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Jacqueline David, A Spiritual Pilgrimage: A Biographical Study of R.J. Campbell,
University of Durham Ph.D. Thesis

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a biography and study of the spiritual pilgrimage of R.J. Campbell (1867-1956). It details Campbell's life, considers the extent to which he was affected by the events of his time, and critically assesses his thought and influence.

Chapter One outlines Campbell's formative years and shows the impact of Ulster Presbyterianism and family life upon him. The years 1867-80 are shown to be vital for an understanding of his adulthood and especially his religious leanings. The chapter ends with an account of his conversion to Congregationalism.

The next chapter discusses Campbell's successful Brighton ministry. It deals with his emergence as a popular nationwide figure and traces the development of his theology.

Chapter Three is concerned with Campbell's City Temple pastorate, the most controversial period of his life, both theologically and politically. A large section is devoted to the New Theology movement and Campbell's gradual disassociation from it. The chapter closes with an analytical account of his transition into Anglicanism.

The fourth chapter deals with Campbell's Anglican years. It discusses the extent to which his theology actually changed, and the impact of his ministry.

An important part of the thesis is the detailed bibliography. No bibliography of his work has been available up until now. Appendix A contains a selection of Campbell's unpublished letters and Appendix B is a copy of the article which fostered the New Theology controversy.

A Spiritual Pilgrimage: A Biographical Study of R.J. Campbell

Jacqueline David

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Ph.D. Thesis

**University of Durham
Department of Theology**

March 1991



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Books**Church Minutes and Records****Articles****Unpublished Theses****Unpublished Correspondence**

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To my mum, dad and my sister, Suzanne, thank you all your love.

Thank you all.

It is not given to human beings, happily for them, for otherwise life would be intolerable, to foresee or predict to any large extent the unfolding course of events. In one phase men seem to have been right, in another they seem to have been wrong. Then again, a few years later, when the perspective of time has lengthened, all stands in a different setting. There is another scale of values. History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days.

Winston Churchill
House of Commons, 12 November 1940

INTRODUCTION

I'm just a boy whose intentions are good. Oh Lord, please don't let me be misunderstood.

B. Benjamin

Human personality is complex; it is both subject to and the subject of its environment. History is made up of this strange interplay of receptivity and creativity. The purpose of this thesis is to take a kaleidoscopic view of the life, work and spiritual pilgrimage of R.J. Campbell. It shows how his historical setting affected his thought, and how his thought influenced the people of his age.

I have chosen a biographical narrative as the most effective way of portraying his life and work, but I have divided periods of his life by themes to make clear his position on main issues, and to avoid unnecessary repetition.

One of the reasons for writing a biography of Campbell is the absence of any substantial study of his life. A 'biography' was published in 1903, when he was thirty-six; the rest of his eighty-nine years remain largely undocumented. Campbell's own 'autobiography' is primarily a 'spiritual' one up to his forty-ninth year, and is particularly selective. Little more has been written on his work, and what has been published often contains wrong or misleading information, and so presents an inaccurate picture of his thought. The main reason for this inaccuracy is the general reliance on 'received wisdom', rather than on documentary research. I have pointed out inaccuracies in existing works and enabled future authors to make accurate reference to Campbell, even in passing comment.

This work shows the value of bringing Campbell out of obscurity with a new examination of his life. In many ways Campbell epitomized the *zeitgeist*. His life spanned five monarchs, twenty-two governments, two World Wars, and much political, social and intellectual change. Campbell was deeply involved in the

theological, political and social activities of his time and as such his life provides a valuable insight into the turbulent years of the first half of the twentieth century.

The spiritual questions addressed by Campbell have a timelessness about them. The value of his spiritual guidance and practical advice was fully attested by his contemporaries. His congregation greatly admired and respected him for his ability to listen to, and then to meet their needs. He founded the Christian League, and Pioneer Preachers' Order for the growth of Christianity, and his sermons, articles, correspondence and books all had a significant influence.

Campbell's achievement as a clergyman who was also a social critic and 'politician' were of considerable note. His work offers insight into the social and political issues of the Edwardian age. Theological contribution to social and political life is underestimated in many standard historical texts, but an examination of this period shows how closely they were related.

Campbell's contribution to theology, and his way of presenting it, are equally valuable. He was not a theologian and never claimed to be such. Rather he was a preacher who captured public imagination and made theological talk fashionable. He was a fine example of a controversialist within the ranks of the Church, but it was primarily his 'position' as minister of the 'cathedral' of Nonconformity, the City Temple, which directed attention to him and fostered the controversy over the New Theology. Theology is often discredited because of controversialists and controversy,¹ but the nature of particular controversies should, nevertheless, be explored in detail. T.H. Darlow, in his biography of Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, wrongly declared in reference to Campbell's New Theology: 'Happily it is

¹See Dr Sheridan Gilley's argument in 'Shades of the English Religious Scene', The Heythrop Journal, 30 (1989) 439-440.

needless to-day to rake over the ashes of an extinct controversy.'² Controversies are important; not only are they a product of certain trends in society, in theology or the Church, but they in their turn shape theology. The New Theology is important for this reason.

The New Theology emerged from a complex set of philosophical, scientific, political and social issues, and from the nature of Congregationalism and 'orthodoxy'. Congregationalism was the denomination of 'liberty', but its wide terms of subscription gave scope to divergent theologies - the New Theology being one. A wide 'orthodoxy' had also paved the way for the New Theology by its looseness on the one hand and its apparent archaism on the other.

The New Theology was an important controversy. It certainly had an impact on the world and it thrived in renewed debate. Various movements, including the ethical movement, claimed Campbell and the New Theology as their own. Many Unitarians did likewise. This thesis will show the similarities of Campbell's theology to the thought of such Unitarians as Martineau, and it explains Campbell's aversion to the Unitarian claim upon him.

The Church as a whole, as a result of the New Theology, was forced to consider the terms of 'orthodoxy', and to stipulate more firmly what it stood for. Catholic Modernists have had their movement well documented, as have Liberal Protestants, but Campbell's theology is overlooked. Yet it needs to be reconsidered because it was a unique example of someone taking the best of both of these schools of thought and trying to marry them. No other writer did this on the same scale as Campbell. A study of the New Theology is, therefore, necessary for a full appreciation of the development of Christian thought this century.

²T.H. Darlow, William Robertson Nicoll: Life and Letters (London, 1925), p.x.

Campbell as a character also makes interesting study. He was a strange mixture of a strong-headed individualist and a highly susceptible individual; original thinker and pioneer and an impressionable eclectic; a nonconformist and a conformist. Liberals thought him too orthodox, and the orthodox thought him too liberal. This often led to Campbell's 'habit of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds.'³ He wanted to capture the wholeness of life and to present Christianity as part of this unity. As he grew older, experience altered his perspective on life and his understanding of Christianity. Naturally, his theology was adapted and, inevitably, inconsistencies within it were duly revealed. These inconsistencies are interesting because they indicate the direction of his thought. More importantly, they illustrate the effect of external circumstances on his convictions and show how in turn, his convictions determined what he accepted from the world around him.

Campbell is also of interest as a man who changed denominations on his spiritual pilgrimage. Starting with Ulster Presbyterianism he moved to Methodism, to Anglicanism, to Congregationalism and finally back to Anglicanism. This thesis explores Campbell's movement between the denominations. It will be argued that Campbell's adherence to Ulster Presbyterianism, Methodism and to Anglicanism (for the first time), were primarily for *practical* reasons. Furthermore, his change from Anglicanism to Congregationalism was for *doctrinal* reasons; it corresponded with his devotion to a search for the 'truth'. In his later change from Nonconformity to Anglicanism his *temperamental* preferences were evident, yet this was also part of his continuing search for the 'truth' of Christianity. Indeed Campbell's change from Congregationalism to Anglicanism at a time when he gradually dissociated himself from the New Theology is also interesting. Other Church leaders, as we shall see, had changed denominations for similar reasons.

³A. Porritt, The Best I Remember (London, 1922), p.120.

Campbell is also interesting for his ability to popularise theology and the Church. He was no arm-chair theologian, or, as Carpenter said of Gore, no theologian's theologian.⁴ Around 1907 it seemed that everyone was talking theology and following Campbell's movements with great enthusiasm. This one personality captivated the nation at large. This thesis will explore and evaluate Campbell's extraordinary popularity and success.

Campbell's wish that all his papers be destroyed at his death was fulfilled.⁵ Fortunately he published enough material to offset this loss, at least in part. In order to be as comprehensive as possible, in such an obviously limited piece of work, I have consulted many sources. Part of my research has entailed tracking down Campbell's prolific output of publications. On the secondary source level, I have consulted the religious and secular press, and searched Church records, private correspondence and political archives. A large proportion of this material has previously received only scant attention.

I hope that I have presented Campbell's life and work as fairly as possible. Subjectivity, however, cannot be completely avoided, and to avoid misinterpreting him I have made liberal use of his own words.

Chapter One deals with Campbell's formative years which paved the way for his Congregational ministry, and, perhaps rather ironically, for his return to Anglicanism in 1915.

Chapter Two is concerned with his successful Brighton pastorate; his increasing national acclaim, his reading, theology and first connections with the City Temple.

⁴J. Carpenter, Gore: A Study in Liberal Catholic Thought (London, 1960), p.11.

⁵His granddaughter, Mrs Pauline Bidwell, in a telephone conversation with the author on 4 January and 18 January 1989.

Chapter Three, on Campbell's City Temple pastorate, is divided into three parts. Part I outlines his early years in London. Part II covers the most controversial period of his ministry, considering the reasons for the emergence of the New Theology. It then describes the New Theology, showing some of the early attempts to evaluate its contribution to theology and Christianity. It also assesses its success. Part III is concerned with the practical outcome of Campbell's interpretation of the New Theology movement. The Chapter is closed with an analysis of his gradual disassociation from the movement and his transition into the Established Church.

Chapter Four explores Campbell's theology during his 'orthodox' and 'obscure' Anglican years and retirement. It is argued that while, unquestionably, he became more 'orthodox', he was not so orthodox as popular opinion has maintained. His beliefs remained liberal and some of his statements were clearly 'heretical'. The fourth chapter also argues that Campbell's Anglican years, while relatively obscure, were not so hidden and as quiet as is frequently supposed.

Appendix A records Campbell's surviving unpublished letters and Appendix B is a copy of Campbell's article which fuelled the controversy over the New Theology.

As a biographer himself, Campbell expressed his opinion that the biographer needs to be sympathetic to the character of his subject, since sympathy is necessary to understanding.⁶ This thesis is sympathetic to Campbell in its effort to understand the man who provoked both considerable 'orthodox' and 'unorthodox' reaction, who had a major influence on contemporary spiritual life, and yet who died in relative obscurity.

⁶R.J. Campbell, Thomas Arnold (London, 1927), in the General Preface.

CHAPTER ONE

1867-95: THE HIDDEN YEARS

His face, mobile and healthily pale, is a combination of gentleness and strength, his large clear grey eyes are singularly expressive; his chin denotes firmness; his broad brow is an index of his intellectual power, while his hair is silvery ... The whole aspect of his face indicates a fine moral sanity. His body appears frail, but it is really little and sinewy ... In his company the singiest and most obscure are quite at ease. He never makes one feel that he thinks himself to be the superior person, but rather that he is much surprised that people should think of him as they do.¹

1867-80

Family

On 29 January 1867 Reginald John Campbell was born. It was the year of the passing of the Second Reform Act, the publication of Matthew Arnold's 'Dover Beach', and the decade of the publication and condemnation of Essays and Reviews (1860). Campbell was to live until 1956, through one of the most interesting periods of national and international history. The Empire was to collapse; there were two World Wars; the two-party political system of Conservatives and Liberals was dismantled and Labour ousted the Liberals; there was constitutional reform, extension of the franchise; the growth of the women's movement, and the beginning of the welfare state. Theological discussion centred on the nature of Jesus and the relationship between God and the world, and the implications of biblical criticism were being explored.

¹Rev S.B. Lane, 'R.J. Campbell as I know Him: A Personal Sketch of the New Minister of the City Temple', The Young Man, August (1903) 268.

Campbell was born a very weak child in Bermondsey, in South East London. He was the son of John Campbell, a United Methodist Free Church Minister², a busy man heavily involved in circuit work. The dirt of London was uncondusive to the child's well-being, so when Campbell was only a few months old, in the hope of saving his life,³ he was moved to the north of Ireland. In Craigyarren he spent his first thirteen years living on his unmarried uncle Thani's small estate, with his maternal grandparents, Mr and Mrs John Johnston.

As was typical of the Scottish settlers in Ireland, Campbell had little contact with the Irish, and he liked to consider himself Scottish. Both the Campbells and the Johnstons were of Scottish descent; the Campbell's being from Argyllshire.⁴ Settling in Ulster as farmers, the Campbells clung religiously to their Scottish tradition. Such was their devotion that while living in Ireland Campbell recalled having heard only the broad Scottish dialect. The family did not intermarry with the Irish and employed only Scottish workers. Jean Colvin, Campbell's nurse was, naturally, Scottish.

²Not a Congregational Minister as written in A. Dale, The Brighton Churches (London, 1989) p.165. A brief outline of the ministry of Campbell's father, Rev John Campbell (1839-1927) is found in the United Methodist Church Minutes of Conference (1928) p.28.

³There is no truth in The Church Family Newspaper's belief that Campbell's family moved to Northern Ireland and then returned to England when Campbell was about twelve - 15 October (1915) 9. Campbell's parents remained in England throughout.

⁴The Campbell's were the most dominant clan in Scotland. It is unknown when Campbell's ancestors moved to Ulster. It may have been during the Ulster plantation, especially that of King James I in the seventeenth century; or during the eighteenth century with the introduction of sheep farms in Scotland, which required few labourers, or during the nineteenth century when the sheep farms gave way to deer which required no labourers at all. See A.L. Morton, A People's History of England (Berlin, 1974, 1st 1938), pp.300-301, and M.E. Collins, Conquest and Colonisation (Dublin, 1969), pp.52ff.

Education

Campbell's health continued to be precarious in Ireland. He recalled that 'As a child I was scarcely ever free from pain of one sort or another ...' On several occasions before his tenth birthday his health was critical, and he was once pronounced dead by the doctors.⁵ His poor health confined him to the house in the winter months so tuition was undertaken at home. A Miss Andrews, a Scot, was his teacher: '... the best instructress that any child could desire ...'⁶ He absorbed the intellectual enthusiasm of Miss Andrews, and became captivated by learning and reading. His playmates⁷ were the children of 'cottier' tenants. They only showed him respect on the appearance of their elders, and the only ascendancy he believed he had over them was his '... superior knowledge and a more active imagination ...'⁸ He invented games about historical characters, and instructed the other children in the reconstruction of historical events such as the Battle of the Boyne (1690). He explained to his peers about the crimes of Edward I in his attempts to overlord Scotland, and so convincing was his description of Edward that no one wanted to 'play' him.

Campbell enjoyed being with other children but he was essentially a loner and preferred his own company. He found the times spent alone educationally edifying. On summer days he would fill one satchel with books and another with food and spend the day reading in the fields. Thani, who treated Campbell as his own son, provided him with many books, and it was Thani, a world traveller, who fostered his nephew's enthusiasm for Scottish history by excitedly telling adventure stories of William Wallace, Robert Bruce and the Covenanters.

⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.2.

⁶R.J. Campbell, A Spiritual Pilgrimage (London, 1916) p.18. This book was reviewed by F.K. Freeston in The Hibbert Journal, 15 (1917) 526-528, and The Times, 5 October (1916) 5.

⁷Campbell never refers to them as 'friends'.

⁸A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.3.

That these formative years in Ireland became touched with nostalgia for Campbell, was partly due to the admirable conduct of his grandparents. His grandfather was '... the soul of uprightness and honour, stern and unbending, and accustomed to rule ...' yet he was '... the gentlest, kindest and most patient of men.' Campbell's respect for his grandmother was equally fervent. 'I owe more to her noble example and untiring devotion than to anyone with whom my lot has been cast.' She was like '... a Roman matron, tall and straight ...', and although one would not call her amiable, she was unselfish and tender to her grandson. Indeed, the community respected her so much that on her leaving Cloughwater, for England, a small, silent crowd stood bareheaded as she rode by.⁹

Politics and Religion

Living in Ireland Campbell was immersed in conservative religion and politics. His hero was William Wallace, and his favourite day of the year was the much celebrated 12 July, the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne (1690), when the Protestant Williamites, led by William of Orange, had defeated the Catholic Jacobites, supporting James II (1633-1701 King of England 1685-5).¹⁰ The family was thoroughly Tory, with a strong Unionist prejudice against the Roman Catholics and the Home Rulers. The 'legend' of the 'Bloody Massacre' during the Roman Catholic rebellion in Ireland in 1641-1642, had certainly aroused in the Campbells, as with the Scottish and English settlers as a whole, intense anti-Irish, and anti-Catholic feelings.

⁹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.14 and 16.

¹⁰This battle wrecked Catholic military hopes and paved the way for British Protestant rule in Ireland. It was quite literally a turning point in Irish history and remains to this day a highly emotional focal point of Catholic Protestant rivalry in Northern Ireland.

With his grandparents Campbell attended the Presbyterian Church at Cloughwater. His uncle was precentor and raised the Psalm, and Campbell believed that his grandfather was an elder. Campbell remembered the Church as decorous, dignified, and plain. The sermon and services were long, often lasting for about three hours. Unperturbed by the length of the service, Campbell regarded himself as having been born religious. Awe and wonder at the Church complemented his whole outlook on life. He had a sacramental view of life and a '... perfect passion for nature ...'. He knew exactly what Wordsworth's nature worship meant long before he knew the poet since it was his own experience.¹¹

Sundays were far from dreary for Campbell. Although the blinds were drawn, whistling and singing (excluding metrical psalms) were forbidden, play was still permissible. He did not attend Sunday School, but learned about the Bible from his grandparents. He found his grandmother, who often taught an allegorical interpretation of the Bible, as of the Fall,¹² the most convincing in answering his questions. To his grandfather he had to recite by heart the Presbyterian Shorter Catechism. While he 'hated'¹³ this he was thankful for his knowledge of it and appreciated its stress on the Church and Sacraments. Indeed the doctrine of the Church which Campbell imbibed during childhood was as 'high' as anything he subsequently learned, and '... nothing could be more solemn and authoritative than the teaching ... [he] ... received in regard thereto.' He respected the piety of the Church with its emphasis on the altar. Moreover, a high regard for holy communion, where 'Admission to the Lord's Table was a very serious matter'¹⁴ with children as mere spectators, was to have a potent influence upon his life.

¹¹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.11.

¹²Such interpretation was radical in Calvinist Presbyterianism.

¹³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.21.

¹⁴A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.21.

Significance of his Early Years

Nothing is more difficult than to determine what a child takes in, and does not take in, of its environment and its teaching.¹⁵

It is clear from Campbell's later life that he absorbed much of his childhood's environment and teaching. His childhood explained much of his future feelings and actions. The political leanings of his grandparents affected Campbell. He remained opposed to Home Rule and his years as a Liberal were tainted with the prejudice of Ulster, as in his Imperialism. One must, however, look askance at his account of himself in A Spiritual Pilgrimage. This 'autobiography' was intended only as an account of his 'spiritual' pilgrimage, and was written as an explanation of his entry into the priesthood of the Church of England. His intention obviously influenced his interpretation of his life, and the selection of events which he recalled: his at-one-ness with the sacramental leanings of Ulster Presbyterians, his love of history, and his anti-Roman prejudice. Such an awareness of Campbell's selectivity does not discredit his words; the truth of his reflections is not at stake.¹⁶ What an awareness of Campbell's selectivity does is to enhance understanding. Campbell definitely saw his life as a spiritual pilgrimage.

1880-91

A Stranger in the Family

On several occasions Campbell's parents unsuccessfully attempted to bring him home from the north of Ireland, but were thwarted by his ill-health and by the

¹⁵A. Whigham Price, 'D.H. Lawrence and Congregationalism II', The Congregational Quarterly, July 1956, 4 (34) 333.

¹⁶See C. T. Bateman, R.J. Campbell MA: Pastor of the City Temple (London, 1903). The account of Campbell's life in this book is remarkably similar to that in A Spiritual Pilgrimage. Admittedly Campbell had recalled his childhood experience to Bateman, but in 1903 the colouring of his later transition into the Established Church was absent.

strong desire of his grandparents to keep him with them. However, after the death of his grandfather, and his uncle Thani in America, Campbell and his grandmother moved to Bolton to be with their family.

Campbell was thirteen at the time and the year 1880 was certainly one of upheaval for him. For the first time he was to live with his parents, three brothers (two younger) and sisters. Campbell had to adjust to a new culture, a new school and a new Church. If he felt a 'stranger' on his arrival, it also took his parents some time to get used to him and for a while they felt he was only half their own. However, uneasiness did not persist, and the family became 'very clannish'.¹⁷ That he preferred the company of his brothers at any time to that of other men indicates the closeness of the family. His idyllic family life in Ireland quickly transferred into an equally happy family life in England.

Studies

Campbell quickly settled into his new school, a private grammar school in Bolton. After only one year, despite prolonged ill-health, he was awarded prizes in literature, classics and history; he also received a distinction for being the 'best boy' at school, and after a couple of years he used his ability and skills to help younger pupils.

He largely overlooked his school days in A Spiritual Pilgrimage because they were spiritually unproductive. Indeed, he underwent a 'pagan period' at this time.¹⁸ The school did have religious exercises; the Modified Prayer Book was used for morning prayers, and there were examinations in divinity. These and the presence of clergy among the masters were, however, mere formalities and little, if any, interest was shown in the spiritual welfare of the pupils.

¹⁷A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.26.

¹⁸A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.27.

In this environment Campbell kept quiet about his childhood religious experiences. Had they surfaced, his peers would have laughed at them; something which he could not bear. Ever impressionable, with the need to be accepted, he submerged himself with the crowd proving 'something of a savage'.¹⁹

A Taste of Methodism

On Campbell's arrival in England his father was stationed in the Bolton circuit. For the first time in his life Campbell sampled English Nonconformity, or more specifically, the United Methodist Free Church.²⁰ It is impossible to ascertain Campbell's immediate feelings about Methodism, since by the time he recalled his attitude in A Spiritual Pilgrimage he had already withdrawn from Nonconformity, and so his negative comments are understandable. He recalled being disappointed with the emphasis in Methodism on the 'Gospel' rather than the 'Church', and on the individual rather than on the community. He lamented the fact that the idea of being incorporated into Christ's mystical body by baptism, or otherwise, was wholly absent.²¹ He regretted that the characteristic silence of the Presbyterian Church before the service was replaced with the buzz of conversation in Methodism. There was also the difference between the Toryism of Ulster Presbyterianism, and the Liberalism of English Nonconformity. Moreover, in Presbyterianism the ministry was held in great reverence; the commencement of ministry having been the laying on of hands. Such a solemn ordination

¹⁹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.27.

²⁰The UMFC (founded 1857) was an amalgamation of the 'Wesleyan Reform Society' and the Wesleyan Association (R.E. Davies, Methodism (Middlesex, 1963), p.144). In 1907 three of the small Methodist Churches - the UMFC, the Bible Christians (founded 1815) and the Methodist New Connexion (founded 1797) united to form the United Methodist Church. It was not until 1932 that the three great Methodist denominations - the Wesleyan Methodists, United Methodists, and Primitive Methodists - amalgamated (Davies, Methodism, p.186). His grandmother attended the local Anglican Church and was buried with Anglican rites.

²¹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.34.

symbolised the belief that the minister had been given a vocation of heaven rather than of earth; he had been set apart from other men by a special call from God. Thus while the congregation could call the minister to a particular church, only God could give the commission. When in Ireland, Campbell attended the ordination of people he did not know; years later when approached by a man in the City Temple, he remembered that his name was Jackson and that he had been ordained thirty years before. It was thus natural that Campbell should feel the remarkable contrast from this to the Nonconformist notion of the ministry. In Methodism there was no laying on of hands, signifying that there was no real distinction between minister and layman. Thus reverence for the minister was a direct outcome of his personality rather than his office. Whether at the time Campbell disliked the lack of distinction between minister and layman is unknown, but by 1916 he said it was a 'grave evil' where no distinction was found.²²

While there was a difference between Ulster Presbyterianism and Methodism, for Campbell the contrast was significantly toned down since when his father preached there was little difference in content from what he had been accustomed to hear in Irish Presbyterianism.²³ Indeed, of Campbell's forbears, it has been said, whatever 'their English denominational label ... they remained in their general ecclesiastical outlook, if not as regards the letter of current Calvinist doctrine, Presbyterians from the north of Ireland.'²⁴ Campbell's father while a Methodist minister was essentially always a 'staid, sober Presbyterian'.²⁵ His father had only joined the Methodist Church on his refusal to subscribe to the Westminster Confession, and as a rejection of the dominant Calvinism of his youth. The Methodist Church he

²²A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.39.

²³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p33.

²⁴K. Robbins, unpublished article 'Rev R.J. Campbell and the 'New Theology': Politics and Religion in Edwardian England'.

²⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.32.

believed to be the freest and most comprehensive in spirit of any evangelical denomination, with a closely knit polity as well. Campbell's paternal grandfather had also taken a similar course, but on objecting to the Westminster Confession had turned to the Congregational ministry. It had likewise been said that his grandfather never ceased to be a Presbyterian, even while he served as a Congregationalist minister. His grandfather exercised to the full his notions of ministerial authority, and he catechised all his children with an invented catechism of his own. The Bible loomed large in his children's lives, and they were required to know their Bible and Christian doctrine.

Life and Work in Nottingham

The Rev John Campbell's ministry in Bolton ended with his appointment to Nottingham. Campbell continued his educational studies at University College Nottingham.²⁶ He also devoted time to a little teaching, in which he believed he found his vocation.

Conversion to Anglicanism

In 1888 Campbell accepted the post of tutor at the High School, Ashton, Cheshire. Amusing recollections of his teaching days emerge from letters by his pupils. One such letter to Campbell's predecessor comically described their new teacher:

We have got a curlywiggid old fellow in your place, called Campbell, and I think he must be a BA or a MA or something because he wears a

²⁶The precise nature of these studies is unknown. University College, Nottingham (founded 1881) has no record among their 'University College Calendars 1881-1890' of Campbell's attendance there (Letters to the author from Mrs Linda Shaw, Assistant Keeper of the Manuscripts, University Library, Nottingham, on 8 and 20 February 1989). Moreover, it is interesting that Campbell made no reference to his time there in A Spiritual Pilgrimage, and in 1916 Campbell recalled that '... it would have been better to take the headmaster's advice and push straight on for the University' after school. While this, no doubt, refers to Oxford University, it still leaves open the question as to his association with Nottingham University. Several secondary sources, however, refer to Campbell's study there. For example, Bateman's, R.J. Campbell, p.15; Britannica Book of the Year (1957), p.338; Who's Who 1951-1960; The Times, 2 March (1956) 11; and A.H. Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell: The Man and his Message (London, 1907), p.6.

hat and gown,²⁷ and I don't know whether his hair is his own. He is going to try and teach us Chemistry soon, but he seems to know only what he gets out of the book. But there is one good thing about him, that is he is going to give a bat to the best batter and a ball to the best bowler ... Mr Campbell is a very poor substitute for you in cricket and football ...²⁸

During the summer holidays, on 8 June 1889, he married Mary Elizabeth Slack at the United Methodist Free Church, Nottingham. The service was conducted by Rev S.S. Barton, under whose influence Campbell's father had given up his position as Headteacher of York Street National School, Belfast, and entered the Methodist ministry. Mary was the eldest daughter of Mr James Slack of Hyson Green, Nottingham, a member of John Campbell's congregation. Campbell's pupils excitedly recorded the marriage in their letters and presented the newly-weds with a handsome clock.

Campbell experienced his first pronounced religious impressions under the influence of the headmaster of the school and curate of St John's, Brooklands, Rev F.H. Mentha, and of the Rev S. Wilkinson, the vicar of the parish.²⁹ Campbell was still very impressionable, yet his decision to join the Established Church was compatible with his years in Irish Presbyterianism and his instinctive love of nature. Temperament drew Campbell towards the ritual, order and reverence in Anglicanism. That his upbringing aided Campbell's transition to the Established Church is seen in the similar steps taken by his brothers. His eldest brother, although never confirmed, on moving to Campbell's neighbourhood attended Church with him. His two younger brothers were subsequently confirmed in the Church of England. Campbell's background had given him a love of dignity and

²⁷Campbell had no degree at this time; the nature of his cap and gown is unknown.

²⁸Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.7.

²⁹Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.7 and Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.15. Rev Samuel Wilkinson, Vicar of Stockton Heath, Cheshire, 1865-1872 - Clerical List (1889).

order and a feeling of the need for historical continuity in Christianity which was lacking in Nonconformity. There was also a more practical cause of his change from Nonconformity to the Established Church. It was desirable that he be confirmed as he was teaching the Church catechism and preparing boys in divinity for the local examinations for Oxford and Cambridge.

On reflection, Campbell recalled that at the time of his confirmation he lacked a full appreciation of the step he was taking. He was, however, confirmed in Manchester Cathedral by Bishop James Moorhouse in 1890.³⁰ Subsequently, Campbell became very much involved as a layman, and he approached Rev S. Wilkinson about the possibility of going to Durham to train for the Anglican ministry. Wilkinson recognised Campbell's academic ability and accordingly advised him to go to Oxford to further his studies, before embarking on a clerical ministry. Under this influence, and his receptiveness to the Oxford philosophy of the highly spiritual and sacramental, Francis Paget, (1851-1911, Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology from 1885). Campbell took Wilkinson's advice.

1891-95

Campbell of Christ Church

It was in the January of 1891, at the age of twenty-four, that Campbell went to Oxford. He took Responsions - an examination he had already helped many pupils through, and in the summer of 1891 he failed to gain a history scholarship, because, he believed, he was too old. Paget, however, wrote to him and offered him a place where he prepared to read for honours. Campbell went to see Paget (who was to become Dean in 1892), gladly accepted the invitation and

³⁰Bishop of Manchester Cathedral 1886-1903. Campbell did not become an Anglican during his Oxford days as in Elaine Kaye & Ross Mackenzie, W.E. Orchard: A Study in Christian Experience (Oxford, 1990), p.33.

matriculated in the Michaelmas term of 1891.³¹ He took up residence in Christ Church, or 'The House' as it was called in Oxford.³²

Before matriculating Campbell had already begun reading for Holy Orders, and on beginning his studies he was still intent on entering the priesthood, with hopes of continuing his academic interests. He contemplated studying Theology for his degree, but Paget, and his tutor, Arthur Husserl, strongly recommended History and Political Science as more suitable for his later work in the Church. Unhesitatingly Campbell accepted their advice.

Dr Oliver Huckle, a fellow student, later gave some insight into the personality of Campbell. Campbell was

... a general favourite among the students in his Oxford days, and many already predicted for him fine and worthy things ... It was always pleasant to meet Campbell, whether at the lectures or social features of Mansfield, or on the Broad Walk, or punting on the Cherwell, or in the jolly river crowds of the Eights week. He was a thorough student, but he believed in life. There was a singular attractiveness in his face and personality. He was at once frank, cordial, sympathetic, and sunshine-bringing.³³

His generosity extended to reading to a blind student to enable the latter to secure a degree, and his captivating personality was recognised beyond the confines of the University. A friend of his from outside the University, on discussing him

³¹H.J.R. Wing, Assistant Librarian, Christ Church, Oxford in a letter to Professor Keith Robbins dated 27 July 1978 said that Campbell matriculated in Michaelmas term 1892. This is contrary to all other references. He also recalled that apart from Campbell's termly battels there was no other material about him in Christ Church's archives.

³²One wonders where his wife was during this period. His daughter, May, was born in his Oxford days, on 12 May 1893, and Bateman said Campbell had a son who died in infancy - Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.17.

