Gospel at Home, raised the question of what was to be done with the converts. The question had not been wrestled with in advance.

Robert Haldane, the financial mainstay of the S.P.G.H., had originally aimed only to supplement the efforts of the Church of Scotland, whose services of worship he still attended.¹¹⁸ As he financed the summer labour of untrained catechists and English preachers and erected halls for the use of Sunday Schools and preaching services, he likely envisioned nothing more than a connexion of meeting houses in an informal relationship to the National Church.¹¹⁹ But his brother's tendency to

¹¹⁷ see for instance, Kinniburgh, Fathers of Indpendency in Scotland, (Edinburgh, 1851), pp. 101, 275, 363, 364.

¹¹⁸ Philip, John Campbell, p.280.

¹¹⁹ this, after all, had been the original plan of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon (1707-1791) until she had been forced to register her various English chapels as Dissenting meeting houses under the Toleration Act.

denounce Kirk ministers unsupportive of his own itinerant preaching only fuelled a growing undertow of Kirk concern at the size of this Haldane "home missionary movement". The result was a pronouncement by the General Assembly of 1798 warning against "itinerant preachers from England".¹²⁰

Any notions the S. P. G. H. may have cherished about their simply supplementing the efforts of the National Church were now shattered. With the National Church now closing her pulpits to itineration, the Haldane connexion had come to occupy a kind of ecclesiastical "no man's land". But simultaneous with these developments, and largely through the personal influence of the English preachers relied upon for the supplying of the Edinburgh Tabernacle, the ideas of congregational Independency began to take hold. The General Assembly's recent display of hostility to the work of itineration gave the anti-hierarchical polity of Independency particular appeal. Greville Ewing, who as a member of the S. P. G. H. then resigned both his position as assistant minister at Lady Glenorchy's Chapel, Edinburgh and his status as a

Willielma, Lady Glenorchy, had pursued just the same aim in Edinburgh, first sponsoring services in the former St. Mary's Chapel, Niddry Wynd in 1770 and later in her own chapel. cf. T.S. Jones, The Life of the Right Honourable Willielma Viscountess Glenorchy, (Edinburgh, 1824), p. 131.

¹²⁰ the measure of the General Assembly not only closed Church of Scotland pulpits to the preachers associated with the S.P.G.H., but also to the formerly well-received representatives of the Baptist and London Missionary Societies.

Kirk minister, came particularly under the influence of these ideas. He now advocated that the Edinburgh Tabernacle be organized into a church on congregational principles. This in fact occurred in 1799; James Haldane was chosen as pastor.

There was nothing inherent in the Haldanite movement which necessitated its moving in a congregational direction. In fact, there was one sizeable obstacle in the path of such a development; this was nothing other than Robert Haldane's own utter domination. He seemed incapable of operating at arm's length and habitually took direct intervening action as the major donor of the Society.

The deleterious effects of such dominance, perhaps only vaguely apparent earlier, would become plain as day in 1808. Then both Haldane brothers made public their changed views on the doctrine and practice of baptism (they abandoned paedobaptism^m) and the need for multiple lay homilies (a practice they termed "mutual exhortation") in church services. The largesse which had subsidized preachers and catechists and erected church edifices across Scotland was now cut off where their new views were not adopted.¹²¹ Workers whose paedobaptist convictions had not changed were left destitute.

¹²¹ Terpstra, Boque, p. 223 lists Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Elgin, Dumfries, Perth, Dunkeld, Aberdeen, Helensburgh, Thurso and Wick as sites of Haldane-financed edifices.

Similarly-minded congregations forfeited places of meeting as buildings reverted to the possession of the philanthropist who held deed to them.¹²² But in 1799, this crisis was not foreseen. The Haldane connexion, now congregational in tendency, continued to grow. By 1805 there were twenty-five congregations in existence; by 1808 the number had grown to eighty-five.¹²³

If itinerant preaching was a first indicator of the arrival of a "new evangelicalism"¹²⁴ in Scotland, there was also a second: the employment of the "Academy" system of ministerial training on a hitherto unknown scale. The Haldanite movement did not introduce the concept to Scotland; we have noticed that Secession and Relief Presbyterian Churches had employed it beforehand, though as a supplement to rather than as a substitute for university education.

Robert Haldane's first plan was evidently to sponsor up to twenty students for study at the Gosport Academy under his old acquaintance, David Bogue. He aimed to utilize these students as summer catechists in the schemes of the S. P. G. H. However, he did not follow through on this intention. Instead, because of the joint

¹²² Examples of this hardship are detailed in Robert Kinniburgh, Fathers of Independency in Scotland, (Edinburgh, 1851), pp. 127, 301, 416, 435.

¹²³ Reeves, Interaction, pp. 107, 144.

¹²⁴The description is justly employed by MacInnes, Evangelical Movement in the Highlands, p.128.

concern of Greville Ewing and James Garie (preacher in the Haldane connexion at Perth) regarding Bogue's then-notorious republican sympathies and the cultural differences a Hampshire education would entail, Haldane financed academy-style instruction in various Scottish centres under able ministers.¹²⁵

Between 1798 and 1808 (the year in which the Haldane connexion foundered) three hundred men received two years of theological education in classes offered at Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dundee. Classes preparatory to the study of theology were also offered to students in need of preliminary training; these were available in Armagh, Ireland and Elgin. Twenty thousand pounds were expended in the ten years of the scheme's existence.¹²⁶

Haldane both gave his own 'imprimatur' to the enrolment of each student (whose costs he paid in full) and monitored all behaviour and manners through student 'censors'.¹²⁷

The Perceived Dangers of Evangelical Dissent

It is worthy of note that evangelical Dissent met considerable opposition in both its northern and southern

¹²⁵ Terpstra, Bogue, p.222. R. F. Calder, "Robert Haldane's Theological Seminary", in Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society, Vol. XIII, (1937-1939), p.60.

¹²⁶ Calder, "Haldane's Seminary", pp. 62, 63.

¹²⁷ Calder, "Haldane's Seminary", p. 63.

manifestations. Yet the opposition encountered was not entirely identical by reason of the fact that the English Toleration Act (1689), which regulated the licensing of Nonconformist ministers and meeting houses in the southern kingdom, applied only there. Opposition met by evangelical Dissent in England may be said to have been both legal and religious and that of ^{the} Scottish variety religious alone.

The arrival of evangelical Dissent in the form of the Haldane movement raised many apprehensions. That it should have done so in a land whose indigenous evangelicalism had first nourished and then welcomed English representatives of the Revival, had found expression in both Secession and Relief churches, and continued amidst some difficulty in the Kirk, requires explanation.

The rise of foreign missionary interest after 1794-5 received cross-denominational support in Scotland. The founding of the London Missionary Society had a most beneficial effect, according to John Philip, biographer of John Campbell.

It had a most electrifying effect on the Christians of the north. We were like men who dreamed. From the days of George Whitefield until then, the Christians on both sides of the Tweed had been fast asleep. The Christians of different names were busy repairing and adding to their walls of separation and now and then throwing squibs at each other ...but the news of the above Society was like the bursting forth of a bright meteor in a dark

night.¹²⁸

Yet the subsequent campaign to establish Sabbath evening schools, led first by Campbell and then by the S. P. G. H., received a very different reception because they provided venues for a flurry of lay-preaching. It is not self-evident why this opposition should have been shown. Both the era of the Cambuslang-Kilsyth awakening and the Highland regional practice of "the men", circulating in broad parishes to assist the minister in catechising, had modestly approximated the lay-preaching of 1797-1798.¹²⁹ Yet there were differences as well; earlier lay preaching had been carried out inside parish boundaries and under the jurisdiction of the minister. The new movement sent lay-preachers across parish boundaries to wherever the S. P. G. H. deemed best.

If the Kirk's opposition was rooted in Moderate party dismay at the denunciatory tendencies of the Haldane itinerants, it is not transparently clear why Secession and Relief churches should have joined in the opposition. Such evidence as we have suggests that Anti-Burgher Secession opposition in 1796 and 1798 was motivated by deep fears about cross-denominational missionary activity in general and the increased scope

¹²⁸ Philip, John Campbell, pp. 23,24.

¹²⁹ A. Fawcett, "Scottish Lay Preachers in the Eighteenth Century", in Records of the Scottish Church History Society, XII, pp. 97-119. MacInnes, Evangelical Movement in the Highlands, pp. 197ff.

given for lay leadership in prayer and preaching. The Burgher Synod in the same period had no scope for preaching by the unordained and looked askance at Sabbath evening schools.¹³⁰ The Relief Church had warmly embraced the coming of the missionary movement and endorsed the concept of foreign mission in 1796 but may have been moved to resent Haldane activity in the Highlands given their own missionary efforts there.¹³¹ Presbyterian solidarity temporarily triumphed over long-standing differences in the face of the new itinerant movement.

This posture seems to have been the clear counterpart to that of the Church of England towards evangelical Dissent in its various forms; as well there was always a measure of disdain by an Establishment towards other churches which were merely tolerated by statute. Throughout the eighteenth century, Nonconformity in England had laboured under this disadvantage and sought to remove its handicap by seizing opportunities to reassure the sovereign and government of the day of its fidelity.

Questions were raised regarding the political loyalty of Nonconformists in connection with the outbreak

¹³⁰ Kinniburgh, Fathers of Independency, pp. 18, 19, 225, 355. McKerrow, History of the Secession Church, (Glasgow, 1841), p. 393.

¹³¹ Reeves, Interaction, p. 68. MacInnes, Evangelical Movement in the Highlands, p. 94.

of the French Revolution. While we will return to consider the ramifications of the French Revolution for British religious thought more extensively below, we may here consider just how disruptive the Revolution and the response drawn by it was to the pan-evangelical spirit. The mere fact that prominent Dissenters expressed initial delight in the French events of 1789, and saw in them a portent of the longed-for elimination of domestic disabilities based on religion¹³² was enough to send shock waves through government and the Established Churches.

David Bogue, a man of wide evangelical influence, clearly espoused such hopes both at the time and subsequently when he came to write, with James Bennett their History of Dissenters. The latter chronicle claimed that "Multitudes of Dissenters entered, with peculiar ardour into the French Revolution as an event pregnant with happiness to the people of France".¹³³ The stream of Dissent which had ceased to be Trinitarian and was now termed "rational" Dissent, was even more forward in extolling the virtues of the Revolution. Richard Price delivered his famous Discourse on the Love of our Country, drawing out the implications from France for Britain, a bare four months after the fall of the

¹³² Martin, Evangelicals United, p. 27.

¹³³ Bogue and Bennett, History, III, p. 483.

Bastille.¹³⁴ While sympathetic to the achievements of the young Revolution, the evangelical Dissenter, George Burder came away dissatisfied from a 1790 meeting of Dissenters. Gathered from the nine Midland counties, delegates sought a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts in the light of the Revolution. Alarmed at the violent approach taken by Unitarians present, Burder withdrew from the association shortly thereafter. Yet the consequences, when they came, imperilled not only the Richard Prices and Joseph Priestlys¹ of the day, but Dissenters of all kinds.¹³⁵

The enthusiasm of many evangelical Dissenters for the French Revolution caused a chill in their recently more cordial relationships with their Establishment counterparts. A monthly fraternal meeting of ministers at Hull, embracing persons from the Establishment, Dissent, and Methodism was terminated in 1792.¹³⁶ The latter year marked the transition of the Revolution from its more moderate to its more radical republican phase characterized by the 'Reign of Terror'. When evangelical Dissenters such as David Bogue continued to support the revolution after 1792 (in his own case with a speech delivered at Salters Hall) Establishment clergy believed this was confirmation of an alliance between Dissent and

¹³⁴ Watts, Dissenters, p.481.

¹³⁵ Burder, Memoir, pp. 145,146,148.

¹³⁶ Walsh, "Methodism at the End", pp. 291,301.

forces working for England's destabilization. Even pan-evangelical John Newton, the strong supporter of the Newport Pagnell academy for the training of itinerant preachers (founded 1782) exclaimed in 1793 that "all the Dissenters, even the orthodox not excepted, are republicans and enemies to government".¹³⁷

Of course, many persons not numbered among the Dissenters raised their own hue and cry on behalf of events in France. Social historian E. P. Thompson has demonstrated the strength of the 'Libertarian' tradition in this period as reflected in the Sheffield weekly press and popular street demonstrations in support of French developments.¹³⁸ Abortive French attempts at landing troops in Wales and Western Ireland, the latter in conjunction with Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen,¹³⁹ ensured that many quite harmless persons would be held suspect in that uncertain decade.

Quite apart from any political remarks or involvement, evangelical Dissenters found themselves more politically suspect than earlier because the 1790's was for them a period of rapid growth and impressive organization. The founding of a national Evangelical

¹³⁷ Josiah Bull, Memorials of W. Bull, (London, 1864), p.221, quoted in Walsh, "Methodism at the End", p. 303.

¹³⁸ E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, (Harmondsworth, 1963), pp. 111-113.

¹³⁹ R. F. G. Holmes, "United Irishmen and Unionists" in W. J. Shiels and Diana Wood, eds., Studies in Church History, 25, (Oxford, 1988), pp. 184ff.

Magazine, a well-funded international missionary organization (the L. M. S.) and an affiliated publishing concern (the Religious Tract Society) made the pan-evangelical movement cause for no small concern.¹⁴⁰

Under such circumstances, only a quite militant breed of Establishment evangelical chose to be associated with the above-named three enterprizes in the decade of their formation. It was understandable that such persons in the Establishment would show a heightened preference for their own kind, demonstrated in the existence of such ministerial fraternals as the "Eclectic Society of London". The published notes of the discussions held within this society afford a rich glimpse into the theological and political views of participating members in the years 1798-1814.¹⁴¹

William Wilberforce, parliamentarian and Anglican, in keeping with this heightened distrust of Dissent, worked in 1796 to obstruct the application of a group (alluded to above) to enter India. David Bogue, Robert

¹⁴⁰ Deryck Lovegrove, "English Evangelical Dissent and the European Conflict" in W. J. Shiels, ed., Studies in Church History, 20, (Oxford, 1983), pp. 263 ff.

¹⁴¹ John Pratt, Notes of the Discussions of the Eclectic Society, (London, 1856, reprint edition 1978). Some interesting topics discussed in the period include: "What can be done at the present moment to counteract the designs of infidels?", "How shall a minister best preserve his people from the influence of Sectarian teachers?", "By what arguments shall we plead with God to deliver us from the French?", "What is the duty of a member of the Established Church if the preaching of the Gospel is occasionally suspended or altogether ceases in his parish church?".

Haldane, Greville Ewing and John Campbell seemed to be associated with this tendency to disloyalty and thus Wilberforce recorded in his diary that the men were "perfect democrats". John Newton, who knew of the proposal through his close acquaintance with John Campbell, also laboured to obstruct it. Yet he simultaneously sought to have chaplains or missionaries of his Established Church introduced to that region.¹⁴²

That the latter aspiration came to fruition with the foundation in 1799 of the Church Missionary Society cannot be attributed chiefly to the fact that the Rev. Joseph Jane, vicar of St. Mary Magdalen Church, Oxford provided a bequest of some four thousand pounds for the purpose. The question must still be asked why Jane and others such as John Venn, William Goode and Charles Simeon could not support the existing missionary society founded in 1795. Any explanation would need to include the fear of the "republicanism" with which the Dissenting supporters of the London Society were thought to be tainted, reservations over that Society's commitment to an undenominational "fundamental principle", and the lack of unanimity among the London Society's directors as to what type of missionary preparation was in order.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Terpstra, Bogue, p.256.

¹⁴³ Martin, Evangelicals United, p. 52. Pratt, Eclectic Society, pp. 95-102. Hay and Belfrage, Waugh, p. 153, indicate Waugh's key role in encapsulating the "fundamental principle".

Even with the cause of wider pan-evangelicalism suffering a setback under the pressures of hostility with France, evangelical Dissent grew by great leaps and bounds. The county associations of Baptist and Independent churches as well as the itinerant societies maintained an impressive growth rate until approximately 1840; the pattern was virtually the same as that experienced by various Methodist bodies.¹⁴⁴

Divergent Outlooks On the Christian Future

The conclusion of the era of the Napoleonic Wars combined with a recognition of the pacific character of evangelical Dissent made the long-awaited repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts possible in 1828. This steadily improving domestic, political and ecclesiastical situation bred the very kind of optimistic Christian futurism which we noted, initially, to have characterized the outlook of evangelical Dissenters such as William Jay.¹⁴⁵ Perhaps best expressed for that generation by Dissenter, David Bogue's book The Millennium (1822), the standard Dissenting and Methodist outlook, which may be termed post-millennialism, expected a steady, relentless progress of Christianity throughout the world. By the ordinary use of means such as preaching, catechizing and Scripture distribution, and extraordinary means such as

¹⁴⁴ Gilbert, Religion and Society, p.39.

¹⁴⁵ cf. page 5, fn. 3.

revivals, the triumph of the Gospel throughout the world was to be expected prior to the second advent. This eschatological outlook, which had been powerfully commended by the impetus of the Evangelical Revival, passed through the revolutionary era (1789-1815) without major modification. It was the view of the Christian future in which Edward Bickersteth had early been nurtured. ¹⁴⁶

Yet while Dissent and Methodism continued to find in this system of belief an outlook on the future which squared with what they saw and experienced in their own generation of Gospel progress and expanded political liberties, there was an increasing movement among the clergy of the Established Churches of England and Scotland which saw in the upheavals of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras portents of the biblical "last days".¹⁴⁷ That it was chiefly persons attached to Established Churches who pursued such themes may have indicated that they believed that the sinister spirit of revolution emanating from France must ultimately threaten the stability of their own nation and Church. Similarly, some early Tractarians were developing similar apocalyptic concerns, concerns fed by what they viewed as a deplorable Erastian domination of the Church by an

¹⁴⁶ Birks, Bickersteth, II. p. 42

¹⁴⁷ Ernest Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism, (Chicago, 1970), pp. 7, 20.

increasingly secular state.¹⁴⁸ The newer view of the last things, termed pre-millennialism, centred around the belief that the reign of the Gospel over the world could only be secured by the personal and visible return and reign of the Saviour. While it is overly simplistic to describe adherents of the newer view as united in being "political reactionaries" or sharing "deeply authoritarian views of society"¹⁴⁹ it remains true that current affairs in Church and state were viewed by them as alarming indeed. Edward Irving (1792-1834) minister of Regent Square Church, London and rising star in the new apocalyptic movement, was described as having opposed the abolition of the Test Act (1828), the enactment of Catholic emancipation (1829) and the general spread of democracy.¹⁵⁰

And yet, to return to our original examples of Bickersteth and Jay, characterized in late life by such contrasting outlooks but shared principles, we may reflect in concluding this survey, that had they had prescience to know the decades ahead each might have been given pause. The evangelical Dissent of which Jay was

¹⁴⁸ David Newsome, The Parting of Friends, (London, 1966), p. 11. Apocalyptic warnings can be found in the Sermon on National Apostasy preached by John Keble at Oxford in 1833.

¹⁴⁹ Sandeen, The Roots, p. 41. D. N. Hempton, "Evangelicalism and Eschatology", in Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 31, no. 2, p. 183.

¹⁵⁰ Margaret Oliphant, The Life of Edward Irving, II, (London, 1862), pp. 382,3.

such an illustrious spokesman was gradually losing its power of multiplication, tied as it was (with Methodism) to a process of the social elevation of the artisan classes. The Church of England, which may have seemed so moribund, so enslaved, to critical onlookers in the 1830's, would shortly, through the provisions of Church Reform, outstrip the growth rates of Methodism and Dissent for the balance of the century.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ Gilbert, Religion and Society, pp. 29, 39.

CHAPTER TWO

DECLINE AND RESURGENCE IN FRENCH-SPEAKING PROTESTANTISM 1685-1819

Francophone Protestantism 1685-1819

Pervasive and Lingering Effects of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

The eighteenth century, which witnessed a dramatic reversal of the decline of Protestantism in Britain, brought almost unmitigated trouble for the Protestant churches of French-speaking Europe. That the eighteenth century was so evidently dominated by the French Protestants' loss of religious and civil liberties should not obscure the fact that there was a concurrent and trans-national faltering of confidence among Europe's Protestants. The Swiss pastor and theologian, Jean Frederick Ostervald of Neuchatel (1663-1747), sounded warnings regarding this state of affairs in his Treatise Concerning the Causes of the Present Corruption of Christians (1700).¹ The work was clearly of such wide application that the English S.P.C.K. promptly arranged for an English edition within the first year. Evidently the religious and political struggles of the seventeenth century had left the population of Europe feeling sated with religious controversy; the Christian faith was now

¹Eamon Duffy, "Correspondence Fraternelle: the S.P.C.K., the S.P.G. and the Churches of Switzerland in the War of the Spanish Succession", in Reform and Reformation: England and the Continent 1500-1750, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford, 1979), p. 257.

neglected in consequence.

So convinced is the French historian P. Joutard of the prevalence of French Protestant torpor at the end of the seventeenth century that he has portrayed the terrible oppression following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) as almost necessary for Protestantism's re-invigoration and survival.² Though public assembly was forbidden under the post-1685 regulations, conventicles were assembling in woods and forests within ten days of the rescinding of liberties. Though all children of Protestant families were obliged to receive Catholic baptism and religious instruction, parents of such children frequently redoubled efforts at instilling Protestant principles in the home. Though widespread banishment and emigration rapidly depleted the supply of pastors, the task of exhortation and the administration of the sacraments was soon taken up by pious tradesmen.³ Synods were held, albeit secretly, from 1715 onwards and the number of provinces in which the church maintained effective organization grew from three in 1715 to ten in 1750.⁴

While it may be true that such extraordinary

²P. Joutard, "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, End or Renewal?", in International Calvinism 1541-1715, ed. Menna Prestwich (London, 1985), p. 360.

³Ibid., pp. 361-62.

⁴Bernard Poland, French Protestantism and the French Revolution (Princeton, 1957), p. 42.

measures helped to prevent an even more serious decline induced by cultural assimilation, it is at the same time difficult to exaggerate the staggering costs of the era of persecution. Nation as well as church felt this keenly. Most obvious among such costs was that of massive emigration. An estimated 200,000 Protestants left France in the immediate aftermath of the revocation with the northern provinces of the country contributing disproportionately to this exodus. Northern artisans were more likely to emigrate than peasant farmers of the south and urban Protestants more likely than country dwellers.⁵

In their tens of thousands, the refugees, preponderantly male, made their way first into Switzerland, then into various German principalities and the Low Countries, and subsequently into Scandinavia, England and the New World. They enriched industry and craftsmanship where they settled while they impoverished it in the homeland. The very scale of the immigration exacerbated diplomatic relationships between France and her neighbours as well as serving to confirm anti-Catholic prejudice in Protestant states.⁶ One unforeseen result of the emigration was the creation of a very substantial French Protestant diaspora from the eastern

⁵Joutard, "The Revocation", pp. 346-48.

⁶See Ibid., p. 351; and Edgar Bonjour et al., A Short History of Switzerland (Oxford, 1952), p. 198.

Baltic to Ireland in the west, a movement that will have significance in the story of the 'Reveil'.

The forced closure of Protestant colleges combined with the noted emigration of ministers guaranteed an uncertain and varied supply of preachers in the Protestant communities remaining in France. In the first years of persecution and uncertainty, the preaching ministry of lay persons sometimes gave way to "prophetism"-- the alleged deliverance of oracles by the Holy Spirit. Such utterances sometimes served to foment armed resistance to royal policies in the period from 1687-1704. Some exponents of this prophetism were transplanted to England where their controversial influence would cast a suspect shadow during the earliest period of Britain's Evangelical Revival.⁷

When it was learned that the various Reformed churches of Switzerland were reluctant to offer ordination to French ministerial candidates from a fear both of offending French royal policy and of appearing to ratify the preparedness of ill-trained persons, the French Protestant communities responded in two ways. First, they utilized what were termed 'écoles ambulantes' in which already active lay preachers might enjoy a modest course of studies with the help of a circulating tutor. Secondly, they employed foreign funds

⁷See Joutard, p. 365; and G.R. Balleine, A History of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England (London, 1911), p. 14.

administered by a committee of French persons at Geneva termed 'La Comite Francais' to provide formal theological education at Lausanne for French candidates from 1729. This "Academy" at Lausanne, which continued in existence until 1809, provided education for the ministry with a curriculum geared to the candidate lacking a rigorous preparatory education.⁸ Yet the Lausanne Academy only educated some three hundred students in its entire history and the French Protestant churches remained dependent upon persons with only the most rudimentary of training. For upon the eve of the Revolution of 1789, the harassed French Reformed Church still had a following of more than four hundred thousand persons.⁹

The Negative Effects of Enlightenment Thought
For Theology and Piety.

This dearth of theological learning placed the Reformed Churches of France in a doubly vulnerable position during the eighteenth century. On the one hand, they were prone to a creeping religious legalism which attributed to acts of resistance to royal tyranny a kind of merit before God; this legalism bordered on salvation

⁸See James Good, History of the Swiss Reformed Church Since the Reformation (Philadelphia, 1913), pp. 121-25; Poland, p.49; and Daniel Robert, Genève et Les Églises Reformées de France (Paris, 1961), pp. 9, 19, 204. The latter insists that the Lausanne Academy was closed in 1812.

⁹Daniel Robert, Les Églises Reformées En France 1800-1830. (Paris, 1961), p. 5.

by works. On the other hand, they were less prepared than some European Reformed and Lutheran neighbours to resist the popular tendency to confine the Christian religion's claims to those within a circle bounded by reason. This tendency, which we conveniently call deism, so swept along the prominent pastor Gebelin that he concluded that all religions were the same.¹⁰

By many accounts, France's European Reformed neighbours were by no means monochrome in their outlook on such questions. Lausanne, in both its university faculty of theology and French academy seems to have maintained the primacy of revelation over reason as the century wore on. But the concessive theology of Geneva, personified in Jacob Vernet, professor of theology 1756-1789, was such that it could earn the ridicule of Voltaire and D'Alembert as Socinianism; all religious mystery was eliminated and all theological inquiry was circumscribed by the bounds of reason.¹¹

The sceptical outlook on the traditional dogmas of the Christian faith manifested itself in quite different ways. Already by the mid-eighteenth century, the majority of the Protestant Swiss cantons had ceased to

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 17, 19.

¹¹ Good, Reformed Church in Switzerland pp. 282-92. An extended discussion of the influence of Rousseau and Voltaire upon Swiss Protestantism in this period is provided in Paul Wernle, Der Schweizerische Protestantismus im 18 Jahrhundert, 3 vols. (Tubingen, 1923-1924), 2, 44-139.

require subscription to the Helvetic Consensus of 1675, a creed composed by representatives of Zurich, Geneva and Basel in order to check the spread of liberalized Calvinism from the French academy at Saumur.¹² Religious syncretism received encouragement from the Enlightenment insistence upon the compatibility of the Christian revelation with the fruits of rational inquiry. Attempts to embrace all religions in one system, such as that characterizing the Masonic movement, were highly attractive in France and Switzerland.¹³ Many defended the uniqueness of Jesus Christ only with considerable hesitation while there was similar uncertainty concerning the Christian and biblical emphasis upon humanity's innate tendency to wrong.¹⁴

A pious young Genevan observed the legacy of this century of theological decline when he began his theological course at Geneva in 1809. Ami Bost (1790-1874) later recalled:

Doctrine, the church, and manners in general had arrived at a laxity not easy to conceive of today. As for the teaching, this laxity was a fact which dominated all others and which now seems incredible. During the four years we spent in the study of theology --over and above the use of the Old Testament required for the learning of a little Hebrew and translating the Psalms --one never opened

¹² Good, Reformed Church pp. 164-66.

¹³ See Hugh M cLeod, Religion and the People of Western Europe, (Oxford, 1981), p. 44; and Alice Wemyss, Histoire du Réveil 1790-1849, (Paris, 1978), pp. 31, 45.

¹⁴ See M cLeod, p.9; and J. McManners, The French Revolution and The Church (London, 1969), p. 14.

the Bible in our lecture rooms. The book was unused and unknown. It never entered our course and apart from language studies it was not necessary to possess it. Without doubt, it was spoken of sometimes in terms of poetics or oratory. Yet natural theology was appealed to in support of dogma. It was pure deism.¹⁵

The same writer looked back, ten years after the commencement of his theological studies and observed that among the clergy a disbelief in the divinity of Jesus Christ was common; so also was it common to deny the necessity for an operation of divine grace in man's receiving Christian salvation and to dispute the possibility of miracles.¹⁶ Now what prevailed in such a centre of Francophone theological training in so blatant a form had been diffused from there for many decades.

Without internal centres of theological learning to maintain the biblical grounding of the Faith, French Protestantism was most vulnerable to such strains of Enlightenment thought. The result was an ever closer approximation of Protestant preaching to the philosophy of the day. This very process of approximation was ultimately counter-productive as the distinctive message and witness of the church was lost.¹⁷

¹⁵ Ami Bost, Memoires Pouvant Servir à L'Histoire du Réveil Religieux, 3 vols. (Paris, 1854), I. pp. 24,25.

¹⁶ Ami Bost, Genève Religieuse en Mars 1819, (Geneva, 1819), pp. 23, 25, 40.

¹⁷ Poland, French Protestantism, p. 249.

Revolutionary Turbulence Brings Gains and Losses

The advent of the period of Revolution brought redress of Protestant civil grievances without altering the religious limitations under which they had laboured since 1685. By the royal Edict of Toleration of November 1787, Protestants gained the right to marry and bear legitimate children outside the pale of Catholicism. Yet, the now permitted alternative to the Catholic solemnization of marriage was not a Protestant, but a civil ceremony, before a royal judge. Protestant worship was still not countenanced, nor was any Protestant right to erect schools and colleges.¹⁸ Thus, when in December 1789 the French National Assembly opened all civil and military offices to Protestants, it was widely expected that the young Revolution would enjoy the support of the Protestant population. This support did not imply anti-royal sentiment on the part of French Protestants at this early stage.¹⁹ Only the King's attempted flight in June 1791 to join with the forces of counter-revolution served to detach the loyalty of his Protestant subjects. They easily reasoned that the King, if restored at the head of counter-revolutionary forces, could not allow their newly-received liberties to remain. Now it was the turn

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 79-80.

¹⁹ See Ibid., pp. 105, 175; and Robert, Les Églises Reformées, p. 22.

of Catholic and Royalist sympathizers to depart from the country in flight from the Revolution, much as the Protestants had had to flee from the rise of absolutism a century before. An estimated 130,000 left for the Low Countries, Rhenish Germany, Switzerland, north Italy and Catalonia.²⁰

In November 1790, a Constituent Assembly ushered in the disastrous period of the Constitutional (Catholic) Church. It was so eager to apply the value of the Church's landholdings to the repayment of national debts that it was prepared to issue stipends to clergy and bishops who would swear loyalty to the new regime. This affected Protestants most by its great failure. The armed rebellion of summer 1793 against the Constitutional Church scheme, emanating from conservative elements in the Vendée, had the appearance of pitting organized Christianity against the Revolution. It also helped to justify both the Reign of Terror and the official proscription of Christian worship assemblies (both Catholic and Protestant) until 1795. In the interim there flourished an alarming variety of state-sanctioned substitutes for the Christian religion. Until the anti-Revolutionary rising, Protestants made the most of their 'de facto' right of assembly and extended their efforts into long-abandoned areas with a steadily expanding

²⁰ Franklin L. Ford, Europe 1780-1830 (London, 1970), p. 139.

number of pastors.²¹ But the proscription of all Christian worship found a surprising number of compliant pastors and congregations. The readiness with which many Protestant clergymen formally and publicly abdicated their tasks (in company with numerous Roman Catholic priests) and lent support to the civic worship of reason and the Supreme Being lends confirmation for the thesis that Christian theology had been so assimilated to Enlightenment patterns of thought as to be incapable of self-defence. The proclamation of freedom of worship (without state financial aid) in February 1795 came none too soon.²² However, with it came the first state recognition of the equality of Catholic and Protestant Churches.

With the restoration of religious freedom, there is evidence of sustained religious resurgence.²³ Catholics, who from the beginning had been divided over the rightness of the imposition of a Constitutional Church, were now left with the considerable but not insurmountable task of reconciling the Constitutional and nonjuring factions. All state aid to the Church had ceased and substantial properties had been alienated.

²¹ Robert, Les Églises Reformées, p. 26.

²² Ibid., pp. 28-31. Interestingly, S. Mours in Les Églises Reformées En France (Paris, 1958), p. 19, takes the view that the abdication of pastors may be explained in part by the influx of Enlightenment philosophy into the French Academy at Lausanne. So also Poland, p. 220.

²³ MacLeod, Religion p. 5.

Protestant resurgence, though real, was somewhat subdued as the extent of its subservience in the period of proscription had been more complete. Regional synods met only intermittently if at all and the perennial shortage of pastors had been exacerbated by the rash of abdications earlier in the decade.

Protestant Life Under Directory and First Empire

Within the first year of the Directory, Napoleon Bonaparte had set in motion plans for government administration of all the religious bodies in France. But these plans were substantially altered, prior to legislation, in light of the Concordat signed with the Pope in 1802. This recognized Catholicism as the religion "of the great majority of the French people".²⁴ The government now granted subsidies in ^{for both} compensation the earlier state alienation of church property and its own new demand that the state would henceforth nominate principal clergy. When to their surprise the Protestants were offered a similar subsidy in April 1802 by Napoleon, the vast majority fervently welcomed the proposal (with its claim of direct jurisdiction). Rabaut-Depuy, a Protestant legislator, compared the newly-enfranchised Protestants with the children of Israel who, having survived Moses, themselves entered Canaan: "Alas, those whom we have outlived, ascended the mountain of Nebo,

²⁴ Poland, French Protestantism, p. 264.

whence they beheld the land of promise--but we alone have gone in to possess it."²⁵

However, within a generation, acute minds recognized that the terms offered by Napoleon in April, 1802 within 'Les Articles Organiques des Cultes Protestants'²⁶ were nothing other than a vice-like bear hug. In return for state recognition and pastoral stipends, three things were required. First of all, the organic articles required the regrouping of France's Protestants into consistorial units of 6,000 persons with administration vested in a body of pastors and wealthy bourgeois invariably centred in a major community.²⁷ Secondly, they required control over the formation, education and accreditation of ministers. None were to enter upon pastoral functions without completion of a five year course in arts and theology, only theological colleges supported by the state might be relied upon for this preparation, and only professors ratified by the government might teach such subjects. Under no circumstance would foreigners be eligible to serve within the French Protestant churches under the approved

²⁵ G. de Felice, History of the Protestants of France From the Commencement of the Reformation (London, 1851), p. 466.

²⁶ and continued after 1815 by the restored monarchy.

²⁷ "Les Articles Organiques des Cultes Protestants" nos. 15-18, printed in Daniel Robert, Textes et Documents relatifs à L'Histoire des Églises Reformées en France (1800-1830), (Paris, 1962), pp. 53, 54.

framework.²⁸ Thirdly, the articles required an indefinite moratorium on the church's former efforts at internal discipline through regional and national synods. They also required that any efforts towards the articulation of a creed or articles of religion be submitted for the approbation of the government.²⁹ The first requirement, that referring to the consistorial units, had two immediate effects. On the one hand there was a concentration of regulative power in the hands of the affluent urban bourgeoisie to the detriment of the former influence of pastor and elders of the local congregation. On the other hand, the very employment of a criterion of 6,000 persons as the administrative unit worked decidedly against the interests of that large part of the country in which Protestant adherents were sparsely represented. The only pastoral care the government would permit for such regions would be of the most cursory kind. By implicit design, there was no room in such a scheme for the evangelization of those who made no Christian profession.³⁰

²⁸ "Les Articles Organiques", nos. 7-14, in Robert, p. 53.

²⁹ "Les Articles Organiques", nos. 25-31, in Robert, p. 54. See also de Felice, History of the Protestants, pp. 467-71; and Poland, French Revolution, pp. 264-67.

³⁰ See de Felice, History, pp. 469-70; Robert, Les Eglises Reformées, p. 117; and F. Kuhn, "La Vie Intérieur du Protestantism Sous Le Premier Empire", Bulletin de le Societé de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Francaise, 51 (1902), 59. Hereafter cited as B.S.H.P.F.

By the second requirement, Napoleon's initiatives accomplished without struggle the closing of the semi-clandestine Lausanne Academy by 1809--a thing pre-Revolutionary governments had been unable to do. To say that he did this while in control of the Swiss cantons (amalgamated as the puppet Helvetic Republic) does not in any way diminish the significance of his elimination of church-controlled theological education. First, Geneva's Academy was appointed from 1802 as the centre for theological education for the Reformed of the Empire. (Strasburg had similarly been designated as centre for the churches of the Augsburg Confession within the realm). Subsequently, Montauban would be established as an alternative^{ive} by Napoleon's own personal designation. Lausanne had produced pastoral candidates with rudimentary training in a mere two years (with some beneficial and some undesirable effects). However, by its insistence on the five year course, the state's ratification of first Geneva and subsequently Montauban may be said to have unduly restricted the supply of pastors at a time when the actual demand was phenomenal. While in 1660 (prior to the Revocation), the French Reformed Churches had had 719 pastors, their numbers were reduced to 138 by 1788. In 1806, the number stood at 210 and was only at 214 in 1815 and at 219 in 1820.³¹

³¹ See Mours, Les Églises, p. 191; Poland, p.270; and Robert, Les Églises Réformées, p. 117.

The frosty reception experienced by the somewhat rustic French students at Geneva in the years following 1802, and the struggles faced by Montauban in preparing to receive its first students in 1810, illustrate this numerical impasse. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Napoleon's policies sustained rather than resolved the problem of pastoral supply.

As for the third requirement, the denial by Napoleon's government of the church's right to gather in deliberative synods, to print and disseminate journals, confessions of faith and theological works, and to enter into relationships with any foreign churches, ensured that the French Reformed Church would suffer a greater internal and international isolation than it experienced in any period since the total proscription of all Christian worship in the years 1792-95.³² Thus nineteenth century French historian de Felice states in summary of the period:

French Protestantism has, properly speaking, no history during the fourteen years of the Consulate and the Empire...We are not aware of the publication of a single important book upon dogma, ecclesiastical history or sacred eloquence in the course of Napoleon's reign.³³

The religious policies of Napoleon regarding conquered territories need not detain us here at length, but two points must be made. First we should note the

³² A. Lods, "Bonaparte et Les Églises Protestants de France", B.S.H.P.F. 46 (1897), 401.

³³ de Felice, History of Protestants, p. 471.

government-sanctioned extension of religious toleration (albeit within a government-regulated framework, as above). Thus Jewish and Protestant minorities received protection in Belgium, Catholics in the Protestant Swiss cantons, and Jewish populations within the major cities of the Italian peninsula.³⁴ Second, and of still greater importance for this study, we must note the heightened interaction between Swiss and French Protestantism in the period of the Directory and Empire. Whereas in the previous century there had been one-way traffic of French Protestant refugees into these regions (and across other frontiers), now in the Napoleonic era the theological influences of Geneva and Lausanne were brought to bear in France in a way unequalled since the seventeenth century. The root of this new influence may be located partly in these cities' long-established reputation as centres of Reformed Protestantism, partly in their ongoing eighteenth century significance as hubs of refugee activity (among which was clandestine theological education) and partly in terms of their inclusion from 1798 in an enlarged France.

Napoleon's decision of 1802 to make Geneva the centre of theological teaching for all the Reformed churches³⁵ may be understood as a partly practical

³⁴ F. L. Ford, Europe, pp. 159-60.

³⁵ Les Articles Organiques, nos. 10,13 in Robert, Textes, p.53. A December 1801 proposal emanating from the Reformed consistory at Paris had called for

measure--simply consolidating and building upon an existing foundation, and partly a calculating and shrewd design which, like his scheme of consistorial church organization, served the interests of containment rather than of expansion. Geneva was not strategically located in terms of the geographic distribution of existing French churches. Its academy could not hope to enrol sufficient candidates to meet the existing need of French pulpits. And this same institution could not be expected to enrol the relatively untutored French candidates in the same curriculum as its own young citizens who were products of the preparatory 'collège'.

The Geneva Academy's response to the latter problem was to propose a two-tiered curriculum with only a more elementary curriculum open for French students who arrived less well prepared than their Swiss counterparts. This proposal, which in effect simply proposed the continuation of a less demanding curriculum such as had been offered earlier in the French Academy of Lausanne, became repugnant and demeaning when proposed by haughty Genevans concerned to shield the reputation of their own theological academy from any dilution. Furthermore, the Geneva Academy proposed to employ no lecturers of French origin. Such delaying tactics on the part of Geneva meant that by 1807 Napoleon's plans for Geneva had still

seminaries at Nimes, Geneva, Strasburgh and Cleves, (see p. 47). On the subject, see also Robert, Les Eglises Reformees, pp. 208-9.

not been implemented and the Lausanne Academy still not been shuttered. A governmental insistence upon immediate implementation brought such deep protests from within France that, in the following year, Napoleon had found it politic to personally designate Montauban in the Midi as a second site for Reformed theological education. Instruction began at the chosen site in 1810.

Yet even so, the stature of Geneva in French religious life was scarcely diminished. The most promising French ministerial candidates were still sent there for academic preparation. Montauban unwittingly paid tribute to Geneva's prominence by styling itself "the Geneva of the Midi" and depended on graduates of the Geneva Academy for two of its original four professors.³⁶ Montauban's felt rivalry with Geneva was surely a complicating factor in the allegations of heretical teaching levelled in 1812-1813 at the Genevan Esaie Gasc, first professor of dogmatics in the new seminary. Orthodox ministers and divinity students in the Midi region detected departures from the Christian doctrine of the Trinity in Gasc's lectures. From whatever mixture of motives, Montauban was consciously delineating a more conservative position than Geneva. In the minds of a concerted minority, Geneva had come to represent the fountain of all errors and was spreading "socinianism

³⁶ Robert, *Les Églises Réformées*, pp. 219-20. Robert indicates that in fact three Genevans were offered positions, only two accepting.

which was at bottom nothing more than a deism tinged with Christianity".³⁷ It was charged that such views were being popularized not only among theological students but also among the young, who were being trained by use of a catechism prepared by that most concessive of all Genevan dogmaticians, Jacob Vernet (d.1789). Thus it was that as Geneva and the other Swiss cantons were regaining their independence from France in the year 1813, Geneva's influence was both sizeable and controversial in that nation.

Forces For Spiritual and Theological Renewal

In the Period

In this epoch of widespread difficulty throughout French speaking Europe, there were various forces working for the sustaining of lively Christian faith. In Switzerland as well as in various German domains, we may notice the presence of pietism. Pietism grew up in an era of high orthodoxy characterized by theological disputation. Ministers such as Johann Arndt (1555-1621) and A.H.Franke (1663-1727) promoted inner heart-religion and a Bible-centred faith as a means of redressing the imbalance which followed in the wake of this era of high orthodoxy. Subsequently, such emphases were maintained in the eighteenth century by Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), a nobleman who became figurehead of the

³⁷ Kuhn, "La Vie Intérieure", pp 63-65.

"Unitas Fratrum" a religious brotherhood which maintained residential colonies and carried out home and foreign evangelization.³⁸

It is plain that the thought and writing of Arndt and Francke, though Lutheran, had much about them that was amenable to the Reformed churches. Zinzendorf travelled extensively within Europe, visiting Geneva and setting up conventicles there.³⁹ His followers lived within a framework he termed 'diaspora', i.e., they were adherents of the United Brethren movement living at a distance from actual Brethren colonies, yet associating with local National Churches. In the latter settings, they maintained conventicles or cells in private homes for mutual edification.

Lay evangelists travelled, linking such cells or conventicles with one another. By 1737, such evangelists had penetrated France; they i tinerated in the regions of Bordeaux, Saintonge, Poitou and Alsace by 1742. Yet greater successes in Protestant Switzerland than in post-Revocation France are signalled by the fact that Switzerland and Holland were named separate districts of endeavor^u in 1785 while France received no mention.

³⁸ The spread of pietism in Switzerland is described in Wernle, Der Schweizerische Protestantismus im XVII Jahrhundert, (Tubingen, 1923), Vol.1. pp.11-77.

³⁹ The decades following the visit of Zinzendorf to Geneva saw as many as 700 persons involved in Moravian 'cells' there. See Leon Maury, Le Réveil Religieux, 2 vols. (Paris, 1898), I. p.18.

Twenty such Moravian districts had been delineated in that year.⁴⁰ However, the era of the Empire saw a dramatic upsurge in Moravian activity in the south of France, especially around Bordeaux. The leader of the organized community there, J. J. Merillat, has been shown to have been an intimate friend of Daniel Encontre (1762-1818), an early dean and professor of theology at Montauban. Francois Bonnard (1776-1838), an early professor of Hebrew at Montauban has been shown to be a member of a minister's fraternal with direct links of regular correspondence with the Moravian leadership at Herrnhut.⁴¹

Quite independent and external corroboration of this Moravian activity in the period of the Empire and Restoration is provided in a short manuscript of sixteen un-numbered folio pages, entitled "A Memorial On the State of the Protestant Churches in the Kingdom of France". Its author, Clement Perrot, was an Independent minister from the Channel Island of Jersey, a loyal supporter of the London Missionary Society, and fluent in both French and English. That society requested him, in the period following Napoleon's "one hundred days", to

⁴⁰ See E. Stoeffler, German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century (Leiden, 1973), pp. 160-61; J. Taylor Hamilton, A History of the Church Known as the Moravian Church (Bethlehem, Pa., 1900), p. 235; and F. Hordern, "Les Moraves En France Sous L'Empire", B.S.H.P.F., 112 (1966), 49.

⁴¹ Hordern, pp. 50-51.

visit French Protestants and record his impressions as a means of informing its directors on the postwar outlook for the churches. Among other impressions, Perrot observed that the twenty to thirty most pious and promising French ministers were heavily dependent upon Moravian literature (in French translation) and tended to limit their usefulness "by their loud declarations of loyalty to the Moravian Brethren".⁴² Significantly, Perrot as visitor was able to identify by name a much more pervasive Moravian following than that established by modern researchers on the basis of scanty remaining records. He also detected a widespread practical (but not theoretical) Arminianism which he believed could only be expunged by the wide circulation of sound theological works, translated, if needs be, from English.

Moravian activity was also very considerable in Alsace, most of all among Lutherans, typified by the justly renowned Jean Frederic Oberlin of Ban de la Roche

⁴² Clement Perrot, "A Memorial on the State of the Protestant Churches in the Kingdom of France, 1815", London Missionary Society (now Council for World Mission) Archive, European Correspondance (France) 1799-1849, Box 3, London University School of Oriental and African Studies. French pastors would certainly have had access to the standard text of Moravian theology by C. A. Spangenberg, Idei Fidei Fratrum Oder Kurzer Begriff der Christlichen Lehre in der Evangelischen Brudergemeine (Barby, 1779). Spangenberg, successor to Zinzendorf, sought to present Moravian belief in as close as possible a form to that of Protestant orthodoxy. It was promptly translated into English, Danish, French, Swedish, Dutch, Bohemian and Polish. See Hamilton, Moravian Church, p. 232; and Stoeffler, German Pietism, p. 165.

(1740-1825).⁴³ Oberlin combined zeal for pietism, for the French Revolution and for social and educational reforms. In the French-speaking cantons of Switzerland bordering on Alsace, Moravian conventicles persisted, albeit in diminished strength, into the Napoleonic period. At Geneva, the remaining circle was very small indeed by the period 1810-1815.⁴⁴ Yet it proved the spiritual 'home' for a surprising number of pious theological students who sought more than the meagre fare available elsewhere in the city. The itinerant Moravian evangelists Merillat and Mettetal still included the Geneva circle in their preaching circuits and in this way were the means of the conversion of students H.L. Empeytaz (1810) and Emil Guers (1812).⁴⁵ Fellow students Ami Bost (whose father presided over many of the Moravian gatherings), Henri Pyt, and Charles Rieu were also regular in attendance.⁴⁶

The spiritual sustenance received in the Moravian setting spawned a distinct student-led pietistic circle, existing between 1810 and 1814. This, the 'Société des Amis', included all the above-named students, others such as J.G. Gonthier, Jonathan Devisme, Matthieu Miroglio,

⁴³ Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 2nd ed., s.v. "Oberlin", and Hordern, "Les Moraves", p. 54.

⁴⁴ thus the biographer of César Malan can speak of "a mere handful" of persons by 1815. C. Malan, Life of Malan, (London, 1869), p.35.

⁴⁵ Emil Guers, Le Premier Reveil, (Geneva, 1872), pp. 41,42.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

Cesar Bonifas, and several pious artisans and tradesmen.⁴⁷ This circle had received the welcome visit of Geneva graduate Abraham Lissignol (1784-1851), then minister at Montpellier, in 1814. Though disbanded in that same year at the insistence of the Geneva Company of Pastors, the circle of pious students by no means forfeited one another's friendship.⁴⁸

It is in this context that we are best able to evaluate the Geneva visits of that charismatic and peripatetic exponent of illuminist mysticism, Baroness de Krudener. Herself a former novelist and the unfaithful wife of a Prussian ambassador, she had undergone Christian conversion upon being introduced to a Moravian circle while visiting at Riga, her maternal home. She subsequently made an extensive tour of Moravian colonies at Bethelsdorf, Kleinwelk and Herrnhut.⁴⁹ The Moravian mystic Jung-Stillung influenced her deeply, as did the devotional writings of Fenelon and Madame Guyon.

Her quietistic message was taught in fashionable

⁴⁷ *ibid.* p. 43.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 59, 67. The pietistic "underground" of post-Revolutionary Geneva is quite complex. Ami Bost, writing in 1819, was able to describe not only the continued existence of the Moravians, but also "many little churches where pious people meet without causing a disturbance, often meeting for reunions other than on a Saturday or Sunday", and a "mystical circle, without a name, where those assembled rely on the writings of Jung-Stillung". Genève Religieuse, pp. 67, 71, 73.

⁴⁹ Clarence Ford, Madame de Krudener (London, 1893), pp. 91, 96, 102.

parlour gatherings at Lausanne, Geneva, Ban de la Roche and Paris. Eventually she was to gain the confidence of Czar Alexander of Russia in the time of sensitive treaty negotiations at both Paris and Vienna.⁵⁰ While the Baroness concentrated her efforts upon individuals, she employed as her chaplain and preacher Henri Empeytaz (c.1790-1861), the zealous Geneva divinity student (described above). The latter, when denied ordination to the ministry by the Geneva Company for his unrepentant zeal in conducting Sunday Schools, had accepted Krudener's timely offer of employment. Empeytaz was associated with the Baroness between 1814 and 1817.⁵¹

That Empeytaz, the Moravian convert, should have been comfortable in the service of Krudener is somewhat indicative of the powerful "brew" of religious influences circulating in the final months of the Napoleonic Empire. Empeytaz' own background and outlook would have given him strong convictions about the Scripture, the cross of Christ, and the need for personal conversion. The Baroness was by all accounts mystical, given to dreams, determined (though without success) to produce miracles, and dabbling with excessive forms of Roman Catholic devotion which raised the eyebrows of her largely

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 166.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 128.

Protestant following.⁵²

British Interest in French-Speaking Europe
Before and after 1789

Reception of Huguenots, Catholic-Royalist Refugees
and Prisoners of War.

As we have observed, the religious cultures of Britain and French-speaking Europe in the eighteenth century were clearly divergent. None the less, the two different religious cultures did intersect one another with fair regularity. Much of this interaction resulted from the waves of French religious persecution which occurred between the 1680's and the 1790's. Aimed first at Protestants and latterly (in the main) against Roman Catholics, state-supported persecution transplanted many tens of thousands of French into Britain where the refugees encountered a combination of official government welcome and local hostility.

Though the renewal of persecution for French Protestants is usually associated with the official Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, in fact two decades of steady erosion of religious rights had preceded this official action.⁵³ The use of

⁵² Ami Bost, who visited the Baroness both in Geneva (1813) and Basle (1817), was no cynical observer. Yet he was certain that her efforts were characterized above all by artificial zeal and a mixture of truth and error. Memoires, I. pp. 29, 62.

⁵³ Robin D. Gwynn, Huguenot Heritage; The History and Contribution of the Huguenots in Britain, (London, 1985),

'dragonnades' (forced lodging of military personnel with Protestant households) as a method of coercing conversions to Catholicism, had in fact begun in 1681 and from that year onwards refugees streamed from the country. As such flight was in fact illegal, many were apprehended and consigned to prison or galley service. Yet some 50,000 (out of an approximate total of 200,000 who eluded border patrols) reached British cities ranging from Bristol, Plymouth and Exeter in the southwest to Southampton, Rye, Dover and Canterbury in the south and to London, Colchester, Norwich and Edinburgh in the east. In London, Canterbury and Norwich, refugees of the Revocation joined French Walloon communities and churches which had survived from the Tudor era. The existing community centred upon the French church at Threadneedle St., London, often took the initiative in organizing the arrivals into new communities dispersed around the coasts.⁵⁴

Immigration on such a scale could have occurred only with the sanction and encouragement of ^{the} English government. In fact, the monarch, the Privy Council and Parliament were united in viewing the refugees as fit objects for assistance. This was so because of their having experienced dire persecution on account of their Protestantism and because of their promise of bringing

p. 21.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

with them trades, technical knowledge and investment capital, all highly in demand in the British Isles. Many citizens agreed with the lead taken by their superiors and consequently contributed some £120,000 in church collections in aid of the newcomers.⁵⁵ These gifts were nearly doubled by parliamentary grants.

Much has deservedly been written about the Huguenot contribution to British economic, military, and industrial life.⁵⁶ Here, however, it is simply our purpose to stress that the Huguenot community made an impact on eighteenth century British religious life both within the Anglican communion and in distinct congregations conforming to French forms and discipline. At the end of the seventeenth century there were no fewer than thirty-one separate French Protestant congregations meeting in London.⁵⁷ In the final decades of the seventeenth century, the mere presence of such a sizeable refugee community served forcefully to remind Protestant Englishmen of the potential danger posed to them by James II's Catholicism. The Huguenot presence helped to undermine the credibility of James' policies

⁵⁵ Reginald Lane Poole, A History of the Huguenots of the Dispersion, (London, 1880), p. 193.

⁵⁶ The reader may consult the appropriate chapters of Gwynn and of Irene Scouloudi, ed., Huguenots in Britain and Their French Background, (London, 1987).

⁵⁷ See Gwynn, p. 166; and John Stoughton, Religion in England Under Queen Anne and the Georges 1702-1800, (London, 1878), p. 366.

and prepare for the acceptance of William of Orange.⁵⁸

The French Protestant community made other contributions to the religious life of eighteenth century Britain. Nowhere was this more evident than in the field of Christian homiletics. Jacques Saurin (1677-1730) was briefly minister of a London congregation after a long ministry at the Hague. His sermons, many of which were translated into English, were looked on as models of passionate eloquence and found wide acceptance, especially among Protestant Dissenters.⁵⁹ Similarly, the homiletical manual by the popular minister Jean Claude (1619-1687), entitled Essay on the Composition of a Sermon, proved widely influential and was recommended to the public in editions edited by the Baptist Robert Robinson (1779) and the Anglican Charles Simeon (1826).

Further, the gradual assimilation of French refugees into the indigenous churches of their adoptive home meant that in time many persons of Huguenot descent rose to positions of leadership in religious life. Historians have noted the inclusion of many such ministers in the Dictionary of National Biography.⁶⁰

There was, however a far larger influx of Catholic

⁵⁸ Gwynn, p. 142.

⁵⁹ See Stoughton, p. 365; and Gwynn, p. 86. David Bogue recommended perusal of Saurin's Sermons, 6 vols. (London, 1796) to his Gosport Academy pupils.

⁶⁰ See Gwynn, Huguenot Heritage, p. 86.

and Royalist refugees into Britain during the French Revolution and especially in the period immediately following the abortive flight and arrest of King Louis XVI. Of this mammoth exodus some 150,000 eventually returned to France under an amnesty proclaimed by Bonaparte.⁶¹ But while in Britain, the refugees had been the recipients of £200,000 in Parliamentary aid as well as private subscriptions.⁶² Spontaneous charity on such a scale to an immigrant Catholic community indicated to some that the time was ripe for Catholic emancipation; in actuality the legislation was delayed until 1829.

Britain received an additional body of French-speaking visitors as a result of the Napoleonic wars. From Edinburgh in the north to Southampton and Plymouth in the south an estimated 60,000 French prisoners of war were detained. The missionary possibilities of the situation were not lost on men carrying forward the impetus of the Evangelical Revival. Thus Thomas Haweis, Anglican rector of Aldwincle and a future founding father of the London Missionary Society, had journeyed to Brighton in 1793 to distribute French language evangelistic leaflets to the refugees congregated

⁶¹ M.H. Wadams, "The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries", in The English Church and the Continent, ed. C.R. Dodwell (London, 1959), p. 95.

⁶² See Halevy, p. 478; and A. R. Vidler, The Church in an Age of Revolution (Harmondsworth, 1981), p. 43.

there.⁶³ The Scottish itinerant and associate of the Haldanes, John Campbell, distributed similar literature to prisoners quartered at Edinburgh Castle and at Penicuik in 1801.⁶⁴ The Methodist mission superintendent Thomas Coke, always watchful for new evangelistic opportunity, requisitioned William Toase, a French speaking Channel Island circuit preacher, for the work of ministering to French prisoners on the south coast of England in 1811.⁶⁵ Theological students at David Bogue's Gosport Academy visited prisoners equipped with tracts supplied by the London Missionary Society.⁶⁶

British Protestants Probe French Europe

Yet British Protestants were by no means content simply to aim at the support and (where necessary) the proselytization of the French speaking refugees and prisoners who had arrived in Britain. On the contrary, British Protestants, having been alerted to the political and spiritual condition of Europe, determined to explore

⁶³ Wood, Haweis, p. 185.

