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A table of contents for *The Baptist Quarterly* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bq_01.php

REVIEWS

Heralds of Health: The Saga of Christian Medical Initiatives, edited by Stanley G. Browne, Frank Davey and William A. R. Thomson. Christian Medical Fellowship, London, 1985. xii, 382pp. f4-95.

This collection of essays has become a fitting tribute to its three late editors, the last of whom, Dr Stanley Browne, died in January 1986 shortly after the book's completion. It is characteristic of the Christian modesty of Stanley Browne that his own distinguished contributions to leprology and community medicine are given relatively little prominence in the finished book.

Medical missionary work by Christian professionals is a relatively recent phenomenon. Until the crucial advances in anaesthetics and antiseptic techniques were made in the mid-nineteenth century, Western medicine and surgery had little of superior value to offer to the peoples of Asia and Africa. Traditional knowledge of drugs and herbal remedies was in fact a resource which the West needed to tap, as David Livingstone but few others recognized. Even when Western medicine had made sufficient strides in technical expertise, and (equally important) professional status, to claim a central place in missionary society strategy, both Protestant and Catholic missions were in practice slow to concede that bodily healing might legitimately accompany evangelization as a primary fulfilment of the missionary mandate. Of the major British Protestant societies, the BMS, we are told (pp.24, 65), were 'probably the diehards' in this respect. Not until the establishment of the Medical Mission Auxiliary in 1901 did medical work gain an assured place in BMS corporate thinking - at least a decade after this had become the case in the London and Church Missionary Societies.

Although it appears that Baptists were initially reluctant to sanction the absorption of professional medical care into missionary policy which took place in the closing years of the nineteenth century, this book makes clear that in more recent decades Baptist missionary doctors have exercised an influence far beyond their denomination. Particular mention is made of the contributions of Harold Balme to medical education in China and of Sir Clement Chesterman - 'for long the Grand Old Man of medical missions' - to preventive medicine and community health care in tropical Africa. It is perhaps an inevitable defect of collections of essays of this kind that assessments of significant figures such as Chesterman have to be pieced together from references scattered through a number of different essays. Occasionally this lack of integration becomes irritating; for example, we are told on both p.24 and pp.65-6 that when Vincent Thomas offered himself as a missionary doctor to the BMS in 1894, the Society had no male doctor on its staff in India and only one woman doctor, Ellen Farrer (mis-spelt as Farrar on the second occasion), serving with the Baptist Zenana Mission. It is also a pity that some of the essays make no concessions to readers such as your reviewer who are not medically literate - medical terminology is often left unexplained.

Heralds of Health is enthusiastic Christian history written by physicians rather than historians or missiologists. Its authors can be

forgiven, therefore, for being less strong on historical perspective and analysis than on compendious detail. It will nonetheless remain for some years to come essential and informative reading for all interested or involved in the Christian contribution to health care in the developing world.

BRIAN STANLEY

Isaac Backus - Puritan and Baptist: His Place in History, His Thought, and Their Implications for Modern Baptist Theology. (National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion Series No. 4) by Stanley Grenz. Mercer University Press.

Baptists in Britain know far too little about the developments of their fellow believers in the U.S.A., and that is their loss because the North American story highlights a number of issues critical to effective evangelism, service and church polity. A crucial figure in that development is Isaac Backus, 1724-1806, here designated Puritan and Baptist. Dr Grenz's lucid and well-structured evaluation starts by sketching in the context of church-state developments in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in both Old and New England. Backus's writings are seen as both influenced by the rational thought of John Locke and also the challenge that the Great Awakening brought to a New England Puritanism that, by way of the Half-Way Covenant, had come to accommodate itself too easily to the declension of belief in succeeding generations of colonists. By contrast, those newly awakened articulated renewed concern that the church in any given locality had to be a church of converted people. Some, forced to separate from previously existing churches, soon came to question the legitimacy of infant baptism and thereby came to a Baptist position by 1751. Because the parish authorities refused to exempt the new 'schismatics' from paying the religious tax, Backus' fertile intelligence began to explore the whole theory of church-state relationships. Persecution of the new separating congregations, which had by now adopted Baptist views, only served to drive them into association with pre-existing Baptist congregations. At the same time the ecclesiastical argument became caught up with the struggles of the colonists against the government in Britain, the separatists arguing that for them the religious tax was already a taxation without representation.