³³The Christian Commonwealth, 4 June (1903) 599.

with Bateman, recorded his ability to console an opponent, and put an end to a quarrel by his power to '... disarm the bitter partisan.'³⁴

Campbell's Influence

Such popularity found expression when rumour quickly spread around the College that Campbell was to preach that evening at Wesley Memorial Church. It was his first sermon in Oxford and '... the students were out in force to hear it.' Rev C.S. Horne (1865-1914) recorded that Campbell's influence in Oxford had been compared to that of Wesley.³⁵ An illustration of Campbell's influence is found with reference to a politics student at Christ Church, Geoffrey Hignett (1871-1954), the son of a reputed millionaire in Liverpool. Hignett was a 'rowdy' student, who under Campbell's influence was attracted to religion and became altogether more sedate. Towards the end of their course Campbell called a prayer meeting, and at its conclusion Hignett declared his determination to go home and inform his parents of his decision to enter the Church. He was surprised that they consented. After returning to Oxford with him, and hearing Campbell preach, they told their son that 'they could wish nothing better than that he should be a man like that'.³⁶

Campbell's Activities

On the whole Campbell did not take a very active part in the life of the College, he did not join the Union (because, he said, he was too shy) and he was not involved in sport; he had, after all, no athletic interests or capabilities as evident from his teaching days!

³⁴Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.157.

³⁵W.B. Selbie, The Life of Charles Silvester Horne (London, 1920), p.156.

³⁶Selbie, The Life of Charles Silvester Horne, p.157.

With the growing confidence of familiarity, Campbell took up membership of several private clubs and discussion societies. He excelled as President of the weekly Saturday evening Cabinet Club. It attracted about thirty people and although inter-collegiate, Christ Church members predominated. The evening consisted of dining together, listening to the address of a special guest, followed by a question time. The intellectual stimulation and friendly atmosphere made the occasion one of the highlights of Campbell's week. Members of the society, so impressed by Campbell's capabilities, believed his *forte* to be the academic world, even if ordained. Dr A.M. Fairbairn (1838-1912), the Scot advocate of theological liberalism, and the first Principal (1886-1909) of the Congregationalist Mansfield College, Oxford, remarked to Campbell:

If ever any man had his vocation marked out for him surely you have yours. I saw that plainly enough the night I visited your club at Christ Church. You will have considerable influence with young men. Recognise that, and stay on in Oxford. Attached to the University in some capacity you could do a much-needed work for the spiritual welfare of undergraduates.³⁷

In Campbell's first year, he was so full of his intention to be ordained, and so eager to taste all the different types of spirituality, that he became involved in evangelical circles. He took part in open-air work with the Oxford University Christian Union. He shared Bible readings in fellow students' rooms and due to the encouragement of its secretary, Marshall Badger, an Anglican,³⁸ he came involved with the YMCA. The YMCA took every opportunity to bring together as many of the denominations as possible. Under these auspices, Campbell was brought in touch with Oxford Nonconformists, and subsequently, was frequently asked to speak and preach for them. With the encouragement of his father's

³⁷A Spiritual Pilgrimage, pp.48-49. See W.B. Selbie, The Life of Andrew Martin Fairbairn (London, 1914).

³⁸Badger became Campbell's assistant at the City Temple - The Christian Commonwealth, 26 November (1903) 143.

friend, Rev C.D. Holmes, the local United Free Methodist minister, Campbell was given many opportunities to speak and preach. His nervousness and shyness were eased by the support of his friends.

Nonconformist connections such as these, and theological struggles fostered by his studies, contributed to Campbell's greatest spiritual crisis.³⁹ He was torn between attraction to Nonconformity and his original intentions of ordination into the Established Church with his love of its ceremony and mystical symbolism. Perceiving these mixed feelings Dean Paget suggested that he sever connections with Nonconformity. Unquestionably Campbell did so, and he stuck rigidly to the Anglican Church and the 'society' of Anglo-Catholics.⁴⁰ Paget's advice, along with his connections with Anglo-Catholicism helped Campbell overcome his struggle. The struggle, nevertheless, had been long and hard; for much of the time he had been in a state of depression. Periods of joy succeeded periods of gloom and he oscillated between the two uncontrollably. These fraught emotions could only be resolved by a spiritual, rather than an intellectual, satisfaction. In Anglo-Catholicism he found a humility and reverence concerning the mysteries of faith, and in the atmosphere of sacramentalism he experienced the awe of holiness and of the supernatural, and nearness of God. The Anglo-Catholic influence also explained Campbell's declaration that to the Anglo-Catholicism of his Oxford days he owed his soul.⁴¹ It had pulled him through his spiritual crisis.

Anglo-Catholicism brought Campbell occasionally to share in the worship of Compline with the Cowley Fathers,⁴² who, on several occasions, invited him for

³⁹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.53.

⁴⁰A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.59.

⁴¹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.53.

⁴²Maude Royden (1876-1956), almost an exact contemporary of Campbell, had similarly attended worship with the Cowley Fathers: 'I do love that church' she had written to Kathleen Courtney, 6 April 1903 - See S. Fletcher, Maude Royden:

Sunday lunch. He was very fond of Father Congreve and approached the Father about his becoming his confessor. For reasons Campbell did not remember one of the other clergy of Cowley St John was chosen instead. Unofficially, however, Dean Paget acted as his confessor and proved '... of more use to me than anybody during this period of uncertainty and mental strain.'⁴³ Even in times of perplexity Campbell contacted Paget for years to come.⁴⁴

At Oxford Campbell met Dr Charles Gore (1853-1932) and other contributors to Lux Mundi: A Series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation (1889).⁴⁵ Campbell said that Gore was the '... most talked of man in Oxford, and large numbers of graduates and undergraduates looked to him as to a master.'⁴⁶ As first Principal of Pusey House (from 1884), Gore familiarised students with the Anglo-Catholic standpoint and discipline. Many were puzzled by his liberal attitude to biblical criticism, and definite Catholic theology, and yet attracted by his personality, zest for the religious life and ability to recall the Church and nation to a knowledge of their Catholic inheritance. Before moving to Oxford Campbell had paid scant attention to Tractarianism and the Lux Mundi school,⁴⁷ believing them to have been discredited. While in Oxford, however, he discovered that the school was still successfully claiming to be the norm and standard of

A Life (Oxford, 1989), p.27.

⁴³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.56.

⁴⁴Surprising is the lack of any reference to Campbell in S. Paget and J.M.C. Crum, Francis Paget (London, 1912).

⁴⁵Paget had made a significant contribution to Lux Mundi. His essay on 'Sacraments' was greatly supported and loved.

⁴⁶A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.50.

⁴⁷Tractarianism was the early stages of the Oxford Movement (1833-45). 'Tracts' were published in the 1830s against Popery and Dissent by figures such as J.H. Newman, E.B. Pusey, J. Keble, R.H. Froude. The Oxford Movement was a Church of England movement which aimed to reinstate the High Church ideals of the seventeenth century. The Lux Mundi men, which included Gore, H.S. Holland, E.S. Talbot, R.C. Moberly, J.R. Illingworth and F. Paget, aimed to interpret faith in a way understandable to their contemporaries.

churchmanship. Ever impressionable, Campbell was attracted to the movement. The spirit of it '... cast a spell upon me'.⁴⁸ The spell, however, was not so strong as he later implied; it had failed to take an immediate grip on him and he was not dissuaded from entering the Congregational ministry.

The hope of bringing the best educated youth of Britain into direct contact with the poor was the purpose of the establishment of the University Settlement Movement. Oxford men voluntarily went to live among the needy. Christ Church had its own mission which worked in a London slum. However, the causes of poverty were largely overlooked and many undergraduates had little knowledge of the plight of the poor. During the 1890s Campbell was one of these. Although he had read the Fabian Essays, and was associated with the Christian Social Union (formed in 1890 by the Lux Mundi men), his knowledge of the social situation was 'very perfunctory'.⁴⁹ Accordingly, he was more familiar with the problem of poverty and destitution only from afar - from economic theories from such men as Mill, Adam Smith and Ricardo, and from the Social Contract theory. Ashamedly Campbell admitted to being familiar with '... Rousseau, Montesquieu, and all that ilk ... But I knew nothing of the destitute England at my doors.' Moreover, 'I knew more about Justinian than I did about General Booth and Darkest England, and could have given a better account of Alfred's laws and the reason for them ... than of the modern demand of the proletariat for better housing and a living wage.'⁵⁰

Campbell took his studies with the utmost seriousness, but ill-health prevented his attaining the first class degree with distinction which he would have liked, and which his peers and tutor believed he would take. As Campbell recounted: 'When

⁴⁸A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.53.

⁴⁹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.134.

⁵⁰A Spiritual Pilgrimage, pp.134-135.

the great week came I was seized in the examination room on the very first day with one of the worst illnesses I have ever had; I was compelled to give up when I had only done, I think, one paper ... the campaigns of Wallace' - a subject which had not been covered by his degree syllabus but which he remembered from his childhood. He was the only student to tackle the question.⁵¹

On leaving the examination hall Campbell fainted twice. The doctor refused him permission to reenter the examination and sent him home. After having settled in Brighton, he was granted permission for a private *viva voce* examination. Once more he was unfit for the occasion but was relieved to hear, on arriving in Oxford, that the Committee, under the charge of Mr A.L. Smith, the Master of Balliol, had called the examination merely to comply with the regulations. Campbell was kept only a few minutes with most of the conversation centering around his unfortunate mishap. A ^{second class degree} was awarded; a grade Campbell believed to have been decided before his *viva*.

Campbell's Oxford days were over, but Dean Paget wrote a letter to him which was read to the Union Street congregation on 14 July 1895:

First let me tell you with what sympathy I viewed the failure of health which hindered you showing in the Schools the outcome of your hard and persevering work. I was indeed, and am, deeply sorry for it. Such disappointments are very difficult to bear; but I am sure that you will bear yours in the spirit which wrests from disappointments their hidden good, and sometimes enables men to look back after a while and see them in an aspect very different from that they wore at first.

I will follow the example of your reserve, and not enter into the choice which you have made in joining the Congregationalist ministry. For I need not tell you how sure I am that you have acted with sincerity and with an earnest desire to do good, and that you have not acted without grave and prolonged thought. I venture to trust heartily that your work and influence in the ministry to which you have given yourself may be like that of two whom I have been privileged to reckon among my friends - Dr. R.W. Dale and Dr. G. Barrett.

You have shown among us strength of character as well as of intellect - your career at Christ Church has been without blame - you have worked,

⁵¹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.71.

I fear, beyond what your strength allowed - and it was an excellent promise of success that was checked by your illness.⁵²

Campbell had taken a pastorate in a Congregational Church in Brighton. A strange turn of events. He had gone to Oxford with the intention of entering the Established Church, most probably in a teaching capacity, yet he entered a Congregational pastorate. What lay behind his change of heart, and why was his certainty about his vocation in the Established Church supplanted with doubt and final rejection?

Change of Heart

Campbell's family were 'furious' on hearing of his change of mind and his decision not to minister in the Church of England, having 'sent [him] up to Christ Church ... to read for orders ...'⁵³ Such fury is difficult to appreciate, especially considering that his main reason for becoming a Congregational minister was his antipathy to a Church which unchurched the Church of his upbringing. High Anglicans, historically, regarded Nonconformists as schismatics whose ministers were without apostolic succession and, therefore, with invalid orders. Campbell rightly believed that for Gore, and his party, there were only three divisions of the Church of Christ - the Anglican, the Roman and the Greek; for all others there could only be a more or less charitable tolerance, but no communion. Campbell, on the contrary, held that since no single ecclesiastical system could hope to satisfy the needs of all humanity, then no single ecclesiastical system could dare '... claim any monopoly of the Holy Spirit's directing energies.'⁵⁴ There was passionate fervour in his insistence that the Church of his childhood equalled the Established Church in holiness and commitment to God.

⁵²A Spiritual Pilgrimage, pp.74-75. The same letter, with minor alterations, is included in Bateman's R.J. Campbell, pp.40-41.

⁵³Selbie, The Life of Charles Silvester Horne, p.156.

⁵⁴Bateman, R.J. Campbell, pp.25-26.

A second reason Campbell gave for his decision to enter the Congregational ministry was his belief that if the Anglo-Catholic theory of the Church was correct then he '... should not feel safe outside Rome', since while Anglicans accepted Rome's ministry, this acceptance was not reciprocated. Although Campbell had attended mass at St Aloysius's twice, to Rome he was 'not prepared to go'.⁵⁵ His historical studies revealed the moral slackness of the Papacy, and the sinister side of its political activities strengthened his antipathy to Rome. He denied the development of papal absolution from apostolic Christianity on the basis that the Fathers were ignorant of this.

Further causes of Campbell's decision to forsake the priesthood of the Established Church can be deduced from other things he said, and from a general understanding of his character. Scottish blood ran in Campbell's veins, and testing conformity came naturally. He was ever an individualist.

Such individualism contributed to Campbell's refusal to subscribe to the Prayer Book or any other formulary. It is difficult to ascertain the principal reason for this unwillingness, whether it was intellectual difficulty with certain parts of the Creed, or his abhorrence of the principle of being expected to subscribe to terms of communion in order to be considered a minister of God. Both reasons were certainly present. Campbell's adamant opinion brushed aside Paget's warning that while there was no subscription, like the Anglican one, in the Congregational communion, a complete liberty of opinion did not really exist. Furthermore, if it did it would mean a subversion of Christianity. It was later that Campbell was to accept the essential truth in Paget's observation.

The respect in which Campbell held Rev A.R. Ezard, and the friendliness which existed between the two also contributed to Campbell's decision to become a

⁵⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.66 and p.60.

member of the Congregational Church in George Street, Oxford. In Campbell's decision to leave the Establishment we see the interplay between susceptibility to the influence of superiors, and a strong individual 'nonconformity' and questioning. Campbell held both Paget and Gore in great esteem. There is truth in the view that Dean Paget was a potent influence in Campbell's life (rather than 'the most potent influence, as Campbell said), during his Oxford years⁵⁶, and, as we have seen, it was Paget who persuaded Campbell, at least for a while, to withdraw from Nonconformity in 1892. Yet Ezard's influence in Campbell's decision to enter Congregationalism was the more powerful largely because Ezard was not a 'conformist' as were Gore and Paget.

Campbell's transition to the Congregational Church had a positive side. It was more than a protest of dissatisfaction with Anglicanism; he was attracted to Nonconformity. At the time he found in Congregationalism the most leeway given to the gifts of the individual, and he found 'not a body but a spirit, not an organisation, but a principle; not a machine but an influence'.⁵⁷ In Nonconformity he found what he considered to be the nearest approximation to the apostolic definition of a Church:

It need hardly be said that the relation between minister and people in a Nonconformist church is at its best one of peculiar closeness and beauty, full of tenderness and mutual devotion. I know more than one such and do not expect to meet with anything better of the kind in corporate religion on this side of the grave.⁵⁸

Campbell was also attracted to the democratic principles which Congregationalism^a upheld, and he revered influential Nonconformist personalities. Of Dr R.F. Horton (1855-1930) he declared: 'everything he said and did of public note had value for

⁵⁶Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.20.

⁵⁷A. Clare, The City Temple 1640-1940 (London, 1940), p.167.

⁵⁸A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.38.

us; everything he wrote I read and kept on my bookshelves'⁵⁹. One of the leading Nonconformists of the day, Fairbairn, encouraged Campbell to enter the Congregationalist ministry, despite the fact that he had no theological training and had not attended the Congregational training college at Mansfield. Oliver Huckle expressed Fairbairn's high regard for Campbell when he said that 'Dr Fairbairn and the whole college [Mansfield] were deeply interested in him'.⁶⁰ P.T. Forsyth (1848-1921), the son of a postman and a domestic servant, and a Congregationalist divine,⁶¹ also initially respected Campbell, and in 1901 asked him to succeed him as minister of Emmanuel Church, Cambridge.

Regretfully, and to the aggrivement of many of his Nonconformist associates, and Nonconformity as a whole, Campbell underestimated, in A Spiritual Pilgrimage, the positive attraction that Nonconformity had for him in the 1890s. Indeed, there is no truth in Campbell's assertion that 'no one of their number ever touched me at all from first to last'. This statement blatantly contradicted what he had said of Horton in the same book!⁶² Further, while he expressed his gratefulness to Nonconformity for instilling him with a sense of democracy⁶³, unfortunately he qualified his thankfulness by asserting his belief that Nonconformity erred on the side of individualism.

⁵⁹A. Peel & J.A.R. Marriott, Robert Forman Horton (London, 1937), p.312.

⁶⁰Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.27.

⁶¹F.L. Cross & E.A. Livingstone (eds.), The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (Oxford, 1988, 1st 1974), p.524.

⁶²See A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.88. Here Campbell described Horton as 'my best friend in the ministry'.

⁶³This is rather ironic when one reads, concerning Campbell's later City Temple pastorate, that while the City Temple was not run as an autocracy, it certainly was not a democracy. '... it seems that vacancies in the diaconate were filled by the genial method of cooption with no reference to the church at all. This was a travesty of Congregational Church order.' - Slack, The City Temple, photocopy, n.p.

Campbell's account of his original decision to enter the Nonconformist ministry was equally controversial; it made Nonconformity appear less credible. In A Spiritual Pilgrimage he argued that his decision had been sudden and made with little grasp of Congregational principles or history. Undoubtedly this was an oversimplification on Campbell's part. In the accounts of his call and acceptance of Union Street in the Church Minutes there is no evidence of a 'sudden' decision. On the contrary, the process of the call was drawn out over almost a year. Furthermore, his spiritual crisis which lasted for the large part of his time in Oxford, underlay his final transition to Nonconformity. A snap decision would be incompatible with such background. The 'suddenness' of the decision was most probably emphasised in A Spiritual Pilgrimage as proof that Paget had been correct when he told Campbell that complete 'freedom' did not exist within Congregationalism. There was more truth, however, in Campbell's declaration that at the time he had little knowledge of Congregational practices and history.

There was little consolation for Nonconformists in the knowledge that A Spiritual Pilgrimage had been written from the perspective of an Anglican priest, and the fact that the Established Church better suited Campbell's temperament. As Wilkerson noted even in 1907, for the freedom of the Free Church Campbell had 'sacrificed sensuous aids [that is, ceremony, symbolism] which must always appeal to a man of his temperament.'⁶⁴ Thus, in 1895 Campbell entered the Congregational ministry, despite the attractions of the Established Church - its devotional, spiritual, ritualistic aspects and its strong personalities. Campbell's spiritual pilgrimage, at this time, demanded a search for the 'true' Church; this was more important to him than aesthetic attraction.

⁶⁴Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.12.

CHAPTER TWO

1895-1903: 'CAMPBELL OF BRIGHTON'

UNION STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

He has the ball at his feet there. The whole place is moved ...¹

Following the suggestion of Rev A.R. Ezard, Campbell was invited to preach at Union Street Congregational Church, Brighton. Having accepted the invitation for 24 September 1894, he delivered extraordinary 'noteless' sermons at the morning and evening services. The congregation were impressed and a lasting friendship between Campbell and the Church Secretary (his host for the day), Mr G.E. Singleton began. Consequently, on 6 November 1894, Rev W. Gooby, the acting pastor, and Singleton were sent to Oxford to discuss with Campbell the possibility of his accepting the pastorate. He said no. A request, however, was sent asking him to preach again. It was an invitation he felt obliged to refuse in the knowledge that he had no real intention of entering the ministry. Campbell and Singleton kept in contact, and they discussed the question of Campbell's entering the Congregational ministry. Singleton assured Campbell that a special study in theology, approved by Congregational leaders, would compensate for his lack of formal training through Mansfield.

In February 1895 Campbell's mind was made up. He wrote: 'Many of those whose judgment I value and whose opinions I hold dear are against my decision,

¹Selbie, The Life of Charles Silvester Horne, p.166 - a quotation from Horne's diary of 21 February 1898.

but I feel bound to make it ... I can only see one step ahead, the future is all unknown, but I know He leads.²

The letter was encouraging. At a Church Meeting on 24 February 1895, Gooby informed the Church that 'it having come to the knowledge of the Deacons that Mr R.J. Campbell of Christ Church Oxford had at length made up his mind to enter the Congregational ministry, they had arranged with him to preach at Union Street as a candidate for the pastorate on Sunday March 31st.'³ Accordingly, Campbell preached for both the morning and evening services and also on the following Monday evening. At a Special Church Meeting on 7 April 1895, the members carried a unanimous resolution that it was their 'earnest desire that he should be invited to become Pastor of this Church'. The Committee unanimously carried a resolution to the same effect, and subsequently invited Campbell to be Pastor. Campbell discussed the matter with Fairbairn, then sent his 'yes' to the Church. 'In the voice of the Church I hear the voice of our common Master, and am ready to obey.'⁴

Another Special Church Meeting was held on 23 June 1895 where a resolution was passed, at Campbell's request, that Geoffrey Hignett be invited to become honorary Assistant Minister. Hignett's letter of acceptance, dated 25 June, was read to the Church on 30 June 1895. Hignett received no stipend; his services had been offered free of charge.

²Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.34.

³Church Meeting Minute Book, Union Street, Brighton, 24 February 1895. This sits uneasily (though the accuracy of the above is not questioned) with Campbell's claim that if it had not have been for the document 'so phrased and unanimously signed ... I doubt if I should have had the courage to enter the nonconformist ministry at all.' A.E. Carson, Union Church Brighton: A Short History (Brighton, 1954), p.6.

⁴See Appendix A for the letter, which was read to the Church, in full.

On Thursday 11 July 1895⁵ Campbell and Hignett were ordained as ministers in the Church. Horton gave the charge.⁶ Silvester Horne had been invited to take part in the service but had a previous engagement. Dr J. Guinness Rogers made a statement concerning Congregational principles and Dr A. Rowland, Rev W. Gooby, Rev A. Norris, Rev A.D. Spong and Rev D. Anthony took part in the service.⁷

Each incoming minister to a Congregational Church was required to deliver a public testimony. This gave church members, who had called the minister, the opportunity to learn of their pastor's conviction. If this was unsatisfactory the charge could be withheld from the pastor-elect. As A. Sell amusingly expressed it, Congregationalists were convinced that 'if God knew the heart, the church members thought they knew a hypocrite when they saw one ...'⁸

During the service Rev A.D. Spong, a Brighton minister, confronted Campbell with the following questions. First, 'What reason have you for believing yourself to be a Christian?' Campbell replied that it was his belief in 'the Lord Jesus Christ not so much as a fact that was, but as a power that is'. He believed in Jesus's power to save people from the influence of sin; his power to forgive sins and his having made the Fatherhood of God comprehensible to Campbell himself.

Secondly, 'What has led you to the conviction that God has called you to the work of the Christian minister?' Campbell answered that God had sought him for the ministry and that he desired that others should see and experience Christ.

⁵Dale, The Brighton Churches, p.165 wrongly implied that Campbell went to Union Church as minister in 1893.

⁶Peel, & Marriott, Robert Forman Horton, p.310.

⁷The Congregational Year Book (1896).

⁸A.P. Sell, 'Confessing the Faith in English Congregationalism', United Reformed Church History Society, 4 (3) 1988, p.181.

Thirdly, Campbell was asked 'Why do you desire to exercise that ministry in connection with a Congregational Church rather than some other section of Christ's Church?' Campbell replied in four points, viz., that he disliked the Church of England's sacerdotalism;⁹ that he believed Congregationalism was more accommodating to the growth of the individual soul towards its Maker; that Congregationalism was more likely to foster a responsibility for the welfare of the Church; and that under the guidance of the Spirit of God the minister was freely chosen by the people rather than as a delegate of a hierarchical power.

Fourthly, 'What are the distinctive features of your religious belief; and what would form the groundwork of your teaching as a Christian minister?' To this Campbell replied that he believed in the naturalness of the Christian faith, and in the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. Every person, he continued, was potentially good, and sin was a disease from which people could be saved by Jesus Christ. Campbell was, he said, fearless of biblical criticism, and believed there need not be any antagonism between religion and science since both were seeking verification. Finally Campbell stressed his belief in looking for points of contact with other institutional bodies rather than dwelling upon the differences.¹⁰

Union Street Church: A Short History¹¹

The first minister of Union Street Church was one of the two thousand and five hundred clergymen condemned for their Puritanism and subsequently rejected from the Church of England by the Act of Uniformity of 19 May 1662. The Conventicle Act (1664) which was responsible for the 'undergroundness' of the

⁹Interestingly, The Sussex Daily News, 9 March (1903) photocopy, n.p., described Campbell as having a sacerdotal ministry!

¹⁰Bateman, R.J. Campbell, pp.37-39.

¹¹A fuller account is in The Brighton Churches, especially pp.161-167.

separatists, the Five Mile Act (1665), and Test Act made life for the Dissenters even more difficult.¹²

The situation was brighter for Dissenters after the Toleration Act (1689). Soon after the Act land was given in the Hempshares, later known as Union Street, for a Presbyterian Chapel, but there was no substantial progress in way of a permanent building until 1698-99 with Rev John Duke. Under Duke it was established that the service should be conducted alternatively by a Presbyterian and an Independent representative - thus the name 'Union' Chapel. In time the Chapel, which became solely a Chapel for the Independent ministry towards the end of the eighteenth century, was commonly referred to as Union Street Chapel, as it had given its name to the street.¹³

Pride in its heritage did nothing to change the fact that in the late nineteenth century Nonconformity was in a poor way in Brighton. That Union Street Church, a Georgian building, and the mother of Congregationalism in the town, was in a very narrow back street was unhelpful. The church seated seven hundred people¹⁴ but there were sixty members,¹⁵ and attendance was low.

¹²See J. Ritson, The Romance of Nonconformity (London, 1910), pp.115ff. For a discussion of the development from Dissenters (18th century) to Nonconformists (19th century) to Free Churchmen (20th century) see C. Binfield, So Down to Prayers (London, 1977).

¹³Dale, The Brighton Churches, p.161.

¹⁴Dale, The Brighton Churches, p.163.

¹⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.80, contrasted with the number one hundred and seven from Bateman's, R.J. Campbell, p.42. Campbell's estimation is the more accurate considering that Singleton said at a Public Meeting, that more had been added to the roll during the past year (eighty members) than had been on the roll when Campbell took charge - Union Street Congregational Church Magazine, February (1898) v.

The Trust Deed of Union Street Church was very wide and attractive to Campbell. Effectively, its only 'doctrinal' clause said that the 'church was erected for the good of the parish and district of Brighton'.¹⁶

Such was Campbell's modest beginning; a small congregation, and much responsibility for the future prosperity of the Church. He began his work in September but suffered a serious breakdown soon after, and from his sick bed offered his resignation. The congregation refused his resignation and gave him all the time and encouragement he needed to recover.¹⁷ It was December before he resumed his pastoral duties.

Interestingly, in view of his later 'pilgrimage' to Anglicanism, Campbell said, in a letter dated 13 November 1897 to the Editor of The British Weekly, that his Nonconformity was a 'reversion to type' since his father and grandfather were both Nonconformist ministers. Yet he also admitted that his 'first, and deepest religious conviction was received in the Church of England, so that had sentiment rather than the principle prevailed I had been there still.'¹⁸

Campbell was disturbed that the population as a whole were not concerned with spiritual matters. While he resisted the simple identification of church attendance with vital religion, he did regard poor attendance as a symptom of decline. He earnestly felt that something was deeply wrong in a society in which only a small

¹⁶A Spiritual Pilgrimage, pp.79-80. See also The Sussex Daily News, 22 January 1907.

¹⁷Church Meeting Minute Book, 8 December 1895. The same sympathy and aid was given by the Church in 1899 when the Committee recommended to the Church that Campbell be relieved from responsibility for the week day work 'during the years forthcoming' - Church Meeting Minute Book, 30 June 1899.

¹⁸The British Weekly, 11 November (1897) 18. Moreover, in 1903 in an interview with The World, Campbell said that he came to his decision to minister in Nonconformity with deep regret because he felt in full communion with the High Church Party, notably Dr Paget and Dr Gore - The World, 21 April (1903) 644.

minority of the nation went to Sunday worship.¹⁹ His own method of getting more people back into the Church was by ensuring that the Church was a Church. That is, he wanted the Church to give to Christian principles 'an unfettered social application'. He believed that dogmatic theology could not do this by itself because its sanctions were too individualistic. He insisted that '... to be a Christian, a man need not turn his back either upon the findings of his intellect or his social aspirations.'²⁰

Campbell's sermons soon began to attract a larger congregation, and Union Church was certainly aided by the fashion among the wealthier classes of spending the winter months of October to March in Brighton.²¹ Another bonus for the Brighton congregation was the increasing use of the railway from London to Brighton which had been opened in 1841. With Campbell as Pastor, Union Street Church membership increased rapidly. In his second year membership amounted to one hundred and seventy eight; in the third year it rose to two hundred and forty four, and from then onwards there 'was a distinct annual augmentation.'²² Membership was increasing so substantially that by 1897 there was a 'problem' of overcrowding. Many were being turned away and the small side rooms of the church were inadequate to accommodate the various new societies that used them

¹⁹He by no means looked uncritically at the fall in church attendance and pointed out that when church numbers had been stronger attendance had been largely due to fear and expectation. He wanted no return to those days.

²⁰Union Church Magazine, December (1903) ii-iv, preached 21 December 1902, Sunday evening.

²¹The Church Calendar (1935).

²²Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.44. The exact accuracy of these figures is improbable, especially seeing as Bateman had given the membership of Union Street Church at Campbell's commencement of his pastorate as forty-seven more than Campbell had made it. See above. The figures cannot be checked since the Congregational Year Book only quotes Membership Numbers from 1900 and copies of Union Church Year Book have only been found as far back as 1901 and there is evidence to suggest that its first edition was in 1900. See Union Church Magazine, March (1899) viii.

throughout the week. Members, at first, failed to convince Campbell of the need of a grand building scheme.

UNION CHURCH, QUEEN SQUARE

By spring 1897 Campbell recognised that something did need to be done. Overcrowding meant that door-keepers with 'smelling-salts and water' and a policeman stationed outside were required.²³ On 29 April 1897, with Campbell's support, a building fund was opened.

Fortunately, as an alternative to a large building scheme, premises were secured by the amalgamation of Union Street with Queen Square Congregational Church which was only five hundred yards away. Amalgamation had been proposed before Campbell's ministry, but only with him did it take definite shape.²⁴ Queen Square Church, in the thirteenth-century Gothic revival style, was erected in 1853-54 and had opened for worship on 12 October 1854.²⁵ The congregation initially numbered about forty seven, but especially under the pastorate of Paxton Hood, and Ryhs Evans, numbers increased, and in 1865 the church building was enlarged. By 1898 numbers had declined - partly eclipsed by the success of Campbell at Union Street - and there was sufficient space to accommodate the Union Street congregation. Amalgamation took place on Thursday 17 February 1898 at a Special Meeting of the two churches. During previous discussions Campbell and Rev Keith Walden, minister of Queen Square Church, had agreed to resign on amalgamation, and had agreed that the two churches would convene a meeting to appoint a new minister. This they did on 17 February; Walden chaired the meeting. The resolution that Campbell be minister was unanimously accepted,

²³Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.46.

²⁴The British Weekly, 10 February (1898) 338.

²⁵Dale, The Brighton Churches, p.186.

by show of hands, by Union Street, and almost unanimously accepted by Queen Square.²⁶ Campbell laid down his conditions: first, he should have a free hand in organising the newly-formed Church; second, he should have the liberty to employ a portion of his time, at his discretion, to public work; third Hignett was to be his assistant minister. These were conceded and Campbell accepted the pastorate. It was further agreed that officers of the two churches would retain their positions. This was a change of plan from the report in The British Weekly 10 February 1898 that 'All the church officers and workers would resign, and they would trust to the grace of God and the spirit of compromise to carry them through ...'²⁷

Overcrowding quickly became a problem with fifty reserve seatholders and many at the doors awaiting admission.²⁸ Thoughts of a new building scheme resurfaced.

The scheme for a large building, the Forward Movement, was launched, and the architect, Mr J.W. Simpson was commissioned. In 1899 his plans were so highly regarded that they were exhibited in the Architectural Gallery at the Royal Academy.²⁹ Union Church was enthusiastic for this Cathedral-like building, reflecting a mood indicative of the time in which Gothic buildings symbolised a great period of Church history.

²⁶Union Church Magazine, March (1898) vi.