⁶⁴ Kinniburgh, Fathers of Independency, pp. 237-39.

⁶⁵ See John Vickers, Thomas Coke, Apostle of Methodism (London, 1969), p. 314; and W. Toase, Memorials of William Toase Illustrative of the Rise and Progress of Methodism in France and the Channel Islands (London, 1874), pp. 15-44.

⁶⁶ Toase, Memorials of W. Toase, p. 30. Expenses for the colportage are reflected in the ledger, Disbursements to France, Europe Handlist, Council for World Mission (LMS) Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

the needs of the Continent itself. One of the pioneers of the Evangelical mission to the Continent was David Bogue of Gosport who journeyed to Amsterdam and Paris in the year 1784 as a private individual. There he established personal contacts, who later forwarded to him information which he used to urge the LMS in March 1799 to sponsor missionary initiatives in Holland, Belgium and France.⁶⁷ In September 1791, Methodist superintendent Thomas Coke journeyed to Paris and negotiated for the purchase of a disused church in the belief that the times were propitious for establishing a Wesleyan mission there. However, he soon discovered that his invitation to Paris had been issued by two cunning English schoolmasters, eager to gather pupils through the influence of a British preacher. This disclosure brought the effort to a prompt conclusion.⁶⁸

The century closed with Britain at war with revolutionary France. Contacts with European Protestants were kept up only with the greatest difficulty. It was hardly surprising that British evangelicals in that expansionist missionary era often came to the most severe conclusions about Europe at this time, dominated as it was by militant nationalism, political revolution and the rationalism of the enlightenment. In An Impartial

⁶⁷ Council for World Mission (LMS), Home Correspondence 1795-1876, Box 1.

⁶⁸ Samuel Drew, Life of Coke (London, 1817), p. 242.

History of the Church of Christ (3 vols, 1800), the L.M.S. director, Thomas Haweis opined regarding Switzerland:

The information I receive misleads me if through all the Protestant cantons the greatest decays are not visible. The Lord's Day is closed with amusements beyond the others. Those who descend from the pulpits partake of them with their flocks. . . . The arch-infidel Rousseau . . . spreads his destructive opinions. Voltaire, the high-priest of infidelity . . . diffused the poison of his scepticism. I doubt if there remains a single professor or pastor at Geneva who adheres to Calvin, either in principle or practice, but the lowest form of moral essay, and Socinian Christianity prevails.⁶⁹

Haweis offered a similar diagnosis of France which had once been

distinguished for the purity of the reformed faith, and then, as we have seen, reduced to the greatest extremities. I am rather induced to think the Protestants themselves have drank [sic] as deeply as any others into the infidel philosophy . . . Of living Christianity among the Protestant professors, I can find little evidence.⁷⁰

It was this sombre outlook on French-speaking Europe which moved David Bogue in April 1800 to advocate that the L.M.S. circulate a French translation of the New Testament in France and the Belgian provinces. Bogue also proposed the addition of an introduction on Christian evidences.⁷¹ The proposal met with prompt acceptance,

⁶⁹ Thomas Haweis, An Impartial History of the Church of Christ, 3 vols. (London, 1800), 3, 290.

⁷⁰ *ibid.* p. 298.

⁷¹ See Bennett, Bogue, p. 225; and Terpstra, Bogue p. 236.

but no concrete action could be taken until the peace of Amiens was signed in March 1802. During the brief interval of peace, the L.M.S. sent^vfour of its directors - - Bogue, Joseph Hardcastle, Matthew Wilks and Alexander Waugh -- to Paris.⁷² The four were to verify the need for a French New Testament, to explore distribution arrangements and to inquire as to what welcome would be given to British ministers who might come to serve in France without state salary.⁷³

The visiting delegation was soon able to report that they had found a member of the French National Assembly who would be willing to translate the essay on Christian evidences which was to be bound with the French testaments. As to the need for a French translation of the Scriptures, four days of exploration among Paris bookshops produced no copy available for sale. However, one bookseller was prepared to order 1500 copies immediately, preferably in Protestant format. It was found that Piedmont, a Catholic region recently annexed to France, now welcomed Protestant activity and sought

⁷² The journey was to have taken place in August of that year and to have involved Thomas Haweis. The latter received serious injury in a riding accident and after delays, the mission proceeded without him in September. Hay and Belfrage, Waugh, p. 164, Bennett, Bogue, p. 227.

⁷³ See Hay and Belfrage, Waugh, p. 164; and Evangelical Magazine, 10 (1802), 462.

free access to the Scriptures.⁷⁴ By way of recommendation to the L.M.S., the delegation urged the following:

1. Printing and circulation of 2,000 New Testaments with preface on Christian evidences;
2. Printing for sale 5,000 Bibles, 5,000 of each of Isaac Watts' first and second catechisms, 5,000 Wesminster Shorter Catechisms, 4,000 New Testaments in Italian, and 2,000 separate copies of Bogue's essay (on Christian evidences) at a cost to the L.M.S. of £848;
3. Promotion of a French language magazine equivalent to the Evangelical Magazine;
4. Support for the theological education of six French students; and
5. Appointment of an L.M.S. agent be appointed for Paris, with the Rev. Samuel Tracy to serve the first six months.

These recommendations, all of which were unanimously adopted,⁷⁵ mark a decided escalation of British missionary activity on the Continent. From this juncture, we may note the inclusion of French language instruction as well as the presence of French students in Bogue's theological academy at Gosport.⁷⁶ Further, from this time forward the L.M.S. consistently earmarked funds for France. These were used for the support of individual workers, for the publishing of French literature, and for efforts among the French prisoners

⁷⁴ "Report Concerning the State of Religion in France", Evangelical Magazine 10 (1802), 462-465.

⁷⁵ Evangelical Magazine, 10 (1802), 466-467.

⁷⁶ Terpstra, Boque, pp. 41, 207.

before and after the brief peace of 1802.⁷⁷

As with the L.M.S., so also was there an orientation to French Europe for the several related agencies it helped to spawn. The Religious Tract Society, formed in London in 1799 primarily to furnish materials for itinerant and colportage work at home, had responded promptly with tracts suited to the needs of interned French prisoners.⁷⁸ The success of this venture led the society to adopt foreign objectives in 1805 in addition to its original domestic intention. The historian, Roger Martin, has recently argued convincingly that it was the clear demonstration by the L.M.S. of French demand for Scriptures, rather than the crying need for Welsh Bibles personified by the young Mary Jones of County Gwynedd, which summoned the British and Foreign Bible Society into existence in March 1804. That a state of war had existed with France since May of the previous year did not keep the L.M.S. from pursuing its French agenda, albeit discreetly through the war years.⁷⁹ However, it printed no more Scriptures in French after 1803, for this task

⁷⁷ Council for World Mission (L.M.S.) Archive, Europe Handlist, "Disbursements to France 1800-1837". Significant among the literature produced were editions of Philip Doddridge's Essays in 1807 and 1812.

⁷⁸ W. Jones, The Jubilee Memorial of the Religious Tract Society 1799-1849 (London, 1850), pp. 282-83.

⁷⁹ L.M.S. expenditure for France in the war years is itemized in Europe Handlist, "Disbursements to France", C.W.M. (L.M.S.) Archive. Expenditures amounted to £500 in the period 1803-1815.

and that of circulating Scriptures in French Europe by way of Basel was rapidly assumed by the Bible Society.⁸⁰

The Sust^entation of Missionary Zeal for French Europe
Through the War Era

British Protestant missionary zeal for French Europe was not dissipated but only held in partial check in the period of intermittent war ranging from 1792 to 1815. That this was the case surely calls for some explanation.

We have seen (supra p.71) that the dawning of the era of revolution had been deeply disruptive of the growing evangelical Protestant unity which was the enduring legacy of the eighteenth century revival of religion. Church of England evangelicals had reacted with disdain to Dissenters' hopes for their own political rehabilitation based on removal of Protestant disabilities by France's Revolutionary government. Yet the onset of the French "Reign of Terror" (1792-95), the rise of the deistic civil worship of "Reason", and the ambitious military campaigns which sent French armies into neighbouring states had a most telling effect on

⁸⁰ R.H. Martin, "The Bible Society and the French Connection", Journal of The United Reformed Church History Society, vol. 3, no. 7, (1985), pp. 278-90. Martin posits the entirely convincing thesis that the clandestine nature of the commitment to the supplying of French Scriptures by the B.F.B.S. is to be explained by the war fever of the time in which any seeming gesture of assistance to France would be utterly misconstrued. The genuine scarcity of Scriptures in Welsh thus served as a genuine though unexhaustive rationale for the creation of the new society.

British opinion. What the historian Franklin Ford has called "the identification of progressivism with Francophilia"⁸¹ was seriously eroded by such excesses. Not only Protestant Dissenters but also the circle of romantic poets experienced sober second thoughts. William Blake, the poet and illustrator, had proudly worn the symbol of the Revolution, the red bonnet with white cockade. However, upon receiving news of the massacres of September 1792, he tore it off and never wore it again. Another earlier sympathizer with the Revolution, William Wordsworth, found the turning point for his affection in the crowning of Napoleon as emperor in 1804.⁸²

Perhaps ironically, this change of heart by Dissenters and literati towards the revolutionary events in France coincided with the introduction of British anti-Jacobin legislation which restricted the right of public meeting and free association.⁸³ The legislation was a blunt instrument which made no distinctions between the now-disenchanted and the still-enamoured who were urged on by the reading of Tom Paine's Rights of Man (1791-92).

Evangelical Protestants learned to strike a

⁸¹ Ford, Europe, p. 164.

⁸² Stephen Prickett, England and the French Revolution, (London, 1989), pp. 62, 131.

⁸³ Halévy, England in 1815, p. 154.

different posture during the subsequent war years; they concentrated on gospel extension and studiously avoided politics. As the editor of the Evangelical Magazine (est. 1793) put it in his year-opening "preface" for 1802:

No political sentiment, from any quarter, has ever gained admission to our publication. On the contrary, it has been our invariable study to direct our readers to higher objects and matters of superior consideration. . . By Divine assistance, we shall always pursue the same course.⁸⁴

Yet as we have seen, a retreat from open sympathy with the direction taken by the French revolution and the exercise of editorial discretion in refraining from political comment did not mean that British Protestant interest in France suffered any material set-back. Quietly and at times secretively the L.M.S., Tract, and Bible Societies continued to focus their energies upon the region throughout the entire period of hostilities between the two nations.

It is only when this constancy of interest is understood that we can properly interpret the otherwise puzzling record of communication between Protestants in the two countries throughout the war years. By proceeding from this constancy of interest, we are able to understand why both the Christian Observer and Evangelical Magazine troubled to reprint in full a translation of the "Organic Articles" for the French

⁸⁴ Evangelical Magazine, 10 (1802), 1.

churches (Catholic and Protestant) which Napoleon introduced in 1802.⁸⁵ Even after the resumption of hostilities with France in May 1803, the Evangelical Magazine did not hesitate to publish an article by M. Martin, pastor of the Reformed Church at Bordeaux, calling for the soonest possible implementation of the L.M.S. program^{me} for France enunciated in the magazine in the previous year. Evidently the periodical had its avid readers in both countries. Martin had gone so far as to suggest that the L.M.S. grant pecuniary aid to French Protestant pastors with sizeable families who were experiencing hardship due to the consular government's non-payment of promised stipends.⁸⁶ The same magazine was able to report in 1807, despite the blockade and war-time conditions, that French Protestantism was undergoing a remarkable resurgence in certain locales and was anticipating the foundation of a new theological seminary (sited by Napoleon's wish in 1808 at Montauban).⁸⁷ Similar items of news indicating French Protestant advance were circulated by the magazine in 1811.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ See Christian Observer, 1 (1802), pp. 259-65; and Evangelical Magazine, 10 (1802), pp. 197-99. The Observer editor went on to highlight the insincere motives from which he believed the Government of France was proceeding.

⁸⁶ Evangelical Magazine, 11 (1803), 451.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 14 (1807), 136.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 19 (1811), 318, 349.

To Europe In Earnest

In April 1814, the month of Napoleon's abdication and before the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the Evangelical Magazine made a public appeal for financial support on behalf of the Rev. G. C. Smith of Plymouth who was shortly to visit France, Spain and Portugal for the purpose of distributing Bibles and tracts. Smith, in turn forwarded encouraging reports in time for the June and August issues and reflected particular pleasure in having been present at the July ordination of thirteen graduates of the Protestant seminary at Montauban.⁸⁹ Contacts established in this tour provided later sobering reports of the "unhappy insulated state" of French Protestant life under the restored monarchy in early 1815.⁹⁰ The Christian Observer in the same month could publish a letter from a "Protestant minister in the south of France" noting similarly trying circumstances yet an encouraging gradual increase in the supply of evangelical ministers.⁹¹

In summary we may note that the British Protestant

⁸⁹ Ibid., 22 (1814), 155, 224, 328. In this same period, the directors of the L.M.S. commissioned the Rev. Clement Perrot of Guernsey to survey the situation of the French churches. His report, "A Memorial on the State of the Protestant Churches in the Kingdom of France" has been alluded to in footnote 42.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 23 (1815), pp. 170-71.

⁹¹ Christian Observer, 14 (1815), pp. 25-6.

missionary interest in French-speaking Europe predated the atrocities of the Reign of Terror (which so markedly dampened British enthusiasm for the Revolution), and persisted through the first phase of the Revolutionary Wars up to 1802. It flourished openly during the Peace of Amiens (1802-1803) and continued under the dramatic wartime conditions 1803-1814. The promptness with which personal links between British and French Protestants were re-established after 1814 suggests that the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars did not break, but only impeded a growing kinship of feeling between Protestants in the two nations. This spirit of cooperation might have developed much more rapidly had it not been for the French Revolution. This steady growth of common interest, despite the devastations of war, transcended the confines of purely national interest.

This Protestant solidarity was shown in its most militant form to date in the period following Napoleon's abortive "One Hundred Days" in the spring of 1815. The emperor's crushing defeat at Waterloo left all who had rallied to his cause in positions of extreme vulnerability. Among these were some Protestants in the southern department of Gard. They had found their religious rights rather indifferently upheld by the restored monarchy, and had therefore shown sympathy to the Emperor's forces moving north between Marseilles and Paris. With Napoleon's defeat, all Protestants in the

region became vulnerable to accusations of complicity in insurrection. Among those most ready to level such a charge was a vindictive Catholic and royalist element which called all Protestant religious liberties into doubt. There were horrible massacres in some districts; in others, houses and properties were burned. It was only by the eventual intervention of Austrian troops that order was restored. The local courts of justice failed to convict any persons for the atrocities, despite the promises by the central government that the perpetrators would be brought to justice.⁹²

Details of these happenings were slow in reaching the British Protestant public. None the less there was a sufficiently clear understanding of the situation for two London committees to be summoned to meet on 21 November 1815. These committees were the "General Body of Ministers of the Three Denominations in the Cities of London and Westminster" (Baptist, Presbyterian and Independent) and the "Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty".⁹³ The former body sent a deputation of four ministers to confer with the Government and heard their report one week later. The conference succeeded in gaining expressions of "deepest

⁹² Daniel Robert, Les Églises Reformées, pp. 279-287.

⁹³ G. Lewis, "British Nonconformist Reactions to the 'Terror Blanche'" in Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London, 20 (1964), p. 514.

regret" from His Majesty's Government, along with some communication on the subject between Lord Liverpool and the French president, Richelieu.⁹⁴ The conference also decided to hold collections on behalf of afflicted Protestants and to mount a national effort to publicize their plight. These efforts succeeded in raising and distributing over £6,000 among those most in need.⁹⁵ Clement Perrot of Guernsey, already a trusted commentator of French religious affairs, was commissioned by a "Committee of Inquiry, Superintendence and Distribution for the Relief of the French Protestants" to survey the actual state of things in the south of France. His report, which documented 200 deaths in the city of Ni[^]mes alone and 450 deaths in the department of Gard as a whole, went far to vindicate the efforts of British Nonconformists in the affair. These efforts were portrayed in the Times and Christian Observer as assisting political dissidents whose Protestantism was largely irrelevant.⁹⁶ The Edinburgh Christian Instructor, however, pilloried the Observer for its jaded effort to secure the stability of the restored French

⁹⁴ See *ibid.*, p. 516; and Edinburgh Christian Instructor, 11 (1815), p. 417.

⁹⁵ Lewis, "British Nonconformist Reactions", p.525.

⁹⁶ See Christian Observer, 15 (1816), pp. 65-68; and Lewis, "Reactions", pp. 512-13.

monarchy at the cost of innocent Protestant lives.⁹⁷

Protestants in the south of France did not simply receive substantial British gifts to help them in their time of need. Further, they learned that once more it was the Nonconformist Protestants and the far flung constituency supporting the London Missionary Society which cared most for their welfare. French Protestant leaders received copies of the petitions for relief of their grievances which the "Ministers of the Three Denominations" had placed before the British government. They were consequently led to trust that such a strategy would bring intervention by their own government.⁹⁸

It was but a small step beyond this state of affairs when Pastor Abraham Lissignol of Montpellier, one of that select number of exemplary French pastors earlier commended to the L.M.S. by Clement Perrot, wrote a letter to the Evangelical Magazine published in the December 1816 issue:

We need that you should send over to us some who shall re-animate that faith which is ready to die

⁹⁷ Edinburgh Christian Instructor, 12 (1816), pp. 127-40, 257-82. The controversy over the true explanation for the persecution spawned considerable literature of its own. Supporting the "religious" basis for the persecution were Ingram Cobbin, Statements of the Persecution of the Protestants in the South of France, (London, 1815) and Summary of the Persecutions of the Reformed Church in France, (London, 1815); and Mark Wilks, History of the Persecutions Endured by the Protestants in the South of France...During 1814-16, 2 vols. (London, 1821).

⁹⁸ See Lewis, "British Nonconformist Reactions", p. 517; and Robert, Les Eglises Reformees, pp. 287-88.

among us, to give fresh ardour to the few faithful labourers in the fields who have born the burden and the heat of the day.⁹⁹

The records and correspondence of the L.M.S. indicate the prompt but limited response the Society was able to make to such appeals in the financially trying period following the return of peace. Several workers in France received part or full assistance and a very full exchange of correspondence between French friends of the Society and London indicates an effort at expansion of work.¹⁰⁰ Yet even as Abraham Lissignol penned his appeal in the autumn of 1816, Britons visiting the continent were rapidly forming their own conclusions about what response the situation demanded.

One of these was Dr. John Pye Smith (1774-1851), theological tutor at Homerton College, London from 1806. He travelled extensively throughout France and Switzerland in summer 1816 in search of improved health. After lingering at Geneva, Smith wrote in his diary:

Geneva stands in need of a reformation and reformer scarcely less than she did in the sixteenth century. The introduction of a suitable minister, if such could be found, who would act on an independent plan appears to be a practical measure. . . He should be a Swiss or a Frenchman, a scholar and an orator. . . Oh that the Christians of Great Britain may be honored as instruments of obtaining and encouraging such a

⁹⁹ Evangelical Magazine, 24 (1816), pp. 521-22.

¹⁰⁰ One worker, Laurent Cadoret, had worked in France with L.M.S. support as early as the 1803-06 period. Unnamed workers received assistance from 1817. See C.W.M. (L.M.S.) Archive Europe Handlist, "Disbursements to France".

man.¹⁰¹

Another Briton just then arrived in France pursuing a missionary resolve he had framed some years previous. That individual was Robert Haldane.

Robert Haldane's Individualistic French Mission

Haldane and Existing Mission Endeavours to France

Robert Haldane's departure for France on 9 October 1816 represented the culmination of a long-standing desire. In 1839, Haldane wrote this to Edward Bickersteth to clarify details about that European sojourn:

For many years I had cherished the idea of going to France with a view to doing something to promote the knowledge of the Gospel in a country in which I had been three times before as a traveller. Accordingly, when the return of peace rendered my design practicable, I went to the continent.¹⁰²

The first of the three previous visits to which he had alluded had almost certainly been in company with David Bogue. That summer visit of 1784, undertaken shortly after a period of tuition under Bogue at Gosport,

¹⁰¹John Medway, Memoir of the Life and Writings of John Pye Smith, D.D., (London, 1853), p. 227.

¹⁰²Robert Haldane's Letter to Edward Bickersteth, (London, 1839) was a pamphlet-style publication of twelve pages reproducing his personal correspondence of 4 September of that year. Published with additional clarifications by the Rev. Cesar Malan of Geneva, the pamphlet's existence indicates the author's deep concern that the awakening be rightly understood. Substantial excerpts are found in A. Haldane, pp. 388-92.

may well have planted the 'germ' of this later interest. A second and more extended visit followed one year later and included Holland, Germany, Austria, North Italy, Southern France, Switzerland and briefly Paris.¹⁰³ But at this juncture, Robert Haldane made no open profession of the Christian faith; this would follow in 1795. His third continental visit prior to 1816 cannot be pinpointed with accuracy.

Having come to Christian faith, Haldane plainly thought much about Europe. We have noted (p.60) his suspected sympathy with the early stages of the Revolution. Far more significant for our purposes was his appointment, in the year following his conversion, to the Board of Directors of the London Missionary Society. He cannot have been well known, for the secretary who noted his election entered his name erroneously as the Rev. Robert Haldane of Airthrey. His service in this capacity ended in 1804; by then the L.M.S. had determined to replace one quarter of its 104 directors each year in the interests of wider participation.¹⁰⁴

There is ample evidence of Haldane's deep involvement in the Society's affairs during his brief period of office. A recorded gift of £50 in 1796 may not have been large given his net worth, but it ranked among

¹⁰³A. Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, pp. 35-36.

¹⁰⁴Reports of the L.M.S. 1796-98, CWM Archive, University of London, (1796) pp. XXIII-XXIV, (1797) p. VII.

the largest single donations that year. In 1799, Haldane surpassed all other directors with his gift of £105 towards the costs incurred by the loss of the L.M.S. ship, the "Duff" to pirates. By 1800 Haldane was one of two directors, each promising £500 towards the creation of a Society seminary for missionary preparation. It so happened that the committee which was struck to pursue the matter recommended that the seminary be conjoined to the academy which was already under David Bogue's care at Gosport, Hants. In addition to having personally benefited from Bogue's teaching, Haldane had since 1798 provided £10 per annum support to a maximum of ten Gosport Academy students for three years, thus making up a financial deficit arising from the death of an earlier benefactor, George Welsh.¹⁰⁵

Haldane's participation as L.M.S. director in these years would also have provided him with a degree of familiarity with continental Protestant affairs and the Society's various schemes for continental assistance.¹⁰⁶ However it is significant to note that even during these years of L.M.S. involvement in and orientation towards

¹⁰⁵See Lovett, History of the L.M.S., (London, 1898), I. p.63. Terpstra, Bogue, p. 106; and J. Bennett, Bogue, p. 133. After 1802, the L.M.S. committed itself to preparing a limited number of French preachers at Gosport. See page 114 .

¹⁰⁶It is therefore unwarranted to insist, as does A. Wemyss, Le Réveil, (Toulouse, 1977), pp.83,84, that Haldane's insistence on a personal mission to France indicated his ignorance of L.M.S. activities and David Bogue's decision not to inform him.

Europe, Haldane did not operate on any assumption, stated or unstated, that his growing European interests must be restricted to those of the existing societies. Thus in 1803, we learn of his efforts to recruit an Edinburgh businessman named Alexander to serve as an independent Christian literature agent for Leghorn, in northern Italy. He also attempted to recruit an agent for the German port city of Hamburg.¹⁰⁷

This determination not to be confined to the efforts of the L.M.S. with its sister organizations (the Tract and Bible Societies) is perhaps reflected as well in an attempt in 1810 to discern from John Campbell of London:

If there be any (scheme for) translation of the Scriptures . . . not likely to be carried into effect by the societies in London . . . or of an enlarged distribution of Scriptures which you are not at present able to embrace . . . I would wish to do it in such a way as would be an addition to what is at present going on. Do you know if anything in this way could be done on the Continent? Can anything more be done for Spain and Portugal? I suppose nothing could be attempted as to France--or would it be possible to send over more copies of the Bible to that country?¹⁰⁸

Here we see not only the continuation of his long-standing interest in Europe and awareness of what the London-based societies were currently doing under wartime conditions, but also Haldane's characteristic desire to undertake private action. We may say that this is the

¹⁰⁷See A. Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, p. 305; and James Ross, W. L. Alexander, His Life and Work, (London, 1877), p. 3.

¹⁰⁸Letter of 25 December 1810 printed in A. Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, p. 360.

outlook of the independent-minded Christian philanthropist who had already organized and controlled the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home", an organization defunct since the year 1808. Such an outlook implied no hostility or contempt towards existing societies. Events subsequent to Haldane's 1819 return amply indicate a widespread community of interest among such groups. But Robert Haldane was always a man of independent action.

Though Robert Haldane now went to Europe at the "return of the peace"¹⁰⁹, he cannot be said to have been part of the first 'wave' of Britons to cross the Channel in the post-war period. Already in January 1815 (prior to Napoleon's "One Hundred Days"), the Christian Observer could report that the city council of Geneva had allotted a chapel for use of Church of England adherents in the city.¹¹⁰

By early 1816, Britons could board the wooden steamship Defiance at London and travel across the Channel and up the Rhine to Cologne.¹¹¹ British 'literati' were drawn to the Continent at this time. The poets Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) and Lord Byron (1788-1824) were then surveying Alpine scenes and

¹⁰⁹R. Haldane, Letter to Cheneviere, (London, 1824) p. 2.

¹¹⁰Christian Observer, 14 (1815), p. 62.

¹¹¹W. O. Henderson, Britain and Industrial Europe, (Liverpool, 1957), p. 51.

sampling Swiss life. British financiers, engineers and entrepreneurs were also present in numbers, making up, as it were, for the time lost during military hostilities. The half-century after Napoleon's defeat saw continental railway building, river navigation, gasworks, waterworks and textile mills expanded on a massive scale with the aid of British capital.¹¹² Significantly, Haldane's biographer would record the spiritual influence of a believing textile engineer, the Welshman Richard Wilcox, who met repeatedly with an existing pietist conventicle at Geneva in the months prior to the Scot's arrival. Wilcox was part of this industrial and entrepreneurial 'invasion' by Britons. A British visitor to the city in 1823 remarked on the advances in navigating Lake Lemán resulting from a ferry service--with steam engines of Scots design.¹¹³

Britishers were welcome in Europe. It was widely appreciated that British subsidies had enabled impoverished European governments to field and equip their armies for the defeat of Napoleon. These subsidies in cash, armaments and materials had amounted to £10,000,000 in the last year of the war and £52,000,000 between 1793 and 1815 exclusive of Britain's own military

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 7-8.

¹¹³See A. Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, p. 397; and Daniel Wilson, Letters From an Absent Brother, (London, 1823), I. p.296.

expenditure.¹¹⁴ Switzerland was especially grateful for Britain's efforts at the Congress of Vienna to secure the restoration of her old borders and to maintain the integrity of all nineteen cantons formerly fused in Napoleon's 'Helvetic Republic'.¹¹⁵

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Robert Haldane went to Europe not only to fulfil a long-standing ambition, but also to escape from personal difficulties in Britain. His biographer speaks of "twenty chequered years of failure and success" preceding the journey, a reference no doubt to the dramatic rise and inauspicious disintegration of the Haldane connexion of churches through disputes about worship and baptism. Though Robert Haldane "announced his intention of making a missionary tour of the Continent of Europe", his announcement stirred little public interest. Too many recalled Haldane's failures and controversies of the previous decade.¹¹⁶

The Haldane brothers had, no doubt, retained a circle of influential friends despite the demise of their connexion. Rowland Hill of Surrey Chapel, Joseph Hardcastle of the L.M.S. and Bible Society and Andrew

¹¹⁴See F. L. Ford, Europe, p. 246; and J. M. Sherwig, Guineas and Gunpowder, (Boston, 1969), p. 4.

¹¹⁵Bonjour et al., History of Switzerland, p. 242.

¹¹⁶A. Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, p. 387.

Fuller, the pastor-theologian of Kettering who itinerated so widely on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society, all continued their friendship with the Haldanes.¹¹⁷ But the decline of their cause had been apparent to any observer and even their close friends lamented the change. David Bogue, the spiritual and theological mentor of both brothers, chose to portray them as disciples of the teaching of Robert Sandeman--the divisive proponent of a biblical restorationism involving the upholding of all biblical precepts, in his History of Dissenters, (1808).¹¹⁸ Andrew Fuller, though himself a Baptist, had warned the brothers in 1808 that they

had once been as positive about paedobaptism as (they) now were about exhortation, discipline and the kiss and that he strongly suspected that it was one of Satan's devices to draw attention to those little things.¹¹⁹

Fuller's work, Strictures on Sandemanianism (1810), addressed directly the very tenets being championed at Edinburgh. Young Christopher Anderson (1782-1852), converted under James Haldane's preaching, and by 1806

¹¹⁷The Haldane biographer noted a continuation of their correspondence in the decade following the connexion's demise, pp. 363-64.

¹¹⁸David Bogue and James Bennett, The History of Dissenters, 4 vols. (London, 1808), 4, 124-25. Bogue and Bennett noted, however, that the Haldanes' new position on baptism separated them from Sandeman's continued paedobaptism. Bennett's 1833 revision of the History no longer maintained any Haldane-Sandeman connection. 3 vols. (London, 1833), 2, 447.

¹¹⁹Ryland, Andrew Fuller, p. 326. The remarks were directed primarily to James, yet the memoir makes plain that similar reasonings took place with Robert also.

the pastor of the Baptist congregation meeting at Richmond Court Chapel, Edinburgh, (and from 1818 at Charlotte Chapel, Rose Street), spoke plainly to his mentor, reminding him "of the former days " when the Gospel had seemed to be advancing in Edinburgh. Now Anderson "conceived that on the whole, religion was in decline, except someone stepped forward".¹²⁰ This was a stern way of speaking; it came from a young man once dismissed from the Tabernacle's membership for a change of conviction on baptism identical to that which his mentor had now himself undergone!

From the fact that Robert was not the great public figure of the connexion (a role which his brother, James filled) and was not the first to submit to second baptism, some have suggested that Robert was far less erratic than James.¹²¹ But there is little evidence that Robert did not embrace the new views with equal fervour. On the contrary, Robert engaged in a preaching tour to Newcastle and London in 1805 in order to promote the very Sandemanian ideas about congregational order and worship which James was shortly to popularize in his book, A View of Social Worship (1805). Further, Robert's was the unseen but supporting hand in the publication of associate W. Ballantyne's pamphlet urging a plurality of

¹²⁰Hugh Anderson, The Life and Letters of Christopher Anderson, (London, 1854), pp. 10, 66.

¹²¹So, for instance, Reeves, The Interaction, p. 147.

preaching elders in every congregation.¹²² The same brother sorely tested old bonds of friendship with John Campbell, now of Kingsland Chapel, London, by urging weekly communion and a plurality of preaching elders upon him. In 1807 Haldane wrote to his old acquaintance:

Your situation is highly dangerous. The cry of usefulness drowns every other voice. How much seldomer do we hear of duty? Yet if the former be pursued at the expense of the latter, our efforts must be abominable to God. Are you not doing this in regard to the Lord's Supper?¹²³

Public confidence in both of the brothers fell hand in hand with the demise of their connexion. They had claimed only to be encouraging forbearance on the questions of baptism and the ordering of the details of worship. But those who found the Haldane innovations in the ordering of sacraments and worship unconvincing perceived only another instance of what one contemporary observer termed the "heavy purse and powerful influence of Haldane".¹²⁴ After the break-up of their connexion, there came the unseemly spectacle of divided congregations and property disputes to which we have earlier referred. And, almost inevitably, rumours circulated which showed neither party in a favourable light. The family biographer was still contending against such stories thirty-five years after the

¹²²A. Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, pp. 333-34.

¹²³ Philip, Memoir of John Campbell, pp. 360, 361.

¹²⁴ Anderson, Christopher Anderson, p. 13.

spectacle.¹²⁵

The Leith Walk Tabernacle saw its core membership reduced to one third of its former strength and at least eight other new congregations emerged in Edinburgh during these years of instability.¹²⁶ James Haldane continued as pastor of the rump congregation at Leith Walk, assisted for a few years by Robert in a makeshift attempt at achieving the Sandemanian ideal of a multiple pastorate.¹²⁷ In this capacity, Robert proved himself quite able; his nephew and biographer could vividly recall his exposition of the Epistles of Peter at a space of more than forty years. He continued to preach regularly after his removal in 1809 to an estate at Auchingray, Lanarkshire. Both in an Airdrie chapel linked with the Edinburgh Tabernacle and in a small meeting house erected for the tenants of his new estate, the older brother regularly gave expositions of the Scriptures.¹²⁸ These Lanarkshire years were also filled with efforts towards the supplying of Gaelic-speaking

¹²⁵A. Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, p. 344.

¹²⁶See ibid., p. 352; Dr. Donald Meek, The Doctrinal Basis of Christopher Anderson, p.2 , (privately circulated essay) states. "the Tabernacle was the source of at least eight other churches in Edinburgh, most of them owing their origins to troubles within the Tabernacle".

¹²⁷A. Haldane, Lives, p. 354.

¹²⁸Ibid., pp. 358, 360.

missionaries to the Highlands.¹²⁹

Haldane's Outlook in 1816

Robert Haldane's trip to France might have proved to be nothing more than a six weeks' grand tour such as he had taken before the years of Revolution. He journeyed "unacquainted with any individual and therefore unable to arrange any plan of action".¹³⁰ He consequently despaired of finding any usefulness on arrival at Paris as he doubted that much Protestantism would have survived after the long history of persecution and revolutionary upheaval. Yet, unexpectedly, Haldane met an American gentleman named Hillhouse who recommended Geneva as a scene of endeavour and named two pastors in that city as contacts. Hillhouse added something else likely to stir Haldane's interest; in his view--"nearly the whole of Geneva's other pastors were Arians or Socinians".¹³¹ Yet the initial visit to Geneva in mid-November was unproductive; it was followed by one to Berne, outside which the younger of the two persons recommended by Hillhouse was now serving as a pastor. This person, A.J. Galland (1792-1862), sought Haldane's teaching twelve hours per day for a week and in turn referred Haldane to

¹²⁹David Bebbington, ed., The Baptists in Scotland, (Glasgow, 1988), p. 43.

¹³⁰R. Haldane, Letter to Bickersteth, p. 2.

¹³¹Ibid., p. 3.

a close pastoral acquaintance a short distance from Geneva.¹³²

Before returning to that city, however, Haldane proceeded to visit other Swiss cantons. He sought out the Englishwoman Miss Anna Greaves at Lausanne, who was rapidly gaining a reputation for her work of literature distribution. He also sought out "the celebrated Baroness Krudener" at Basle and found in her "a spirit of charity but very little knowledge".¹³³ He was subsequently preparing to depart from the Swiss cantons for Montauban, the 'Geneva of the Midi' in search of opportunity there.¹³⁴ His former involvement with the London Missionary Society and familiarity with the reports furnished by the Evangelical Magazine would have made the significance of Montauban plain enough. But a second visit to Geneva set in motion a chain of events which would detain Haldane from his travels to the Midi for half a year.

The return visit was initially no more productive than the first. Two Prussian clergymen, a Professor Sack and his brother travelling homeward from London, provided

¹³² See *ibid.*, p. 3; and A. Haldane, Lives, p. 393. Neither Haldane, Letter, or his biographer, Lives, indicate that Galland had already gained a reputation for preaching the "new birth" before his departure from Geneva for Berne. See. Emil Guers, Le Premier Reveil et Le Premier Eglise Independent a Geneve, (Geneva, 1872), p.61.

¹³³A. Haldane, p. 395.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 392.

Haldane with little satisfaction in conversation.¹³⁵ A visit with the recent ordinand, Louis Gausson (1792-1863) at the village of Satigny near Geneva was more productive; Gausson had just recently "submitted his faith to the great doctrines of the Scriptures" and found in Haldane encouragement for his young faith. Subsequently, Gausson returned Haldane's visit in response to an invitation relayed by a young theological student Jules Charles Rieu (1792-1821). A second conference with the senior minister, Moulinie (1757-1836) produced little of substance other than the statement that the city was in "deplorable darkness".¹³⁶ But the old minister did make a kind offer to show Mrs. Haldane a scale model of the surrounding peaks the following morning. It was his inability to make good on this offer on account of physical weakness and his sending of an inquisitive divinity student G.L. James (1790-1867) as his replacement that led to the deferral of all plans to proceed to Montauban. Haldane, finding the student ignorant concerning the gospel, spoke with him in his hired lodgings late into the night.

The young man was sufficiently intrigued by Haldane's command of Biblical teaching that he returned next morning with another theological student. Haldane's opinion of both was that

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 391.

¹³⁶Ibid., pp. 393, 391.

had they been trained in the schools of Socrates or Plato, and enjoyed no other means of instruction, they could scarcely have been more ignorant of the doctrines of the Gospel. . . To the Bible and its contents their studies had never been directed.¹³⁷

These two (James and Rieu) in turn brought six additional students who began to pay return visits at all hours until Haldane proposed stated times of six to eight p.m., three nights per week. Proceeding on this stabilized basis, the Scot was freer both to prepare lectures for the stated sessions and to converse with still additional students who called on him at Place Maurice, No. 19, Promenade St. Antoine. Paul's Epistle to the Romans formed the basis of his lectures to this group of eight for about two weeks, ending in mid-February 1817. At that time he began the lectures afresh due to the enlarged number of students desiring to take part. This course of expositions, delivered through a translator, lasted until May-June. In addition to those attending official lectures, numerous other persons both male and female came for instruction.¹³⁸

It is important to note that Haldane was by no means alone in his endeavours among the students in this period. The two Prussians (with whom Haldane found conversation so unprofitable), the Lutheran minister of

¹³⁷R. Haldane, Letter to Bickersteth, pp. 4-5.

¹³⁸See *ibid.*, p. 5.; and A. Haldane, Lives, p. 399. Haldane read French fluently but spoke it haltingly. He relied upon students Rieu, Monod and James as translators.

Geneva, M. Wendt, and Haldane were all active in a similar way. "A learned doctor from New York and a faithful young minister" (whom we now know to be Dr. John Mitchell Mason and Matthias Bruen) were also active with students and others in Geneva at the commencement of 1817. Student meetings involving up to fourteen students at a time were held in Mason's rooms as late as March 1817. Haldane and the Americans were themselves visitors in one another's apartments.¹³⁹

The Genevan ecclesiastical establishment and the students who frequented Haldane's parlours had been agitated in November 1816 by the publication of H.L. Empeytaz's pamphlet, Considerationes sur la Divinité de Jésus Christ. Great sensation was stirred up by the pamphlet's claim -- based on a survey of sermons printed in the city over a sixty year period -- that the Genevan pulpit's virtual silence regarding Christ's divinity indicated disbelief in this central affirmation of the faith. While Haldane's entry to Geneva was in fact quite independent of such developments, he was profoundly affected by the aftermath. Only two theological

¹³⁹ C. Malan, The Conventicle of Rolle, (1821, E.T. London, 1865), p.109; S. C. Malan, Life and Labours of C. Malan, (London, 1869), pp. 44-45; and John M. Mason, Sermons, Lectures and Orations, (Edinburgh, 1860), p. xii. Mason (1770-1829) was in Europe recuperating from an over-active term as New York City pastor of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and Professor in Theology in that city's Columbia College. Mary D. Lundie, Memoirs of Matthias Bruen, (Edinburgh, 1832), p. 32.

students, Henri Pyt (1796-1835) and E. Guers (1794-1882), had declined to sign a student petition to the Venerable Company of Pastors protesting against the charges made by Empaytaz. The two, called before the Venerable Company to defend this implicit support for Empaytaz, cited the articles from the French Confession of La Rochelle (1559) bearing on the divinity of Christ. The Company, knowing it would be impolitic to contend against this historic creed, let the matter rest.¹⁴⁰

This student body, which had recently demonstrated its substantial support for the current teaching in the theological Academy, formed the audiences which waited on Haldane's expositions. The attendance of the students at these sessions was noted by their professors, with J.J.C.Cheneviere (1783-1871), professor of dogmatics, taking down the names of participants.¹⁴¹ Supposing a connection between the November publication of the Empeytaz pamphlet and Haldane's lectures, the Venerable Company responded with denunciatory sermons and the issuing of a pastoral regulation on 3 May 1817. This required that all prospective ordinands ('proposants') sign and all ministers and pastors abide by a promise to abstain from propounding their own opinions as to:

¹⁴⁰See Emil Guers, Vie de Henri Pyt (Toulouse, 1850), p. 17; and Blanche Bieler, Une Famille de Refuge (Paris, 1930), p. 106.

¹⁴¹A. Haldane, Lives p. 402.

1. the manner in which the divine nature is united to the person of Jesus Christ;
2. original sin;
3. the manner in which grace operates, or efficacious grace; and,
4. predestination.

They also had to promise not to combat the opinion of any pastor or minister on these matters.¹⁴²

But what teaching was it that provoked such outcry? Haldane's own well-supported claim is that he took the Epistle to the Romans as his subject, expounded it and dilated on its great doctrines. He did not hesitate to name and confute Geneva's current theological aberrations.¹⁴³ However, it is not a simple task to establish the details of Haldane's expositions. The French edition of his Romans exposition, published at Montauban in 1819, was admittedly the product of an additional two years' study and reflection; therefore, it was no mere transcript of what his Genevan auditors actually heard.¹⁴⁴ We would not go far wrong if we were to understand the notorious 'règlement' (pastoral regulation) of 3 May as summarizing the main thrust of Haldane's teaching, for there is little doubt that the

¹⁴²The entire French original is printed in Henri Heyer, L'Église de Genève: 1555-1909, (Geneva, 1909), p. 119. We may note here that in the Genevan context, all ordained clergy were termed ministers. Only those attached to particular congregations were termed pastors.

¹⁴³R. Haldane, Letter to Bickersteth, pp. 5-6.

¹⁴⁴A. Haldane, p. 450. The 1819 edition has proved unobtainable in the U. K. We will refer to the expanded London edition of 1836.

instruction given at No. 19, Promenade St. Antoine pilloried the current Genevan outlook on each issue.

The theological stance taken was above all biblicistic, with primary authority being attributed to chapter and verse of the Biblical text. Bibles in the biblical and modern European languages lay open on the large table around which all gathered and to these the teacher would appeal. Frederic Monod, an eager student participant in the sessions, would recall almost thirty years later:

He answered every question by a prompt reference to various passages. . . He never wasted his time in arguing against our so-called reasonings but at once pointed with his finger to the Bible, adding the simple words, "Look here--how readest thou? There it stands written with the finger of God". He was, in the full sense of the word, a living concordance.¹⁴⁵

In this biblicistic emphasis, Haldane was emulating his own mentor of three decades earlier, David Bogue.¹⁴⁶ In common with many evangelical Nonconformists of the period, Bogue and Haldane were confident that historic Protestant orthodoxy could best be maintained not by appeals to confessional statements but by direct appeal to the Scriptural text. Haldane's biblicism however, may well have advanced beyond that of his mentor. Haldane had recently crystallized his thoughts on the subject of

¹⁴⁵A. Haldane, Lives, p. 403. The author has drawn on remarks which were given by Monod in the 1845 General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. See the Free Church Assembly Reports, (Edinburgh, 1845), pp. 128-33.

¹⁴⁶Terpstra, Bogue, pp. 42-43.

revelation and inspiration in his Evidence and Authority of the Divine Revelation (2 vols., 1816), which he had seen through the press at Edinburgh immediately prior to his European journey. The work was not innovative in its argument for the necessity of a divine revelation committed to writing. In this area he maintained, with a myriad of others of his age, a biblicistic stance; i.e. that "it is only from the revelation itself that the urgency of that necessity to man can be fully known".¹⁴⁷ Man's estrangement from and way of return to God could only be properly grasped through God's self-communication.

Haldane does seem to have been a trail-blazer, however, in his distancing himself from the widely-popular view held among eighteenth-century evangelicals that the divine revelation committed to Scripture had been written under varying and discernible degrees of inspiration; these were specified to be superintendence, elevation and suggestion.¹⁴⁸ Proceeding from the conviction that "our knowledge of the inspiration of the

¹⁴⁷R. Haldane, The Evidence and Authority of the Divine Revelation, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1816), 1, 4.

¹⁴⁸Such 'degrees' of inspiration were distinguished by Philip Doddridge (1702-1751). Haldane's near contemporary, the Glasgow Secession theologian John Dick (1764-1833), had used these distinctions circumspectly while attempting to defend a plenary inspiration of Scripture against deist scepticism. See J. Dick, The Inspiration of Scripture, (Edinburgh, 1800, 2nd revised edition Glasgow, 1803), pp. 1-24. His own mentor, Bogue, similarly used this framework of 'degrees' in defending plenary inspiration. Lectures, I, pp. 370-71.

Bible, like every other doctrine it contains, must be collected from itself", Haldane went on to argue that such 'degrees' of inspiration were no part of Scripture's self-description, and were therefore inadmissible. In fact, he stated,

"the Scriptures uniformly assert the highest degree of inspiration and give no intimation of any part of them being written under an inspiration of any kind but one".¹⁴⁹

Haldane admitted that the Spirit of God might have communicated the revelation to the human writers in differing manners, yet insisted that inspiration was ultimately uniform.¹⁵⁰ Such views were not characteristic of all British evangelical Protestantism at this period; some proponents of the very notions Haldane repudiated none the less joined with him in mission work on behalf of French Europe. But there is little doubt that Haldane communicated his pronounced views on Biblical inspiration and authority to his auditors at 19, Promenade St. Antoine.¹⁵¹

Moving from this foundational aspect of Haldane's theology to his more specific views, we may first consider "the manner in which the divine nature is united to the person of Jesus Christ". The latter was

¹⁴⁹ R. Haldane, Evidence, 1, 134-35.

¹⁵⁰ R. Haldane, Evidence, I. pp. 134-35.

¹⁵¹We will turn to the question of the duplication of Haldane's views in some of his soon-prominent auditors in the following chapter.

the first theological issue over which the 3 May 1817 pastoral regulation sought to bring about a moratorium of debate. We must note that Haldane had almost certainly left Scotland with the conviction that the Protestantism of French-speaking Europe had largely lapsed from affirming the full deity of Jesus Christ. This perspective had only been strengthened by his contact with the American whom he had met at Paris. Was the conviction entirely justified?

There is strong evidence to suggest that Haldane's 'verdict' on Geneva's theology was premature, and obstructed him in making dispassionate judgment. One year earlier an anonymous correspondent had written the London-based Christian Observer to extol the fervent evangelical preaching which he had heard from two Genevan preachers in a single Sunday. In the year of Haldane's visit, a correspondent to the same periodical reported that at least five of Geneva's twenty-five ministers were orthodox.¹⁵² Furthermore, the biographer of one student (Merle D'Aubigné) who came to know Haldane intimately in early 1817 recorded the existence of four senior pastors known for their orthodoxy and piety serving in the city at that time.¹⁵³ Haldane's pre-commitment to independent

¹⁵²Christian Observer 14 (1815), pp.800-803. Christian Observer 16 (1817), p.713. These impressions were echoed in the New Evangelical Magazine 4 (1818), p.297.

¹⁵³Bieler, Une Famille de Refuge, (Paris, 1930), p. 106, names Peschier of Coligny, Diodati of Cartigny, Naville of Chancy and Cellierier of Satigny. Moulinie, to

action seems to have prevented him from seeking to identify sympathetic ministers in the city. Only from such a stance could he later remark of the students who gathered in his rooms and their preachers:

"While such was the deplorable state of religious instruction in the Theological Academy . . . nothing was heard from the pulpits of Geneva to compensate to the students for this woeful defect".¹⁵⁴

The effects of such a sweeping dismissal of the entire Company of Pastors were far reaching. Yet, there was also strong evidence to warrant Haldane's wariness. He claimed to have collected the clergy's arguments against what he taught as Scriptural truth; he had certainly heard Prof. Cheneviere preach.¹⁵⁵ The latter, the professor of dogmatics who later sought to discredit Haldane by publishing "A Summary of Theological Controversies Which Have Agitated Geneva" in a London periodical in 1824, could even then affirm no more than that "each one of the pastors confessed that Jesus was a divine being".¹⁵⁶ Haldane considered this view to mean no more than that the Saviour was "the first of created

whom Haldane had been referred by Hillhouse at Paris, and who twice proved quite unhelpful, does not appear.

¹⁵⁴R. Haldane, Letter to Cheneviere, p. 21. The remark was a sweeping and unjustified generalization.

¹⁵⁵See R. Haldane, Letter to Bickersteth, p. 6 and Letter to Cheneviere, p. 23.

¹⁵⁶J. J. Cheneviere, "A Summary of the Theological Controversies Which Have Recently Agitated Geneva", Monthly Repository of Theological and General Literature, 19 (London, 1824), p. 5.

beings".¹⁵⁷ In light of such vagaries, Haldane had made it his business while at Geneva to teach a robustly Trinitarian theology which accorded full deity to God the Son. Commenting on Romans 1:4 ("declared to be the Son of God with power"), he would later state:

This expression, the Son of God, definitely imports Deity, as applied to Jesus Christ. It as properly denotes participation of the Divine nature as the contrasted expression, Son of Man, denotes participation of the human nature. . . The belief, then, of the import of this term is the substance of Christianity.¹⁵⁸

In the second main point, the pastoral regulation of May 1817 had singled out the notion of original sin as being one about which contention should be curtailed. Haldane's interviews with various students led him promptly to conclude that they had been taught that men were born pure.¹⁵⁹ Young Merle D'Aubigné, who visited him privately, was for a long time unwilling to renounce the idea of the natural goodness of man. Haldane had himself heard Cheneviere preach this doctrine.¹⁶⁰

Commenting on Romans 5:12 ("Wherefore, as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin and so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned"), Haldane

¹⁵⁷R. Haldane, Letter to Bickersteth, p. 6.

¹⁵⁸See R. Haldane, Letter to Cheneviere, p. 25, and Romans, 1, pp. 37-38.

¹⁵⁹R. Haldane, Letter to Bickersteth, p. 6.

¹⁶⁰See Bieler, Une Famille, p. 111; and R. Haldane, Letter to Cheneviere, p. 23.

stated:

It is not that sin merely commenced by one, but that it came upon all the world from one. This is the only point of view in which it can be contrasted with Christ's righteousness. The meaning is that as Adam's sin came upon all men, so Christ's righteousness came upon all his posterity, or his people whom he represented.¹⁶¹

Now this, in combination with his emphasis upon sin as a present power within human life would have no doubt sounded novel to students whose ideas of theological anthropology probably owed more to Rousseau's Emile and other Enlightenment works than to biblical teaching.¹⁶²

Third, the pastoral regulation of May 1817 described "the manner in which grace operated, or efficacious grace". At stake here was the question of whether the Christian experience of grace is conscious experience. On such themes, taught in the eighth chapter of Romans, Haldane confessed to "having been long detained".¹⁶³ Commenting on Romans 8:28 ("to those who are the called according to his purpose"), he would write:

This is a further description or characteristic of God's people. They are called not merely outwardly by the preaching of the Gospel, for this is common to them with unbelievers, but called also by the Spirit with an internal and effectual calling, and made willing in the day of God's power. They are called according to God's eternal purpose . . . It imports

¹⁶¹R. Haldane, Romans, 1, p. 445.

¹⁶²Ami Bost, Life of Felix Neff, (London, 1855), p. 5, reports that Neff, a young convert and preacher of the Réveil period, had found his favourite reading material to be the works of Plutarch and Rousseau.

¹⁶³ R. Haldane, Letter to Cheneviere, p. 34.

that their calling is solely the effect of grace.¹⁶⁴

The fourth and final doctrine dealt with in the pastoral regulation, predestination, was also one which Haldane had taught with relish. From the ninth chapter of Romans he had taught that divine predestination to eternal life is quite absolute as illustrated in the case of Jacob and Esau. On Romans 9:13 ("Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated"), he would write:

That the Apostle quotes these words in reference to Jacob and Esau personally is clear, since he speaks of the children before they were born. Jacob was loved before he was born, consequently before he was capable of doing good; and Esau was hated before he was born, consequently before he was capable of doing evil.¹⁶⁵

When Haldane was subsequently upbraided by Professor Cheneviere for being a "rigid Calvinist", the Scot was offered the rejoinder:

What! Sir are you afraid of Calvinism! Has the ghost of Calvin, whom you thought dead, and buried, and forgotten, appeared among you? Is he again raising his voice from the chair which he once occupied, but from which you had hoped that it would never more be heard, and are you greatly alarmed?¹⁶⁶

The above is admittedly only our selective representation of Haldane's teaching assembled to demonstrate the essential congruence of the May 1817 regulations with the themes pursued in his lectures. The

¹⁶⁴R. Haldane, Romans, 2, p. 345.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 461-62.

¹⁶⁶See Cheneviere, "A Summary of Theological Controversies" p. 4; and R. Haldane, Letter to Cheneviere, p. 3.

Scot later provided a summary of his teaching gathered round the foci of the charges levelled against him by Cheneviere in 1824.¹⁶⁷ These charges were: 1) a preoccupation with the mysterious points of the Christian religion; 2) a diffusion of an exclusive and intolerant spirit; 3) a contempt for reason; and 4) a disparagement of good works.

Haldane indicated that he was unashamed of having taught "mysterious points of the faith" if by this was meant the vital doctrines omitted from the Genevan pulpit.

There was little or no allusion to the fall of man or his ruined condition by nature, and nothing of the necessity of the New Birth. . . The imputation of the Redeemer's righteousness and justification by his blood, were also set aside. The person and work of the Son of God were passed by and the work of the Spirit overlooked.¹⁶⁸

Haldane had directed the attention of his Genevan hearers to these doctrines "in the full conviction that they are conducive in the highest degree to the interests of holiness . . . "¹⁶⁹

As for the charge that he had encouraged in the students an "exclusive and intolerant spirit", Haldane was again unembarrassed. On the contrary, he had seen it as his duty to emphasize the exclusive claims of the

¹⁶⁷Cheneviere, "Summary of Theological Controversies", p. 4.

¹⁶⁸R. Haldane, Letter to Cheneviere, p. 22.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 39.

Christian Gospel for Jesus Christ as the only saviour. Accordingly, Haldane freely admitted to having taught that one who denied the deity of Christ --such as an Arian-- could not be Christian.¹⁷⁰ As for "intolerance", he denied having encouraged any such outlook; he claimed instead to have taught a "toleration among Christians in articles not fundamental". Significantly, his imperviousness to the charge indicates that he did not perceive it as a fundamental criticism of his entire Genevan mission.

That he had encouraged the disparagement of reason in religion he partly admitted, insofar as he had consciously stressed the transcendence of God and His ways above the realm of human understanding.

I can follow him (God) but one or two steps in his lowest and plainest works, till all becomes mystery and a matter of amazement to me. How shall I account for his nature or account for his actions . . . ? The only proper use of our reason in reference to religion is to listen when God speaks.¹⁷¹

Had he also "waged war with good works"? The answer must be "yes" in settings where Haldane heard it contended that performance of these might contribute to human justification before God. But having shown in his exposition of Romans that this state of justification could be entered only by the exercise of faith in Christ who suffered for our sins, he had also "urged upon the

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 41.

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 45.

students and ministers at Geneva the duty of observing the holy precepts contained in the last six chapters of the Epistle to the Romans".¹⁷²

We may therefore summarize Haldane's theological teaching at Geneva by saying that it was a presentation of the proven "ruin and redemption" theology of the Evangelical Revival from a decidedly biblicistic and Calvinistic orientation. In its main essentials, it might have been equally well presented by any number of British preacher-theologians of that era.

It is evident from multiple accounts that what Haldane propounded in his lecture room he also applied in a searching personal manner in private conferences. Merle D'Aubigné, whose attachment to the notion of innate human goodness we have noted, was not only confronted with Scripture evidence to the contrary and made to grant the fact, but was then asked, "Do you see this in your heart?"¹⁷³ Of the approximately twenty-five students who attended Haldane's lectures regularly, (this being almost the entire body of local theological students), the greater part were deeply and permanently affected.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁷³See Bieler, Une Famille, p. 111; and Malan, Conventicle, pp. 113-14.

¹⁷⁴Correspondence of Louis Gausson, quoted in A. Haldane, Lives, p. 433. But such a claim may not be construed as meaning that this number of students necessarily dated their Christian conversions to the Haldane lectures. We will consider the diversity which existed in this matter in the following chapter.

Haldane and Genevan Separatism

Such an overview of his lectures on Romans leaves unexplored, however, the important question of whether Haldane promoted at Geneva the views on which his connexion of churches had foundered in 1808. This question is inextricably bound up with another: did Haldane promote ecclesiastical separation? As to the first, the family biographer insisted that there had been no such advocacy: "He was silent in regard to all the questions which had agitated and divided the Congregational Churches of Scotland."¹⁷⁵ But we must ask for independent testimony on the question.