Backus' widely-spread polemical literature is systematically analysed so that he emerges as a substantial Puritan, whose thought, though firmly rooted in the sovereignty of God, is warmly sympathetic to the human condition. In churchmanship, he upholds a radical congregational polity, whose authority is found not in any clerical caste but in the whole company of believers meeting together under the Lordship of Christ. Coercion by the state by appeal to the Old Testament model of theocracy, was deemed illegitimate: only a voluntary relationship between ministers and people had New Testament justification. The civil magistrate, however, still has an authority over men's bodies and estates deriving from the creation order. At the same time Backus' doctrine of man gives a prominence to the individual in society which, he argued, could not be usurped by institutions,

though he is equally at pains to argue that liberty and good government need not be in contention with each other; for him it is crucial that all citizens, by the reason that God allows to them, should come to a right and worthy estimate of the function of the state. That reference to man's reason is important for Backus' Puritanism is one that embraces a Lockean anthropology as far as the dignity of man's God-given reason is concerned.

Working from the primacy of scripture and out of his own experience of conversion as also from his witnessing of the Great Awakening. Backus saw history as witnessing to the rediscovery of spiritual religion. In contrast to this, he identified the mingling of church and state together as the great Anti-Christ. Accordingly, he employed all the imagery of the Book of Revelation, not simply as in the older Protestant myth, or historiography, to attack the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church, but with his Baptist perspective, he apostasizes that tradition's confusion of the role of church and state, a mistake also made by the reformed churches of North America. By contrast, he saw the Baptists, the 'despised dissenters of Massachusetts' as 'the most reformed of reformation churches', the end product in fact of that process of reformation.

In the last section of the book, Backus' theology, whilst submitted to systematic criticism, is also used as a measure for revealing some of the weaknesses of contemporary Baptist thought and action.

J. H. Y. BRIGGS

The Meaning of Baptism by Raymond Burnish, Alcuin Club/SPCK, 240pp. £10-50.

Believer's Baptism for Children of the Church by Marlin Jeschke, Herald Press, 160pp. \$7.95.

In 1896, W. T. Whitley identified 'sacerdotalism and sacramentalism' as the twin evils of the church, stemming from the early intrusion of heathenism, paganism and heresy in its formative years. Raymond Burnish's fine study of the baptismal theologies of Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom of Antioch and Theodore of Mopsuestia, identifies the fourth century as the 'golden age' of baptismal catechesis to which twentieth century Baptists, like Roman Catholics, have unconsciously reverted. Freed from the necessity of anti-catholic polemic, Baptists are now able to respond more positively to the riches of the patristic period, a response of which Dr Burnish's research is a laudable and welcome example. He explores first the theology of baptism as it emerges from the Lenten catechetical teaching of his three chosen subjects, then the liturgy of baptism and its mystagogical interpretation as these appear in the paschal and Easter rites of the fourth century church. His examination of the sources provides us with a model of patristic exegesis, always clear and always readable. As well as his insights into the patristic theology of baptism, Dr Burnish provides fascinating and moving glimpses into the Eastertide rite of baptism, enriched by his recognition of the influence of the teaching of Cyril of the Jerusalem basilica, with its telling visual impact, examples of the great preaching of Chrysostom and Theodore's

positioning of baptism in the eschatological hope of the church.

From the Fathers, Dr Burnish moves to the twentieth century where he examines the teaching and practice of the Orthodox church who, by virtue of their unchanging liturgy, can be seen as the direct descendants of the patristic period; the catechesis and liturgy of a post-Vatican II development in the Roman Catholic church, in which adult or believer's baptism is seen as the norm; and, finally, to the present beliefs and practices of the Baptist churches, a picture he gleaned from a personal survey based on a questionnaire and an examination of the various service manuals used by Baptists. One cannot fault Dr Burnish on the excellence of his treatment of his various sources. Yet a feeling of unease has to be confessed to as he leaps from the fourth century to the twentieth, from one Christian tradition to another, making connections here, spotting parallels there. For Baptists, at least, an underlying question remains unanswered. How do they relate now to that catholic tradition from which, by their re-definition of the baptismal parameters, they so decisively separated themselves? Accustomed as we are to leap-frogging the centuries into the pages of scripture, how do we stand in relationship to the ongoing tradition of the church? Whitley's answer would not lack support amongst us still. Whilst leaving the questions unbroached, Dr Burnish has nevertheless done us the great service of helping us to see ourselves within the context of the Fathers and the continuing catholic tradition.