²⁷That positions were fused is supported in Carson, Union Church Brighton, p.22. Carson also said that all members of the diaconate and church council on each side also remained unchanged. A brief summary is given of the 'council' an abberation of Congregational Church order. Carson said that it was formed during Campbell's time and before the union of the two churches. This however is contrary to the existence of Church Minutes and Church Committee Minutes with no reference to a Council. Mr Jenners, a member of Brighthelm - the descendent of Union Church, also informed the author that it was Rev Rhondda Williams who instituted the 'Council'.

²⁸Union Church Magazine, August (1899) viii.

²⁹See Union Church Magazine, June 1899 for a sketch. The British Weekly Supplement, 11 May 1899 also has a sketch of the proposal on its front page.

Estimated total costings reached seventy thousand pounds. It was proposed to construct the building in three sections; the main church building, the Sunday School institute and class-rooms, and the entrance parlours. There was a nationwide appeal so that dependents of Union Church would not suffer.³⁰ So considerable was the undertaking that the plans never came to fruition. Within the year the dream had dissipated. The exact reasons are unknown, but it is said that difficulty after difficulty arose. Everyone was disappointed, including Campbell who conceded that 'the Divine Will had so ordered it.'³¹

Campbell's Popularity: An Exposition

I have never doubted ... that Mr Campbell, if God spared him, would take a foremost place amongst the preachers, teachers, and religious leaders of this country.

... his popularity is not based on superficial grounds, on the appeal of mere oratory, but on stable qualities of head and heart and character, and it is the firm conviction of those who know him and love him, that if God give him life and health, R.J. Campbell will prove one of the great moulding factors in the religious life of England in the earlier half of the new century.

... a preacher who will soon be influential and famous.³²

The esteem in which Campbell was held was amply illustrated when on 31 January 1901³³, Dr Robertson Nicoll opened his columns to Campbell. The British

³⁰For example, Crowborough, Jarvis Brook - which Campbell superintended; and Kensington Gardens Mission Hall. The Mission Hall at Bethel Arch was financially independent. See Union Church Magazine, June (1898) vi.

³¹Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.49. Bateman gave the wrong impression that the amalgamation of Union Street and Queen Square Congregational Churches took place after the failure of the dream-like building scheme. The amalgamation had taken place a year before.

³²Sir R. Nicoll quoted in Bateman, R.J. Campbell, pp.51-52 and p.158; and The British Weekly, 4 November (1897) 49. Sir Robertson Nicoll (1851-1923) was editor of The British Weekly: A Journal of Social and Christian Progress.

³³The British Weekly, 31 January (1901) 415. The British Weekly was launched in the autumn of 1886 by Messrs Hodder and Stoughton with Nicoll as editor. Its first paper was Friday 5 November 1886 - T.H. Darlow, William Robertson Nicoll: Life and Letters (London, 1925), pp.67ff. Nicoll remained editor until his death in

Weekly was the main interdenominational organ of Nonconformity, and Campbell was invited to contribute a weekly series of 'Answers to Correspondents'. This he continued until 28 June 1906.³⁴ Campbell's aim was to unite intellectual vigour with spiritual perception, which made, Nicoll said, a full man like Anselm, Martineau, and Principal Caird.³⁵ In his capacity as a 'spiritual director' he was called to answer very different sorts of questions. One student asked how best to spend ten to fifteen pounds to start a library; one Northumberland coal miner enquired about the best possible means of learning Greek. Anxious people facing difficulties approached him for comfort and counsel, and one man asked him how he could overcome secret sins. Each letter was treated confidentially, and in his published reply he quoted the experience, for the sake of helping others in a similar situation, but kept the identity of the correspondents anonymous.

What was it about Campbell that engaged the attention of the journalist and critic as well as the local residents and visitors?

First, Campbell's unquenchable enthusiasm fostered and inspired the enthusiasm of other church officers and his congregation. He was always ready with a word of encouragement: 'You have done well - why not let us say so?'³⁶

Secondly, by catering for the needs of young men, Campbell attracted them in droves. 'Mr Campbell is essentially a Young Man's Man'.³⁷ After appeals from outlying districts of Sussex, he inaugurated a 'Preachers' Class'. He knew that the

1923.

³⁴It is ironic that Nicoll, in 1907, attacked Campbell because he lacked theological training, when he had opened up his influential columns to him in 1901.

³⁵The British Weekly, 31 January (1901) 415.

³⁶Union Street Congregational Church Magazine, January (1898) viii.

³⁷The Young Man, August (1903) 268.

willingness and devotion of young men, properly equipped, would spread the Gospel; this they did in places such as Crowborough and Jarvis Brook.

At Union Church Campbell took care to ensure the pastoral oversight of his congregation. Owing to the colossal growth in numbers his 'At Homes' were moved from his comfortable home, 5 Clifton Terrace, and were held at the church. Church teas were a popular location for them since entertainment was provided and Campbell could make informal contact with his congregation. He also gave some of his time to supporting clubs and societies which enabled him to mix with his congregation, but his popularity and success was enhanced by the tremendous work of Hignett. Hignett played the larger part in organising the social functions; though Campbell tended to receive the praise. Hignett was especially involved with the young people. While Campbell was the figure-head, as President of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, it was Hignett who was its driving force. Similarly with the Sunday School Hignett gave generously of his time,³⁸ and it was he who undertook the systematic visitation of the congregation and 'who by his presence at the doors at the commencement and close of the service does much to foster a healthy esprit de corps amongst the people ...'³⁹ Yet throughout Hignett remained a totally unassuming man. During the Annual Church Meeting in 1898 he thanked the congregation for receiving him, but said he 'did not deserve it'. There was a loud 'Not so'.⁴⁰ There is only reference to him preaching on one occasion, but his loyalty was firmly to Campbell and he

³⁸Hignett had commenced special medicinal studies - Union Church Magazine, October (1898) vii.

³⁹H. Webb Smith, a Brighton Anglican Vicar, in a letter, dated 8 November 1897, to The British Weekly, 11 November (1897) 68.

⁴⁰Union Church Magazine, February (1898) v.

encouraged the whole congregation to be 'assistant minister'.⁴¹ Hignett's ministry should most definitely be remembered in understanding Campbell's popularity.

A third element of Campbell's success was his involvement with the community at large. He stirred the congregation to do something for the welfare of the people of

"Union Church Magazine, February (1898) vi. Hignett also gave large financial contributions to the church. In 1898 he made a generous gift of £350 to the Church Improvement Fund and in 1899 promised £5,000 on laying the foundation stones and a yearly contribution of £1,000 for twenty years for the Forward Movement. Thanks were also given to Hignett 'for his generous offer to erect School and Institute Building at his own cost'. - See Church Committee and Deacons' Minute Book, 22 November 1898; Union Church Magazine, June (1899) viii; and Church Committee and Deacons' Minute Book, 19 February 1900, respectively.

How much of the promised money actually came to fruition is unclear, since the Church Committee and Deacons' Minute Book, 1 April 1901 records:

Dear Sir

In reply to your request I simply state that owing to circumstances over which I have had no control I cannot see my way to hold by any offer I may have made with regard to the Extension Movement in connexion with Union Church, Queen Square, Brighton.

Yours very truly

Geoffrey Hignett [signed].

Sadly, but for reasons unknown, the Church records being very vague, Hignett had resigned his pastorate in November 1900. In 1898 he had wished to resign (perhaps because of his medical studies) but the Church Committee urged that he postpone until he had given the 'matter his most earnest and prayerful consideration' (Church Committee and Deacons' Minute Book, 22 November 1898). He remained in office. However, one suspects that his final resignation came over a difference with Campbell, maybe of a financial nature. He was not asked to withdraw his resignation in 1900. 'Mr Campbell intimated that Mr Hignett had resigned the post of assistant to the minister. The secretaries were asked to convey to Mr Hignett the thanks of the Church Committee for all services rendered to the Church in that capacity; their sense of his great generosity in aiding the Church funds, especially the Improvement Fund of 1898, and the initiating of the Church Extension Enterprise; to their hope that he would continue to do the Church service as one of its Committee.' (Church Committee and Deacons' Minute Book, 17 November 1900.) There is no reference to Hignett attending Committee meetings. He did not retain his membership of the Church, at least during 1901 onwards but he remained a seatholder until 1902. Whether or not he actually attended is unknown though highly improbable. There seems to have been no further positive correspondence between Hignett and Campbell. Hignett continued to live in Brighton, living, in 1901 in 12 Clifton Terrace, and in 1902 at 89 Cromwell Road. He married Alice Hardman, who had been a member of Union Church, and who lived at 17 Devonshire Place. They had a daughter in 1906 and a son in 1908 - Charles Hignett's letter to the author, 8 March 1989. Alice Hardman was not among the list of members of Union Church in the Year Book (1901), though she was a seatholder for the last time in 1901. Rev F.L. Riches Lowe became Campbell's assistant in 1902.

their town and country. He made 'earnest appeals for better housing for artisans and for the poor children's book fund'. For a while 'Robertson of Brighton' was replaced with 'Campbell of Brighton'.⁴² He was recognised as an honoured citizen having been elected, in 1899, to a position on the Brighton School Board for the second year running.⁴³ Only two years after moving to Brighton, he became Chairman of the Sussex County Association of Congregational Churches; Union Church was proud. As its Magazine said: 'Though he will wear no vestments or mitre, our Minister is in effect, elevated to the Congregational 'Bishopric of Sussex'.' Moreover, he was believed to be the youngest minister to hold this position, and he had attained it after a period of service 'the shortest on record'.⁴⁴

Campbell frequently visited other village churches in the Brighton area and beyond for preaching engagements. Already by February 1898 he had visited the Leeds Congregational Council where he addressed three gatherings at the Philosophical Hall, and four evening services at Salem Chapel. His lectures at the former attracted ministers of all denominations, city merchants, professors, teachers, students; at the latter factory and mill workers were present. Thus Campbell, who had only been known in Yorkshire through an article by Claudius Clear in The British Weekly,⁴⁵ strikingly showed his ability to adapt to the level of his hearers and to capture the attention of crowds who listened as to the 'voice of a new prophet'.⁴⁶

⁴²Carson, Union Street Brighton, p.23.

⁴³The British Weekly, 12 October (1899) 453.

⁴⁴Union Church Magazine, February (1899) x.

⁴⁵The British Weekly, 4 November (1897) 49. Claudius was the editor himself, Robertson Nicoll - Darlow, William Robertson Nicoll, pp.78-79.

⁴⁶The British Weekly, 3 February (1898) 331.

The Liverpool Courier, in 1899, referring to a visit of Campbell to Liverpool and Southport, declared that within only four years of leaving Oxford, he was already in the front rank of English preachers.⁴⁷ The Free Church Council involved Campbell in local work, and from October to March he addressed some of their meetings.⁴⁸ However, he refused to let his work for the Council interfere with his Sunday services at Brighton. In 1902, his closing year at Union Church, he was President of the Brighton, Hove District Free Church Council,⁴⁹ and he served on the National Committee of the Free Church Council. It was under these auspices that with Rev Thomas Law, the secretary of the Council, Campbell made an extensive tour of the country. The outcome increased his social standing and 'fame' and he delighted other Free Churchmen with his presence. He made such an impact on the nation that preaching invitations abounded; he accepted whenever possible. The British Weekly kept a close coverage of his whereabouts and so helped enhance his popularity; Campbell was becoming nationally known. He opened the new Congregational Church at Urmston, Manchester on 1 March 1901; addressed the National Free Church Council at Cardiff in March 1901; preached on New Year's Day at Christ Church, Westminster, and was among speakers at the Young Men's Colonial Missionary Society's annual meeting in the City Temple on 13 May 1902.⁵⁰

Campbell's concern for the pastoral needs of congregations was evident in his organisation of a conference for Free Church ministers in Oxford in early September 1900. Campbell presided at the conference. The morning and evening addresses were given by himself and fellow ministers, and they stressed the

⁴⁷The British Weekly, 14 September (1899) 387.

⁴⁸The British Weekly, 17 August (1899) 317.

⁴⁹The British Weekly, 16 October (1902) 5.

⁵⁰The British Weekly, 7 March (1901) 533, 21 March (1901) 582, 24 December (1901) 301, and 16 January (1902) 365 respectively.

devotional and practical aspects of Christianity. These continued to run for another three years, and attendance was very good.⁵¹ This involvement and acceptance in Nonconformity contradicts Campbell's later insistence that he had never been accepted by organised Nonconformity. Such an insistence may have arisen from an aggrievement at not being actually involved in the 'leadership' of Congregationalism. It was not until 1915 that he was nominated for the Presidency of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.

Conviction compelled Campbell to embrace party politics, modestly recognising that: 'I was not much of a politician'.⁵² For Campbell, politics was the application of Christian principles to common life. Accordingly he urged his fellow ministers to take the hard option and involve themselves in politics. Indeed many attended his services because of his 'advanced political doctrine'. Thus on one occasion a young woman showed a total lack of interest during his sermon when he expounded Isaiah and the Evangelists, but her attention revived at once when he mentioned the great American poet, Walter Whitman.⁵³

Campbell's sympathies with the Liberal Party at this time are best seen in conjunction with the fact that Britain was effectively a two party country; the Liberals and the Conservatives. Campbell's choice of the former can be accounted for by his Nonconformist allegiance as much as any positive attraction to the Liberal Party. The Established Church was traditionally the Church of the Conservatives. The Liberal Party originated as a splinter group from the Whigs,

⁵¹The Christian World, 11 September (1900) 7 and 18 September (1900) 7 and The British Weekly, 3 July (1902) 277. This conference was, The British Weekly, of September 1903 said, been 'called a new Oxford Movement', 17 September (1903) 548. On average about four hundred people attended in the second and third year. See The British Weekly, 17 September (1903) 548 and 22 September (1904) 556 respectively.

⁵²A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.135.

⁵³'The Personal Note by the Editor: A Memory of R.J. Campbell', The Christian World, 8 March (1956) 3.

and the Nonconformists were a splinter group from the Established Church. It was, therefore, to the Liberals that the majority of Nonconformists looked to redress their 'ills'.

Campbell had made such an impact that he was considered 'the only man who could carry Brighton for the Liberals', and was accordingly approached by Herbert Gladstone, the Liberal Chief Whip, to stand for Parliament.⁵⁴ Campbell did not stand but he retained a political 'interest'.

On 4 March 1902, he was among thirty Nonconformist ministers invited, by the Liberal MP for Brighton, J. Compton-Rickett, to his house in Lancaster Gate, to a meeting with Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1836-1908) and Herbert Gladstone. The British Weekly of 6 March 1902 said that the 'conference' was followed by dinner.⁵⁵ The proceedings of the meeting were confidential, but in his diary of 5 March, the following day, Horne described the occasion. Primarily the meeting had been called to discuss the situation of the Liberal Party which was nearing a disastrous split over the Boer War.⁵⁶ Campbell proposed a resolution that the meeting hoped that Rosebery (1847-1929) would come back⁵⁷ and lead the Liberal Party, with Campbell-Bannerman, who had opposed the Boer War, as the leader in the House of Commons. Campbell-Bannerman replied that no one before had been elected as leader of the Liberal Party and that since he was the leader of the Commons and Spencer the leader of the Lords there was no vacancy!

⁵⁴The British Weekly, 20 February (1902) 404 and A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.136.

⁵⁵The British Weekly, 6 March (1902) 531.

⁵⁶Selbie, The Life of Charles Silvester Horne, pp.126-127.

⁵⁷Rosebery was asked to form a government by Queen Victoria on Gladstone's retirement in 1894. His ministry fell in June 1895. Rosebery gradually moved to the right of the Liberal Party. Campbell's allegiance to Rosebery is interesting considering that Rosebery was largely distrusted by the Liberal rank and file because he was a strong Imperialist, and because his tastes offended Nonconformists - A. Palmer, The Penguin Dictionary of Modern History 1789-1945 (Harmondsworth, 1983, 1st ed. 1962), pp.249-250.

In spite of Campbell's political interest his sermons were largely 'a-political'. He was diplomatic and careful not to isolate people. He appealed to the Christian notion of love rather than to political duty, or political allegiance. He did not condemn wealth, but its possessors were urged to use it wisely, having been reminded of the commandment to love God and to love one's neighbour as oneself. This approach was consonant with the 'popular' thought of the time. It was a sort of fatalism in which the rich were thankful for being rich and saw it as a gift from God - a gift they could use to placate and help the less fortunate. Emphasis was on 'charity' and 'palliatives' rather than on attempts to deal with the root cause of poverty.

'Charity' was so fashionable that Campbell's preaching did not upset his 'horribly respectable'⁵⁸ congregation.

Charles Booth maintained that Congregationalists, more than any other, were the church of the middle class.⁵⁹ Union Church certainly had its share of the middle and upper classes. Regular attendance included W.E.H. Lecky the historian, the Duchess of Bedford, Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham, and General and Mrs Trotter. That Union Church had its share of 'wealth' was evident in the fact that on 26 February 1899 Campbell appealed to his congregation for financial assistance to aid the Empire Mission. The aim of the Mission was to reach non-churchgoers without probing their pockets; no collection was, therefore, taken in the Dome. Astonishingly, by 27 February enough money had been donated.⁶⁰

⁵⁸Union Church Magazine, May (1898) vi.

⁵⁹A. Hastings, A History of English Christianity 1920-1985 (London, 1986), p.106 quoting C. Booth, Life and Labour of the People in London, 17 vols. (1902-1903).

⁶⁰Union Church Magazine, May (1899) vii.

Campbell's ministry was always an attempt to address the needs of his congregation; he was sincere in his own spiritual pilgrimage and wanted to help others in their own. He was very influenced by his surroundings. Had he been elsewhere he might have been more *au fait* with the growth of 'socialist' remedies to the social problem.

There was a definite hint, however, of a social gospel in Campbell's ministry even at this time. On Sunday 8 March 1896 one of his first sermons was on the social gospel.⁶¹ W.T. Stead, the founder and editor of The Review of Reviews, addressed Union Church at the Dome, on 19 April 1898, on the subject of the popular municipal programme of social reform. Similarly, Mr E.W. Hobbs, on 3 February 1903, addressed the Literary and Debating Society on 'Municipal Socialism'.⁶²

Fourthly, Campbell's popularity can be attributed to the fact that he gave each of his services a particular purpose. To negate, Campbell said, the common charge against Nonconformists that 'they are apt to neglect the systematic culture of the devout life'⁶³, the weekly Wednesday evening service at Union Church was devoted to this. Campbell's Sunday services, likewise, avoided fragmentary teaching. Sunday morning centred upon Apologetics: The Great Articles of Christian Belief, and the Sunday evening service was on The Teaching of Christ. 'In the morning courses the authority of Jesus is demonstrated; in the evening, assumed'.⁶⁴ Campbell's preaching also had a personal note. His sermons always seemed, to his hearers, to be addressed to one of them. This was testified by Norman Jenner, who in an interview with the author on 9 February 1989, distinctly remembered hearing Campbell preach in 1947 and had this experience.

⁶¹Union Street Congregational Church Magazine, March (1896) i.

⁶²Union Church Magazine, March (1903) v.

⁶³Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.45.

⁶⁴Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.45.

It was this command of the pulpit that 'completely changed the position of Nonconformity in the town. It was lifted from a back street to a place of influence and public recognition.'⁶⁵ Interestingly, in the monthly church magazine, Campbell's contribution was a sermon, which week by week had been taken down in shorthand by Miss A. Homes.⁶⁶ His reputation as a great preacher was further revealed in his monthly visit to Union Congregational Church, Crowborough and Jarvis Brook. The occasion was eagerly anticipated by the congregation, and many residents who ordinarily worshipped elsewhere made a point of attending when he preached.⁶⁷

Fifthly, Campbell's charisma enhanced his popularity: 'As we look at this young preacher and pastor, we know that personality tells. There is an undefinable something in his appearance in the pulpit which impels attention.'⁶⁸ He wore a long sweeping Geneva gown⁶⁹ which looked all the more striking with the contrast of his thick white hair and large clear blue eyes. He had a fine subtle humour which 'often sends a ripple of mirth over a sea of upturned faces which but a few minutes before had been thrilled with reverence and with awe'.⁷⁰

⁶⁵Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.52.

⁶⁶Union Street Congregational Church Magazine, February (1898) i. This magazine had a wide circulation. By July 1898 there was a monthly issue of 1,100 copies and it peaked at 1,300 in March 1899 to return in May 1899 to 1,100.

⁶⁷Union Church Magazine, December (1898) vi. Crowborough and Jarvis Brook had amalgamated in Spring 1898. Campbell was their superintendent and Rev A.E. Hooper their minister. The church was run by a managing committee of eight; the two ministers, two Crowborough deacons, two Jarvis Brook deacons and two deacons from Union Church - Union Church Magazine, May (1898) vi.

⁶⁸Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.94.

⁶⁹This showed his 'high' tendencies, since as a rule Congregationalists had less sense of the ministry as set apart and so had abandoned the Genevan gown - O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church 1860-1901, Part II (London, 1970), p.255.

⁷⁰The Young Man, August (1903) 268.

Campbell's personality may be described as the underlying foundation of all his success; personality counted for everything: 'The public cannot be expected to think of Mr Campbell as those who enjoy his friendship think of him ... he is a celebrity.'⁷¹

A sixth contribution to Campbell's outstanding popularity was his intellect. He had a working knowledge of Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian and Spanish, and he was well-read in English literature and theology. Moreover, he was a good communicator, and was able to share his knowledge and to present stimulating addresses. For the January meeting of Young Men at Union Church, he spoke on 'The Teaching of Jesus in the light of Modern Criticism' and, on 10 February 1903, he gave a lecture on the Criticism of St John's Gospel.⁷² His interest in spiritual and theological issues soon developed into publications, though the first two were primarily of spiritual interest. In The Making of an Apostle (1896) he encouraged readers to see themselves like St Peter; God can do great things from small beginnings, and The Restored Innocence (1898) urges a return to the state of Innocence after sin: 'Innocence is that quality of soul which forbids compromise with evil'.⁷³

In 1899,⁷⁴ Campbell received his MA from Oxford University. In the following year his article 'The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought' appeared in The Christian World. Later that year it appeared as the leading article in a

⁷¹The Sussex Daily News, 9 March 1903.

⁷²Union Church Magazine, January (1903) viii and March (1903) vi respectively.

⁷³R.J. Campbell, The Restored Innocence (London, 1898), p.40.

⁷⁴H.J.R. Wing, Assistant Librarian, Christ Church, Oxford, in his letter of 27 July 1978 to Professor Keith Robbins said that Campbell took his MA in 1902.

composium⁷⁵ of articles on the same theme. Campbell had begun: 'Christ is our Saviour from everything that humanity has cause to fear and our Saviour to everything for which humanity ought to hope.' Campbell argued that from the primitive Church to the present there was a connection between the suffering and death of Jesus and the forgiveness of sins. First, Campbell declared that the soul was under condemnation when a person felt himself to be guilty. Secondly, this guilt left the person feeling permanently associated with their evil. Thirdly, the alienation from good was the chief penalty of sin. Fourthly mankind had the ability to atone for sin. Campbell concluded that '... the Christian doctrine of Atonement is the only remedy which has ever been propounded to the world to deal with the psychological fact of guilt. It satisfies a Christ-awakened need.

In 1900 Campbell's A Faith for To-day: Suggestions towards a System of Christian Belief⁷⁶ was published. It was a collection of sermons preached at Brighton during late 1899 to the beginning of 1900. The sermons had been taken down in shorthand and revised, mainly by Rev J. Brierley (editor of The Christian World), during Campbell's illness in 1900. Each chapter had already been published over thirteen weeks in The Christian World Pulpit, 8 November 1899 to 31 January 1900.

While six reasons for Campbell's personality have been outlined, his own account of his popularity is helpful.

I can account for it in no other way than this: that there is a spiritual craving abroad such as we have not seen for a long time, and when a real spiritual experience speaks, men come and listen. I think the only reason one can give for the attendance here is this: that I know whom I have believed, and a confidence in Christ speaks to a wistfulness of craving that is present in this great city ... A great number have tried to explain

⁷⁵W.F. Adeney (ed), The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought: A Theological Symposium (London, 1900). Other contributors were Dr R.F. Horton, Dr P.T. Forsyth and Rev C.S. Horne.

⁷⁶Reviewed by R.F. Horton in The Christian World, 7 June (1900) 13.

the secret of my success, but it is very remarkable that those who attempt to estimate it so seldom give any credit to the Holy Ghost.⁷⁷

Campbell, however, had his personal critics and he was 'popular' with them as an object for their sarcasm. The Sussex Daily News defended Campbell declaring that those who 'have got hold of the notion that Mr Campbell is fond of personal adulation, are as far from understanding him as they well can be', and again, Campbell 'glories not himself, but his Master. No man could be freer from egoism in the pulpit ...'⁷⁸ However, the voice of those who regarded Campbell more sceptically were not convinced.

K.D. Brown⁷⁹ makes Campbell's popularity to be some kind of vanity fair; Campbell, he said:

... positively revelled in the attention he received - and encouraged - from rich, adoring young women. He cultivated something of a personality cult, launching his own journal, the Christian Commonwealth, and selling signed photographs of himself.

Fenner Brockway similarly said that he had not become too enthused about Campbell personally, 'perhaps ... because I saw his circle at close quarters and was repulsed by the hero-worship - and his love of it.'⁸⁰ Brockway recalled that at the end of his vote of thanks to Keir Hardie for his lecture on Socialism at the City Temple, Campbell had turned to Hardie and said: 'You see what my young men

⁷⁷Lane in The Young Man, August (1903) 270.

⁷⁸The Sussex Daily News, 22 January (1907) 5 and 9 March (1903).

⁷⁹K.D. Brown, A Social History of the Nonconformist Ministry in England and Wales 1800-1930 (Oxford, 1988), p.176.

⁸⁰F. Brockway, Inside the Left: Thirty Years of Platform, Press, Prison and Parliament (London, 1947), p.16.

are like'. Brockway continued: 'I resented it: I was already more the follower of Hardie than of Campbell'.⁸¹

A.G. Gardiner expressed sentiments comparable to those of Brown and Brockway: 'It was not that he was insincere, but that the instinct of the drama was ineradicable. He could not forget the limelight, and loved the echoes of his own thunder.'⁸²

In a letter Canon Barnett wrote: 'if only he [Campbell] were a monk he might be a Savonarola but Savonarola too was in love with his own personality.'⁸³

The conclusion of W.S. Smith was that 'Campbell was not always as ingenious as he painted himself to be ... His later statement that 'public life has never had any charm for me' must not be taken too seriously.'⁸⁴

Such perceptions gain more credibility from a comment in Union Church Magazine, written by friends of Campbell: 'You know, I sometimes am inclined to think he rather overrates the kindness meted out to him. But his words are always genuine.'⁸⁵

⁸¹Brockway, Inside the Left, p.17.

⁸²A.G. Gardiner, Prophets, Priests and Kings (London, 1914), p.241.

⁸³Letter from Canon Barnett dated 13 June 1909 kept in the Greater London Record Office - F/BAR/421. Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98) was an Italian preacher and reformer who believed himself to be divinely inspired and therefore entitled to disobey ecclesiastical authority. He later admitted to having acted from self interest rather than divine inspiration. He was hanged as a schismatic and heretic. See Cross & Livingstone (eds.), The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p.1239.

⁸⁴W.S. Smith, The London Heretics 1870-1914 (London, 1967), pp.209-210.

⁸⁵Union Church Magazine, August (1898) vi.

The sheer number and diversity of source indicates an element of truth underlying their judgements. Brown's argument would be more convincing had he known or met Campbell, and Brown has clearly indulged in poetic exaggeration which is unfair in its presentation of Campbell. Campbell did not 'cultivate' a personality cult even if he revelled in it once it had become apparant - a natural response to someone so sensitive to criticism and who was eager to please and to be loved. Moreover, Campbell did not 'launch' The Christian Commonwealth. He did contribute articles, and it did become the 'organ' of the liberal progressive movement, and from 1909 Campbell was Chairman of its editorial committee - though only for a year.

Ill-health and the Boer War: 11 October 1899-31 March 1902

The arduous nature of Campbell's vocation and his enthusiasm towards it caused him bouts of his characteristic ill-health. His most serious illness during his Brighton days was on his return from South Africa. He was determined to visit the scene of the Boer War for first hand knowledge. His attitude to the Boer state was Imperialistic, he could not divest himself of the Ulster prejudice of his background. Accordingly, when offered a seat on the council of the Liberal League, by R.W. Perks, a Wesleyan Liberal MP, Campbell accepted.⁸⁶ The Liberal League was a Roseberyite 'Imperialist' body of which Rosebery was President from 1902. Campbell was not an enthusiastic member, and only accepted the seat on the condition that he would not have to give too much time and energy to it, and that it would not 'draw me away from my own more directly spiritual work'.⁸⁷ For Campbell Imperialism, Liberalism and Nonconformity were compatible. He was of the opinion that the Empire was something to be proud of;

⁸⁶Campbell was the only Nonconformist minister on this committee, The World, 21 April (1903) 644.

⁸⁷R.J. Campbell's letter to R.W. Perks dated 10 July 1902. See also H.C.G. Matthew, The Liberal Imperialist: The Ideas and Politics of a Post-Gladstonian Elite (Oxford, 1973). Matthew's wrongly refers to Campbell as a Methodist on pp.49, 92, and 297.

it was the largest Empire, in terms of territory and population, that the world had ever seen.⁸⁸ Many other Liberals and Nonconformists could not reconcile their pride in the British Empire with their principles. Imperialism sat uneasily with the Liberal and Nonconformist emphasis on the freedom of the individual. Many Liberals and Nonconformists were of the opinion that the Boers should be allowed to opt out of the Empire, especially as Britain did not have their real interests at heart. There was also suspicion that the 'Tory Government had launched the Boer War for the benefit of the mine-owners of the Rand ...'⁸⁹

On the first Saturday in March 1900, Campbell, with his brother, set sail for South Africa in the Tantallon Castle. His time on board was characteristically busy. He acted as Chaplain to the troops, and officiated at burials, taking both Church of England and Wesleyan services. In a space of one hour, he said, he was both Nonconformist and Conformist.⁹⁰

At Cape Town he was greeted with a grand reception. Thus he began his 'working holiday' where he assisted the Colonial Missionary Society. His visit and preaching engagements made a great impact.⁹¹

Two months later, on 2 May 1900, with his Imperialism having been reconfirmed, he left Cape Town in the Briton; again acting as Chaplain. He contracted a chill but, nevertheless, continued with his lecture on Tennyson and Browning. Soon

⁸⁸See B. Porter, 'The Edwardians and their Empire', *Edwardian Age*, ed. D.Read (London, 1982), p.129 for a discussion of the position of the Empire at this time.

⁸⁹L.C.B. Seaman, *Post-Victorian Britain 1902-1951* (London, 1979, 1st ed. 1966), p.16.

⁹⁰Bateman, *R.J. Campbell*, p.61.

⁹¹For a more detailed account of Campbell's time in South Africa see Bateman, *R.J. Campbell*, pp.61-64.

after the lecture, his voice failed and he was obliged to keep to his berth. With his health steadily declining he was seized with typhoid seven days from port.⁹²

On arriving at Southampton he was rushed to Southampton Isolation Hospital, frustrating the public reception to be held in his name on the following Monday at the Pavilion, and worrying his wife and friends who had assembled at the docks. Concern for Campbell during this period was widespread. The Above Bar Congregational Church in Southampton kept his hospital isolation ward bright with flowers, and he received endless letters, including one from Dr Paget:

I cannot tell you how very sorry I am to hear of your serious illness ... I am heartily thankful to hear that you have reached the stage of convalescence ... There is often ... a sense of rest and quiet in that sheltered time of convalescence which one hardly gets in any other holiday.⁹³

A long and tedious recovery lay ahead. On leaving hospital he went, with his wife and daughter, to Freshwater on the Isle of Wight, to stay with friends.⁹⁴ In October, he returned to Brighton, advised by the Doctor to preach only once a month. Considerably weaker, especially in the voice, Campbell's strength of character, determination and enthusiasm for his vocation were unabated.

In 1901, for his friend, Horton, Campbell spoke at the Church anniversary at Hampstead. In the same year he began his regular series in The British Weekly, and in 1902 was President of Brighton's Free Church Council (both of which have been mentioned above). He also resumed appointments outside Brighton, and continued to receive enticing offers of pastorates. As well as Forsyth's invitation (mentioned above), Dr Joseph Parker suggested that Campbell be appointed to

⁹²The British Weekly, 31 May (1900) 141.