Some light is shed on the first question through the testimony of Louis Gausson. Gausson had been an intimate of Haldane's during the winter of 1817, and was later professor of dogmatics in the alternative school of theology established in the city in 1831. After the death of Haldane in 1842, he recalled:

His wisdom at Geneva was indicated by the sobriety of his language, and by the pre-eminence he assigned to all that was essential. He was himself a Baptist, but never did I hear him utter a word on the subject. I have been told that our brother, M. Guers, at that time also a Baptist, wrote to him, "We have baptised two persons" and that he replied, "I should have been much better pleased had you written that you had converted two persons".¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵A. Haldane, Lives, pp. 425, 429, 431.

¹⁷⁶Correspondence of Louis Gausson to Alexander Haldane, quoted in A. Haldane, Lives, p. 431. The recollections of Gausson are buttressed by the fact that the Exposition of Romans steadfastly avoids comment on the disputed aspects of Christian baptism at Romans 6:1-

As for the second question, the advocacy of ecclesiastical separation, we have the testimony of two Genevans who could hardly have held more varied sentiments about the overall effect of the Scot's visit. Both Prof. J. J.C. Cheneviere and the Rev. Cesar Malan (1787-1864) portrayed Haldane as standing within their Reformed tradition--Cheneviere depicting him as one belonging to a "sect of the Reformed" and Malan incorrectly describing him as a Scots Presbyterian. The former, despite his intense distaste for Haldane's lecturing, placed blame for the separatist impulse upon his British successor at Geneva, Henry Drummond (1786-1860). It was Drummond, "of less skill, but greater impetuosity who collected assemblies in which he distributed both instruction and money".¹⁷⁷ Cesar Malan, was also called on to declare whether or not this visitor had shown himself to be a separatist. His questioners at Rolle, mid-way between Geneva and Lausanne, had evidently heard reports to this effect prior to 1821. Malan replied to them, that Haldane had never "advanced a

6, the major 'locus' of the doctrine in the epistle. R. Haldane, Romans, 2, pp.11-27. However, Gausson, writing at a distance of twenty-five years, seems guilty of faulty memory. Emil Guers, to whom he refers as a Baptist, could not have held such baptismal views in spring 1817 as he was still then a candidate for the Genevan Reformed ministry. That he did hold such view subsequent to Haldane's visit and then wrote the Scot with news of baptismal "successes" would seem to suggest the opposite conclusion than that drawn by Gausson.

¹⁷⁷See Cheneviere, "A Summary of Controversies", pp. 1, 4; and Malan, Conventicle, p. 111.

single opinion that could lead me to suppose so. There is no evidence of separationism in his Evidences or Romans".¹⁷⁸ Malan's testimony can probably be trusted; Malan remained nominally a minister of the Genevan National Church until 1823 and was himself no friend of separatism when he visited Rolle. Is there then no basis for a charge of separatism?

The charge of separatism was rooted in the fact that a separatist church, later termed 'Bourg de Four', did emerge from Haldane's sojourn at Geneva. Haldane's biographer, cognizant of this fact and its potential for casting an unfavourable reflection upon his uncle, Robert Haldane,¹⁷⁹ stressed that the latter had departed for and was resident in Montauban when the little separatist congregation assembled for its first formal administration of the Lord's Supper on 21 September, 1817. Yet this, while true enough, is hardly the whole story. The biographer, in his determination to clear his uncle of the suspicion of complicity in this development, did not deal evenhandedly with the eyewitness accounts on which his own narrative depends.

¹⁷⁸Malan, Conventicle, pp. 114-15.

¹⁷⁹ Alexander Haldane, the nephew and biographer, had himself chosen to forsake the legacy of controversy surrounding the Edinburgh Tabernacle at Leith Walk. Upon relocating to London to practise law, he was received into the Church of England. He became editor of the Record newspaper in 1828. Writing the Lives in the 1850's, he seems often to be motivated by a concern to portray his subjects with all possible respectability.

Emil Guers, author of La Vie de Henri Pyt (both author and subject were charter members of the 'Bourg de Four' congregation), was commended by the Haldane biographer for having preserved the "dates and days connected with Robert Haldane with a pious care".¹⁸⁰ Yet this very Guers, in addition to recording Haldane's departure for Montauban on 20 June 1817, states that the infant church "for which they had found a suitable organization" was founded on 18 May 1817 (though not constituted formally until 23 August). To this young church, Guers reported, Haldane had given the parting advice that they "adopt for their rule nothing besides the Gospel". Haldane was also credited with bringing union between his student followers and the surviving cell of Moravian believers in the city.¹⁸¹ Moreover, Henri Pyt, writing to a friend in London in March 1818, reported that the young congregation had received financial aid from Haldane at Montauban.¹⁸² Thus, the very involvement which Haldane's biographer denied was eagerly declared by Haldane's Genevan followers.

Now too much should not be made of Haldane's encouragement to the nascent separatist church, which the

¹⁸⁰A. Haldane, Lives, pp. 430, 426.

¹⁸¹Emil Guers, La Vie de Henri Pyt (Toulouse, 1850), pp. 24-25.

¹⁸²Henri Pyt to Mr. A(nderson?), 7 March 1818, printed in Christian Repository and Religious Register, 3 (1818), pp. 309-311.

family biographer, like Cheneviere, was so prepared to attribute to "the more rash and sanguine . . . Henry Drummond".¹⁸³ We need not attribute to Haldane the separatist impulse itself. This orientation was plainly present in certain student minds many months before his arrival. Empeytaz had published his pamphlet, Considerationes sur la Divinité de Jésus Christ (1816) after withdrawing from the student body of the faculty of theology. During the late 1816 sojourn of the Welsh artisan, Wilcox, an enlarged circle of seven persons observed the Lord's Supper in the dwelling of J. G. Gonthier (d.1823), another student of theology --all this well before Haldane's arrival.

But we must attribute to Haldane the quickening and strengthening of the impulse. The pastoral regulation of 3 May 1817 requiring a moratorium of preaching on selected doctrines found three of his more earnest pupils (Guers, Pyt and Gonthier) quite unambiguously opposed to the regulations 'in toto'; the studies of all three were abruptly terminated.¹⁸⁴ The resolve to found a separate congregation emerged immediately after 3 May and in little more than two weeks the die was cast. It is here that we may justly suppose that Haldane, the somewhat circumspect lecturer, became a frank adviser to those who had drawn their own conclusion that a form of

¹⁸³A. Haldane, Lives, p. 429.

¹⁸⁴Guers, Vie de Pyt, pp. 14, 20.

independency was to be pursued.

Where may his hand be discerned? Certainly in the procedure followed in compiling the first membership roll for the young church. In a scene which might have been taken from an Evangelical Magazine account of the constituting of a chapel membership, we read of two believing men, Henri Pyt and Antoine Porchat (1792-1861); accepting the declaration of one another's faith and then, as a committee of two, proceeding to hear the declarations of others.¹⁸⁵ In what seems irrefutably a manifestation of the old Sandemanian tenet of multiple pastors, we find the new church comprised of not more than ten initial members yet led by three pastors, Mejanel, Gonthier and Pyt.¹⁸⁶

It is possible that anti-paedobaptist sentiments had come to the fore in the minds of some of Haldane's auditors quite independently of their teacher. However the early prevalence of these sentiments among a segment of his auditors and within a segment of the young 'Bourg de Four' congregation is most simply explained by Haldane's disseminating of these views through

¹⁸⁵Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁸⁶See A. Haldane, Lives, p. 430; and Guers, Vie de Pyt, p. 26. We may add that both sources report that Caesar Malan, the silenced but not yet divested minister of the National Church, had declined the pastorate when offered to him alone.

conferences with enquirers.¹⁸⁷ Significantly, such sentiments cannot be attributed to contemporary Moravian thought or the illuminist circles of Madame de Krudener - the two previous 'streams' on which the young church drew. Moravian theologian A. G. Spangenberg (1704-1792) had presented a strong biblicist case for paedobaptism in the standard theological compendium, An Exposition of Christian Doctrine (1778).¹⁸⁸ H. L. Empeytaz, the travelling chaplain of Krudener, upon entering the joint pastorate of the 'Bourg de Four' church in March 1818, was for a time the solitary pastoral practitioner of paedobaptism in that congregation.¹⁸⁹

We are also hard pressed to explain two other features of church life at 'Bourg de Four' without recourse to the Scottish precedents which the Haldane biographer claims were studiously avoided. These are the

¹⁸⁷British readers were informed of this diversity of baptismal views in the young congregation by Henri Pyt's correspondence of 7 March, 1818 reprinted in the Christian Repository, 3, (1818), p.310. He indicated that both he and G(uers?) held to baptistic views. Ami Bost (1790-1874) who served the 'Bourg de Four' congregation as pastor both in 1821 and 1825-26 recorded in his Memoires Pouvant Servir a L'Histoire du Réveil Religieux, 3 vols. (Paris, 1854), I. p. 379 that "Haldane and Drummond had carried baptist views to Geneva".

¹⁸⁸Spangenberg, An Exposition. p. 235. We note below at chap. 3. p.253 the confessed influence of Spangenberg's published theology for the young students prior to Haldane's arrival.

¹⁸⁹See Good, Swiss Reformed Church, pp. 380-382; and Guers, Le Premier Réveil a Genève, (Geneva, 1872), p.202. Bost, Memoires, I. p.379.

practice of mutual exhortation of Christians on the Lord's Day and at weeknight services and the custom of weekly administration of the Lord's Supper. Both practices had been very much 'de rigueur' in the Haldane connexion at 1808.¹⁹⁰ Both relate closely to Haldane's reported parting dictum to the 'Bourg de Four' nucleus-- "adopt nothing as a rule apart from the gospel".¹⁹¹ Thus it would seem that Haldane's old zeal for the imitation of supposed apostolic practices had not been left at home in Scotland.

Contrary to what may be taken as special pleading on the part of the family biographer then, it seems that Robert Haldane privately counselled and advised those bent on venturing into independency. The end result was a congregation which, in its structures, style of worship and sacramental usage, was remarkably similar to those which the brothers Haldane had established in Scotland before and after 1808.¹⁹² The young preachers were

¹⁹⁰ Henri Pyt supplied a very full description of the young church's polity and format of worship to British readers within six months of the 18 May decision to form a church. See his letter of 4 Nov. 1818 in New Evangelical Magazine 4 (1818) p. 96. T. C. F. Stunt, "Geneva and the British Evangelicals in the Early Nineteenth Century", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, (hereafter J.E.H.) 32, no. 1 (1981), p.36.

¹⁹¹Guers, Vie de Pyt, p. 24.

¹⁹²In concluding this section, it is interesting to note that the Haldane biographer, while attempting to distance his uncle from the movement of separation, adopts a deeply hostile tone toward the Genevan National Church as soon as the separation has been described. 'Arian' promptly becomes the common adjective used in

decidedly Calvinistic but like their Scots mentor, ultimately committed to a kind of apostolic "restoration". The eyewitness and participant Emil Guers, asked and then answered his own question:

Was this a return to Calvin? After falling so far there was needed not a return to Calvin but a return to Jesus and the apostles. They cast away the weight of human traditions, protestant or Roman, and the servile imitation of the churches of the sixteenth century.¹⁹³

To Montauban at Last

In late June during Haldane's final days in Geneva, there occurred a remarkable "changing of the guard" comparable to that of Haldane's succeeding Wilcox, six months earlier. Henry Drummond, a banker and young convert to the Christian faith, arrived from Genoa to see the religious developments at Geneva for himself. The short overlap between Drummond's arrival and Haldane's departure was filled with hours of intensive reportage of the recent developments.¹⁹⁴ The basis for a decade of further cooperation in aid of French Europe was firmly laid.

The Robert Haldane who reached Montauban in July 1817 was in certain respects an altered man from the one

describing the church left by the separatists. A. Haldane, Lives, pp. 429-30.

¹⁹³Guers, Vie de Pyt, pp. 36-37.

¹⁹⁴A. Haldane, Lives, p. 426.

who had left Scotland the preceding October. He had now abandoned all thought of a "six weeks' tour", he had gained considerable ability in conversational French and had acquired a sense of earnest direction about his presence in Europe. He now aimed at the preparation of his Evidence of Christianity and Romans lectures for publication in the French language. Though ministry among students seems to have been no part of his original design in October 1816, it was now his settled expectation as he arrived in southern France. The attraction of Montauban for Haldane lay not in its size but in its school of theology which then had a student body of sixty-four.

He might well have been optimistic concerning the reception he would receive there. Though the theological faculty at Montauban was largely made up of theological graduates from Geneva and Lausanne, it had at the same time manifested an independent spirit. Geneva's own current retreat from trinitarianism had been rebuked when such views had been propounded at Montauban by the Genevan, Esaie Gasc, in 1812-1813. British Protestants had received favourable reports of the college through such periodicals as the Evangelical Magazine.¹⁹⁵

Yet as one reads the narrative of the Haldane

¹⁹⁵E.g., Evangelical Magazine, 22 (1814), p. 328. We may refer also to the generally supportive comments of Clement Perrot, "Memorial on the State of the Protestant Churches" (1815).

biographer, he encounters only the most begrudging acknowledgement of this improvement of theological climate:

Nothing could be worse than the state of the Churches throughout France, but at Montauban itself the darkness was not quite so palpable as that which but a little while before had brooded over Geneva.¹⁹⁶

There is at least an acknowledgement of the piety and orthodoxy of Francois Bonnard (1776-1838), professor of Hebrew, and of Francois-Maurice Marzials (1779-1861), preacher and president of the Montauban consistory. The Dean of the seminary, Daniel Encontre (1762-1818), had then recently been warmly commended to the directors of the London Missionary Society by Clement Perrot as

a man of unfeigned devotedness to the Redeemer. He is one of the best mathematicians in France and still more to be respected as one of the best theologians in that vast and demoralized country.¹⁹⁷

At Encontre's untimely death in 1818, the Evangelical Magazine eulogized him as "distinguished by a firm and enlightened attachment to the doctrines of the gospel (and) by a fervent piety"¹⁹⁸

Yet in Haldane's eyes, the professor was little more than "a strong Arminian and very indistinct in his

¹⁹⁶A. Haldane, Lives, p. 444.

¹⁹⁷Perrot, "Memorial".

¹⁹⁸Evangelical Magazine 26 (1818) 574. The British public was able to gauge something of the fervour of Encontre's piety through the publication of a fervent address to his Montauban students in The Christian Magazine or Evangelical Repository, 12 (1818), pp. 81-88.

apprehensions of the truth" and "enveloped in much of Pelagian or semi-Pelagian darkness, teaching grievous error".¹⁹⁹ It may be argued that Haldane formed his impression over a protracted period and was thus the more perceptive judge; yet this would still not account for an astonishing lack of charity towards a well-meaning Protestant leader in a demanding situation.

Perhaps Haldane's negative impression of Encontre stemmed from Encontre's coolness towards the Scot. There is evidence that Encontre actually discouraged his students from group attendance at Haldane's rented quarters and that he distributed Haldane's reprint of Luther's Letter to Erasmus on Justification only after considerable deliberation.²⁰⁰ Thus we read of no thrice-weekly expositions of Romans to crowded student assemblies at Montauban but of many individual callers, both ministers and students. In a more leisurely atmosphere than he had found in the Swiss city, he prepared his books and tracts for publication and succeeded in seeing an edition of the Bible through the press.²⁰¹ Here also he began to ponder the application of the methods and strategies utilized in Scotland by the late "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home"

¹⁹⁹A. Haldane, pp. 446, 448.

²⁰⁰See Robert, Les Églises Reformées, pp. 355-56; and A. Haldane, p. 449.

²⁰¹A. Haldane, Lives, p. 448.

to the challenge of distributing the Scriptures and other religious literature in French Europe.

Robert Haldane departed from Montauban in August 1819. He left behind no cell of separatist Christians, as at Geneva, but a large supply of his Evidence and Exposition of Romans for distribution to students.²⁰² The Montauban ministry, though not surrounded by the controversy and notoriety of the earlier sojourn at Geneva, had nevertheless been conducted on the basis of the same two foundational assumptions.

First, Robert Haldane had demonstrated a presumption that the existing Christian churches of French Europe were guilty of the gravest departures from the historic faith. Admittedly, he shared this outlook with the greater part of his British evangelical associates. Yet, he parted company from a great many of this number in his evident disbelief that a gradual reversal of this state of affairs had been in progress since at least the reintroduction of Christian worship in 1795 and the state recognition of Protestantism in 1802.

He consequently had treated with scepticism reports of the admittedly small yet growing number of orthodox and pious ministers of the gospel. Clement Perrot had informed the London Missionary Society that he knew personally of twenty to thirty men worthy of trust and

²⁰²A. Haldane, p. 436.

that there were probably many more.²⁰³ Haldane seems to have operated on the assumption that all of France contained a mere "four or five besides those at Montauban and Toulouse".²⁰⁴ Accordingly, he refused to attend the Lord's Supper unless it was to be administered by one of the select ministers who enjoyed his trust. His lack of confidence in the faculty of theology at Montauban would shortly move him to fund theological training at Paris by tutors wholly responsible to himself.²⁰⁵

The difference of perspective is far broader than the differing estimates of evangelical strength would suggest. Robert Haldane, with his new associate Henry Drummond, as well as all their forthcoming organizational efforts on behalf of Europe, were entirely indisposed to expect their principles and convictions to be affirmed by the institutional church. In such a situation, private or individual action seemed the only reasonable course.

A second foundational assumption flowed necessarily from the first. If Europe's churches were so far gone and if reports of gradual recovery were to be distrusted, there seemed to follow what we can only term a sense of personal indispensibility (or in the case of organizational efforts, corporate indispensibility). It is evident that both Haldane and his biographer viewed

²⁰³Perrot, "Memorial".

²⁰⁴A. Haldane, p. 449.

²⁰⁵A. Haldane pp.453,545.

French Europe from this egocentric perspective. It was not the simple self-infatuation of his subject which led the biographer to write that

the inanimate condition of the French churches continued, with scarcely a symptom of spiritual life, down to the conclusion of the war and the period when, in July 1817, Robert Haldane . . . presented himself at Montauban.²⁰⁶

The biographer would for identical reasons happily repeat the assertion of Haldane's Montauban acquaintances that "they traced the Revival in France to Robert Haldane".²⁰⁷ It was instead this sense of indispensibility rooted in a profound mistrust of the institutional church.

British evangelicals after 1815 largely shared Robert Haldane's ethnocentrism. Britain had rescued Europe from Napoleonic despotism; now it was quite reasonably supposed that British endeavour would reinvigorate European Christianity. Yet British evangelicals did not necessarily share Haldane's outlook of utter mistrust of French Europe's churches or his supposition that only Britons and those directly responsible to them would be the means of setting things right. And therein lay the seed of the great tension which would bedevil British missionary efforts to the Continent for the next three decades.

²⁰⁶Ibid., p. 443.

²⁰⁷Ibid., p. 449.

CHAPTER THREE

GENEVA'S 'REVEIL' AND THE AWAKENING OF EUROPE

Geneva's Position of Precedence

Among the various religious awakenings in the francophone territories formerly comprising the Napoleonic Empire, the precedence belongs to that of Geneva. Writing in 1968, the French historian, Henri Dubrief, stated that

Everyone agrees that the 'Réveil' in French-speaking Europe emerged from Geneva in the years 1816-1820. There had been contributing movements in operation since 1810. From there, the first wave was diffused through French Switzerland and the Protestant Midi on a ground prepared by Quakers and Moravians.¹

It is not immediately clear why Geneva should have taken the leading role in the 'Reveil'. The events and influences which led to the awakening at Geneva in 1817 (the illuministic teaching of Jung-Stillung, the itineration of Madame de Krudener, and the fervent evangelization of the Moravians) were widespread throughout the Rhineland, Alsace, Switzerland, the Low Countries and eastern France. Nor was Geneva the only

¹Henri Dubrief, "Réflexions Sur Quelques Aspects du Premier Réveil". B.S.H.P.F., CXIV (1968) pp.374-5. That regions such as Belgium and the Netherlands did not make such direct acknowledgement will be noted in due course. A helpful older survey of the spiritual quickening experienced in the various Swiss cantons in the 19th century is found in James I. Good, A History of the Swiss Reformed Church Since the Reformation, (Philadelphia, 1913).

city to receive visits by British evangelicals.² Yet contemporary observers as well as modern authors concur in attributing to Geneva's 'réveil' an influence over similar movements in the region.³ We may justifiably ask why this should have been so.

We have noted above that the theological prominence of Geneva was greatly advanced by the decision of Napoleon's government in 1802 to make Geneva's Academy the centre for Reformed theological study in the Empire. This decision provided native graduates of the Geneva Academy with wider opportunities for service than those available prior to Geneva's annexation (1798). One such graduate was Abraham Lissignol (1784-1851), a Genevan student under Moravian influence, who was called to serve at Montpellier in 1809; he remained there until his death in 1851. By every reckoning, Lissignol was a father figure in the movement for the re-awakening of France. Of precisely the same outlook was Matthieu Miroglio (1792-1866), Genevan-born theological graduate of 1810,

²e.g. the work of Miss Anna Greaves at Lausanne, described in chap. 2 and the extended service rendered in southern France by the English Methodist, Charles Cook, described in Leon Maury, Le Réveil Religieux dans L'Eglise Reformée a' Genève et en France, I. pp. 416-442, (Paris, 1892).

³E.g. J. Cart, Histoire du Mouvement Religieux et Ecclesiastique dans le Canton de Vaud, (Lausanne, 1890), I. pp.142,162,163,172,230. Malan, Life of Malan, pp.284ff. E. Guers, Le Premier Réveil et le Premier Eglise Independent a' Genève, (Geneva 1872) pp.173,196,252, 323. R.F. Evans, The Influence of Foreigners, pp.66,67.

who gave long service at Besancon, France from 1814-1865.⁴

This enhanced influence of Geneva survived the restoration of Swiss independence in 1813. Thus from within the circle of students which Robert Haldane gathered in his salon at 19, Promenade St. Antoine, at least two went immediately upon graduation to French pastorates and found wide usefulness.⁵

Yet Geneva's Academy was not only the most prestigious place of ministerial preparation for the French Reformed Church; it had also never ceased to be the primary source of ministers for the churches of the Huguenot diaspora, spread across northern Europe.⁶ Prior to the Haldane sojourn at Geneva, theological students under Moravian influence had been called to serve French congregations in this Huguenot diaspora. Thus A.J. Galland (1792-1862), whom Emil Guers recalled as a strong preacher of the need for "new birth" even prior to

⁴ For Lissignol, cf. H. Heyer, L'Eglise de Geneve, (Geneva, 1909), p. 483. For Miroglio, cf. Heyer, ibid. pp. 491,492. Robert, Les Eglises, p.565 and Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p. 43.

⁵ These were Frederic Monod (1794-1864) who settled at Paris and helped to found Les Archives du Christianisme and Cesar Bonifas (1794-1856), subsequently minister at Grenoble and later professor of Hebrew at Montauban. The younger brothers of Frederic Monod, Guillaume and Adolphe, studied subsequently at the Geneva Academy, yet were also caught up by the 'réveil'.

⁶ Thus Jean Monod (1765-1836), father of Frederic, Guillaume and Adophe, himself a Geneva graduate, had first served the French Church at Copenhagen (1794-1808) before a long pastorate at Paris.

Haldane's visit⁷, was first called to a French congregation in the German-speaking Swiss canton of Berne, where he remained until 1824. Ami Bost (1790-1874), later the author of the invaluable eyewitness account of the period, Memoires Pouvant Servir a' L'Histoire du Réveil Religieux (3 vols. 1854), had secured a first ministerial posting at Moutiers-Grand Val, also in the canton of Berne, in 1816. Bost's contemporary and 'réveil' sympathizer, J.E. Coulin (1792-1869), had in that same year accepted the call to the French congregation at Frederica, Denmark.

This pattern of placement was repeated by the non-dissident⁸ members of the Haldane circle. Gabriel Louis James (1790-1867), the theological student inadvertently introduced to Haldane because of the illness of the Genevan minister Moulinié,⁹ was ordained in 1818 and called to be the minister of the French congregation at Breda, United Netherlands, in 1820. Jules Charles Rieu (1792-1821), who had assisted as a translator in the Haldane 'Romans' expositions, received his first call to the Frederica, Denmark congregation recently served by

⁷Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.61 We have noted above (p.137) Haldane's extended consultation with Galland at Berne in autumn 1816.

⁸i.e. those who refused to adopt the beligerent stance of students H.Pyt, J.G. Gonthier, and E. Guers in the face of the infamous 'reglement' of May 1817.

⁹cf. chap. 2 supra and Heyer, L'Eglise de Geneve, p.476.

J.E. Coulin (supra). There Rieu soon succumbed to a fatal illness.¹⁰ Perhaps most striking in this vein is the manner in which a call was issued to the diligent postgraduate student at Berlin, Jean Henri Merle D'Aubigné (1794-1872), by the Huguenot congregation at Hamburg. The young scholar was content to let the matter be adjudicated for him by the Geneva 'Compagnie des Pasteurs' and on their recommendation, he served the congregation 1818-23.¹¹ D'Aubigné's subsequent pastorate at Brussels (1823-30), while not strictly among the Huguenot diaspora, was nevertheless conducted in the French language and on the basis of his close association with Geneva.¹²

It is necessary to stress this diffusion of 'reveil' influence by means of Geneva's established theological dominance in order to show that the movement did not have an intrinsically separatistic impulse. Most of the young ministers named above had earlier embraced the Moravian

¹⁰ F. Monod, Memorial of Jules Charlies Rieu (translated from the French), (Edinburgh, 1854). A printed edition of Rieu's Lettres rapidly became staple reading among 'reveil' supporters. The Memorial makes plain that 'reveil' emphases were certainly transmitted to Frederica.

¹¹ Bieler, Une Famille de Refuge p. 137. D'Aubigné had gone from Geneva to Berlin in Autumn 1817. 'Réveil' themes were clearly the subject matter of the young minister's preaching. cf. p.152ff.

¹² The congregation's patron was William, King of the United Netherlands. In the congregation was Groen Van Prinsterer, secretary to the royal cabinet. Bieler, Une Famille, p.159.

strategy for renewing the Church by Gospel preaching combined with careful cultivation of 'reunions', or cell groups of the awakened inside existing parish structures.¹³

If Geneva's theological prestige meant that its theological graduates were welcomed across northern Europe, there was also a second, and more weighty factor about the city which made it an export centre of 'reveil' teaching and activity. This was the public controversy over the central doctrines of the Christian faith sparked by the 'règlement' of May 1817.¹⁴ No doubt the 'Venerable Compagnie' which drafted the 'règlement' intended to encourage concord by insisting upon the avoidance of unseemly public theological debate. Yet the fruit of the 'règlement' was not concord but division. The historian of the 'reveil' period, Leon Maury, has observed that the 'reglement'

was the starting point of a twenty-year struggle and its publication served to push the orthodox party on the road to separation...First Emil Guers, then also Henri Pyt and J.G. Gonthier refused to sign...Within the 'Compagnie' Moulinié, Cellierier Sr., and Demellayer refused to give their approbation to the 'reglement'. Caesar Malan prevaricated and finally refused to give his approval and subscription...The

¹³ The 'ecclesia in ecclesiola' strategy is well described in A.J. Lewis, Zinzendorf, Ecumenical Pioneer, (London, 1962), p.116ff. Guers Le Premier Reveil, p. 97 indicates that the inability of the Geneva dissidents to employ this strategy any longer after their separation from the National Church was a very major frustration. Bost's reliance on the Moravian strategy at Moutiers-Grand Val is reflected in his Memoires I. p.53.

¹⁴ We have printed the 'reglement' above at page 142.

practical result was just the opposite of the intended effect. It provoked the foundation of an independent church.¹⁵

While the conforming ministers and theological students of Geneva still enjoyed opportunities for service at home and elsewhere, those for whom the 'règlement' represented the point of 'no return' as regards theological orthodoxy found themselves with few such opportunities. This fact explains in part why the fledgling independent congregation (later called the 'Bourg de Four') had at its earliest period a team of three pastors but only ten members.¹⁶ More important, it explains why so many ordained and lay evangelists, colporteurs and schoolmasters left the community of Genevan evangelical dissidents to be dispersed throughout not only France and francophone Switzerland, but also the Low Countries.

Because the 'règlement' of 1817 was viewed with hostility in at least the Canton of Vaud and the Reformed Church of France,¹⁷ the Geneva dissidents often found a

¹⁵ Maury, Le Réveil Religieux I. pp. 56,57. So also Guers, Le Premier Réveil, pp. 90.91 and Cart, Histoire, I. p. 156.

¹⁶ We have suggested in the previous chapter that the Haldanite practice of encouraging multiple ministry was also a factor.

¹⁷ Maury, Le Réveil I. p.61 indicates that "Orthodox Genevans distributed the règlement to foreign places. The faculty of Montauban, the periodicals of France and England occupied themselves with it. The clergy of Vaud broke off contact with Geneva and the French Reformed Churches refused to receive candidates from Geneva who had signed it".

friendly reception when they ventured out from their canton. Thus, Caesar Malan was active in the canton of Vaud as early as 1819. Henri Pyt terminated a short period of service in the young dissident congregation at Geneva in 1818 in order to accept a position as 'suffragant' (assistant) to the French Reformed pastor of Saverdun, Pierre-Cyprian Vergé. Emil Guers, Pyt's biographer and Geneva co-pastor, seriously considered leaving Geneva for the same type of opportunity in France. This pattern of service with non-Genevan National Churches was also followed by the justly-famous Felix Neff (1798-1829), who assisted Reformed ministers at Grenoble and Mens before working alone at Freysinnieres and Plombieres in the High Alps.¹⁸ This anomaly of persons allied to a dissident church at Geneva but attempting to labour in concert with National Churches beyond their own canton would later become the seed bed of considerable friction and misunderstanding. The concerted attempt by Geneva's 'Venerable Compagnie' to resist the 'réveil' by the 'reglement' of May 1817 was plainly the largest single contributing factor to Geneva being a "net exporter" of advocates of religious awakening.¹⁹

¹⁸ Guers, Vie de Pyt p.41, Le Premier Reveil, p.97, Bost, Letters and Biography of Felix Neff, (London, 1843) pp. 57, 68, 171, 348.

¹⁹ A similar but less-extensive dispersion of evangelical dissidents was to take place from Lausanne and the Canton of Vaud following 1821. But we will

Events in Geneva 1816-1831

We have already had occasion to note that Robert Haldane had seriously underestimated the size of the orthodox minority within the Geneva 'Compagnie'.²⁰ This mis-appraisal later had very far-reaching implications for the future connection between Haldane's circle of British contacts and the 'réveil'. Yet Haldane's miscalculation notwithstanding, the orthodox minority was substantial in size and already in a process of asserting itself in the period preceding and concurrent with Haldane's visit. Pastor Charles Etienne Francois Moulinié (1757-1836), of whom Haldane had a poor impression even after two encounters, had already gained the admiration of the circle of theological students unsatisfied with the teaching in the Academy; he invited many students to his home for lectures on Scriptural topics.²¹ Moulinié and a second pastor of Geneva, Antoine Paul Pierre Demellayer (1765-1839), had defended

contend that Lausanne developments were accelerated by events at Geneva.

²⁰ chap. 2

²¹ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p. 49. This recognition of Moulinié's contribution is the more significant as it is from the pen of one driven into dissidence in May 1817. One is left to wonder whether Haldane's mis-appraisal of the Genevan theological scene was not the combined result of poor counsel received at Paris and a paltry ability in conversational French. In the pages following, the 'table Biographique' furnished at the close of Heyer's L'Eglise de Geneve:1555-1909, has proved invaluable.

H.L. Empaytaz when the 'Compagnie' questioned the correctness of his association with Baroness Krudener in 1813.²² A third Genevan pastor of the same generation, J.I.S. Cellerier (1753-1844), had responded to the publication of Empaytaz' explosive tract Considerations Sur La Divinité de Jésus Christ in August 1816 by preaching upon the divinity of Christ during the Christmas season of that year.²³ It was then considered unfashionable to do so. His successor in the parish of Satigny, F.S.R.L. Gausson (1790-1863), though soon to be permanently influenced by the outlook of Haldane, was already in 1816 earning the disfavour of the 'Compagnie' for weekday afternoon expository lectures which drew citizens across parish boundaries.²⁴ Cellerier and Gausson responded to the 'reglement' of 3 May 1817 by jointly republishing the Second Helvetic Confession of Faith (1566) with a preface on the importance of creeds.²⁵

As a lecturer in apologetics and homiletics within

²² Maury, Le Réveil Religieux, I. p. 34. Guers, Le Reveil, p.20 indicates Demellayer's considerable influence over H.L. Empeytaz.

²³ Maury *ibid.* p. 51. The aim of Cellerier in this was evidently that of underlining the essential truthfulness of Empeytaz' charge that most Geneva clergy now doubted Christ's deity. The charge would at least not "stick" to him.

²⁴ Bost, Memoires, I. p. 35. Two hundred persons eventually attended these gatherings before the Company intervened.

²⁵ Bost, Memoires, I. p.35

the Academy, Jean-Louis Duby (1764-1849) earned the respect of pious theological students. He also served as first secretary of the Geneva Bible Society and supported the Geneva Mission Society from its foundation in 1821.²⁶ J.F.L. Peschier (1759-1831), pastor of the cantonal village of Cologny, was respected for his encyclopedic learning, thoughtful lecturing in the Academy, and presidency of the Geneva Mission Society.²⁷ Alexandre Amedée Edouard Diodati (1787-1860), pastor at Avilly, was recognized as a "friend of the gospel" though "slightly tainted with mysticism".²⁸ Francois Marc Louis Naville (1784-1846), pastor at Chancy, was also remembered as being "firm in the faith".²⁹

The existence of this sizeable group of pastors sympathetic to orthodox Christianity within the Geneva 'Compagnie' in this period goes far to explain several developments otherwise difficult to account for. First, the majority of that circle of between twenty and thirty theological students who thronged Haldane's apartments for the 'Romans' expositions did find a way to negotiate their way through the "shoals" presented by the

²⁶ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p. 59. Maury, Le Réveil, I. p. 27.

²⁷ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.24. Maury, Le Réveil, I. p.27.

²⁸ The phrase is that of Guers, *ibid.* p.24. Maury, *ibid.* I. p.27.

²⁹ Bieler, Une Famille, p. 106. The recollection was in this instance that of Merle D'Aubigne.

'règlement' of May 1817 and to be ordained as ministers.³⁰ That this was a very difficult process for young men with newly-heightened doctrinal sensitivity is plain. Young Merle D'Aubigné confided to his diary at the time, "After conscientious examination of the issues, I have believed it necessary to make this agreement (to abide by the 'règlement')".³¹

It is difficult to understand how the zealous young ordinand could have consented to abide by the 'règlement' were it not for the encouragement to do so provided by the orthodox minority in the 'Compagnie'.³² Some of this number worked to soften the terms of subscription in order to stop other candidates being driven into dissidence.³³ It is against this backdrop that we should understand the prevaricating activity of Caesar Malan (1787-1864). Barred by the 'Compagnie' from preaching in any city pulpit of the National Church after

³⁰ eg. James, Rieu, Bonifas, D'Aubigné, Monod, etc. Yet it is perhaps significant that not one of these persons lingered to serve at Geneva, but all dispersed to serve francophone churches elsewhere. Bieler, Une Famille, p. 115, hints at this deliberate distancing from Geneva.

³¹ Bieler, Une Famille, p.115. The entry indicates a careful weighing of the interpretation of the 'reglement'.

³² As it was, several of this minority withheld their own consent to abide by the articles. cf. footnote 15, above.

³³ Bieler, Une Famille, p. 115 names J.I.S. Cellierier and Jean Heyer (1773-1859) as ministers active in this way. See also Malan, Life of Malan, p.67.

an inflammatory sermon on justification by faith on 8th March, 1817, the young minister's³⁴ suspension was only compounded by the promulgation of the 'reglement' on 3rd May. Refusal to conform to the 'reglement' kept Malan out of city pulpits until May, 1818. Then, in response to the blandishments of J.I.S. Cellerier, he submitted and offered the 'Compagnie' a fawning apology for his earlier extremism. The liberty to preach thus gained was extremely short-lived; further sermons contrary to the taste of the 'Compagnie' meant that an absolute ban was imposed in August 1818 and never lifted.³⁵ Although Malan preferred to be loyal to the Genevan National Church, he was driven into 'de facto' secession in order to maintain a preaching ministry.

A Sunday School and Sunday gathering for edification (both outside the stated city hours for church services) soon led to the establishment of a congregation which met in a chapel erected on Malan's own property in the suburb of Pré L'Eveque. The 'Église du Temoignage' was erected in 1820 with the assistance of concerned Christians in Germany, England, Scotland, Ireland, France, America and Switzerland and it was soon full to capacity. Malan's whole outlook was one of all possible continuity with the Reformed traditions of Geneva and this stance made his

³⁴ i.e. minister without charge. The title 'pastor' designated a minister linked to a particular congregation.

³⁵ Malan, Life, pp. 67-70.

chapel an acceptable alternative to the National Church, particularly for persons of means who wished to attend elsewhere.³⁶

However, the opening of the chapel and Malan's eventual celebration of marriages and administration of the sacraments there, precipitated the final break between Malan and the canton's 'Compagnie'. In July, 1823, the 'Compagnie' suspended him from the ministry and insisted on treating him as an ordinary citizen.³⁷ With some gallantry, the 'Compagnie' member, Louis Gausсен, stood to grasp the hand of Malan as he departed from the awkward scene of the final suspension.³⁸ Malan's suspension had the dual effect both of making him more dependent upon the moral and financial support of foreign Christians and of narrowing the actual distance between himself and dissidents of 'Bourg de Four'.³⁹

The total suspension notwithstanding, the gathered congregation at the 'Eglise du Temoignage' grew steadily

³⁶ Malan, Life, pp. 116,154. Good, History, p.389, Maury, Le Reveil, I. p.122. The American clergyman, W.B. Sprague, visited the chapel in 1828 and found 250 persons in attendance. W.B Sprague, Letters from Europe, (New York, 1828), p.25.

³⁷ Malan, Life, p.100.

³⁸ Malan, Life, p.96. Gausсен's role as builder of a Geneva evangelical coalition was here present in germinal form.

³⁹ This strengthening of foreign ties is elaborated in the following chapter. Malan had earlier been offered the founding pastorate of the Bourg de Four dissident congregation but declined it, partly due to his hopes of regaining usefulness within the National Church.

until its capacity was taxed to the limit. After 1830 however, the chapel began to experience steady decline; a call by Malan for a vote of confidence from his congregation in that year saw a third of the members and adherents depart; they immediately re-affiliated with the original dissident congregation at 'Bourg de Four'. At the root of the separation lay dissatisfaction with Malan's high Calvinism in the pulpit and his autocratic manner in directing the affairs of the ostensibly presbyterian congregation. From the year of the rupture, Malan gave himself more fully to itineration outside the borders of canton Geneva.⁴⁰

The suspension of Malan by the 'Compagnie' in the period 1817-23 was, however, not wholly typical of that body's actions before 1831. Responding to the widespread complaint that the curriculum of the Academy paid insufficient attention to biblical study⁴¹ (as opposed to biblical languages) the 'Compagnie' appointed Jacob Eliséé Cellerier (1785-1862)⁴² as honorary professor of biblical criticism in 1824. The appointment gained widespread approval. National Church ministers Gausson,

⁴⁰ Malan, Life, p.259. Good, History, p.389.

⁴¹ This charge was later echoed by Ami Bost, Memoires, I. p.25; "one never opened the bible in our lecture rooms. The book was unused and unknown".

⁴² Cellerier, son of the senior minister of Satigny, was ordained in 1808 and was professor of oriental languages in the college preparatory to the Academy, 1816-1854. Heyer, p.436.

Coulin and Diodati were at this time unopposed by the 'Compagnie' in their efforts to inaugurate the Geneva Missionary Society in 1821. Initially linked to the pioneering Basle Missionary Society, the Genevan society welcomed the support of dissidents as well as National Church members.⁴³

Yet these encouraging signs were matched by others of a most unsettling type. J.J.C. Cheneviere (1783-1871), the Academy's professor of theology from 1817, chose to counter the efforts of Gausson and Cellerier Sr. in republishing the old Second Helvetic Confession (1566); his counterblow was a tract entitled Sur Les Causes Qui Retardent Le Progrès De La Theologie Chez Les Reformées (1819). In the young professor's view, appeals to the Reformed confessions of the 16th century were anachronistic and a definite "brake" on progress.⁴⁴

Controversy increasingly gathered round the head of Gausson in the following decade. The city's Mission Society came increasingly under the domination of pastors whom Gausson, a founder, viewed as unorthodox; in 1828 he departed from the society with his supporters.⁴⁵ About

⁴³ Good, History, p.384. Maury, Le Reveil, I. p.149.

⁴⁴ Cheneviere drew two replies; one was a pacific rejoinder by A.J. Galland (cf. p.137 supra), then French minister at Berne. A second came from the pen of L.A. Curtat, 'doyen' of the company of pastors of Vaud. Cart, Histoire, I. p.150.

⁴⁵ To this date, the Missionary Society had permitted participation by the dissident Christians of the city. With Gausson's departure, this participation was halted.

this time, Gausсен (still pastor at Satigny) also fell afoul of the 'Compagnie' for his refusal to utilize the revised catechism of 1814 (which he viewed as doctrinally suspect) for the training of children. The dispute had two major consequences. First, Gausсен's refusal to comply with the 'Compagnie's' directives regarding mandatory use of the catechism and his insistence on appealing to the civil courts in the matter led to his total exclusion from all sessions from that church assembly for one year. Secondly, Gausсен and his supporters in the dispute (many of whom were high-placed members of Genevan society) then founded the Evangelical Society of Geneva. A.J. Galland, the Genevan minister at Berne who had since 1824 worked on behalf of the Paris Missionary Society at both Paris and Lausanne, was one of the founding members of the new Genevan society. Four other founders were members of the Genevan Council of State.⁴⁶

The Geneva society, inaugurated in January, 1831 distributed tracts and Bibles, promoted foreign missions, and carried out evangelization within the canton.⁴⁷

Maury, Le Réveil, I. p.151. Wemyss, Le Réveil, p.192 indicates that Gausсен was one of four National Church ministers to depart from the society at this point. Names are not supplied.

⁴⁶ Maury, Le Réveil, I. p. 158.

⁴⁷ Maury, Le Réveil, I. pp.153-158. Good, History, p.461.

The society soon began holding Sunday evening preaching services (conflicting with no stated service in the National Church), a Sunday school, a day school founded on evangelical principles, and a monthly missionary meeting.⁴⁸

The work of the Evangelical Society of Geneva provoked a strong reaction from the 'Compagnie', which now entrusted to its theological professors the launching of a religious periodical, Le Protestant de Genève, in 1831. All faculty members with the exception of J.L. Duby contributed to this periodical which warned its readership of the dangers of 'methodism' and decried the fixation of 'réveil' supporters with the theology of the sixteenth century. In the same year, Prof. J.J.C. Cheneviere published various lectures in theology which many felt substantiated long-standing fears that he had retreated from trinitarianism.⁴⁹ Cheneviere's lectures served as justification for the launching of a new Evangelical School of Theology by the Geneva Evangelical Society.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Maury, Le Réveil, I. p.159. Many of these activities took place in a rented facility on the 'Rue de Chanoines' which was utilized until 1834.

⁴⁹ The published lectures were entitled 'Essais Theologiques', (Geneva, 1831-34). The separate published lectures were re-issued together as 'Dogmatiques Chretiennes', (Geneva, 1840).

⁵⁰ of which more below. Good, History, p.461. Involvement in this scheme brought Merle D'Aubigne a total suspension from preaching in Geneva's established pulpits. Gausson was formally excluded from the Genevan

So sizeable and influential was this movement of 1831, that it is now regarded as constituting a second 'wave' of the 'réveil' movement in Geneva and abroad.⁵¹ At Geneva the special meeting place erected in 1834 for the activities of the Society (L'Oratoire) was soon filled to its capacity of 1,000 for Sunday services. The leadership of 'L'Oratoire' maintained a continuity of doctrine, liturgy and ministerial dress with the Genevan National Church tradition. While at first no sacraments were administered and no gatherings assembled during hours of services in the National Church, by the mid-1830's such restrictions were allowed to lapse and the 'Oratoire' gradually took on the character of an independent church consciously in the Reformed tradition.⁵²

The greatest initial impetus for the 'réveil' at Geneva, however, came from the dissident church initially called 'La Petite Eglise', but soon known as 'Bourg de Four'.⁵³ It is not immediately apparent why this

ministry in 1832. Heyer, pp.468.488.

⁵¹ Guers, Notice Historique, p. 25. Maury, Le Reveil, I. p.176. Smith, British Nonconformists and Swiss Dissidents, p.77. Bieler, Une Famille, pp.187,199.

⁵² Maury, Le Reveil, I. p. 176. From 1837, chief minister of the Oratoire congregation was J.A.S. Pilet, a Vaudois, who served until his death in 1861.

⁵³ This locale of Geneva, from which the congregation took its name, was in fact the fourth venue at which the young church met. It located there in 1818, having assembled earlier in a schoolroom in the section of the city known as 'Croix d'Or', then in an inn called

dissident church, led by Henri Pyt, J.G. Gonthier and Pierre Mejanel, emerged at all when we remember that the largest portion of the circle of students and other persons who had frequented Robert Haldane's lectures on Romans declined to become separatists.⁵⁴ As almost all of these shared an earlier exposure to Moravian influences, we may not attribute the separatist impulse to this source with any degree of certainty. Indeed, the young dissidents themselves soon recognized that their whole prior orientation to the Moravian pattern of church renewal was now of little use to them, determined as they were to stand apart from the National Church on account of the restrictive 'reglement'. Emil Guers later recalled the time of upheaval and wrote:

We, having withdrawn from the academy, were cast on the way of dissidence. Meanwhile, we knew nothing as of yet of this outlook other than the system of Spener and the Moravians -- little churches within large -- and we asked nothing more. We were so little inclined towards separation from the national church that I turned my eyes to France thinking I would volunteer to accept a post as pastor or 'suffragant' in a consistorial church; this is what my friend Pyt did the following year. Gonthier stood with us in this.⁵⁵

But separate they did, albeit without the company of

the 'Écu de France' and in the neighbourhood of Rive. Cart, Histoire, I. p.160. Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.107.

⁵⁴ See page 159 above.

⁵⁵ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, pp. 97,98. Notice Historique, p.15. By 'consistorial', Guers simply meant the French Reformed Church as locally administered by government regulated consistories.

most friends in the Haldane circle. Fortified by the Scot's invigorating teaching, they now wished to distance themselves from what they perceived as the open abuses of their National Church. They were repelled "as much by the communion as by the preaching, for the Supper was most often distributed by men who did not believe in redemption".⁵⁶ In refusing to abide by the 'règlement' of 1817, Pyt, Gonthier, and Guers soon found themselves part of a circle of persons (the majority of whom were not students) who absented themselves from the stated worship services in their city's Established Churches. In May 1817, these persons formed themselves into "a simple Christian association lacking all ecclesiastical character".⁵⁷ The association, established on the principle that only persons of undoubted Christian faith might be admitted, proceeded with the approbation, though not the involvement, of Robert Haldane; the latter departed Geneva on 20 June, 1817.⁵⁸

This association, now comprised of at least six members, and with the eager involvement of Henry

⁵⁶ Guers, Le Premier Reveil, p.97.

⁵⁷ Guers, Notice Historique, p.15. Le Premier Reveil, p.99.

⁵⁸ Guers, Le Premier, pp. 99,100. Haldane's non-participation in the fledgling association did not, however, rule out the supplying of advice both before and after his departure for Montauban. See also chap. 2, pp.158,159 supra.

Drummond,⁵⁹ constituted itself into a church on the 23rd August. Two days later the membership assembled in Drummond's lodgings and were joined by Caesar Malan, Pierre Mejanel and Marc Dejoux. A multiple pastorate was envisioned from the first and the unpalatability of this plan was one reason (among others) why Malan (the first choice of the membership for such a pastoral team) declined the request.⁶⁰ Pierre Mejanel, the Montauban minister who had recently arrived via London⁶¹ was then chosen in company with Henri Pyt and J.G. Gonthier to comprise the multiple pastorate. The multiple pastorate was no doubt meant to emulate apostolic precedent; it also enabled the young church to maintain a feverish level of activity with preaching services daily and three assemblies each Lord's Day.

When Mejanel's preaching gifts proved more slender than expected, a fourth preacher, Henri Empeytaz, was called to assist in November, 1817. Empeytaz, ordained at Ban de la Roche by the renowned Oberlin, while

⁵⁹ chap. 2. pp.156,163 supra. Guers, Le Premier, p.104.

⁶⁰ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.108. Malan, though in cordial fellowship with the principals of the new church at this stage (labouring as they all were in opposition to the 'reglement') deeply disagreed with their attempt to found everything on apostolic precedent.

⁶¹ Pierre Mejanel's allegiance to the new church can only partly be explained by the French Reformed Church's clear reaction against the 'reglement' of May. His own separatistic and erratic tendencies became most clear after his expulsion from Geneva and subsequent residence at Paris.

travelling as chaplain to Madame Krudener, was returning to Geneva after an absence of three years. He prudently studied the affairs of the new church for six months before openly identifying himself with it and accepting its call in April, 1818. By this juncture, Mejanel had been required to leave Geneva on order of the Council of State, while Henri Pyt had gone to commence a pastoral assistantship at Saverdun; the original pastoral team was reduced to J.G. Gonthier, who was then joined by Emil Guers.⁶²

The energetic preaching of the Gospel by the team of dissident ministers was by no means the sum total of the young congregation's outreach. The members of the little church engaged in door to door visitation on Sunday afternoons and offered literature to interested persons. Initially, the literature distributed consisted simply of translations of available English tracts and booklets. Soon, however, the little church was distributing a journal of its own production, entitled Le Magazin Evangelique.⁶³

⁶² Guers, Le Premier, p. 139. It is interesting to note that Guers, the dear friend and promoter of Empeytaz as a prospective member of the pastoral team, yet observed that at his return from touring, "in Bible knowledge, Empeytaz stood where we had before our exposure to Haldane". p.110.

⁶³ Guers, Le Premier, pp. 231, 222. Among those early translations were Robert Haldane's Emmanuel, or Scriptural Views of Jesus Christ and Thomas Scott's Force of Truth. From 1819-1822 Guers edited Le Magazin Evangelique, a missionary magazine modelled on its London namesake. Le Premier, p. 139.

It was by design a missionary church which sent out its members into the districts of Geneva and Vaud to carry the evangelical message to places where it seemed to be lacking.⁶⁴ Such aggressive measures brought growth which necessitated multiple changes of venue for Sunday assembly. It was just as the young congregation was in process of relocating to the new location in 'Bourg de Four' in July, 1818, that violent persecution and harassment broke out against them.⁶⁵

But this persecution at the hands of jeering mobs and in the columns of a hostile press did nothing to halt the growth of the young church. From 1820, the congregation was swelled by the affiliation with them of the entire remaining Moravian circle in Geneva.⁶⁶ By the year 1823, three hundred persons were in membership; these were drawn primarily from the labouring and artisan classes.⁶⁷ The accession of numerous persons previously affiliated with Malan's 'Église du Temoignage' to 'Bourg de Four' in 1830 soon created a situation in

⁶⁴ Guers, Notice Historique, p.21. Smith, British Nonconformists, p.46. In time, a daughter congregation was begun in the suburb of Carouge.

⁶⁵ Guers, Le Premier, p.140. Wemyss, Le Réveil p. 90.

⁶⁶ Guers, Le Premier, p. 177. The re-affiliation was approved by the Moravian leadership at Herrnhut.

⁶⁷ Guers, *ibid.* pp. 109.248. Wemyss, Le Réveil, p.90

which a larger hall was required.⁶⁸ Built with substantial British financing and opened in 1839,⁶⁹ the congregation was now re-named 'La Pelisserie'.

Steady growth continued until the year 1842, when sixty members withdrew promptly and without warning under the influence of the strident teaching of the Englishman, John Nelson Darby.⁷⁰ This unforeseen development so demoralized the congregation that it was rendered instantly more amenable to co-operative evangelical schemes being pursued by the Evangelical Society of Geneva and its congregation meeting in the 'Oratoire'.

The preceding two decades of steady growth had given this primary dissident congregation of Geneva a considerable influence within Switzerland and eastern France. Initially too poor to underwrite the cost of commissioning its own members as missionaries to the neighbouring regions of Switzerland and France, it co-operated to the full with the London-based Continental Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge for this

⁶⁸ Good, History, p. 389 estimates this number to have comprised one third of Malan's total congregation.

⁶⁹ Guers, Le Premier, pp. 330,333 indicates that £563 towards the cost was collected from a mere handful of concerned women in England.

⁷⁰ Darby's destructive Swiss activity is helpfully surveyed in C.S. Smith, "J.N. Darby in Switzerland" in The Christian Brethren Review Journal, 34 (1983), pp. 53-94.

purpose.⁷¹ Pierre Mejanel, member of the dissident congregation's original pastoral team, was named the Continental Society's first agent in France within two months of his expulsion from Geneva in March, 1818.⁷² Henri Pyt, a second member of that pastoral team, himself entered the society's service in spring 1819. Emil Guers, who entered the joint pastorate to fill the void created by the departure of the aforementioned duo, served the London Society as general agent for France until the late 1820's. Yet another person, subsequently a member of the 'Bourg de Four' pastorate, Ami Bost, served the society as itinerating agent for two separate periods.⁷³ The congregation's involvement with the Continental Society was not, however, limited to the ranks of its ministers; at least six members of that church served as missionaries in France under Continental

⁷¹ the development of which is described in the following chapter.

⁷² The society, until then a mere notion which had been taking shape in the minds of Henry Drummond, Robert Haldane and their intimate friends, seems to have been precipitated into existence by Mejanel's banishment from Geneva and return to his native France.

⁷³ Bost's activity for the society is in many ways instructive. In his Memoires we read of fund-raising itineration in England (I.310ff), extensive preaching activity among the Moravians of the Rhine region (I. 126), contact with evangelical Catholicism (I.198) and attempts to set up European affiliates for the Society (I. 206). His second period of service was initiated at his own request (II. 8,9).

Society auspices.⁷⁴

As the 'Bourg de Four' congregation grew in numbers and influence in its second decade of existence, it began to be less wholly reliant upon the missionary strategies and funding of the London-based society. Thus, by 1829, it took the initiative and called a conference at Lyons for sympathetic ministers and missionaries "in order to discover the best means of advancing the kingdom in neighbouring places".⁷⁵ Of twenty persons in attendance, only seven were Continental Society agents. In the same year, 'Bourg de Four' determined to launch a Missionary Training Institute for preparing its own popular evangelists and missionary schoolmasters.⁷⁶

As in regional evangelization, so also in global missionary efforts, 'Bourg de Four' demonstrated a readiness to move from participation in the schemes of others towards launching its own missionary enterprises. Thus from 1819, the infant congregation heartily

⁷⁴ Evans, Influence of Foreigners, p.676. The most illustrious of these, surely, was Felix Neff. The six were engaged in itinerant preaching, literature distribution, and school teaching. When it is noted that the Continental Society never employed more than thirty-one agents at any one time (infra p.317) the 'Bourg de Four' component will be seen in its true significance.

⁷⁵ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p. 323. The host of the conference would seem to have been Adolphe Monod, then serving as a minister of the National Church at Lyons. Guers records his attendance.

⁷⁶ Guers, *ibid.* p.291. The institute continued in existence until the disruption created by the rise of militant Darbyism. p. 341.

supported first the efforts of the Basle Missionary Society and then the Genevan Missionary Society (led by National Church ministers, Gausson and Coulin). When the latter came under the direction of unsympathetic elements in the National Church in 1829, 'Bourg de Four' threw its not inconsiderable weight behind the Paris Missionary Society and substantially assisted the latter to send its first three workers to Basutoland, South Africa. By the mid-1830s, the congregation was commissioning its own members for independent missionary labour abroad.⁷⁷

The same progression may be observed in the congregation's ordering of its internal affairs. Following the advice of Robert Haldane that they "adopt no rule in anything other than the Word of God", the congregation attempted to make its own way forward with "no written rules other than the Word of God and no guide except the Spirit".⁷⁸ This policy gave the young congregation little guidance when facing such questions as whether sympathetic members of the National Church (who made no formal identification with the dissident congregation) might join professing members of the young congregation at the Lord's Supper, or whether persons of

⁷⁷ Guers, *Le Premier Réveil*, pp. 242, 245. Rodolphe de Rodt, formerly of Berne, was thus commissioned to India in 1835 by the congregation. After 1842, the congregation (Now La Pelisserie) commissioned three married couples and two single men for missionary work in the region around Montreal, Quebec, p.341.

⁷⁸ Guers, *ibid.* pp. 100, 109.

baptistic outlook could be countenanced in that chiefly paedobaptist congregation. Both issues were eventually resolved in the affirmative, yet the painful process of achieving a consensus on these questions after 1825 required an advance beyond the somewhat fond principles embraced so enthusiastically in 1817.⁷⁹

Over the same first decade came a gradual but steady recognition by the civil and religious authorities of Geneva that the 'Bourg de Four' congregation was a permanent fixture which would not be easily deterred. In the first years of its existence, the congregation had had to endure the ugly threats of street mobs and to see its pastors threatened with conscription for military service (as persons not recognized as cantonal clergymen).⁸⁰ The congregation's second decade was

⁷⁹ The first issue of admission to the supper had, until it was resolved, left the young church open to the charge of sectarianism. Until Dec. 1824, a distinction was insisted upon between church member and mere communicant. The latter category had somewhat begrudgingly extended the right of participation in the Supper to those National Church members who were able to articulate a principled rationale for their continuance in the Establishment! Plainly, the policy was one of obstruction. From Dec. 1824 forward, the congregation reckoned participation in the Supper (open to all believers) as the basis of a new, widely embracive membership. Paedobaptism alone was permitted in the formal services of worship, yet baptism of adults was permitted outside these services. Guers, Le Premier Réveil, pp. 201-208, Bost, Memoires, I. p. 378.