The alarming title of Marlin Jeschke's book would suggest that he has already wandered too far into a paedobaptist tradition for some tastes. Such readers should be re-assured. Dr Jeschke is an American Mennonite whose view of baptism would find acceptance in any British Baptist church. What he deals with is the difficult question of the relationship of the children of believers to the church. To these the author would add all children who, in varying ways, are caught up in its life. This is a clear statement of both the ecclesiological questions and the wider theological question of the status of children in relation to Christian salvation. Dr Jeschke, in the nature of the case, can add little clarification to that pastoral problem experienced by all ministers, namely to define the point in adolescence when a child passes from innocence to accountability. He has wise things to say, however. He rejects the notion that children of the church are amongst the lost. He advocates a model of natural progression that has too often been set on one side in favour of the 'sudden conversion' model. He warns that 'we should not expect young children to achieve an adult grasp of the meaning of sin and guilt' (109). Where such expectations are held and seem to be fulfilled it is because 'too often a child's alleged conversion is itself an extension of adult control over a child's experience' (113). Dr Jeschke's approach to the question of children has excellent early Baptist precedents and provides us with a clear and necessary restatement for our own greatly changed times.

MICHAEL WALKER

Darwinism and Divinity, ed. J. Durant, Blackwell. £15.

This is a good book which allows one to be grateful that in this country, the context, content and impact of the Darwinian debate can be calmly and sensibly discussed. The editor himself is a sure guide through the literature from the days of the first controversy to the present. J. H. Brooke writes a fascinating chapter on what Darwin himself thought to be the implications of his work, once again reminding us that, in part at least, *The Origin of Species* emerges out of the Natural Theology of the previous sixty years. His own personal scepticism is dated back to 1838 and it is suggested that his engagement to Emma Wedgwood at that time forced him to discover his own position in response to the questions on religious experience that his future wife insistently put to him. Jim Moore entertainingly shows how readily liberal protestants in N. America accommodated their faith to the evolutionary philosophy of Herbert Spencer focussing in particular on the ministry of former Calvinists like Henry Ward Beecher and Lynam Abbott, what was called the 'praying part of Progressivism'. Moore carefully points out that with the advent of Walter Rauschenbusch, American liberal theologians came under a social theology little influenced by Spencerian evolutionist thought. Rauschenbusch's talk, though still cast in evolutionary language, was once more conflictive rather than harmonic; 'If we can trust the Bible, God is against capitalism, its method, spirit and results. The bourgeois theologians have misinterpreted our revolutionary God. God is for the Kingdom of God and his Kingdom does not mean injustice and the perpetuation of innocent suffering'. Such a clarion call to protest, however, had to encounter the wealth of J. D. Rockefeller on which so much of the programme of the Northern Baptists depended. The end of Moore's chapter is full of stimulating observation especially for Baptists. Rockefeller's too energetic pursuit of the Interchurch movement, a form of big business ecumenicalism, with his father's funds, collapsed in 1920. This was followed by Fosdick's famous sermon 'Shall the Fundamentalists Win?' which led to the controversy 'between those who rejected evolution and emphasised Christianity as a mode of personal salvation and those who accepted evolution as the basis for the harmonious social relations they believed were essential to industrial progress without revolution'. This led to Fosdick being excluded from his Presbyterian pulpit and to Rockefeller eventually building Riverside Church for him. Over the west portal of this is a figure of Christ Triumphant surrounded by philosophers, religious leaders and scientists, one of whom is Darwin, Darwin whose reputation was better able to survive the despairing cataclysm of the First World War than the optimistic Spencer. There follow chapters on the interplay between theology and evolutionary thought and the sacralization of evolutionary theory. The final chapter analyses the controversy on the teaching of evolution in American schools in the last 25 years and the founding of the Creative Research Society and the whole 'scientific creationism' movement, including its modest development in this country.

J. H. Y. BRIGGS

Christianity: A World Faith, Lion Handbook, 1985. 384 pp. \$12.95.