⁹³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.75.

⁹⁴The British Weekly, 30 August (1900) 377.

King's Weigh House Church, in West London. From here Campbell would easily be able to help at the City Temple. Campbell, however, refused these enticing offers by explaining that by temperament he was 'averse to changes'⁹⁵. Besides, he was happy in Brighton, and he was only prepared to accept invitations where his loyalty to Union Church was not impeded; thus he helped with the City Temple Thursday service.

Campbell and the City Temple

Campbell's link with the City Temple began with preaching engagements in 1902 on 21 June, 13 July and 19 October.⁹⁶ From Thursday 23 October of the same year, owing to Parker's ill-health, Campbell was solely responsible for the weekly Thursday service.⁹⁷ This was to be for six months; little did he know that this would be his responsibility for thirteen years! He did, however, at the close of the Thursday service on 18 December 1902, announce the deacons' request that he be permanently responsible for the Thursday service, and he acknowledged this as his duty 'for the present'.⁹⁸ He had no reservation about preaching there while Parker was ill, but he felt uneasy after Parker's death,⁹⁹ even though he had been urged to keep the service alive.

Campbell's success at the Thursday morning service was instantaneous. Attendance substantially increased. Both male and female,¹⁰⁰ young and old,

⁹⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.83.

⁹⁶The British Weekly, 25 June (1902) 257, 17 July (1902) 317, and 23 October (1902) 29.

⁹⁷Some of Campbell's addresses at this service were later published, Thursday Mornings at the City Temple (London, 1908).

⁹⁸The British Weekly, 23 December (1902) 309.

⁹⁹Joseph Parker died on 28 November 1902; he last preached at the City Temple on Thursday 2 October 1902.

¹⁰⁰Males predominated - Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.87.

flocked to hear this preaching star.

An article, 'The Preacher', by 'One in a Pew', appeared in The Daily Telegraph early in 1903. It gave an insight into the Thursday service:

There were thousands of us in pews at the City Temple yesternoon, and one man was in the pulpit. We had come from warehouses and offices, from banks and shops, from the Exchange and the markets, giving up our dinner-hour, and taking our snack of food when or where or how we could, so that a higher purpose was duly served. And what had we all come out for to hear? ... a man with the 'point' safely in his possession ... do you think that we should have given up our luncheon-hour, crowded ourselves into pews and improvised seats of many kinds; sat, to much bodily discomfort upon stairs and steps, or stood in compact groups wherever standing room could be found? Verily, we should have done nothing of the kind ... Religion, we sometimes hear, has become limp and flaccid, it has lost its earnestness because its faith has decayed; or it is hidden away in the folds of ecclesiastical millinery, like the parabolic talent in a napkin, or it has become a mere profession of the devotion that is respectable once a week. But has it? Let the crowd in the City Temple answer. Personally I attach little importance to statistics, which show that, out of London's millions, less than one person in ten goes to church or chapel. To my mind, the figures simply prove that the 'Speaking Man' who has got hold of the 'point' is scarce ... Find the Man, and the people will come round to hear ... Men of such fidelity and loving-kindness are those whom the churches want, and, though I have 'sat under' the new minister of the City Temple but once, I cannot help recognising in him the true preacher ... It was no languid hearing which the people gave the Rev R.J. Campbell yesterday. It was, in simple truth, an attention as strained as a bow just before the archer lets his arrow fly: and as the calm, clear words came from the still young man with the whitening hair, the silence reigning within the church made the muffled noises of the street almost startling by contrast ... Yet Mr Campbell had attempted nothing startling; no lights of rhetoric marked his discourse; he made no dramatic 'points', nor once turned from the level of his argument to show himself on the peak of an unnecessary climax. He dealt with the old injunction to repent in words and phrases as simple as the language of the Gospel from which he took his text, and in this simplicity lay the chief beauty of the sermon. But plainness went hand in hand with happiest definition, and was some-times relieved by a brief and pointed anecdote ... Mr Campbell uses action freely, occasionally even in prayer, but it is not of the large, sweeping, demonstrative order which his predecessor frequently employed. His gestures are quick and vivacious, but circumscribed. In this respect they accord with the preacher's almost equable voice ... Yesterday the sermon was above all 'the thing,' and the fact afforded another proof that the people are hungering and thirsting for ministers who are in earnest, who have a message which they must needs deliver, and who know how, by simple diction, clear reasoning, and a persuasive style to enchain public attention. Members of all denominations feel this need. The religious spirit of England is not dead, though unquestionably it has been in a bad way. Consideration of a

remedy brings us round to Carlyle's 'Speaking Man'. They have him at the City Temple, and we see the result. Cannot he be multiplied?¹⁰¹

Campbell's Thursday services dealt with difficult problems of the Christian faith and of personal life. They owed their great success to their intellectual content and reasoning, but also to the accommodation for the spiritual susceptibilities of the hearers. His sermons, The British Weekly went so far to say, 'inaugurate a new epoch in the church's history'.¹⁰² An overstatement, perhaps, but their distinguishing feature was certainly the close human contact between preacher and congregation. Campbell's sermons were able to relieve the depression of sin and he made the Gospel alive in a world that was becoming increasingly secularised. Speaking on the text 'We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities', Campbell incorporated the following 'story' into a sermon at a time of increasing materialism. He told of a young man living and working in the City. While he had a moderately well-paid job, he certainly was not receiving the wages his mother believed that he was earning. He lived on a few shillings a week and sent the rest of his salary home for his mother and his sisters. He knew his family would not accept his money if they knew what it cost him to send it, so he did not tell them, and would not let them visit. Sometimes the mother would go to the workhouse with presents bought with his money. With humour, the young man remarked: 'It would be a joke, but the very truth is that if they sent them to me I need them as much.'¹⁰³

Campbell believed that the action of this young man was a firm ground for faith and hope. The son had acted in a Christ-like manner. Thus, 'We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities'. His

¹⁰¹Clare, The City Temple, pp.141-143.

¹⁰²The British Weekly, 5 February (1903) 449.

¹⁰³Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.88.

congregation could, therefore, go out and face the rest of the day and days ahead in confidence that Jesus Christ was with them, and if they trusted him he would not fail them.¹⁰⁴

Encouragement was also evident in Campbell's sermon preached on Thursday 1 January 1903, published in Looking Backward and Looking Forward. He recognised that while mystery and uncertainty surrounded life, 'looking forward ... You have nothing to fear - for all your questions are answered beforehand, if you know Him whom to know is life eternal.'¹⁰⁵ He urged his congregation to thank God for what was not known and to believe firmly that 'My life is had with Christ in God.'¹⁰⁶

In his sermon the 'Humanity of God'¹⁰⁷ Campbell implored that the text, John 20:28 'My Lord and my God', testified to the deity of Jesus and the discovery of the humanity of God. He recognised that for many of his hearers it was relatively easy to accept Jesus as a very good person but hard to accept him as Master and Lord. Campbell insisted: '... Jesus is God, my God, very God of very God. I could not do without Him.'¹⁰⁸ Campbell's 'liberalism', however, was evident in his unorthodox merging of the humanity and deity of Jesus:

In Christ there were not two natures, but one ... The humanity of Christ was His divinity, and when you have gathered all divinity together you have got Deity. Not two things, but one thing. There is no line between

¹⁰⁴Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.89.

¹⁰⁵R.J. Campbell, 'God's New Year', Looking Backward and Looking Forward (London, 1903), p.26.

¹⁰⁶'God's New Year', p.27.

¹⁰⁷R.J. Campbell, 'The Humanity of God', Sermons by Congregational Preachers, Vol. 1 (London, 1904), preached at the City Temple on Thursday 12 March 1903.

¹⁰⁸'The Humanity of God', p.11.

man and God ... God is all that you are, and infinitely more ... All that you know about Deity is human, every bit of it.¹⁰⁹

He emphasised that Christ held together all humanity and pointed out that of no other person was the question ever asked: 'Is He man or is He God?'

Jesus Christ becomes the pledge and guarantee of Infinite God for the salvation of mankind. Not only is He God and must be God, because His life is behind and above yours, and is the source of all that is worthiest and best in yours, but Jesus Christ brings Infinite God into finite human life.¹¹⁰

Campbell referred back to the biblical passage in which Thomas refused Jesus's offer to touch the print of nails on his hands and side, but exclaimed: 'Why was it that I never saw in Him my Lord and my God?' Thomas had learned, Campbell maintained, the humanity of God in the love that was drawn out from him to the human Jesus; and now he saw Him as He was Lord and God: 'Christ is our Saviour to everything for which humanity ought to hope.'¹¹¹

Campbell's Theology and Direction of Thought

Campbell's theology can be ascertained from his sermons. His sermon 'Humanity in Deity'¹¹² was concerned with the problem of reconciling Jesus's humanity with his deity, to which Jesus himself had witnessed. Jesus had referred to his pre-existence: 'Before Abraham was, I am' (John 8:58), 'And now, O Father, glorify thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory I had with Thee before the world was' (John 17:24), 'I and the Father are one' (John 10:30).¹¹³ Campbell believed

¹⁰⁹'The Humanity of God', p.13.

¹¹⁰'The Humanity of God', p.15.

¹¹¹'The Humanity of God', pp.20-21.

¹¹²'Humanity in Deity', preached on Sunday morning 12 February 1899 and printed in Union Church Magazine, March (1899) ii-vi.

¹¹³Union Church Magazine, March (1899) iii.

that these words were not exhausted by interpretations which portrayed Jesus as implying only that his 'character', 'nature', 'disposition', were like God's, but he believed that something more was implied, and this was the belief that Christ was judge of mankind - all that had been and all that should be. Further, Jesus thought of himself as being perfectly free from sin; he often prayed 'for' his disciples but never 'with them',¹¹⁴ and always referred to 'My Father and your Father, My God and your God'.¹¹⁵

Campbell recognised that holding both Christ's humanity and deity simultaneously may seem contradictory; Christ's deity would exclude his humanity and his humanity would exclude his deity, and why need Jesus pray at all were he God? However, Campbell insisted that the self-consciousness of Christ was 'separate' though not 'distinct' from that of the other Persons in the Godhead. Further, he pointed out that Christ's deity grew out of familiarity with his humanity, and it was plausible that the mystery of personality was an indication of an even deeper mystery in the Godhead.¹¹⁶

In a sermon on the Incarnation, Campbell recognised that Christianity was distinguished from all other religions by the Incarnation. Christianity is about God manifest in the flesh; the humanity of God. The Incarnation was 'the revelation of the higher by means of the lower, the expression of the invisible through the visible'. History, he maintained, revealed this. In Genesis, God said let there be light and there was light; this was God incarnating something of himself, since as St John witnessed, 'God is light'. Similarly, 'God is life', and in Genesis God

¹¹⁴Union Church Magazine, March (1899) iv-v.

¹¹⁵'My heavenly Father' - Matthew 15:13 on the clean and the unclean, and Matthew 16:17 Peter's confession, and Matthew 20:23 a mother's request, Matthew 25:34 the sheep and the goats. 'Your Father' - Matthew 6:6-9, 14-15, 17, on prayer, fasting. 'My God', Matthew 27:46, the death of Jesus. 'Your God', Matthew 22:37 the greatest commandment.

¹¹⁶Union Church Magazine, March (1899) vi.

breathed life into his creatures. As an example Campbell drew attention to a basket of flowers sitting on his rostrum. He explained:

Very little of the soil that covers the roots has gone to build up the structure of the organism itself; yet had it not been for the soil there would have been no flower. What we see in this exquisite structure is really concentrated light and air. The invisible atmosphere that surrounds us has given far more to the composition of these lilies than has the soil in which they grew. We are looking, then, at light and air, that in the process of the growth of these flowers have been concentrated, revealed. The invisible has become visible.

Campbell continued: 'The Incarnation of the Son of God is the supremest example of a principle exemplified and at work in all our affairs.' Jesus showed that 'God is in the tears of things'. God was brought right into the heart of humanity. The birth of Christ gave ground for optimism by showing that blessedness would prevail.¹¹⁷

A Liberal Evangelical

Campbell referred to himself, during his Brighton ministry, as a liberal evangelical,¹¹⁸ yet he did qualify the label. He was, he said, evangelical by definition, in virtue of the fact that Nonconformity was evangelical. More staunch 'evangelicals' were not attracted to Campbell whose acceptance of biblical criticism and resistance to a 'fundamentalist' interpretation of the Bible was disapproved. Moreover, his avoidance of characteristic evangelical phrases such as 'washed in the blood of Jesus', was a further cause of alienation. In an evangelical guise, however, as we have seen, he organised successful mission services during February and March 1899 in the Empire Theatre: 'one of the most fruitful efforts of our Pastor's ministry.'¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷'The Doctrine of the Incarnation', Union Church Magazine, January (1899) ii-v - preached on Sunday morning 18 December 1893.

¹¹⁸A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.91.

¹¹⁹Union Church Magazine, March (1899) vii.

Campbell observed that his congregation consisted largely of personal acquaintances, especially liberal Anglicans.¹²⁰ His appeal to liberal 'Anglicans' was primarily because 'liberalism' was more common in Anglicanism. Moreover, in A Spiritual Pilgrimage his emphasis on his appeal to 'Anglicans' was most probably to show that his 'conversion' to Anglicanism was natural.

Campbell's 'liberalism' in theology became more acute throughout his Brighton days, and it had some correlation with what he was reading. He methodically kept a record of his studies:

Following a definite order, I kept a number of large leather bound, indexed ledger notebooks on my shelves, divided into subjects and into these I used to enter week by week the results of my reading and reflection. Small, thin, black notebooks were my inseparable companions during the reading itself, and still are; I am never without them; I have filled thousands of them; it is second nature to me to have one always at hand when reading anything whatever, not necessarily to copy passages into it, but to record my own comments on what is read.¹²¹

Eagerly Campbell read widely on Philosophy, a subject which fascinated him. He was particularly interested in the relationship between philosophy and theology but he also felt it his 'duty to obtain a sufficiently adequate knowledge of the history of thought to enable ... [him] ... to place and form a judgment upon modern systems of belief and practice.'¹²² Familiar, from his degree, with a great deal of Plato and Aristotle, Campbell's sympathies were with Plato's 'instinct for reality'; the very foundation of religious experience.¹²³ During his Oxford days he had read Descartes, Locke and Pascal. Moving to more 'modern' philosophy, he was

¹²⁰A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.86.

¹²¹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.92.

¹²²A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.93.

¹²³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.97.

influenced by the Balliol idealist philosopher, Edward Caird (1835-1908), especially his Evolution of Religion (1895).¹²⁴ Towards the end of Campbell's Brighton days, Professor James Ward (1843-1925) delivered the Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen University (1896-98). These lectures Naturalism and Agnosticism (1899), shattered any Spencerian theories¹²⁵ Campbell had, but what impressed him particularly was Ward's 'respectful treatment of Spiritualistic Monism'.¹²⁶ Campbell's monistic view of the relations of individual self-conscious being to the whole, subsequently became more pronounced.

Campbell came to prefer B. Spinoza (1632-77), the most thorough exponent of pantheism who denied the freedom of the will and immortality, to the German idealist philosopher, G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831).¹²⁷ Campbell did not say specifically why this was so. It was certainly not Spinoza's denial of freewill, though it was probably his teaching on morality; Spinoza dismissed the view that monistic systems weakened morality.

Monistic philosophy, however, largely came to Campbell's attention toward the end of his Brighton ministry. A Faith for To-day (1900) lacked the strong monistic tendencies evident in The New Theology (1907).¹²⁸

¹²⁴The Gifford Lectures which had been delivered before St Andrew's University 1890-91.

¹²⁵That is, the agnostic theories of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). For Spencer, all reality was knowable (science) and unknowable (religion) and the Absolute is the fundamental reality. Moreover, knowledge was dependent on the unknowable, therefore, the Absolute could not be known in the strict sense of the word because one could only be conscious of the unknowable. All Spencer's arguments were characterised by an extreme liberalism. Cross & Livingstone (eds.), The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p.1298.

¹²⁶A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.96.

¹²⁷A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.99.

¹²⁸Even in The New Theology, Campbell was not to adopt a strictly Spinozist philosophy. Campbell always insisted on free will.

There was a great revival of interest in mysticism during the first decade of the present century; interest in immanentalism and experience in religion had encouraged this trend.¹²⁹ People looked to the saints for an exposition of religion after the unsatisfactory attempts of philosophy (Idealist philosophy), and history (by the quest for the historical Jesus) at presenting Christianity.¹³⁰

It was Dean Inge's Bampton Lectures on Christian Mysticism (1899) which introduced Campbell to a systematic study of the Christian Mystics. Having abhorred Augustine the theologian for his predestinarianism, Campbell was greatly impressed by Augustine the Mystic. Campbell was also deeply touched by the teaching of Julian of Norwich (c.1342-after 1413); especially her The Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love. He was, thereby, attracted to Catholic spirituality. With such figures as St Bernard, St Francis of Assisi, St Francis de Sales, St John of the Cross, St Teresa of Jesus, St Catherine of Genoa, St Catherine of Siena, Madame Guyon and Fénelon, Campbell said: 'My spirit knows no greater solace to this day than to kneel with them before the world's Redeemer and adore the goodness of God.'¹³¹

Mysticism, for Campbell, was compatible with monistic philosophy; it was 'the soil in which my monism grew ... I read everything in this field that I could lay my hands on.'¹³² Riddle of the Universe (1901), the work of the German scientist and naturalist, Ernst Heinrich Haeckel (1834-1919), taught Campbell that 'The question was not so much whether existence was a unity or a plurality, but what the nature of the unity was in which we and the whole universe, visible and

¹²⁹W.R. Inge (1860-1954) and Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941) were two prominent writers of this revival.

¹³⁰H. Davies, Worship and Theology in England - The Ecumenical Century, 1900-1965, Vol. 2 (Oxford, 1965).

¹³¹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.108.

¹³²A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.109 and p.104 respectively.

invisible, live and move and have our being.'¹³³ Constantly Campbell tried to come to terms with his 'mystical' experience of God and how it actually related to the daily workings of earthly existence with all its happiness and problems.

In 1875 Professor Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900), the 'comparative philologist and religious writer',¹³⁴ undertook the work of translating Eastern religious classics, The Sacred Books of the East. Max Müller's fundamental identification of the Many and the One, Campbell said, 'accorded with my perceptions' and he was fascinated with the similarity of the Greek and Hindu thinkers and the Christian saints' understanding of God. Campbell also came to believe that 'The fundamental principle of mysticism is the same the world over and in all ages, namely, the realisation of the essential oneness of the soul with God ...'¹³⁵ Campbell's 'mysticism' endorsed his concern for the social problems of his day, as well as reaffirming his monistic premise for his theological expositions.

The American psychologist-turned-philosopher, William James (1842-1910) published his striking piece of work The Varieties of Religious Experience in 1902. He argued from an immanent theology that the psychology of religious experience was an ally of Christianity. Campbell's own theology revealed his appeals to experience and his sympathy with James's masterpiece.

Interested in how theology related to philosophy Campbell turned to dogmatics. He was disappointed and dissatisfied with Fairbairn's Philosophy of the Christian Religion (1902), and maintained that it was simply a repetition of things said in

¹³³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.107. In Riddle of the Universe (1901), a translation of Die Weltratsel (1899), Haeckel attempted to apply Darwin's theories to philosophical and religious questions. Campbell did not endorse Haeckel's denial of a personal God, free will and the immortality of the soul.

¹³⁴Cross & Livingstone (ed.), The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p.895.

¹³⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.105 and 106 respectively.

the past. He was equally frustrated on reading Dr R.W. Dale (1829-95), the Congregationalist theologian, but he was unclear on why he disliked Dale's work and the work of Nonconformist theologians in general. During his Brighton pastorate Campbell turned to Anglican theologians. There were, after all, more of them, and Campbell was particularly impressed by Gore and John Richardson Illingworth.¹³⁶ Indeed a journalist for The World in 1903, noticed the preponderance of Anglican books on Campbell's shelves.¹³⁷

Campbell's interest in dogmatics extended beyond the Established Church. The Christian Doctrine of Salvation (1905), by the Yale theologian Professor George Barker Stevens, helped clarify his thought on the Atonement. The Roman Catholic, Henry Nutcombe Oxenham (1829-88), in his Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement (1865) similarly made an impression on him.¹³⁸ Oxenham argued that the Atonement was only fully intelligible through the corporate life of the Church. Campbell only fully appreciated this later when he maintained that mystery and sacrifice were continually renewed in the sacrament of the altar, and that it was important that the innermost of the divine sacrifice should remain a mystery.¹³⁹

Campbell was interested in the Church Fathers, particularly the Alexandrians with their Platonist presumptions. He was especially attracted to Clement (c.150-c.215) and Origen (c.185-c.254) who 'did nothing to check ... [his] ... liberalising tendencies.'¹⁴⁰ Campbell sympathised with Clement's belief that 'gnosis',

¹³⁶It had been at Illingworth's rectory than the Lux Mundi men had met; he contributed two essays to the symposium.

¹³⁷'Celebrities at Home: The Rev R.J. Campbell in Brighton', The World, 21 April (1903) 644-645. This is all consonant with Campbell's own later declaration that 'distinctively Nonconformist or shall I say evangelical? theology failed me.' A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.122.

¹³⁸A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.114.

¹³⁹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.115.

¹⁴⁰A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.115.

religious knowledge, was the chief element in Christian perfection and that Jesus was the source of all human reason and the interpretation of God to mankind. So great was Campbell's enthusiasm that 'No Nonconformist minister in England, and probably few Anglican or Roman ecclesiastics, possess so fine and complete an edition of 'the Fathers' ... [as Campbell].'¹⁴¹ The influence that the Fathers had on Campbell was evident throughout his ministry. His allegorical interpretation of scripture, for example, in part, attests to the Alexandrian influence; as does his acceptance of a Platonic sense of the reality of the spiritual world, and the transcendence of God. Campbell does, however, stray from the Alexandrian fathers in his emphasis on the full humanity of Jesus.

Campbell read widely in biblical exegesis, especially the work of the Old Testament Hebrew scholar, Professor Samuel Rolles Driver (1846-1914), and the English New Testament scholar, Professor William Sanday (1843-1920). For fifteen years Campbell read a great deal of German biblical criticism. In hindsight (by 1916), he regretted having devoted so much time to this sphere, but it was consonant with the theological trend of the time. He realised that he had been too impressionable; and had swallowed much of their theses without digesting the material. From the end of his Brighton days he became more critical in his reading, and in the later part of the decade he declared: 'I lean the way of the higher critics generally, but I go very cautiously; that is quite a different thing from always preaching their way.'¹⁴²

Campbell had read The Life of Christ (E.T. 1883, German ed. 1882) by Bernard Weiss (1827-1918), and he had read the work of the German evangelical theologian, Willibald Beyschlag (1823-1900) - Leben Jesu (2 vol. 1885-86). He had also read the New Testament scholar, Wilhelm Bousset (1865-1920); the Life

¹⁴¹The World, 21 April (1903) 645.

¹⁴²Bateman, R.J. Campbell, pp.126-127.

of Jesus (1835) by the German theologian David Friedrich Strauss (1808-74) which described the supernatural elements of the Gospel as 'myth'; the Vie de Jesus (1863) by the French philosopher, theologian and orientalist, Joseph Ernest Renan (1823-92); and Ecce Homo (1865) by the British historian John Robert Seeley (1834-95) who upheld the 'historic' Jesus as a moral reformer, and who dismissed the supernatural elements of the Gospel. Campbell was grateful to these writers for humanising Jesus but he dismissed their theories because they did not survive the attack of the German theologian, Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965)¹⁴³. Moreover, he was always careful not to succumb to a purely naturalistic explanation of Jesus's words and works. He did not want Jesus robbed of mystery and divinity.¹⁴⁴ Regarding German theology as a whole, he said, he would have tenaciously clung to it had it stayed as propounded by F.D.E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834) in spirit.¹⁴⁵ Campbell's reservations about German theology as regards Christ, however, was not so strong during the two decades either side of 1900. At that time he was still interested in 'rationalism' and he himself did try to rationalise the Gospel in A Faith for To-day and The New Theology.

During his Brighton pastorate Campbell began to explore the phenomenon of Modernism, both Roman Catholic and Anglican, yet his attention in A Spiritual Pilgrimage^g is to the former. Through his reading, he increasingly came to a more positive appreciation of the richness of Roman Catholic spirituality, though Campbell was never a convert. The lack of a striking personality by whom the impressionable Campbell could be lured, as well as his Ulster Protestant upbringing, contributed to his aloofness to the movement. He had met the English Modernist, George Tyrrell (1861-1909) and said that he 'did not attract me much

¹⁴³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.121.

¹⁴⁴A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.122.

¹⁴⁵The World, 21 April (1903) 645.

personally'¹⁴⁶. Nor was he attracted to the French Modernist, and biblical scholar, Alfred Firmi Loisy (1857-1940), who, in Campbell's terms, replaced 'spirituality' with 'intellectuality'. It was Baron Friedrich von Hügel (1852-1925), theologian and philosopher, whose spirituality most impressed Campbell. Pope Pius X condemned the Modernist movement within the Roman Catholic Church with the decree 'Lamentabili', issued on 3 July 1907, and the encyclical 'Pascendi' issued on 8 September 1907. Clergy identified with the movement, including Tyrrell, were, for the most part, excommunicated, while lay people, such as von Hügel, were largely left untouched.¹⁴⁷

A fuller account of the influences upon Campbell during his Brighton ministry is found in A Spiritual Pilgrimage; the above suffices to make clear the lines along which he was thinking, and to show what lay behind much of his theology and preaching in Brighton. Campbell's A Faith for To-day (1900) illustrates the Neo-Hegelian influence on him in the fact that his theory of creation regards creation as a mode of the self-expression of God. The Augustinian impact was evident in the negative view of evil. Campbell's treatment of miracles reveals his indebtedness to his reading of many late nineteenth-century texts, and biblical criticism accounts for Campbell's interpretation of the Fall as a continuing psychological occurrence rather than an 'historical' event at a particular time.

Campbell's sermons in A Faith for To-day attempted to expound a system of Christian belief; a courageous enterprise considering his lack of formal theological training. The 'systematics', however, was mainly a consequence of his love of system, order and neatness; his work was not a conscious effort to present the Christian Gospel in a way that could be regarded as a systematic theological treatise. Unfortunately, the contents of the book were dissected as a theological

¹⁴⁶A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.125.

¹⁴⁷More will be said of Campbell's relationship with the Modernists on pp.184ff.

treatise rather than a collection of sermons, but fortunately the book was not brought to the forefront of theological minds, as was The New Theology. The main reason for this was that on its publication Campbell was minister of a Brighton Church, not the City Temple, the Mecca of Nonconformity, and he was relatively unknown beyond the Brighton region. This 'obscurity' meant that his theology was relatively unimportant and uninteresting to society and the theological world at large. Moreover, systematicians would have been largely uninterested in a book of sermons.

Among the critics of the book the opinion of Campbell's orthodoxy and unorthodoxy were presented. Wilkerson, for example, had, in 1907, declared that in A Faith for To-day Campbell was 'conspicuous ... by his freedom from orthodox trammels.'¹⁴⁸ How orthodox, then, was the book?

There are external evidences of the 'orthodoxy' of the book. It was, after all, published and received without commotion; Campbell was not denounced as a heretic; Forsyth requested that Campbell replace him at Cambridge after the book was published, and it was dedicated to Francis Paget.

'Orthodoxy' is also apparent in the book itself. Campbell had stated that he did not pledge himself to the 'ordinary Christian view', but in effect this was virtually what he did. His Christology was certainly orthodox. Jesus of Nazareth was, he said, in a unique sense Divine as no other person was or could be. Jesus was man and God at the same time, yet one. In the man Jesus God had surrendered 'omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, while retaining moral perfection and spiritual consciousness.' Further, Jesus had existed from all eternity with the Father. He was 'within the Being of God':

¹⁴⁸Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.67.

the eternal abysmal reality is the Father; the Eternal Word or Wisdom or Activity of God is the Son, the going-forth of creation; the Holy Spirit is the nexus between the Father and the Son.

Jesus made us, is our saviour and judge and is so alive that for faith in the living Christ an intimate acquaintance with his earthly life, though desirable, was unnecessary.

On the Trinity, Campbell believed that within God there was a 'society in unity' - a belief which prevented a lonely God; an Augustinian idea. In explanation of the Christian trinitarian formula Campbell interpreted the word 'Person' as 'manifestation'. The one supreme personality of God knows itself in thought and expresses itself in life through its various personae or self-manifestations as Father, Son and Holy Spirit: 'Thus and thus only, is the mystery of the Being of God to be even relatively understood by humanity.'

The Unitarian, Rev Richard Acland Armstrong (1843-1905) offered a powerful critique of Campbell's orthodoxy. Campbell was too orthodox, or more particularly, too trinitarian, for Armstrong's liking. He found Campbell's argument for the Trinity a 'little confused, rather feeble, unpersuasive, intellectually unsound'.¹⁴⁹ Armstrong could not conceive of Jesus as 'man without ceasing to be God ... God without ceasing to be man.'¹⁵⁰ Further he could not contemplate a God renouncing omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. Just as abhorrent was Campbell's explanation of a God made up of a society to prevent loneliness. Armstrong, in order to explain God's lack of loneliness, yet 'oneness', preferred the view that God's nature is love, and that God had always created and called into being spirits akin to his own, both here and in other worlds, on whom

¹⁴⁹R.A. Armstrong, The Rev R.J. Campbell on the Trinity in A Faith for To-day (London, 1900), p.2.

¹⁵⁰Armstrong, The Rev R.J. Campbell on the Trinity, p.5.

he could pour his love. Moreover, regarding Campbell's concept of God being made up of a society, Armstrong argued that if, as Campbell said, 'person' meant 'manifestation' then it would be beyond conception that these manifestations were so distinct and individual so as to constitute a society and provide companionship.

Bateman too upheld the 'orthodoxy' of A Faith for To-day. He said Campbell was 'an embodiment of the latest and best religious thought in England, progressive in spirit, yet conservative in all essentials ... His sermons are the theology and philosophy of Mansfield aflame on the lips of an earnest and gifted young apostle. If Dr Fairbairn be the St Paul, and Dr Forsyth the St Peter, then Mr Campbell is the young St John of English Congregational thought and of the new evangelism of a larger theologic impulse.'¹⁵¹

Others did not doubt the 'orthodoxy', but accurately believed that 'it needed no microscopic study to detect in it rather more than the germ of his later teaching' of Jesus as 'a supernatural being, prior to humanity, and greater than humanity, but not God.'¹⁵² Thus, Wilkerson's comment that in A Faith for To-day Campbell was 'conspicuous ... by his freedom from orthodox trammels' was true only in so far as one can see from Campbell's thought in the book how his New Theology developed. The book itself was orthodox.

¹⁵¹Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.29.

¹⁵²D. Balsillie, 'Mr R.J. Campbell and the New Theology', The Fortnightly Review, July (1907) 49.

Breaking Away - Brighton to London

It was not until February 1903, three months after the death of Parker, that it was resolved unanimously, by the deacons of the City Temple, to recommend that Campbell be offered the vacant pastorate. On Monday 2 March 1903 at a Church meeting members voted for the appropriate resolution with much enthusiasm;¹⁵³ only three young women, two of whom were sisters, voted against him. He was duly sent a call.

Campbell's doctor warned him of the danger of accepting such a strenuous position and accordingly gave him only five years to live if he undertook the responsibility.¹⁵⁴ Convinced that the call had been made 'under God's guidance'¹⁵⁵, Campbell bravely wrote a letter of acceptance.¹⁵⁶ Parker's wish that Campbell should succeed him was fulfilled.¹⁵⁷

At a Special Church Meeting at Union Church, on 6 March 1903, Campbell made known his acceptance which was heard with profound regret. At the end of the Sunday morning service of 8 March,¹⁵⁸ he again announced his intentions and

¹⁵³The Christian World, 5 March (1903) 3 and The British Weekly, 5 March (1903) 542.

¹⁵⁴A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.138.