⁸⁰ It was in just this setting that pastors Emil Guers and J.G. Gonthier went to London in May, 1821 armed with letters of introduction from orthodox ministers of the National Church of Geneva and Reformed Church of France in order to gain a recognized ordination in Poultry Chapel. Their status as proper ministers was

thankfully free of such external threats; energies and funds were therefore freely channelled into extension efforts.

The period to 1831 thus saw the preponderance of evangelizing activity from Geneva carried out by Protestant dissidents.⁸¹ With them had lain the initiative in the publishing of tracts and journals for wide distribution, the establishing of a training school for missionary colporteurs and school teachers, and the commissioning of Christian workers for itinerant ministry in neighbouring cantons and the east of France. The same dissidents had worked in closest conjunction with the British evangelical societies and come to enjoy a considerable measure of recognition among the British Protestant public.

Events at Geneva 1831-1849

Yet these considerable developments began to be put in the shade by the flurry of similar activity generated by the newly-founded Genevan Evangelical Society in 1831.⁸² If the dissidents had printed tracts and

never thereafter challenged in Geneva. Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.188. The ordinations were fully reported in the Evangelical Magazine, 29 (1821), p.339.

⁸¹ Maury, Le Réveil, I. p.150 concludes "It seems that it was 'Bourg de Four' which had harvested most of the results of the first period of the 'Réveil'".

⁸² The origin of which has been described above at p.186.

journals, commissioned itinerant Bible agents and evangelists and promoted foreign mission, the new Society, aided by numerous wealthy patricians of the city,⁸³ soon surpassed these attainments. Yet we read of not a trace of rivalry in the period of the 1830's between the earlier dissidents and the later (for that is in fact what supporters of the Society were). The roots of this cordiality lay in the sympathetic posture struck by the continuing orthodox party in the Genevan National Church towards the original dissidents in the entire period 1817-1831. For the 'Bourg de Four' congregation, this sympathetic posture was personified by Gausсен, minister of Satigny. Of him, 'Bourg de Four' minister and later chronicler, Emil Guers, could write:

He approved of our doctrine, but did not share our thoughts and views on the church. Knowing the grave reasons which had motivated our dissidence and the share of responsibility belonging to the majority of the 'Compagnie', he could not view our efforts for the gospel without interest. From the first day, we were able to count him among our most devoted friends...He possessed all our confidence and we made no important choice or decision without consulting him...We were always warmly received in his home.⁸⁴

It had been Gausсен's circle (including Coulin, Peschier, Cellerier Sr., and Moulinié) which had provided for dissident involvement in the Genevan Missionary Society until the reverses of 1829 caused the circle to

⁸³ Maury, Le Réveil I. p.158. Guers, Notice Historique, p.25

⁸⁴ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, pp.293,294.

resign in protest.⁸⁵ The same circle had readily penned letters of reference to assist Emil Guers and J.G. Gonthier in obtaining ordination in London in 1821 and shown ready friendship to 'Bourg de Four' missionary to the Alps, Felix Neff.⁸⁶ It was then a mere extension of this relationship into the changed circumstances of the 1830's which explains the gradual convergence of the earlier and later 'waves' of Genevan dissidence. The participation of Gaussen, a minister of the 'Oratoire' and professor of dogmatics in the Evangelical School of Theology, in the March 1839 dedication of 'Bourg de Four's' new edifice at 'La Pelisserie' was fully consistent with this convergence.⁸⁷ So also was the involvement of past and present 'Bourg de Four' ministers Bost and Guers in the affairs of the Genevan Evangelical Society and School of Theology.⁸⁸

The convergence was assisted not only by such bonds of long friendship, but by three additional factors. First was the positive consideration that the Geneva Evangelical Society (of which the 'Oratoire' and

⁸⁵ cf. p.185 supra.

⁸⁶ Guers, Le Premier Réveil. pp. 188,300. cf. Bost, Life of Neff, (London, 1855) p.355 where in a letter, Neff speaks of Gaussen as "our dear friend".

⁸⁷ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.333. Bieler, Une Famille, p. 186 speaks of the "consolidation of an evangelical 'bloc'" in Geneva of the 1830's to counter the opposition of the city's liberal 'bloc'.

⁸⁸ Bost, Memoires, II. p.266. Maury, Le Réveil, I. p.180.

Theological School were but two concerns) made it plain that it was prepared to carry on, on a larger scale, the very type of enterprise pioneered by the 'Bourg de Four' congregation in the decade of the 1820's. Second, the futility of duplication of any such effort became all the more apparent when both the 'Oratoire' and 'Bourg de Four' congregations found themselves co-belligerents against the common foes of Irvingism and Darbyism in the years following 1835.⁸⁹ The 'Bourg de Four' congregation's loss of one wealthy supporter and numerous students from its Missionary Institute to Darbyism directly threatened the viability of that college and led to its closure in 1842.

Thirdly, there was a drastically changed political situation within Geneva. Whereas the period through the 1830's had seen the National Church and cantonal government working in tandem to protect mutual interests, the rise of liberal and secularist political strength in the Geneva of the 1840's ended the cantonal regulation of the National Church and made it internally governed.⁹⁰ Whereas formerly, major changes in the Church had been subject to the review of the Council of State, now a

⁸⁹ Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p. 341. Smith, J.N. Darby in Switzerland, pp. 74,75.

⁹⁰ A new constitution of 1847 decreed these changes. Maury, Le Reveil, I. pp. 207-209. Bieler, Une Famille, notes that many pious members of the National Church had come to relish this deregulation under the influence of Alexander Vinet's seminal book of 1842, The Manifestation of Religious Convictions.

devolution of authority to the church made it master of its own house; the change also served to allow an acceleration of rapid innovation. On the one hand, cantonal congregations were freed to choose as their own ministers any properly qualified person meeting their particular criteria. Yet another feature of this deregulation was the removal of all former (and merely formal) cantonal obligation that the Church must maintain a fixed creed.

In the "year of revolutions" (1848) official representatives of the 'Oratoire' and 'Pelisserie' (formerly 'Bourg de Four') congregations as well as private individuals affiliated both to Malan's 'Eglise du Temoignage' and the now-deregulated National Church began prolonged conferences about the possibility of union in this new and undefined situation. Their motivations no doubt differed. The thriving 'Oratoire', claiming to represent the true heritage and doctrine of the National Church, found that the deregulation of the latter called for a complete re-appraisal of its own posture; there was now nothing to be gained by an anachronistic stance towards Genevan creeds and discipline which had been rendered quite irrelevant by the recent upheaval in Church-state relationships. The 'Pelisserie' and 'Eglise du Temoignage' congregations had already crested numerically in years prior to the introduction of the new constitution and were motivated primarily by a desire

after solidarity in a society which had undergone rapid secularization.

The negotiations were highly difficult and lasted a full year. 'Oratoire' representatives desired to maintain continuity with the doctrine, worship, and government of the Reformed tradition. They were especially concerned to preserve the government of churches by elders, the distinct office of the minister and the normativity of paedobaptism in the face of a prolonged relaxing of such standards by 'Bourg de Four - Pelisserie'.⁹¹ The concerns of Caesar Malan (who unlike some of the members of his chapel, did not eventually enter the 'Eglise Libre') centred around the maintenance of high Calvinism, for which he had long been known.⁹²

In 1849, the majority of members of the three dissident congregations and additional persons until then affiliated to the National Church united to form the 'Eglise Evangelique Libre de Geneve'.⁹³ In polity, the newly amalgamated body determined to be presbyterian. In

⁹¹ In this congregation, the long tradition of mutual admonition and exhortation in public services had led to an altered conception of the pastoral office. Always congregationalist in tendency, the church seems to have consciously affirmed such a polity after 1837 when it censured its ministers for presbyterian tendencies. Guers, Le Premier Réveil, pp. 162,163,334. We have referred above at pp.197,198 to the congregation's baptismal tensions.

⁹² Maury, Le Réveil, I. p.210.

⁹³ Good, History, p.462 reports the initial membership by profession to have been 700.

doctrine, it adhered to a new confession which while clearly Calvinist "consolidated the dogmatic divergences which had separated the supporters of the 'reveil'".⁹⁴ The two congregations which entered the new body as units ('Oratoire' and 'Pelisserie') were permitted to maintain their distinctive patterns of worship; the former thus continued the style of church service customary in the Genevan Reformed tradition while the latter continued to encourage the extensive lay participation for which it had long been known. Even differences over Baptism were accomodated; while paedobaptism was to be normative, it was resolved that "there would exist no need for division if some brothers believed it necessary to await the arrival of a more advanced age for the ceremony".⁹⁵

Geneva's 'Reveil' Crosses Borders

Francophone Cantons

We have observed already that the 'reveil' at Geneva took precedence over similar movements in surrounding territories largely on account of the city's tradition of theological pre-eminence and a relative abundance of

⁹⁴ Maury, Le Reveil, I. p.217. The discipline and doctrine of the new church is printed as an appendix to Guers, Notice Historique, pp. 84-94. The articles of doctrine appear in French and English with helpful commentary in P. Schaff, Creeds of Christendom, (London, 1877) III, pp.781-786.

⁹⁵ Maury, Le Reveil, I. p.218. Guers, Notice Historique, p.93.

dissident missionaries.⁹⁶ It is appropriate now to pause and consider the precise relation in which Genevan developments stood to those in neighbouring cantons.

The fervour and intensity of Geneva's awakening in the period to 1831 may be understood as a reaction against the pervasiveness of Enlightenment theological thought in the 'Compagnie des Pasteurs' and Academy. Yet the Protestant ministry and colleges of theology in other francophone Protestant cantons in this period neither exhibited this theological tendency nor provoked the reaction which had fragmented Geneva's religious life. The religious tensions which did plague these cantons in the decades following 1820 were highly unique to each.

The Reformed Church of Neuchâtel had enjoyed a high degree of autonomy from the state since Reformation times; it continued to uphold a formal orthodoxy until well into the nineteenth century. This stance was only challenged in mid-century when a new cantonal government, zealous to limit the church's long-standing freedoms, began to nominate theological scholars of a sceptical outlook to the cantonal university. The Church, long accustomed to appointing all theological professors according to its own criteria, resisted such inroads being made. Additional pressure by the canton upon the Church's long-established prerogatives eventually led to ecclesiastical separation in 1873 and from this sprang

⁹⁶ cf. pp.171-175 supra.

'L'Église Évangélique de Neuchâtel'.⁹⁷ The latter established a highly credible faculty of theology from which scholars Frederick Godet and August Gretillat exercised an influence far beyond the confines of their church and canton.⁹⁸

We may not speak, however, of any clear-cut dependency of these Neuchâtel developments upon Genevan antecedents. It is plain that the Genevan itinerants, Felix Neff, Ami Bost, and Cesar Malan had periodic activity in the canton⁹⁹, but such itineration clearly

⁹⁷ Good, History, pp. 494-499. Charles Monvert, Histoire de la fondation de l'église évangélique Neuchateloise, (Neuchâtel, 1898). It is of interest to note that this 'Eglise Évangélique' was numbered among the founding members of the "Alliance of Reformed Churches Throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System" (now World Alliance of Reformed Churches) at its inauguration in 1875. cf. Marcel Pradervand, A Century of Service, (Edinburgh, 1975), p.23.

⁹⁸ Good, History, pp. 497-499. Godet's commentaries on Luke (1871), Romans (1879-80) and 1 Corinthians (1886) have been kept in print almost continuously since their initial release. Gretillat authored an important dogmatics, Exposé de théologie systématique, 4 vols. (Paris 1885-1892). His historical and theological retrospective of the 'reveil' period, "Movements of Theological Thought Among French-Speaking Protestants 1820-1891", Presbyterian and Reformed Review, III, (1892), pp. 421-447, will be alluded to below. Significantly numbered among the graduates of Neuchatel's alternate faculty of theology were two sons of Geneva's J.H. Merle D'Aubigné. Monvert, Histoire, p. 304.

⁹⁹ Cart, Histoire, I. pp. 162,3. Gilly, Life of Felix Neff, p.47. Bost. Memoires, II. pp.10,11. It is plain that the majority of Bost's itinerating efforts in Switzerland and South Germany centred around Moravian communities, however. Malan, Life, p. 273. The "Continental Society", described above, had one agent, named Magnin, in the canton of Neuchatel as late as 1834. cf. Appeal of the Continental Society, Dublin Auxilliary, (Dublin, 1834). Three Neuchateloise

preceded by several decades the polarization and separation of the cantonal Church . It is entirely likely that this activity served to nurture forms of evangelical independency which sprang up in advance of the eventual disruption of the cantonal Church.¹⁰⁰ Yet, as regards the latter, the established Genevan pattern of an alternative to cantonal Church and faculty of theology was no doubt held out as an example when concerned Christians of Neuchâtel asked themselves what was to be done about the unprecedented intrusion of the secular power into the affairs of their church and academy.

However, we tread on entirely different ground when examining the relationship between developments at Geneva and the canton of Vaud. Vaud's contiguity with the canton of Geneva ensured that its ministers had a high level of awareness of religious currents in the

ministers, J.H. Grandpierre (1799-1874), and brothers F.E. Petitpierre (1804-1889) and G.A.F. Petitpierre (1801-1884) served independent evangelical causes in France in the years to 1836. F.E. Petitpierre was translator of the Lives of Robert and J.A. Haldane. cf. Robert, Les Eglises Réformées, pp.557,568.

¹⁰⁰ The Scottish Congregationalist, W.L. Alexander, witnessed the pervasiveness of this Independency movement during his tour of Switzerland in 1845. In his Switzerland and the Swiss Churches, (Edinburgh, 1846), pp. 222-3, he wrote, "In almost all the Protestant cantons and especially those of French Switzerland, churches of the Independent order have sprung up which stand to the Church of the Pelisserie (formerly 'Bourg de Four') in the relation of sister churches". Independency of this type had sprung up in Neuchâtel in 1828. Alexander found 50 such independent churches in the French cantons and 10 in the German. p.268.

neighbouring region. From their standpoint of formal orthodoxy concerning the doctrine of the Trinity, the two natures of Christ, justification by faith, and Biblical authority, Vaud's clergy found much to unsettle them in their annual conferences with their Genevan counterparts (conferences which continued until 1818). Thus, they perused the polemical pamphlet of young Henri Empaytaz, Considerationes Sur La Divinite de Jesus Christ (1816), with great eagerness and largely sympathized with its primary contentions.¹⁰¹

From 1810, the chief minister ('doyen') of the canton, L.A. Curtat (d.1832), had given supplementary lectures in his own home to the theological students of the Lausanne 'Academie'. He chose to dwell especially on subjects of current debate and thus addressed the divinity of Christ and the inspiration of Scripture. He also gave sermon analysis as part of which he showed himself ready to insist that every sermon must speak of Jesus Christ.¹⁰² Yet this man, the chronicler of 'réveil' activity in Vaud termed both "the first and one of the most powerful advocates" of the upsurge in religious activity within the canton, and (paradoxically)

¹⁰¹ Cart, Histoire du Mouvement, I, p. 159. The annual conference was terminated in protest by doyen L.A. Curtat in response to the Genevan issuance of the 'réglement' of May 1817.

¹⁰² Cart, *ibid.* I.1. p.85.

also "the greatest opponent and adversary of the same".¹⁰³ Curtat harboured an inveterate fear of the pietistic religion which flourished concurrently with his own special efforts at the preparation of ministerial candidates.

The 'doyen' thus looked askance at the rise and prolific activity of the Lausanne Bible Society in 1814; thereafter the society's two divisions for Scripture and tract distribution unwittingly aided pietistic conventicles. Now-plentiful Scriptures and tracts were so much "grist" for the pietists' "mill".¹⁰⁴ Curtat was similarly alarmed by the rise of the missionary movement. The wide readership found within Vaud by Le Magasin Evangelique¹⁰⁵, so full of missionary affairs, immediately gave rise to agitation for a mission society at Lausanne. At the centre of this agitation was the Englishwoman, earlier involved equally in the launching of the Lausanne Bible Society, Mary Anna Greaves.¹⁰⁶ By mid-1820, Miss Greaves had summoned the young convert and budding missionary, Felix Neff, from Geneva to assist in

¹⁰³ Cart, *ibid.* I.1. p.79.

¹⁰⁴ Cart, *ibid.* I.1. pp.102,103. Prime mover behind the Lausanne Bible Society was Professor David Levade. Initial deliberations leading to the formation of the Lausanne Society also involved representatives from the cantons of Neuchâtel and Geneva.

¹⁰⁵ published at Geneva from 1819 by the 'Bourg de Four' congregation.

¹⁰⁶ Greaves had been made a life member of the Bible Society for her pioneering efforts on its behalf. cf. Cart, I.1.105.

the promotion of the mission society cause.¹⁰⁷

'Doyen' Curtat believed he detected a pietistic conspiracy in all this. He alerted the cantonal council to the financial implications of a substantial outflow of currency from the region in support of foreign missions. The council acted promptly on this warning by publicly discouraging involvement in the missionary cause.¹⁰⁸

Curtat went further still and wrote a series of tracts against the growing tendency towards religious meetings in homes ('conventicules'). The best known of these was De L'Établissement des Conventicules dans le Canton de Vaud (Lausanne, 1821). In this, he warned that such non-official religious assemblies were, in effect, "fronts" for an influx of English religious sentiment, that they used literature printed with English donations, and that they held out the prospect of the cantonal Church rapidly becoming "a humble auxiliary of one of the two sections of English Methodism".¹⁰⁹

Yet it was not merely concerned Britons who took note of this adamant opposition emanating from a hitherto

¹⁰⁷ Bost, Life of Neff, p.122. Neff spoke in many small evening gatherings over a two week period in advocacy of a mission society. Cart, Histoire, I.1.pp.162-169 outlines the extensive visits of Neff and Bost to Vaud.

¹⁰⁸ Cart, *ibid.* I.1. pp.191,204.

¹⁰⁹ L.A. Curtat, De L'Établissement des Conventicules dans le Canton de Vaud, (Lausanne, 1821), p.iv.

impeccable source.¹¹⁰ The Genevan, Caesar Malan, who was often in the neighbouring canton of Vaud after 1818 in order to preach in such conventicles and missionary gatherings, wrote in defense of gatherings such as the one at Rolle, Vaud in 1821. The pamphlet, bearing the name Les Conventicules de Rolle par un Temoin digne de Foi, defended such gatherings against the charge of separatism, counselled prudence in dealing with parish ministers who seemed strangers to the Gospel, and related the circumstances of Malan's own post-ordination conversion. All this had been spoken in response to the questions of three Vaud ministers. The pamphlet then went on, however, to urge that prayer be offered for the obstructive Curtat!¹¹¹

Anti-conventicle legislation was promptly enacted by the government of Vaud in 1821. Devotional services in homes involving any persons other than family members were strictly forbidden. There followed a series of resignations by ministers and ordinands who objected to this onslaught against pietist activity and to what they

¹¹⁰ Curtat's opposition necessitated the relocation of Miss Greaves to Geneva by early 1822. She there became affiliated with the congregation of Gausson at Satigny. Wemyss, Le Reveil, p.155.

¹¹¹ Malan, Les Conventicules de Rolle, (Geneva, 1821). We have utilized the English translation produced at London in 1865. See pages 16-21, 109-115. The jibe directed towards Curtat drew immediate criticism from young Alexandre Vinet, a loyal supporter of the doyen. But Vinet later defended the religious rights of dissidents. See Laura M. Lane, Life and Writings of Alexandre Vinet, (Edinburgh, 1890), pp. 40-41, 121.

perceived as a drifting of their National Church from close adherence to the Second Helvetic Confession (1566) and proper exercise of discipline.¹¹² With the anti-conventicle legislation in place, there was no legal scope for dissident Protestantism in the canton, and thus, belatedly, Vaud became like Geneva an exporter of preachers and missionaries to other Francophone regions.

Yet, in spite of the restrictions, the 'réveil' diffused itself through the canton. By 1824, twenty-six ministers within the National Church petitioned the council of the canton to repeal the anti-conventicle legislation. The following year, an "Evangelical Society of Vaud" was organized. Shortly thereafter, Alexandre Vinet, who had earlier stood with 'doyen' Curtat against conventicles, reversed himself and made the change of outlook plain by publishing an appeal in favour of religious liberty.¹¹³

The granting of complete religious liberty in 1834 at the hands of the current secularizing Vaud council of state marked a new chapter in the history of evangelical

¹¹² Cart, Histoire du Mouvement. I.1.pp.301-308. By June 1824, there were at least six dissident ministers and ordinands. Cart also demonstrates (p.229) that all of the first dissidents had been participants in Malan's conventicles. Louis Barbey, Henri Juvet, Alex Chavannes and F. Olivier were such men.

¹¹³ Good, History, pp. 475,476. Such was the illicit activity of pietistic dissidents that Ami Bost of Geneva records his presence and activity in a "synod of independents" at Lausanne in November, 1828. Memoires, II. p.90.

dissidence. Henceforth, one might hold public or private religious gatherings outside the National Church framework with perfect liberty. But this same secularizing council was simultaneously examining what it viewed as the outdated outlook of the National Church; in 1839 it rendered this church creedless by abolishing the Second Helvetic Confession as the standard of teaching.¹¹⁴ Now, as in 1824, there was a stream of pastoral resignations from the National Church.

In response to the council's reforms, there was growing agitation for the separation of church and state. No individual did more to further this cause than Vinet, whose treatise on the subject, Essai sur la manifestation des convictions religieuses et sur la separation de l'église et de l'état (Paris, 1842), became influential in francophone Protestantism far beyond Vaud's boundaries. From 1839, the cantonal government also dismantled the National Church's internal government and administered each parish directly by a ministry of religious affairs¹¹⁵, much on the current French model. The cantonal government's insistence in 1845 that National Church ministers read from their pulpits a written declaration indicating support for the new

¹¹⁴ This development moved A. Vinet, by this time professor of practical theology in the Academy of Lausanne, to resign from his post and the ministry. Lane, Vinet, p.195.

¹¹⁵ Good, History, pp. 476,477.

arrangements served as the catalyst for a massive disruption. One hundred and forty ministers departed while only eighty-nine remained in the National Church. The clear majority of theological professors and students also seceded; shortly a "Free Faculty of Theology" was established. The Free Evangelical Church of Vaud was constituted on 15 December, 1845; the abandoning of manse and church buildings in mid-winter was rightly considered as heroic action. The Free Church of Vaud cause was rapidly taken up through the Protestant world.¹¹⁶

The disruption of the National Church of Vaud was a clear and conscientious response to the State's invasion of the Church's right to determine her own doctrine and administer her own affairs. It was an occurrence which could never have taken place without the leavening agent of the 'reveil', much of the impetus of which was provided by the dissidents of Geneva.

France

Contemporary British observers in post-Napoleonic France were easily led to the conclusion that the cause

¹¹⁶ Good, *ibid.* p.480. Over 400 Church of England ministers declared their support. The Free Church of Scotland assisted the Free Church effort in Vaud promptly from 1845. cf. chapter four, p.362. The Free Church of Vaud was a constituting member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches at the inauguration of that body in 1875. cf. Pradervand, A Century of Service, p.22.

of the Gospel had been well-nigh extinguished there. Often relying on spotty religious intelligence, they reached conclusions about the extent of orthodox Christian belief and proclamation which bore little relation to the real state of Christianity in France's many 'departements'. Robert Haldane had believed that France contained only four or five ministers of orthodox views outside the Montauban and Toulouse which he knew so well. The Methodist missionary, Charles Cook, had asserted in 1818 that he could number all the orthodox ministers in France on the fingers of one hand.¹¹⁷

In fact, French Protestantism, while far from robust, was nevertheless showing unmistakable signs of quickening in the period dating from the decision in 1808 to establish an approved theological college at Montauban. Two early professors there, Daniel Encontre and Jules Bonnard, were participants in a circle of ministers which also included the Moravian evangelist, J.J. Merillat. The circle maintained official links with the Moravian headquarters at Herrnhut, Saxony.¹¹⁸ Under the influence of lecturers such as Encontre and Bonnard, Montauban soon sent a steady supply of generally orthodox and Trinitarian ministers into the pulpits of the

¹¹⁷ Haldane, Life, p.449. Maury, Le Réveil Religieux, I. p.225. Yet Cook, upon undertaking an extensive tour of the south of France, quickly came to see that there were many men with whom he could collaborate.

¹¹⁸ see chap. 2. p.100 above.

National Church. We have noted above the posture struck by Montauban and the National Church 'vis a vis' the Genevan 'reglement' of May 1817.

Against such a backdrop, we are driven to the conclusion that the historian of the 'reveil', Maury, was substantially correct to claim that

a judgement describing the French church as utterly fallen in 1815 has little foundation. It is certain that around 1815 there were in our church a number of zealous and faithful pastors who joyfully received the help of foreigners - yet who without and before them laboured with perseverance.¹¹⁹

It was as part of this indigenous stirring that the French churches received Genevan graduates who had been touched by Haldane's influence in 1817; it had also welcomed like-minded graduates in preceding years. The Monod brothers and Cesar Bonifas were welcomed every bit as heartily following 1817 as had been Abraham Lissignol in 1809 and Matthieu Miroglio in 1810. In the 1820's, there was plainly opportunity in the ministry of the National Church for several men of French citizenship whose studies at the Gosport, Hampshire seminary of David Bogue had been financed by the London Missionary Society.¹²⁰ While full ministerial rank was most difficult to obtain for anyone other than a native (given the governmental insistence upon citizenship as a

¹¹⁹ Maury, Le Reveil Religieux, I. p.474.

¹²⁰ These were Laurent Cadoret and Gilles Portier. On Cadoret's somewhat stormy relationship with the National Church, cf. Robert, Les Eglises Reformees, pp.244-45 and Wemyss, Le Reveil, pp.126ff.

prerequisite), the National Church nevertheless offered almost unlimited opportunity for those francophones who, lacking citizenship, were ready to serve as pastoral assistants ('suffragants').¹²¹ We lay stress on these facts so as to emphasize that the National Church, though beset with difficulties of very long standing, extended an open door of opportunity after 1815 and harboured within it many friends of the 'reveil'.

The 'reveil' at Geneva furnished the National Church of France both with leading personalities of a generation younger than Daniel Encontre and Jules Bonnard and a widened trans-national orbit within which to operate. As regards the first, it is sufficient to note that no names figure so prominently in the affairs of the the French Protestant Church in the period to 1849 as the brothers Frederic and Adolphe Monod. As regards the second, we can observe that by the 1830's, the seminary at Montauban was attempting to move explicitly in concert with the tendencies of Genevan evangelical theology. Adolphe Monod was offered but declined a post in the new theological school established at Geneva in 1832, preferring to accept a chair in ethics and sacred eloquence at Montauban in 1836.¹²² Cesar Bonifas,

¹²¹ We have noted at p.189 that Genevan dissidents Henri Pyt and Felix Neff served in this way while their comrade, Emil Guers at least contemplated the idea.

¹²² Monod served the Montauban faculty until 1847. Heyer, L'Église, p.493.

associated with Haldane in 1817, joined the Montauban faculty in the same decade. J.H. Merle D'Aubigné declined the chair in theology there in 1830 in the period of his transition from a Brussels pastorate to a post at the Evangelical School of Theology in Geneva.¹²³

Beyond the seminary, we may observe that Caesar Malan of Geneva itinerated extensively in the eastern and southern 'departements' of France between the years 1836 and 1853¹²⁴ while Ami Bost served National Churches at Bourges, Asnieres, Melun, and Paris in the period 1843-52.¹²⁵ The "door" of the National Reformed Church was then definitely open to the influences of the 'reveil'.

The growth patterns of the French Reformed Church to the middle of the nineteenth century give the most unambiguous evidence of the 'réveil's' quickening effect. Writing in 1854, Ami Bost could recollect that

in 1814 one could not have counted two hundred churches (with pastors) salaried by the state and not one dissident congregation. Presently there are 763 pastors salaried by the state and an indefinite

¹²³ Bieler, Une Famille, p.168.

¹²⁴ i.e. in the years 1836, 1841, 1849, 1852, 1853. cf. Malan, Life of Malan, p. 284. The financial backing for such itineration was often supplied by the New York based "Foreign Evangelical Society". The published Report of this organization for 1842, pp.29,30 indicates the funding for such itineration.

¹²⁵ Bost, Memoires, II. pp. 297ff. Bost had been re-admitted to the ministry of the Genevan National Church in 1840 and thus became eligible for call to France.

number of independent churches.¹²⁶

The means by which this great change was effected we will shortly consider.

For the moment, it is necessary for us to recollect our earlier contention that at Geneva, the momentum of the 'reveil' in the period to 1831 lay primarily with the dissident congregation of 'Bourg de Four'.¹²⁷ This factor ensured that France - like the canton of Vaud - would initially encounter Geneva's 'reveil' primarily through its dissident representatives. Frederic Monod, member of the Haldane 'circle' and future assistant to his father, Jean Monod, in the National Church at Paris, was ordained at Geneva in July, 1818; he began his Paris ministry in the following year. The young man was the first member of the Haldane 'circle' to attach himself to the National Church in the capital.¹²⁸ Yet already in March-April 1818, the Genevan dissidents had, in the person of Pierre Mejanel, their own representative at

¹²⁶ Bost, *ibid.* II. p.307. His statistics cannot be easily verified. Statistics excerpted from Soulier's Statistique de 1828 quoted in Gilly's Life of Felix Neff, (London, 1832), pp.140-141 make plain that even by 1828 the number of pastors had increased dramatically to 303. The number of state church buildings in 1828 was reported to be 438. Mours, L'Eglise Reformée, pp. 190,191 documents an increase from 200 pastors in 1820 to 569 in 1865.

¹²⁷ this assertion was made above at p.188.

¹²⁸ Heyer, L'Eglise de Geneve, p.407. Cesar Bonifas, also of the 'circle' had been ordained in July of 1817 in company with Merle D'Aubigné ; he then proceeded to serve at Grenoble.

Paris. By May, Mejanel had been appointed the first agent of the "Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge On the Continent of Europe" and by April of the following year both Henri Pyt and Ami Bost were similarly employed.¹²⁹

The significance of this lies not so much in the inauguration of a Christian society outside the jurisdiction of the consistories of the National Protestant Church (a thing which we will find, below, to have been commonplace) but in the selection of personnel. Pierre Mejanel was himself a minister of the National Church; yet at this stage of his career he had no thought of resuming pastoral work in that setting. Ami Bost had been ordained in the Genevan National Church in March, 1814¹³⁰ and served a first pastorate at Moutiers - Grand Val, canton of Berne, 1816-1818. In early 1819 he had returned to Geneva and allied himself openly with the dissident 'Bourg de Four' congregation.¹³¹ Only in 1840 did he return to the fold of the Genevan National Church. Henri Pyt also came to the "Continental Society" from 'Bourg de Four', by way of a short-term as assistant

¹²⁹ The first Annual Report of the Continental Society (London, 1819), p.9 reported that "there are now four itinerants serving in France". The rise and progress of this society is described in detail in the following chapter.

¹³⁰ Heyer, L'Eglise, p.406.

¹³¹ A change of allegiance announced in his publication of that year, Geneve Religieuse, (Geneve, 1819), p.2.

('suffragant') in the French National Church at Saverdun. His shift of allegiance had been motivated by a desire to "avoid compromise with the National Church".¹³²

Now such agents at best adopted an eclectic attitude to the National Protestant Church of France. Where its pastors and consistories welcomed them, they were happy enough to occupy its pulpits. But where this hospitality was not extended they felt free to bypass such churches altogether. Such free-lance preaching, distribution of literature and organization of home gatherings was all the more naturally the pattern followed in the vast tracts of France where Protestantism had long gone under-represented. From the Pyrenees north to Flanders and especially across the whole sweep of northern France, these apostles of independency roamed.

But they were by no means the only advocates of a Protestantism outside the confines of the state church. The number of such advocates grew steadily through the 1820's in direct proportion to the state's efforts to tether Protestantism.¹³³ Any direct proselytization of France's nominally Catholic population was severely frowned upon in the period to 1830. The historian Leon Maury records that

¹³² Guers, Vie de Pyt, p.59.

¹³³ The extent of the State's surveillance of Protestant attempts at proselytization in the period to 1830 is helpfully surveyed in Pierre Genevray, "L'Etat Francais et la Propagation du Réveil", B.S.H.F.P. 95-96 (1946-47) pp.12-39.

in 1825, the consistory of Paris was refused the right to open a church in Ageux simply for those of Protestant birth. The following year, the consistory of Lyons was refused the right to hold religious services in neighbouring communities where curious Catholics requested these. Yet Protestant conversions to Catholicism were highly encouraged. The prince of Salm, who renounced Catholicism at Strasburgh in 1826, was expelled from France by ministerial order.¹³⁴

Such events made some forward-looking persons weigh the benefits of state establishment against the limitations which this status entailed. The latter certainly strengthened the case for the creation of various evangelical societies at Paris, commencing with the 'Societe Biblique Protestant' in 1818. A less-regulated National Protestant Church, subsuming as it did in the post-1815 period virtually all French Protestantism, might have been expected to launch such beneficial schemes at its own initiative. But in point of fact, it was restrained from doing so by the terms of the Napoleonic 'concordat' of 1802 - now carried forward under the restored monarchy. The Bible Society and its subsequent counterparts¹³⁵ were consequently the embodiment of private or individualistic Christian initiative and the substantial successes accomplished by these agencies tended to serve as proof positive of how

¹³⁴ Maury, Le Réveil Religieux, I. pp.470.471.

¹³⁵ 'Societe des Traités Religieux' (1821), 'Societe des Missions Evangeliques' (1822) 'Comite pour l'Encouragement des Ecoles du Dimanche' (1826) and 'Societe pour l'Encouragement de l'Instruction Primaire parmi les Protestants de France' (1829).

the interests of evangelical Protestantism could be well served outside the framework of the 'concordat'.¹³⁶ Such private initiatives brought together likeminded Lutheran, Reformed and independent Christians in France.¹³⁷ Strong support was also given by foreign churchmen such as the English Independent, Mark Wilks, who served an English-speaking Paris chapel from 1822, British Methodist missionaries John Hawtrey and Charles Cook, and the American merchant, Sampson Wilder.¹³⁸ In so far as the Bible, Tract and Mission societies employed their own agents to traverse the country, we must observe in their efforts the gradual emergence of "para-church" endeavour as the primary means of Protestant expansion in the 1820's.

This expansion of evangelical endeavour by societies was furthered by two additional factors: the emergence of theological polarization within the French Reformed

¹³⁶ While the viability of the principle of such private (rather than ecclesiastical) initiative had been amply demonstrated in Great Britain in the preceding twenty-five years, this private initiative may be said to have been needed to overcome the effects of Protestant pluralism. In France, the obstacle to ecclesiastical initiative was not this pluralism but state regulation.

¹³⁷ Churches of the Augsburg (Lutheran) Confession had also been recognized and funded by the state in the 'concordat' of 1802. They were concentrated in north east France. The co-operation of various Christians is documented in O. Douen, 'Histoire de la Societe Biblique Protestant de Paris', (Paris, 1868), pp. 79-83.

¹³⁸ whose activity, especially in the organization of the Tract Society, is related in chapter four, p.297. cf. Wilder, Records from the Life of S.V.S.W., p.80.

Church and the upsurge of evangelical internationalism. First, during the 1820's there is evidence of theological polarization in the French Reformed Church between friends and foes of the 'reveil'. Samuel Vincent (1787-1837), minister at Nimes, gave voice to those uneasy with the new strident conversionist emphasis through his editing the periodical Melanges de Religion de Morale et de Critique Sacree (1820-24).¹³⁹ Adolphe Monod encountered stern opposition from ministers of this outlook from the time of his arrival at Lyons in 1826; his opponents eventually succeeded in gaining his dismissal from his pastorate and obstructing his potential appointment to a chair at the Montauban seminary.¹⁴⁰ The upshot of this altercation at Lyons was the inauguration of the 'Eglise Evangelique de Lyon' under Monod's leadership. Independent action by societies had initially been justified on the ground that state regulation of the Church inhibited the launching of publishing and proselytizing schemes. Now, if only on a regional basis, it seemed necessary to resort to

¹³⁹ Robert, Les Eglises Reformees, p.378 typifies the theological outlook of Vincent as being 'pre-liberal' and approximating the thought of Schleiermacher.

¹⁴⁰ Robert, Les Eglises Reformees, pp.407-409. Monod, the subject of investigation from 1829, was dismissed from his pastorate by the state-regulated consistory of Lyons in March, 1832. He gained a chair at Montauban on a second attempt in 1836. It is evident that a certain rigidity on Monod's part exacerbated actual divergences on matters of doctrine. cf. Maury, Le Reveil Religieux, I. p.159.

independent action because of ecclesiastical hostility to the same endeavours.

But secondly, a step like that taken by Monod at Lyons was rendered feasible largely because of the enlarged operation of what can only be called an "evangelical internationalism". Caesar Malan's Genevan 'Eglise du Temoignage' had been erected by an early manifestation of the same generosity while the 'Bourg de Four' congregation of the same city would similarly afford the unaffordable in erecting their new edifice at 'La Pelisserie' after 1839.¹⁴¹ To just such a constituency at home and abroad Monod appealed for assistance with his Appel aux Chretiens de France et de l'Etranger en faveur de l'Eglise Evangelique de Lyons (Paris, 1833).¹⁴² The Lyons congregation grew rapidly through an aggressive evangelism and regional itineration and joined an informal network of other such independent congregations in existence at Bourdeaux, Castetarbe, La Nougarede, Paris, St. Etienne, ^{Le} Havre and Strasburgh.¹⁴³

Paris itself had become the hotbed of evangelical independency largely because it was to this centre that foreign evangelicals gravitated. To the capital came the

¹⁴¹ cf. p.201 supra.

¹⁴² the mere presence of a copy of the pamphlet in the library of New College, Edinburgh suggests something of the audience to which Monod appealed. That this was far from an isolated occurrence is helpfully documented by Evans, The Influence of Foreigners, pp.414ff.

¹⁴³ Maury, Le Reveil Religieux, I. pp. 465,506.

exiled Vaud pastors Francois and Henri Olivier; in 1824, with funding from Robert Haldane they commenced the private tutoring of men for the ministry outside the National Church. A congregation of independent views sprang up in conjunction with this, the 'Institut Haldane'.¹⁴⁴ To Paris in 1824 came A.J. Galland, the Genevan-educated minister of the French congregation at Berne;¹⁴⁵ he served as the first director of the Paris Mission Society. Galland, like the brothers Olivier, held preaching services which were boldly evangelical. At his 1826 return to Geneva, Galland was replaced by a citizen of Neuchâtel, J.H. Grandpierre (1799-1874). The latter combined his administrative duties with the Mission Society and the role of preacher in Paris' most prominent independent chapel, 'La Chapel Taitbout'.

The sudden end of the Bourbon monarchy by the forced exile of Charles X in July 1830, and the rise of the house of Orleans through the reign of Louis Philippe created an atmosphere which was considerably more

¹⁴⁴ Maury, Le Reveil, I. p.446. Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, p.545. After 1831 direction of school and congregation passed into the hands of Henri Pyt. Guers, Vie de Pyt, p.262 maintains that Pyt erected a chapel of his own with lavish assistance from an English donor.

¹⁴⁵ We have noted above Galland's exposure to Haldane in autumn 1816 and his eventual cooperation with F.S.L. Gaussen in 1831 in founding the Evangelical Society of Geneva.

amenable to French Protestantism in its varied forms.¹⁴⁶ No change was more significant than the relaxation of Bourbon legislation inhibiting the right of assembly for purposes other than worship. Now there could be gatherings for deliberation and for strategy formation. Three major consequences followed from this restored right of free assembly; these were the extension of the Christian society movement, the spread of the 'reveil' among the upper classes of Paris by what is called the 'reunion' movement, and the rise of open debate regarding the suitability of the National Church's linkage to the state.

First, while the Established Church now began to engage, gingerly, in some church extension, the existing pattern of evangelistic initiative by societies meant that it was these (and not the Church) which were poised to exploit the new situation most fully. A cue was taken from the groups of likeminded persons at Lausanne and Geneva who had established "Evangelical Societies" in 1825 and 1831. By August 1834 there also existed at Paris the 'Société Evangelique francaise'-- a new organization which would shortly eclipse the efforts of all foreign bodies working for French evangelization.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Maury, Le Reveil, p.471. Guers, Vie de Pyt, p.258 "the fall of the Bourbon kings created much wider opportunity for the free preaching of the gospel".

¹⁴⁷ The awkward situation created by this development for the London-based Continental Society is related in the following chapter.

The foundation of the Paris-based society reflected both the indigenization of home missionary effort and the fact that the internal political climate of France was now more hospitable to such proselytizing efforts among the nominally Catholic population.

Already by 1838 the Paris-based society employed sixteen ministers, ten evangelists, seventeen school teachers, and nine colporteurs. Further, it was assisting seven candidates who were in various stages of preparation for the ministry.¹⁴⁸ The Paris society worked in close conjunction with its Geneva counterpart which was focusing its missionary efforts on the eastern regions of France surrounding Lyons.¹⁴⁹ The cooperation between the two societies, which included the training of French preachers in the Evangelical School of Theology at Geneva for service of the Parisian society,¹⁵⁰ extended also to a shared eclectic attitude towards the French

¹⁴⁸ Excerpts from the Quarterly Report of the Paris Evangelical Society, (July-Oct. 1838) reprinted in Edward Bickersteth, ed. A Voice From the Alps, (London, 1838) pp.160 ff. Those under preparation were almost certainly studying at the Evangelical School of Theology, Geneva.

¹⁴⁹ By the year 1846, the Paris Society would employ 146 agents and the Geneva Society 124. Sixth Report of the Foreign Aid Society, (London, 1846) pp.11,15. It is the contention of Evans, The Influence of Foreigners, p.410 that the two societies were substantially funded to the tune of U.S. \$83,340 in the years 1839-49 by the New York "Foreign Evangelization Society" in which S.V. Wilder was a principal. Evans further alleges that initial American funding was integral to the founding of each society.

¹⁵⁰ Maury, Le Reveil, I. p.186.

Reformed Church. Both societies aimed not only at the preaching of the Gospel, but also at the erection of chapels. Would these or would these not be affiliated to the recognized Protestant Church of the land? The policy of the societies in this regard was one largely determined by the attitude of the regional consistory towards their evangelistic efforts.

When queried on the point for the sake of conscientious Church of England donors (who found the prospect of funding any apparently sectarian endeavour worrisome) the Paris society replied in measured terms:

In the instruction to the agents of the Society, Article IV, they are told "to keep in view, not only there there is nothing hostile to the churches legally constituted in France, but on the contrary the committee is anxious to cooperate everywhere, wherever it can be done with the pastors of those churches for the advancement of the church of God by the propagation of the pure gospel".¹⁵¹

But such a policy clearly anticipated numerous situations where cooperation would be unfeasible and independent congregations spring up. Reservations within the National Church regarding such a policy encouraged the formation in the 1840's of several evangelization societies termed 'Societes Protestantes' throughout

¹⁵¹ Bickersteth, ed. A Voice, p.158. Bickersteth's English readers were also re-assured that M. Juillerat-Chasseur, an immediate past moderator of the Reformed Church was a secretary of the 'Societe Evangelique'. Yet the fact, while true, was not the ironclad guarantee of denominational loyalty implied.

France.¹⁵² These societies differed from those of Paris and Geneva in professing "to act consistently with the constitution of the French Reformed Church of 1802 and by virtue of which conforming pastors received government stipends".¹⁵³

By the mid 1840's, the Evangelical Societies of Geneva and Paris were clearly reflecting current ecclesiastical tensions in France¹⁵⁴ and were now indicating that their posture towards the National Church was so regionally variable as to be one of acting "either with, or independent of and sometimes opposed to the Consistorial churches".¹⁵⁵ It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the principle of private or individual action pursued by the societies of Geneva and Paris had ultimately served the interests of ecclesiastical independency.¹⁵⁶

Second, the right of free assembly facilitated the

¹⁵² Branches were located in Paris, Orleans, Normandy and Bordeaux.

¹⁵³ Seventh Report of the Foreign Aid Society (London, 1847) p.21.

¹⁵⁴ to be detailed below.

¹⁵⁵ Seventh Report of the Foreign Aid Society, (London, 1847) p.20.

¹⁵⁶ the detailed statistical analysis provided by Mours, Les Églises Reformées, pp. 190-191 indicates that by the later date of 1865, the 638 salaried clergy of the National Church had a nationwide counterpart of 218 pastors or evangelists not salaried by the state. This ratio, albeit for a slightly later date, indicates the dramatic growth of independency.

gatherings ('reunions') of upper class Parisian Protestants who met in the drawing rooms ('salons') of influential Christians on week day evenings. In the homes of Mark Wilks, Frederick Monod, Thomas Waddington (an English industrialist), Jules Hollard (a Vaud physician), V. de Pressense, and Henri Lutteroth (a Bavarian banker) interested persons from the intellectual, governmental and economic elites assembled for far-ranging discussions bearing on the relation of the Christian faith to modern life. There was in all such gatherings an over-arching concern to

announce the gospel in its simplicity to those of their fellow citizens for whom indifference, doubt, and prejudice combined to keep them far from any sanctuary.¹⁵⁷

Like the London Clapham circle on which they modelled themselves, this influential Paris group came to be called the "Saints". They arranged visits by Thomas Chalmers and Elizabeth Fry, who discussed their Christian approach to social problems.¹⁵⁸ Christian women, including some very highly placed in society such as the Baroness de Stael, hosted distinctive gatherings for women at their own level in society. By October 1830, this influential Parisian circle had opened a small place of worship in 'rue Taitbout' which prospered so much that by 1833 their Sunday assemblies had to be relocated to a

¹⁵⁷ Maury, Le Réveil Religieux, I. pp. 456,457.

¹⁵⁸ Wemyss, Le Réveil, p.187.

concert hall on the same thoroughfare. A National Church minister, Jean-Joel Audebez¹⁵⁹ (1790-1881) was called from Nerac in 1831 and under his ministry (now on an independent footing) a sizeable congregation of influential Parisians was assembled. The 'chapel Taitbout' was essentially an outreach centre for the well-born; only in 1839 did it assume a churchly character by administering the sacraments and solemnizing marriages. From that year, it declared its independence from the state, established a roll of membership for those who made profession of faith and declared its doctrinal basis to be the historic French Reformed Confession of La Rochelle (1559).

The congregation, which moved into a new edifice on the 'rue de Provence' in 1840, shortly initiated six additional congregations by sending out teams of itinerant preachers and colporteurs. One of the six was specifically created for the working classes.¹⁶⁰ What the 'Société Evangelique de France' attempted in the 'departements' of France beginning in 1834, this congregation of affluent individuals attempted

¹⁵⁹ Significantly, Audebez in this para-church post also became a founding secretary of the eclectic 'Société Evangelique de France'. Robert, Les Eglises, p.542.

¹⁶⁰ Maury, Le Réveil, I. pp.457-463. The congregation's declared adherence to the historic confession was deeply significant, coming as it did in a period of agitation over the National Church's being left virtually "creed-less" by the terms of the 'concordat' of 1802.

simultaneously in Paris. Not animosity towards the National Church, but simple impatience at its corporate lethargy, served as the original impetus.

The third major consequence of the July Monarchy for French Protestantism was the new freedom to debate the desirability of the linkage of Church and state. Since the enactment of the 1802 'concordat', the various regimes ruling France had all proven reluctant to fund any sizeable expansion of the Protestant ministry and church facilities.¹⁶¹ The difficulty was partly administrative; under the terms of the 'concordat', the Reformed Church's national synod was forbidden to meet without governmental approval; this was consistently withheld. The debate, which could therefore not take place in a national synod, came to be argued out in the pages of the various Protestant journals. The case for the drastic revision or even repudiation of the 'concordat' was argued in the pages of Les Archives du Christianisme, edited by Frederic Monod. Perhaps the most forceful advocate of this position was the rising young theologian, Edmond Scherer (1815-1889).¹⁶² In a

¹⁶¹ The total number of ministerial graduates produced at Montauban in the years 1815-1829 was 144 or an average of 9.6 per year. This could hardly sustain let alone expand a church which, even in 1815 had had 441,890 members. Robert, Les Eglises, p.539. Mours, Les Eglises, pp.188,189.

¹⁶² Scherer, bold champion of ecclesiastical independence from the state, had received the D.Th. at Strasburgh in 1843. He served the Evangelical School of Theology at Geneva 1845-49 as professor of exegesis, but

series of articles entitled l'Etat actuel de L'Eglise reformée en France, Scherer argued that a Church deprived of the right to assemble in synod (there to establish and uphold its own doctrine and discipline) had been fatally compromised:

By lopping off its head, the ecclesiastical constitution that now regulates us has annihilated the Reformed Church amongst us, in so far as it exists in an organization of its own. The Synod was the bond of unity of this church. We had a church, we have now only churches. The proper character of our ecclesiastical system was the association of our churches in opposition to the system of isolation; by the suppression of our Synod, this isolation has become our system. Our regime was presbyterianism, it has lapsed into congregationalism.¹⁶³

Yet this protest was not only about the absence of a national synod, it was also a cry against the operation of the present consistory system - weighted as was all political life in that era in favour of the upper middle classes. Under the 'concordat' of 1802, the churches had forfeited the right to choose the elders who were to comprise the regional consistories. When such men were no longer chosen on the basis of Christian maturity and knowledge, further ruin resulted.

Our consistories...instead of being composed of the most experienced Christians of a flock are formed of the most considerable or the most busy among them...Every consistory may choose an infidel or a

was dismissed from that institution when he disclosed radical convictions regarding the biblical canon. Heyer, L'Eglise, p.516, Maury, Le Reveil, I. p.185.

¹⁶³ Scherer's Archives articles were subsequently printed separately under the identical title at Paris in 1844. We quote the English edition, On the Present State of the Reformed Church in France, (London, 1845), p.27.

believing pastor according as the majority in the consistory may chance to be. In this manner error finds itself placed exactly in the same rank with truth.¹⁶⁴

Another source of agitation for separation of church and state was the Paris journal, Le Semeur, edited by Alexandre Vinet of Lausanne.

But there was also a party in the Church ('reveil' supporters among them) who believed that the best course of action was to seek only a limited modification of the present system and the redress of specific grievances. This substantial segment had as its organ the magazine called L'Espérance. The agitation of the Church-state question continued until the "year of revolutions" (1848). Following the fall of the July Monarchy, the church, capitalizing on the temporary disarray in government, summoned an irregular synod.¹⁶⁵ Three major issues were addressed in this gathering. The first was the place of confessional statements in the Reformed Church. Opposition to all confessions of faith by one party led to a stalemate, and the synod failed to resolve the matter. Second, the synod considered ending the present system of regional consistories and returning

¹⁶⁴ Scherer, op. cit. pp. 37,51. Ami Bost, Memoires, II. pp.328,29 records how just such an unsatisfactory pastoral choice at La Force in 1844 resulted in the dissatisfied members (who had no right of call in the matter) departing to form an independent church with his son, John, as pastor.

¹⁶⁵ under the 'concordat' of 1802, state approval was required for a synod to meet.

actual authority to the local congregation and its elected officers. Third, the synod debated the practicability of returning to the historic pattern of regional and national synods.¹⁶⁶

The failure to secure immediate satisfaction regarding restoration of fixed doctrinal articles in the sessions of the irregular synod of 1848 was utilized by forces centring around Frederic Monod and Agenor Louis Gasparin as legitimation for withdrawal from the National Church and the founding, in the following August, of 'L'Union des Églises Évangéliques de France'.¹⁶⁷ 'L'Union' began with thirteen existing congregations and eighteen in formation.¹⁶⁸ This union invited to its inaugural synod representatives of the Free Church and United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Free Churches

¹⁶⁶ Maury, Le Réveil, I. pp.510.511. Each of the three issues would eventually be resolved in favour of the church's historic Reformed practice. The state-supervised consistories were terminated in 1852 while the recovery of recognized articles of doctrine and the reconstitution of regional and national synods was accomplished in 1872.

¹⁶⁷ Maury, Le Réveil, I. p.514. Wemyss, Le Reveil, p.215. This union had actually been preceded by an informal association of independent congregations existing since 1847.

¹⁶⁸ Maury, Le Réveil, I. p.514. Wemyss, Le Reveil, p.215 suggests these numbers to have been fourteen and sixteen respectively. By 1899, the half-centenary, the 'Union' still comprised only 36 churches, but 61 had been admitted at various stages in the preceding years. cf. L'Union des Eglises, p.215. Evans, The Influence of Foreigners, p.535 indicates that none of the thirty-one congregations had been in existence for more than twenty-five years, all being the products of the 'reveil'.

of Vaud and Geneva and the Congregational Union of England and Wales.¹⁶⁹ The Scottish Free Church delegates were unsuccessful in urging that the establishment principle (as distinguished from current abuses of it) should be maintained. English Congregationalists returned home confident that a posture towards the state similar to their own had been adopted.¹⁷⁰

The formation of 'L'Union' was not without stresses and strains for the National Church; there was no clear consensus among 'reveil' supporters as to what course of action to follow. Brothers Frederic and Guillaume Monod supported the creation of 'L'Union' while brother Adolphe stood firm in the National Church. The prestigious Paris

¹⁶⁹ L'Union des Eglises évangéliques libres de France, Ses Origines, Son Histoire, Son Oeuvre (Paris, 1899) pp. 69ff. Wemyss, Le Réveil, p. 215. The Free Church of Scotland delegated Dr. Patrick Clason (Edinburgh) and Dr. David Brown (Aberdeen). The United Presbyterian Church was represented by Dr. Gavin Struthers (Glasgow) and Dr. Andrew Thompson (Edinburgh). Both the French Reformed Church and the Union of Evangelical Churches were among the founding members of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches at its organization in 1875. Pradervand, A Century of Service, p.23

¹⁷⁰ Mark Wilks of Paris had kept readers of Les Archives du Christianisme abreast of the Scottish developments of 1843 with a series of articles subsequently published as Précis de l'histoire de l'Eglise Libre d'Ecosse, (Paris, 1844). Cf. the report of Congregational historian, John Waddington, in the Evangelical Magazine, 28 n.s. (1850) p. 38. The articles of doctrine and constitution of the church had appeared in the same magazine in English translation in the December issue of the preceding year. 27 n.s. (1849) pp. 654-656. The magazine, for its own ideological reasons chose to call the new body the "Evangelical Anti-State Church of France".

pastorate, 'L'Oratoire', vacated by Frederic when he withdrew from the National Church, was shortly filled by his brother, Adolphe. This Monod had turned decisively against the independency he himself had temporarily adopted in the crush of events at Lyons in the years 1832-1836. The younger brother now supplied the basis for his continuance in the Establishment by penning 'Pourquoi Je Demeure dans L'Eglise établie' (Paris, 1849). It is plain that the majority of the 'reveil's' supporters continued within the Establishment as did Adolphe Monod.¹⁷¹ The new 'Union des Eglises Evangeliques' was primarily composed of individuals and congregations which had long existed outside the Establishment and been assisted by either the Continental Society, Evangelical Society of France, or Evangelical Society of Geneva; it did not by any means embrace the whole evangelical movement outside the National Church.¹⁷²

The Low Countries

¹⁷¹ This is the interpretation supported by statistics provided by Mours, Les Eglises Reformées p. 189. Rapid growth continued in the Establishment until 1862 and then gave way to decline in the period to 1895.

¹⁷² Mours, *ibid.* reports that there were 180 non-state supported Protestant clergy in France at 1865. The 'Union', even by 1899, was served by only 45 pastors and 15 evangelists. 'L'Union des Eglises', p.230. Evans, The Influence of Foreigners, p. 414 reports that by 1848, the Evangelical Society of France had been sustaining 200 churches alone.

It is necessary to observe, albeit briefly, that the impetus of the Genevan 'réveil' was quickly transmitted beyond purely Francophone regions. The United Netherlands, formed in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna by the union of the Netherlands and Belgium, was one such region. We have noted already the presence of Haldane "circle" members G.L. James and J.H. Merle D'Aubigné at Breda and Brussels from 1820 and 1823 respectively.¹⁷³ D'Aubigné's ministry proved especially significant, for in the period from 1823 to 1830 (when revolution severed the kingdom into the Netherlands and Belgium of today) he exercised a significant ministry as court preacher to King William I. In the same pastorate, D'Aubigné exercised a profound influence over Groen Van Prinsterer, a recent Leiden University graduate now attached to the royal court. Van Prinsterer was subsequently secretary to the Cabinet and royal archivist.¹⁷⁴ From Geneva, there were also in this period evangelists and

¹⁷³ pp.173,174 supra.