This is a very informative and gracious handbook on world Christianity today. It is informative in the comprehensiveness of the coverage and the sharpness of its articulation. It is gracious in that the editors hold to a Christian faith which justifiably sees unity in diversity, and to a faithfulness which embraces both tradition and contemporary challenges to tradition. The result is a lively portrait of Christ's Church, in the last quarter of the twentieth century, of ideas, trends and movements which shape it. And pictures too, beautifully and liberally spread throughout the volume. I came away with a sobered understanding and much hope.

What have been the major happenings in world Christianity in the last decade or so? The book presents the following: the challenge of secularism, the working out of Vatican II, the rise of Pentecostalism, the re-emergence of the Church in China, the confrontation with racism and apartheid, the mission priority of Good News to the Poor, the response to militarism, and global economic injustice... I find the selection faultless. But more importantly, these topics are presented in such a way that they are relevant to the 'averaged' Christian with all the human limitations that an 'averaged' person is subject to. The book encourages and enables the reader to be a world Christian, i.e. to think and pray globally and act locally. This process, of course, is not automatic. It would therefore do well for a congregation, or a Christian fellowship, to use the book, to work at it corporately. I believe the exercise would be a joy and a blessing.

As a reviewer, I feel somewhat obliged to look for a book's weakness. That would not be easy in this case. Probably the easiest one is the wrong caption on p.52. The priest in the picture performing a ceremony is not Romanian Orthodox but Armenian Orthodox. (Incidentally, the article on the Orthodox Families is a most succinct piece. I warmly recommend it to us ignorant (of Orthodoxy) Baptists 😊). Taking a closer look, two topics should have, I believe, received more attention: the Pentecostal movement for its growth, and the plight of Christians and churches in the Middle East for the precarious state of existence they are in. The latter story which is one of the most tragic in this period has seldom been brought adequately to the attention and prayer of Christians worldwide. But this is a bit too much of fault-finding.

I recommend this volume with enthusiasm and expectancy.

RAYMOND FUNG

Dr Raymond Fung is a Baptist from Hong Kong experienced in Urban Mission, currently serving as Secretary for Evangelism in the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches.

John Bunyan, *Good News for the Vilest of Men & The Advocateship of Jesus Christ*, edited by Richard L. Greaves, in *The Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan*, General Editor: Roger Sharrock. Volume XI, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1985. xliii + 231 pp. £25.

The Oxford edition of Bunyan's 'miscellaneous works' has come half-way through its task of editing that vast hinterland of poems, controversial works and sermon-treatises that lie behind the allegories and *Grace Abounding*. This is the fourth in the series to be edited by the historian Richard Greaves, and appears to have solved the problem of which copy-text to use, which was a problem noted with an earlier volume in the series.

The two works in question, sometimes known by their second edition titles of *The Jerusalem Sinner Saved* and *The Work of Jesus Christ as an Advocate*, come from 1688, the last year of Bunyan's life, although they are characteristic of the whole of Bunyan's writing in their eloquent, almost Lutheran insistence on the primacy of God's mercy to sinners. *Good News* takes the line in the Great Commission, 'beginning at Jerusalem', to argue that, as Jerusalem was responsible for the death of Christ, he must want the Gospel preached to the biggest sinners first. Some of the most impressive passages are set pieces against despair and about the unforgiveable sin; though without the intensity of *Grace Abounding*.

The Advocateship of Jesus Christ is a sermon-treatise on I John 2.1. Bunyan did not have a good experience in law-courts, but Christ's pleading against Satan's accusation gives him an opportunity for some imaginative law-court scenes without the horrors of Judge Hategood or the justices of *A Relation of My Imprisonment*. There are some lively internal question and answer sections, too. The doctrine is still clearly Calvinist, with its link of assurance and election. And there is an interesting hint of Bunyan's attachment to the Fifth Monarchy Men earlier in his life.

Both these books, then, will amplify our understanding of Bunyan's position, but not radically change it. However, Greaves' introduction, in the section on Bunyan in the period 1686-88, does solve one problem which is of wider interest, particularly for readers of *The Holy War*. Discussions of Bunyan's hostility to remodelling in Bedford corporation evidenced in that book have had trouble with the dates; Greaves clearly distinguishes between Charles II's moves to expel Whigs in the wake of the Exclusion crisis, attacked in *The Holy War* (1682), and James' later removal of the men his brother had placed in control of the corporations, in favour of (amongst others) four members of Bunyan's congregation.