¹⁵⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.86.

¹⁵⁶Clare, The City Temple, pp.143-144. See The Christian World, 12 March (1903) 3.

¹⁵⁷On Campbell's last visit to Parker, Parker had passed his charge of the City Temple on to Campbell with the words, 'The Lord bless you a thousandfold more than He has blessed me.' (A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.85) Parker had told only one or two others of his wish - the Church did not know, and so the call to Campbell was made independent of Parker's wish.

¹⁵⁸Union Church Magazine, April (1903) vi.

following the evening service when, on his request, non-members had departed, he spoke to the members about his decision.¹⁵⁹

On Sunday 26 April 1903 he delivered his last sermon as minister of Union Church, Brighton. For the last three Sundays in April the congregation had been forced to use the Dome, which seated 3,000¹⁶⁰. With the exception of the last Sunday when heavy rain had kept many away, crowds filled the building to capacity; many were turned away. The Town Hall police were required to help regulate admission and ensure order and safety. On the following Wednesday, 29 April, a farewell service was held. To prevent overcrowding, admission was by ticket only, and only Union Church members were eligible for tickets. At the close Campbell said: 'If during the years I have been in Brighton I have helped anyone to a higher life, if I have the means of raising and inspiring anyone here, I pray you forget everything else and think on these things'.¹⁶¹ Union Church was sad to lose Campbell and he himself left 'with the keenest regrets and most tender reminiscences'.¹⁶² He had certainly had the 'ball at his feet there'.¹⁶³

On the evening of Tuesday 19 May, the congregation addressed Campbell and presented him with a carriage and a massive suite of dining-room furniture. The Brighton and Hove Free Church Council gave an address and presented him with an album containing portraits of all the ministers and the leading laymen of the

¹⁵⁹A verbatim account of Campbell's announcement was reported in The Sussex Daily News of 9 March 1903: 'This is not man's call, but God's. I have, therefore, accepted it ... This congregation and its interests are too dear to me to permit of my lightly sacrificing them, and, if ever need should arise, I am sure you will understand that you have only to send for your old minister to come and hold the fort, and, God willing, it shall be done.'

¹⁶⁰The British Weekly, 16 April (1903) 7. The figure given in The British Weekly was 3,00 - a misprint for 3,000.

¹⁶¹The British Weekly, 30 April (1903) 64.

¹⁶²Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.68.

¹⁶³Selbie, The Life of Charles Silvester Horne, p.168.

town. The Sussex Federation of Evangelical Free Churches and the Brighton Congregational Union also gave addresses.¹⁶⁴

The congregation presented his wife with his oil portrait!¹⁶⁵ Her involvement with Union Church had been significant. She was President of the Dorcas Society, a group of ladies who made clothes for the poor. She was also President of the Missionary Working Party, joint superintendent of the Mother's Meeting,¹⁶⁶ and she took part in the At Homes.

Little is known of Campbell's daughter, May. She was certainly proud of her father. One day, May had gone home and told him of 'the strange things she had seen on the placards about the new minister of the City Temple.' Playfully she asked who it might be; Campbell continuing the game shrugged his shoulders. Joyfully May wrapped her arms around his neck and whispered 'He is my father.'¹⁶⁷

After his departure from Brighton Campbell's loyalty to Union Church remained as firm as ever, and before his successor's appointment he conducted the Wednesday evening services from 7 October 1903.¹⁶⁸ From Sunday 3 January 1904, until 1908, Rev John George Stevenson, the minister of Campbell's choice, and highly regarded for his stories for children, took over the pastorate of Union Church. Even after Stevenson's induction Campbell annually attended Union Church for the Children's New Year Gift Fund, and when unable to attend he

¹⁶⁴The British Weekly, 7 May (1903) 85, and 21 May (1903) 138.

¹⁶⁵A replica of this was to be hung in the vestry of the church; it is no longer in the church or its archives.

¹⁶⁶The Year Book (1902), Union Church, Queen Square, Brighton, pp.31,39 and 33.

¹⁶⁷Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.122.

¹⁶⁸The British Weekly, 15 October (1903) 5.

delivered a sermon at the City Temple in aid of buying books for poor children. During one visit to Union Church, on 21 January 1907, after a reception, a service was held to commemorate the amalgamation of Union Street Church and Queen Square Church. During the service Campbell unveiled the brass tablet, the top of which was a model of the exterior of Union Street Church. Once more the building was overcrowded, and spectators enticed by the New Theology controversy had gone to hear Campbell. They must have been delighted when he spoke of the 'Wisacres and Busybodies' who were trying to secure his resignation on the grounds that his teaching was not consistent with the Trust Deeds of the City Temple.¹⁶⁹

Being the first pastor of Union Church Campbell was always pleased to be invited back at the inauguration of a new pastor. Rhondda Williams, minister of Union Church from 1909 to 1931, said: 'Would the commencement of a new pastorate in Union Church without your participation be truly valid?' Campbell replied: 'Well, as I was the first pastor of Union Church as such, I could not withhold my benediction to all to whom that church is dear and its memory sacred.'¹⁷⁰

Years later Campbell was asked by the minister of Union Church to contribute an article on 'Brighton Forty Years Ago' for The Church Calendar of 1935. This he did willingly. His last visit to Union Church was in February 1947 when he was invited to unveil a tablet to the memory of Rhondda Williams. His last connection with the church, however, was in his eighty-seventh year, when he wrote the Foreword of Union Church Brighton: A Short History which had been prepared to commemorate the centenary of Queen Square Church.

¹⁶⁹The Sussex Daily News, 22 January (1907) 5. See p.132 for a discussion regarding the Trust Deeds of the City Temple.

¹⁷⁰Carson, Union Church Brighton, p.9.

CHAPTER THREE

1903-16: THE CITY TEMPLE¹

Part I: 1903-06 - The Early Years

A luxurious house, Hill Lodge, on Clay Hill, only two miles from Enfield, with a ground of two and a half acres, was Campbell's home during his City Temple pastorate. At thirty-six he was but 'a grey-haired boy with magnetic eyes and a soul of fire'.² On 3 May 1903, his first Sunday as pastor, the building was full. During his sermon he pointed out the uniqueness of the City Temple, and expressed his pride at its having been 'the common platform of the Evangelical denominations.'³ His Recognition took place on 21 May 1903 '... thousands, could not obtain admittance', and the press was amazed that the City of London had been taken by storm by a young Free Church minister.⁴

The morning service was conducted by the eminent Congregationalist Rev John Henry Jowett (1864-1923), of Carr's Lane, Birmingham. A luncheon at the Holborn Restaurant, presided over by Compton Rickett, followed the service. Campbell and his wife then held a reception in the Lecture Hall of the City Temple, where representatives of all the churches were present. Canon Hensley

¹Considering Campbell's success here it is puzzling that he is not mentioned among the 'Greats' of the City Temple in their present leaflet - Parker and Weatherhead are. I am grateful to Mr Panting for sending me a copy of this leaflet. The City Temple Church Records were destroyed when the building was demolished the night of the German bombing of 16-17 April 1941 - Smith, The London Heretics, p.203. The City Temple was rebuilt and opened in 1958.

²W.T. Stead, 'The Renaissance of Nonconformity: Campbell of the City Temple', The Review of Reviews, May (1903) 457-467.

³The British Weekly, 7 May (1903) 85.

⁴Bateman, R.J. Campbell, pp.74ff.

Henson (then Dean of Durham) welcomed Campbell on behalf of the Anglicans, Rev J.H. Shakespeare did the same for the Baptists, and Dr R.F. Horton and Rev C.S. Horne represented Congregationalists.

At the evening meeting, presided over by Lord Kinnaid, speeches were made by the Chairman, Canon Fleming; Rev W.L. Watkinson, an ex-president of the Wesleyan Conference; and Dr Robertson Nicoll. Campbell expressed his plans for the City Temple to become a strong and vigorous church with agencies of a religious and social character:

I have a dream - something more than a hope - it is that this might become the young men's church of the metropolis. I will tell you why I wish it. It is not because I believe that I have any qualification over my brethren for speaking to young men, but, firstly, because I am interested in them, perhaps more than any other class who live all around this place. Young men are writing to tell me that in the present moment in the City of London very little is done for their spiritual needs. If some kind-hearted philanthropist in this assembly will only help us a little, we shall try to provide here a spiritual home for young men. I want young men to feel that it is not only a manly thing and a right thing to join the Church of Christ, but that in joining this one you are testifying to Him, you are helping His work; and you can depend upon the minister as a man and a brother.⁵

Thus were Campbell's sincere dreams for the City Temple whose origins extended as far back as 1640⁶ when the congregation first met in Anchor Lane, Thames Street. In 1672 the church moved to Paved Alley, Lime Street; in 1755 to Miles' Lane; in 1766 to Camomile Street, and in 1819 to the Poultry Cheapside. Here for fifty-three years the congregation worshipped under a succession of notable ministers. Its founder and first pastor was Dr Thomas Goodwin, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell and one of the most noted divines of that period. Whenever he preached, be it in an obscure meeting-house, in St Paul's Cathedral or Westminster Abbey, large congregations flocked to hear him.

⁵Bateman, R.J. Campbell, pp.80-81.

⁶The Congregational Year Book (1904), p.280.

The City Temple continued to attract eminent ministers; Dr Joseph Parker, Campbell's predecessor, was one such minister. During Parker's ministry the premises at Poultry were sold, but he insisted that the City Temple remain in the city: when many other churches were moving to the suburbs to follow the population drift. From the sale and with donations the building on the Holborn Viaduct was constructed. The memorial stone was laid on 19 May 1873, and the dedication and opening of the newly named City Temple, the Temple of the Lord in the City, took place a year later.⁷

The Corporation of the City presented a splendid white pulpit, which had cost three hundred guineas⁸, and sent representatives to the opening service - an unprecedented event for a Nonconformist Church in the City of London. The Lord Mayor presided at the luncheon.

According to the religious census of The Daily News (November 1902-November 1903),⁹ the City of London had a resident population of 26,332 people, with over one million entering the city every day for business. Remarkably, the City Temple was the largest church in the metropolis and its congregation amounted to one third of all church attendance in the City of London (7,008 out of 22,597).¹⁰ Attendance at the City Temple had certainly increased from 1886 when the

⁷The name, City Temple, had previously been used, in Parker's ministry for the Church Magazine - Smith, The London Heretics, p.202.

⁸Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.72. F.W. Norwood provocatively asked, following the Nonconformist reaction to the Education Act of 1902, 'And did this grant of the tax-payers' money to Nonconformists go unchallenged.' It seems so! Smith, The London Heretics, p.202.

⁹Published as R. Mudie-Smith (ed), The Religious Life of London: Daily News Census (London, 1904).

¹⁰P. d'A. Jones, The Christian Socialist Revival 1877-1914 (Princeton, 1968). In 1903 City Temple attendance was three times that of St Paul's Cathedral whose numbers had declined from 4,705 in 1886 to 2,337 in 1903 - The British Weekly, 21 May (1903) 139.

average congregation numbered 3,740.¹¹ Parker and Campbell increased and sustained terrific congregations, at a time when many London churches were declining.¹²

Being in such a prestigious position as minister of the City Temple, Campbell was bound to receive attention. Had circumstances been different many things which he did or said would have been unquestioned, even unnoticed. As it was, everything he said and did was to receive wide coverage, and not always fair coverage; Campbell's reputation as a man of controversy was duly enhanced.

Controversy - The Education Act

At the outset of Campbell's pastorate at the City Temple 'the' major issue among Nonconformists, and 'a' major issue on the political front was the Education Act of 1902. The thoughts of such an open-minded public figure as Campbell came to the attention of the public, with the result that his time at the City Temple began as it continued and ended - in controversy.

Nonconformists were dissatisfied with the educational system, and the Education Act of 1870 had failed to appease them. They paid for schools (a large number of which belonged to the Church of England) out of taxes, but were excluded from teaching in them.¹³ The new Education Act (1902) championed by the Tory, Balfour,¹⁴ proposed to finance schools from rates, rather than taxes. This was marginally better, it being easier to calculate the proportion of one's rates spent on education. While this amount often went unpaid, the root problem for

¹¹The religious census of 1886 was taken on 24 October.

¹²Membership for the City Temple does not feature in the Congregational Year Books, but in 1907 membership was approximately 200 - The Tribune, 15 January (1907) 6.

¹³Ritson, The Romance of Nonconformity, p.325.

¹⁴Arthur James Balfour 1848-1930. Prime Minister, 1902-06.

Nonconformists remained. They were irked that more than half the elementary schools of the country were in the hands of Anglican managers and that in many of these children would be taught that their denomination was heretical and that their Church was no Church at all. There were 3,000,000^{children in} denominational, as opposed to 2,600,000ⁱⁿ non-denominational schools,¹⁵ and in 8,000 parishes only one school - an Anglican one.¹⁶ Many parents, therefore, had no choice but to send their children to a Church of England school.

Dr John Clifford (1836-1923), the Baptist leader and opponent of the Education Act, rallied his co-religionists against the government. When, in January 1903, Clifford announced the formation of a National Resistance Committee, with himself as Chairman, Campbell was one of the associates. Throughout the controversy Campbell spoke against the Bill which Rev Stuart Headlam, the well-known Anglican and member of the London School Board, had called 'brimful of iniquities'.¹⁷ Campbell was among the speakers to address delegates from the Free Church Councils, from all over England, who assembled on Tuesday 15 April 1902, at St James's Hall to protest against the Education Bill.¹⁸ To the same purpose on 13 May 1902 he spoke at a conference on the Education Bill at Memorial Hall, where he declared that should the Bill become law 'we' must make it unworkable. He consistently urged that laws were not always right and encouraged people to follow the example of John Bunyan who carried on

¹⁵R.J. Campbell, Sermon on Passive Resistance, Tract No. 9 (National Passive Resistance Committee, London, 1903), p.5. Reprinted from The Christian Commonwealth, 21 May 1903.

¹⁶Ritson, The Romance of Nonconformity, p.330. When one considers the seriousness with which Nonconformists took their religion and denomination, there can be little sympathy for A.J.P. Taylor's failure to appreciate why for Nonconformists religious education taught by Anglicans was no better than no religion - A.J.P. Taylor, 'Prologue: The Year 1906', Edwardian England (ed. D. Read), p.9.

¹⁷Sermon on Passive Resistance, p.3.

¹⁸The British Weekly, 11 December (1902) 220.

preaching in spite of being imprisoned for it; Bunyan obeyed God rather than man.¹⁹

Campbell's resistance had a positive side; he had alternatives to Balfour's ideas. In an address on 26 February 1903, at London Road Chapel in Leicester, and Rutland Citizens' League, Campbell declared: 'We want a national, uniform, efficient, graded, state-controlled system of education, administered by local authorities directly nominated by the people who pay rates ...' At the same time, he knew that action was necessary to support verbal protests:

Let the public say 'I refuse the priests' rate; I pay the people's rate ...' Some of us might find ourselves in prison, and a good thing too ... Every vote lost to those who adopt passive resistance will mean a gain of ten others at the next election. For the first time for many years we have the working men companying with the Nonconformists. May they be on the same platform for evermore.²⁰

Campbell by no means shirked from practising what he himself preached, and on moving to Clay Hill his passive resistance remained as firm as ever. He withheld his £1. 4s. 4d. rates,²¹ which he estimated as the sectarian portion, and appeared in Enfield's magistrates court for non-payment on 24 March 1904.²² Forty other 'rate' withholders were also called and a single distress warrant for all cases was issued after a twenty-five minute hearing. The resisters were not deterred by this or the more extreme possible sentences, and after court they assembled for a protest meeting which Campbell attended.²³

¹⁹Sermon on Passive Resistance, p.7.

²⁰The British Weekly, 5 March (1903) 551.

²¹The British Weekly, 3 March (1904) 552.

²²Three of Enfield newspapers from this period - The Enfield Observer, The Enfield Chronicle, and The Tottenham and Edmonton Weekly Herald - are held in Enfield County Council Local History Unit.

²³By 1904-05 there had been 70,000 summonses issued and 254 committed to prison - Ritson, The Romance of Nonconformity, p.333.

Over this issue Campbell revealed his open-mindedness about party-politics: 'I am not prepared to put blind confidence in the present liberal leaders'. Indeed his loitering between the parties over the Education issue may either be seen as an indication of his prime loyalty to Christianity, or his own political confusion. His loyalty to Christianity was, undoubtedly, the stronger force.

Campbell had discussed the Education issue with the Tory, Joseph Chamberlain. This had caused concern among Perks and Lloyd George who were fearful of the two making any decisions. After all, 'Campbell is a power, at all events at present', and Lloyd George supposed that Campbell had 'completely gone over'.²⁴ Lloyd George was wrong in his suspicion, but it had good foundation since as Campbell had said earlier:

To be perfectly frank with you, I have very little confidence in the Liberal party ... We will stand no nonsense. What we want is a majority for any political party that will settle it without delay.²⁵

At the Great Passive Resistance Day Meeting on 27 October 1904, at the City Temple, Campbell again stated his view: 'I will accept a just settlement even if it comes from the other side.'²⁶ However, two years later, the Liberals, with the support of a homogeneous Nonconformity, achieved a landslide victory at the general election of 1906. Campbell and leading Nonconformists, such as Clifford, certainly believed they were witnessing the 'renascence of Nonconformity as a controlling force in the counsels of the Empire'.²⁷ The government responsible for

²⁴R.W. Perks to Lord Rosebery, 1 April 1904 and 13 April 1904, Rosebery MS., National Library of Scotland. I am grateful to Professor Keith Robbins for this reference.

²⁵The British Weekly, 3 March (1904) 552, and The British Weekly, 27 March (1904) 635 respectively. The latter was quoting Campbell at a protest meeting on 24 March 1904.

²⁶The British Weekly, 3 November (1904) 91.

²⁷Stead, The Review of Reviews, May (1903) 459. See also J.H.S. Kent, 'Hugh Price Hughes and the Nonconformist Conscience', in G.V. Bennett & J.D. Walsh (eds.), Essays in Modern English Church History (London, 1966), pp.181-205. Kent argues that many prominent Nonconformist ministers saw the Liberal Party

the 1902 Education Act had sustained a crushing defeat. The first measure in the new Parliament was Augustine Birrell's Education Act, an unsatisfactory Act rejected by the House of Lords. The next Education Act, that of Reginald McKenna and Walter Runciman was rejected by the Church and consequently dropped. The Nonconformists did not control the reigns of power as much as they would have liked. After the failure of these two Acts the education question became enmeshed in the constitutional crisis which came to a climax with the Parliament Act on 10 August 1911 (see p.203). Subsequently, the House of Lords, which Ritson had called the 'nonconformist enemy',²⁸ lost much of its power.

Further controversy around this time alienated Campbell from many militant Nonconformists. Soon after Campbell's move to London, he attended a Liberation Society Meeting where he dissociated himself from John Clifford, who had made a thorough attack on the Church, especially the bishops. Campbell stated his belief that the Liberation Society, as its original purpose stated, should seek to secure complete autonomy from the Church in spiritual matters, rather than denounce any connection between the Church and State; it was unwise to 'attempt to carry disestablishment in the teeth of the opposition of the Church'.²⁹ Further, in reply to Clifford's speech Campbell drew attention to the fact that many prominent Anglicans had done much for social reform and for Temperance legislation; many bishops were total abstainers. While a teetotaler himself, Campbell endorsed the provisions of the Tory Licensing Act (1904), which required compensation to be paid to licensees whose licence was withdrawn under the Liberal Licensing Act of 1872. Perks wrote to Rosebery, 'I see our old friend Campbell has said this but it

as 'an instrument through which they might increase the effectiveness of their moral demands.' Yet he concludes that 'the struggle for political power coarsened their moral sensibility'.

²⁸Ritson, The Romance of Nonconformity, p.335.

²⁹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.142.

will make his congregation furious.³⁰ Ironically, it would have made Nonconformists furious rather than his congregation who were, for the most part, businessmen with a vested interest in the licence trade. One suspects, however, that his position over the Licensing Act was not primarily formulated with the interests of his City Temple congregation, who paid his salary, in mind.

American Tour³¹

On Saturday 13 June 1903, accompanied by his wife, Campbell left London for the States. They landed in New York a week later. The two month visit to America was primarily intended as an instructive holiday, but preaching and 'teaching' engagements made the work schedule heavy.

On Sunday 21 June, the day after Campbell's arrival, he preached in Plymouth Church. His reputation had already preceded him and crowds were turned away. Indeed, Campbell attracted crowds wherever he went. Even at an address to the New York ministers, the building had been filled fifteen minutes before the meeting began, and many were unable to get into the hall. Writing to The Christian Commonwealth, Dr A.H. Bradford, the chairman of the meeting, declared that Campbell was

... one of the simplest and most unassuming of men that I have ever met, and I can say that I have never seen anyone who occupies so distinguished a position so utterly self-oblivious. His modesty and self-depreciation are most remarkable ... That he regarded himself as a man with a message from God could be doubted by no one. This fact was

³⁰R.W. Perk to Lord Rosebery, 22 April 1904, Rosebery MS., National Library of Scotland, quoted by Professor Keith Robbins, 'The Spiritual Pilgrimage of the Rev R.J. Campbell', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol.30, No.2, April (1979) 270.

³¹Details of Campbell's trip were recorded in Bateman, R.J. Campbell, and The British Weekly. Readers of The British Weekly were also kept in touch by Campbell's own letters to the Editor, 9 July (1903) 308, 23 July (1903) 360, 6 August (1903) 412, 20 August (1903) 460. The itinerary of Campbell's tour featured in The Christian Commonwealth, 2 July (1903) 662.

wonderfully impressive, and sent his hearers to their homes with their eyes turned inward and upward.³²

The American religious press was welcoming. The Boston Congregationalist said:

... the preacher preached persuasively and movingly by his words, but most by his personality - an incarnation of his message ... Doubtless its very simplicity and spirituality made the discourse seem ordinary to all too many among us who bow down to gods of rhetoric and vociferousness and cleverness. It was great because the messenger put the message above himself, and so behaved and so spoke that the effect agreed with the invitation.³³

Similarly, The Western Christian Advocate commented that: '... Spirituality is written in his countenance. You feel that one of God's noblemen is standing before you - a heroic soul of the Puritan type, which nothing can intimidate ... He is certainly a unique personality.'³⁴

On the whole the American secular press also treated Campbell at length and positively. The Boston Herald described him as 'The Leader of English Nonconformity ...' and both The Boston Journal and The Boston Globe featured favourable reports. The papers, naturally, emphasised good headline news: 'JOSEPH PARKER'S SUCCESSOR HAS DEFIED HIS GOVERNMENT'; 'THE REV REGINALD JOHN CAMPBELL CALLS UPON NONCONFORMISTS TO RESIST NEW SCHOOL TAX'.

Campbell, in a letter to The British Weekly dated 26 June 1903,³⁵ commented on the very hospitable nature of the Americans. He described their buoyant optimism,

³²The Christian Commonwealth, 9 July (1903) 678.

³³Bateman, R.J. Campbell, pp.148-149.

³⁴Bateman, R.J. Campbell, pp.149-150.

³⁵The British Weekly, 9 July (1903) 308.

and jokingly referred to the American headlines which called him Dr. Every minister there, he said, seemed to have a DD. Back home in England, especially in Brighton, speculation arose as to whether he would return with an American honorary DD.³⁶ While he claimed that he did not want one, he must have been a little disappointed about failing to receive the honour, all the more if, as he himself admitted, they were practically two a penny!³⁷

Campbell spent a few days in Canada before returning to England from New York. On Saturday 15 August³⁸ he and his wife landed safely in England. He spent the next day in Nottingham, and arrived back in London on the Monday.

The British public were glad to have Campbell home, and immediately he resumed his weekly correspondence in The British Weekly, which had been missed in his absence.³⁹ As a bonus, Campbell featured on the front page with an article, 'The Spiritual Consciousness of Today.'⁴⁰

While Campbell quickly resumed his national engagements, the City Temple remained the centre of his attentions. It had been renovated during the summer and had reopened on 13 September. When he mounted the pulpit for the first time in three months, there was great enthusiasm in the large congregation. On the recommencement of the Thursday service, the congregation once more numbered over three thousand.⁴¹

³⁶Union Church Magazine, July (1903) x.

³⁷He also returned from America without a DD after his tour in 1911-12.

³⁸The British Weekly, 20 August (1903) 452.

³⁹The British Weekly, 16 July (1903) 330.

⁴⁰The British Weekly, 27 August (1903) 473-474.

⁴¹The British Weekly, 24 September (1903) 569.

Publications

To Campbell's great credit one of the three religious landmarks given in The British Weekly, 'A Religious Review of the Year 1903', was 'the unparalleled success of Mr Campbell's work at the City Temple'. This was astounding considering that he had only begun his full-time ministry there in May 1903, and had been away for two months during the summer. Campbell had, however, succeeded in maintaining the attention of the congregation without simply imitating Parker. Indeed Campbell's congregation would probably have consisted of different men from that of Parker. 'Dr Parker did not get on well with working-men. He did not like the agitators, neither did they like him. He was typically middle-class. Mr Campbell is quite the opposite.'⁴²

The strength of Campbell's sermons and their appeal was evident in his publication of three books in 1903; each was a collection of sermons.

'The Keys of the Kingdom' and Other Sermons is a collection of six sermons which relate to the theme of the willingness of God to give his followers the 'keys of the kingdom', that is, the key to pass through hardships - crisis in love, moral failure, sorrow, - to higher things. The collection stresses God's presence in creation and identification with mankind, hence the sermon entitled 'Sin-bearing', based on 1 John 3:2,5; the 'Self-revelation of Jesus' (John 1:35-51); 'The Promise of the Comforter' (John 14:15-18); 'The Self-Assertion of Jesus' (John 12:30) and 'God's Perfecting of Life' (Psalm 138). God was always there to lead mankind to a higher quality of life, and Jesus was part of that process.

In the twenty sermons published as City Temple Sermons⁴³ hardly an issue was left uncovered. The sermons included: 'What is God?'; 'What is Man?'

⁴²Stead, The Review of Reviews, May (1903) 462.

⁴³Reviewed by Ian Maclaren in The British Weekly, 28 January (1904) 441.

'Communion with God'; 'Prayer'; 'Penitence'; 'Remedy of Sin'; 'Mystery of Pain'; 'Christianity and the Social Order'; 'Supposing Christ were Only a Man' and 'The Essence of Christianity'.

The collection gave an insight into the ideas which took the world by storm only four years later in the New Theology.

The difference between man and God is a difference not in kind but in moral height. From the side of God there is no line drawn between humanity and Deity at all ... Jesus is only man, but He is the Man of men; Jesus has enfolded humanity ... None other could have spoken as Jesus did without blasphemy. He stood for God when He looked at man, and those who stood nearest to Him were compelled involuntarily to ask themselves: 'What manner of man is this? Never man spake like this man; He has the words of eternal life' ... The humanity of Christ rises up - not that He had to climb there, He was there - until it becomes Deity to us, and we cannot, if we would, separate our conception of the humanity of Christ from our confidence in His Godhead ... The incarnation of the Son of God did not begin with the lowly birth at Bethlehem; it is still going on ... [the incarnation] ... is God becoming man ... and ... it is man becoming God. The incarnation is the process whereby humanity is being taken to its home in God; or better still, the incarnation is the discovery that humanity is in God.'⁴⁴

In Some Signs of the Times Campbell took as his text Matthew 16:3 'Ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?' He expressed his belief that 'England will live or die by the quality of her manhood.' Thus he urged his readers to live out the two great commandments - loving God with all heart, soul, strength and mind and loving neighbours as selves.⁴⁵ No controversy was detected in the collection of sermons.

Emerging as a man of national acclaim, Campbell was invited to write the Foreword to The Journal of John Woolman, the Quaker, who Campbell believed to

⁴⁴R.J. Campbell, City Temple Sermons (London, 1903), p.33,55,57, and 224 respectively.

⁴⁵Some Signs of the Times, p.4 and p.7 respectively.



be a 'noble example of the practical mystic ... [whose life was] ... a life of service to his fellows, and resistance to great wrongs.'⁴⁶

Increasingly, Campbell became more nationally known especially from the beginning of October 1904 when he was editor of The Young Man. The magazine, he said, would be 'essentially religious', but not an attempt to thrust religion before our readers. Its theology would be 'liberal', but 'it will encourage both the spirit of devoutness and of moral earnestness ... The only orthodoxy which can stand the test of time is that of goodness, and this kind of orthodoxy THE YOUNG MAN exists to promote'. His editorship was to last little over a year. In the December issue of 1905 he withdrew as editor, since he believed it unfair that due to overwork he had had to leave too much to his assistant editor, and earlier biographer, Bateman.⁴⁷

The Working Man's Controversy

Amazingly, no controversy ensued from Campbell's interview with a reporter from The British Weekly⁴⁸, protesting against 'Chinese Slavery' in the South African colonies.⁴⁹ Campbell was clearly moving away from his earlier Imperialistic attitude. When, in October, he wrote an article on Sunday observance for The National Review⁵⁰, controversy was rife. Daily newspapers, desperate to fill their columns detached, and published, a paragraph of the article. These few lines concerned his belief that idleness and a lack of desire to do good work for its own

⁴⁶R.J. Campbell, 'Foreword', The Journal of John Woolman (London, 1903), p.viii.

⁴⁷The Young Man, September (1904) 317; October (1904) 326 and November (1905) 400.

⁴⁸The British Weekly, 3 March (1904) 552.

⁴⁹Chinese coolies were imported in tens of thousands into the Transvaal because of labour shortage. They were forced to sign documents binding them to their masters and were segregated from the rest of the community.

⁵⁰'Sunday Observance', The National Review, October (1904) 289-299.

sake, were on the increase. Doing as little work as possible, for as much pay as possible, was having a deleterious effect on the national welfare and Britain's standing in the world. Further he expressed his concern about the amount of alcohol the country, especially the working class, was consuming.

Working class people were in outrage, and justifiably so, even if they were ignorant that the main point of Campbell's article was Sunday observance, and that the rich week-enders had also been attacked. Criticism of Balfour's Sunday golfing was by far less condemnatory than Campbell's harsh words on the laziness of working men. On 16 October 1904 a threatening crowd of working-men, duly surged in Plumtree Court and waited in vain for Campbell's emergence from the City Temple. He had certainly become what he called, almost with an air of martyrdom, 'the bogey-man of the non-churchgoing masses',⁵¹ and an antagonism had developed which further isolated him from this class. The leaders of the working-men, however, invited him to repeat and justify his observation at a meeting, to be attended by representatives of the working men themselves.

Campbell attended this meeting, which was for ticket holders only, on Thursday 20 October 1904. During the proceedings he was reminded that it would be a bad day for those who paid his salary, £3,000 a year, they said - a colossal sum at the time,⁵² when working men abandoned the public houses for the public libraries. After all, many of the City Temple congregation were shareholders in trading companies and breweries.

During Campbell's reply he diplomatically apportioned no blame to the working men since they had only read extracts of the article. The National Review cost

⁵¹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.144.

⁵²Campbell had said: 'I learn that the national income is not less than £1,500,000,000. This amounts to £174 for every adult man.' - R.J. Campbell, Socialism (London, 1907), p.7.

half a crown, and half crowns, he recognised, were not plentiful to them.⁵³ He reminded them that he had stood by Keir Hardie in defence of the Penrhyn quarrymen,⁵⁴ and pointed out that out of the six thousand words in his article only about two hundred referred to the working man, and they were only complained of in about two dozen of these.⁵⁵ They were, Campbell said, eager to vilify the aristocracy while not willing to hear their own shortcomings. Moreover, he pointed out that he had got his information about the consumption levels of alcohol from The Daily Mail Year Book of 1904.⁵⁶

To Campbell's credit he was cheered at the close of the meeting, and he recalled that '... some of the horny-handed sons of toil insisted on carrying me to my carriage shoulder high. It was the only occasion on which a compliment of this kind was ever paid me, and I am more than willing that it should remain such; it was a somewhat disconcerting experience.' The crowd in the streets were unaware of what had taken place in the meeting. There was an ugly rush at him, and a fight ensued between his protectors and his 'opponents'. A paving-stone was thrown through his carriage window but he was not hurt.