¹⁷⁴ The significance of D'Aubigné's years in Brussels is stressed in Michael Wintle, Pillars of Piety, (Hull, 1987), p.22 and Gerrit J. tenZythoff, Sources of Secession: The Netherlands Hervormde Kerk On the Eve of the Dutch Immigration to the Midwest, (Grand Rapids, 1987), p.109. Bieler, daughter and biographer to D'Aubigné, indicates in Une Famille, p.159 that her father "had the joy of propagating the 'réveil' in Holland" and p. 170 had the offer of a call from the French church at Rotterdam when the revolution required his removal from Brussels.

colporteurs sent out by the 'Bourg de Four' congregation.¹⁷⁵ Emil Guers, 'Bourg de Four' minister and central agent of the Continental Society, visited the United Provinces on that Society's behalf in early 1823.¹⁷⁶

Yet such data, while worthy of consideration, ought not to obscure the fact that there had been earlier and (sometimes) indigenous forces at work for spiritual renewal. The historian, M. Elizabeth Kluit, has documented the significance for the Netherlands of the visit of John Wesley in 1783, the influence of the translated writings of John Newton and James Hervey and the the assistance of the London Missionary Society in the inauguration of a Dutch counterpart in 1797; all were examples of British evangelical influence preceding the post-Napoleonic 'reveil'. The same writer observed a significant Moravian influence in the region flowing from the educational institution of Montmirail (in the French Jura region) as well as the diffusion of the Reformed pietism of Johan Caspar Lavater (1741-1801), preacher of St. Peter's Church, Zurich.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵Bost, Memoires, II. p.98 and Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.287.

¹⁷⁶Guers, Le Premier Reveil, p.252. The Continental Society had at least one pastor-evangelist in this region from 1820. See the Second Report of the Continental Society, (London, 1820), p.4.

¹⁷⁷M. Elisabeth Kluit, "Internationale Invloeding in de Voorgeschiedenis van het Reveil in Nederland" in Nederlands Archief Voor Kerkgeschiedenis, 44-45 n.s. (1961-63), pp. 37-45.

Along similar lines, the Belgian historian, H.R. Boudin has demonstrated that activity by agents of the Netherlands Missionary Society (founded 1797), the Basel Missionary Society (founded 1815), and the British and Foreign Bible Society substantially predated the labour of the better-known Swiss evangelicals in the region of the United Provinces which would once more be identified as Belgium after 1830.¹⁷⁸

After acknowledging this pre-history, we may note that certain Protestants in the Netherlands observed developments at Geneva after 1816 with keen interest. One such group of observers was a patrician and intellectual circle of persons gathered around the Leiden historian, William Bilderdijk; the circle was characterized by deep piety, loyalty to the House of Orange (now restored in the person of William I) and a loathing of the atheism and disorder of the French Revolution. Groen Van Prinsterer, to whom we have referred above in connection with the Brussels pastorate of Merle D'Aubigné, was part of this circle; he had been one of Bilderdijk's Leiden pupils.¹⁷⁹ From 1816, this circle kept abreast of Genevan developments; it was fully conversant with the explosive Genevan pamphlet of that year, 'Considerationes Sur La Divinité de Jésus Christ'.

¹⁷⁸H.R. Boudin, "Einige Aspekte des Reveils in Belgien" in J. Van den Berg and J.P. Van Dooren, eds., Pietismus und Reveil, (Leiden, 1978), pp. 289,298.

¹⁷⁹ten Zythoff, Sources of Secession, pp. 59,109.

One member of the circle, Cornelis Baron van Zuylen van Nijveldt, subsequently translated for local consumption the similarly potent treatise of 1819, 'Geneve Religieux en Mars 1819' by Ami Bost.¹⁸⁰

The Bilderdijk circle saw in the vigorous activity of the young orthodox ministers of Geneva a pattern worthy of emulation in their own national and ecclesiastical situation. Van Prinsterer himself visited Geneva in 1833 to meet with his former minister, D'Aubigné, as well as Caesar Malan and Louis Gaussen. He also made it his business to consult the increasingly influential Alexandre Vinet of Lausanne.¹⁸¹

Similarly, the Bilderdijk circle rapidly developed affinities with the patrician evangelicalism of Paris. There were comparable efforts to resolve current social ills by the application of Christian principles.¹⁸² A periodical, 'De Vereeniging Christelijke Stemmen' (The Society of Christian Voices) sought to keep sympathizers

¹⁸⁰M. Elisabeth Kluit, "Wenselijkheden Voor de Studie Van Het Réveil", in Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift, 11 (1956-57), p.360. tenZythoff, Sources of Secession, p.62.

¹⁸¹J. Edwin Orr, The Eager Feet, (Chicago, 1975), p.110. Perhaps it was Van Prinsterer who brought to the fledgling Evangelical Society of Geneva the donation from King William alluded to in Bickersteth, Voice from the Alps, p. 4.

¹⁸²cf. p.232 supra. Wintle, Pillars of Piety, p.23, describes the activities of W. de Clerq who deliberately sited the industries of the Dutch East Indies Trading Company so as to alleviate chronic unemployment.

of the movement abreast of developments akin to their own in England, France, and the Rhineland.¹⁸³ Such patrician and intellectual evangelicalism would seem to have proved the setting for the extended preaching tour of Caesar Malan through the Netherlands and Belgium during 1842 and 1845.¹⁸⁴ Yet this movement in Holland, even at its zenith, is said to have embraced not more than 3,000 persons.¹⁸⁵

A second and more expansive movement of Dutch Protestantism, also characterized by intense opposition to the tendencies introduced during the period of French domination, was also cognizant of developments at Geneva. This grouping, which left the National Reformed Church of the Netherlands in 1834, and was then termed the 'Afschieding', had its origin in the royal imposition of a new church order in 1816. King William's government, then apparently enamored with the efficiencies of the consistorial system introduced in Napoleonic France, determined in 1816 to administer church affairs through representatives of its own choosing and to impose new and ambiguous formulas of

¹⁸³Wintle, Pillars, p.22.

¹⁸⁴Malan, Life, p. 284. In Belgium, Malan would certainly have connected his labours with those of the "Belgian Evangelical Society", described below. His 1842 trip was undertaken with the aid of the "Foreign Evangelical Society" of New York. See their Report, (New York, 1843), p.33.

¹⁸⁵Wintle, Pillars, p.22.

subscription to the Reformed confessions of faith for use by candidates seeking ordination.

Such measures understandably antagonized the representatives of this outlook, characterized as they were by adherence to the high Calvinism of the pre-Revolutionary period. This theological outlook was then experiencing something of a resurgence. Unlike the patrician constituency of the Bilderdijk movement, these supporters of a rigorous confessional theology in the Netherlands were predominantly provincial, lower middle class, and long accustomed to attendance at conventicles supplementary to stated religious services.

This movement, though similar to others we have considered both in its resistance to state intrusion in church affairs and use of home gatherings, nevertheless stands apart. The movement was not markedly "conversionist" and was largely content to reiterate Reformed theology as it had been handed down; the popularized Calvinism of the Francophone 'reveil' was not the note being sounded within the 'Afschieding'.¹⁸⁶ At first, the declaration of secession from the National Reformed Church brought rigorous military and governmental harassment. This continued until, in the

¹⁸⁶Yet the magazine of the 'Christlijke Gereformeerde Kerken' (which arose from the 'Afschieding' or secession), Die Reformatie, reflected a healthy interest in the unfolding of religious affairs at Geneva from its inauguration in 1837. See for example "Berigt van de Evangelische Maatschaapij te Geneve" in I (1837), p.124.

1840's, it was recognized that the seceders harboured no intention of promoting political upheaval.¹⁸⁷

In 1830, Belgium broke away from the control of the Netherlands. Belgium was almost exclusively Roman Catholic, with a Catholicism that had scarcely been challenged by the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Such enclaves of Protestantism as did emerge had very often been colonies of French Huguenots. There had also been some colonies of Hollanders, though most of these withdrew in 1830. By 1837, only seven Protestant churches were still in existence; all were state-supported under the constitution of 1831. All seven congregations were served by foreign pastors and four of the seven were comprised exclusively of foreigners - many recently arrived from various German states to pursue business or establish industry. The three indigenous congregations had no more than eight hundred members and adherents among them.¹⁸⁸

The situation began to change when a Scripture distribution committee was established in Brussels in 1834 with assistance from the British and Foreign Bible

¹⁸⁷ tenZythoff, Sources, pp.61 ff. J.D. Bratt, Dutch Calvinism in Modern America, pp.6 ff.

¹⁸⁸ Leonard Anét, Histoire des Trente Premières Années de la Société Evangelique ou Église Chrétienne Missionnaire Belge, (Bruxelles, 1875), pp. 14,18,20. One of these seven foreign pastors was J. Devisme, serving a church at Dour. He had been a close acquaintance of Emil Guers since their days together in the University of Geneva, cf. Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.43.

Society. The latter supplied a resident agent, William Pascoe Tiddy, in the following year. The widespread diffusion of Scriptures by colporteurs greatly assisted the Protestant Churches in the task of evangelization. A second significant development was the visit in 1836 of the American minister, Dr. Robert Baird, who was touring in Europe as the representative of a New York based "French Commitee". Through Baird's influence, the American "French Committee" assisted in the cost of construction of a second Protestant place of worship in Brussels.¹⁸⁹

With such encouragements as these, W.P. Tiddy of the British and Foreign Bible Society began to make special efforts to secure the services of Francophone evangelists. It was in these circumstances that Louis Vierne, a 'Bourg de Four' missionary to France, was invited to assist the Belgian Protestant movement in 1837.¹⁹⁰ In the same year, Tiddy's enquiries secured the services of a M. Girod, a recent graduate of the Evangelical School of Theology at Geneva. Shortly thereafter, a third new worker was secured, a M. Maton

¹⁸⁹Anet, *ibid.* p.23. Wilder, Records from the Life of S.V.S. Wilder, (New York, 1865) p.273 indicates that this "French Committee" subsequently became the "Foreign Evangelical Society".

¹⁹⁰Anet, *ibid.* p.25. Vierne is mentioned in Bost, Memoires, II. p.98 as being somewhat problematic for the 'Bourg de Four' congregation as he belonged to its Baptistic minority. cf. also Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.287.

who had been assisting an independent church at Leme, France, as an agent of the Continental Society. The latter organization re-assigned Maton to La Bouverie, Belgium, in response to the entreaties of Tiddy.¹⁹¹ But further expansion seemed problematic. Three of the seven long-established churches, with their ministers, stood opposed to all such aggressive efforts at evangelization as were underway. Further, all new missionary labourers (such as the three named) were dependent not on state subsidy, but private (and largely foreign) support.

Such circumstances commended the pattern of missionary endeavour being followed at Lausanne, Geneva and Paris. The Bible Society agent, Tiddy, joined forces with the four supportive National Church pastors and other concerned individuals to found the Belgian Evangelical Society in November 1837.¹⁹² The immediate direction taken was one of making the three privately supported missionaries the initial agents of the new society. That the initial three agents were all dissident Protestants seems to have been incidental. In fact, most of the leading figures in the society favoured

¹⁹¹Anet, *ibid.* pp. 29,30. The printed Appeal of the Continental Society (Dublin Auxilliary), (Dublin, 1834) identifies Maton as an agent in the north of France. Another graduate, besides Girod, of the Evangelical School of Theology at Geneva, Louis Durand, was pastor at Liege, Belgium, in this period. cf. Guers Le Premier Réveil, p.253. The first native of Belgium to enrol at the Evangelical School of Geneva did so in 1838. Bickersteth, A Voice, p.177.

¹⁹²Anet, *ibid.* p.35

state support of Protestantism; both Lutheran and Reformed sympathies were evenly represented.

The foundation of the Belgian society was warmly acclaimed in Geneva, Paris, Holland and London; financial aid was soon forthcoming. Belgian ministers of Lutheran outlook travelled to Cologne, Frankfurt, Berne, and Basle to gather support for the new enterprize.¹⁹³ But there were soon political difficulties. In May 1839, the Belgian government determined to place supervisory responsibility for all Protestant religious affairs in a newly-created Synod of the seven Established Belgian Protestant Churches. A powerful element in the Established Churches had consistently opposed the work of evangelization as then conducted.¹⁹⁴ The government's move left the Society, with its five agents and mission stations, liable to the unfriendly control it had sought to avert by its independent organization.

In response, the Society re-organized its affairs in such a way as to again side-step this unfriendly jurisdiction and by 1842 could begin once more to expand. This expansion led to the creation of a new denomination, 'L'Eglise Chretienne Missionnaire Belge', in March

¹⁹³Anet, *ibid.* The contributions to the Society in the period 1837-1844 with their sources were (in Belgian francs): Belgium (32,282), Great Britain (152,131), Holland (37,679), Germany (7,311), France (515), Switzerland (11,090), America (9,781). Anet p. 143.

¹⁹⁴Anet, *ibid.* p.72.

1849.¹⁹⁵ Organized along presbyterian lines and adhering to the Belgic Confession of 1561, the fledgling body rapidly took its place in an orbit of like-minded European Churches.¹⁹⁶ Fourteen congregations or preaching stations existed in 1858.¹⁹⁷

We may note finally, in passing that the influence of the Genevan 'réveil' passed to other regions in Western Europe. A consciously related movement taking the name 'Freie Evangelisch Kirche' arose at Wuppertal-Elberfeld in the German Rhine region in 1854. The principal proponent of the cause, a businessman named H.H. Grafe (d.1869) had been a member of the Reformed congregation at Elberfeld. While on business in Lyons, France in 1841-2, he had encountered and come to admire the Evangelical Church of Lyons - founded a decade earlier. Grafe assisted in the formation of a congregation at Wuppertal in 1854; the articles of faith adopted were those of the Free Evangelical Church of Geneva. This movement, motivated in part by displeasure

¹⁹⁵Anet, *ibid.*, p.159.

¹⁹⁶Anet, *ibid.* p.172 cites the Presbyterian Church of England, United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, Free Church of Scotland and Free Evangelical Churches of Geneva and Vaud as early fraternal churches. Consistent with this configuration, the Belgian Church was a founding member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1875. cf. Pradervand, A Century, p.22.

¹⁹⁷Anet, *ibid.* p.278. An interesting account of the Belgian Evangelical Society's labour in the 1840's is provided in Hugh Heugh, Notices of the State of Religion in Geneva and Belgium, (Glasgow, 1844).

at government encroachment in church affairs, soon spread into the Rhineland, Westfalen and Hesse.¹⁹⁸

Moreover, we may observe the influence of Geneva in the strengthening of evangelical life among the Italian Waldensians. Lacking any theological faculty of their own, the Italian churches entered into an agreement with the Evangelical School of Theology at Geneva and sent a steady stream of students there until 1855. At the opening of the Waldensian College at Florence in that year, Merle D'Aubigne was present to give an inaugural address.¹⁹⁹

The 'Reveil' and Theology.

"The 'reveil' was before all else a doctrinal affair" observed the historian of the movement, Maury in 1892.²⁰⁰ This observation has never been seriously

¹⁹⁸Gunnar Westin, The Free Church Through the Ages, (Nashville, 1958), p.296. We may assume that the visit of the Genevan preacher, Caesar Malan, to this region in 1856 was in some way connected with this movement. Malan, Life, p.284. The 'Freie Evangelische Kirche' was a founding member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. cf. Pradervand, A Century, p.23.

¹⁹⁹Good, History, p.465. Facolta Valdese di Teologica, 1855-1955, (Firenze, 1955), pp.70ff. This volume makes plain that it was the spread of the Genevan 'reveil' which led to the heightened vitality of the Waldensian movement and, ultimately, the foundation of the faculty of theology at Florence. The presence of Hungarian, Spanish and Canadian Students in the Evangelical School at Geneva would suggest a similar diffusion of the 'reveil' in those regions. cf. Bieler, Une Famille, p.194.

²⁰⁰Maury, Le Reveil Religieux, II. p.7.

questioned, not even by those contemporary critics of the movement who either dismissed it as "Methodism" or faulted it for an obsession with the theology of the sixteenth century. More recently, the French historian, Jean Cadier, has written that "the orthodoxy of the nineteenth century was born in the 'réveil'".²⁰¹

Yet the claim of theological importance for the 'réveil' is extremely problematic for two reasons. First, while the movement clearly generated or stimulated theological writing (Vinet on church and state, for example) no such treatise ever represented the thought or conviction of the international 'réveil' as a whole.²⁰² Thus we cannot attribute the particular views of any single writer of the period to the movement as a whole. Second, and inseparable from the first, is the fact that no work of Protestant dogmatics was written by any participant in the 'réveil' movement during the period in question. Indeed, the great opponent of the movement, the Geneva theologian J.J.C. Cheneviere, stood quite alone in this respect, for in publishing his Dogmatique Chretienne (Geneva, 1840) he offered the Francophone

²⁰¹Jean Cadier, "La Tradition Calviniste Dans Le Réveil du XIX Siecle" in Etudes Theologiques et Religieuses, 27 (1952), p.9.

²⁰²Vinet's Essaie sur la manifestation des convictions religieuses et sur la separation de l'eglise et de l'etat, (Paris, 1842) cannot be said to have convinced the majority of French 'réveil' supporters for whom Adolphe Monod was speaking when he wrote Pourquoi Je Demeure dans L'Eglise Etablie, (Paris, 1849).

public the only Protestant systematic theology of the 19th century before the year 1885.²⁰³ With these boundaries to our discussion in mind, however, we may still discover suggestive facts about the theology of the 'réveil'.

About Books

We may first ask, what the early preachers of this movement read, over and above the Scriptures. Emil Guers, separatist and later pastor of the 'Bourg de Four' congregation, has left a very clear record of what his circle of friends read in the years and months prior to the visit of Haldane to Geneva:

We relied on religious books such as a 'Kempis' Imitation of Christ - which dwelt exclusively on sanctification. A corrective to it was needed - or a complement. We found this in David Hollaz' L'Ordre de la Grace dans L'Economie du Salut - a work translated from the German. Lissignol of Montpellier reprinted this later in 1825. The Heidelberg Catechism became very important as did L'Exposition de la Doctrine des Freres du l'Unie by their Bishop Spangenberg. The Sermons of Nardin and of Jean Daille were also read.²⁰⁴

²⁰³A. Gretillat, "Movements of Theological Thought Among French-Speaking Protestants From the Revival of 1820 to the end of 1891", in Presbyterian and Reformed Review, III (1892), p.422.

²⁰⁴Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.50. This is a highly significant list. David Hollaz (1648-1713) was "a strict Lutheran on whom pietism has a powerful silent influence. His writing, characterized by great precision of definition, marks the transition from the severely scholastic formalism of the seventeenth century to the pietism of the eighteenth century", John MacPherson, Christian Dogmatics, (Edinburgh, 1898), p.61. We have referred already to this text of Spangenberg at chap. 2 p.101 supra. Nardin and Daille were popular seventeenth

In the period prior to Haldane's arrival, Caesar Malan (who was not part of Guers' circle) had been ruminating on L'Abroge des Doctrines of Benedict Pictet (1655-1724), a writer regarded as the last orthodox dogmatician at Geneva, as well as upon the Belgic Confession of Faith (1561).²⁰⁵ The writings of Calvin receive no mention among the recollections of the 'reveil' men for this period. It was to rectify this neglect that the English banker, Henry Drummond, personally financed two printings of the Institutes.²⁰⁶ There was, however, no lack of interest in Calvin at Lausanne, where Doyen L.A. Curtat made readings from Calvin the basis of his special lectures to ministerial students.²⁰⁷ In France, Calvin and other theologians of the Reformation and post-Reformation era were neglected as at Geneva. Yet in France the neglect was the direct consequence of the "enforced theological silence following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes

century preachers.

²⁰⁵Malan, Life, p.44. Guers obviously knew of and appreciated Pictet's writings, cf. Le Premier Réveil, p.10.

²⁰⁶Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.223. Guers himself supervised the re-issue.

²⁰⁷Cart, Histoire du Mouvement, I.1.p.83. Cart notes the consequences, unforeseen by Curtat, of this re-exposure to Calvin.

(1685)".²⁰⁸ In the United Netherlands, a future leader of the secession ('afschieding') of 1834, Hendrik de Cock, encountered the Institutes for the first time in another minister's library in 1829.²⁰⁹

What did 'reveil' leaders make available for others to read - either by their own translation or simple distribution? Ami Bost translated into French John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress as well as the Life of the late John Newton (1725-1807). Bost also translated into German Haldane's Exposition of Romans and assisted in the French translation of Charles Finney's Lectures on Revival (New York, 1835).²¹⁰ Edouard Petitpierre (1804-1889), the Neuchatel-born and Geneva-trained evangelist in the east of France and his own canton, translated Alexander Haldane's Lives of Robert and J.A.Haldane and the Life of George Muller of Bristol.²¹¹ Felix Neff, whose literary labours did not extend to the translation of foreign works, was none the less active in urging his parishioners of the High Alps to read them, when available. Bunyan's Life and Pilgrim's Progress, Edwards' Life of David Brainerd and the early 'réveil'

²⁰⁸Cadier, "La Tradition Calviniste", p.10.

²⁰⁹tenZythoff, Sources of Secession, p.111. We have maintained above that this secession of 1834 was not organically related to the Genevan 'réveil'.

²¹⁰Bost, Memoires, I. pp. 267,306,291. Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.225.

²¹¹Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.286

classic, Letters of Charles Rieu (late of Frederica, Denmark) were the titles he recommended most often.²¹²

Quite apart from the labours of 'réveil' leaders in translating and distributing such literature, we may note the substantial endeavour for the printing of evangelical literature operated by the Courtois brothers at Toulouse. This concern, "Le Societé de Livres Religieux" was responsible for the production of a large proportion of French evangelical literature in the period following the revolution of 1830.²¹³

The works that the men of the 'réveil' read or recommended to others reflect a Protestant eclecticism quite in step with the evangelical theological outlook then current in Britain and America. One can readily understand how it is that Francophone historians, noting these similarities and the free flow of translated literature, would readily attribute all to foreign rather than native influence. Thus Alice Wemyss has written of

²¹²Stephen Gilly, Memoir of Neff, (London, 1832), p.301.

²¹³Among the titles produced at Toulouse were the following of **American** origin: Archibald Alexander, The Canon of Sacred Scripture, Gardiner Spring, The Distinguishing Traits of Christian Character, W.B. Sprague, Lively Oracles, Charles Hodge, Romans, and The Way of Life. The following were of **British** origin: Richard Baxter, Call to the Unconverted and The Saints' Everlasting Rest, John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress, John Newton, Life, and Cardiphonia, Philip Doddridge, Proofs Which Establish the Truth of Christianity. This is a compilation of titles drawn from Evans, The Influence of Foreigners, pp. 417,564, and the Third Report of the Foreign Evangelical Society, (1842) pp. 34,35.

"this massive importation of English civilization"²¹⁴ in this period while Jean Cadier has described how a

French Protestantism which had been (by persecution and Revolution) cut off from its origins, received from outsiders powerful new influences in its theological culture.²¹⁵

But this hypothesis --that theology of the 'reveil' is only the theology of the late Evangelical Revival transposed into another tongue -- is unconvincing for several reasons. First, virtually all of the leading personalities, preachers and missionary agents of the period were Francophone and not foreign. Secondly, the majority of France's Protestants would probably never have met a missionary agent or owned a translation of a British or American evangelical work. Third, leading participants in the 'reveil' insisted that they were influenced by continental Moravianism before any pronounced British influences were brought to bear after Napoleon's fall.²¹⁶ Yet after observing that the basic

²¹⁴Wemyss, Le Réveil, p. 143.

²¹⁵Cadier, "La Tradition Calviniste", p.12. It should be noted that Cadier's reasons for insisting upon this view are quite different from those of Wemyss. Cadier, a 20th century neo-Calvinist, was concerned to recover and emphasize a 'pristine' French Reformed Theology; yet he writes of the 'réveil' period with clear affection. Wemyss wrote from a stance which was clearly dismissive of religious enthusiasm.

²¹⁶Guers, whom we have already quoted at fn.201 acknowledging theological indebtedness to Moravian Bishop Spangenberg, was always at pains to emphasize that "Moravianism was the 'cradle' of the 'réveil'"; cf. Le Premier Réveil, pp. 40,41 and Cart, Histoire du Mouvement, I.1.p.140.

theological thought of the 'réveil' was formed first by European and only subsequently by British or American forces, we can still recognize that Francophone evangelical theology in our period was not strikingly different from what one would have found in Britain or America.

In point of fact, Reformed preaching and theology in Britain and America in this period had itself undergone a simplification of presentation and argument through contact with Methodism.²¹⁷ It is now commonplace to speak of the "moderation" of British Calvinism through this interaction.²¹⁸ We will do well to consider the evangelical theology of the 'réveil' as having gone through a similar 'modification'-- its Reformed theology having been 'nursed' through a century of persecution and rationalism by Moravianism and the Continental pietist tradition and then only latterly influenced by British evangelicalism.²¹⁹ It is to this sometimes ragged amalgam of views that Cadier was referring when he

²¹⁷We have noted in chapter one the observations of David Bogue and William Jay on the modification of Nonconformist Reformed theology and preaching by contact with Methodism.

²¹⁸the terminology is imprecise and unhelpful in that it gratuitously assumes a pervasiveness and fixity of British Calvinism prior to the rise of Methodism - yet useful in designating the adjustment which Bogue and Jay observed.

²¹⁹It is here significant to note the warm praise of Guers not only for Zinzendorf, but for pietists such as Jean de Labadie and Spener and mystic-contemplatives such as Madame Guyon. Le Premier Réveil, p.6.

maintained that

while the 'réveil' missionary-evangelists were not theologians, had not studied theology and had no proper regard for theology, such theologians as the 'réveil' had were Calvinists.²²⁰

About Doctrines

Maury, who provided a thorough treatment of the question of what the men of the 'réveil' believed and taught, wrote:

The 'réveil' had at its base the dogmatic truths which have served since the Reformation as the foundations of evangelical theology: the authority of Scripture, the divinity of Christ, expiation, grace, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and sanctification.²²¹

Affirming the accuracy of these sentiments, we wish here to consider briefly only three questions, each of which has bearing on the issue of whether the 'réveil' introduced new doctrinal formulations. The first is the question of the understanding of "regeneration by the Holy Spirit". Understanding regeneration to be that Divine quickening of the hearer of the Gospel necessary to the active acceptance of the message about Christ, (conversion), it is plain that the 'réveil' men did not stand on the same ground as did their respected senior ministerial friends.

Emile Guers, who in his early student days had

²²⁰Cadier, "La Tradition", p.27.

²²¹Maury, Le Réveil Religieux, II. p.12.

incurred parental disapproval for his frequenting of Moravian gatherings, received surprising though qualified support for his attendance at such assemblies when the senior minister of Satigny, J.I.S. Cellerier told his father that

the Moravians were excellent Christians and that they would be a good influence on me. Cellerier did object, however, to the Moravian distinction of people into Christian and non-Christian.²²²

Cellerier then, was in the view of Guers orthodox and even pietistic in outlook; but he was not "conversionist". Young Guers was decidedly so. His own conversion had come about by means of a personal interview with the Moravian evangelist, J.N. Mettetal.²²³ Jacques Cart, the chronicler of 'réveil' activity in the canton of Vaud, had similar recollections of his mentor, L.A. Curtat, who was impeccably orthodox on major doctrines but seemed to lack an appreciation for conversion. In Cart's view, Curtat was lacking

a clear understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, the appropriation of salvation and Christian assurance. In his thought, the Holy Spirit works in all. All are considered by him (Curtat) as Christians. He insists strongly on the redemption wrought by Christ, but he considers it essentially as an objective fact.²²⁴

We are not able here to explore the question of whether Reformed ministers such as Cellerier and Curtat

²²²Guers, Le Premier Réveil, p.21.

²²³Guers, *ibid.* p.41.

²²⁴Cart, Histoire du Mouvement, I.1.pp.80-82.

represented their theological traditions well in looking askance at "conversionism".²²⁵ What is beyond doubt is that a younger generation of students and ministers imbibed this from the Moravians, were schooled in it further by Haldane and other British evangelicals and then came to consider its absence in the older generation to be a grave omission. This issue had, in fact, been one on which the promulgators of the Genevan 'reglement' of May 1817 had sought to enforce a cessation of debate.²²⁶ We may simply note that the preachers and evangelists of the period were careful not to embrace the facile notion that conversion would necessarily be experienced in some standardized manner.²²⁷

Second, we must note that the evangelical theologians of Geneva -- and in particular Malan, Gausson, and D'Aubigne -- were charged by some contemporaries and some members of the succeeding generation with theological extremism. The espousal of high predestinarianism by Malan and the embracing of the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of Scripture by

²²⁵Maury in the above quotation is endorsing the view that 'reveil' convictions about regeneration were anticipated by the Reformation.

²²⁶The third of four topics itemized in the 'reglement' had been "the manner in which grace operates, or efficacious grace"; cf. chapter 2. p.142 supra.

²²⁷ Caesar Malan, for example, recorded that his own conversion to Christ had been "rather like the rousing of an infant by a mother's kiss". Malan, Life, p.38.

Gaussen and D'Aubigné drew this censure.²²⁸ In considering this accusation of theological extremism, we must first note that evangelical theologians at Geneva exercised considerable influence "on the coat-tails", of the long-established and long-influential Geneva Academy. Much Genevan evangelical theology was the theology of rejoinder. Second, the struggle for theological "high ground" which developed between the Academy and the Evangelical School of Theology after the latter's foundation in 1832 was initially fought along the lines of which institution stood in clearest continuity with the sixteenth century Reformation. As the Academy was determined to distance itself from the theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,²²⁹ it was very soon the case that the new college had established for itself an essentially conservative and retrospective posture which was far happier in emphasizing the abiding truths of the older orthodoxy than in engaging in creative theological writing for the nineteenth century.

²²⁸cf. the disapproving attitude of Alexandre Vinet in Laura M. Lane, Vinet, p.7, of Adolphe Monod (then of Montauban) in Maury, Le Reveil, II. p.35., of Gretillat, "Movements of Theological Thought", p.423. Bieler, daughter of D'Aubigné, exempted her father from the criticism, but laid the charge at the feet of Malan and Gaussen; Une Famille, p.112.

²²⁹a determination signalled, for instance, by the 1819 publication by Cheneviere of the tract, Sur Les Causes Qui Retardent Le Progres de La Theologie Chez Les Reformees; the tract singled out the current upswing in attention to the Reformed Confessions as one such "check" on progress.

This retrospective posture cannot be said to have ever embraced the entire faculty. Samuel Preiswerk, the New Testament lecturer from 1834, defected to Irvingism by 1838, while Edmond Scherer, who joined the faculty as lecturer in exegesis in 1844, was dismissed by 1849 for making concessions to German criticism.²³⁰ Yet Louis Gausson and Merle D'Aubigne²³¹ seem to have felt obliged to uphold a high orthodoxy consistent with the Reformed Confessions. Included in this high orthodoxy were the doctrines of absolute predestination and the verbal inspiration of Scripture. Outside the polemical context of the rival Genevan faculties of theology -- whether among the theologians of Montauban or the pastor-evangelists of 'Bourg de Four' -- 'réveil' supporters pursued a more practical and less retrospective theological line. Biblical authority was a constant for the 'réveil', but the Gausson-D'Aubigné approach to Biblical inspiration was not embraced by all 'réveil' supporters.²³²

²³⁰Maury, Le Réveil Religieux, I. p.185

²³¹And non-faculty member, Caesar Malan who shared this retrospective approach to theology in general and predestination in particular. It must be remembered in all this that the 'agenda' for theology was largely predetermined for the evangelical theologians of Geneva by the 'reglement' of 1817 and the publication of Cheneviere's Theological Lectures in 1831.

²³²In 1841, Gausson published his 'Theopneustie' at Paris. D'Aubigne in 1850 published 'L'Autorité des Ecritures Inspirees de Dieu' at Toulouse. Both were characterized by an indebtedness to the high orthodoxy of the seventeenth century and an affinity with the position

The same point could be made about the doctrines of election and predestination. All Genevan evangelicals of the period had had these doctrines forcibly placed at the forefront of their thinking by the dual fact that Robert Haldane had emphasized them in his exposition of Romans and the 'Compagnie' had proscribed debate over them by the 'reglement' of May, 1817. Thus, not only Caesar Malan, but as well the young preachers of 'Bourg de Four' and Gausson of Satigny were busy in the defending and propagating these doctrines from 1817 on, perhaps in the belief that since the doctrines had been challenged, it was now necessary to give them prominence. By contrast, the Genevan graduate Abraham Lissignol of Montpellier -- on meeting the English Methodist (and anti-predestinarian) missionary, Charles Cook in 1819 -- cordially agreed to overlook their undoubted differences over this matter in the interests of a wider cooperation.²³³

It was to this more pragmatic stance that the 'Bourg de Four' preachers eventually came. They realized that their early months of preaching on these doctrines, immediately subsequent to the departure of Haldane in June 1817, had been unbalanced and had constituted an actual obstacle to evangelization. Having been warned by

taken by Robert Haldane in his The Evidence and Authority of Divine Revelation (Edinburgh, 1816).

²³³Mauray, Le Réveil, II. p.121.

the visiting London Scot, William Anderson, in late 1818 "not to be so foolish as to place the doctrine of election between the sinner and Christ",²³⁴ they thereafter came to see the doctrines of election and predestination primarily as consolatory truths. Felix Neff, the 'Bourg de Four' convert who went on to evangelize in the High Alps, undoubtedly believed these doctrines firmly, but censured a young preacher under the influence of Caesar Malan for his seeming obsession with them.²³⁵ Ami Bost similarly believed these doctrines firmly, but insisted that a complementary doctrine -- the personal responsibility of the sinner for his own destiny -- be equally emphasized.²³⁶ It is significant that when the Free Churches of Geneva and France (both established in 1849) set out their doctrinal articles, election and predestination were dealt with in this restrained manner.²³⁷

²³⁴Guers, Vie de Pyt, p.28.

²³⁵Bost, Letters and Biography of Felix Neff, (Wyatt, trans.) (London, 1843) pp. 326-333.

²³⁶Bost, Memoires, I. p.200-201 and II. pp.457,458. Bost, in composing his Memoires, was gratified to find that Thomas Chalmers had insisted on the same equilibrium between these doctrines.

²³⁷see the Geneva article number ten in Guers, Notice Historique, p.88 or Schaff, Creeds of Christendom, III. pp.781ff. For the French articles, see the Evangelical Magazine, 27 n.s. (1849) p.654.

About Confessions of Faith

Now what has just been demonstrated in the particular instance of the doctrines of election and predestination holds equally true in the matter of attitudes towards the historic Reformed Confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the Francophone regions we have surveyed, the 'réveil' preceded concern for confessional integrity rather than the reverse. It was because they had been awakened and desired systematic Biblical instruction that Emil Guers and his friends began to seek assistance from the Heidelberg Catechism (1563).²³⁸ Gausson and Cellierier reprinted the Second Helvetic Confession (1566) in 1819 because they were committed to evangelical renewal in the face of their canton's moratorium on the discussion of central Christian doctrines. The confessions were viewed almost as an armoury - from which clear definitions could be drawn, like so much weaponry, as the need arose. There is nothing to suggest that the 'réveil' men were advocating a return to the more strict confessional subscription of a previous era.

Laurent Cadoret, 1804 graduate of David Bogue's Gosport Seminary serving the National Church of France at Luneray, successfully appealed to the French Confession

²³⁸cf. the quotation from Guers, Le Premier Réveil, at p.253 above.

of Faith (1559) when charged in 1809 with preaching on abstruse doctrinal questions. The mere fact that the doctrines in question were included in the Confession told in favour of Cadoret.²³⁹ Similarly, Daniel Encontre, dean of the Seminary at Montauban, acted in concert with concerned ministers of his region and appealed to the same confession for clear definitions of Trinitarian orthodoxy in an attempt to check the anti-Trinitarian teaching of their Genevan theological professor, Esaie Gasc in 1813.²⁴⁰ Young Henri Pyt and Emil Guers also appealed to this Confession in autumn 1816 when challenged by their Genevan professors to justify their sympathy for the provocative pamphlet of Henri Empeytaz.²⁴¹

But this is not to say that such 'réveil' men were theological precisionists. They were in fact as much indebted to the Moravian-Pietist tradition as to the Calvinist; yet without insincerity they made use of the Reformed confessions as honored guardians of the great doctrines of the faith. It was for these reasons that the Alpine missionary, Felix Neff was able in all good conscience to tell his London theological examiners, met at the Poultry Chapel in May 1823, that he "subscribed

²³⁹Robert, Les Églises Réformées, p.245.

²⁴⁰Robert, *ibid.* p.221.

²⁴¹Guers, Vie de Pyt, p.17. The pamphlet was Considerationes Sur la Divinité de Jésus Christ.

both in matters of faith and practice, to the confessions of faith of the Reformed Churches of France and Switzerland".²⁴²

Such appeals to the confessions did not, however, always mean the same thing. At Geneva, Caesar Malan certainly aspired to conform his teaching and preaching in every respect to the ancient formularies.²⁴³ Louis Gausson, when admonished by the 'Compagnie' of Geneva for refusing to utilize the Catechism of 1814 in the training of parish children, threatened legal action to prove that the old Catechism of Geneva had never been officially set aside by constitutional authority.²⁴⁴ With this somewhat "constitutionalist" approach may be contrasted the attitude of the dissidents of 'Bourg de Four' and their associates in other cantons and in France. For them, the sixteenth-century Reformation had been compromised by its embracing of the National Church idea while the scholasticizing theology of the seventeenth century had, in their view, substituted frigid formulae for the religion of the heart. Emil Guers, speaking for those who combined this outlook with adherence to central Calvinist teachings, had no patience with the idea of

²⁴²Gilly, Neff, p.91. Bost, Neff, p.114.

²⁴³His son and biographer went so far as to cite his father's readiness to emphasize even the British (not Continental) confessional teaching regarding Sabbath observance. Life of Malan, pp.241,338,345.

²⁴⁴Maury, Le Réveil Religieux, I. pp.156-159.

the servile imitation of the churches of the sixteenth century...After falling so far there was needed not a return to Calvin, but a return to Jesus Christ and the apostles.²⁴⁵

This was the circle which Haldane had admonished to "take no rule but the Gospel". For persons of this outlook, a revived adherence to Reformation confessions was less to be desired than a recovery of apostolic teaching and example.

The year 1832 brought the inauguration of the Evangelical School of Theology at Geneva. What posture did it strike as to historic doctrinal formularies? It was a harbinger of things to come that it adhered to no single existing confession but selected articles on

the state of man and the grace of God; the nature of Christ; the work which he has done, and that which he is still doing for the salvation of his people, - the doctrines which the Protestant churches proclaim with one accord in their confessions of faith.²⁴⁶

The articles in question were selected from the French Confession (1559), The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (1571), the Augsburg Confession (1530), the Westminster Confession of Faith (1643) and the Second Helvetic Confession (1566). Why, we may ask this deliberate eclecticism?

Perhaps it was a gesture to the international Protestant community which stood by, with wallets open,

²⁴⁵Guers, Le Premier Reveil, pp.3,4. Vie de Pyt, pp.36,37.

²⁴⁶J.H. Merle D'Aubigné, "An Account of the Geneva School of Evangelical Theology", in Bickersteth, ed. A Voice From the Alps, (London, 1838) p.49.

to assist the Geneva Evangelical Society and its daughter School of Theology. Anglican and Presbyterian supporters were certainly involved to a large degree.²⁴⁷ A second hypothesis is that the Geneva school was aiming from the outset to meet an international and interconfessional need for preachers and Christian workers. Strong appeals had come from ministers in France for the creation of the school, while dissident Protestant churches in the other Swiss cantons and the existing Reformed Churches of Belgium and the south German Rhine had at this stage no reliable source of ministerial supply.²⁴⁸ Whatever may be the full reason for its eclectic posture, the college's confessional stance marked a major innovation and set an important precedent for the international cooperative schemes of the following decade, as well as for the creation (also in the following decade) of abbreviated confessions for 'L'Eglise Evangelique Libre de Geneve' and 'L'Union des Eglises Evangeliques de France'.

Finally, we should note briefly that the 'reveil' made a significant contribution to theological literature. Having drawn attention already to the

²⁴⁷We will note in the following chapter that the very creation of the Geneva Society called into being a "Central Committee in Aid" of it at London, supported by Church of England persons. Evans, The Influence of Foreigners, p.402, alleges that American finance was critical to the launching of both Genevan enterprises.

²⁴⁸D'Aubigné, "An Account of the Geneva School", pp. 47,48.

writings of Vinet of Lausanne and Gausson of Geneva, we may here simply observe that the international reputation of Merle D'Aubigné was established with the publication of his multi-volume History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century (1835ff).²⁴⁹ Another historian and preacher, Edmond de Pressense (1796-1871) was the disciple of Alexandre Vinet of Lausanne. Minister of 'La Chapelle Taitbout', in Paris from 1847 and supporter of 'L'Union des Églises Évangéliques de France, he was the author of the still-useful History of the First Three Centuries of the Christian Church (Paris, 1858).

Early Calvin scholarship was given impetus by the 'réveil'. The first major biography of the reformer in the nineteenth century was the work of Paul Henry (2 vols. 1825-44), minister of the French church at Berlin. Henry moved freely in the Geneva 'réveil' circle and was numbered among the close friends of Caesar Malan. Jules Bonnet, historian of the French Reformation and friend of Merle D'Aubigné, was the collator and editor of the standard nineteenth century edition of the Letters of John Calvin (3 vols. 1855-1858). Though of a subsequent generation, the massive researches of the Montauban historian, Emil Doumergue, 'Jean Calvin, Les hommes et

²⁴⁹ A multi-volume sequel, History of the Reformation in Europe in the Time of Calvin, (1864ff.) did not enjoy the same widespread acclaim. A most useful modern study of D'Aubigné is that of Jochen Winkler, Der Kirchenhistoriker Jean Henri Merle D'Aubigné, (Zurich, 1968).

les choses de son temps' (2 vols, 1899,1902) built upon the renewed interest in Calvin generated by the 'reveil'.

Having said this, it must also be observed that the theological legacy of the 'reveil' was all but dissipated by 1900. Largely because the evangelical theology taught at Geneva was, as we have intimated above, retrospective and somewhat pre-critical, 'reveil' sympathizers were not well prepared by it for the coming dominance of German critical theology. Maury insisted that the Free Theological Academy of Lausanne had far excelled its Genevan counterpart in intellectual and theological rigour.²⁵⁰ By 1907, the Geneva school had stood in need of a thorough re-organization and by 1922 it had ceased operation altogether.²⁵¹ So unsettling were the theological currents of the late nineteenth century that the Free Church - National Church divide had virtually ceased to be determinative of theological outlook.²⁵²

²⁵⁰Maury, Le Reveil Religieux, I. p.186. Maury, while sympathetic to the Geneva school, faulted it for failing to insist upon the entrance prerequisite of a university diploma. Without this standard, its graduates were never eligible for service in the National Church of France or for postgraduate study. Maury's esteem for the Free Academy of Lausanne is open to question. Gretillat, "Movements of Theological Thought" p.442 indicates that the orthodoxy of the Lausanne Free Academy had waned considerably by the 1880s.

²⁵¹Heyer, L'Eglise de Geneve, p.242. Bieler, Une Famille, p.194.

²⁵²Gretillat, "Movements of Theological Thought" pp. 445-447.

CHAPTER FOUR

BRITISH RESPONSE TO THE 'REVEIL' AT GENEVA

The Formation of a British Outlook On the 'Reveil'

Journalistic Reports of Developments at Geneva

The foregoing discussion regarding the spread of the 'réveil' from Geneva and its theological development has carried us forward in time considerably from the decades most closely connected with the period of awakening. It is now fitting to consider both how nineteenth century Britons learned of the 'réveil' and assisted its progress.

By August of 1817, Robert Haldane had settled comfortably at Montauban and the young convert, Henry Drummond, had succeeded him at Geneva as advisor to the young dissidents. Though there is no evidence to indicate that either individual publicized his activities for the benefit of the British religious public, that public none the less learned of Genevan developments with remarkable haste from other sources.

For example, readers of the Christian Observer for November 1817 could peruse a report of late summer events at Geneva by an anonymous Anglican correspondent who described the theological division within the city's Company of Pastors, the activities of "two Scotch gentlemen" (Drummond's nationality was misconstrued), and

the baneful effects of the pastoral regulation of 3rd May.¹ However, the Observer then maintained a studied silence until May 1819, when it announced that

the difficulty of obtaining the whole truth . . . is almost insurmountable as the facts of the case, even if clearly ascertained are not absolutely necessary to be known by our readers . . . We think we shall stand excused to the majority of our readers (notwithstanding the eagerness of some of our correspondents) for not particularly meddling with a topic of so much irritation.²

The periodical did not mean to minimize at all the degenerative trend in Genevan theology. On the contrary, it maintained that this degeneracy now made imprudent the custom of sending promising young students to Geneva. Yet in keeping with the details supplied by its correspondents of November 1817, the Observer recognized that the Genevan Church had an orthodox minority fully deserving of support.³ In so recommending, the periodical was carefully following a policy suited to the English religious situation. After all, the Observer's own readership formed a party of small and humble origin now growing within the National Church; it would therefore scrupulously insist on the validity and propriety of the efforts of this Swiss orthodox minority.

¹Christian Observer, 16 (1817) pp.712-714.

²Christian Observer, 18 (1819), pp.310,311. It is perhaps significant that the Observer's comments came in the immediate aftermath of Caesar Malan's first visit to England in April, 1819.

³*ibid.* p.311. The November 1817 writer had found five orthodox ministers in a Company of twenty-five.

If the position of one minority within a foreign establishment should be depicted as untenable, what would be the domestic implications?

This same outlook was reflected in an extended Observer review of four volumes of sermons and prayers published in 1818 and 1819 by J.I.S. Cellerier, one of the orthodox senior ministers of Geneva's Company of Pastors.⁴ The reviewer, after offering what was to date Britain's most judicious and well-informed account of the conflict underway at Geneva, proceeded to contend that Cellerier's orthodox preaching exemplified the kind of edifying and faithful ministry still permissible within the constraints in operation at Geneva.⁵ The reviewer also commended Cellerier for his cooperating with Louis Gausson, his ministerial successor at the cantonal village of Satigny, in republishing the Second Helvetic Confession (1566).

The Observer minced no words in laying central blame for the hostilities in Geneva at the door of the Company of Pastors. They had departed from the doctrines of the Reformation and had dismissed Caesar Malan in a highly arbitrary way. However, the reviewer took a kind of gleeful delight in highlighting one edifying sermon of Cellerier upon Luke 19.10. The text was, in fact, one of two which Malan had preached upon with great offence;

⁴ibid. 19 (1820), pp.399-415, 469-478, 546-554.

⁵ibid. p.407.

this preaching had led to his dismissal. Thus, opined the writer

It becomes M. Malan to consider whether the inconveniences he has incurred and the dissensions which have unhappily arisen between him and the Company of Pastors might not have been obviated by closely imitating that meekness of Christian wisdom which shines so conspicuously in M. Cellerier.⁶

As for the Genevan dissidents now established at 'Bourg de Four', their conduct

has become in some respects unadvised and precipitate, and their accusations against the Company of Pastors far too unmeasured and exaggerated.⁷

The Nonconformist evangelical press was soon vying with the Anglican Observer in press coverage, although initially it seemed to lack for informed correspondents. The Evangelical Magazine for Dec^{ember} 1817 responded to "various misrepresentations in the public papers respecting a Mr. Drummond who lately resided some months in Geneva" by rushing to his defense, as well as to that of Robert Haldane.⁸ The two gentlemen were to be commended for their travel "not only for amusement...but nobler purposes". This periodical seems to have been unaware that the activity of Haldane and Drummond had contributed to the founding of a new church. The disclosure of this fact, as well as the earliest lengthy

⁶ibid. p.415.

⁷ibid. pp.404,405

⁸Evangelical Magazine, 25 (1817), p.489. It is significant that Henry Drummond was not known to the editors at this date.

appraisal of recent theological developments at Geneva, was provided by the nonconformist Eclectic Review in January 1818. The Eclectic provided an extensive analysis of two recent publications emanating from Geneva - H.L. Empeytaz' Considerations on the Divinity of Christ (1816) and the Company of Pastors' Catechism (1814).

The reviewer observed that readers might wonder at the need to concern themselves in the theological affairs of European neighbours. Such involvement, the writer believed, was demanded of Britain by the prominence she had come to enjoy.

As a commercial nation not only are our sympathies in great measure governed by our commercial relations, but our opportunities of beneficence, and the power attaching to national influence are chiefly confined to the same channels...It is to her commercial character that England is, under Providence, mainly indebted for that high distinction which it is her noblest prerogative to enjoy, as the Evangelist of nations.⁹

The writer then proceeded, by a telling comparison of Geneva's new and old catechisms, to demonstrate the retreat from Trinitarian orthodoxy currently in vogue there. In this light, the controversial pamphlet by H.L. Empeytaz, which decried this trend and purported to demonstrate the anti-Trinitarianism of the city's current and recent ministers, was shown to be substantially correct.¹⁰ The author then proceeded to relate the

⁹Eclectic Review, 27 (1818), p.2. The editor at this time was Josiah Conder.

¹⁰ *ibid.* pp.10,11.

story of the founding of the separatist congregation there. Sharing the Christian Observer's tendency to construe the Genevan events according to contemporary British categories, the Review writer spoke of the new church as being formed "on the plan of the English nonconformists".¹¹

Having just made such an identification of British and Genevan religious tendencies, the writer spoke of the important contribution of Mr. Haldane, "from whose design nothing seems to have been more remote than any project of a sectarian character".¹² As if to qualify his quite total exoneration of Robert Haldane from any meddlesome activity, the writer then proceeded to utter the hope that the church would show no predilection for the "Sandemanian hypothesis" that Haldane had earlier championed with chilling effects!¹³ The writer closed his essay by warning his readers that there was no intrinsic obstacle to the plagues of Geneva being rained down upon Britain insofar as these errors found their source in "a learned ministry destitute of the genuine spirit of piety".¹⁴

¹¹ *ibid.* p.12. The Eclectic writer had in fairness acknowledged "honorable exceptions to the general defection from Christianity among the pastors". So also the Evangelical Magazine, 26 (1818), p.122.

¹² *ibid.* p.13.

¹³ *ibid.* p.16. The reviewer thus knew well Haldane's past. See the discussion in chap. 2, pp.132 ff., *supra*.

¹⁴ *ibid.* p.18.

Within a month, the New Evangelical Magazine could identify the hitherto little-known Henry Drummond as "the banker of London" and print a letter from dissident Genevan pastor, Henri Pyt, giving a quite fulsome description of the polity and worship of that young church. The congregation was plainly a stronghold of apostolic "primitivism" as well as being earnestly evangelistic.¹⁵ The same periodical subsequently printed correspondence (likely supplied by the same London source) from J.G. Gonthier, another of the separatist pastors. Gonthier indicated that the young cause had received moral support from orthodox ministers within the Company of Pastors. He reported public puzzlement over their use of mutual exhortation¹⁶ in worship, and gave news of a general religious stirring across Switzerland. The editor noted that Christian churches in both England and Scotland had already supplied more than £100 for the young congregation.¹⁷

The same journal, which had by now established itself as the best source of Genevan news, reprinted

¹⁵ New Evangelical Magazine, 4 (1818), p.96. The letter was dated 4 Nov. 1817. We believe that the London recipient of the letter, one "lately returned from Geneva" was the merchant, W. Anderson, referred to in Guers' Vie de Pyt, p. 28.

¹⁶ i.e. a spontaneous admonition or homily by lay members.

¹⁷ New Evangelical Magazine, 4 (1818), pp.274,275. The letter was dated 20 April, 1818.

further correspondence from Henri Pyt, indicating his itinerant preaching forays from Geneva into the mountainous French region of the Jura and his forthcoming relocation to assist a French minister at Saverdun.¹⁸ An anonymous member of the remaining pastoral team supplied the same magazine with first details of the outbreak of persecution in July, 1818.¹⁹

Concerned Protestants in Scotland were not well served by their local publications. The Edinburgh Christian Instructor took no notice of the evangelical resurgence at Geneva, though this had been widely reported in London periodicals. The Seceding Presbyterian (Anti-Burgher) Christian Magazine or Evangelical Repository could do better; the March 1818 issue surveyed the Genevan theological landscape, reported the establishment of the separatist congregation "on congregational principles" and told of the approach of persecution.²⁰ Yet the Seceding Presbyterian (Burgher) Christian Repository and Religious Register of May 1818, apparently relying on the same London sources

¹⁸ *ibid.* pp. 276,277. The letter was dated 27 June, 1818.

¹⁹ *ibid.* p.310,311. On the basis of so many publishing "firsts", the magazine editor would boast in his preface to volume 5 (1819) "for the last several months of 1818, we have been the exclusive source of Genevan news". This was an exaggerated claim, no doubt; yet the editor's wanting to stake such a claim is deeply significant.

²⁰ Christian Magazine or Evangelical Repository, 12 (1818), pp.88-94.

as the New Evangelical Magazine, was able to publish
correspondece of Henri Pyt to Mr. A(nderson?), a recent
visitor to Geneva, in which Pyt reported all recent
developments. A new place of worship had become necessary
as attendances had surpassed one hundred. Quantities of the
Scriptures (in reliable translation) were now required for
distribution, and financial support was needed
desperately.²¹

The troubles experienced by the fledgling Genevan
congregation in its first year were fully reported in the
London religious press. The Evangelical Magazine
reported the January 1818 enunciation of an edict of

²¹ Christian Repository and Religious Register, 3
(1818), pp. 309-311. The supply of Pyt-Anderson
correspondence to this journal suggests that Anderson was a
Scots Seceding Presbyterian residing in London. The
magazine supplied two Glasgow and two London names and
addresses (Anderson's being one of the latter) to which
donations for Geneva might be sent.

deportation against the Genevan (but French born) dissident pastor, Pierre Mejanet; the implementation of the edict on 4 March was also reported.²² The same journal took pleasure in providing a translation of a pamphlet produced by the young congregation at Geneva in an effort to end the violent and abusive molestation of their assemblies, which began in July, 1818.²³ As Nonconformist English Protestants still experienced such intermittent harassment themselves, they would have been capable of feeling considerable solidarity with their Genevan comrades.²⁴

In 1819, the New Evangelical Magazine heralded the inauguration of a sister periodical, Le Magazin Evangelique in Geneva at the commencement of the year. It also supplied an extensive coverage of the Genevan debate over the right of religious dissent between an advocate, M. Grenus (in support) and an Academy Professor of Homiletics, M. Duby (in opposition).²⁵

²² Evangelical Magazine, 26 (1818), pp. 121, 211.

²³ *ibid.* pp. 391-393, 438. See also the London Christian Instructor, 1 (1818), p. 555.

²⁴ the Evangelical Magazine 26 (1818) p.211 reported just such an outbreak at East Coker, Somerset, and the successful prosecution of the disturbers.

²⁵ New Evangelical Magazine, 5 (1819), p .263, pp.67-72, 148-151. Professor Duby, not without sympathy for the dissidents, was also secretary to the Geneva Bible Society.

The Emergence of Caesar Malan.

The distinct phase of developments at Geneva marked by the suspension of Caesar Malan from ministerial and teaching duties in August 1818 was closely reported in British periodicals. A correspondent to the Evangelical Magazine in November 1818, identified simply as "an English lady at Geneva" extolled Malan by exclaiming

I often think that if the Christians in England were but to witness the utter destitution of such a man as this, they would rise up with same zeal as they did for the persecuted Protestants of France.²⁶

That such ideas as these were already occurring to others in Britain is plain; as we have seen, financial assistance was already being gathered in both England and Scotland.

The same number of the Evangelical Magazine provided a full letter of explanation regarding Malan's plight from the Rev. Mark Wilks of Peckham, just returned from the Continent. He was an eyewitness of the events he described.²⁷ That the Genevan preacher was not then lacking in London supporters who were his intimate friends was illustrated by letters to the same magazine

²⁶ Evangelical Magazine, 27 (1819), p.28. We have already noted the attitude of the Christian Observer towards Malan (p.276) in the interest of demonstrating that journal's early and settled coolness towards him.

²⁷ *ibid.* pp.27,28. This concern for French Europe would take Wilks to Paris for an extended pastorate. See page 294 below.

from correspondents 'Cosmopolite' and J. Pye Smith.²⁸ The former related that the deprived Malan had been actively supported before the Company of Pastors by pastors Gausson and Moulinie. The latter related his personal introduction to Malan in August, 1816 and his lofty estimate of his worth. We need not doubt that Smith saw in Malan the true embodiment of his longing for a preacher-evangelist to arise from within the city of Calvin.²⁹

Given that Malan's most enthusiastic supporters were so evidently Nonconformists, there was some chagrin that the Genevan's brief visit to England in April, 1819 (ostensibly to gather pupils to receive his instruction) was spent so substantially in the company of Church of England ministers. The New Evangelical Magazine complained of Malan's partiality for the Established Church only to be rebuked by Malan who denied the charge. None the less, the editor insisted that the Anglicans had unfairly "embargoed" Malan during his brief stay.³⁰ From the episode we may infer that there were many Church of England clergy and laity who did not share the coolness of the Christian Observer toward Genevan affairs. We may also note the manifestation of Nonconformist-National

²⁸ Evangelical Magazine, 26 (1818), pp. 526, 527.

²⁹ cf. supra p.125.

³⁰ New Evangelical Magazine, 5 (1819), pp.152, 178.

Church rivalry, each group being determined to claim Genevan developments as falling within their own bail iwick. There is evidence to suggest that Malan, for all his generosity of time with sympathetic Anglicans, still knew that sympathetic Nonconformists were most likely to provide financial backing for the erection of his proposed chapel. He sent the Evangelical and New Evangelical magazines identical copies of a diplomatic letter acknowledging gifts already received and indicating the outstanding balance still needed.³¹

One other consequence of Malan's April 1819 trip to England was the inauguration of a series of publications thrusting him still more directly into the public eye. Those who wished to do so could read Malan's Sermons Translated From the French (1819) with accompanying commentary upon religious developments at Geneva.³² It was in fact these sermons which had brought about the preacher's deposition by the Company of Pastors. His subsequent removal from his teaching post was then followed by the publication of Documents Relative to the

³¹ The Evangelical Magazine, 28 (1820), p.241 had reported that £600 in all would be needed. The Evangelical Magazine, 29 (1821), p.114, and New Evangelical Magazine, 7 (1821), p.59 both printed his letter indicating progress made and outstanding balance required.