It would be eccentric to recommend these texts for pastoral, or even literary reasons; but they do retain the affective directness of Bunyan's popular preaching, and demonstrate the continuity between late seventeenth century nonconformity and the Reformation. It is good to have them in a scholarly edition.

ROGER POOLEY

Colin A. Russell, *Cross-currents: Interactions between Science and Faith*, Inter-Varsity Press, 1985, 0 85110 751 6, 272pp. £14.95.

A mention of Galileo or Darwin is sufficient to remind us of past conflicts between science and faith, but it is equally true that most science has been pursued in an ostensibly Christian culture. *Cross-currents* concerns the influence of science upon faith and of faith upon science, not just the conflicts. When seen in the perspective of a time span which runs from Greek science and its eventual absorption by the church up to the present day (or at least 1984 and the Bishop of Durham's doubts about miracles), the conflicts are the aberrations, not the normal condition. Even in tracing them the real causes of conflict need separating from the froth of public controversy.

Modern science may be said to have begun in the seventeenth century. Newton's studies of the movement of the heavenly bodies led him to propose his Laws of Motion, applicable to all things on earth and in the heavens. The value of experiment in determining scientific truths became appreciated and, in 1662, the Royal Society of London, still the most prestigious of all the scientific bodies, was founded. Russell identifies five alternative philosophical positions emerging around that time. One was the view of God as a creator who, having created his universe, leaves it to run unattended. For practical purposes this 'Deism' and 'Pantheism', the idea that God does not exist except as 'nature', are virtually atheism. Another position, 'semi-Deism', was that God has set his universe running but still intervened on rare occasions. The fourth position, 'human instrumentalism', made man into God's agent for controlling the material universe, and was in tune with Puritan thought. Finally there was 'radical Christian theism', the belief that God is the immediate as well as the ultimate cause of all the phenomena of nature. One of the clearest early formulations of that view came from John Wesley, a man well versed in contemporary science, who wrote 'fire and hail, snow and vapour, wind and storm, fulfil his [God's]word... What is nature itself but the art of God? Or God's method of acting in the material world? True philosophy therefore ascribes all to God'.

During the eighteenth century the new science of geology began to raise theological questions. While the existence of fossils in sedimentary rocks was thought to be evidence of Noah's flood (the remains of creatures drowned in the deluge), geology's arguments for the vast age of the earth made belief in a literal creation in six days difficult, if not impossible. Most Christian thinkers modified their understanding of the Genesis story accordingly. 'Uniformitarianism', propounded by Lyell in 1830, raised similar problems in attributing the earth's present form mainly to slow changes of the kind we see around us now (erosion, precipitation, volcanic action, etc.) rather than to cataclysmic convulsions like the flood. Lyell, who tended to Unitarianism, was a 'semi-deist' in Russell's classification. He admitted one Divine intervention - the creation of the human race.

With Darwin and evolution the real issue was not whether he was challenging Genesis, but whether the very idea of 'the origin of species by means of natural selection' was a denial of God as creator of all. Did a giraffe have a long neck because God willed it - or merely because its preferred food was found in high places?

John Clifford, whose geology degree is not noticed, is cited for his 'remarkable decision' to include Darwin in his *Typical Christian Leaders* published in 1898. Spurgeon is also quoted, but as one of those who avoided getting embroiled in scientific controversy. It did not help his immediate concerns as pastor and preacher, though he was not unaware of the debate and does seem to have modified his own position over the years. In 1865 he referred to Genesis 1, 1-5 as containing 'no doubt a literal and accurate account of God's first day's work in the creation of the world'. Ten years later he was saying 'We shall this morning leave all discussion as to the creation of the world to those learned divines who have paid their special attention to that subject, and to those geologists who know, or at any rate think they know, a very great deal about it. It is a very interesting subject, but this is not the time for its consideration: our business is moral and spiritual rather than scientific'.