The whole controversy reflected Campbell's ability to disarm the bitter partisan, and it showed his unshirking honesty. He emerged victorious; he had won the loyalty of many of the working class. The young men present, four-fifths of them younger than Campbell, became his supporters. Campbell had certainly learned a lesson; the whole experience fostered his realisation that he must address the social

⁵³Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.43.

⁵⁴Lord Penrhyn had refused to recognise the Quarrymen's Committee. Two strikes, 1896-98 and 1900-03, therefore, took place in the slate quarries in Caernavonshire. K.O. Morgan, Lloyd George: Family Letters 1885-1936 (Cardiff, 1973), p.96 and p.108.

⁵⁵The British Weekly, 27 October (1904) 67.

⁵⁶Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.45.

question as efficiently and sensitively as possible.

Influence as a Spiritual Director

First and foremost he is essentially a preacher and spiritual counsellor, with a distinct vision of God which he interprets for the age.

I have never been a pastor in the ordinary sense—that is, I have never visited people much in their homes. Instead they have come to me one by one ... It has not been as priest to penitent but as man to man that I have hitherto dealt with those who have sought me in this way, and I have certainly learned more than I have ever taught.⁵⁷

In keeping with Campbell's interest in people was his dedication to his work as a 'spiritual director'. He continued his 'Answers to Correspondents' in The British Weekly.⁵⁸ In addition to hundreds of correspondents each week and the personal calls made upon him, on Thursday afternoons he opened his vestry of the City Temple specifically for those seeking spiritual guidance.

Campbell believed that 'spiritual diagnosis' was largely lacking in Nonconformity, or was unsatisfactory. He resisted the 'mischievous' confessional methods of the Roman and Anglo-Catholics but said: 'It is because I humbly think that God has permitted to me, in some degree, the exercise of the gift of spiritual directorship that I offer to do what little I can to help some of my fellow-voyagers.'⁵⁹ He endeavoured to show those who confided in him that spiritual development followed certain laws, and that their own cases were by no means extraordinary.

⁵⁷Bateman, R.J. Campbell, p.160, and Campbell in The Church of England Newspaper, 13 December (1918) 11.

⁵⁸He conducted similar work throughout his ministry. 'Mr Campbell's Correspondence Column' appeared in The Christian Commonwealth from 7 October 1908 to 29 September 1909, and in The Church Family Newspaper/Church of England Newspaper his 'Problems of Life' ran from 21 September 1917 to 28 November 1924 and 28 August 1931 to 22 May 1936. He also had a correspondence column in The Young Man, November 1905-January 1907.

⁵⁹Clare, The City Temple, p.108.

No phase of spiritual difficulty was entirely new; certain spiritual phenomena were sure to recur given certain temperaments.⁶⁰

Campbell's recognition of a real need was evident from the amount of correspondence and queues outside his vestry. Representatives of every section of the community recognised his gift of 'counselling'. It was known that whenever he said 'Do you think I could do anything? If I can, I will' he meant it. For Campbell, 'Christianity meant personal service at whatever cost', and while his acute sensitivity to the needs of others was often exploited, his endeavour to help continued unabated, fearful that he might turn away a deserving application for his help.⁶¹

Campbell's whole ministry was sensitive to spiritual longing. His one-to-one 'counselling' and letters were not the only means of communicating to the 'needy'; his preaching was deeply spiritual, and his sermons were nearly always based on a recent 'confession' to him.

Spiritual directorship for Campbell was a two-way process. He welcomed, and took no offence at criticisms of his preaching, and, aware of his own shortcomings he was ready to admit that he could learn from others. One member of the congregation caught his attention: 'Excuse me, sir, did you finish your sermon just now?' Campbell replied that he thought he had done so, but met with the reply: 'Oh, you did not. You told me exactly what my life was once. You told me all the beauty and the winsomeness and the power of Christ, but you did not tell me how to bring the two together.' Campbell humbly replied: 'I will never make that mistake again.'⁶²

⁶⁰Clare, The City Temple, pp.107-108.

⁶¹Porritt, The Best I Remember, pp.126-127.

⁶²Clare, The City Temple, p.108.

Publications

1904 witnessed the publication of another two books by Campbell, both collections of sermons.

In Sermons to Young Men each of the eleven verbatim sermons was directed towards the particular concerns of young men. Campbell implored young men to live for the higher, not the lower impulse. They were to struggle with the temptation of gambling, fear and false ambitions, and to set their sights on things above - the 'kingdom of God and His righteousness'.⁶³ They were assured that they could not escape the consequences of their sins, but that God would forgive them if they were repentant. Christ was both their brother and their God:

Christ is as completely human as you ... even ... more human than you are ... Your humanity will only come to its own when it aspires to Him and is represented in it. Remember, there is no dividing line between the deity and the humanity of our blessed Lord. He is both and both are one.⁶⁴

Sermons Addressed to Individuals is a collection of eighteen sermons based on questions addressed to Campbell in response to his Thursday sessions and correspondence column in The British Weekly. Each sermon was preceded with the original question or problem. In his sympathetic replies Campbell assured the broken-hearted of God's power to enter broken hearts and to work within their lives.⁶⁵ He then warned that we can 'never love too much, we only love too little'.⁶⁶ His answers revealed a great deal about his theology. He insisted that '... eternity is not coming; it is here; it is now ... You are not waiting for judgment, it

⁶³R.J. Campbell, Sermons to Young Men (London, 1904), p.112.

⁶⁴Sermons to Young Men, p.195.

⁶⁵R.J. Campbell, Sermons Addressed to Individuals (London, 1904), p.230.

⁶⁶Sermons Addressed to Individuals, p.184.

is going on.'⁶⁷ There were passages reminiscent of Charles Gore's conception of kenosis in what Campbell called the 'agnosticism of Jesus', that is, the limitations of his knowledge. Jesus, being a man of his time duly expressed certain things in the thought of the time. 'He could not be at once finite and infinite ...' This Chapter did cause a stir, but it had no adverse effect on Campbell who believed that the sermon had helped more people than it had disturbed.

Taking as his text: 'I and My Father are one' (John 10:30), Campbell was adamant that:

There is nothing more certain than that Jesus employed these words, not in their metaphysical sense, but in their moral sense. It is true they cannot have a moral without a metaphysical meaning - but it is the moral meaning upon which I laid stress, and I do not think that those who heard Him mistook His meaning ... by this assertion Jesus claimed divinity for manhood ... His credentials were in the purity and nobleness of His character and work ... He was and is one with the Father in Spirit and purpose, heart and will ... When we shall see Jesus ... face to face, we shall never ask the question, the thought will not occur to us whether He is man or God. The absurdity of the inquiry by that time will be clear. No such questions, I say, will occur to us. No creed will rise to our lips.⁶⁸

Ill-health

It was almost inevitable that a man of Campbell's calibre should suffer from the pressures of his work and he was forced to take two months rest away from the pulpit, in January and February 1905. This time of recuperation was a time of reflection, and he determined that on his return to work he would devote more of his time to the City Temple: 'I have not strength for anything beyond.'⁶⁹ Within a couple of weeks of his resuming ministerial responsibilities he contracted a chill

⁶⁷Sermons Addressed to Individuals, p.133 and p.136.

⁶⁸Sermons Addressed to Individuals, pp.298,299,299, and 300 respectively.

⁶⁹As told to the Thursday morning congregation on 2 March 1905. The British Weekly, 9 March (1905) 569.

on his journey to Nottingham, on Thursday 23 March 1905, for the funeral of Mrs Campbell's stepmother.

So critical was the situation that long afterwards Campbell believed that: 'Never for a moment had ... [he] ... physical strength equal to the task' which his ministry entailed, and that without the support of his congregation he thought that he would have had to resign in 1905. Horne had detected Campbell's depression, and visited him at Clay Hill, on 22 April 1905, with the purpose of cheering him up. Horne's diary for that day [Thursday] read: 'Poor boy. He has a lonely time of it, and with his somewhat morbid conscience and habit of introspection I am really sorry for him.'⁷⁰

Campbell's dynamism meant that his time of rest was used in intellectual employment, reading and assimilating as much as he could. His absence from the City Temple failed to weaken his strong hold on his congregation and they continued to support him. Thus, in 1905, a selection of some of his most helpful thoughts during his City Temple ministry was published. Suggestive Thoughts from the Temple contained useful pieces of Campbell's encouragement: 'If you have a great trouble, let me tell you that it may contain God's message for you',⁷¹ and it also gave an insight into Campbell's theology:⁷²

I need not shrink from saying even in Jesus you have not all there is of God ... God is at once Father and Mother,⁷³ and I often think that the Mother side of God is to be sought in Christ ... My theology is Christocentric, 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which

⁷⁰Selbie, The Life of Charles Silvester Horne, p.192.

⁷¹M. Dicken (collector), Suggestive Thoughts from the Temple (London, 1905), p.1, No.2. The Rev R.J. Campbell's Birthday Book compiled by M.A. Willis had been published the year before.

⁷²E. Esdaile (editor), A Rosary from the City Temple (London, 1912), was of the same making.

⁷³quite a novel expression at the time.

is Jesus Christ' ... No Creed is big enough for the Christ: the Christ is always beyond the Creed ... Evil is the vacuum where God ought to be.⁷⁴

1905 also witnessed the publication of Campbell's The Song of Ages, a collection of seventeen sermons which anticipated some of his controversial teaching two years later. Jesus's death, he said, was not a vicarious punishment but 'vicarious suffering' - a deliberate choosing to identify himself with humanity.⁷⁵ 'Jesus was and is the Christ, and therefore was and is the Resurrection'.⁷⁶ Jesus was the resurrection of St Paul in that the zealous persecutor of the Church of God turned evangeliser; Jesus was the resurrection of St John who from praying for fire to consume enemies of the Lord later said 'Like children, love one another.' Moreover, Jesus was the resurrection for each individual; all unselfish love was evidence of the power of the risen Christ.⁷⁷

We also see the germ of his teaching on Heaven and Hell - thoughts which he was practically to repeat word for word in later years. Luke 16:23, Campbell believed, taught that 'Heaven and Hell are states of the soul rather than of the body, whether it be the spiritual or the natural body. These are experiences independent of place and time.'⁷⁸ He gave what was to become his usual illustration of this, Milton's idea that the mind could 'make a heaven of hell, and hell of heaven' and the thought that heaven and hell may sleep in the same bed but:

between them is a great gulf fixed ... Sooner or later heaven and hell meet each other, that which might have been in one's life, and that which is - it may be on this side of death, it may be on the other, but that great antithesis will come, and we shall be under no delusion when it does

⁷⁴Suggestive Thoughts from the Temple, p.12, No.36; p.16, No.51; p.23, No.81; p.52, No.181; and p.107, No.354 respectively.

⁷⁵R.J. Campbell, The Song of Ages and Other Sermons (London, 1905), p.256.

⁷⁶The Song of Ages, p.244.

⁷⁷The Song of Ages, p.245, and p.248 respectively.

⁷⁸The Song of Ages, pp.135-136.

come. Our hell will gain in fierceness when we have seen the heaven that ought to be.⁷⁹

Campbell's health temporarily improved, but during the course of the next few years he faced crises and conflict as he had never before experienced.

⁷⁹The Song of Ages, p.136 and p.140 respectively.

Part II: 1906-16 - The New Theology

... under-developed and over-exposed ...

We shall never go back to where we were before, and in this movement we have the nucleus of a very great movement in the future if only we are faithful to it.

No recent utterance would have set the heather on fire if that heather had not been already dry as tinder.⁸⁰

The New Theology movement gave a great impetus to discussion of God and theology in the ordinary household, as well as in ecclesiastical and academic circles. Incessant chatter about God, religion and Campbell filled the air as the enthusiasts and critics strove to keep abreast of the latest news. The religious⁸¹ and secular press presented prolific articles and ensured that what was to the fore of the minds of their readers was given plenty of coverage. Equally, such prominence in the press ensured that the theological world of R.J. Campbell remained to the fore of peoples' minds. Admirers and converts were quick to rally around Campbell, and critics were equally zealous in venting their misgivings. Controversy raged.

C.H. Vine, a Congregationalist, detected the seriousness of the movement: 'The present conflict in the Church is more critical for Christianity than any that has arisen since the second century.'⁸² A similar conviction, and a more realistic one, was expressed by Warschauer who believed that there was '... no disguising the

⁸⁰P.T. Forsyth in The Tribune, 22 January (1907) 8. Rhondda Williams in, The New Theology and Applied Religion (London, 1908), p.17. This was the book which contains the papers presented at the New Theology Summer School at Penmaenmawr in August 1907. Sir J. Compton-Rickett as Chairman of the Congregational Union 1908 Congregational Year Book (1909), p.38.

⁸¹The British Weekly was highly critical of the movement, as was The Christian World. The Christian Commonwealth was more favourable. The last was the only one to support Campbell throughout the New Theology controversy.

⁸²C.H. Vine (ed.), The Old faith and the New Theology (London, 1907), p.57.

fact that we are standing at a most critical moment in the history of religious thought in the English-speaking world.'⁸³

What did the term New Theology mean? What was the New Theology? What were the aims of the movement, from what did it emanate, and of what did it consist? How successful was it and what was its legacy?

The New Theology - The Name

The term 'New Theology' was neither of Campbell's choice nor invention; he was even unsure as to its origin. It had been in existence for several years before his New Theology was associated with it. He had referred to it in a sermon preached at Union Church on 23 April 1899, and repeated at the Annual Missionary Sermon of the United Methodist Free Church a few days later, on 27 April. His main thesis in the sermon was that people were no longer so generous with their money for missions. In part he blamed this on the 'new theology', which he said was 'a change of emphasis rather than a change of statement; it contains nothing that is really new'. It placed value on conduct rather than opinion, so that a noble character was the best orthodoxy; it said little of Christ as Redeemer but more of Christ as an example; it believed in the salvability of society as well as in the salvation of the individual; it believed in the salvation of the world and proclaimed that the same moral standard between man and man should be maintained between nation and nation; and it preached earnestly the revelation of the love of God. While Campbell said he endorsed these trends he believed that something tended to be omitted, viz., attention to the mission field. He, therefore, stressed the importance of remembering that Christianity was more than an ethical standard; further, it was the 'gladness of redemption', it was a Gospel. 'If the new theology has no Gospel it will fail us when we come to apply it to the mission field.' Christianity had to recognise the impotence of human nature to save itself, and 'If

⁸³The Christian World, 7 February (1907) 21.

the new theology is deficient in that one need, the declaration of redemption through Christ and Him crucified, it will fail.’⁸⁴ Campbell’s criticism of the New Theology here was similar to the criticism of *his* New Theology several years later.

In simple terms, however, by 1906-07 and in association with Campbell and his school, the term New Theology was generally used to refer to the rearticulation of the fundamentals of the Christian faith in terms of Divine Immanence. It was a term he ‘disliked’ because it had many undesirable connotations and was controversial.⁸⁵

There were several disadvantages of the term New Theology of which Campbell was fully aware. It implied a breach with historical Christianity and this was unfortunate for new theologians whose whole system was based on the unity of the past and present. Moreover, it implied that there was an ‘Old Theology’ and of this there was no evidence. After all, theology had been divided between the Calvinistic Antinomians who believed in determinism where the elect could not fall into sin; the more moderate Calvinists who believed Christ died only for the elect, and those with Wesleyan ‘Arminian’ tendencies. The latter were followers of James Arminius (1560-1609) who denied the doctrine of predestination in any form, while maintaining the necessity of grace for salvation; Christ died for everyone. There had also been a division between those emphasising salvation through works, as well as faith, and those exhorting salvation by faith alone.⁸⁶ The New Theology movement did not see itself as a revolt against the past theology, rather a restatement of eternal values.

⁸⁴Union Church Magazine, May (1899) v-vi.

⁸⁵Archdeacon Basil Wilberforce, an Anglican exponent of the New Theology, accordingly entitled his book New(?) Theology (London, 1907).

⁸⁶The Expositor, (1907) 88.

The term, however, did have its appropriate aspects. Campbell had declared that: 'The word 'theology' is almost a misnomer; it is essentially a moral and spiritual movement, the recognition that we are at the beginning of a great religious and ethical awakening, the ultimate results of which no man can completely foresee.'⁸⁷ Nevertheless, it was 'theology'; it was a study of the expressions of mankind's religious experience, the experience of God. After all, Campbell himself had stated that 'theology is the intellectual articulation of religious experience.'⁸⁸

The word 'new' was also appropriate in the sense that it was a new age, brought about by a great scientific and cultural revolution. Campbell produced a 'new' theology in that he sought to substitute simplicity for complexity;⁸⁹ he made an effort to interpret Christian doctrines such as the fall, in moral terms, and he expressed theological concepts in 'modern' language and forms of thought, making theology, and primarily, Christianity, a living and meaningful force.

For Campbell theology was not static. It was always in need of renewal; as a personality changed, so the theology of that person changed. Moreover, people hold different interpretations of the Gospels and have different ways of articulating religious experience. Thus Campbell himself was too intelligent to believe that his own theology would remain static throughout his life; change in ones theology does result in 'contradiction'. There are, thus, a variety of theologies; a phenomenon which could be found as far back as the Gospel writers. Even critics of the term 'New Theology' accepted this insight. Harold Eustace Brierley, the minister of Highbury Congregational Church said: '... new theology does not disquiet me in the least ... [since] ... theology is no more fixed than astronomy or

⁸⁷R.J. Campbell, The New Theology (London, 1907), pp.14-15.

⁸⁸The New Theology, p.1. There are certainly echoes of Schleiermacher in this definition.

⁸⁹The New Theology, p.4.

biology', for it is knowledge of facts and our presentation of the facts change though the 'truth does not change'.⁹⁰ Vine also said that 'A re-statement of the essential truths of the Christian religion in terms of the modern mind' may be desirable.⁹¹

The term, New Theology, was undoubtedly the cause of much controversy. To avoid misunderstanding the name needs to be seen, not in isolation, but in the context of the whole movement.

There were many exponents of the New Theology,⁹² and while there were some very interesting characters and some interesting ideas, this thesis is concerned with Campbell. Balsillie's view that Campbell was the 'author' of the movement⁹³, is exaggerated. Lawton's view that Campbell was the 'most thorough-going advocate of immanentist theology',⁹⁴ and the dubbing of him as the 'apostle' of the New

⁹⁰H.E. Brierley, Do we Need a New Theology? (London, 1907), pp.13-14.

⁹¹Vine (ed.), The Old Faith and the New Theology, p.vi.

⁹²J. Hunter, G.T. Sadler, J. Stitt Wilson, H.C. Wallace, Venerable B. Wilberforce - the Anglican exponent of the New Theology, - A. Pringle - who remained true to the New Theology throughout his life, and A.S. Mories whose The New Theology (1907), was reviewed by James Murray in Review of Theology and Philosophy, Vol.3, July 1907-June 1908, pp.37-38. The more renowned propagators included Rev T. Rhondda Williams (1860-1945) who on his retirement from the Congregationalist ministry in 1931, attended a Unitarian church; Rev Kerr Crunston Anderson (1848-1923) the extremist new theologian; and Rev Joseph Warschauer, an ex-Unitarian minister who had trained in Manchester College, Oxford, but left the denomination from Bristol in 1905. William Edward Orchard (1877-1955) was also a supporter of the principles of the New Theology movement during its early years, although he was always too aware of its weaknesses to ally himself with the movement *in toto*. Orchard said: 'While not committing myself to any particular agreement with Mr Campbell's statements, I am in general sympathy with what I conceive to be their true tendency.' - The Enfield Observer, 1 February 1907, quoted in Kaye & Mackenzie, W.E. Orchard, p.35. For more information on Stitt Wilson see Jones, The Christian Socialist Revival, pp.426-429. For more information on H.C. Wallace see H. McLeod, Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City (London, 1974), pp.68-69.

⁹³Balsillie, 'Mr R.J. Campbell and the New Theology', The Fortnightly Review, July (1907) 50.

⁹⁴J.S. Lawton, Conflict in Christology (London, 1947), pp.231-232.

Theology⁹⁵ are more accurate. Campbell can be taken as the prime example of the movement since he popularised, publicised, and made the New Theology nationally and internationally known more than any of the others. Had he remained at Union Street, or had someone else been pastor of the City Temple, the New Theology controversy would have almost certainly been unrecognisable. Campbell attracted 'controversy' which was as much fostered by the nature of his position as by the content of what he wrote.

The Spirit of the Age: The Birth of the New Theology

Christianity is always adapting itself into something which can be believed.⁹⁶

With the closing of the Victorian age and the dawning of a new era, it has been argued that ministers faced the dilemma of ignoring the spirit of the age - with the risk of becoming irrelevant, - or of adapting their preaching to make Christianity a living force - with the risk of being dubbed 'modernists' or 'new theologians'.⁹⁷ Campbell was a supreme example of the latter.

Mid-Victorian England had witnessed the birth of insecurity, especially in religion. Uncertainty was common. The assurance of past generations about Christianity was disturbed. The literature of the period reveals the doubts and scepticism that was casting its shadow on the religious life of the nation. Dover Beach (1867) by Matthew Arnold (1822-88) described the Sea of Faith, Christianity, as a 'melancholy, long withdrawing roar'. George Eliot (1819-80) longed for the certainty which religion offered but felt unable to worship; her yearning for ritual

⁹⁵The Christian World, 17 January (1907) 4.

⁹⁶T.S. Eliot, quoted in the opening of D. Nineham's, The Use and Abuse of the Bible (London, 1976).

⁹⁷H. Davies, The English Free Churches (Oxford, 1952), p.183.

was unfulfilled because of her unwillingness to submit to intellectual doctrine. Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) by the 1870s had lost his faith altogether and disassociated himself from the Church of England. He turned his sympathies to the Comtean positivists⁹⁸ who believed that God was what humanity had made him, and that any hope for the future lay with a Religion of Humanity. Increasingly Hardy became disillusioned with this system too.⁹⁹ Thus in his poem, 'Thoughts at Midnight' (1906) he began with the condemnation: 'Mankind, you dismay me', and 'Christmas 1924' reveals his scepticism about Christianity:

'PEACE upon earth!' was said. We sing it,
And pay a million priests to bring it.
After two thousand years of mass
We've got as far as poison-gas.¹⁰⁰

This was also the period when Dickens and Mrs Gaskell wrote novels showing the limitations of institutional reform and the impossible hope that Christian charity and its underlying social structure could ever actually solve the problems that were emerging.¹⁰¹ The 1860s was the period when Karl Marx (1818-83), in London, and Friedrich Engels (1820-95), in Manchester, were writing their ideas for social and political change. They saw Christianity as a system which was concerned with reform. They, on the other hand, were convinced that reform was inadequate and that revolution was both necessary and inevitable.

The general insecurity that was common emanated from new scientific theories. Darwinism and the whole theory of evolution precipitated the conflict between

⁹⁸British positivists included John Stuart Mill (1806-73), George Eliot (Marian Evans, 1819-80), and Harriet Martineau (1802-76).

⁹⁹See E.E. Kupp, The Influence of Comtean Positivism on the Writings of Thomas Hardy, Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Durham, 1989.

¹⁰⁰T. Hardy, 'Christmas: 1924', Thomas Hardy: Stories and Poems, ed. Donald J. Morrison (London, 1979, 1st ed. 1970), p.126.

¹⁰¹See, for example, C. Dickens, Hard Times (London, 1985, 1st ed. 1854), and E. Gaskell, North and South (London, 1970, 1st ed. 1854-5).

science and religion. The evolutionary theorists questioned God as creator and negated the Christian fundamentalist belief in creation in seven days. Christian 'truth' began to be 'doubted' and the nature of 'truth' challenged. Mankind had certainly become more inquisitive about its presumptions; the quest for truth was fervently begun. Education was more widespread. A dramatic increase in literacy meant that more people could comprehend and contribute to the debate. This further coincided with the new power of the press; religious strife accordingly became all the more strident and aggressive.¹⁰²

With the new humanitarianism ushered in from the Enlightenment, there came an abhorrence of forms of dictatorship. External authorities such as the Bible were frowned upon, and the way was open, especially from the 1860s, for 'historical' criticism of the Bible. By the turn of the century, biblical criticism was causing greater uncertainty and alarm than the debate over science and religion. Interpretation, for the masses,¹⁰³ had moved from seeing the Bible as a divinely guaranteed repository of knowledge about God and the world, which was true in all parts, and which as John 10:35 said 'cannot be broken'¹⁰⁴, to seeing the Bible as subject to critical approaches, investigations and interpretations as any other book; a revolutionary thought for Christians and one which proved to be of great concern and debate. With the post-Enlightenment emphasis on liberty and equality, the 'institution' of the Church, and its authority, was questioned. The opinion that one could effectively interpret the will of God without the interference of the institutional Church was rapidly gaining in momentum. The general pre-Enlightenment acceptance of the Creeds was equally questioned; and each person was, within limit, to define his own area of belief. 1871-73 and 1900-05

¹⁰²O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church 1829-1859, Part I (London, 1970 1st ed. 1966), p.4.

¹⁰³Academic circles had preempted this. See the New Testament scholar, F.J.A. Hort (1828-92), B.F. Westcott (1825-1900), and J.B. Lightfoot (1828-89).

¹⁰⁴Quoted by J.I. Packer, God Has Spoken (Sevenoaks, 1979), p.23.

witnessed attempts to abolish the recitation of the Athanasian Creed, or at least to render it voluntary.¹⁰⁵ Many Anglicans wanted it removed from the Book of Common Prayer (or altered), because they objected to the damnatory clauses (vv.2 and 42). While the Anglican version is in some places inaccurate, due to mistranslation, and a translation of an inaccurate text, it was not removed or clarified. This was because it was successfully argued that an alteration would give the impression that something of the traditional faith was being surrendered.¹⁰⁶

In reaction to the eighteenth-century deistic conception of God and the new emphasis on the importance of the individual there arose a stress on the immanent God, the God within. This paved the way for what is popularly referred to as 'the culture of the heart', for Schleiermacher and his theology of feeling, and for the German Protestant theologian, Albrecht Ritschl (1822-89) and his identification of religion with morality. Both taught mankind to look for God within the self and creation at large. Proof of God's existence, moved away from the traditional arguments (that is, the ontological, teleological and cosmological arguments) to arguments based on personal experience. Kant (1734-1804) had certainly cogently argued that there were limits to what could be ascertained from human reasoning. The post-Enlightenment mood was reflected in the Romantic novels of Walter Scott and the poetry of William Wordsworth (1770-1850), especially in The Prelude and Lyrical Ballads (1798), and in 'The Ancient Mariner' by S.T. Coleridge (1772-1834).

Philosophy of the time, partly in response to the evolutionary theories, was mainly monistic. Many of the leading philosophers in the United States and Britain at the end of the nineteenth century had adopted an Hegelian outlook, with its assertion

¹⁰⁵Chadwick, The Victorian Church 1860-1901, Part II, p.150.

¹⁰⁶Cross & Livingstone (eds.), The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p.101. Campbell believed the Athanasian Creed to be 'a magnificent piece of work' - The New Theology, p.72.

of the 'unreality of separateness',¹⁰⁷ and its apparent promise of a comprehensive philosophy unifying all things in an immanent God.

Intellectually, therefore, it was a disturbing as well as a challenging and exciting period. Socially, the Industrial Revolution was still taking its toll. The movement of large sections of the population, from the rural areas to the new towns and cities, had brought with it the colossal problems of poverty, ill-health, and overcrowding. Charles Booth's Life and Labour of the People of London (1889-1903) and Seebohn Rowntree's Poverty: A Study of Town Life, awakened the nation to the poverty of early twentieth century Britain. Four fifths of the Edwardians were working class, and from twenty-five to thirty per cent of the population of towns in the United Kingdom were living in poverty.¹⁰⁸ The new industries fostered a competitive spirit with much stress on individualism, which could find itself in opposition to religious authority.

Economically the country was prosperous. There were more opportunities for investment and there were more things to buy. Entertainment and leisure activities outside the Church increased. Large departmental stores opened, and the cinema became popular - by 1914 there were at least 3,500¹⁰⁹. People benefited from the new freedom given by the extension of the transport network and the rise of ownership of the motor-car enhanced the mobility of the rich. When the London religious census of 1886 and of 1903 are compared churches are shown unfavourably. It was the age of materialism, combined with the age of doubt, and geographical mobility which created great difficulties for the Church. The age of doubt, alone, had not witnessed the 'poverty' of the churches; its social function

¹⁰⁷B. Russell, History of Western Philosophy (Kent, 1969, 1st ed. 1961), p.701.

¹⁰⁸Read, 'Introduction: Crisis Age or Golden Age?' Edwardian Age, p.31, and S. Wood, The British Welfare State 1900-1950 (Cambridge, 1982), pp.5-6.

¹⁰⁹Read, 'Introduction: Crisis Age or Golden Age?', Edwardian England, p.31.

had still been retained, but doubt coupled with the rise of materialism eroded its social function. With improvement in the availability of state education church numbers declined; fewer people depended on the Sunday School and church discussion groups for learning. Moreover, that people were forced to move from their own area for work affected the church; outside of their established home and 'routine', many were less inclined to attend places of worship.

Pessimism,¹¹⁰ however, was far from rife, and on the turn of the century the country was still living off and enjoying the glories of a past generation. Progress had been made in science and technology, and Britain was a leading nation with its huge empire and industries. In February 1906 Britain launched the first all-big-gun battleship, HMS Dreadnought, which immediately dated all other existing models.¹¹¹ Britain's naval security was thereby increased, but bitter rivalry with Germany had been fostered. Nevertheless, by 1914 Britain had confirmed her naval supremacy.¹¹²

Churches, too, participated in this optimism. While congregations were declining in relation to the population growth, membership actually increased. There is much truth in the view that 'Victorian England was religious. Its churches thrived and multiplied ... the Victorian age continued till the war of 1914'.¹¹³ Indeed, the

¹¹⁰G. Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England (London, 1935), has a particularly pessimistic view of the Edwardian period. He argued that only the First World War prevented a Civil War in Britain.

¹¹¹Palmer, The Penguin Dictionary of Modern History, p.102.

¹¹²A.J.P. Taylor, 'Prologue: The Year 1906', Edwardian England (ed. Read), pp.9-10. See also C. Tighe, Gdańsk: National Identity in the Polish-German Borderlands (London, 1990), pp.72-73.

¹¹³Chadwick, The Victorian Church 1829-1859, Part 1, p.1. For the period 1900-14 Church membership numbers for Nonconformists, Major Protestants and Catholics were 1 803,000 to 2,003,000; 5,056,000 to 5,682,000; 2,016,000 to 2,389,000 respectively - Currie, R., Gilbert, A., Horsley, L., Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles Since 1700 (Oxford, 1977), p.31, Table 2.4.

Nonconformist heyday was in 1906 when it had a membership of 2,057,000.¹¹⁴ Into this Edwardian age of optimism and pessimism¹¹⁵, poverty and wealth, Christianity, it was believed, had to be credible. Thus at the time of the Nonconformist heyday, the New Theology (primarily advocated by Nonconformists) was born. Its agenda had been set by the spirit of the age.

Aims of the New Theology

The aims of the New Theology, as understood by Campbell, were outlined in his article 'The Aim of the New Theology Movement'.¹¹⁶ There had been, he maintained, a correlation between the growth of literacy and growing uncertainty about the Gospel, but this, he believed, was an unnecessary correlation, since there was no contradiction between the intellect and Christianity. Accordingly, the New Theology 'represents a method rather than a system'¹¹⁷ - its method included the application of knowledge to religion. The Bible still had a message; the Church still had a role, and the Creeds still had an underlying truth. New learning, such as biblical criticism, had not discredited but elucidated religion, it had fostered a

¹¹⁴Currie, Gilbert, Horsley, Churches and Churchgoers, p.31, Table 2.4.

¹¹⁵See Read, 'Introduction: Crisis Age or Golden Age?', Edwardian Age, pp.14-39.

¹¹⁶R.J. Campbell, 'The Aims of the New Theology Movement', The Hibbert Journal, Vol.V, No.3, April (1907) 481-493.

¹¹⁷'The Aims of the New Theology Movement', p.482.

new understanding and deeper interpretation.¹¹⁸ Freshly formulated statements of belief on a credal basis were far from the aim of the movement.