³² For an extended review of the sermons cf. New Evangelical Magazine, 5 (1819), pp. 105-108. The reviewer could state that "Malan's name had presented itself repeatedly to the eye of the reader of our magazine during the last six months".

Deposition of the Rev. Caesar Malan From His Office In the College of Geneva (1820). The purpose of the book's release was to familiarize the British public with Malan's present plight. Not only gifts were forthcoming; English families were also eager to place their adolescent children under Malan's tutelage thus providing Malan with needed income.³³ By April 1822, Malan's renown was such that the Evangelical Magazine included him among its notable ministers whose engraved likenesses graced its inside covers.³⁴

In summary we may say that the religious developments at Geneva and the leading Swiss personalities involved had assumed a considerable importance in the eye of the British Protestant public prior to the return of Henry Drummond in mid-1818 and of Robert Haldane in August 1819. This extensive coverage, whether from the deliberately "cool" perspective of the Christian Observer or the unabatedly zealous outlook of such periodicals as the Evangelical Magazine, reflected the frequent coming and going of other interested Britons to Geneva in the initial two years following Haldane's lectures there. By 1819, British concern for Geneva had

³³ The anonymous biographer of John Adam, L.M.S. missionary to India, indicates that Adam's family placed him as Malan's student in 1821 as "the privations of Malan had excited peculiar interest and sympathy in the minds of English Christians". Memoir of John Adam, (London, 1833) p.5.

³⁴ Evangelical Magazine, 30 (1822), facing page 133.

developed a momentum of its own. Against this backdrop we can understand the vying of Anglican and Nonconformists for the attention of Malan at his 1819 visit and the readiness of London Nonconformist ministers to ordain the dissident ministers of Geneva, J.G. Gonthier and E. Guers, in June 1821.³⁵

Additional British Visitors to Geneva

Against this backdrop, we may also properly construe the recorded impressions of additional British visitors to Geneva in the period following 1817. It would seem that anyone who ventured there with any ecclesiastical interest felt compelled to comment on these matters which had so stirred the interest of the British religious public.

The Rev. John Owen, Anglican rector of Paglesham, Essex, and secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society, visited many cities of the Continent between 25 August and 14 November 1818. In travelling, he sought both to recover his broken health and to encourage the European Bible Societies affiliated to his own. After visiting the Bible Societies in some fifteen cities (where he distributed more than £1500 in aid) he came to Geneva on 31 October with great apprehension. He recorded that

The information I possessed convinced me...that I

³⁵ Evangelical Magazine, 29 (1821) p.339. Presbyterian and Congregational ministers presided.

should contend there with difficulties of a peculiar nature...It is well known that for a long time past there have been very serious discussions in matters of theological doctrine among the pastors and professors of Geneva and that these divisions have given occasion to many contentions.³⁶

Owen's mission was indeed a delicate one. He represented a pan-evangelical society whose supporters were responding to Genevan developments according to their varied denominational outlooks. He found to his utter chagrin that the Genevans themselves held wildly differing expectations regarding his visit. Would Owen support the dissidents or the establishment? He carefully determined to do neither and acted in a manner which he calculated would best preserve the Bible Society's independence. He worked to assure members of the Geneva Bible Society that the institution he represented was not simply a vehicle of advancing Methodism (of which they considered their own dissidents to be a distasteful manifestation) by emphasizing the affiliation to his own society of bishops and nobility. He did nothing to openly identify with the religious dissidents of Geneva and preached only in the Sunday services of the congregation of the Church of England in that city.³⁷

³⁶ John Owen. Brief Extracts From Letters...On His Late Tour To France and Switzerland, (London, 1819) pp.36,37.

³⁷ ibid. pp.38-40. Robert Haldane would subsequently vilify this posture of Owen at Geneva in his Second Review of the Conduct of the Directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society, (Edinburgh,1826) pp.108-111. Yet

Five years later, Daniel Wilson, Anglican rector of St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row, London, also visited the major centres of Europe and included Geneva among his points of call. He entered that city full of reverence for its past:

I approach Geneva with feelings of peculiar veneration. The name of Calvin stands highest amongst the Reformers, Divines and Scholars of the sixteenth century...There is no man to whom I owe so much as a commentator...³⁸

While he faulted the great reformer for "carrying his acuteness too far...and having followed not the Episcopalian but the Presbyterian model", he made a point of visiting the Geneva public library to view at first hand the preserved sermons and letters of Calvin.³⁹

With such affinities as these, what would Wilson make of the five year history of religious dissidence in the city? He sampled the preaching of the city's Company of Pastors and found one sermon such that "a Socinian might have preached it"; yet another contained "nothing contrary to sound doctrine".⁴⁰ He deliberately heard the preaching of Caesar Malan, whom the Christian Observer had been so careful not to embrace. His reaction to

Haldane's recalcitrance was rooted in his unwillingness to grant the continuation of any significant orthodoxy in the Genevan Company of Pastors. Owen, with the majority of British observers, gladly recognized this.

³⁸ Daniel Wilson, Letters of An Absent Brother, (London, 1823, 3rd Ed. 1825) 2 vols. II. p.289.

³⁹ *ibid.* pp. 223,290.

⁴⁰ *ibid.* p.227.

Malan is worth recording because it was so disparate. On the one hand Wilson could extol that

His manner was so pathetic, so calm, so persuasive, and his matter upon the whole so edifying that I have scarcely heard anything like it since I left London...a preacher of first-rate powers, there is an inexpressible unction in all he delivers.

Yet on the other hand, he cautioned that

his doctrine is a little too high, in my opinion, to be quite scriptural or safe in the long run; he does not sufficiently unite the preceptive and cautionary parts of Holy Writ with the consolatory and elevatory - a fault not important in a single discourse, but momentous as extending over the whole system of a minister's instructions.⁴¹

Wilson, the former tutor of St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford and vastly experienced preacher, was no mean judge of these things. Yet more importantly still, his published analysis of the Genevan scene supported the existing "party line" established for evangelical Anglicans by the Observer. Like the Observer, Wilson was forthright in condemning Geneva's pastoral regulation of May 1817 (which provoked the dissidence). In response to the prohibition of preaching upon the Divinity of Christ, original sin, grace and predestination, he observed:

the three former...contain the very sum and substance of the Gospel and the latter is undoubtedly an important scriptural doctrine. Thus from being the flower of the Reformed Churches, Geneva has (for the time) fallen into the gulf of Deism and Socinianism.⁴²

Yet such a verdict did not bring Wilson to the

⁴¹ *ibid.* p.215.

⁴² *ibid.* pp.342,3.

position of the Genevan dissidents. His sympathies were instead with those like Louis Gaussen of Satigny and the visiting Merle D'Aubigné (whom he encountered during the latter's absence from Hamburg at Geneva). Such men were evidently labouring to strengthen the position of a vital orthodoxy from within rather than allying themselves with separatism. Wilson was happy therefore to engage Gaussen to translate the English Commentary on the Bible (1792) by Thomas Scott and D'Aubigné to translate Joseph Milner's History of the Church of Christ (1797) into French in keeping with this aim.⁴³

Although Wilson was unacquainted with Haldane, he praised the fervour and courage of the enterprising Scot:

A gentleman of Scotland almost unacquainted with French, about seven years since and in a few months, by simply dwelling on the authority and manifest truths of the New Testament, was the means of attracting the attention and regard of a whole circle of young students and imbibing their minds with its evangelical doctrine.⁴⁴

⁴³ ibid. p.214. J. Bateman, Life of the Right Reverend Daniel Wilson, D.D., (London, 1861) pp. 109,110 explains that the commentary publication faltered after the release of Matthew, Acts and Romans for lack of demand. This factor apparently halted all thoughts of the publication of Milner. Yet D'Aubigne's involvement in the project no doubt assisted preparations for his own historical works in the next decade.

⁴⁴ Wilson Letters, p.328. Haldane's analysis of Wilson was not forthcoming until 1829. It was then issued at Edinburgh as A Review of the Conduct of the Rev. Daniel Wilson On the Continent. Haldane's concern seems to have been primarily that of the buttressing of his own bleak analysis of the Christianity of Europe against those who viewed it more pragmatically. In pursuit of such an end, Haldane did not hesitate to resort to hectoring and invective.

The steady stream of enthusiastic journalistic reports and published impressions soon made Geneva a major stopping-off place for sympathetic British Protestants. Among those who visited Geneva during the 1820's were James Haldane Stewart, Anglican rector of Percy Chapel, London,⁴⁵ the brothers Gerard and Baptist W. Noel (both Anglican clergymen),⁴⁶ and the Scots advocate and lay-theologian Thomas Erskine of Linlathen⁴⁷. Several generalizations may be attempted about these visits.

As none of the visits resulted in the immediate publication of accounts such as those of Owen and Wilson, they had no measurable impact upon the existing polarized opinion. Yet having said this, it is noteworthy that the attraction which Geneva held for all four (three of whom were ministers of the Church of England) lay definitely with the orthodox party within the National Church and with Caesar Malan. The Genevan National Church taken as a whole, held no attraction for them; nor did the

⁴⁵ David D. Stewart Memoirs of James Haldane Stewart, (London, 1857) p.87.

⁴⁶ Gerard Noel, Arvendale, or Sketches in Italy and Switzerland, (London, 1826) e.g. p.66. Noel's visit evidently followed promptly on the heels of that of Stewart, whose ministerial 'locum' he was. Baptist W. Noel, Notes of a Tour in Switzerland in the Summer of 1847, (London, 1847) p.1 indicates a first visit in 1821 followed by a second in the year of publication.

⁴⁷ W. Hannah, ed. Letters of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, (Edinburgh, 1878). The letters indicate meetings with Merle D'Aubigné at Hamburg, p.30, Gerard Noel at Paris, p.37, and Caesar Malan at Geneva, p.36.

dissidents gathered at their chapel named 'Bourg de Four'. Thus Gerard Noel could recall that "the names Satigny, Pre L'Eveque, and Cologny return often with all the softness of a magic sound"⁴⁸. Only of the involvement of Thomas Erskine may we speak of an enduring legacy. The future preacher of Lyons and Paris, Adolphe Monod, was in the final year of his theological course at Geneva when he had the pleasure of making Erskine's acquaintance. His own theological outlook was then extremely unsettled; he described his student outlook as "Orthodox, Methodist, Arian - I am each of these in turn".⁴⁹ He was permanently helped by extended exposure to Erskine's then relatively-orthodox views, of which he said

his system is more moral and more philosophic than that of the orthodox party at Geneva...He has nothing of that narrow mindedness which is to be seen in some of our orthodox people nor of that hard and unyielding spirit which appears in others among them.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Noel, Arvendale, p,80. Satigny was the country parish within the canton of Geneva served by Gausson, and Cologny that served by J.L. Peschier at the time of Noel's 1821 visit. Pre L'Eveque was the site of Cesar Malan's home and chapel.

⁴⁹ Life and Letters of Adolphe Monod, (London, 1885) p.13.

⁵⁰ *ibid.* Erskine would have further influence over Monod at Naples in 1827; cf. p. 39. A helpful modern review of Erskine's Continental visits and contacts is provided by N.R. Needham, Thomas Erskine of Linlathen; His Life and Theology 1788-1837, (Edinburgh, 1990).

Paris Replaces Geneva as Focal Point
of 'Reveil' Attention

We may justifiably speak of a diminution of British journalistic and personal attention to Genevan events and personalities after 1823.⁵¹ There are several related explanations for this phenomenon.

First, the appointment of the Rev. Mark Wilks as minister of the English Independent congregation at Paris meant that increasingly, religious developments in French Europe would be reported from his Parisian vantage point and not that of Geneva as in preceding years.⁵² The greater part of Genevan missionary energy in the 1820's would itself be focussed on France. Second, it was at Paris that British societies focussed their efforts to establish affiliate Bible, Tract, and Missionary Societies and a religious periodical, Les Archives du Christianisme.⁵³ Thus, increasingly, the promotion of

⁵¹ The English translation of Prof. J.J. Cheneviere's "Summary of Theological Controversies Which Have Lately Troubled Geneva" in The Monthly Repository of Theological and General Literature, 19 (1824) pp. 1ff, and the rejoinders it drew from J. Pye Smith, "Reply to Prof. Cheneviere" in the same volume of that journal, pp. 321 ff., and Robert Haldane, Letter to Prof. Cheneviere, (Edinburgh, 1824) were all essentially retrospective and concerned primarily with the issues of 1816-1819.

⁵² The commencement of Wilks' Parisian ministry was noted by the Evangelical Magazine, 30 (1822), p.288. Wilks had been a close acquaintance of Caesar Malan since 1818. Wilks was a most capable correspondent on all French evangelical affairs.

⁵³ The establishment of which were happily reported in the British religious press. Eg. The Paris Bible Society in Evangelical Magazine, 27 (1819), p.29 and New

evangelical religion in French-speaking Europe became the business of British societies working through French affiliates, on whose behalf funds were raised and news circulated. This tendency marked the decided escalation rather than diminution of British interest.⁵⁴

Third, we may note in passing what will be developed below, i.e. the constitution in October 1818 of the "Continental Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge". The latter was, in effect a specialist organization which made French Europe its chief field of operations. Virtually all of the early principal workers of the Society were Genevans or persons otherwise connected with the Genevan dissidents now known as the 'Bourg de Four' congregation. Their labour in France was symptomatic of a shift of focus away from Geneva, which

Evangelical Magazine, 5 (1819), p.66. Also Les Archives du Christianisme in Evangelical Magazine, 26 (1818), p.121.

⁵⁴ In this context we may introduce the dramatic upsurge of British Protestant interest in the Waldensians of S.E. France. The Rev. W.S. Gilly (1789-1855) made visits to the region in 1823 and on the basis of such travels wrote Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piedmont and Researches Among the Vaudois or Waldenses, (London, 1824). This led to the rise of relief efforts enjoying royal and wide public support. Gilly was later the author of the standard English biography of Continental Society worker among the Waldensians, Felix Neff (London, 1832). Gilly's earlier writings influenced John Charles Beckwith (1789-1862), a decorated and disabled veteran of the Napoleonic Wars to devote the final thirty-five years of his life to social and missionary work in the region. Both Gilly and Beckwith are well described in the Dictionary of National Biography.

offered only restricted missionary opportunity. This shift in effect facilitated the diffusion of the Genevan 'reveil' into France under the Society's auspices. The Society, through its annual meetings, publications and speaking tours became, for at least a decade, the foremost vehicle for the marshalling of British religious efforts regarding French Europe.

However, the unforeseen^e Genevan developments of 1831, in which Merle D'Aubigne, Louis Gaussen, and others would be thrust from the Genevan National Church in a second "wave" of dissidence, would again bring British religious opinion to focus upon Geneva itself with avid attention.

The Rise and Fall of the Continental Society

British Protestants were quick to recognize that the stirring of Protestantism in French-speaking Europe deserved their moral and financial support. It had been appropriate to gather collections on behalf of the suffering Protestants of the Midi in 1815-1816; how much more so was it appropriate now as gospel fortunes revived?

Yet, the immediate post-war years were financially difficult for most Britishers. The cessation of hostilities left many British mills and factories over-committed to war-time production; these now faced shrinking markets. The military demobilization of some 300,000 men combined with the foregoing factors to create

massive unemployment. While the price of foodstuffs declined on account of good harvests and the free flow of imports, the fall of agricultural prices from record war-time levels seriously threatened agricultural landowners who had borrowed to expand in war-time. Income taxes, even when lowered to half their war-time levels, were a great but unavoidable burden for the heavily indebted victor nation. Even in 1818, almost two thirds of public expenditure was required to service the National Debt accumulated over more than a decade of hostilities.⁵⁵ This being so, it is remarkable that evangelical agencies expanded their operations at the return of peace.

We have already noted that the Rev. John Owen strengthened the efforts of European Bible Societies affiliated to the British and Foreign Bible Society by his visits and financial grants in 1818.⁵⁶ The Religious Tract Society disbursed funds through its agent, Dr. Steinkopff, to eleven south German and Swiss tract concerns in 1815.⁵⁷ From 1816, the American export merchant based at Paris, Sampson V. S. Wilder, supervised the wide distribution of Religious Tract Society French-language materials. As it became clear that an

⁵⁵ See Elie Halévy, A History of the English People in 1815-1830, (London, 1926), p. 36; and Ashton, The Industrial Revolution, p.122.

⁵⁶ See pp. 287 ff. The affiliate 'Société Biblique Protestante de Paris' was founded in 1819.

⁵⁷ Jones, Jubilee Memorial of the Religious Tract Society, (London, 1849), p. 86.

undesirable stigma was attached to religious material of British origin, Wilder, with Tract Society financial assistance, began the indigenous production of tracts in Paris.⁵⁸ An American business associate fluent in French, Hillhouse of New Haven, translated many standard English Tract Society titles; from these informal beginnings emerged the Paris Tract Society in 1818.⁵⁹ The London Missionary Society, in addition to funding a handful of missionary agents in France and the printing of major English works in French translation, from 1820 assisted an affiliate, the Paris Missionary Society, to begin its operations.⁶⁰

Yet these efforts, whether measured in terms of money or manpower, were relatively insignificant. The L. M. S., for instance, in the years 1817-19 committed £133, £199 and £115 to France respectively. The Religious Tract Society assisted the inauguration of its Paris affiliate with a grant of £110.10s.⁶¹ These were not negligible sums but neither did they represent the giving of any special priority to French Europe by societies with constantly widening global horizons. It was,

⁵⁸ See Sampson V. S. Wilder, Records From the Life of Sampson V. S. Wilder, (New York, 1865), pp. 78, 80; and Jones, Jubilee Memorial, pp. 283-84.

⁵⁹ Wilder, Records, p. 80. Hillhouse had advised Haldane at Paris in September 1816. See p. 137 supra.

⁶⁰ L.M.S. Handlist: Disbursements to France 1800-1837.

⁶¹ See L.M.S. Handlist; and Jones, Jubilee, p. 284.

therefore, no direct affront to existing agencies when an independent organization, the Continental Society, was launched in 1818.

It has been asserted that the "Continental Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge" came into being largely as a result of the efforts of Henry Drummond after Robert Haldane's 1817 departure for Montauban.⁶² An older and more compelling view, originating with the Haldane biographer, is that Haldane and Drummond collaborated in launching the scheme during their brief overlap of itineraries at Geneva. Haldane, before departing, is said to have supplied ideas for the deployment of aspiring young Genevan students based on his earlier familiarity with itinerant schemes in the Society For the Propagation of the Gospel at Home. The execution of the ideas was left largely to Drummond.⁶³ The comprehensiveness of even this theory is challenged however, by an independent account, almost certainly stemming from Drummond, which reports that:

In the year 1817, a plan was in agitation among some zealous Christians at Berlin, Petersburg, Basle, Berne and Geneva for forming a Society in aid of persons over the Continent of Europe; it was the intention of those persons to establish a branch also at Paris and another at London. The difficulty of

⁶² See A. L. Drummond, "Robert Haldane at Geneva", in Records of the Scottish Church History Society, 9 (1946), 79-80; Wemyss, Le Reveil, p. 98; and Stunt, "Geneva", p. 37.

⁶³ A. Haldane, pp. 426, 454 has been carefully followed by L. Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, (Washington, D.C., 1949),

carrying the design into effect without much personal communication retarded its execution until the spring of 1818, when a few religious persons being at Paris, determined no longer to delay the commencement of this important work and accordingly subscribed a sum nearly sufficient for one missionary immediately - which was done. . .In order to obtain sufficient funds to carry on what was already begun, the present Continental Society was formed in London.⁶⁴

Granting the accuracy of such a report, many questions arise which are most difficult to answer. One might be the identity of the "zealous Christians" who originally helped to "agitate" the scheme. Here we may simply note that J. H. Merle D'Aubigné went from Geneva to Berlin in the latter half of 1817, that the chaplain of Mme. Krudener, Empeytaz, had been in the Baltic region in the same period, and that Haldane had made personal contact with A. Galland at Berne in late 1816.⁶⁵ The American merchant at Paris, Sampson Wilder, certainly knew Drummond by correspondence and hosted Haldane, homeward-bound from Montauban in August 1819.⁶⁶ These names admittedly form mere hypotheses as to the makeup of the zealous circle within which the idea of a society was discussed.

It is also a matter of some curiosity that the

⁶⁴ Report of the Continental Society For the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge, 1 (London, 1819), 8. From 1822, the published "reports" were styled "proceedings". Accounts in both the New Evangelical Magazine, 7 (1821) p.122, and Evangelical Magazine, N.S. 4 (1826) p.126, make plain that the spring 1818 meeting took place in May at Paris.

⁶⁵ A. Haldane, Lives, p. 390.

⁶⁶ Wilder, Records, pp. 122, 142.

discussions of 1817 envisioned a London connection. While Drummond as a banker and former member of Parliament certainly had connections of his own in that city, we have seen that the first mention of his name in connection with religious affairs at Geneva had drawn a blank in the British evangelical press.⁶⁷ The historian, A. L. Drummond, writing in this century, has suggested that the reason for this might be that the banker had only come under serious religious influences in the year 1817;⁶⁸ it was under these influences that he had embarked for Palestine only to be diverted to Geneva from Genoa. Now the very London evangelical connections which Drummond lacked, Robert Haldane certainly had from his eight-year term (1796-1804) as an L. M. S. director and confidante of David Bogue. If Haldane was no longer a member of the London pan-evangelical elite on account of his well-known advocacy of apostolic primitivism⁶⁹ and his autocratic hectoring of his former connexion of chapels and tabernacles, he was at least still well-connected and well-remembered.

It was on the strength of such long-standing bonds that the first London efforts were made to rally support

⁶⁷ p. 276 above.

⁶⁸ A. L. Drummond, Edward Irving and His Circle, (London, 1937), p. 126.

⁶⁹ We have noted above, p. 278, the renewed raising of the question of Haldane's allegiance to the primitivistic "Sandemanian hypothesis" at first report of his involvement at Geneva.

for the proposed Society in October 1818. The initial missionary, Pierre Mejanel, had been ratified by "a few religious persons at Paris" in spring 1818.⁷⁰ In order that the envisioned society might undergo a metamorphosis from a circle of moneyed businessmen, operating on a "handshake basis" to something public and expanding, Drummond made it his business on returning to London to assemble a group of supportive individuals. At least one such gathering took place prior to the first annual meeting of 28 April 1819.

In January 1819, the London Christian Instructor or Congregational Magazine could report that:

A society has been formed in London whose object is to aid the progress of divine truth over the Continent of Europe by employing persons properly qualified, chiefly natives of the respective countries. We understand this society has emanated from those pious persons who have attempted the revival of evangelical principles at Geneva.⁷¹

More details are provided by one who attended the organizational meeting at London - the American and recent theological graduate, Matthias Bruen. Bruen, having earlier been present at Geneva to observe the influence of both Haldane and his own mentor, John Mason

⁷⁰ We may surmise this group to have included Drummond, Haldane (by correspondence from Montauban) and the Americans Wilder and Hillhouse. Wilder's name appears as one of six society vice presidents in the Report of the Continental Society, 2, (London, 1820), p. i. He continued in this capacity until 1839.

⁷¹ London Christian Instructor, 2, (1819) p. 62.

Mitchell, upon Geneva's divinity students,⁷² was now in London as pastor-elect of an American congregation at Paris. Bruen was to be ordained at London's Homerton Chapel on 3 November, 1818 in a service at which leading evangelical ministers, Alexander Waugh and Pye Smith would preside.⁷³

Significantly, it was while Bruen moved in the circle of such men - men whom we have already met as persons keen for the re-evangelization of French Europe, that he attended a meeting on 21 October, 1818 for the founding of the society. He confided to his diary:

The first object is to support and encourage all native ministers, everywhere over the continent in preaching the gospel...The thing they chiefly aim at, and indeed the principal difficulty, is to bring all the religious sects here to co-operate in the business. I was at a meeting last night of the principal persons...which augurs well.⁷⁴

The early annual Reports of the society indicate that those "principal persons" were persons with whom Robert Haldane had long been familiar - many of them numbered among the earliest supporters of the London Missionary Society. In such circles, Henry Drummond may still have been a novice, but this could have been remedied by some well-aimed letters of introduction from Haldane, still at Montauban. Drummond may also have gained entry into the L.M.S. circles through his

⁷² cf. page 140 supra.

⁷³ Lundie, Memoir of Bruen, p.117.

⁷⁴ Lundie, *ibid.* pp. 109,110.

recently-formed acquaintance with Sampson Wilder of Paris, a close friend of key individuals in the London Missionary and Religious Tract Societies since 1816.⁷⁵

This substantial overlap between existing pan-evangelical societies and the Continental Society is further demonstrated in two main ways. First there are the explicit tributes paid to the memory of such senior stalwarts in the pages of the society's Reports and Proceedings at the times of their deaths. Thus the 1826 annual meetings heard tributes paid to the Reverends David Bogue and John Townsend

the steady friends of this Institution from the beginnings of its operations to the period of their death...David Bogue was never absent from an anniversary when in London.⁷⁶

Townsend (1757-1826), minister of the Independent chapel, Jamaica Row, Bermondsey from 1784, had been an L.M.S. director at the 1802 sending to France of a four-man team of inquiry.⁷⁷ Speaking to the 1823 annual meeting of the Continental Society, he recalled those events of 1802 and saw them now being built upon by the new institution:

When the L.M.S. was formed, the continent of Europe was contemplated as an object within the sphere of its operations. While it was formed for the heathen, there was added to the object, the words "and other unenlightened countries"; that phrase was proposed by myself for the very purpose of carrying the

⁷⁵ Wilder, Records, pp.76-78.

⁷⁶ Continental Society Proceedings, 8 (1826), pp.13,14.

⁷⁷ cf. p. 113 supra.

operations of Christian benevolence into France and Germany...We sent a deputation consisting of Mr. Hardcastle and three others to see if churches could be opened at Paris and we actually commenced the printing of New Testaments with a view to beginning operations there. War then interspersed. We now perceive the door opened...⁷⁸

David Bogue (1750-1825), himself a member of that 1802 L.M.S. delegation to France, and theological tutor at Gosport Academy, could inform the 1824 gathering of the Continental Society that

I esteem it an honor^U to say that there were six students with me now preaching on the continent within the field of your labours; four of them were converted by a minister in this place.⁷⁹

In a similar vein, the passing of another founder of the L.M.S., the Rev. Alexander Waugh (1754-1827), himself also a member of the 1802 delegation to France, was marked by a tribute from the society president, Joseph Strutt, who stated that Waugh " was one of the earliest and best friends of this Society. It received his countenance and aid as well through evil and good report".⁸⁰ On the same occasion, Henry Drummond recorded

⁷⁸ Proceedings, 5 (1823) pp.76,77. Townsend was an L.M.S. director 1796-1825 and a Tract Society director 1800-1819.

⁷⁹ Proceedings, 6 (1824) p.76. Bogue was an L.M.S. director 1795-1825. The six students had been enrolled at Gosport at L.M.S. expense. Bogue implies that the six now serve the Continental Society, though he may only mean that they labour in the same region.

⁸⁰ Proceedings, 10 (1828) p.8. Waugh, the minister of the Wells Street, London Secession Church, was an L.M.S. director 1795-1827. As a London resident, he served the business committee of the Continental Society from 1818 until his death.

the tribute, "I cannot help remembering how much the society was indebted to him for powerful support at its first foundation".⁸¹ Such examples indicate that the launching of the society at London in October 1818 was heavily dependent upon the established credibility and influence of L.M.S. founders, all of whom were Robert Haldane's former associates in that cause. From this same Nonconformist constituency, the Society's committee of management drew John Pye Smith of Homerton College, W. Anderson - the London-based Scot whose own visit to Geneva in 1817-18 had subsequently yielded such informative correspondence⁸² and William Jones, subsequently secretary of the Religious Tract Society.

Secondly, the young society emphasized its continuity with the older society at its annual meetings. Thus at the 1822 meeting, the Rev. Mark Wilks, only recently posted to Paris, declared:

I am glad this society is formed on the principle of those great societies which have done so much good. When I see here the fathers and founders of the Evangelical Magazine and of the (London) Missionary Society...when I see such men, I cannot but view in them a pledge for that broad Christian charity which embraces the world.⁸³

At the same gathering, the Rev. J. Pye Smith argued that the younger society's concentration on nominally-

⁸¹ *ibid.* p.31

⁸² Continental Society Report, 1 (1819), p.3. Anderson's correspondence from Geneva has been discussed above at p. 281.

⁸³ Proceedings, 4 (1822), p.18.

Christian Europe was freeing the L.M.S. to concentrate on evangelizing the heathen regions:

The (London) Missionary Society has most honourably laboured in this field; but who can wish that any part of its funds should be diverted from the heathen world? Thus the existence of the Continental Society is a matter of the most pressing necessity. When the Continental Society was established, I felt it my duty to become a member of it.⁸⁴

This argument was taken up in 1825 by a father-figure of the L.M.S., George Burder, who maintained at the Continental Society annual meeting:

We have laboured many years to send the gospel to the remotest nations of the earth and we have done so, we thank God, not without success. But we are not to forget our neighbours nearer to home.⁸⁵

This was a significant articulation of L.M.S.-Continental Society solidarity.

The initial support of Bogue, Waugh, and Townsend, and later endorsements by such men as Burder were simply part and parcel of a very extensive adoption of the new society by L.M.S. supporters. Indeed, Bogue, Waugh, Townsend and Burder were but four of at least ten L.M.S. founders committed to the support of the new society.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ *ibid.* p.21.

⁸⁵ Proceedings, 7 (1825), pp.49,50.

⁸⁶ The ten formed a healthy proportion of the thirty-six founders treated in John Morison's The Founders of the L.M.S. (1844). Not all of these persons were still living at the founding of the junior society in 1818. Other such supporters were Joseph Hardcastle, the Rev. John Love (Paisley), the Rev. Rowland Hill (Surrey), the Rev. William Roby (Manchester), the Rev. Edward Parsons (Leeds) and Thomas Wilson (London). This information is garnered largely from the lists of donations printed in the Proceedings from 1822.

Of this number, one - Joseph Hardcastle, had been L.M.S. treasurer 1795-1815. His successors in that office - William Alers Hankey (1816-1832) and Thomas Wilson (1832-1843) were also Continental Society supporters from its early years.

But would the new society transcend the Nonconformist constituency? Bruen, the eyewitness of the first organizational meeting had noted that the great difficulty was to "bring all the sects to co-operate".⁸⁷ Behind the remark lay two obstacles, one of recent and one of older vintage. As recently as 1815-1816 Anglican and Nonconforming evangelicals had found themselves in a stand-off over the issue of what ought to be done for the Protestants of southern France.⁸⁸ Nonconformists, convinced that Protestants were suffering for their religion, had gathered funds which were still being dispersed in the Midi in 1817. The Anglican Christian Observer however, had cautioned against intervention into what it viewed as a purely political matter. In the more distant past, the Church Missionary Society had been founded in 1799 because of settled Anglican reservations over the agenda set by the co-operating Nonconformists who founded the London Missionary Society in 1795. Such had been the concern over Nonconformist political sympathies in that age of revolution and the espousal of

⁸⁷ cf. page 303 supra.

⁸⁸ cf. page 123 supra.

a fundamental principle⁸⁹ (permitting each evangelized region to establish its own church order) that only Anglicans deemed "irregular"⁹⁰ had given strong support to the London society. Could Anglicans, earlier so committed to the upholding of their own distinctives, now make common cause? An affirmative response was secured by two initiatives.

First, care was taken to draft what might be called a "fundamental principle" for the Continental Society which would resolve in advance all questions about the form of Christianity to be propagated in Europe. This principle was, as stated in 1819:

The object of this society is to assist local native ministers in preaching the Gospel, and in distributing Bibles, Testaments and Religious publications over the Continent of Europe, but without the design of establishing any distinct sect

⁸⁹ The drafting of this policy is attributed by his biographers to Alexander Waugh. cf. Hay and Belfrage, Waugh, p.153. That policy stated: "As the union of God's people of various denominations, in carrying on this great work, is a most desirable object; so, to prevent, if possible, any cause of future dissension, it is declared to be a fundamental principle of the Missionary Society, that our design is not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy, or any other form of church order and government (about which there may be a difference of opinion among serious persons) but the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, to the heathen; and it shall be left (as it ought to be left) to the minds of the persons whom God may call into the fellowship of his Son from among them, to assume for themselves such form of church government as to them shall appear most agreeable to the word of God".

⁹⁰ Such were Rowland Hill, Thomas Haweis, and John Eyre, all numbered by Morison as Founders. See his vol. 2.

or party.⁹¹

Such a principle was adopted because of "diversity of opinions among professing Christians".

The Continental Society has therefore wisely determined to guard against the possibility of collision arising from the usual causes of dissension, by employing none but natives in the respective countries...No Englishman has been or can be employed by this society.⁹²

David Bogue, long the advocate of co-operative enterprises, expressed himself content with such policies in the 1822 meeting:

It is a true principle of Christianity not to establish new sects among those people, but, to strengthen the hands of the true disciples of Christ and to give all the aid we can to the friends of the gospel in advancing religion.⁹³

We shall have reason to note that these objectives were never achieved perfectly and were in fact frequently breached. Yet they did serve initially to facilitate Establishment-Nonconformist co-operation in a way not characteristic of the London Missionary Society. Europe's existing churches were to be strengthened rather than scuttled.

Second, deliberate efforts were made to involve representatives of the Church of England in the leadership of the society. The presidency was entrusted

⁹¹ Continental Society Reports, 1 (1819), p.4. The statement formed the first of eight objectives and regulations printed in each annual Report.

⁹² *ibid.* pp.8,9.

⁹³ Proceedings, 4 (1822), pp. 19,20

from 1819-1826 to Thomas Baring, M.P. (1790-1848), the staunch Church of England heir of Sir Francis Baring, cloth merchant and East India Company director.⁹⁴ The hard-working secretary of the society 1820-25 was the Rev. Isaac Saunders, rector of St. Anne's Church, Blackfriars. The independently wealthy Rev. Lewis Way, associated with the London Society For Propagating Christianity Among the Jews) was one of six vice-presidents from 1820 until at least 1832.⁹⁵ Another Anglican, the Rev. S.R. Drummond of Swarraton, gave vital assistance to Isaac Saunders in the important work of itinerating on behalf of the society as far afield as the major cities of Scotland.⁹⁶ Upon the secretarial duties becoming too demanding, Saunders withdrew in 1825 and was replaced as secretary by both Drummond and the Rev. Hugh McNeile, rector of Albury, Surrey. Only in 1827 was a Nonconformist secretary added to this team; this was the Rev. Henry F. Burder of London.⁹⁷ Such an arrangement

⁹⁴ the Dictionary of National Biography 3. p.192 indicates that Baring, Sr. accumulated a fortune of seven million pounds.

⁹⁵ E.R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism, (Chicago, 1970) p. 9 indicates that Way had trained as a barrister and practised law until inheriting £300,000 from a John Way to whom he stood in fact unrelated. Thereafter ordained, he used his wealth to place the debt-ridden "Jewish Mission" of the L.M.S. on an Anglican footing. By 1825, he served a Paris congregation.

⁹⁶ Reports, 3 (1821), p.9

⁹⁷ Proceedings, 9 (1827), p.ii. Henry F. Burder was the son of L.M.S. and Evangelical Magazine founder, George Burder.

strongly suggests that support was garnered most easily among the original L.M.S.-oriented constituency.

The strategy bore fruit in so far as Anglican involvement markedly increased. By 1822 (the first year for which contributions are recorded in the annual Proceedings) prominent persons in the Church of England such as the Rev. Charles Simeon of Cambridge and William Wilberforce, M.P. could be found among the supporters.⁹⁸ The Rev. Josiah Pratt, long intimate of Simeon through the London Eclectic Society, and Zachary Macaulay - with Wilberforce reckoned part of the 'Clapham Sect', were both involved in the 1820's.⁹⁹ Daniel Wilson, rector of St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row, London - himself just returned from the Continent, also joined their number.¹⁰⁰

The Rev. Gerard Noel was added to the business committee in the same year (1826) as his travel sketches of Switzerland, entitled Arvendale, were published in London.¹⁰¹ The Rev. Edward Bickersteth, itinerating secretary of the Church Missionary Society until 1830,

⁹⁸ Proceedings, 4 (1822), appendix. The records indicate that Simeon ceased contributions in 1825. Wilberforce was still a strong supporter in 1829.

⁹⁹ Proceedings, 9 (1827), 10 (1828), 11 (1829) appendices.

¹⁰⁰ Proceedings, 5 (1823), appendix.

¹⁰¹ Proceedings, 8 (1826), p.1. Other members of the Establishment who had been in Europe, such as James Haldane Stewart (cf. p. 292 supra) and Miss Anna Greaves (p. 138 supra) were steady supporters through the 1820's.

was a supporter from 1827.¹⁰² And we may add that the same assurances of non-sectarian activity which made the participation of 'regular' Anglicans feasible served equally well to warrant the participation of others. The prominent Methodist, Jabez Bunting, D.D. was present to give a supporting speech in 1823.¹⁰³

Such a survey of the trans-denominational complexion of the society in its initial years does not disclose anything of the organization's growth and operations. The simple fact is that it was severely hampered by its small numbers concentrated in the English southeast until 1821. Only those capable of paying the not inconsiderable one guinea annual membership fee were eligible for membership.¹⁰⁴ Already at its first annual meeting (1819), four itinerants were under appointment in France on stipends ranging from £50 to £80 yearly;¹⁰⁵ it is highly unlikely that such expenses were being met by the number of one guinea subscriptions received. By 1820, the number of agents had doubled - largely on the basis of a few sizeable donations rather than increased subscriptions. The Report for the year indicated that,

¹⁰²Proceedings, 9 (1827), appendix. Bickersteth made a speech the following year Proceedings 10 (1828) p.34. A recent trip to the Continent had quickened his interest in the society.

¹⁰³Proceedings, 5 (1823), p.93.

¹⁰⁴There were at that time 21 shillings to the guinea and 20 to the pound sterling.

¹⁰⁵Reports, 1 (1819), p.9.

as regards funds

these are at present very low. The Society has been supported hitherto chiefly by large donations from a few individuals. No considerable efforts have yet been attempted to make it known, consequently the number of annual subscribers is still small.¹⁰⁶

In 1821, the number of agents had risen drastically to fifteen. Yet the financial footing of the society had scarcely changed, for the Report could indicate that "income does not at present exceed £200 whilst expenditure is nearly £1000. Heavy expenses have been met by donations".¹⁰⁷ But there were now glimmers of hope. A promotional 'memoir' was prepared to publicize the society's existence. What is more, appeals from north Britain for a tour by society representatives led to extensive itineration in March 1821 by Isaac Saunders and S.R. Drummond. Consequently, auxiliary societies were founded at Edinburgh and Glasgow with corresponding committees formed in Dundee, Perth, Stirling, and Paisley. Some £220 in offerings were received in the course of this promotional tour.¹⁰⁸

From this period forward, the society underwent rapid expansion and saw its revenues dramatically increase. By the year 1822, income rose dramatically to

¹⁰⁶Reports, 2 (1820), p.6. Agents were in that year labouring in Valenciennes, Rouen, Piedmont, Paris, Strasburg, Geneva, Basle, and the Netherlands.

¹⁰⁷Reports, 3 (1821), p.8. The £200 figure would indicate not more than 190 members paying one guinea each.

¹⁰⁸Reports, 3 (1821), pp.9-11.

£1074, of which £700 was raised by the Scots auxiliaries.¹⁰⁹ This surge of interest came on the heels of an extensive itineration by agent Pierre Mejanel. This colorful personality spoke in at least thirty-five communities in the north of England and Scotland and was often accompanied by Robert Haldane.¹¹⁰ The same duo were successful in gathering the nucleus of an auxilliary society at Dublin, in which families of Huguenot descent figured most prominently.¹¹¹

The cross-denominational alliance, achieved in London after considerable effort, seems to have manifested itself spontaneously among the Scots. The Edinburgh-Leith auxilliary was a microcosm of the entire Scottish constituency in this respect. Prominent in the organization were ministers of the Establishment such as Robert Gordon of Buccleuch Church and T. S. Jones of Lady Glenorchy's Chapel. The (now) United Associate Synod was represented by Dr. Peddie of Rose Street Chapel and the Congregational Union by John Aikman of College Street Chapel (later Augustine Church). The Haldane brothers,

¹⁰⁹Proceedings, 4 (1822), p.36. This would increase to £751 in the following year. cf. Proceedings 5(1823) appendix.

¹¹⁰The itinerary can be largely reconstructed from the summary of collections received for the society in connection with the tour. cf. Proceedings, 5 (1823), appendix.

¹¹¹Names such as La Touche, Bissonet and Metge figured prominently in this auxilliary. Proceedings, 4 (1822), p. 5.

William Innes, and the eccentric physician, Charles Stuart, represented Edinburgh Baptists.¹¹²

Promptly thereafter, the initiative for the forming of auxiliaries took hold among English sympathizers. The 1823 Proceedings reported the formation of committees of correspondence in Gloucestershire, Bristol, Liverpool, Leeds and Hull; income rose to a respectable £1625. Twenty agents were now in the employ of the society.¹¹³ The following year saw twelve new auxiliaries founded, total receipts of £2014 and twenty-six agents in service.¹¹⁴ Steady progress was registered through 1826 when income reached £2733 and auxiliaries totalled thirty-nine; thereafter separate handling of accounts for English and Scots auxiliaries made the plotting of aggregate progress impossible.

Even at its period of greatest financial strength, the Continental Society was a rather small concern when compared with endeavours such as the Religious Tract Society or the London Missionary Society. In the year of the Continental Society's highest income (1826) their own

¹¹²Ibid., p. 4. Cooperation on highly similar lines was evident in auxiliaries or corresponding committees at Glasgow, Dundee, Stirling, Paisley and Aberdeen. Interestingly, Thomas Erskine of Linlathen supported the society from 1822 and served as president of the Dundee Auxiliary from 1826. Full reportage of the Edinburgh meeting was supplied in The New Evangelical Magazine, 7 (1821), pp. 153-158. Robert Haldane played a major part.

¹¹³Proceedings, 5 (1823), pp. 1, 45, 93.

¹¹⁴Proceedings, 6 (1824), preface, p. 4, appendix.

receipts were £12,568 and £38,860 respectively.¹¹⁵ The number of agents, both part-time and full-time, reached thirty-one in 1829 and thereafter declined, for complex reasons which will be discussed below.¹¹⁶

The Continental Society had been early advised that it would be indiscreet to circularize the names of its European agents and their stations of labour. Such self-imposed restraint must have been very difficult to maintain. The society's stated view was that

the Continental Society labours under difficulties unknown to similar societies. It must maintain an unbroken silence on the part of your committee respecting names of persons and places. Any other line of conduct would subject agents to considerable danger.¹¹⁷

The need for such a policy was repeated by the well-informed pastor of the English Independent congregation at Paris, Mark Wilks, in the 1822 meeting. He warned, "There is a universal dread of foreign agents. If you wish to destroy your Society in France, the best way is to make it known".¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵See Jones, Jubilee, Appendix 1; and Lovett, History of the L.M.S. 2, 753.

¹¹⁶Proceedings, 11 (1829), p. 1. Proceedings, 14 (1832) indicated a decline to 30 agents. By 1834 the number had been reduced to 21. See Appeal of the Continental Society of Dublin, (1834), p. 3.

¹¹⁷Report, 2 (1820), p. 3. The air of secrecy necessary to the operations of the society in France at this time were simply reflective of the awkward position of all Protestant agencies in France under the Bourbon regime.

¹¹⁸Proceedings 4 (1822), p. 17.

In pursuit of this policy, the Continental Society seldom if ever named their agents or indicated their locations other than by region, when such details involved French Europe. Claus Von Bulow, a Dane who served the society in coastal Norway in 1827-28, and J. G. Oncken, a German-born but Edinburgh-reared agent of the society at Hamburg from 1823-29, form clear exceptions to the policy.¹¹⁹ Even the quarterly Extracts of Correspondence from society agents, issued by the management committee to members in an attempt to bridge the communication "void", systematically deleted all names and places.¹²⁰

As a consequence of such a policy, supporters had to be content with knowing only generalities about the agents they supported. Thus, the Report for 1821 disclosed only that workers were distributed as follows: two at Paris, two at Orleans, one each in the Netherlands and the canton of Vaud, two in Piedmont, and the prospect (never realized) of placing an agent in Spain.¹²¹ The following year, subscribers were simply informed that the

¹¹⁹See Proceedings, 6 (1824), p. 49; and 9 (1827), pp. 50-51.

¹²⁰From approximately 1824 these were printed and bound with the Proceedings. The British Library holds a free-standing pamphlet Extracts of Correspondence 58, April-November 1838. However, a clear lapse from this policy was committed by the Evangelical Magazine, 4 (1821), pp. 156-57 for it gave names and details of all society agents known to it.

¹²¹Report, 3 (1821), p. 12.

fifteen agents had itinerated in France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and the Rhine region.¹²² While these secretive policies may not satisfy the twentieth-century observer, they do not appear to have caused friction or misunderstanding among the early society supporters. For them, the published Extracts of Correspondence illustrated wonderfully (albeit without names and locations) the progress being made in Scripture distribution and village evangelism. The committee of management were themselves privy to much helpful information never published and when correspondence did not yield all necessary information, they were prepared to deputize one of their number to visit French Europe on their behalf. One such representative, vice-president Captain Cotton, visited every European mission station supported by the society to gather facts and to explain current society decisions and policies.¹²³

Even when agents of the society visited Britain, either to itinerate on the society's behalf,¹²⁴ or to gain ordination at the hands of ministers supportive of the Continental Society in gatherings at Poultry Chapel,

¹²²Proceedings, 4 (1822), p. 36.

¹²³Proceedings, 9 (1827), p. 3.

¹²⁴As did P. Mejanel in 1821; see p.315 supra. Ami Bost itinerated extensively in England in 1822, Memoires, I. p.310ff. Henri Pyt itinerated throughout Britain as late as 1832, Vie de Pyt, p.290

London,¹²⁵ care was taken not to unduly draw attention to them in the religious press.¹²⁶ Ironically, the general supporters of the Society only learned the identities of some agents when tributes were paid following their untimely deaths. Such was the case as regards Ferdinand Caulier and Felix Neff.¹²⁷

The London-based society, the distinctive of which was its employment of European agents "to assist local native ministers in preaching the Gospel . . . without the design of establishing any sect or party"¹²⁸ encountered some difficulty ensuring the application of this unsectarian principle. As early as 1821 the officers of the society felt compelled to respond to the persistent questions of those who demanded to know "what are the sentiments of the agents in doctrine and discipline?"¹²⁹

The question arose not because of sectarian bickering within the society's supporters but because of well-founded reports that some agents both "held the

¹²⁵As with agents Henri Pyt and M. Falle in July, 1821, (see Guers, Vie de Pyt, (1850), p. 130) and Felix Neff in May, 1823, (see Ami Bost, Life of Neff, p. 99).

¹²⁶The Evangelical Magazine, 29 (1821) p.339 by contrast reported in full on the ordination at Poultry Chapel of dissident Genevan pastors Guers and Gonthier.

¹²⁷Proceedings, 11 (1829), p. 4.

¹²⁸i.e., the greater portion of the society's first regulation, printed in each annual report or proceeding.

¹²⁹Report, 3 (1821), p. 15.

tenet of adult baptism and have been no less assiduous in making proselytes than in preaching the gospel."¹³⁰ The agent, Henri Pyt, may himself have been the source of such disquieting reports. He had as much as admitted, in a letter of 7 March 1818 to "Mr. A."¹³¹ that his own views, as well as those of Emil Guers, were unconventional on the doctrine of baptism. By late the same year, Pyt had been made the young society's second agent.¹³² Shortly thereafter, Pyt's preference for adult baptism and separatist church policy became public knowledge at Nomain and Bayonne. ¹³³

One suspects that some cracks were being "papered over" when the society members were informed, at the 1821 annual meeting, that as to the sentiments of the eight agents:

the majority are of the Reformed Church in France. Two are Baptists, two are former Catholics. . .The

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹The Mr. A. was surely Mr. W. Anderson, involved later that year in founding the Continental Society. The letter was published in Christian Repository and Religious Register, 3 (1818), pp. 309-11.

¹³²Guers, Vie de Pyt, p. 59. Mejanel had been the first.

¹³³Wemyss, Reveil, pp. 105, 127. Guers (himself of baptistic views) in his Vie de Pyt, p. 125, admits that society agents Mejanel, Pyt and Porchat all held this outlook, yet maintains that only Mejanel propounded it. Correspondence was then received from R. Haldane, who counselled, "In speaking much about baptism, one makes people forget about their spiritual misery and love to the saviour; one seeks more to satisfy his proper judgement than to advance the edification of the church of God".

society acknowledges that two agents did introduce the subject (of baptism) into their ministry and that they did baptize a small number of individuals. The committee must positively declare that it was done without any knowledge, consent or connivance of the committee and that measures were immediately taken to prevent a recurrence.

Your committee moreover explicitly assure you that the doctrines promulgated by the agents of this society are in strict accordance with the articles of the Church of England and those of the Assembly's catechism.¹³⁴

In hindsight, it seems obvious that the two initial appointees, Mejanel and Pyt, (the two Baptists alluded to) enjoyed their employment largely on the basis of personal agreement or accord with the two principals, Haldane and Drummond. This method of selecting agents, while it may have seemed satisfactory to the principal founders, raised serious questions in the mind of the chiefly paedobaptist society. Was there not a more even-handed method of selection? The society's vaunted unsectarian character seemed to hang in the balance. To guard against any further unsettling developments, the committee reported to the 1822 meeting (by which time fifteen agents were serving): "Two committees have been formed; one at G_____ and the other at M_____. By this method, we guard against a wrong choice of agents."¹³⁵

¹³⁴Report, 3 (1821), pp. 15-16. Pyt had been present for the 1820 annual meeting.

¹³⁵Proceedings, 4 (1822), p. 36. The locations, as usual shrouded in secrecy, were likely Geneva and Montauban. Emil Guers, Le Premier Reveil p.278 indicates that he served as central agent of the Geneva committee for many years before relinquishing the role to Henri

But this cannot have been the end of the matter, for the committee found it necessary in 1826 to provide six rules for agents in order to safeguard the original non-sectarian basis of 1818-19, i.e., "the aiding of native preachers without the design of establishing any distinct sect or party".

I. The agents shall confine themselves to the preaching of the Gospel. . . They shall not encourage a spirit of separation from the Protestant Churches nor establish churches under any form of government whatsoever.

II. They shall abstain from the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper altogether as the opinions of Christians concerning the proper mode and subjects of these ordinances are greatly divided. . . They are at liberty to partake of the latter.

III. Should an agent meet with an offer to become a stated pastor. . . he shall be at liberty to do so, but in that case he will no longer be considered an agent of the society.

IV. No agent shall be allowed to transact the business of any other society or to become an editor or author of any publication without the express permission of the committee; and it is recommended to the agents not to correspond with any society, church or individual on matters relating to ecclesiastical discipline.

V. The agents shall promote as much as possible the circulation of the Scripture, exclusive of the apocrypha, and religious tracts and consider themselves as cooperating with every religious institution which is formed for the purpose of advancing Christ's Kingdom in the world.

VI. The agents shall keep journals of their labours and transmit a copy of the same.¹³⁶

Plainly, the mere existence of screening committees in two European cities for the purpose of selecting the

Pyt. As both held to Baptist views, it is difficult to see how their appointment necessarily served to rectify the tensions of the early 1820's.

¹³⁶Proceedings, 8 (1826), p. 16.

right sort of agent was no panacea for the sectarian tensions of the time. If the society attracted some agents who entered the ministry of the French Reformed Church when the opportunity presented itself,¹³⁷ and others who sought entry without success,¹³⁸ there was always a sizeable third group within French Europe and beyond which found the idea of such 'rapprochement' unpleasant in the extreme. Henri Pyt, from 1828 the "central agent" of the society within France,¹³⁹ had sought employment in the society originally because he sensed that "only in the work of itinerant evangelism could he avoid compromise with the national church".¹⁴⁰ That Pyt, who shared convictions so similar to those of his mentor, Haldane, should have occupied such an influential place within the society suggests internal tension between the organization's original non-sectarian posture and the individual stance of some of its agents.

The Continental Society and Contemporary Controversy

To its credit, the society did manage to steer clear of one of the two major issues serving to divide British

¹³⁷E.g., Laurent Cadoret and Philippe Falle, both graduates of Bogue's Gosport academy.

¹³⁸E.g., Felix Neff, whose lack of French citizenship served to bar his ratification by the government of the day.

¹³⁹Proceedings, 10 (1828), p. 8.

¹⁴⁰Guers, Pyt, p. 59.

evangelical Christians in the 1820's. The "apocrypha controversy", pursued by Robert Haldane and Henry Drummond with the British and Foreign Bible Society over the constitutionality and propriety of the latter's including the apocryphal books in bound copies of the Holy Scriptures supplied to Europe, did not bring estrangement between the two societies. One might have expected otherwise, given the prominence of Haldane and Drummond in the unfortunate debacle. While the Continental Society's "rules for agents" of 1826 had urged circulation of Scriptures without the apocrypha "as much as possible" (a deliberately ambiguous phrase?), it is plain that the society's agents were highly eclectic in their Scripture distribution. Repeated appreciative statements in the Reports and Proceedings indicate the Bible Society's unstinting help in providing the 'de Sacy' Catholic version of the New Testament for broad and enthusiastic distribution by Continental Society agents.¹⁴¹ The time-honoured Martin version was also widely used. The agent, Felix Neff, recorded his displeasure that Scriptures with apocrypha were not widely enough available for distribution to the largely

¹⁴¹Report, 2 (1820), p. 5; 3 (1821), p. 19; 4 (1822), pp. 38,39: "The mainspring of the whole has been the B. F. B. S. of London"; 6 (1824), p.15: "Your agents have been regularly supplied with all they have required".

Catholic population of the High Alps.¹⁴²

The charge of the Haldane biographer that "the Bible Society was induced, by the dread of giving offence, to refuse to entrust Bibles for distribution to such able men as Bost, Pyt, or Neff"¹⁴³ finds no corroboration in the Reports or Proceedings. At the 1827 annual meeting, the secretary, Hugh McNeile, repudiated in no uncertain terms the rumour, fed by the Apocrypha controversy, "that the Continental Society is opposed to the Bible Society". McNeile admitted that it was probably his own and Henry Drummond's purely personal opposition to the inclusion of the Apocrypha which had fed the rumour. Yet he rejoiced that the Bible Society itself had recently resolved that "it is injudicious to add the Apocrypha to the volume of the Holy Scripture". Now he was happy to state that "the interests of the Bible Society are interests which ought to be sacred to the end of the world".¹⁴⁴ Robert Haldane meanwhile carried on his own polemical warfare with the Bible Society. But these machinations, leading to the estrangement of the Edinburgh Bible Society from the British and Foreign Bible Society and the inauguration of the Trinitarian Bible Society within England in 1831 were

¹⁴²A. Bost, Letters and Biography of Felix Neff, (London, 1855), p. 251. Neff to M. Bonifas (1822): "As it is useless to offer Bibles without the Apocrypha to the Roman Catholics, this good work of distribution must at present stand still."

¹⁴³A. Haldane, Lives, p. 507.

¹⁴⁴Proceedings, 9 (1827), p. 115.

not Continental Society concerns.¹⁴⁵ Yet if the apocrypha controversy passed this society by, the same cannot be said for the second major issue of the 1820's facing evangelical Protestants--the sudden rise of premillennialism.¹⁴⁶

Premillennialism, in contrast to the established post-millennial outlook, did not expect the gospel to win more than marginal advances in the world prior to the second advent of Christ. Further, it predicted continual societal and ecclesiastical decline until the great event of the 'eschaton'. A strong feature of this movement in the 1820's was the attempt at intercalating contemporary historical events into the biblical teaching regarding the "end". Three of the most vocal advocates of this new system of prophetic interpretation were all officers of the Continental Society. These were Lewis Way, Henry Drummond and Edward Irving.

Lewis Way,¹⁴⁷ vice-president from 1820 until at least 1832, is credited by the leading contemporary historian of premillennialism with having sparked the rise

¹⁴⁵Cf. W. C. Somerville, From Iona to Dunblane, (Edinburgh, 1948), p. 21. They were, however, the concerns of his nephew and biographer, Alexander Haldane. The latter, resident in London from 1822, was a member of the Continental Society business committee from 1824. From 1828 he was the incisive editor of the arch-Protestant Record. Cf. Balleine, Evangelical Party, p. 135.

¹⁴⁶This issue has been briefly alluded to in chapter 1, pp. 75 ff.