Colin Russell, Professor of the History of Science and Technology at the Open University, is a chemist, not a theologian. His evident affection for both the science and the theology leads to a clear and concise handling of both themes. As an historian normally concerned with a limited part of the history of science and technology, I am impressed with the breadth of subject matter covered in this book. Non-scientists need have no fear that they will be out of their depth (unless perhaps in the section on quantum physics) and I warmly commend *Cross-currents* to anyone who would like an outline of these important themes.

BRIAN BOWERS

AUSTRALIAN BAPTIST STUDIES

The vitality of Australian Baptist scholarship is attested by a number of recent publications. The Baptist Historical Society of New South Wales is publishing a series of historical studies which so far include

H. E. Evans: *Soldier and Evangelist: The Story of Rev. John G. Ridley M.C.* (1980)

K. R. Manley & M. Petras: *The First Australian Baptists* (1981)

and most recently Michael Petras has summarised his M.A. thesis on *Extension and Extinction: Baptist Growth in New South Wales 1900-1939*, which examines the growth of Baptist churches in Australia in a period of history disturbed by both world war and depression. Here you will find insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the congregational church order in an area of scattered population, the differences between metropolitan and up-country churches, the competing interests of home and foreign missions, the efficiency of the Sunday School as a feeder to church membership and the leakage of Baptists to other denominations. Alongside the impact of evangelism and the activity of the Home Mission Society (which planted new congregations which as yet lacked autonomous identity and provided them with ministry), the importance of immigration as a source of growth is also assessed. (Available from Dr K. R. Manley, 120 Herring Road, Eastwood, 2122, New South Wales).

From Tasmania comes Laurie Rowston's *Baptists in Van Diemen's Land*, which tells the story of Baptist beginnings and development over the last 150 years, for the Reverend Henry Dowling, although the third recorded Baptist minister to arrive in Australia, constituted the first Baptist Church in Australia in Hobart in June 1835. (Available from L. F. Rowston, 3 Portsea Place, Howrah 7018, Tasmania).

THE NORTHERN BAPTIST COLLEGE HISTORICAL COLLECTION

After a prolonged delay, occasioned by serious staff shortages, this valuable collection, on permanent loan to the John Rylands University Library of Manchester and housed in the Deansgate premises, has now been sorted and listed. The collection consists principally of materials from the former Manchester Baptist College. At one remove the historical collection of Rawdon College is fully represented here, and at two that of the old Midland General Baptist College. Some items have also strayed in from other closed colleges such as Haverfordwest. The material has been arranged in several sections according to type and a catalogue of the whole collection is currently in preparation.

PERIODICALS - There are 47 periodical titles in the collection, some of which are represented by fairly long runs, others by only a few volumes. They are in alphabetical order of title and include the handbooks, circular letters, reports and yearbooks of various Associations and of the Baptist Union.

PAMPHLETS - There are 129 volumes of these, some of them containing as many as 30 individual items. Because of the very large number of authors represented this is the one section which is not really accessible at the moment and awaits the appearance of a definitive catalogue.

BIOGRAPHIES - Most of the 135 volumes in this section are individual biographies which are arranged in alphabetical order of subject: there are a few volumes of collected Baptist biographies.

MONOGRAPHS - There are nearly 600 books on Baptist history and theology, with some general theology included. There are a number of 17th century items, but most are 18-19th centuries. These are arranged largely in alphabetical order of author. There is a certain amount of B.M.S. material.

SERMONS - Most of the 92 volumes are the collected sermons of one or more preachers. Spurgeon is very well represented.

HYMN BOOKS - There are over 240 hymn books of a variety of denominations, 26 books on hymnology and 40 volumes of sacred poetry. The hymn books are arranged in alphabetical order of author or compiler, or of title if none is stated.

CHAPEL HISTORIES - There are over 400 pamphlets and books dealing with the history of specific Baptist churches or the history of Baptists in a particular area. They are mainly arranged in alphabetical order of place (town or county) not by the name of the church.

MANUSCRIPTS - There are 79 separate manuscripts, most of which are minute books or account books of various Baptist organisations, some of which are identifiable from the manuscript, though a few are not. The most valuable item is probably a manuscript volume of sermons by John Fawcett.

It is also worth noting that a considerable quantity of General Baptist material is to be found in the historical collection from the Manchester Unitarian College, also deposited at the John Rylands some years ago and now fully catalogued.

IAN SELLERS