New theologians incorporated the current monistic philosophy in their understanding of God and God's relationship with the universe. Stress was put on God's immanence.¹¹⁹ In line with the general optimism of the age, immanent monistic philosophy and immanent theology, Campbell stressed that the one great word of the New Theology was unity, 'the unity of the individual with the race, and of the race with God'.¹²⁰ It hoped to overcome denominational barriers in order to discover the common ground between liberal-minded Catholics, Anglicans, Evangelical Free Churchmen and Unitarians. The movement, therefore, belonged to 'no one person and no one church'.¹²¹ It was a movement going on in Italy with Tommaso Scotti; in France with Jean Réville and Auguste Sabatier (1839-1901) who propagated the thesis of Schleiermacher and Ritschl; and in

¹¹⁸S. Neill (ed.), Twentieth Century Christianity (London, 1961), reports that liberal theology at the beginning of the twentieth century was concerned with three notable controversies. The first was the result of biblical and historical criticism which questioned the notion of Christian revelation and was epitomised by the controversy between Harnack and Loisy on the essence of Christianity. The second was the result of Natural Science (evolution) which concerned the nature of the doctrine of creation and providence. This was the underlying controversy of the immanence of God in the Campbell versus Forsyth discussions. The third was the controversy of the Kingdom of God brought on by the social problems created by the Industrial Revolution. This was fought between Rauschenbusch versus the critics of the Social Gospel.

However, Campbell was not only concerned with the question of the immanence of God. As we have seen here he was concerned with addressing the implications of biblical and historical criticism for Christianity and, as we shall see below, he was interested in the social question and made frequent reference to the kingdom of God.

¹¹⁹J. Macquarrie, Twentieth-Century Religious Thought (London, 1988, 1st ed. 1963), gave three examples of theological/religious writers with idealist tendencies: J.R. Illingworth (1848-1915); R.J. Campbell (1867-1956) and R.W. Trine (1866-1958), p.23.

¹²⁰'The Aim of the New Theology Movement', p.486.

¹²¹'The Aim of the New Theology Movement', p.481. The Inquirer, 23 March (1907) 184 acknowledged that the movement was not sectional or sectarian; it was also a movement which stretched across international borders.

America with such figures as Williams Newton Clarke and George Barker Stevens. Further, Campbell argued that there was no dissonance between science and religion, and endeavoured to show the common aims of the church and men of science like Sir Oliver Lodge. 'Religion', Campbell said, 'is the soul's response to the universe, and science is only the mind trying to understand the universe.' Moreover, he sought to show the common aims with ethical teachers like Stanton Coit, and declared the aim of the New Theology to be to 'discard(s) every theologoumenon which had not a practical ethical value'.¹²²

Consonant with Campbell's conviction that truth was too big to be monopolised by one institution, was his aim to show the links of the New Theology movement with social reformers such as Keir Hardie. Campbell was aware of the rife social problems, the unsettling consequences of the Industrial Revolution, the competitive selfish individualism promoted by the new industries, the increasingly secular age, and growing emphasis on material wealth. He, therefore, insisted that 'The urgent need of the hour is the idea of social brotherhood based upon spiritual sanctions.' Thus, the aim of the New Theology was 'the realisation of a kingdom of God, a spiritual brotherhood ... We have to preach the Kingdom of God, and nothing else.'¹²³

'Popular Theology: Its Changing Sanctions'

Campbell's presidential address¹²⁴ to the London Board of Congregational Ministers,¹²⁵ on Tuesday 11 September 1906, was controversial. His paper was entitled 'Popular Theology: Its Changing Sanctions'. The general reaction to the

¹²²'The Aim of the New Theology', p.486 and p.483 respectively.

¹²³'The Aim of the New Theology Movement', pp.485-486 and 489 respectively.

¹²⁴He had been declared Chairman for the year on 10 April 1906 - The Times, 11 April (1906) 12.

¹²⁵The Minutes of the London Board of Congregational Ministers are held in Dr Williams's Library.

address was that Campbell had betrayed Evangelical faith; he was subsequently asked to explain his position at the next meeting of the Board on 9 October 1906. However, before the meeting on the 9th, the contents of the paper of 11 September, even though delivered in private, became public knowledge. Thus Arthur Porritt, on behalf of The Christian World, invited Campbell to contribute a synopsis of his speech, in the hope of avoiding misunderstanding and misrepresentation. Campbell consented and 'Popular Theology: Its Changing Sanctions' duly appeared in The Christian World on 20 September 1906.¹²⁶

The publication of this address caused a tremendous stir, but it was the meeting on 9 October that Campbell believed was 'really the commencement of the new theology controversy'.¹²⁷ The room was full of spectators, and the result of the speech and the publication in The Christian World was quite phenomenal.

On 28 October 1906, Rev F.A. Russell, a Congregational minister, began a series of morning sermons at the King's Weigh House Church on the subjects raised by Campbell's paper 'Changing Sanctions in Theology'.¹²⁸ He was an example of many Congregationalists, throughout Britain, who expressed in their sermons either their sympathy with, or hostility to, Campbell's position. Outside Congregationalism, ministers attending the first meeting of the United Methodist Church, in Manchester on 12 October 1906, were requested to bring with them a copy of The Christian World of 20 September. At the meeting, Rev J. Naylor referred to Campbell's 'piece of prophetic candour' with admiration. Although he refrained from regarding Campbell as a 'safe guide on all points' he was encouraged by his loyalty to the truth and by his constructive aim and 'splendid

¹²⁶See Appendix B for a copy of this article.

¹²⁷A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.185. See also The Christian World, 4 October (1906) 3.

¹²⁸The Christian World, 25 October (1906) 3.

courage' in attempting a restatement of Christianity in terms of modern thought.¹²⁹ Campbell also spoke on the same subject at the United Methodist Ministers' Assembly at Forest Gate on 26 March the following year.

Campbell's paper published on 20 September also invoked a reaction from Unitarians. Rev John Page Hopps maintained that the New Theology was 'good old Unitarianism'¹³⁰ since it:

... has broken up the old exclusive idea of Inspiration; it has made the Bible a human document; it has dissipated the notion of an eternal and hopeless doom; it has altogether altered the outlook upon sin and salvation; it has, in fact, set up house-keeping in our old Unitarian garden.¹³¹

Hopps was correct in noting that the insistence of the New Theology on the immanence of God, the indwelling of God in all things and in all creatures, were not necessarily contrary to Unitarians since they were, after all, themes propounded by the distinguished nineteenth-century Unitarians - the American, William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), the American, Theodore Parker (1810-60), and the British James Martineau (1805-1900). However, in claiming Campbell for the Unitarians, Hopps had not appreciated that the Unitarian 'gulf' between man and God, as evident in the Unitarian convert from the Presbyterian ministry, Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) and Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), had been more popular in Unitarianism. Channing, Parker and Martineau had been widely criticised for their views, which even in the first decade of the twentieth century were far from acceptable to many Unitarians.

¹²⁹The Christian World, 18 October (1906) 2.

¹³⁰The Inquirer, 24 November (1906) 765.

¹³¹The Inquirer, 8 December (1906) 802.

Other responses were more vehement, facetious and unhelpful. It was suggested that Campbell should join the Church of England where he would have greater opportunity to extend his sphere of influence, and attain further social advancement. Campbell denounced this as a 'damnable and insidious suggestion',¹³² and 'Mr Campbell Lashes his Critics' by maintaining that what he expounded - namely, the essential divinity of man, his unbroken oneness with God, and the salvability of the whole race - were eternal truths and essential elements of the real Gospel of Jesus.¹³³

As 1906 drew to a close the storm still roared, and continued to sweep over theology, the Church and the nation. The intensity of the storm, and the havoc it caused increased after Campbell's interview with F.A. Mackenzie of The Daily Mail. It was this interview, Porritt said, which 'set the heather ablaze.'¹³⁴

The Daily Mail - 12 January 1907

'Rev R.J. Campbell's Position' was the title of an article in The Daily Mail on Saturday 12 January 1907.¹³⁵ Basically his stance here was the same as the one featured in The Christian World on 'Popular Theology: Its Changing Sanctions'. Once again he denied the literal interpretation of the Fall. He continued: 'We believe that the very imperfection of the world today is due to God's will, and is a working out of Himself with its purpose, a purpose not wholly hidden from us ... Sin is simply selfishness ... We reject wholly the common interpretation of the Atonement - that another is beaten for our fault.'¹³⁶ He once again insisted on the immortality of the soul, believing as he did that every individual consciousness

¹³²The Christian World, 18 October (1906) 3.

¹³³The Christian World, 30 November (1906) 3.

¹³⁴Porritt, The Best I Remember, p.121.

¹³⁵The Daily Mail, 12 January (1907) 7-8.

¹³⁶The Daily Mail, 12 January (1907) 8.

was a ray of the universal consciousness and, therefore, could not be destroyed. A final judgement was once more dismissed in preference for a judgement that was ever proceeding, and again he insisted that 'Jesus is and was divine, but so are we'.

The Daily Mail 'at that time [was] the most widely read and popular national newspaper',¹³⁷ and by publishing Campbell it ensured that his views became known to an even greater number of people. The controversy went beyond the confines of the Church and the religious press. At political clubs Campbell and his New Theology were more eagerly discussed than the Education *impasse* or the future of the House of Lords.¹³⁸ For the following few months the daily tabloids were flooded with articles and correspondence on the controversy. Often, because of his own ambiguity, Campbell was misunderstood. In 'The Outlook: The New Theology', in The Daily Mail,¹³⁹ he was accused of surrendering the doctrine of the Atonement. Replying to this accusation he maintained: 'On the contrary, I have little else to preach about. The New Theology is an attempt to restate the Atonement in terms of the ethical ideal'.¹⁴⁰

Campbell's insistence that he preached the Christian Gospel did not prevent criticism from all quarters. In The Daily Mail of 14 January, he was accused of being a pantheist, while on the following day the same newspaper expressed the opinions of those who believed the New Theology to be theoliverlodgery, Buddhist and Pure Unitarianism. Similarly in The Daily Telegraph of 24 January the New Theology was denounced as 'Campbellism' and 'Egotheism'.

¹³⁷K.W. Clements, Lovers of Discord: Twentieth Century Theological Controversies in England (London, 1988), p.30.

¹³⁸The Christian World, 17 January (1907) 3.

¹³⁹The Daily Mail, 12 January (1907) 6.

¹⁴⁰The Daily Mail, 14 January (1907) 5.

There were demands for Campbell's resignation. Campbell Morgan in The Tribune failed to see how Campbell could remain in the Congregational ministry.¹⁴¹ The Baptist recorded that it could not be 'other than traitorous to use the advantages of the City Temple to seek to extinguish the Gospel.'¹⁴² Leading Congregationalist ministers, Fairbairn, Jowett, and Forsyth, who previously had had positive connections with Campbell, denounced the New Theology. Forsyth in a letter to The Tribune sarcastically stated that Congregationalists did not banish their 'theological freaks' but called them 'learners'. Referring indirectly to Campbell, he correctly and rather aptly stated that 'some popular attempts at theology are like a bad photograph - under-developed and over-exposed.'¹⁴³ Forsyth continued his bitter attack by saying that the question relating to Campbell was not that of heresy, but that of intellectual levity and temerity. Moreover Campbell was not actually aware of his lack of knowledge. Forsyth perceptively, though rather arrogantly, argued that 'Theologically he is a layman, and that is why it is difficult to enter into the highly debatable points he has raised.'¹⁴⁴ Jowett showed his disagreement with Campbell, in his statement that humanity did not need 'a Saviour who stands on some great summit calling to us ... We need a Saviour who will come to the base of the mount and lay hold of us there.'¹⁴⁵

Campbell's own father, Rev John Campbell, of Beeston United Methodist Free Church distanced himself from the New Theology. He did, however, sympathise

¹⁴¹The Tribune, 16 January (1907) 7.

¹⁴²The Daily Mail, 22 January (1907) 5.

¹⁴³The Tribune, 22 January (1907) 8.

¹⁴⁴The Christian World, 7 February (1907) 21.

¹⁴⁵The Tribune, 21 January (1907) 9 and The Christian World, 24 January (1907) 21.

with his son's views and expressed his dislike for claims that this or that 'is' atonement, since 'there is a fullness that human speech cannot express.'¹⁴⁶

Anglican opinion in the person of Canon Scott Holland was unsympathetic to the New Theology. At St Paul's Cathedral on Sunday 20 January he said that we cannot become Christ's if Christ was no more than we are ourselves.¹⁴⁷ The Bishop of London, Arthur Winnington-Ingram¹⁴⁸ argued that there was no such thing as a New Theology because 'The Church of Jesus Christ has only one faith - Jesus Christ, incarnate, born of the virgin Mary ...'¹⁴⁹

There were, however, some positive responses. Campbell was hailed as one of the liberal divines along with such figures as Beecher, Kingsley, Maurice and Martineau.¹⁵⁰ Talk of the New Theology even reached The Nursing Times which endorsed Campbell's idea that the best work emanated from the Christian Spirit within, whether one was aware of this or not.¹⁵¹ The Australian Victoria Independent expressed the opinion that the New Theology was indicative of a 'line of advance'.¹⁵² Stanton Coit, leader of the Ethical Movement, rejoiced over Campbell and the New Theology, because he believed the latter was essentially the

¹⁴⁶The Christian World, 24 January (1907) 22. See also The Tribune, 29 January (1907) 8. John Campbell's response was the same as that of Harnack in The Christian World, 7 February (1907) 21.

¹⁴⁷See also H.S. Holland, Creeds and Critics: Being Occasional Papers on the Theology of the Christian Creed (London, 1918), pp.88-105 which argues that Campbell's 'flighty' optimism about the human race could not be the basis of a reconstruction of belief.

¹⁴⁸Bishop of London 17 April 1901-1 September 1939.

¹⁴⁹The Tribune, 21 January (1907) 9 and The Christian World, 24 January (1907) 22.

¹⁵⁰The Christian Commonwealth, 14 February (1907) front page.

¹⁵¹'Off duty Hours: The New Theology', The Nursing Times, 16 February (1907) 143-144.

¹⁵²The Christian World, 21 February (1907) 4.

message of the Ethical Movement which was, under the New Theology, capturing public attention.¹⁵³

Campbell was more positively received by the people who knew him, or who heard him preach - evidence of the captivating nature of his personality. The Methodist Times recorded a conversation between two men: 'He [Campbell] ought to be chucked out'. 'Do you know him? Have you heard him?' 'No' he said, but he later heard him and declared 'I could listen to him for ever.'¹⁵⁴

The immense loyalty of the City Temple congregation was commendable. Critics maintained his teaching was not in accordance with the City Temple Trust Deeds which stated that the minister must '... hold the religious tenets contained in the Assembly's catechism and confession of faith drawn up by the Westminster Assembly of Divines'.¹⁵⁵ The minister must, therefore, be in agreement with the Westminster Confession of 1646. This Confession stated that Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, that sin was hereditary, and that by the decrees of God some men and angels were predestined unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death. Such propositions Campbell categorically rejected.

Despite pressure from the 'wiseacres and busybodies'¹⁵⁶, Campbell did not feel obliged to resign, and the City Temple congregation did not wish him to do so. W.M. Cross, a deacon at the City Temple, said: 'I think the majority of the City

¹⁵³The Tribune, 19 January (1907) 7 and The Manchester Guardian, 19 January (1907) 4.

¹⁵⁴The Methodist Times, 24 January (1907) 52.

¹⁵⁵The Daily Mail, 22 January (1907) 5.

¹⁵⁶The Daily Telegraph, 22 January (1907) 7.

Temple congregation like his teachings.¹⁵⁷ Another deacon, M. Richards declared that there had been 'not the slightest demur ... There is no opposition to Mr Campbell's teachings' at the City Temple.¹⁵⁸ By 31 January 1907, however, F.F. Belsey, of the Sunday School had resigned his office as deacon owing to his disagreement with the New Theology sermons,¹⁵⁹ as did Lucie Johnson, the City Temple's renowned singer who composed under the name of Louis Carey.¹⁶⁰

The popular consensus, however, was with Richard's reading of the Trust Deeds, and that there was no reason for Campbell's resignation. The Trust Deeds, it was maintained, did not 'bind the preacher'.¹⁶¹ The distinctive principle of Congregationalism, as in the Trust Deeds, was that every Christian Church or congregation was entitled to elect its own officers, to manage all its own affairs, and to stand independent of, and not responsible to, any authority, except that of the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ. Congregationalists regarded the Bible as their only standard; all human traditions - fathers and councils, canons and creeds - held no authority over the faith and practice of Christians.

For many outside the City Temple, this interpretation of the Trust Deeds, which had been set to limit and prevent innovation in belief and practice in the Congregational Church, was deplorable and farcical. J.M. Connell said: 'if pastors and people now agree ... To treat the trust deed so far as doctrine is concerned, as a dead letter, there is no reason why they should not profess the New Theology, or

¹⁵⁷The Daily Mail, 17 January (1907) 5.

¹⁵⁸The Daily Mail, 17 January (1907) 5.

¹⁵⁹The Christian World, 31 January (1907) 3.

¹⁶⁰The Christian World, 7 February (1907) 21 and The Methodist Times, 7 February (1907) 91.

¹⁶¹The Daily Mail, 17 January (1907) 5.

Unitarianism, or any other form of religious thought which they hold to be true.'¹⁶²

New theologians, however, continued to encounter great opposition from leading ministers in Nonconformity. Knowing the antipathy to the New Theology of Fairbairn, Campbell cancelled a conference for 24 January 1907 at Mansfield College. Warschauer and Wallace were not elected to the London Board of Congregational Ministers because of their involvement with the movement. Campbell failed to secure a place by ballot or cooption to the Committee of the National Free Church Council. In previous years he had headed this ballot, and in his Brighton days had travelled the country in the interests of this Council. This negative result, however, was probably not simply a reflection of the outburst of the New Theology. The Christian World of 21 March 1907 reported that Campbell had only attended one of the meetings in the previous year, and even if coopted would 'probably ... not have served.' Yet as the article perceived it was 'unfortunate that the Council should have dispensed with his services at this juncture, where the omission ... [would] ... almost certainly be attributed to odium theologicum.'

While some Unitarians remained keen to claim Campbell, Campbell adamantly continued to disassociate himself from them. In The Daily Mail of Saturday 12 January he maintained that the New Theology differed from Unitarianism because the latter stressed the gulf between man and God. In the same newspaper on the Monday, however, he admitted that he had not stated the case fairly and had misrepresented 'recent' Unitarianism: 'The ordinary Unitarian certainly does insist on the Divine Immanence as much as we do ...' But, he went on to say, that

... does not make the New Theology a victory for Unitarianism. My contention is that Unitarianism and Trinitarianism alike have tended too much in the past to separate between man and God. In the New

¹⁶²The Daily Mail, 26 January (1907) 3.

Theology the old issue between our Unitarianism and Trinitarianism simply ceases to exist; we do not need the names.¹⁶³

At a meeting in Allen Street Chapel, Kensington, Campbell again repudiated any association of the New Theology with Unitarianism. He would not, he insisted, be labelled by that name; the word Christian was enough.¹⁶⁴ This was similar to the position adopted by Martineau himself. In his antipathy to being called a Unitarian, Martineau had insisted on being called an ecclesiast Presbyterian, and he saw the term 'Unitarian' as a theological and not an ecclesiastical term.¹⁶⁵ Doctrines divide, but in true worship theological differences are forgotten. Martineau, in a letter to Rev Valentine D. Davis, dated 29 March 1897, wrote:

In my judgment ... the class "Unitarian" is simply a subdivision of the higher class "Christian"; and no one who knows what he is about can claim the former while disclaiming the latter.¹⁶⁶

Like Campbell, Martineau before him during the years 1867 to 1869, had tried to cross denominational barriers with his attempts to establish a Free Christian Union.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³The Inquirer, 19 January (1907) 40.

¹⁶⁴The Christian World, 17 January (1907) 4.

¹⁶⁵The British Weekly, 18 January (1900) 321. See also 'James Martineau and the New Theology', The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald, 30 November (1907) 591 and especially 'James Martineau and the New Theology II', The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald, 7 December (1907) 603.

¹⁶⁶The full letter is quoted in Appendix B of R. Waller, James Martineau: His Emergence as a Theologian, His Christology, and His Doctrine of the Church, With Some Unpublished Papers, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1986, p.385.

¹⁶⁷The British Weekly, 18 January (1900) 319. For a fuller account of the Free Christian Union see R. Waller, James Martineau, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, pp.243-250.

Under pressure from Horton,¹⁶⁸ Campbell withdrew from the Essex Hall Lecture which he was to have delivered on 21 May 1907. He did, however, retain connections with Unitarianism. He addressed a public meeting at Manchester College, Oxford on Monday 12 May 1907 on 'The Present Conditions of Liberal Religious Thought'¹⁶⁹, and in 1908 preached in High Pavement Chapel, at a liturgical service led by its minister Rev J.M. Lloyd Thomas.¹⁷⁰ Several years later Campbell supported the Free Catholic Movement, the brain-child of Lloyd Thomas. (See pp.218ff.)

Despite turmoil and criticism Campbell was not deterred from propounding his views. On 14 January at Tynemouth, he addressed a meeting of Congregational ministers and laymen on 'The Changing Sanctions of Popular Theology', and on 19 February, at a theological conference in Bodmin, he spoke on his understanding of the New Theology.

During his two-week holiday in Cornwall at the end of January to the beginning of February, Campbell took time to write The New Theology. Here he offered no *apologia*, but, at the request of friends, powerfully expounded his beliefs to offset misunderstanding. Published on 20 March 1907¹⁷¹, the book was instantly a best seller, with over 20,000 copies sold by 28 March 1907.¹⁷² It ran into nine editions before Campbell bought its publishing rights in 1915.

¹⁶⁸Peel & Marriott, Robert Forman Horton, p.239.

¹⁶⁹The Inquirer, 18 May (1907) 306.

¹⁷⁰The Inquirer, 2 May (1908) 275.

¹⁷¹R.R. Rogers, New Theology Problems (London, 1907), p.80, and The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald, 23 March (1907) 143. The book was not published in 1906 as stated in A.R. Vidler, 20th Century Defenders of the Faith (London, 1965), p.29.

¹⁷²The Christian World, 28 March (1907) 4.

The New Theology (1907)¹⁷³

A haven for heresy hunters

The New Theology contained a 'systematic' theology, though it was not intended as a systematic theology *per se*. Its main aim was to present the Gospel to the age. It tackled areas from God and the Universe, Man in Relation to God, the Nature of Evil, Christology, the Authority of Scripture, Salvation, Judgement, and the Life to Come through to the Church and the Kingdom of God. While written in such a short time, the thought behind the book was extensive, having been already aired through his sermons.

Campbell's first chapter was entitled 'The Name and the Situation'. Here theology was defined as the 'intellectual articulation of religious experience', therefore, '... theology is every one's business.' He was frustrated with 'antiquated dogmatic theology'¹⁷⁴ which he believed led to a set of assumptions on which lives were based six days a week, and another set of assumptions on Sunday and in Church.¹⁷⁵ Emphatically he insisted upon a theology for seven days which tallied with religious experience. 'What is wanted is a restatement of the essential truth of the

¹⁷³The book was reviewed by H. Rashdall, The Hibbert Journal, 5 (1906-07) 921-928, and G. Tyrrell, The Hibbert Journal, 5 (1906-07) 917-921. Tyrrell had said: '... I will stick up for him [Campbell] when I review him ... but I wish he had more restraint and would not let himself be drawn over to the counter-philistinism.' - Tyrrell's letter to Rev Charles Osborne, Vicar of Wallsend-on-Tyne, dated 30 March 1907, quoted in M.D. Petre (ed), George Tyrrell's Letters (London, 1920), p.114. The New Theology was also reviewed by J. Murray, Review of Theology and Philosophy, 3 (1907-08) 378; A.C. Headlam in The Church Quarterly Review, July (1907), v.94, n.128 quoted in A.C. Headlam, History, Authority and Theology (London, 1909), pp.79-109; and Friedrich von Hügel, The Albany Review, September (1907) 650-668 - see L.F. Barmann, Baron Friedrich von Hügel and the Modernist Crisis in England (Cambridge, 1972). A German translation of The New Theology appeared as Die neue Theologie (Jena, 1910).

¹⁷⁴The New Theology, p.2.

¹⁷⁵Compare with Campbell's article 'Popular Theology: Its Changing Sanctions', The Christian World, 20 September (1906) 3.

Christian religion in terms of the modern mind.'¹⁷⁶ Thus, the New Theology with its new-old spirit¹⁷⁷ which rearticulated the fundamentals of the Christian faith in terms of divine immanence. This was, Campbell believed, a return to the original Gospel. The 'religious experience which came to mankind in Jesus of Nazareth is enough for all our needs.'¹⁷⁸ There was a need, as with the nineteenth-century Liberal Protestants, to go back to the simplicity of Jesus and away from all the 'limiting statements which have distorted the original Gospel'. This was Campbell's starting-point; he believed if theology was found convincing people would flock to the churches.

The greatest of all the causes of the drift from the Churches is the fact that Christian truth has become associated in the popular mind with forms of statement which thoughtful men find it impossible to accept, not only on intellectual, but even on moral grounds.¹⁷⁹

Campbell deplored what he called the 'popular' Christian teaching on the Fall, Scripture, Atonement, Salvation, Punishment, Heaven and Hell, so he aimed to make these beliefs more credible, and he wanted to present them in such a way as to interpret life.

God and the Universe

He is the universe, and infinitely more.

When I say God, I mean the mysterious Power which is finding expression in the universe, and which is present in every tiniest atom of

¹⁷⁶The New Theology, p.3.

¹⁷⁷The New Theology, p.13.

¹⁷⁸The New Theology, p.4.

¹⁷⁹The New Theology, p.8. This was different to the conviction of Currie, Gilbert, Horsley, Churches and Churchgoers who argue that Church growth depends more upon exogeneous factors.

the wondrous whole.¹⁸⁰

Experience shaped Campbell's definition of God. The universe, he maintained, was always calling and mankind always answering. The artist answered by trying to express his feeling of the universe's beauty; the scientist answered by recognising its laws and unfolding its wonders. There was 'a conviction that the unit is the instrument of the All', and religion, Campbell said, was where 'the soul consciously enters upon communion with this higher-than-self ... it is the soul instinctively turning towards that from whence it came.' God was the name given to this higher-than-self whose presence was so unescapable. God was 'the un-caused Cause of all existence, the unitary principle implied in all multiplicity.'¹⁸¹ Recognition was given to the impossibility of defining 'God' completely, since to define was to limit and God was the illimitable. Nevertheless, a working definition of God was needed. Thus:

When I say God, I mean the mysterious Power which is finding expression in the universe, and which is present in every tiniest atom of the wondrous whole. I find that this Power is the one reality I cannot get away from, for, whatever else it may be, it is myself ... How can there be anything in the universe outside of God? ... everyone believes in God if he believes in his own existence.¹⁸²

God was immanent, yet Campbell was careful not to stress that God was only immanent, rather he called the doctrine of the Divine transcendence 'the obvious truth that the infinite being of God must transcend the infinite universe ...'¹⁸³ The phrase was, however, totally neglected by Campbell's critics. Campbell said that his belief in the transcendence of God tallied with his religious experience:

¹⁸⁰The New Theology, p.25 and p.18 respectively.

¹⁸¹The New Theology, pp.16-17.

¹⁸²The New Theology, p.18 and p.17 respectively.

¹⁸³The New Theology, p.4.

My God calls always to my deeper soul, and tells me I must read Him by mine own highest and best, and by the highest and best that the universe has yet produced. Thus the last word about God becomes the last word about man: it is Jesus.

We can, therefore, know something of God and it was 'only as we read Him in the universe that we can know anything about Him'.¹⁸⁴ Not forgetting the transcendence of God, Campbell was 'compelled to believe that the Power which produced Jesus must at least be equal to Jesus. So Jesus becomes my gateway to the innermost of God.'¹⁸⁵

Campbell directed his attention to the meaning of the universe. To questions such as 'why has the unlimited become limited?' he replied, because 'this finite universe of ours is one means to the self-realization of the infinite.'

It is inconceivable to me that God should exist without a universe wherein to give expression to what He eternally is. God is what He is ... but it will take Him to all eternity to live it forth. And how can he live it forth otherwise than in the experience of such finite creatures as ourselves?¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴The New Theology, p.25. Compare Campbell's address 'The Foundation of the Christian Doctrine of God', The New Theology and Applied Religion.

¹⁸⁵The New Theology, pp.21-22. Professor David Brown offers a challenging and interesting perspective on talk of God as Transcendent or Immanent. His main thesis is that the two terms are based on 'spatial imagery'. He recognises that the terms can be understood in human experience where spatial imagery 'makes some kind of sense', but he rightly argues that this is not the case when referring to God. One's experience of God as 'internal or external' reveals nothing about his location 'since by definition he is present everywhere, omnipresent.' See D. Brown, Continental Philosophy and Modern Theology: An Engagement (Oxford, 1987), pp.54-55. Campbell certainly had not perceived the limitations of the terms Transcendent and Immanent. Yet, it is clear that by adopting them he did not believe he was compromising God's omnipresence. Indeed for Campbell, in many ways, the terms were quite appropriate since he was, after all, arguing for a 'knowledge' of God through human experience. Campbell was, however, to see the pitfalls of such a premise later in his life.

¹⁸⁶The New Theology, p.22 and The Church of England Newspaper, 16 December (1927) 11.

If God was the infinite consciousness, there would still be possibilities to that consciousness which it could only know as it became limited.¹⁸⁷ There was, therefore, a finite universe because God wanted to express what He was and 'it will take Him to all eternity to live out all that He is.' Thus there are

two modes of God - the infinite, perfect, unconditioned, primordial being; and the finite, imperfect, conditioned, and limited being of which we are ourselves expressions. And yet these two are one, and the former is the guarantee that the latter shall not fail in the purpose for which it became limited.¹⁸⁸

Man in Relation to God

Where, then ... is the dividing line between our being and God's? There is no dividing line except from our side ... The ocean of consciousness knows that the bay has never been separated from itself, although the bay is only conscious of the ocean on the outside of its own being.¹⁸⁹

This identity in the relation of man and God where 'man is a microcosm of the universe'¹⁹⁰ did not obliterate human personality. 'If such obliteration were possible our present personality could possess no permanent value even for God. No form of self-consciousness can ever perish. It completes itself in becoming infinite, but it cannot be destroyed.'

Further, insisting that there was no dividing line between our being and God's, Campbell did not imply that man was in a determinate relation to God. In strict logic Campbell admitted he could find no place for the freedom of the will but, on this issue, he said he was 'compelled to overleap logic when considering this

¹⁸⁷The New Theology, p.22.

¹⁸⁸The New Theology, p.23.

¹⁸⁹The New Theology, pp.34-35.

¹⁹⁰The New Theology, p.25.

matter. No argument will convince us that we have not some power of individual self-direction and self-control.¹⁹¹ He had endorsed an antinomy in his scientific monism.¹⁹² Conceding free will, he nevertheless regarded perfect freedom as impossible within a finite being; this belonged to infinity alone, since finiteness presumed limitations: 'The only freedom we possess is like that of a bird in a cage: we can choose between the higher and the lower standing ground, a choice called for by the very fact that we are in prison, but we cannot choose where the cage shall go.'¹⁹³

He found support for his insistence on the fundamental identity of God and man in scripture.

He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me.

That these words applied only to Jesus Campbell rejected, and he believed that St John thought likewise.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹The New Theology, p.36.

¹⁹²The New Theology, p.36.

¹⁹³The New Theology, p.39.

¹⁹⁴The New Theology, p.40.

The Nature of Evil

Evil is a negative, not a positive term. It denotes the absence rather than the presence of something.

Evil is not an intruder in an otherwise perfect universe; finiteness presumes it. A thing is only seen to be evil when the capacity for good is present and unsatisfied.

Infinity alone can know nothing of evil because its resources are illimitable and ... every need is supplied before it can be felt.