¹⁴⁷to whom reference has been made above at p. 311.

of the movement in post-war England.¹⁴⁸ In 1820, using the pen-name 'Basilicus', he issued a series of articles in the journal of the London Society for the Propagation of Christianity Among the Jews that the second advent of Jesus Christ should be expected before the millennium.¹⁴⁹ Among the many evangelicals influenced was Henry Drummond, a principal, as we have seen, in the founding of the Continental Society.¹⁵⁰ Edward Irving, a member of the business committee of the society from 1826 (and anniversary preacher the year preceding), was by 1825 also an exponent of the new ideology; he acknowledged himself the disciple not of Way but of another early writer on these subjects, J. Hatley Frere.¹⁵¹

The relative inaccessibility of the Reports and Proceedings of the society, when taken in combination with the known involvement of such vocal advocates of the

¹⁴⁸Sandeen, Roots of Fundamentalism, p. 12. Way still appears as vice-president in the 1832 Proceedings but has vanished from the executive in the Proceedings of 1839.

¹⁴⁹Sandeen, Roots, *ibid.* Significantly, Way's preoccupation with the issue led to the termination of his connection with the L. S. P. C. J. which was unsympathetic.

¹⁵⁰We may safely surmise that Way was drawn into the Continental Society on the basis of Drummond's growing appreciation for this viewpoint and of Way's obvious wealth.

¹⁵¹Irving's controversial anniversary sermon of 1825, "Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed", was not published in original form. The much expanded version published in 1826 at London gave, in its introduction, a declaration of clear indebtedness to Frere.

premillennial scheme has left the field open for conjecture as to the relation of the one to the other. What is more, the only twentieth-century scholar to make full use of the extant society records was the Adventist historian, Leroy Froom, who examined the society as part of an over-arching attempt to demonstrate the persistence of premillennial interpretation through the Christian centuries. Froom tenuously equated the viewpoint of vocal individuals (e.g., Way, Drummond, Irving) and that of the society;¹⁵² his analysis has been adopted as definitive by more recent students of the society.¹⁵³

A close examination of the records, however, indicates that it is an oversimplification to suggest, as does one writer dependent on Froom, that the society was "very quickly dominated by millennarian concerns".¹⁵⁴ The related judgement that "the Genevan 'reveil' in general and Caesar Malan in particular were associated

¹⁵²Leroy E. Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, 4 vols. (Washington D.C., 1950-54). The relevant materials are found in vol. 3, pp. 435-460. Examples of this over-readiness to equate the view of one for all are found on pp. 446-447 where Froom speaks of "the real purpose" and "the unchanging keynote" of the society.

¹⁵³Cf. Ernest Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism; British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930, (Chicago, 1970); Iain Murray, The Puritan Hope; Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy, (London, 1971); T. C. F. Stunt, "Geneva and the British Evangelicals in the Early 19th Century" in J. E. H., 32 (1981). It is appropriate to add that such writers have not shared Froom's concern to commend the premillennial understanding.

¹⁵⁴Sandeen, Roots, p. 16.

with the circle of radicals around Drummond and Irving. .
."155 is equally open to question. Both conjectures are
largely dependent upon Froom's highly selective sifting
of the records.

We may note initially that the new premillennial
ideology with its pessimism regarding the possibility of
progress in this world, proved most attractive to
ministers and laymen of the Established Churches of
England and Scotland.¹⁵⁶ It was this constituency and
not that of English or Scottish Dissent which recoiled
most forcefully from the events and example of the French
Revolution. It was this same constituency which had
fastened upon the slightest evidence of Dissenting
sympathy for that revolutionary cause as the basis for an
estrangement of recent cordial relationships in the early
1790's. Post-war agitation over the price of corn,
unemployment, Catholic emancipation, and extension of
suffrage tended to be construed by the members of the
Established Churches as symptoms of great social
upheaval. And in this respect, younger evangelical
ministers and laymen within the establishments were far
more likely to strike a volatile and strident posture

¹⁵⁵Stunt, "Geneva and the British Evangelicals", p.
43.

¹⁵⁶A point effectively made by Sandeen, Rise of
Fundamentalism, p. 19.

than the older generation.¹⁵⁷ Yet Dissent, proliferating by leaps and bounds in this period, saw in the steady return of freedoms to French Protestants a harbinger of the restoration of its own political rights, and claimed to see in the successes of the Bible and missionary societies evidences of world conquest for the gospel.

We have noted that the founding of the Continental Society was greatly assisted by certain stalwarts who two decades earlier had been among the founders of the L. M. S.¹⁵⁸ This group was so characterized by evangelical optimism throughout the 1820-1840 era that it was virtually impervious to the appeal of the pessimistic premillennial emphases. The appointment of Lewis Way as vice-president in 1820,¹⁵⁹ just as Way was gaining a reputation for his novel premillennial views, might strike us as odd, given the existing consensus. But Way was not the spokesman for any premillennial "movement" as such at this point.¹⁶⁰ Until 1826, premillennial writers

¹⁵⁷See David Newsome, The Parting of Friends, (London, 1966), p. 10; and Sandeen, Roots, p. 41.

¹⁵⁸See pp. 304 ff. supra.

¹⁵⁹Note p. 328. above and footnote 149.

¹⁶⁰This cannot be said to have existed in any official sense until Henry Drummond hosted three successive annual "Albury conferences" for premillennial enthusiasts at his Surrey estate, commencing December 1826. Cf. Sandeen.p.18ff.

such as Way, J. H. Frere, and William Cunninghame¹⁶¹ were looked upon as eccentric individualists. Against the background of the early and sustained support for the society from the L.M.S. constituency and the undeveloped state of premillennialism before 1826, the allegation that premillennialism provided the "real purpose" and "unchanging keynote"¹⁶² of the society cannot be sustained.

Having set this tendentious hypothesis aside, we are now free to observe instead the gradual and increasing employment of the society's annual meetings for apocalyptic speculations, the spirited resistance to such speculation by representatives of the society's older (and probably larger) constituency, and the role played by this rise of apocalyptic controversy in the rapid decline of the society after 1830.

There can be little doubt that Lewis Way was sounding a very strange and unexpected note when, in 1822, moving the adoption of the committee's report at

¹⁶¹All of whom eventually supported the Continental Society. It may be freely admitted that principal founder, Henry Drummond, once under the influence of Lewis Way in prophetic matters, certainly made it his business to propose the inclusion of persons holding these views to positions of influence within the Continental Society. A case in point was Hugh McNeile, who having received the rectory of Albury by Drummond's presentation in 1822 and similarly joined the business committee of the society in 1824, was soon joining his patron and Way in sounding the premillennial note within the society. D.N.B s.v. "McNeile, Hugh", vol. 35, p.246, Proceedings, 6 (1824), p.i.

¹⁶²Froom, Prophetic Faith, vol. 3, pp. 446,447.

the Society's fourth annual meeting, he intimated

There is a time for all things: and I think this is the very time marked out by prophecy and determined by the circumstances of Europe when this Society ought to commence a scriptural crusade under that sacred commission . . . to call its members out of the mystical Babylon. This is the foundation on which this Society ought to rest and if continued on this foundation, stand it must.¹⁶³

Behind this cryptic statement lay Way's conviction, buttressed by his recent tour of Europe, that the National Churches of Europe were in an utterly ruinous state - a state so deplorable that they had become foes rather than allies of the Christian gospel. Way continued:

There is just no religion on the continent at all! I don't mean to exclude the thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal; God has his people there - but they are so few that I could not find them.¹⁶⁴

Way's contention, so utterly at odds with the society's position that Europe's existing churches were worthy of assistance in their present difficulties, was immediately challenged. Mark Wilks, a constant observer of the religious affairs of French Europe and from 1822 pastor to an English congregation at Paris, was promptly on his feet to insist that:

the state of France is highly encouraging. There is a movement among the minds of men highly favourable to revealed truth. There is among the Catholics a

¹⁶³proceedings, 4 (1822), p.9. It is highly significant that no evidence of this apocalypticism is found in any of the preceding Reports or Proceedings. Without such antecedents, the new note can be judged to have been disturbingly innovative.

¹⁶⁴ibid. p.10.

disposition, perhaps not seen since the Reformation, to receive the truth and examine the truth. I shall neither therefore talk of the extent of infidelity nor of catholic superstition but tell you of the glorious appearance of divine goodness, truth and mercy in subduing infidelity by the gospel, and in dispelling all the shadows of superstition. . . certainly if there are encouragements anywhere in the world. . . it is on the Continent.¹⁶⁵

Listeners might have been forgiven for wondering whether the two speakers had in fact visited the same continent. To be sure, they had done so. Yet to Way, a pessimistic minister of the Church of England, the frailty of the gospel cause in Europe had only served to reinforce his disposition to believe that the end of all things was at hand. Wilks, by contrast, saw in the same struggle being waged in France ample encouragements that the gospel was still a world-changing force. He had seen

a Bible Society formed in France with forty auxiliaries established. Almost all the large cities of France now possess ministers of the Gospel of Christ who all preach the fall of man, the necessity of the sacrifice of Christ, and the doctrine of salvation by faith.¹⁶⁶

The novel missionary pessimism had shown its head and been made to give place not only to the older view, but a view well buttressed by an abundance of encouraging developments.

At the 1823 annual meeting, the extravagant utterances of the preceding year were restrained. The anniversary preacher, John Williams of Stroud,

¹⁶⁵ibid. pp.15,16.

¹⁶⁶ibid. p.17.

Gloucestershire, articulated the purpose of the society in a way acceptable to all by indicating that "The Continental Society aims at nothing more and nothing less than a revival of spiritual religion on the Continent of Europe".¹⁶⁷ Mark Wilks reported once more, in glowing terms, on the encouraging aspects of evangelical work in France, while a budding premillennialist Scot, William Cunninghame of Lainshaw spoke of how the missionary exertions of favoured Britain did not yet equal the measure of her responsibility in "the wreck of Europe (there) in almost Egyptian darkness".¹⁶⁸

The 1824 annual meeting featured sermons by both Hugh McNeile of Albury and Ralph Wardlaw, professor of theology at the Glasgow (Congregational) Theological Academy. There were no clashes of opinion. Henry Drummond cleverly made liberal use of extracts from Daniel Wilson's recently-published Letters from an Absent Brother On the Continent (1823) to "demonstrate the true state of Europe and the validity of the society's enterprize"¹⁶⁹

Given the absence of apocalyptic expressions at

¹⁶⁷Proceedings, 5 (1823) pp.xiv ff. This aim was lauded by the Methodist, Jabez Bunting. p.93.

¹⁶⁸ibid. pp.83,89.

¹⁶⁹Proceedings, 6 (1824), p.63. It is somewhat ironic that while Drummond quoted the work approvingly, Robert Haldane would speak disparagingly of the work in his Review of the Conduct of Daniel Wilson On the Continent (Edinburgh, 1829). We have noted that Wilson supported the Continental Society in the early 1820's.

society gatherings following the mild flare-up of 1822, the selection of Edward Irving as preacher for the 1825 annual meeting probably signified nothing more than the considerable esteem in which he was then held. On account of this same general regard he had been invited to preach the anniversary sermon of the London Missionary Society in May 1824.¹⁷⁰

When Irving stood to unfold his theme of "Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed of God" before the Continental Society in May 1825, there was an instantaneous reaction. William Jones, the early biographer of Irving, records that

it was attended with the effect of disturbing and disquieting the minds of those for whose edification it was written, and several of the leading members of the committee had neither Christian patience nor decorum enough to hear the preacher out, but abruptly left the place. From hints that were subsequently dropped, Mr. Irving found that his object in the discourse had been much misapprehended.¹⁷¹

Perhaps because of the instantaneous furore, the sermon was not printed for circulation.¹⁷² Some

¹⁷⁰The Pulpit 2 (1824) p.461, having printed the sermon in full, commented acerbically "how far it was judicious to expose the errors of the missionary system to upwards of 3,000 persons, we do not now say. Neither are we competent to determine the propriety of engaging in any argument for three and a half hours".

¹⁷¹William Jones, Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Edward Irving, A.M., (London, 1835) p.141. It is as likely, however, that this noticeable disapproval was rooted in a clear recognition of Irving's meaning, rather than a misjudging of it.

¹⁷²Irving, however, filled this void by turning the sermon into a book-length treatise of the same name, published in 1826. The author predicted that the second

consummate diplomacy must have been required to restore a sense of decorum to the annual meeting, the featured guest of which was Professor A. Tholuck of Halle, Prussia. Tholuck bluntly underlined the spiritual decline of the Christian Church in his homeland, but emphasized that pious young Prussian ministers were receptive to the evangelical emphasis of the society.¹⁷³

In 1826, the guest preacher was Caesar Malan of Geneva, no friend of millennialism.¹⁷⁴ Yet in the meeting, Henry Drummond further indicated the development of his own thinking by maintaining that

the Bible, Jews (i.e. London Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Jews) and Continental Societies, by their very existence, are indicative of the signs of the latter times.¹⁷⁵

Lewis Way seized the opportunity to re-iterate his theme of 1822, that the work of this society was "to call the people out of Babylon"¹⁷⁶; by this terminology he represented all nominal Christianity in Europe, whether Catholic or Protestant, as idolatrous.

Having surveyed the first eight years of the

advent would occur in 1868.

¹⁷³Proceedings, 7 (1825), p.42.

¹⁷⁴Malan, Life of C. Malan, p.200 credits Alexander Haldane for this re-introduction into the London evangelical world after a lapse of seven years. Haldane was now a London barrister and committee member of the society. Malan's antagonism to millennialism is made plain in the Life, p.411.

¹⁷⁵Proceedings, 8 (1826), p.33.

¹⁷⁶ibid. p.38.

society's existence, it is worth remarking that we find very little evidence that this society was "very quickly dominated by millennarian concerns"¹⁷⁷. In honesty, we may speak only of the manifestation of the new viewpoint by select persons in the face of an otherwise-minded membership.

Before the society would assemble again in an annual meeting, there occurred another meeting at the private residence and by the personal invitation of Henry Drummond. To his estate in Albury, Surrey in December 1826, Drummond summoned approximately twenty ministers and laymen, chiefly of established churches, for a discussion about the fulfillment of biblical prophecies. Sandeen acutely remarks:

As might be expected, many of those attending the conference had been previously associated in the work of the Continental Society and the London Society for the Propagation of Christianity Among the Jews. In addition to Drummond and Irving, there were Lewis Way, Joseph Wolff, and Charles Hawtrey, editor of the Jewish Expositor (of the L.S.P.C.J.). William Cunningham of Lainshaw and James Hatley Frere, prophetic expositors. George Montagu, Lord Mandeville, and later Duke of Manchester and the Rev. William Marsh. Also the Rev. Hugh McNeile, rector of Albury, Daniel Wilson, later Bishop of Calcutta, John James Strutt, later Baron Rayleigh, Rev. Robert Story of Roseneath, the Rev. James Haldane Stewart, the Rev. James Stratton, the Rev. Edward T. Vaughan all Anglicans, and two laymen, John Bayford and John Tudor.¹⁷⁸

It has now been possible to identify¹⁷⁹ no less than

¹⁷⁷Sandeen, Roots, p.16.

¹⁷⁸Sandeen, Roots, pp. 18,19.

¹⁷⁹From the Reports and Proceedings of that decade.

fourteen of these twenty-two persons as Continental Society supporters. The immediate result of this conference (repeated annually through 1828) for the society to which so many were affiliated, was that these persons began to be immediately identified with the pessimistic premillennial tenets and singled out for scorn. Thus Edward Irving, even when he rose in the 1827 meeting to give the conventional commendation of the efforts of the society against "hollow Protestantism and superstitious popery", stopped to complain of the scurrilous treatment being shown him within the meeting:

I would beg leave to suggest that those around me might be better employed than endeavouring to drown the sound of my voice in the acclamation of their own . . . It is not to be endured that on such occasions as these, a speaker should stand up and be overawed by the approbation or disapprobation of those that surround him.¹⁸⁰

Hugh McNeile, himself a participant in the Albury conference and society secretary since the year preceding, reflected the same defensiveness when he attempted to respond

to an alarm that has sprung up among Continental Society members lest the society should be injured by the literal interpretation of the prophecies as understood by some of those connected with the society and the platform of the meeting should be made the arena of particular views. In reply, I have this to say, "that it is by its Report that the Society must be judged, and not by the opinion of any particular member". . . By such (attention to) prophecies, I do not feel that the dignity of any society is compromised.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰Proceedings, 9 (1827), p.103.

¹⁸¹ibid. p.116.

Yet it may be remarked that it was only the determined effort of the Albury circle to raise their novel perspective in the annual meetings which threatened to make the platform just such an arena. McNeile's remarks were therefore a clear case of special pleading for his own cause. The Albury circle must have taken courage from the fact that from their number, John James Strutt, was named in that year as the new society president and Lord Mandeville as member of the committee. But they were still very far from dominating the society.

As though building upon a foundation laid by McNeile's remarks at the close of the annual meeting of 1827, Henry Drummond stood to his feet at the meeting of 1828 to maintain that the organization's purpose was primarily to "send preachers into the heart of Christendom to tell the inhabitants that they are not Christian". Further, Drummond presented a rambling and verbose defence of his premillennial scheme. Ostensibly careful to make it plain that he delivered only personal opinion, he drew both hisses from the hall and some cheering from the platform when he maintained

that in my opinion it is the duty of the agents to declare to Babylon that she is not to be converted but destroyed. . .When I first perceived that the present dispensation was not to end in the conversion of the world but in judgements from God, I thought it so clear that I wondered I had never seen it before and I concluded that all my Scripture friends were previously aware of it. . .Those who oppose our views bring forward two texts of Scripture; the one is "Go into all the world and preach the gospel", the other "The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth" whence they draw the unavoidable conclusion that

their societies are to produce such a state of things. Their logic is bad, their theology worse.¹⁸²

We need not wonder that Drummond found it necessary to pause and protest at the lack of decorum in the meeting; his comments seemed guaranteed to raise the ire of what in all likelihood was the majority of his hearers. Was he not making the platform "the arena of particular views" with a vengeance? Curiously, a second premillennialist designated to second Drummond's motion, Edward Bickersteth of the Church Missionary Society, commenced by insisting that "he did so without concurring in every remark which the preceding speaker had made".¹⁸³ The reaction was not yet complete; J. Pye Smith of Homerton College (without mentioning Drummond by name) repudiated his apocalyptic sentiments in the strongest possible terms:

When the kingdoms of this world should be declared to be the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, it should be by an extraordinary blessing poured out upon those common means of grace which this society was engaged in sending among the Continental nations.¹⁸⁴

With such goings-on in the annual meetings, surely it was an act of extraordinary honesty for Drummond to

¹⁸²Proceedings, 10 (1828), pp. 31.34.

¹⁸³Proceedings, 10 (1828), p. 34. Interestingly, one of the very few identifiable Nonconformist ministers to sympathize openly with Drummond, Joseph Irons of Grove Chapel Camberwell, stated that "he concurred with Drummond's point that the return of Christ will be a day of vengeance". p.43.

¹⁸⁴ibid. p.37.

inform the following year's meeting that the press was describing the gatherings of the Continental Society as "the exhibitions of theological mountebanks!"¹⁸⁵ Yet such press reports did not dampen the zeal of the Albury circle. John James Strutt, now society president, indicated in his opening remarks for 1829 the extent to which he was now a devotee of the new school:

The political aspect of affairs seems to confirm the opinion that the sixth seal (of Revelation chap. 6) is nearly expired and we see the kingdom which formed the image of gold, silver, brass, and iron in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. . . The time is not distant when a terrible day of vengeance will come; the Lord Jesus will return, but he will return offended with those who have slighted his doctrines.¹⁸⁶

As if the president's opening statement did not constitute a sufficient defence of the new theories, additional exhibits were provided by the Rev. C.S. Hawtrey's attempt to show that "the 14th chapter of Zechariah was the key chapter in reference to the millennial day" and the Rev. Horatio Montague's effort to demonstrate "that Popery is the apocalyptic Babylon".¹⁸⁷ Such zealous spokesmen for the cause seemed to proceed on the mistaken assumption that all and sundry listeners understood and agreed with the details of their apocalyptic argument.

All this proved too much for one listener to bear.

¹⁸⁵Proceedings, 11 (1829), p.35.

¹⁸⁶ibid. p.23.

¹⁸⁷ibid. p.28.

Dr. J. Pye Smith of Homerton, a clear proponent of the older prophetic view, had been slated to speak in support of the anti-papal resolution. Like any robust Protestant of his day he was profoundly distrustful of the papacy. Smith diplomatically indicated that he gave the anti-papal motion his "cordial approbation", yet "was concerned over sentiments which he could not but deem erroneous".¹⁸⁸ He went on to insist that:

This society was founded upon the great common principles in which all Christians agreed; therefore he deeply lamented that there had been an infusion of other opinions which to say the least were doubtful and which put those who conscientiously felt otherwise into the unwelcome alternative of seeming either to acquiesce by their silence or raising their voices. . . He begged to express his dissent from the dark and gloomy views which some of them took of the state and prospects of Christianity. . . On the contrary there was considerable ground for hope and rejoicing. . . He respectfully conceived that opinions which are not generally approved by serious and devoted Christians ought not to be introduced on these occasions. As one of the original members of that society. . . he begged to enter his humble protest against the introduction of these sentiments.¹⁸⁹

Such a call brought the unprecedented interjection of the society's secretary, the premillennialist McNeile, that "according to the Society's rules, the Society is not responsible for the sentiments of any individual"¹⁹⁰. Smith, graciously accepted this reminder and completed his speech on a note of Christian optimism regarding the

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.* p.30

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.* pp.29,30.

¹⁹⁰ *ibid.* p.31

future by claiming that "never since the days of the primitive Christians was there so propitious an aspect for the growth of the Word of God". Yet his speech ended to a "combination of hisses, applause, and cries of "chair!".¹⁹¹

It is perhaps significant that the records of the Continental Society have proved almost unobtainable beyond the year 1829.¹⁹² The growing strife over the implications of biblical prophecies of the denouement of history for the conduct of Christian mission, a strife engendered by the outspoken advocates of the newer pessimistic views, was working steadily to erode the spirit of goodwill originally recognized as vital to the society's existence. The champions of strident premillennialism, determined to have a platform for their views, had fastened upon the Continental Society - not least because that society was in a position of financial dependency upon Henry Drummond.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ibid. pp. 31-34.

¹⁹²The bound volume of the Reports and Proceedings at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, encompasses the years 1819-29 only. Some society supporter apparently terminated his support with the year 1829. The British Library can add only Proceedings for 1832 and 1839.

¹⁹³The Reports and Proceedings indicate Drummond to have been consistently the largest single donor to Society operations through the 1820's, with annual contributions in the region of £290.

The Society Overtaken by Events

Yet before this fissure could be broadened further, the society was overtaken by two developments -- one domestic and the other foreign -- which brought complete upheaval to the contemporary situation. The first was the growth of notoriety and suspicion surrounding the Rev. Edward Irving, minister of the National Scotch Church, Regent Square, London. Irving's connection with the society as an anniversary preacher in 1825, a charity sermon preacher in 1827¹⁹⁴ and a committee member from 1826 raised awkward and unwelcome questions regarding the body when, in 1829 he was complained against by his congregation for his encouragement of "prophecy" and "glossolalia" in church services. The presbytery in the city not only took up the complaint and found it entirely justified but also moved to dissolve the pastoral tie between Irving and the congregation.¹⁹⁵ In early 1830, it also commenced its own investigation into the espousal by Edward Irving and A.J. Scott (another London minister)

¹⁹⁴Irving preached a sermon entitled "The Three Unclean Spirits" (Rev. 16.13,14) at Hackney in 1827. The sermon is printed in Irving's Sermons, Lectures, and Occasional Discourses, (London, 1828) vol. 3, pp. 847-892.

¹⁹⁵Jones, Sketch of Irving, p.274. The volume contains extensive documentation of this and subsequent proceedings. Owing to the fact that the 'presbytery' of Church of Scotland congregations in London had no legal standing in the eyes of the Scottish General Assembly, its ability to adjudicate these complaints was contested by Irving, who renounced his connection with it. The dissolution was not finally enacted until 2 May, 1832.

of the view that the Son of God had received a sinful human nature at his Incarnation. A charge of heresy against Irving was sustained and remitted to his home presbytery of Annan.

The practical effect of Irving's aberrations for the society was one of confusion. The growing circle of society office bearers moving in the circle of Henry Drummond (of which Irving had been one) suffered considerable discredit and inner division. Irving was himself promptly removed from the business committee.¹⁹⁶ A dual exodus from the society followed; one, of persons who supported Irving, and a second comprised of persons who unsuccessfully demanded the removal of Henry Drummond as well as Irving. Plainly, some papering over of cracks took place, for Drummond, who was as much as Irving the advocate of the restoration of the charismata, was permitted to remain on the business committee as wealthy patron. He gave assurances that he would not seek to make his particular opinions prevail.¹⁹⁷ The premillennial faction within a straitened society was therefore a somewhat chastened group by the year 1832.

¹⁹⁶Guers, Vie de Pyt, p. 296. The account of these developments provided by Guers represents the only known contemporary source. Guers acknowledges the sister of the deceased Pyt (himself central agent of the society in France and visitor to the London annual meeting in 1832) as the person supplying these details.

¹⁹⁷ibid p. 296. Drummond continued as major financial supporter of the society as late as 1839, when he contributed £340. Proceedings, 21 (1839), appendix.

Strains within the Drummond 'circle' were illustrated by the publication in 1832 of three sermons by Hugh McNeile contesting the claimed restoration of miracles.¹⁹⁸ The annual meeting of 1832 received somb~~r~~^e news of a troublesome year past. Total annual receipts had declined from an average of £2400 to £1909; some agents had been released for lack of funds.

The other and apparently larger development to overtake the society was the second wave of 'dissidence' in the Genevan Church.¹⁹⁹ The immediate outcome was the creation in 1831 of the Geneva Evangelical Society, an evangelical agency committed to the provision of alternat^{ive} religious services, itinerant home evangelism and colportage, foreign mission, and theological education. The Genevan society invited and received foreign assistance with the latter two tasks from a very early period.

From America, the returned Paris merchant, S.V.S. Wilder, organized financial assistance for the Geneva Society and disbursed it through a European agent, Robert Baird.²⁰⁰ At London, concerned individual evangelicals

¹⁹⁸D.N.B. vol. 35. p. 246.

¹⁹⁹described in chapter 3, above.

²⁰⁰Significantly, Wilder continued a long-term vice president of the Continental Society 1820-1839 (by correspondence after 1823). This involvement did not preclude his generating quite distinctive New England responses to the needs for evangelization of French Europe, the best known of which was the Foreign Evangelical Society. Its Reports 1840-46 are available

within the Church of England responded as early as 1832 to the new state of affairs at Geneva by establishing a "Central Committee in Aid" of the new Geneva Society.²⁰¹ Such new responses to French Europe may have been reflective of a lack of confidence in the stability and resolve of the Continental Society. Yet they were more certainly a recognition that that body, beset with difficulties largely of its own making, had more responsibility than it could properly bear for the present in simply supporting its existing agents. The Continental Society was certainly unprepared for the escalation of evangelical opportunity created by the commencement of the Geneva Society.

The Continental Society made what was surely an overdue attempt to indigenize its French operations in late 1832. No doubt it was spurred to do this by the example of the indigenous society at Geneva, which aimed to support and direct its own colporteurs and evangelists. At the urging of Henri Pyt, the Continental Society agreed to the establishment of a committee of

in the British Library.

²⁰¹see Edward Bickersteth, ed. A Voice From the Alps, (London, 1838), p.4. The new organization as reflected in the 1838 publication was supported by such notables as W.S. Gilly (biographer of Neff), brothers Gerard and Baptist Noel, and Richard Burgess, former Anglican minister at Geneva. Yet certain Church of England evangelicals such as Bickersteth, Hugh McNeile, and S.R. Drummond were still faithful supporters of the Continental Society as late as 1839. Bickersteth and the Noel brothers were obviously strong supporters of both.

twelve persons at Paris which would give direction to all society agents working in the country.²⁰² Yet the beneficial scheme was scuttled by the proposal, printed that year in Les Archives du Christianisme, that a purely French evangelization society be created, along the lines of that now begun at Geneva. The proposal was accompanied by the offer of five hundred francs to assist. The London-linked society of French directors led by Pyt met only three times before its majority opted to found such a new all-French society.²⁰³ Pyt and the minority continued in connection with London. Thus began the 'Societe Evangelique Francaise' and the Continental Society subsequently experienced serious marginalization in the country where it had most focused its men and funds.

The Church of England-related "Central Committee" was happy to embrace the new indigenous Paris Society and

²⁰²The Pyt proposal will have also reflected the increased liberty experienced by Christian societies in France under the July Monarchy commenced in 1830. Cf. chapter 3 supra.

²⁰³Guers, Pyt p. 298. There is a very considerable likelihood that the initial backing for the indigenous Paris-based society was provided by the S.V.S. Wilder-linked American grouping then known as the "French Committee". If this surmise is correct, Wilder, linked also to the Continental Society was outflanking that body by forwarding an American-backed indigenization. Furthermore, Wilder will have known in detail the Continental Society's inability to greatly expand to meet the current expanded opportunities. See Robert Evans, The Influence of Foreigners in the French 'Reveil', (Manchester University Ph.D. Dissertation), 1971. p.398 and Wilder, Records, p. 273.

a similar organization founded at Brussels in 1838,²⁰⁴ as well as the pioneering Evangelical Society of Geneva. The "Central Committee" existed simply to encourage moral and financial support of the European societies and left all selection and supervision of agents to these bodies. Increasingly, the beleaguered Continental Society sought to make a virtue out of its lack of success in adjusting to this indigenizing process. Having changed its name to the European Missionary Society (perhaps to shed unhappy associations from the past), its Proceedings now asserted:

The committee is aware of the existence, and desires the success of societies with objects nearly similar, but as the operations of these societies are confined to particular localities or the raising - not the distribution of funds for such purposes, it is presumed that the duties and claims of the European Missionary Society are in no respect superseded by their efforts. . . Your committee see no sufficient reason why they should surrender to any body of persons on the continent the management of those funds entrusted to them by the people of Great Britain.²⁰⁵

But this was mere whistling in the dark. The society had never really recovered from the loss of goodwill generated by the activities of the strident premillennialists and the aberrations of Edward Irving. The untimely death of its mainstay in France, Henri Pyt

²⁰⁴This was the Belgian Evangelical Society.

²⁰⁵Proceedings of the European Missionary Society formerly designated the Continental Society, 21 (1839), p.5. The change of name had taken effect as early as 1836 for in that year E. Bickersteth preached for it a sermon later published as The Religious State of Europe, (Glasgow, 1836) . See p 24.

in 1835, deprived it of a seasoned helmsman. By 1840, it was insolvent and was forced to submit to an inequitable merger with the Church of England-related "Central Committee". Henceforth known as the Foreign Aid Society, the merged organization conducted its business on strict Established Church lines, and would allow no Nonconformist to hold more than honorary office.²⁰⁶ The disappearance of the Continental Society brought about the end of that era of cross-denominational missionary effort in Europe.

Britain's Churches Respond to the 'Reveil'

The demise of the Continental Society might have been expected quite apart from the suspicion and mistrust sown by the Drummond "circle" and the loss of valued agents such as Pyt; the era 1810-1830 brought great change in Britain's ecclesiastical landscape. Viscount Sidmouth, speaking to the House of Lords in 1811, had

²⁰⁶Report of the Foreign Aid Society, 1 (1841), p. 5. The person most responsible for the merger was the indefatigable Edward Bickersteth, active member of both. Ironically the Church of England-related society was not the richer but only the more solvent of the two. The receipts of the senior society for 1838-39 (the last year for which we have records) were £1983, while for the "Central Committee" in its last year of separate existence, a mere £1277. But the former left a bank deficit of £300 which the merged society kindly took upon itself to repay. The merged society continued a vigorous existence through the century before finally expiring on the eve of W.W. I. Its annual Reports are found in the British and Bodleian libraries as are its magazines, The Gospel on the Continent and The Watchfire.

warned that the day was coming when Britain would be a nation with an "Established Church and sectarian people"²⁰⁷. The prolific growth of evangelical Nonconformity which lay behind Sidmouth's warning now began to converge into denominational patterns not seen earlier.

Though temporarily destabilized by the death of John Wesley in 1791, his Methodist followers continued a strong connexional life through the annual conference of "the one hundred" delegates from the regions where this form of evangelicalism had taken root. A Methodist Mission Society was then founded in 1813 and a theological college set up in 1837.²⁰⁸ English Baptists, who had long maintained strong county associations and, under the impulse of the Evangelical Revival, used these as the framework for expansion through itinerant preaching, witnessed the formation of the Baptist Missionary Association in 1792. The Baptist General Union, formed in 1813, gradually expanded to encompass Wales and Ireland as well.²⁰⁹ Congregational Independency in England similarly saw a progression from expansionary county associations to a national Union in

²⁰⁷in Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, 19 (1811), p.1131 quoted in D. Lovegrove, Established Church, Sectarian People, (Cambridge, 1988), p.vi.

²⁰⁸O.D.C.C. s.v. "Methodist Churches".

²⁰⁹O.D.C.C. s.v. "Baptists".

1832; Scottish Congregationalists had already federated in 1812.

It has recently been maintained that this heightening of denominationalism represents a retreat from the co-operative and undenominational idealism of the 1790's - an idealism which gave rise to the London Missionary, Tract, and Bible Societies.²¹⁰ However, such an analysis, while properly noting denominationalism's advance and the effect of this on co-operative enterprizes, has neglected to note the fashion in which denominationalism was the indirect result of the success of domestic and foreign evangelical enterprizes.

Baptist, Methodist, and Independent preachers and Sunday School workers may not have aimed at the direct creation of new connexional churches by their labours. But the very success of their widespread efforts did create new congregations which customarily gravitated into the connexion from which preacher and workers had come.²¹¹ Similarly, the support of the Baptist Missionary Society by non-federated Baptist congregations and the support of the London Missionary Society by non-federated Congregationalists served cumulatively to commend the usefulness of the denominational unions which

²¹⁰Martin, Evangelicals United, p.196.

²¹¹David M. Thompson, Denominationalism and Dissent, 1795-1835: A Question of Identity, (London, 1985), p.13.

followed.²¹² Thus conceived, denominationalism was the offspring of evangelical expansion.

Thus, by the 1820's and 1830's, there had developed a considerable expectation that denominations ought to be active in organizing their own foreign endeavours and placing their own agents. We have seen²¹³ that British Methodists had been active in France on this basis since 1792 and afresh after the peace of 1815. From that period commenced several decades of working to assist the French Reformed Church in locales where assistance was welcomed. Charles Cook became the most prominent British Methodist working in France. Yet by mid-century, such collaborative efforts on the part of the Methodists began to give way to the foundation of self-consciously Methodist congregations.²¹⁴

The opportunity for such European activity was inadvertently thrust upon the newly-configured United Secession Church of Scotland²¹⁵ in spring 1825 by the written request of the Genevan minister, Caesar Malan, for ministerial reception. The latter had sought

²¹²ibid. p.12.

²¹³chapter two, above.

²¹⁴The missionary career of Charles Cook and the issues raised by it are helpfully treated in Maury, Le Reveil, I. pp.416-442.

²¹⁵founded in 1821 by the re-union of the majorities of the Burgher and Anti-Burgher Secession Churches. We have noted the 'Reveil' interests of each church as reflected in their respective magazines in the first section of this chapter.

reception unsuccessfully from the Assembly of the Church of Scotland the year previous, but had fallen afoul of a regulation of 1799 requiring ministers to have trained in a Scottish university. The United Secession Church, being happily without any such bar, granted Malan the status he sought, both on the basis of his declaration of doctrinal affinity and the widespread familiarity of Synod ministers with his case. M'Kerrow, the Secession historian, could record that

the expulsion of Mr. Malan from his church, in the city of Geneva, and the persecution to which he had otherwise been subjected. . . had excited a lively interest in him among the friends of religion in this country. And those ministers of the Secession who were acquainted with his history were ready to hold out to him the right hand of fellowship and to hail him as a fellow labourer.²¹⁶

The Secession Church went so far as to offer Malan financial aid in the following year; while this was accepted towards the cost of Malan's newly-built chapel, it was declined as regards his personal subsistence.²¹⁷ With the impetus provided by the linkage with Malan, the Secession gradually opened itself to further involvements in Europe. By 1838, the Synod of the Secession was prepared to ordain a Genevan, John Monnard, upon completion of his studies at Edinburgh University and the Synod Divinity Hall. Commissioned for an evangelistic

²¹⁶John M'Kerrow, History of the Secession Church, (Glasgow, 1841) pp. 679,80. and Malan, Life of C. Malan, p. 102.

²¹⁷Malan, pp.102,116.

ministry in France, Monnard tragically died in the first month of his labour at Vadencourt, near Amiens. Another worker, Charles F. Major, was received by the Secession in 1839 for similar labour at Strasburg; he had undergone examination by Secession ministers serving at London.²¹⁸ The continuing vitality of Secession interest in French Europe was demonstrated by the 1843 travels of senior minister, Hugh Heugh; his volume published the following year bore the name Notes of the State of Religion in Geneva and Belgium.²¹⁹

We have noticed, above, the commencement of organized independent Anglican effort in aid of the 'reveil' in the 1832 launching of the "Central Committee". No comparable response was forthcoming at that time among the ministers and members of the Church of Scotland, even though a considerable number of persons from this communion had supported the Continental Society in the decade of the 1820's.²²⁰ What did occur however,

²¹⁸M'Kerrow, p.714. It is apparent that at least in the case of Monnard, C. Malan would have played a decisive role in orienting him to the Secession.

²¹⁹Glasgow, 1844. The Revd. Hugh Heugh had earlier been active as treasurer of the Stirling auxiliary association of the Continental Society. Proceedings, 4 (1822) p.5.

²²⁰This interest in the Continental Society had extended to the student members of the Edinburgh University Missionary Association. One sixth of their subscribed funds were given to this cause in 1827 and one fourth in 1828. Active members of later note included W. Cunningham, Andrew and Horatius Bonar, Robert Murray McCheyne, John Cairns, and J.G. Lorimer. The latter would later write A Historical Sketch of the Protestant

is that the Continental interests of Dr. Thomas Chalmers, Professor of Divinity in the University from 1828, and a patron to the University Missionary Association, served to encourage many future ministers to take note of the 'reveil' movement. Chalmers' own Tron Church Sermons and Christian and Civic Economy were then available in French translation at Paris. Leading French Protestants had secured for Chalmers the distinction of membership, by correspondence, in the prestigious Royal Institute of France in 1834. His visit to Paris in June, 1838 to lecture before that Institute brought him into personal contact with the leading Crown minister and 'reveil' activist, Francois Guizot.²²¹

In the period of the 1830's, the Edinburgh University Mission Association showed an observable growth in interest in French Europe accompanying the growth of the patron's influence there. The association heard a student essay on "The State of Protestantism in France" and began a subscription to the main French Protestant journal, Les Archives du Christianisme.²²² From the academic year 1836-37 to 1840-41 the association

Church in France, (Edinburgh, 1841). See Minutes of the Edinburgh University Missionary Association 1826-1842. New College Library, Edinburgh. I am indebted to Mr. David Currie of St. Andrew's University for this reference.

²²¹S.J. Brown, Thomas Chalmers, (Oxford, 1982), pp. 272, 273.

²²²Minutes of the E.U.M.A. entries for 3 March and 28 March 1835.

made grants, sometimes amounting to one third of the total disbursed in a year, to the Evangelical Society of Geneva and the Society for the Printing of Religious Books at Toulouse.²²³ Further, a very extensive correspondence was carried on by the students with European figures such as Merle D'Aubigne of the Evangelical School of Theology, Geneva (and the student body there), Louis Courtois of the Toulouse Religious Book Society, and the students of the theological college at Montauban.²²⁴ Such eager contacts were maintained right up to the eve of the Disruption of 1843 and laid the foundation of a more enduring internationalism, of which more will be said below.

Considerable awareness of the developing situation on the Continent was also shown by the Kirk's General Assembly of May, 1835. When the Geneva Company of Pastors invited the General Assembly to send a deputation to their city's ter-centenary Reformation celebration on 23 August, the Assembly was not inclined to accept. The immediate past moderator, Dr. Patrick McFarlane, rose to

²²³ibid. See entries for the annual general meetings in March of these years.

²²⁴E.U.M.A. Correspondence, Box 1 (1826-45), New College Library, Edinburgh. Items 48, 49, 62, 65, 71, 73, 78, 99, 108. Edinburgh students were also corresponding with their counterparts at Glasgow, Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Princeton, and Andover in this period. Item 108, received from Geneva students, indicates that the E.U.M.A. had successfully urged similar correspondence to Geneva from mission associations at Aberdeen and Glasgow.

oppose acceptance of any such invitation:

He was sorry to say, that he could not propose to the General Assembly that they should express, even in the feeblest terms, their approbation of that Church, which had become deplorably corrupted in its doctrine. Still, he thought it was the duty of the Assembly to answer the letter, certainly in all the mildness and gentleness of Christianity, but at the same time with the firmness of men who held the principles of the Reformation. . . The reverend doctor concluded by proposing the appointment of a small committee to draw up an answer to the letter. After a few words from Dr. Stewart of Erskine, Dr. Smythe of Glasgow, Principal Dewar and Dr. Welsh corroborative of Dr. McFarlane's statements, the motion was agreed to and the committee appointed.²²⁵

Yet despite such a militant stance based on current knowledge of the European situation, the Church of Scotland involvement in the 'réveil' did not then advance. It may be that the links formed between the Edinburgh Bible Society and the Geneva Evangelical Society from the latter's formation in 1831²²⁶ provided both an outlet for the concern of ministers and members of the Kirk and a channel for their contributions. But the failure of the Kirk to officially involve itself seemed puzzling to 'réveil' leaders in Europe, who looked for its support.

When a circle of French 'réveil' pastors wrote directly to the Church of Scotland Assembly in May 1836,

²²⁵Acts of the General Assembly, Church of Scotland, Friday, 22 May, 1835, p.52 and Edinburgh Christian Instructor, 4 n.s. (1835), p.407. The Instructor had, since the 1831 creation of the Geneva Evangelical Society, been an excellent source of news regarding Genevan events.

²²⁶Somerville, Iona to Dunblane, p.27

appealing for direct communication and encouragement, their letter was noted but never pursued.²²⁷ William Meston, who called for a reversal of this seeming neglect, both pointed out that American Presbyterians were already corresponding directly with the Protestant Consistory of Paris and supplied a number of feasible proposals for greater Church of Scotland involvement. Meston now proposed the creation of a Scottish equivalent to the London "Central Committee", the bringing of select Montauban students to Edinburgh or Glasgow for one or more sessions of study, and the direct Scottish funding of colporteurs in definable districts.²²⁸ Only the first was taken up.

A somewhat ambivalent outlook was reflected in an article published in 1840 by the Scottish Christian Herald entitled "The Claims of France Upon British

²²⁷Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1836, 30 May, p.66. Admittedly, the letter reached the hands of the moderator, Norman MacLeod, on the morning of the final day of the Assembly. The failure to respond to the letter was cited by William Meston, in his Observations On the Present State of Religion in France..., (London, 1839) pp. 55,56. Meston printed the letter of 1836 in full in French. It is signed by Juillerat Chasseur, founding editor of Les Archives, Martin Rollin, Frederic and Adolphe Monod, J.J. Audebez and D.L. La Place, all pastors.

²²⁸ Meston, *ibid.* Meston is a somewhat shadowy figure. He plainly was known to the Church of Scotland readership which he addressed. Yet, though self-identified as a preacher, he is nowhere mentioned in Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae. Long a schoolmaster at Caen, France, he was from 1848 agent of the Edinburgh Bible Society at Lille. See Somerville, Iona to Dunblane, p.27.

Christians". The article described the demanding work and financial needs of the Evangelical Societies of Geneva and Paris without so much as indicating where a donation might be sent.²²⁹ Yet by the following year, the same magazine could publish a two-part report from the newly-founded "Edinburgh Continental Association" which was filling the very role Meston had outlined in 1839.²³⁰

That the Disruption of 1843 was accompanied by intensified interest in these European affairs was made plain by the presence in the first Free Church Assembly of a Prussian delegate and receipt of a written expression of solidarity from the "Free Dissenters" of Holland.²³¹ The autumn Assembly of that Disruption year gave prominence to the visit of Caesar Malan, who was invited to speak at length.²³² In 1845, both Merle D'Aubigne and Frederic Monod were present in and

²²⁹Scottish Christian Herald, 2 n.s. (1840), pp. 641-644.

²³⁰Scottish Christian Herald, VIII second series, (1841), pp. 726-729, 765-768. The Association secretaries were Charles J. Brown, D.T.K. Drummond, and Aeneas M. Rate. The account, p.766, indicated that the 1840 General Assembly had received delegates from the Evangelical Societies of Geneva and Paris.

²³¹Free Church Assembly Proceedings, 1843 (Spring), pp. 107,117. The effects of the 'reveil' in Holland have been detailed in chapter three. The "free dissenters" were very likely the seceders who had departed from the Netherlands Reformed Church in 1834, now formally organized as the 'Christlikje Gereformeerde Kerken'.

²³²Free Church Assembly Proceedings, 1843 (Autumn), p.40.

addressed the General Assembly.²³³ A committee appointed the year previous under the convenorship of J.G. Lorimer "for corresponding with foreign churches and aiding them in their evangelical operations and trials" reported that £2034 had been collected in the intervening months for the needs of the Waldensian Church, Evangelical Societies of Paris, Toulouse and Lyons, and the similar societies in Geneva and Belgium.²³⁴

The committee, under Lorimer's lead, was conscious of having to make up for lost time.

The committee rejoice to think that greatly as the continent has been neglected in its religious interests by the churches in Britain, some assistance has long been rendered. Besides the labours of the European Missionary Society of London - afterwards the Foreign Aid Society. . . the Wesleyan Methodists have for fifty years carried forward important operations on the continent. . . And within these few years, our American brethren have come forward in behalf of the same cause with great liberty and zeal. Three years ago, they supported above fifty religious agents in one form or another. . . Surely if, with the wide waters of the Atlantic in between, they cherish so lively an interest in behalf of their brethren, we, separated from them by only the British Channel should share in a zeal at least as devoted.²³⁵

With the leadership of persons such as Lorimer, Robert Candlish and Patrick McFarlane, this committee

²³³Free Church Assembly Proceedings 1845, pp. 128-40.

²³⁴ibid. p. 121. The significance of this sum will be better appreciated when it is noted that the total receipts for the same year of the recently amalgamated Foreign Aid Society were £2408. The Free Church's denominational collections were therefore from the outset almost on par with those of a long-standing voluntary society.

²³⁵ibid. p.124.

rapidly made the affairs of Continental Protestants the business of Free Church families and individuals. Addresses given in Glasgow and Edinburgh in 1845-46 and published as Lectures on Foreign Churches²³⁶ soon provided the whole church with information about affairs at Geneva, Paris, Leghorn and Budapest. Thus, in the space of a very few years, the Free Church of Scotland became as deeply involved in support of the 'réveil' as any of the British churches.

The London Baptist Society had sought to organize its own missionary endeavour in Switzerland from as early as 1831.²³⁷ Concerned individuals within the young Congregational Union of England and Wales were galvanized into a similar, though more modest involvement in the same period as was the Free Church. Many of the individuals involved, centring around former Continental Society stalwarts W. Alers Hankey, Mark Wilks, J. Pye Smith and Sir Culling Eardley Smith, rallied afresh to the needs of the Continental evangelicals in conjunction with the July 1845 visit to England of Merle D'Aubigné;

²³⁶Robert Candlish, ed. (Edinburgh, 1845,46) 2 vols. W. Wilson, Memoir of Candlish, ((Edinburgh, 1880) makes plain that his subject advocated the creation of the committee and was an eager fundraiser for the Continental Churches at the presbytery level. See pages 337,353.

²³⁷Former 'Bourg de Four' pastor and Continental Society agent Ami Bost served this denominational society in 1831-32. Bost, Memoires, II. pp.127-130. An article in the Evangelical Magazine, 12 n.s. (1834) pp. 158,159 reports the creation of the Baptist Continental Society in May, 1831.

they formed themselves into the Evangelical Continental Society. The members, all Congregationalists, having been prohibited from sharing in the governance of the Foreign Aid Society after its 1840 absorption of the European Missionary Society, had then been reduced to supporting a small "corresponding committee" of their own. But for this bar to their deep involvement, they would gladly have thrown their efforts behind the latter.²³⁸ In the same period, the Calvinistic Methodist Churches of Wales began a missionary effort in the French coastal region of Brittany.²³⁹

An unsavoury aspect of this heightening of British denominational involvement on the Continent was the intentionally divisive influence of two nascent groups. The Continental 'pioneer' for the Christian Brethren, J.N. Darby, was deeply involved in propagating his own particular tenets at Lausanne and Geneva in the period following 1837.²⁴⁰ Darby's activity, which focussed upon and divided the dissident evangelical communities of these cantons, prompted one of the earliest critiques of his peculiar theological system. J. J. Herzog, professor

²³⁸Continental Echo and Protestant Witness, 1 (1845), p.242. £517 was raised in the first year.

²³⁹O.D.C.C. s.v. "Calvinistic Methodists".

²⁴⁰A. Christopher Smith, "J.N. Darby in Switzerland: At the Crossroads of Brethren History and European Evangelicalism", The Christian Brethren Review Journal, 34 (1983) pp. 53-94. W. Lindsay Alexander, Switzerland and the Swiss Churches, (Edinburgh, 1846) p.278. E. Guers, Le Premier Reveil, pp.335-341.

of theology at Lausanne, published Les Freres de Plymouth et J.N.D., Leur Doctrine et Leur Histoire.

An entirely similar tendency and strategy was demonstrated in French Europe by the Catholic Apostolic Church. The latter, established in England in 1832 under the influence of the now-familiar Henry Drummond, secured the services of former Continental Society agent, Pierre Mejanel as European agent. Another former agent, Ami Bost, declined the offer of this employment after careful investigation of the new movement.²⁴¹ Division and confusion followed in the wake of its arrival in European centres of evangelical activity.

The Continental Society had initially attempted to influence French Europe for the Gospel in a non-sectarian manner; in this it achieved a limited success. Subsequent efforts, such as that of the "Central Committee" of London, and the Free Church of Scotland, attempted to guard against sectarianism by making

²⁴¹The standard history by P.E. Shaw, The Catholic Apostolic Church, (New York, 1946) fails to trace this European aspect of the movement. Brief coverage is provided in R.A. Davenport, The Albury Apostles, (London, 1970, reprinted 1973), pp. 153-160. 'Reveil' historians customarily describe the divisive and disruptive influence of this teaching in France and Switzerland. Guers, Le Premier Réveil pp.328,329, Bost. Memoires, I. pp.93,95. II. pp.166-199. Wemyss, Le Réveil, p.166. Maury, Le Réveil, 1 p.184ff. Behind the European and British activities of the Catholic Apostolic Church was Henry Drummond, who simultaneously continued to support the endeavours of the Continental Society. Drummond was not above soliciting Continental Society workers as agents of the Catholic Apostolic Church. Mejanel acceded to these solicitations while Ami Bost declined them.

European societies (which they profusely supported) the administrators of evangelistic activity. But a third phase sadly saw British agencies employ their own agents to replicate distinctly British forms and notions of the Christian Gospel and Church.

CHAPTER FIVE

GENEVA AND EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITAIN

The British Veneration of Geneva

"I approach Geneva with feelings of peculiar veneration. The name of Calvin stands highest among the reformers". So confided the touring Daniel Wilson to his diary in 1823.¹ The Englishman's visit to the Swiss city clearly represented the fulfilment of a longstanding aspiration and he made sure to allow time for an excursion to the city library where he examined Calvin's sermon manuscripts. Yet in Georgian and early Victorian Britain, the magnetism of Geneva was felt by many who were never privileged, as was Wilson, to tour the Continent. They venerated Geneva from afar and thronged to hear representatives of the Genevan Protestant Churches when they came to Britain.

Though Genevan preacher and mission agent Ami Bost sensed the attractive power of his connection with Geneva during a speaking tour through England on behalf of the Continental Society in 1822, he could scarcely have understood the lineage of the attraction.

A foreign minister was then a rarity. Arriving in a town I would see, to my great surprize, my name affixed to a wall-poster. The adjoined words, "of Geneva" were by themselves a powerful recommendation.²

¹Daniel Wilson, Letters of An Absent Brother, II. p.289.

²Bost, Memoires, I. p.315.

What Bost attributed to the mysterious appeal of the foreign visitor was in fact something far deeper. In the "collective unconsciousness" of the British Protestant population, Geneva had many associations, all of which were positive.

In the sixteenth century, Geneva had been the centre of a Protestant "solar system" of which England and Scotland, like France and the Low Countries, had been orbiting planets. It had been one of several safe havens in which English Protestant refugees had found safety during the period of Catholic persecution under Mary Tudor (1553-1558). From this Geneva had come that most influential of Reformation-era English translations of Scripture - the Geneva Bible (1560) which was only displaced with difficulty by the subsequent Authorized Version (1611). Geneva had been the primary initial destination of the Huguenot refugees after 1685, and, not least important to British minds, the powerful symbol of resistance to Continental Roman Catholicism and political absolutism.

British evangelicals in the late Georgian and early Victorian period were under no illusions that such halcyon days still existed at Geneva. We have noted that evangelical leaders had repeatedly lamented that Geneva was now a place where all had changed.³ But it remained

³Thomas Haweis, quoted at chap. 2. p.112, had expressed the opinion in 1800 that "he doubted whether there remained a single professor or pastor at Geneva

true that Geneva, considered in its legendary character as the seat of Calvin, had lost nothing of its old power to evoke strong Protestant sentiment. Evangelical Protestants longed for Geneva's return to Scriptural Christianity as assuredly as medieval Christians had longed for the liberator of Jerusalem from Muslim control.

Thus, when Genevan evangelical Protestants came calling in early 19th century Britain, they were afforded no ordinary welcome; it soon dawned on such Genevans that they were religious celebrities by virtue, merely, of their city of residence and employment. The Continental Society knew this instinctively and "traded" on it by inviting the Swiss to come at intervals and meet the religious public on its behalf. Caesar Malan, though never the agent of the Continental Society, also grasped this principle and resorted to England and Scotland with a regularity which played into the hands of his detractors.⁴ Henri Pyt, principal agent of the Continental Society, Frederic Monod in his capacity as

who adhered to Calvin". John Pye Smith, quoted in the same chapter, p. 125, had observed in 1816 that "Geneva stands in need of a reformation and reformer scarcely less than she did in the sixteenth century".

⁴A nameless contributor to the Evangelical Magazine, 6 n.s. (1828) p.477 emphasized that Malan's theological eccentricities were to be taken the more seriously just because "he repairs almost every year to this metropolis and gives all possible currency to these views". This was an exaggeration, to be sure, but the exaggeration of a truth.

representative of the Evangelical Society of France, and J.H. Merle D'Aubigné representing the Evangelical Society of Geneva were all Protestant notables in Britain of the 1830's primarily because they all had the Geneva "connection". Geneva, when taken as a whole, might still be far from Scriptural Christianity and this was to be lamented; but there was now at least a restored "evangelical Geneva" in whose legendary orbit Britain might once more rotate.

It was this same Geneva linkage which made the heroic missionary labours of Felix Neff in the High Alps of eastern France of compelling interest to British evangelicals. In a somewhat hyperbolic strain, the French ecclesiastical historian Guillaume de Felice observed of the now-deceased Neff in 1849:

No name of the French Reformation in our day has been so famous as his; numerous original writings and a host of translations have been published concerning his life. In the heart of Germany, in the most distant valleys of Scotland, on the banks of the Orinoco and the Ohio, the name of Felix Neff is pronounced...⁵

But such rhapsodic praise would scarcely have exaggerated the interest of the English in Neff. A mere three years following his untimely death (1829), the Church of England clergyman, W.S. Gilly, hastened into print a Memoir of the Alpine missionary; the book was an immediate success and proved highly influential. The Religious Tract Society quickly followed suit with a

⁵de Felice, History of Protestantism, p.495.

Memoir of its own. Ami Bost, compatriot and friend of the deceased, composed a fuller Letters and Biography of Felix Neff which appeared in two separate translations and many English editions.⁶ Within a decade of Neff's decease, the Religious Tract Society published a translation of the biography of F.A.A. Gonthier (1773-1834) whom it mistakenly identified as the human means of the conversion of Neff at Geneva.⁷ This editorial blunder only bore unwitting testimony to the fascination the English speaking world had with the career of Neff, who much like the still-revered American missionary of the previous century, David Brainerd (1718-1747), had literally spent himself in missionary service to a remote region.

Neff's life was not without additional uses for the reading public of the 1830's. Gilly, his first biographer, was a loyal and temperate Church of England cleric who for his English readers (many of whom were Nonconformists) took pains to point out that Neff, though from a dissident background at Geneva, had served loyally in the state-regulated church of France.

⁶Gilly, Memoir of Felix Neff, (London, 1832). Memoir of Felix Neff, (London, n.d.). Ami Bost, Letters and Biography of Felix Neff, M.A. Wyatt, translator (London, 1843). Ami Bost, The Life of Felix Neff, (London, 1855).

⁷L. & C. Vulliaman, Some Account of the Life of the Rev. F.A.A. Gonthier, (London, 1837) p.176. The true instrument of Neff's conversion had been J.G. Gonthier, 'Bourg de Four' minister ordained at Poultry Chapel in 1821, who himself died an untimely death in January, 1823.

Moreover, Neff, though a staunch Protestant who revered the Reformation Confessions, was no extremist. According to Gilly:

The broad distinctions and uncompromising truths of Protestantism were matters of awful sanctity with Neff; and yet though he was the pastor of a flock opposed to Popery by all the strong prejudices of hereditary separation...nevertheless with dogmatical and polemical Protestantism he would have nothing to do.⁸

Gilly had once supported the Continental Society which had subsidized Neff's Alpine ministry. Yet the biographer seemed to suggest that Neff had been nobler than the agency which had assisted him; that agency, the Continental Society, had come by 1832 to be known for the very types of intemperate and extreme views now cautioned against.⁹

Again, in the same decade, William Jones, second biographer of the late Rowland Hill (1744-1833) seized on the current fascination with Neff. He made extensive quotation from the Memoir then being circulated by the Religious Tract Society in order to illustrate the life of his own subject. Hill, he maintained, had been as ideally suited to his own work of preaching at the Surrey Tabernacle and itinerating throughout Britain as had the missionary to the high Alps been suited to his sphere;

⁸Gilly, Life of Neff, p.314.

⁹We have shown in the preceding chapter that the Continental Society suffered considerable loss of usefulness and support by reason of agitations within over Millennialism and Irvingism.

both moreover, had been just as much given to the use of striking pulpit illustrations.¹⁰ That the life of the Alpine missionary should have been estimated to shed this light on the long career of Hill -- who was surely the "old soldier" of the Evangelical Revival -- provides striking evidence of the place which Neff then held in the mind of the Protestant public.

Now in all this British veneration of persons and things Genevan there was very considerable irony. On all sides British evangelicals would have admitted that the segment of Genevan Protestantism which they so venerated was an insignificant thing when considered in comparison with the whole. Yet for the purpose of rekindling the "legend" of Protestant Geneva set amidst the constellation of its Christian allies, it was sufficient that there be at Geneva only a vigorous evangelical presence. However, the truth of the matter is that, even allowing for the substantially indigenous genesis of Geneva's evangelical revival, the momentum of the new Geneva was being supported and financed largely from without. British evangelicals were venerating a "new" Geneva which they had largely bankrolled themselves; in truth the "new" Geneva was in the orbit of London and

¹⁰ A first and most substantial biography by Edwin Sidney, The Life of the Rev. Rowland Hill, (London, 1835) remains the standard work. The second, William Jones' Memoir of the Rev. Rowland Hill, (London, 1837) sought to correct deficiencies in the first. We have alluded to remarks in the latter, pp. 20, 189.

Edinburgh rather than the reverse.¹¹ But this was not perceived at the time within Britain.

This fascination with the "legendary" Geneva was but a symptom of the Romantic movement, by which heroic persons and struggles of the past were being recalled from obscurity - often for the benefit of the newly-moneyed artisan and business classes which now read, assembled home libraries, and conversed about the bearing of the past on the present. It was true in the world of fiction. Sir Walter Scott wrote forty historical novels for such a readership; among them was Old Mortality, a tale of the Covenanted times of the seventeenth century.¹² The same appetite for the past was manifested by the many, predominantly young, ministers who devoured the twin biographies of John Knox (1514-1572) and Andrew Melville (1545-1622) published by the Scottish clergyman, Thomas McCrie, in 1811 and 1819. Here biographies of heroic sixteenth century figures were being written with an eye to the church-state questions vexing the early nineteenth century; the lessons were not being lost on a

¹¹ Merle D'Aubigné indicated his grasp of this fact when he wrote in 1842, "God has given the dominion of the seas to nations who bear everywhere with them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But if, instead of good news of salvation, England carries to the heathen a mere human and priestly religion, God will deprive her of her power". "Geneva and Oxford" in Merle D'Aubigné, Discourses and Essays, (Glasgow, 1846), p.202.

¹² Bruce Lenman, Integration, Enlightenment and Industrialization: Scotland 1746-1832, (London, 1981), p.130.

rising generation.¹³

Now what McCrie did to bring Scotland's sixteenth century to bear on present-day questions was only performed on a larger scale and a larger canvass by Merle D'Aubigné, whose multi-volume History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century began to be available in English dress from 1838. This 'magnum opus' delighted British readers by its extensive treatment of the Reformation in England; that the treatment of the theme was provided by a trusted Genevan narrator was all that could be asked for in that period, so susceptible to the city's legendary influence. And of the treatment of the Swiss Reformation, no less a judge than Thomas Chalmers wrote to the historian to say that

The Swiss Reformation was very much unknown in its details to the people of this country, and I never was more rivetted in my life to any book than when engaged in the perusal of it. But while the latter half of (this) your (fourth) volume is full of interest on the subject of the Church's spiritual independence, and the danger of mixing up the secular with the spiritual, I should hold that the former half of your volume will be still more prized by the theologians. The Confession of Augsburg and the conference between Luther and Zwingli at Marburg are

¹³ Halévy, England in 1815, p.465. Lenman, Integration, Enlightenment, p.147. John Campbell, Memoir of John Angell James, (London, 1860) p.6. Robert Rainy and James MacKenzie, Life of William Cunningham, (London, 1871), p.64. W. Wilson, Memorials of R.S. Candlish, (Edinburgh, 1880), p.27 notes "the biographies carried the mind back to Reformation views and principles and were a very effective protest against the Moderation which had so long cramped and stifled the religious life of Scotland...(by them) many apprehended the doctrine of the Church's autonomy".

truly splendid and memorable passages.¹⁴

Evangelical Geneva when considered numerically, financially, and educationally was but a modest force which was in perpetual dependency on foreign financial aid. But when considered as the epicentre of that "second Reformation"¹⁵ which British evangelicals agreed Francophone Europe desperately needed, Geneva seemed as potent a centre in the nineteenth century as the sixteenth. Just how susceptible evangelicalism in the English speaking world was to the allure of this Geneva of legend is hinted at in the introduction to the British edition of Merle D'Aubigné's Discourses and Essays.

Of all the men of this age, it may safely be said, Dr. Merle D'Aubigné is the most thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Reformers. In fact, he hardly lives in the present era, though he does move bodily about among the men of our times. Sure I am, his whole spiritual man is at least as much conversant with the events and spirit of the age of the Reformers, as with those of our own day.¹⁶

Recognizing that this veneration of Geneva was a potent force within British evangelicalism in the early nineteenth century, we may now consider how British

¹⁴ "Thomas Chalmers to J.H. Merle D'Aubigné 14 Feb. 1846" in W. Hannah, ed. A Selection From the Correspondence of the Late Thomas Chalmers, D.D. L.L.D., (Edinburgh, 1853) p.447.

¹⁵ the phrase was used by Merle D'Aubigné to describe events at Geneva since 1816. cf. the quotation in Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, p.402.

¹⁶ Robert Baird, intro. p.iv, to Merle D'Aubigné, Discourses and Essays, (Glasgow, 1846). D'Aubigné received the honorary D.D. from both Princeton Seminary and Edinburgh University as a testimonial of this esteem.

religion and church life was influenced by Genevan preachers and theologians. We will consider three main representatives of the 'reveil' at Geneva and their contributions: Caesar Malan and British evangelism, Louis Gaussen and British attitudes towards the Bible, and J.H. Merle D'Aubigné and the growth of evangelical ecumenism.

Genevan Evangelism In Britain

Caesar Malan was not the only foreign-born evangelist to have an impact in early nineteenth century Britain, but he was surely one of the most colorful.¹⁷ A familiar figure among British evangelicals even before his first visit, he seemed to be the living refutation of the common surmise that rigorous Calvinistic theology could not be successfully wedded to aggressive evangelism.¹⁸ By the 1830's, English Nonconformity's fascination with the modified theology and methodology of Charles Finney, fresh from his campaigns in New York and Ohio, would illustrate the degree to which a new generation of ministers was experiencing a loss of nerve in attempting to evangelize from the traditional

¹⁷ R.J. Carwardine, Transatlantic Revivalism, (Westport, Conn. 1978) has described the visits to Britain of American evangelists Asahel Nettleton (1783-1844) and Charles Finney (1792-1875) in this period.

¹⁸ In fact, we have tried to demonstrate in the first chapter of this thesis that a very large segment of the Evangelical Revival had stood on this theological footing.

theological base. Malan, by contrast, provided proof enough that the unashamed Calvinistic presentation of the Gospel could still be compelling.

At least nine times between 1819 and 1853, Malan was in Britain to address public meetings, preach in churches and evangelize through house gatherings.¹⁹ He himself provided records of two of these visits.²⁰ After his reception in 1825 as a minister by the United Secession Church of Scotland, he found most - but not all- of his public Scottish preaching opportunities in that communion.²¹ We have noted above that due to the numerical decline of his Geneva congregation after 1830, he increasingly gave himself to itinerant preaching tours; in the 1830's this was not a common habit as most preachers did almost all their preaching in one church and one pulpit.

¹⁹ The computations of such visits provided in Good, History of the Reformed Church, p.389 and David Brown, Life of John Duncan, (Edinburgh, 1872), pp. 124ff. are both incomplete. We believe Malan to have been in Britain in 1819, 1822, 1826, 1828, 1833, 1834, 1839, 1843, and 1853. Cf. Malan, Life of Malan, p.200 and this thesis, supra. p. 284. Malan received the Glasgow University D.D. in 1826 in recognition of his preaching in Britain.

²⁰ Recollections of the Rev. Caesar Malan of Geneva, D.D. being notes of sermons preached by him in May and June 1826, (London, 1827). The sermons were recorded by a journalist. A Visit to Scotland in 1843, (Edinburgh, 1843).

²¹ This focus is reflected in the churches named in Recollections, (1827). In A Visit, (1843) he noted sermons preached in that communion as well as Free St. Georges and the Haldane Tabernacle (both Edinburgh).

Even now, the sermon summaries from the period of his visits make stirring reading; the texts themselves were often most apposite to the occasion.²² We will comment on some of the sermon subject matter below. Here we can allude to the striking fact that the records of two conversions under the ministry of Malan both attribute great significance to the Genevan's effectiveness in personal interviews. Both John Duncan (1796-1870) later Professor of Hebrew at New College, Edinburgh and John Adam, later L.M.S. missionary to India, attributed their Christian conversions to Malan's methodical use of this technique in homes where he was entertained.

He requested that each guest be sent to him alone, one by one...He would insist that the state of matters between the soul he was dealing with and God should be brought to a point then and there.²³

Malan was, to be sure, a powerful preacher.²⁴ But he excelled with individuals every bit as much as with congregations. In England also, much of his preaching

²² As when on 11 June, 1826 at the Floating Chapel, Leith, he preached from John 6.16 regarding Jesus walking on the water.

²³ Brown, Life of John Duncan, pp. 129,130, 142. See also Adam, Memoir of John Adam, (London, 1833) p. 14. The method was somewhat reminiscent of Haldane's method of student interviews at Geneva in 1816-1817.

²⁴ Adam, *ibid.* p.9 confided to his diary, "never did I hear a preacher who came so near to my idea of what a minister ought to be".

and evangelistic work was done in private homes. ²⁵

John Duncan may have believed that Malan's habit of pressing for a response to the Gospel without delay was novel; it is likely that it was only novel to him and the circles of the United Secession Church in which he then moved. The belief in sudden conversion was in fact quite widespread throughout the regions affected by the Evangelical Revival -- although it never enjoyed universal approbation among evangelicals.²⁶ Older evangelicalism had often emphasized the preparation of the hearer to receive the Gospel by a stress on the exacting standards of the divine moral law. It was the distinguishing trait of the New England evangelist, Asahel Nettleton, that he defended and utilized this traditional approach in Britain just as in America.²⁷ Even the great and unsettling innovator, Charles Finney, had used the "anxious seat" below the pulpit in America and Britain not as the guarantor of sudden conversion, but only as a device to assist in "breaking the pride" of the sinner and helping him to seek conversion. This was

²⁵ T.C.F. Stunt, "Geneva and the British Evangelicals", pp. 43,44.

²⁶ cf. the helpful discussions of the question in David Bebbington's Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, (London, 1989), pp. 5-10, and Bernard Citroen, The New Birth, (Edinburgh, 1950), pp. 67-75.

²⁷ Andrew Bonar (1810-1892), prominent Free Church of Scotland minister, indicated his approbation for this older approach by editing Nettleton's biography for British readers in an edition published at Edinburgh in 1854.

in fact but a variation on the older preparationism.

The aged Rowland Hill had heard Malan preach in England and proclaimed thereafter "this day I have heard George Whitefield preach".²⁸ In all likelihood, it was the call to decision, to conversion without delay which the old soldier of the Evangelical Revival saw as the common factor uniting Whitefield and this Swiss meteor. Yet in the case of Malan, there were highly unique theological presuppositions beneath the emphasis upon sudden conversion and those presuppositions were regularly made the subject of British debate. Complaints were made against Malan's supposed antinomianism (stemming from a lack of emphasis upon repentance), his undue emphasis upon the Christian believer's enjoyment of Christian assurance, and his unsatisfactory description of the sinner's experiential transfer from being under the divine displeasure to the divine favour.²⁹ All such complaints were ultimately traceable back to the prominence of predestination, construed in supralapsarian fashion, in Malan's dogmatic thought. Malan evidently held, in a way quite uncommon among evangelical

²⁸ Malan, Life, p.283

²⁹ We find these complaints reflected in the Christian Observer, XXVII (1828) pp. 73-77 where Malan's Conventicle of Rolle is under review. As well, they are made in the Evangelical Magazine, 6 n.s. (1828) pp.477-481 where Malan's Theogenes is under consideration. See also McKerrow, History of the Secession Church, p.681 for evidence that Malan's adoptive denomination took note of his eccentricities.

Calvinists of his day, that the election of men to eternal life through Christ was an election of men who were considered in the mind of God as not yet fallen into sin. Two major consequences followed for those who shared Malan's understanding of Christian salvation.

First, the incarnation, atonement and resurrected life of the Son of God were understood to have no reference whatsoever to the substantial portion of humanity passed by in election. In Malan's case, this viewpoint was articulated in terms of an ultra-particularism, quite out of vogue among contemporary British Calvinists. Before the special meeting of the General Assembly of the fledgling Free Church of Scotland in the autumn of 1843, Malan implored the preachers present to

Keep to the standards of your faith - preach Christ the Saviour and his atonement solely for the Church - solely for the Church - solely for the Church; for Popery says that his atonement is for all men, which is a lie. Christ is a saviour and not a helper. He has not two wives - he has only one, which is the Church. He has not two bodies - he has but one beloved one, chosen for him of the Father. Oh ye ministers of Scotland, have you some men among you who would listen to the doctrines of Arminianism. God Almighty forbid. The truth which has made the Church of Scotland conspicuous is the truth that Christ is God indeed - that he is a Saviour indeed, that he never died for those who are lost - that those for whom he died he has saved fully and forever.³⁰

³⁰ Records of the Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, (Autumn, 1843) pp. 40,.41. Malan's keen interest in extirpating all traces of "Arminianism" in Scotland was likely fuelled by the atonement controversies then engulfing his own adoptive denomination, the United Secession Church. The latter's efforts to maintain both a universal and particular

Malan's remarks, part of a deeply emotive speech which marked the first personal recognition of the Disruption by a Francophone, were warmly received. He had been introduced as "the delegate from Geneva". But this variety of high Calvinism, while it was keen to preach the Gospel to all who would hear, was also suspect in that it deduced all the Gospel's breadth, scope and efficacy "backwards" from the terms of its eventual accomplishment (i.e. the salvation of the elect). This was not the strain of Calvinism being taught in those very years by the reigning theologian of the Free Church, Thomas Chalmers. As his lectures, posthumously published as his Institutes of Theology make plain, Chalmers was earnest in attempting to place all possible distance between his young preachers-in-training and this outlook. (Chalmers also gave a workmanlike and orthodox treatment of predestination in volume II of his Institutes).³¹ Caesar Malan could not have been accused of denying the

reference in the atonement of Christ in this period is well documented in the recent work of Ian Hamilton, The Erosion of Calvinist Orthodoxy, (Edinburgh, 1990). Malan delivered similar admonitions in 1843 sermons delivered during that visit; these may be noted in A Visit to Scotland in 1843, (Edinburgh, 1843) pp. ix, 38.

³¹ Chalmers in lecturing on the proper framing of the Gospel offer had warned against ultra-particularistic formulations of Calvinist theology. Such formulations he designated as belonging to the "middle ages" of theology. cf. his Institutes, II. pp. 403-405. Suggestive remarks regarding the correlation between the populist spirit of that era and its bearing on some theological questions of the period are made in N.L. Walker, Robert Buchanan, (Edinburgh, 1877) p.23.

universal offer of the gospel. But his attempts to bolster up the tenets of high Calvinism certainly stood at the very threshold of the providing of a "drag" on the freeness of gospel as proclaimed by others.

Second, Malan's extreme Calvinist particularism, rooted in a supralapsarian understanding of predestination, manifested itself in an implicit over-emphasis upon the eternal divine purposes and a de-emphasis upon the individual's conscious experience of and entering in to the saving favour of God in history. In a sermon preached in Edinburgh in June, 1826, Malan urged his listeners:

Suppose one of you was guilty of a crime against your king, worthy of the gibbet. You run and hide. You are in pain and fear. Well, but the King has been so good as to determine in his heart, to give you grace; that moment [italics his] you are saved; the king has given you a pardon. But hear this. As the law and the king's justice cannot be disregarded, he has said, "I cannot save him without fulfilling the law; the law requires the death of the guilty". The King then has determined to give himself for you...to transfer on his own son your crime. The letter of pardon is written out for you. You are safe. But I seek after you and only after two years am I able to find you. I read you your letter of pardon. You believe and are at peace. Now believe Christ. He is saying this very thing to you.³²

It is not difficult to understand how such a strain of preaching alarmed discerning hearers. By the analogy employed by the evangelist, as yet unconverted hearers were being invited to contemplate themselves as being the object of ancient saving purposes of God which reckoned

³² Malan, Recollections of Sermons Preached in Edinburgh, (London, 1827), p.63.

them saved and safe quite apart from the exercise of any faith, repentance or response on their own part. The elect sinner's only lack or deficiency was that of an awareness of the divine favour. Malan's emphasis was not here universalistic (though at first sight it might appear so), but actually deterministic; the divine favour was understood by him to be so fixed on elect sinners that their experiential transition from a state of sin to that of salvation was all but eclipsed by the actualization of the eternal divine purpose. It would not misrepresent his position to characterize it as teaching the salvation of the elect from eternity.

Under such a scheme, we need not wonder that contemporaries listened in vain for evangelical admonition to repentance from known sin, appeals to place conscious faith in Christ as sin-bearer, and instructions to the converted to walk in holiness of life. The future professor, John Duncan, recalled that Malan attempted to resolve his doubts as to whether he was a genuine Christian or not by a mere form of syllogistic reasoning based on a Scripture verse - 1 John 5.1, "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God". When the troubled Duncan gave satisfactory answer to the question of Jesus' identity, the Swiss evangelist gave him the strongest assurances of his standing in grace. The impressionable Duncan at first thought Malan's whole manner both "reasonable and apostolic", but on more

mature reflection came to see that the man's method was based upon a defective understanding of the interior work of the Holy Spirit.³³ Orthodox reviewers of Malan's writings in the Christian Observer and Evangelical Magazine appraised him similarly. The latter writer concluded his remarks with the expressed hope

that the sentiments contained (in the work) may never disturb the peace, tarnish the purity, or dishonour the profession of the churches in Great Britain.³⁴

Most British evangelicals rejected Malan's theology and methods not because they rejected predestination, but because they believed that the doctrine could not be given this degree of prominence without eclipsing equally important biblical teachings. Here was one important respect in which a popular and revered representative of the Geneva of legend clashed with British evangelicalism; that he felt authorized to denounce what he -- by his high Calvinist outlook -- termed Arminianism, will not have endeared him to the many evangelical Calvinists who found his doctrinal formulations severe in the extreme.

Genevan Theology in Britain

British theology in the late Georgian and early Victorian era was neither well-informed about nor concerned to know the state of theology in Europe. H.P.

³³ Brown, Life of Duncan, pp. 129, 216.

³⁴ cf. footnote 29 above. Evangelical Magazine, 6 n.s. (1828) p.481.

Liddon, the biographer of E.B. Pusey (1800-1882) (who did gain a knowledge of the European theological scene in the mid-1820's) wrote that

German politics and German editions of the classics were welcomed in England; but the history, the results, the temper and the tendencies of German protestant theology were as little understood as though they had belonged to another and a distinct continent far beyond the pale of Christendom and civilization.³⁵

Professor August Tholuck of Halle (1799-1877), who had served as close advisor to Pusey in the latter's German sojourn, was one of a select few European theologians considered worthy of general trust by the English Protestant public. Yet though invited to be the guest speaker at the London annual meeting of the "Continental Society" in May 1825, he was not considered to be beyond criticism by Robert Haldane. In the following decade the Scots polemicist penned a scathing review of the theologian's translated writings.³⁶

By 1842, and in the context of a proposed joint Anglican-Lutheran action to establish a Protestant bishopric at Jerusalem, Pusey wrote a public Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.³⁷ The letter warned both

³⁵ H.P. Liddon. Life of E.B. Pusey, (London, 1891). Vol. 1, p.147. Similar sentiments are recorded by A.R. MacEwen in Life of John Cairns, (Edinburgh, 1895) p. 148, in connection with Cairns' Continental study two decades later.

³⁶ Two Pamphlets for the Consideration of the Church of Scotland on Professor Tholuck's Neologian Opinions, (Edinburgh, 1837,38).

³⁷ (Oxford, 1842).

of the decidedly rationalistic character of European church life and theology and of the way in which this degenerate approach to the Christian faith was now so much a part of the life of the Church of England as to make large scale internal conflict necessary. He realized that one magnetic "pole" towards which a substantial segment of Anglican opinion leaned was Geneva. In his mind, Geneva, the city of Calvin, was now the epitome of the Reformation run to rationalistic ruin.

Two schemes of doctrine, the Genevan (i.e. the rationalistic) and the Catholic, are probably for the last time struggling within our Church; the contest which has been carried on ever since the Reformation, between the Church and those who parted from her has now been permitted to be transferred to the Church itself; on the issue hangs the destiny of our church...³⁸

Now in just such a setting, when all things to do with Continental theology were held suspect by the vast majority of British Christians, there came forward the preachers and theologians associated with the evangelical 'reveil' emanating from Geneva. That trusted Protestant leaders in Britain such as Edward Bickersteth, John Pye Smith, Thomas Chalmers and Robert Haldane could vouch for the trustworthiness of the foreigners made them rapidly the 'toast' of many Protestants. Here were Europeans who

³⁸ *ibid.* p.70. Pusey had likely chosen Geneva as the 'type' of rationalistic Christianity in the light of the publication in the previous year of fellow High Churchman William Palmer's Aids to Reflection on the Seemingly Double Character of the National Church, (Oxford, 1841). Palmer had visited Geneva in 1835-36 and recorded in graphic detail the heterodox views of the official theological faculty. cf. pp.38,39.

could be found emphasizing as emphatically and unambiguously as any native Protestant the themes of Christ and Scripture, human ruin and redemption. Here was positive reassurance that the evangelicalism and biblicism which the British shared with other Anglo-Saxon peoples was not unique to them.

We may note in passing that the 1830's had ushered in a period when, not only the writings of the 'reveil' leaders themselves, but the writings which had first influenced them had become widely available in Britain. It cannot be attributed to coincidence that Edward Bickersteth, acting in his capacity as editor for the London publisher, Seeley and Co., included the Christian Theology of Benedict Pictet of Geneva (d. 1724) in his series, the "Christian Family Library".³⁹ Similarly, there appeared in print at London in 1838 the work which the Genevan dissidents, Emil Guers among them, credited with delivering them from an imbalanced preoccupation with the work of sanctification - David Hollaz' The Order of Grace in the Economy of Salvation.⁴⁰

As for the writings of the 'reveil' men themselves,

³⁹ Pictet had been reckoned by the evangelicals at Geneva as the last orthodox theologian to teach in their city's Academy. Malan clearly was indebted to Pictet for assistance in his own formative period. Life of Malan, p.45. The translation was published by Seeley at London in 1834.

⁴⁰ The translator of Hollaz from the French edition of 1825 was clearly an enthusiast for the book. He had the work published at his own expense.

we have mentioned already the approbation given to the historical writings of Merle D'Aubigné.⁴¹ Here we may simply note that within a decade of first release in French dress in 1838, the multi-volumed history had been published by five separate British publishing houses - each utilizing a fresh translator.⁴² Caesar Malan proved himself an able commentator on Swiss theological affairs for the British evangelical public in the same period. In 1839, the Scottish Christian Herald published his accounts both of the abolition of the Helvetic Confession of Faith within the neighbouring canton of Vaud and the successful popular opposition at Zurich of the now-notorious David Friederich Strauss when the latter was named to a theological chair in that university.⁴³

Gausson's Theopneustia and British Evangelicalism

Among purely theological (as distinct from

⁴¹ supra p. 375.

⁴² An interesting review provided by the Eclectic Review, XI n.s. (1842), pp. 652-673 weighed the merits of the translations published by Walther and Whitaker (both of London) and Blackie of Glasgow. A second Glasgow edition by Collins and one at Edinburgh by Oliver and Boyd followed in mid-decade.

⁴³ Scottish Christian Herald, I. n.s. (1839), supplement, pp. 27,36,37. The latter material was reprinted by the Herald from the Record, the strident Church of England newspaper published at London.

historical) writings, no work emanating from the Genevan 'reveil' had such a noticeable impact on Britain as that of F.S.L. Gausсен's Theopneustia; the volume was published at Paris and London in 1841.⁴⁴ Gausсен, following partially in the footsteps of his Scots mentor, Robert Haldane⁴⁵ was keen to emphasize that according to Scripture's self-description, all parts of the biblical canon enjoyed an equally pervasive inspiration and consequent authority in matters of faith. Gausсен was disarmingly candid in admitting that he was utterly at a loss to explain the process or "psychology" of inspiration and could only concern himself with the resultant authoritative volume. He defined inspiration as being

that inexplicable power which the Divine Spirit, exercised, aforetime, upon the authors of Holy Scripture, to guide them even to the words which they have employed and to preserve them from all error, as well as from any omission.⁴⁶

The author's purpose was a rather restricted one. He did not seek to convince the sceptic or agnostic that man stood in need of a revelation from God, or, that the Scriptures provide us with the record of just such a

⁴⁴ A separate translation and edition was issued at New York in 1842.

⁴⁵ Whose views on the inspiration of Scripture have been detailed in chapter two, above. The Gausсен-Haldane indebtedness is officially recorded in correspondence of Gausсен printed in Haldane, Lives of the Haldanes, pp. 515, 516.

⁴⁶ Gausсен, Theopneustia, (London, 1841), p.37.

revelation; he left all such argument to others. His concern was primarily for those within the Christianity of Western Europe, who granted that the Scriptures were a book from God - but were without fixed views about the way in which the Scriptures had come to us from God. Maury, a considerable authority on the theology of the 'réveil', indicated that Gausсен had been provoked to write his treatise by the teaching of Etienne de Chastel (1801-1886), professor of ecclesiastical history in the Academy of Geneva from 1831, and J.E. Cellerier (1785-1862), honorary professor of biblical criticism in the same institution. The two, who had in common a pious upbringing and the earlier confidence of the 'réveil' circle, combined forces in the 1830's to introduce the latest German critical views about the Bible to Genevan theology.⁴⁷

Against such a backdrop, Gausсен was eager to maintain that all Scripture was uniformly and equally inspired:

Our object is to establish, by the word of God, that the Scriptures are from God, that they are in every part from God, and they are as a whole, entirely from God.⁴⁸

The consequence of such a uniform inspiration was that the books of Scripture " contained no error, their entire contents are inspired of God....Not one of these words

⁴⁷ Maury, Le Reveil Religieux, II. p.44.

⁴⁸ Gausсен, p.30.

ought to be neglected".⁴⁹

Some contemporary observers, not unsympathetic to Gausсен, found the work unconvincing. Adolphe Monod, then teaching in the theological college of Montauban, wrote the author to suggest that

this absolute doctrine of inspiration has been formed, I believe, 'a priori', to meet the needs of theology more than on the teachings of the Bible. I myself need to conceive of inspiration more broadly.⁵⁰

The daughter and biographer of Merle D'Aubigne saw illustrated in Gausсен's views "the fatal law of spiritual tides"⁵¹ - an excessive reaction to earlier opposite excesses.

There were major weaknesses in Gausсен's volume. For one, his eagerness to maintain the absolute embraciveness of inspiration for every part of Scripture prevented him from addressing the problem posed by the inclusion of material in the Bible which we are plainly meant to understand to be deficient. The faulty counsel of the friends of Job, for instance, may have been painstakingly recorded and included in our Scripture by inspiration, but nevertheless represents something far less than Divine wisdom. Some writers criticized by

⁴⁹ Gausсен, p.37.

⁵⁰ quoted in Maury, II. p.35.

⁵¹ Bieler, Une Famille, p.112. A similar view was later maintained in Gretillat, "Movements of Theological Thought", pp. 424,425.

Gausсен dealt with such nuances far more adequately.⁵² Again, Gausсен aimed to achieve his embracive and absolute doctrine of inspiration by an insistence that all Scripture writers functioned as prophets -subject to the immediate promptings of the Divine spirit. But even if such a construction fit the case of the Old Testament writings⁵³ (and we would maintain that it did so imperfectly) it seemed to comport poorly with the various literary forms of the New Testament and the admissions of some New Testament writers as to their methods of compilation and composition.⁵⁴

Though Gausсен was then understood and continues to be understood as an innovator both in the high doctrine of inspiration he espoused and the methodology employed in asserting this view, the first judgement is much less certain than the last. Benedict Pictet, that last trusted theologian of Geneva, the republication of whose work we have noted above, had himself maintained that the Scripture writers

wrote nothing without the Spirit either inspiring them, or influencing them to write, or directing them, so as to not to suffer them while writing to commit even the least error or mistake.⁵⁵

The notion of a comprehensive inspiration, embracive of

⁵² So for instance John Dick, The Inspiration of Scripture (Glasgow, 1803), pp. 30-33.

⁵³ The argument of Gausсен, pp. 382ff.

⁵⁴ The argument of Gausсен, pp. 410.

⁵⁵ Pictet, Christian Theology, p.33.

the different genres and stylistic variations in Scripture, and guaranteeing freedom from error was plainly much older than Gausson or his Scots mentor, Haldane.

Now this fact was underlined by the generally enthusiastic reception given the book by evangelicalism in Britain. The reviewer for the Evangelical Magazine concluded his thorough overview of the work, spread across two monthly instalments, by stating

It is a work which will repay the reader. It is the work of a man of considerable ability, extensive scholarship, and deep piety. It embraces a full, comprehensive and interesting discussion of an important and agitated question. It is written in a clear, forcible and elegant style, containing passages of much beauty and eloquence in which there are "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" and above all, an unction from above that renders its perusal truly edifying.⁵⁶

The Eclectic Review, though somewhat more restrained, was also full of praise. Though its reviewer noted features of the work which were not exactly to his taste, yet he maintained

we do not the less readily hail him as a fellow labourer in the great field of European evangelization. We have been edified by his glowing appeals to the heart. We go entirely with him in his

⁵⁶ Evangelical Magazine, 20, n.s. (1842), p.177. In New England, similarly laudatory views of the book were set down in the American Biblical Repository, VI, 2nd series (1841) which claimed, p.113 "all in all, we think it decidedly the best work on the subject which we have ever read". The Princeton Review, XIV (1842), p.525 declared "it establishes and vindicates the thorough going, old school doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the scriptures. Though this doctrine has never, so far as we know, been formally denied among ourselves, it has been neglected and derided on the continent of Europe".

reverential homage to the authority of Scripture. ...We strongly recommend the study of it to those who are tempted by the freedom of German rationalism and to those also, who are fettered by the servitude which is spreading so widely through the land under the high pretensions of Anglican theology.⁵⁷

But Gausсен's work did raise nationalistic concerns and test the bounds of Christian charity when appearing in English dress.

As to the former, Gausсен showed himself just as ready as Malan⁵⁸ to subject British evangelical theology to criticism. While Malan had done this in defense of his particular version of high Calvinism, Gausсен -- now defending a still more central theme in contemporary theology -- had gone so far as to name those British theologians who he believed had abandoned the ramparts of a full and absolute inspiration. To be sure, these British divines were not the only theologians named as falling below Gausсен's standard of acceptability. A first group, comprised of the Germans Schleiermacher and De Wette, were charged with rejecting all miraculous inspiration. A second, represented by the German, Michaelis, was faulted for acknowledging only the inspiration of some of the sacred books. But the Britishers, Drs. John Pye Smith, Daniel Wilson and John Dick along with the contemporary German, Twesten, formed a third group charged with denying that inspiration was

⁵⁷ Eclectic Review, XI, n.s. (1842), pp. 382, 383.

⁵⁸ supra p.382.

in evidence in equal degree in all portions of the Scripture.⁵⁹

Here was an attack on the view popularly known as the "degrees of inspiration" theory. It had been adopted by many Christian thinkers a century earlier, in the face of the deistical allegation that the purported miraculous element in Christianity and the Bible had been highly exaggerated. From Philip Doddridge forward, many British Reformed theologians had responded to this criticism by adopting the view that the supernatural or miraculous element necessary to the composition of the Bible had varied in degree from book to book. The supposed variation was correlated with the method of Biblical composition employed (were extant documents relied upon?), the subject matter under discussion (was the material sublime and otherwise concealed from humanity, or simply everyday?) and the question of whether prediction of the future was involved. The "degrees of inspiration" stance had seemed attractive in that it took note of observable genre in Scripture and hints as to composition found within the Bible itself. It also guarded the orthodox writers who employed it against the charge of "over-belief" - the claiming of the operation of a miraculous inspiration in a manner more widespread than seemed necessary to account for the Bible's

⁵⁹ Gaussen, pp.27,28. Daniel Wilson, Lectures On the Evidences of Christianity, (London, 1828). John Dick, Inspiration, (Glasgow, 1803).

existence.

Gausson was not the first early nineteenth century writer to protest against this stance. We have seen that his mentor, Haldane, had made the criticism as early as 1816.⁶⁰ Yet Gausson did not deny that there may have been a manifold and diverse divine activity in superintending the writing of the books of Scripture. He simply maintained that

The power which then operated in those men of God, and which they themselves experienced in very different degrees has not been defined to us. There is not any thing to authorize our explaining it. Scripture never presents to us either its mode or its measure as an object of study. It is spoken of only incidentally and is not associated with our devotion.⁶¹

The matter was not peripheral, but central, maintained Gausson; the "degrees" of inspiration schema was in fact a dangerous concession.

This protest was noted and acted upon, not least because of the author's connection with the Geneva of legend.⁶² In short, it assisted in the launching of a kind of revisionist treatment of Britain's past century of Reformed theology. Such a revisionism seemed necessary to the reviewer at the Evangelical Magazine because at the present day, Biblical infallibility was

⁶⁰ see the discussion at chap. 2, p.144.

⁶¹ Gausson, p. 24,25.

⁶² the Princeton Review XIV (1842), p.525, suggestively commented, "It will be read, understood, and felt by those who would throw aside with a sneer the productions of a Scottish or American author".

under attack in light of the critical ideas of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (enunciated in Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit) and the rise of Tractarianism. The writer believed that

there are many who entertain doubts on the subject, partly in consequence of their having been accustomed to follow Doddridge's unscriptural distinctions on inspiration and partly for their having too easily abandoned the true and ancient doctrine.⁶³

The reviewer for the Eclectic Review demurred, however. Although acknowledging the overall value of Gausson's volume, he objected to seeing the evangelical theologians of his country denigrated by a foreigner. He believed that the "main design of M. Gausson's volume is to impugn some opinions of those who acknowledge the inspiration of the Scripture"; he believed that such tactics were but an example of "dogmatic harshness".⁶⁴ He furthermore believed that the Swiss writer had been guilty of sowing the seeds of mischief by seriously exaggerating the differences of opinion between himself and the British theologians named.

Of our own writers we will say, with M. Gausson's permission, that they have taught an inspiration of the Scriptures as plenary as that for which he contends and that in teaching it they display a

⁶³ Evangelical Magazine 20, n.s. (1842), p.173. It was one of the ironies of the controversy that the "degrees of inspiration" view, emanating from Doddridge, was widely known in Europe as in Britain, because the Religious Tract Society had been circulating Doddridge's Lectures in translation since 1807. Thus the new attack on Doddridge was, by extension, an attack on the Tract Society. cf. chap. 2. p. 114 supra.

⁶⁴ Eclectic Review, XI, n.s. (1842) pp. 379,373.

calmness of thought, a sagacity of discrimination, and a strength of argument which we are tempted to claim as the national characteristics of English theology on this, as on every other question.⁶⁵

The Eclectic charge that Gausсен had treated the British evangelicals unfairly appears well justified. Pye Smith, Wilson and Dick had contended for a plenary inspiration of Scripture; but they did not all use the term in an identical sense.⁶⁶

But the argument of Gausсен not only cut across the grain of British nationalism, but of Christian charity. There can be no doubt that Gausсен knew both Pye Smith and Wilson by reason of their earlier sojourns in Geneva. Wilson had actually commissioned Gausсен in 1823 to translate Scott's Commentary on the Bible into French.⁶⁷ Gausсен must have known that both Smith and Wilson had also been keen supporters of the "Continental Society"⁶⁸. And as for John Dick, he had been the honored theologian of the Associate Synod, which when re-united in 1820 as

⁶⁵ *ibid.* p.377.

⁶⁶ Dick, for example maintained a plenary inspiration which involved dictation, extended to the words as well as ideas of Scripture, and included judicious conceptions of varying degrees of divine involvement required in the process of inscripturation. It is difficult to see that this position, reflected in his Inspiration, (Glasgow, 1803), pp. 1,3,20-27,34 differed significantly from that of Gausсен.

⁶⁷ cf. Wilson, Letters from an Absent Brother, II. p.214.

⁶⁸ the support of Pye Smith and Wilson for this missionary enterprize has been indicated in the previous chapter.

the United Associate Synod, had been prepared to receive Caesar Malan as minister and support young men referred to them for service in French Europe. Of course, Gausson may have sincerely believed that these British writers were gravely in error and worthy of being exposed to the religious public. But we can endorse neither the questionable theological judgement nor the faulty diplomacy which caused him to turn on his evangelical allies; his polemic only served to exacerbate existing tensions within British evangelicalism. At Geneva, Gausson had long gained a reputation as an evangelical 'concordist' - drawing the different strands of evangelicalism together to co-operate with one another.⁶⁹ His writings played no such role in British evangelicalism.

It has been claimed that Gausson "provided, for the first time, a carefully argued defence of the inerrancy of the Bible".⁷⁰ The evidence we have marshalled would suggest a somewhat modified appraisal of his significance. He may at least be said to have been the

⁶⁹ cf. chap. 3. p.200.

⁷⁰ David Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, (London, 1989), p.90. The helpful thesis of Bebbington, that an evangelicalism influenced by the outlook of the Romantic era challenged its predecessor, influenced by the Enlightenment, is in fact supported by the evidence put forward here. It is only suggested, by way of modification, that many "Romantics" (Gausson among them) were quite consciously returning to pre-Enlightenment theological views or joining forces with those who had never relinquished them.

early nineteenth century theologian most responsible for rehabilitating the views of biblical inspiration postulated in the period of high Protestant orthodoxy; it must be added that these views had never ceased to be held in segments of the Reformed theological tradition.

The 'Formula Consensus Helvetica' of 1675, composed at Zurich by theologians of that canton, Geneva and Basle, had maintained that the text of the Hebrew Bible, is

not only in its consonants, but in its vowels - either the points themselves, or at least the power of the points - not only in its matter, but in its words, inspired of God, thus forming with the New Testament, the sole and complete rule of our faith and life.⁷¹

We have noted already that Benedict Pictet of Geneva, writing in the following generation, had not hesitated to speak of the Scriptures as being "free from even the least error or mistake" by virtue of inspiration. Among the Scottish Presbyterians, there were those such as Thomas Boston (1676-1732) who approximated the views of the 'Formula Consensus Helvetica' (above) and wrote in defence of the inspiration of the Hebrew vowel points.⁷² John Dick, to whom we have referred above, held views hardly distinguishable from those of Gausson, while Andrew Thomson (1779-1831), minister of St. George's

⁷¹ Article II. The 26 articles are printed as an appendix to A.A. Hodge, Outlines of Theology, (London, 1886), pp. 656-663.

⁷² Andrew Thomson, Thomas Boston of Ettrick: His Life and Times, (London, 1895), pp. 178-180.

Church, Edinburgh and editor of the Christian Instructor stood beside Robert Haldane in these matters. The same could be said of Robert Gordon (1786-1853), minister of of the High Church, Edinburgh.

The prominent United Presbyterian theologian, John Cairns, read Gausson while a theological student in the period 1840-1844 and even twenty years later, when known for his somewhat broadened views, could recall for a correspondent:

You ask about inspiration. I do not know a perfectly satisfactory work on the subject. Gausson is a little too rigid for me, but contains many fine things.⁷³

Seen in this light, Gausson did not originate but merely lent his considerable weight to the re-assertion of an older view of biblical inspiration in a time of flux. But this flux was in such progress at the time he wrote, that neither the view identified with Gausson's volume nor the moderating British view which he criticized could long hold the field. The release of Essays and Reviews in 1860 would upstage both. By late century, Gausson's stance had come to be identified with Anglican clergyman J.C. Ryle (1816-1900) and the London Baptist preacher, C.H. Spurgeon (1834-1892).⁷⁴

⁷³ A.R. MacEwen, Life of Cairns, p. 485. The quotation indicates that Cairns, having read Gausson, was still awaiting a work which maintained its strengths while making up its deficiencies.

⁷⁴ Nigel M. de S. Cameron, Biblical Higher Criticism and the Defense of Infallibilism in 19th Century Britain, (Lewiston, N.Y., 1987) has identified Gausson's

Evangelical Ecumenism

We have alluded above to the fact that the 1830's witnessed an upsurge in denominational identity and activity; this tendency was in contrast to the preceding quarter-century of extensive inter-church co-operation.⁷⁵ Now we will argue both that the decade of the 1840's contained its own counter-thrust in pursuit of evangelical Protestant ecumenism and that the personalities of the 'reveil' had their own significant role to play in this movement.

In May, 1842, the Rev. John Angell James of Birmingham stood before the annual meeting of the Congregational Union to advocate a union among churches committed to the voluntary principle with the object of combat^{ing} infidelity and opposing "Popery, Puseyism and Plymouth Brethrenism".⁷⁶ The moving force behind the call for a new ecumenism could not have been made more clear. British evangelicals were all too keenly aware of seismic

contribution in the context of that century; cf. pp. 136, 261, 351. J.C. Ryle, Old Paths; Being Some Plain Statements On Some of the Weightier Matters of Christianity, (London, 1877). C.H. Spurgeon contributed a foreward to a new and revised edition of Theopneustia, B.W. Carr, ed., (London, 1888). It is also worthy of note that Gausson's volume has been repeatedly reprinted in the U.S.A. during the twentieth century.

⁷⁵ cf. p.353 supra. We have there accepted the hypothesis of D.M. Thompson that the rise in denominationalism was the natural outgrowth of evangelical expansion rather than a lapse from earlier charitable relations.

⁷⁶ R. Rouse and S.C. Neill, A History of the Ecumenical Movement, (London, 1954), p.318.

changes which were underway; they found themselves in reaction to these forces. From 1841, the summarized argument of D.F. Strauss's unsettling Leben Jesu had begun to circulate in England⁷⁷ and this served, as it were, as a harbinger of things to come. The massive influx of Irish immigrants, especially as a result of potato famine, into Lancashire and the West Midlands fed latent fears of spreading Catholicism. The publication from Oxford of the series of Tracts for the Times convinced the same constituency that Britain faced a Catholicizing "fifth column" from within the Established Church of England. Such was the evangelical Protestant perception of affairs, and that perception -- however partial or blurred -- was the stimulus to action. The proposals made by James of Birmingham won favour with the Congregational Union and led to a massive rally at Exeter Hall, London in the following June; however, the rally was frustrated in taking any action beyond its own confines by the lack of any formal ongoing organization.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ the full English translation did not appear until 1846 at the hands of Marian Evans, better known to us as the novelist George Eliot. cf. Daniel L. Pals, The Victorian "Lives" of Jesus, (San Antonio, 1982), pp. 25ff. It is worth noting that the warning notes sounded by Caesar Malan regarding Strauss, alluded to at fn.49, actually preceded by two years the appearance of Strauss's arguments in any English dress.

⁷⁸ J.B.A. Kessler, A Study of the Evangelical Alliance in Great Britain, (Goes, Netherlands, 1968), p.17.

Similar concerns for Protestant unity were aired in a co-operative gathering of Scots Presbyterians, met at Edinburgh in July 1843 to celebrate the bi-centenary of the meeting of the Westminster Assembly (1643-1647). A speech given in that setting by Dr. Robert Balmer, professor of theology of the United Secession Church, called for "co-operation in the things in which we are agreed" in the expectation that "our incorporation would be ripened and would come in due time".⁷⁹ This speech served in turn to incite a Christian philanthropist, John Henderson of Glasgow, to sponsor the writing of a volume of Essays on Christian Union;⁸⁰ the essays uniformly called for a visible unity. A letter from the American minister, Dr. Patten, placed in the published volume at the close of the essay by J.A. James, went so far as to call for an international planning convention to be held in July 1845.⁸¹ This sentiment James heartily endorsed; but it was eventually agreed that the conference should be held not in London, but in Liverpool and that the Scots should take the initiative in calling for

⁷⁹ J.W. Massie, The Evangelical Alliance; Its Origin and Development, (London, 1847), p.98.

⁸⁰ David King, ed. (Edinburgh and London, 1845). The contributors were Drs. Thomas Chalmers, Robert Balmer, Robert Candlish, David King, Ralph Wardlaw, Gavin Struthers, Andrew Symington and the Rev. John Angell James.

⁸¹ Essays on Christian Union, pp. 223-225.

British and foreign delegates.⁸²

Now there was, simultaneous with these British stirrings, another initiative launched by Merle D'Aubigné at St. Gall, Switzerland in August 1844. There, while addressing an all-Switzerland conference of Protestant pastors, the historian had issued a summons for the preparation of a unified pan-Protestant confession of faith. He articulated the resolutions:

1. That it is highly desirable for all Evangelical Christians, Reformed and Lutheran, Presbyterian and Episcopalian and generally all who believe in the fundamental truths of the gospel to unite for the purpose of making an open confession of their common faith in opposition to the unity, purely material, of the Romish Church and thus proclaim their own true spiritual unity.

2. The conference resolves to put itself in communication with some of the pastoral conferences recently founded in Germany, particularly with that of Berlin, which has very recently occupied itself on the same question and this may eventually lead to a similar union with the pastoral conferences of other countries, namely France, Great Britain, Holland, and America and to the re-establishment of an ecumenical confession of the Christian faith.

3. It appoints a commission, authorized to fix the basis of an evangelical confession of the 19th century and which shall contain all the truths embodied in all the existing Protestant confessions and arranged in a form adapted to the wants of the present age. This commission should likewise be authorized to take the necessary steps to attain the end pointed out in the preceding articles.⁸³

⁸² Kessler, A Study, p. 23.

⁸³ The initiative was reported in the new periodical The Continental Echo and Protestant Witness, I, (1845), p.29. In May 1845, Merle D'Aubigné spoke of the St. Gall initiative in his speech to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, cf. Proceedings of the Free General Assembly, (1845), p.139.

To this initiative of Merle D'Aubigné and its reportage in Britain we may legitimately trace the extension of the then-current Anglo-Saxon Protestant ecumenical initiative into the pan-Protestant scheme it soon became.⁸⁴

The fact was that the formerly Protestant cantons of Switzerland had had their own exclusively Protestant constitutions altered under the Napoleonic policy of granting freedom of religion throughout the lands of the Empire. Merle D'Aubigné now publicly claimed that Geneva was "half Catholic". He was, moreover, fully abreast of those developments in Britain which tended to corroborate the conviction that a large-scale Roman advance was now underway and that only a united Protestantism could maintain its position.

To his Genevan students in autumn 1842, he had delivered a rousing address entitled Geneva and Oxford⁸⁵ in which he reviewed and confuted the claims of E.B. Pusey's Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury (1842). When in the spring of 1845, he embarked on a speaking tour in Britain, he was ready to inveigh against the

⁸⁴ in this wider sense, it was proper for the Continental Echo, II (1846), preface, to attribute the creation of the Evangelical Alliance to this Swiss initiative. "The institution of the Evangelical Alliance is the greatest historical fact, not merely of the year, of the era - not merely of Britain, but of the world...In being really effected by the British churches, though originally suggested by a continental divine..."

⁸⁵ The address was promptly translated in English and published at Edinburgh and London. We have utilized the edition included in D'Aubigne's Discourses and Essays, (Glasgow, 1846).

proposed "Maynooth Bill" (which would increase the state grant to the Catholic seminary at Maynooth, Ireland) and the larger issue which he believed to underlie it:

The present state of things shows us that the Church has nothing more to expect from the State. The Maynooth Bill is a bill of divorce which the State sends to the Church. During three centuries, Protestantism expected much from its union with the State; it has now no longer anything to expect from it...The State is disconnecting itself from the Church.⁸⁶

Now all this was the result of the gradual "disappearance of the Protestant State". What was now called for in its place was "the manifestation of the spiritual unity of all Protestants", and a "great Christian union against the Roman league".⁸⁷ The historian called on the Free Church of Scotland, just freed from State interference, to be "a special engine for that great work of Christian union".⁸⁸ Whether or not the Swiss visitor knew it to be the case, this was

⁸⁶ Proceedings of the Free Church General Assembly, (1845), p.137. It is highly ironic that such sentiments regarding the State's failure in its duties towards established Protestantism had also been expressed by John Keble in his 1833 Sermon On National Apostasy; the latter is generally regarded as the warning shot which marked the inauguration of Tractarianism which Merle D'Aubigné was concerned to warn against. Keble had asked, "How may a man best reconcile his allegiance to God and his Church with his duty to his country, that country, which now by the supposition, is fast becoming hostile to the Church and cannot long be the friend of God?" National Apostasy. (Oxford, 1833 reprinted, Steventon, 1983), p.21.

⁸⁷ Proceedings of the Free Church, (1845), pp. 138,140.

⁸⁸ ibid. p. 139.

the very role being urged upon the Free Church in the previous year by John Angell James. The James initiative would eventuate in a conference at Liverpool in October of 1845 preparatory to the launching of the Evangelical Alliance the following year.

Here it is not our purpose to re-tell the story of the founding of that Alliance,⁸⁹ but only to emphasize the part played by Merle D'Aubigné in convincing the evangelical public of the need for such an expression of unity. We may also rightly stress that the significant European (and more particularly Francophone) participation in the inaugural conference at London in August 1846 could never have materialized were it not for the events of the preceding thirty years described above. Of the eight hundred representatives present, forty-eight were from various Continental countries.⁹⁰ Internationalized Protestantism was the thing sought in that age when state Protestantism had proven itself obstructive because unable or unwilling to meet the challenges posed by a new era in Western Europe.

Merle D'Aubigné and Caesar Malan's attendance had been anticipated at London in August, 1846 - as had been that of Alexandre Vinet of Lausanne; all were temporarily

⁸⁹ a work which has been adequately performed by Kessler, *op. cit.* and Massie, *op. cit.*

⁹⁰ Kessler, *A Study*, p.35. Eighty were American delegates and the balance British. We cannot dwell here on the various European representations.

indisposed and kept from attending.⁹¹ Yet among those present were numerous Francophones with whom we have become familiar: Adolphe Monod, professor at Montauban, Louis La Harpe, of the Evangelical Theological College of Geneva, Georges Fisch, minister of 'L'Église Évangélique de Lyons', J.J. Audebez of 'La Chapelle Taitbout' in Paris. Antoine Vermeil of Paris, Emile Froissard of Nimes, and D.D. Duvivier of Saumur were present. Ami Bost was present, as was a delegate of 'L'Église Évangélique de Vaud', Charles Baup. From what would shortly be constituted as the 'L'Église Missionnaire de Belge' came Louis Panchaud.⁹²

Now these persons, when taken in combination with early supporters of the Continental Society who were now deeply active in the launching of the Alliance⁹³ indicates something of the way in which the Alliance was able to draw on a fund of international good will built up over time. These long-standing co-operative links also go some distance to explaining the facility with

⁹¹ Massie, The Evangelical Alliance, p.379.

⁹² Massie, *ibid.* pp. 392-396. Bost has left a record of his impressions at the inaugural meetings in his Memoires, II, p.388ff as has the biographer of Adolphe Monod, pp. 152ff. Both men indicated misgivings at the Alliance's efforts to be exclusive of some currently unpopular views. Bieler, Une Famille, p.218 indicates that La Harpe of Geneva took with him the written support of 130 ministers and laymen to the inauguration of the Alliance.

⁹³ We might mention Edward Bickersteth, W. Alers Hankey, J. Pye Smith, James Haldane Stewart, Baptist Noel and Hugh McNeile.

which affiliates of the Alliance were established in France and Switzerland, among other places. These same international links, by then extending back five decades, made the European involvement in another ecumenical scheme originating in the English speaking world - the World Presbyterian Alliance (1875) seem desirable and natural.⁹⁴ Thus it has been fairly remarked that the cumulative effect of the penetration of Europe by Britain's Evangelical Revival was only initially towards division and ultimately towards union:

The unpalatable conclusion must be accepted that one feature of the Evangelical Awakening, as of other dynamic spiritual awakenings, was a tendency to create divisions or new denominations...The 'reveil' in Switzerland and France played its part in leading to the formation of the Free Churches in several Swiss cantons and in France... Yet all this reaction against Christian unity led to a counter action in its favour.⁹⁵

The Geneva 'reveil' was plainly a potent influence upon early nineteenth century British religious life. British evangelicals found in the events and personalities of that awakening much to stir their imagination and to invigorate their interest in the heritage of the Protestant Reformation. Yet the Genevan influence was, as we have seen, quite often at odds with British evangelicalism. The theology of evangelism of

⁹⁴ However, the roots of this linkage in the 'reveil' go undocumented in Pradervand, A Century of Service, who nevertheless records the expanse of the initial co-operation.

⁹⁵ Rouse and Neill, History of the Ecumenical Movement., pp. 316,318.

Caesar Malan represented a form of Calvinistic thought reminiscent of the era prior to the Evangelical Revival; such ideas were widely perceived as retrograde by British persons no less at home in the Reformed tradition than Malan. Louis Gaussen's writings on inspiration had commended respect for their learning and strength of argument, but had fallen far short of securing the comprehensive support he had sought. By their polemical character, they served to fragment rather than consolidate evangelical conviction. J.H. Merle D'Aubigné's speeches and writings in advocacy of international Protestant solidarity against perceived Roman Catholic advance materially assisted the advance of evangelical ecumenism. Yet his advocacy of these ideas was rooted in convictions about the demise of European State Protestantism which were considerably more developed than those of many of his closest supporters in the Established Churches of Britain.

CONCLUSION

We are now in a position to venture certain judgements regarding the ecclesiastical initiatives of Britain in connection with the spiritual awakening in Francophone Europe in the years 1816-1849. We may say with certainty that these initiatives had their roots in both the reception of Huguenot refugees into Britain since 1685 and the rise of domestic and foreign missionary enterprise flowing from the Evangelical Revival after 1770. The advance of religious liberty in France from 1787 onward, culminating in the State recognition of Protestantism in 1802, served to render the Francophone Protestantism of the Napoleonic Empire amenable to British evangelical assistance. This assistance was offered covertly in advance of and overtly following the end of military hostilities in 1815.

That Britain had proven herself stalwart in resisting and assisting others to resist the territorial ambitions of Napoleon only served to enhance the welcome given to British Christians when they ventured to the Continent in peace time. In an age when British investment in Continental heavy industry, transportation schemes, and manufacture proliferated, there was a concurrent massive outflow of charitable givings by

British Christians to that region.¹

This assistance was warmly received by Francophone evangelicals. But in accepting it, the latter did not mean to admit any absolute dependency on such British aid, either for the origin of or sustenation^{t,} of their spiritual awakening. As soon as political and economic circumstances permitted, Francophone evangelicals increasingly moved to finance and direct Gospel extension schemes within their borders. Sadly, some British evangelicals of paternalistic outlook sought to maintain a relationship with Francophone Europe built upon a supposition of enduring Francophone dependency. Such an outlook served to justify both attempts at ongoing British control of Francophone evangelization and endeavours to reproduce forms of British evangelicalism on the Continent without respect for the existing indigenous Protestantism.

While British efforts to assist in the re-Christianization of the Continent usually proceeded from laudable motives, the effort was also often motivated by a British Protestant wistfulness about the demise of an older international Protestant order dating from the Reformation era. Yet the re-establishing of this international Protestantism was in certain respects less, not more, than Britons bargained for.

¹Evans, *The Influence of Foreigners*, pp. 570 ff. has estimated an outflow of more than 100,000 pounds sterling to Francophone Europe in the period to 1849.

Though Geneva underwent something of a rehabilitation as a centre of Gospel activity, London and Edinburgh had in fact displaced it as hubs of international Protestantism. The venerated theology of the Reformation tradition, when articulated for the British by nineteenth century Francophone preachers and divines seemed often to have an abrasiveness and polemic which ill corresponded with fond expectations of a renewed international Protestant solidarity. The unanticipated discovery that Francophone evangelicals in the Reformed tradition did not necessarily articulate or defend the Christian faith just as Britons would do served as an important, though disturbing lesson in the nineteenth century process of confrontation with ideas of modernity and change.

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