I have the audacity to believe that it is not so ... I will even go so far as to assert that the problem had been solved in human thought before Christianity began.¹⁹⁵

Campbell adopted the Augustinian concept of evil as an 'absence rather than the presence of something', but his view of evil was also characteristic of the optimism and confidence of his age, and shaped by his monistic philosophy. He regarded evil as a necessity in the present state of existence; it enabled mankind to know that there was such a thing as good. Pain was often, he said, spoken of synonymously with evil, but he recognised that pain was not itself evil, but evidence of evil. It was thus evidence of good, of life asserting itself against death, the higher struggling with the lower. When, for example, a guilty man suffered the torture of remorse, it meant that the truth within him was declaring itself against the falsehood ...¹⁹⁶ Pain, like evil, was therefore inevitable in creation. This was especially so if creation was the self-expression of God. Since the nature of God is love and since love is essentially self-giving, it follows that in 'a finite world this cannot but mean pain, but it is also self-fulfilment ... Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life shall find it.'¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵The New Theology, pp.43,44,44 and 43, respectively.

¹⁹⁶The New Theology, p.46.

¹⁹⁷The New Theology, p.50.

Sin, for Campbell, was selfishness; the opposite of love.

Sin is always a blunder ... Sin is actually a quest for life, but a quest which is pursued in the wrong way. The man who is living a selfish life must think, if he thinks about it at all, that he can gratify himself in that way - that is, he can get more abundant life. But in this he is mistaken; he is trying to cut himself off from the source of life.¹⁹⁸

Campbell rejected the view which spoke of the Judge on the great white throne, whose justice must be satisfied before his mercy could operate. Such a 'muddle', he said, was largely due to the doctrine of the Fall. This doctrine, in essence, was that man was created innocent and pure but, by an act of disobedience to a Divine command fell from his high estate, taking with him the whole of creation. Subsequently everything had been wrong. God, being a God of righteousness, punished mankind. There was, therefore, a plan of salvation in which God sent His own Son to live on earth to suffer a violent death. In view of Christ's death, God undertook to forgive mankind, if they 'believed' in the saving power of His death.

Campbell would not accept that the doctrine of the Fall was related to a literal and historical event. He felt justified in so doing on historical, humanitarian and scientific grounds.

From a psychological standpoint Campbell argued that the doctrine of the Fall was 'the gradual transformation of a primitive legend into a religious dogma' - the Jewish nation in its suffering saw their present as a result of some transgression in their past.¹⁹⁹ This, he believed, made the doctrine of the Fall less credible. Justification for dispensing with the theory and believing that it 'is not integral to

¹⁹⁸The New Theology, p.52. This same view is expressed in Campbell's sermon in on 'More Abundant Life', at the City Temple 18 March 1906.

¹⁹⁹The New Theology, p.56.

Christianity'²⁰⁰ was given in his belief that Jesus did not speak about it, or even allude to it.

On ethical grounds Campbell likewise dispensed with the doctrine of the Fall as a literal and historical event. A God who knew beforehand that the world would go wrong would be to blame for the catastrophe, so this responsibility should not be shifted to mankind. Further, it would be unethical should the disobedience of one blight all posterity and the whole of creation.

From scientific grounds Campbell argued that there was no evidence of a perfect beginning to creation and such a cataclysm in human history. On the contrary, 'there has been a gradual and unmistakable rise; the law of evolution governs human affairs just as it does every other part of the cosmic process.'²⁰¹ He, therefore, upheld the contemporary belief in progress. Evidence for this he saw in the fact that heretics a few hundred years ago would have been flayed alive, or hung over a slow fire; they would not have escaped with mere criticisms in newspaper articles.²⁰²

Despite his aversion to this doctrine, he acknowledged that it contained an element of truth. There was a 'fall' in the sense that mankind, through its own selfishness, continually forfeited a full knowledge of being eternally one with God. This 'fall', however, was for the good and there was 'nothing to mourn over except our own slowness at getting into line with the cosmic purpose.'²⁰³ Campbell's exegesis of Romans 8:19-20 is interesting. 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us ...

²⁰⁰The New Theology, p.58.

²⁰¹The New Theology, p.60.

²⁰²The New Theology, p.62.

²⁰³The New Theology, pp.66-67.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope ...' These words, Campbell concluded 'are a clear statement of the truth that the imperfection of the finite creation is not man's fault but God's will, and is a means towards a great end.'²⁰⁴

Christology²⁰⁵

Christianity without Jesus is the world without the sun.

Jesus was God but so are we.

... the son of Joseph and Mary ...²⁰⁶

Campbell was encouraged that though the institutional Church was losing its credence 'the name of Jesus ... [was] ... held in greater regard than ever', since 'Jesus seems to sum up and focus the religious ideal for mankind.'²⁰⁷ Who, then, was Jesus? The creed-makers concluded that he was God and man. Campbell endorsed their conclusion in this respect, but insisted that this did not mean he had two natures, that the same was true of everyone, and the fact that Jesus was God put no gulf at all between him and the rest of mankind. Campbell endeavoured to

²⁰⁴The New Theology, p.67. The more orthodox and popular exegesis of this passage differs from Campbell's interpretation. Cranfield argues that it was not 'human creations fault that it was subject to frustration, but through man's sin'. Moreover, God 'subjected' it 'on account of man's fall'. - C.E.B. Cranfield, Romans: A Shorter Commentary (Edinburgh, 1985), p.196-197.

²⁰⁵For Campbell's Christology see also 'Jesus or Christ?', The Hibbert Journal Supplement (London, 1909), pp.180-192. Here Campbell argued for the synonymy of Jesus and Christ. The Christhood of Jesus was not in his moral perfection, nor his place in the Godhead, 'but in the success with which He had expressed upon mankind the ideal of a humanity which is the fullest possible expression of the love of God.' (p.192) Jesus showed that 'Humanity is one and indivisible, and the aim of every individual being should be to live as though he or she had no value or significance apart from the One who is All.' (p.192) For a presentation of the various views of Christology at this time see, Lawton, Conflict in Christology.

²⁰⁶The New Theology, pp.69,94, and 106 respectively.

²⁰⁷The New Theology, p.70.

'shed the husk' of Christian doctrines, while keeping the kernel.

Campbell's attempt to understand Jesus was based on monistic idealism. With this essential and fundamental oneness he differentiated Deity, Divinity and humanity.

[Deity was the] all-controlling consciousness of the universe ... the infinite, unfathomable, and unknowable abyss of being beyond ... [Divinity was] the essence of the nature of the immanent God ... perfect love ... [Humanity, the lesser of the three terms - Deity being the highest - was] ... that expression of the Divine nature which we associate with our limited human consciousness ... Strictly speaking, the human and Divine are two categories which shade into and imply each other; humanity is Divinity viewed from below, Divinity is humanity viewed from above.²⁰⁸

Using such a basic preposition it followed that Jesus was Divine; it also meant that he was more Divine than the rest of mankind and existence, because in Him alone perfect love was manifested. It is this, which made Jesus unique: 'We do not need to talk of two natures in Him, or to think of a mysterious dividing line, on the one side of which he was human, and on the other Divine.'²⁰⁹ It was Jesus's moral perfection, not his metaphysical status which was and is important.²¹⁰ Jesus was 'the unique standard of human excellence' and it was something mankind must attain to in order to fulfil its destiny and to complete its work. Jesus 'came to show us what we potentially are.'²¹¹ It was this uniqueness which Campbell believed answered accusations that he made Jesus 'only' a man. He insisted with orthodoxy: 'I make Him the only Man ... We have seen perfect manhood once, and that was the manhood of Jesus. The rest of us have got to get there.'²¹² Jesus was, therefore, though a different conclusion from orthodoxy, different in degree rather than in kind from the rest of mankind. While orthodoxy insisted that Jesus

²⁰⁸The New Theology, pp.74-75.

²⁰⁹The New Theology, p.76.

²¹⁰The New Theology, p.79.

²¹¹The New Theology, p.84.

²¹²The New Theology, p.77.

was not different in kind from the rest of mankind in regards to his humanity, Campbell believed that by insisting on two natures, orthodoxy made the 'whole' Jesus different in kind because of his divinity.

In line with orthodoxy, Campbell emphasised that Jesus did not possess the all-controlling consciousness of Deity during his life on earth; He was the Deity self-limited. He further endorsed Jesus as the second person of the Trinity: 'Jesus is the fullest expression of that eternal Divine Man on the field of human history.'²¹³

Campbell maintained that the doctrine of the Trinity belonged more to philosophy than to religion. He upheld, with orthodoxy, that the Trinity is unity. His reasoning was:

The primordial being must be infinite, for there cannot be a finite without something still beyond it. We know, too, that to our experience the universe is finite; we can measure ... it ... And yet if we think of infinite and finite as two entirely distinct and unrelated modes of existence, we find ourselves in an impossible position, for the infinite must be that outside of which nothing exists or can exist; so ... we are compelled to think of the infinite as ever active within the finite ...²¹⁴

Thus, 'With what God have we to do except the God who is eternally man?'²¹⁵ - the eternal Christ ideally revealed in Jesus. Jesus and Christ were one and the same, yet Jesus was the name given to the earthly life of a man who was eternally Christ. Significantly Campbell emphasised that St Paul said 'To me to live is Christ' rather than 'To me to live is Jesus'. Campbell claimed biblical support for his Christology, and went beyond orthodoxy in maintaining that all people could

²¹³The New Theology, p.89. Interestingly, while Schleiermacher put the doctrine of the Trinity at the 'end' of his thesis, as a kind of appendix, Campbell writing a few years later inserted discussion of it in the 'middle' of his book, and Barth writing a few years later 'began' with this doctrine.

²¹⁴The New Theology, p.87.

²¹⁵The New Theology, p.90.

be eternal Christs. St Paul always thought of Jesus as Lord yet he drew no sharp line between him and the rest of mankind. Jesus, for St Paul, was 'the firstborn among many brethren' and he spoke of the summing-up of all things in Christ, and of the final consummation when God would be all in all.'²¹⁶ Moreover, Campbell believed that Jesus himself 'bade mankind respond' to the fact that mankind itself was an eternal Christ, and to 'realize it to be the true explanation of our own being.'²¹⁷

Campbell also tackled the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. He dismissed 'popular' theology which limited the incarnation of God in human life to the life of Jesus.²¹⁸ 'Orthodoxy' maintained that this Incarnation was effected through a virgin birth, of which, arrogantly and rather presumptuously, Campbell declared: 'There is not much need to combat it, for most reputable theologians have now given it up ...'²¹⁹ He did, however, attempt to support his position.

Scripture, Campbell said, did not support a 'virgin' birth as popularly understood. Neither St Paul, St Mark nor St John mentioned it, and the two Gospels which alluded to it were mutually contradictory. St Matthew, for example, gave Bethlehem as the native place of Joseph and Mary: St Luke preferred Nazareth. Both Matthew and Luke contained a genealogy of Joseph, (not Mary) which were inconsistent with each other.²²⁰ Further the Isaiah passage referring to a virgin birth was a reference to 'Isaiah's' contemporary events, not a prophecy of Jesus; the word 'virgin', as used in Isaiah, simply meant young woman.²²¹ Similarity of

²¹⁶The New Theology, p.92.

²¹⁷The New Theology, p.93.

²¹⁸The New Theology, p.97.

²¹⁹The New Theology, p.97.

²²⁰The New Theology, p.102.

²²¹The New Theology, p.98.

this biblical account to the descriptions of the virgin birth of Gautama Buddha, for example, gave, Campbell believed, less credence to the 'popular' Christian belief.²²²

Campbell was drawn to the conclusion that the 'nativity stories belong to the poetry of religion not to history'.²²³ This was not an attempt to undermine Jesus, rather, the virgin birth 'operates as a hindrance', it puts a barrier between Jesus and mankind making Him something 'which cannot properly be called human.' Thus, Campbell emphasised that Jesus was 'the son of Joseph and Mary ...'²²⁴

The virgin birth, however, as a 'concept' was upheld by Campbell because it contained a great truth, namely that

... the emergence of anything great and beautiful in human character and achievement is the work of the Divine Spirit operating within human limitations ... The lower cannot produce the higher, but the higher is shaping and transforming the lower; every moral and spiritual advance is therefore of the nature of a virgin birth, a quickening from above.²²⁵

Campbell's interpretation exalted human nature. He was convinced that 'if we are humanity without Divinity, and He Divinity that has only assumed humanity, perfect fellowship between Him and ourselves is impossible.' All human history was one long incarnation, and 'Wherever you see self-sacrifice at work, you see the very spirit of Jesus, the spirit of the Christ incarnate ... Look abroad all through the world, look back upon the slow upward progress of humanity to its

²²²The New Theology, p.103.

²²³The New Theology, p.103. This was also evident in his sermon on Christmas Day at the City Temple - The Christian World, 6 December (1906) 3.

²²⁴The New Theology, p.104 and p.106.

²²⁵The New Theology, p.105 and p.107.

home in God, and you will read the story of the incarnation of the eternal Son.²²⁶

Regarding the Atonement, Campbell, again rather arrogantly, declared: '... I do not think the Atonement is such a very great mystery after all ...'²²⁷ He dismissed the current views of atonement as unethical. It was popular, among upholders of classical Protestantism, following the thought of Origen, Irenaeus and Anselm, to believe that because humanity 'fell' and separated itself from God, God's justice demanded that mankind should be punished, but that he was satisfied by the death of his sinless Son, Jesus, who continued to make intercession for mankind. Why, Campbell asked, should God demand such a sacrifice before forgiving mankind? He took up the example of the at-one-ness of Jesus with God. Jesus's life was selfless, and his death was a self-offering, 'the offering of the unit to the whole, the individual to the race, the Son to the Father ...' He 'showed' the ideal life by living it himself, and to be effective the atonement 'has to be repeated on the altar of human hearts ... Until His spirit becomes our spirit His Atonement has done nothing for us, and, when it does, we, like Him, become saviours of the race.' Thus the atonement was 'the fundamental unity of all existence; the unity of the individual with the race and of the race with God. The individual can only realise that unity by sacrificing himself to it. To fulfil the self we must give the self to the All.'²²⁸ Wherever, and orthodoxy would not dispute this, one sees a Christ-like life, one sees part of the atonement of Christ. The work of Keir Hardie as he pleaded for justice in the House of Commons was an example of the atonement in action.²²⁹

²²⁶The New Theology, pp.94,108,109 and 110 respectively.

²²⁷The New Theology, p.133.

²²⁸The New Theology, p.140.

²²⁹The New Theology, p.123,166,174, and 173 respectively.

Campbell said that if the doctrine of Atonement was deemed unnecessary after starting with human nature then the doctrine could be dispensed with.²³⁰ Yet he maintained that human need for atonement had been apparent since the beginning of human history, and that atonement had been expressed in terms chosen specifically to relate to the people to whom the message was being affirmed. Moreover, Campbell's understanding of the atonement was compatible with his monistic philosophy. When oneness was marred by sin, atonement was necessary; selfishness needed to be transformed into selflessness. He claimed biblical support, but he also recognised that the true meaning was often distorted by crudities such as vicarious punishment, for which, as we have seen, he preferred to substitute vicarious suffering.

Ideas of atonement were traced, by Campbell, back through history.²³¹ Semitic peoples were accustomed to offer sacrifices to their gods, and underlying their action was the assumption of their solidarity with the deity. Since they maintained their deity to be the giver and sustainer of life, by offering up their possessions they believed they were offering back to him his own. A blood sacrifice, thus

²³⁰This was an adoption of a method used, for example, by Schleiermacher. It started with human nature, man's experience, and proceeded from there. As we shall see, gradually and more quickly after the onslaught of the first world war, Campbell came to recognise the weaknesses of such an anthropological emphasis and, while never a Barthian, he did recognise the limitations of man's knowledge of God and stressed, for example, the doctrine of the Incarnation, as opposed to Christ's consciousness of God merely being human self-consciousness perfected.

²³¹See also R.J. Campbell, 'The Christian Doctrine of Atonement as Influenced by Semitic Religious Ideas', The Hibbert Journal, Vol.V, No.2, January (1907) 329-342. Here Campbell argued that Atonement 'connotes a group of related religious conceptions rather than one simple homogeneous idea or doctrine.' (p.329) He traces the ideas of Atonement back through the Old Testament to the influence of Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Hittites, Scythians and Persians. (p.331) Sin is not even necessarily suggested by Atonement. The idea behind the Atonement is the '... community of life, and the solidarity of man with God ...' (p.335) Jesus taught and lived this Atonement and 'that a life was once lived in terms of the whole, and took the consequences of so doing, was the true Atonement, whose full effect will be realised only when the whole race has become conformed to its spirit and likeness.' (p.342)

symbolically declared that the individual life belonged to the whole and must give itself to the common life and God who was the source of all.²³²

These semitic ideas inspired the writers of the Old Testament. After all, one of the results of modern investigation, Campbell believed, was to show that Hebrew religious ideas were very similar to that of the older semitic peoples which surrounded their civilisation. The rituals of the semitic people who offered sacrifices to their deities are evident in the Old Testament reference to the Day of Atonement, when offerings were made by the Israelites to Yahweh.

Sin came to be associated with atonement since sin marred the fundamental oneness between the people and God. Consequently, not only were sacrifices being offered to God as an apology for anything that might have been done against the will of God, but to act as a recognition that a sin had been committed, and that there was a need to renew oneness with God. Campbell resisted, for ethical reasons, the idea that Jesus was a satisfaction for God; rather, he believed, the sacrifice of Jesus was the highest expression of the innermost being of God. The 'highest satisfaction that God can know must be His self-expression in the self-sacrifice of His children.'

The Authority of Scripture

I take up this work with the purpose to read it for the first time as I should read any other book.

... never mind what the Bible says about this or that if you are in search for truth, but trust the voice of God within you.²³³

²³²The New Theology, p.139.

²³³S.T. Coleridge, Aids to Reflection (London, 1913), p.294 and The New Theology, p.202.

Understanding Campbell's concept of the authority of scripture and thus his hermeneutical approach is vital, especially as he believed that it was a misunderstanding of the Bible that had given false doctrines a foothold. The key to Campbell's hermeneutics was his reluctance to accept, as final, external authorities. 'At the best external authority is only a crutch, and at the worst it may become a rigid fetter upon the expanding soul. The true seat of authority is within, not without the human soul.'²³⁴

That authority and truth could be looked for within was because, as his monistic philosophy had led him to believe:

All truth is one, and ... It is the Divine self within every one of us which enables us to discern the truth best fitted to our needs, and this Divine Self is ... fundamentally one with the source of all truth, which is God.²³⁵

Campbell, as Coleridge before him, was not renouncing the authority of the Bible; on the contrary he wanted it properly understood. This understanding, Campbell believed, would come from interaction with the text. The contents had to be judged from within and its compatibility with reason and morality tested.

Thus for Campbell the authority of the Bible was not in its statements *per se*, but in its underlying truth. Such truth was more easily appreciated on familiarity with the historical context in which the text was presented and written. Psalm 137 was given as an example: 'Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.' This could be seen as promoting happiness by killing, but Campbell pointed to the context of the Psalm. It was originally written by a Jew

²³⁴The New Theology, p.179. Here we see echoes of Schleiermacher and Martineau. See for example J. Martineau, The Seat of Authority in Religion (London, 1891, 3rd ed.), p.vi, cf. with The New Theology, p.17. See also J. Martineau, Studies in Christianity (London, 1858), pp.199ff.

²³⁵The New Theology, pp.178-179.

exiled into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BC. On the exiles' journey across eight hundred miles of desert many would collapse and die. Where a helpless child was left unattended Babylonians would dash the child's brains out against the rocks. The Psalm was written by one father who had lost his child in this way; it was, therefore, an expression of grief, frustration, anger and doubt about God. The example reinforced Campbell's position that the

Bible is not like a parliamentary blue book, an exact and literal statement of facts; it represents ... what earnest men belonging to a particular nationality in a bygone age thought about life in relation to God ... The Bible is not infallible for the simple reason that the human nature even of wise and great men, is not infallible.²³⁶

Limitations of language reveal the danger of categorically accepting biblical phrases, and Campbell's view on this issue was consonant with that of the orthodox: 'Language is never more than an approximately convenient expression of the reality it is meant to declare.'²³⁷

Campbell insisted, however, that the Bible had authority since 'We have found it helps us more than any other book.'²³⁸ The writers' were 'struggling with the same problems as ourselves, and therefore what they have to say about them is valuable.'²³⁹ He believed that beyond the inconsistencies, '... we can get beneath the symbol to the thing symbolised.'²⁴⁰ Thus, behind all the atonement accounts

²³⁶The New Theology, pp.181-182 and p.185.

²³⁷The New Theology, p.187.

²³⁸The New Theology, p.182.

²³⁹The New Theology, p.185.

²⁴⁰The New Theology, p.198.

lay evidence of the fundamental oneness of God and man, and the means to it in self-sacrifice.²⁴¹

Jesus, he believed, supported his approach to scripture. Jesus knew and repeated the Old Testament, but he often rejected a statement which jarred his moral sense: 'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time ... But I say unto you ...'²⁴² Campbell believed that this authority lay in Jesus's humanity, since the hearers of his message 'knew nothing' of his Godhead; to them he was simply a great teacher.²⁴³ St Paul, similarly, spoke against literalism and legalism, and it was ironic that St Paul himself should be regarded as a fixed, final authority on the issues he addressed.²⁴⁴ 'Paul's opinion is simply Paul's opinion, and not necessarily a complete and adequate statement of truth.'²⁴⁵

The Bible was not, therefore, written from the fingers of God, and 'of equal authority in every part, and containing a full and complete statement of the propositions we must accept in order to make sure of salvation ...'²⁴⁶ We are, Campbell asserted:

Writing a Bible with our own lives to-day, a Bible which may never be read in its fullness by human eyes, but every letter of which is known and read in heaven. Every noble life is a word of God to that world; every brave, unselfish deed is a ray of eternal truth. Our characters ought to become living epistles, known and read of all men, while we strive to express the best that God has given us to see; for the same eternal Spirit

²⁴¹For example, Campbell gave the various accounts of the atonement in the New Testament. There is 'The Pauline principle of dying with Christ, the Hebrews idea of the eternal sacrifice manifested in time, [and] the Johannine thought about the out-poured life of the eternal Christ ...' The New Theology, p.198, and p.189 respectively.

²⁴²The New Theology, p.182.

²⁴³The New Theology, p.183.

²⁴⁴The New Theology, p.188.

²⁴⁵The New Theology, p.188.

²⁴⁶The New Theology, p.201.

of Truth, the Spirit who has been the teacher of all the Elijahs, Isaiahs, and Pauls of history, is with us to-day as He was with them.²⁴⁷

The Last Things: Here and Now

... death, judgment, heaven and hell cannot properly be regarded as the 'Last Things'. They are all here now, here within the soul ...²⁴⁸

In Campbell's chapter on the Last Things, he drew together topics such as punishment, salvation, resurrection, ascension, death, judgement, heaven and hell. He did so because they all shared a lowest common denominator - namely they were '... descriptions of states of the soul, and imply each other ...'²⁴⁹

While Campbell wanted to retain the concept of the Last Things, he sought to enfold them with a meaning in which they were regarded as states of the soul rather than external conditions.²⁵⁰ He was disturbed by 'popular' belief which, he said, maintained that:

Sin ... would be punished in a future life by the committal of the impenitent soul to everlasting torment. Salvation was primarily a means of escaping this, and secondarily being conformed gradually to the moral likeness of the Saviour. Judgment was a grand assize which would take place when the material world came to an end; Jesus Christ would be the Judge, and would apportion everlasting weal or woe according as the soul had claimed the benefit of His redeeming work in time to profit by it. Death was the dividing line beyond which destiny was fixed eternally, whether one died young or old. Heaven was the place into which the redeemed entered - whether after death or after judgment had never been clearly settled - there to praise God eternally in perfect happiness; hell was the place of never-ending torment to which unbelievers are to be consigned.²⁵¹

²⁴⁷The New Theology, p.185.

²⁴⁸The New Theology, pp.228-229.

²⁴⁹The New Theology, p.203.

²⁵⁰The New Theology, p.210.

²⁵¹The New Theology, p.204.

No sin, Campbell maintained, deserved everlasting punishment. Moreover, the love of God made this impossible.²⁵²

Sin, for Campbell, was selfishness, salvation was ceasing to be selfish. 'The Christ - the true Christ, who was, and is, Jesus, but who is also the deeper self of every human being - is saving individuals by filling them with the unselfish desire to save the race.'²⁵³ Furthermore, there was 'no far-off Judgment Day, no great white throne, and no Judge external to ourselves.' Mankind was not punished by some external authority - God.

The deeper self is the judge, the self who is eternally one with God. The pain caused by sin arises from the fact that the soul is potentially infinite and cannot have its true nature denied ... This is what the punishment of sin means. It is ... love striving against selfishness, the deeper soul with the surface soul.²⁵⁴

Moving on to the resurrection Campbell said that it was 'spiritual, not material'.²⁵⁵ St John's Gospel read: 'I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me though he were dead, yet shall he live: and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.' Here St John 'makes the eternal Christ speak in terms of the earthly Jesus, and tells us that the uprising of this eternal Christ within the soul of the penitent sinner is the real resurrection'.²⁵⁶ Yet Campbell omitted any reference to the orthodox and biblical belief in the redemption of the natural order.

Campbell turned his attention to the resurrection of Jesus. While he admitted inconsistencies in the Gospels, he conceded that 'without a belief in a resurrection

²⁵²The New Theology, p.207.

²⁵³The New Theology, p.210.

²⁵⁴The New Theology, pp.215-216.

²⁵⁵The New Theology, p.217.

²⁵⁶The New Theology, p.217.

of some kind, Christianity could not have made a start at all ... in some way or other, the disciples must have become convinced that they had seen Jesus face to face after the world believed Him to be dead and buried.'²⁵⁷

Murray's Life of Jesus conceded that the disciples believed Jesus had been resurrected but argued that they were mistaken in their belief. He regarded Jesus as none other than a splendid failure whose spirit we must try to imitate. Campbell, however, did not doubt the disciples' claim, especially as it was compatible with modern science. Monistic idealism insisted on the identity of matter and spirit -there was no fundamental distinction between the two since fundamental reality was consciousness. The material world was consciousness exercised in a certain limited plane, and the spirit was consciousness on a different plane. Similarly it was as easy in monistic idealism to accept the reanimation of a physical body as in the use of any other thought-form to express a fact of consciousness.²⁵⁸ Yet Campbell did not insist upon the physical resurrection, 'it is purely hypothetical', and he concluded, like Murray, that 'the main thing to be agreed upon is that Christianity started with the belief that its founder had risen from the dead in order to demonstrate that death has no power to destroy anything worthy of God.'²⁵⁹

Credence was given to Campbell's view by the claim of the disciples to have seen the body of Jesus. Jewish thought at the time was unclear on personal immortality and death was synonymous with annihilation; thus the great difficulty for the disciples in accepting the resurrection of Jesus whose death they had witnessed.

²⁵⁷The New Theology, p.218.

²⁵⁸Orthodoxy, however, had never regarded the resurrection as a reanimation of a physical body, and would refer to the resurrection as a bodily resurrection rather than, as Campbell did, a physical resurrection. The resurrection, for orthodoxy, was of a spiritual body, not a physical one.

²⁵⁹The New Theology, p.222, and pp.224-225.

Campbell's monistic philosophy also made viable another view of the ascension: 'it only means that when Jesus had done what He wanted the body was dissipated.'²⁶⁰ Symbolically the ascension was 'the uplifting and uniting of the soul to the eternal Father.'²⁶¹ However, ascension for the rest of mankind, would be preceded by the pain of moving away from selfishness, and the consequences of sin would still have to be experienced. Salvation, however, was to be enabled through pain.

Heaven and hell were states of the soul, and the latter implied the former ... When a guilty soul awakens to the truth, hell begins, but it is because heaven wants to break through. The aim and object of salvation are not the getting of man into heaven, but the getting of heaven into him.²⁶²

Finally, though it was an argument which underlay his treatment of the Last Things, Campbell argued for the immortality of the soul. He believed he was supported by men of science, such as Sir William Crookes and Sir Oliver Lodge who favoured the persistence of individual self-consciousness after death. Campbell, however, rested his belief on the conviction that the fundamental reality of the universe was consciousness, and that no consciousness could ever be extinguished, for it belonged to the whole, and must be fulfilled in the whole.²⁶³

Did Jesus really found a Church of this kind? The Church and the Kingdom of God

The Labour Party is itself a Church ... for it represents the getting together of those who want to bring about the Kingdom of God.²⁶⁴

²⁶⁰The New Theology, p.225.

²⁶¹The New Theology, p.227.

²⁶²The New Theology, p.228.

²⁶³The New Theology, pp.230-231.

²⁶⁴The New Theology, p.255.

Did Jesus really found a Church of the kind that was in existence in the beginning of the twentieth century? This was the question on Campbell's mind.²⁶⁵ He argued that Jesus did not found such a Church by showing how the concept of the Church and the Kingdom of God had developed. In line with the Liberal Protestants, he went back to Jesus and the early apostles. People born of the Jewish race at the time of Jesus were looking for the establishment of the Kingdom of God. This had become increasingly acute as the subject-race retained hope of overcoming their 'masters', the Romans, and establishing their own kingdom. This kingdom was to be just, righteous, peaceful and joyful and would be inaugurated by a Messiah. The expectation of an imminent earthly kingdom of God was the message of John the Baptist. Jesus also addressed the subject of the kingdom of God, and he recognised that many Jews looked upon the kingdom as one of material prosperity and universal dominion. Perturbed, Jesus emphasised the spiritual aspect of the kingdom and the importance of justice, righteousness, and peace with God in the individual human heart.

And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.²⁶⁶

The first Christians likewise believed in the imminent establishment of the ideal kingdom of God upon earth, hence their recitation of the words Jesus taught them: 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' They were more fervent in their enthusiasm than their Jewish contemporaries and were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah who was to usher in the kingdom. After his death and resurrection followers of Jesus maintained that Jesus's Spirit was

²⁶⁵The New Theology, p.246.

²⁶⁶The New Theology, p.239 quoting Luke 17:20.

working in their hearts to inaugurate this kingdom.²⁶⁷ This belief in the imminent kingdom of God greatly affected the conduct of their lives. Wealth would be unimportant once the kingdom had come so possessions became less important and belongings were shared or given away.²⁶⁸

Believers in the Messiahship of Jesus after his physical departure from them began to organise themselves into small groups to meet together and to encourage one another. Naturally these new Christian communities called themselves the 'ecclesia'. It was the custom for members of a Greek self-governing community to meet together occasionally for the transaction of public business; a practice which was allowed to continue when the Greek states became absorbed in the Roman Empire.²⁶⁹ Ecclesia, therefore, was a name appropriate to the meetings of the first Christians; it existed for the propagation of the imminent coming of the kingdom of God on earth.

Campbell recognised that Jesus did hope for some kind of 'society' to spread his teaching after his death; the appointment of twelve apostles may have symbolically indicated that they were to be the beginning of a new Israel. Jesus, however, offered no rules for organisation to the twelve and this gradually led to diverse views of the nature and structure of the Ecclesia, the Church. Campbell outlined two theories of the Church as evident in his own time; the sacerdotal theory which gave great power to the priest, and the evangelical theory which did not. He regarded the first as having no impetus or foundation in Jesus. Jesus did not appoint bishop nor priest and he never ordained that a mere 'mechanical ceremony should be the means of admission to the Christian society or be necessary to the

²⁶⁷The New Theology, p.240.

²⁶⁸See Acts 4:32-37.

²⁶⁹Acts 19.

eternal welfare of any one.'²⁷⁰ Campbell favoured the second theory, which made Church government and structure less important and recognised the fact that churches might organise themselves differently in order to accommodate varying temperaments.

Campbell anathematised two concepts often indicative of the Church of his time. The first was that it was contrary to the thought of Jesus that the Church existed to 'snatch men as brands from the burning and get them ready for heaven.' The second aberration of the true Church was 'The whole of the otherworldism of the Churches, the elaborate paraphernalia of doctrine and observance, is utterly useless, and worse than useless, unless it ministers to this end.' This end was 'to make the world a Kingdom of God, and to fill it with His love.' Judged from this premise Campbell concluded that 'the Churches are to a large extent a failure.' Society did not live up to the ideals of the kingdom of God. Selfishness, injustice, unrighteousness, inequality, and the large gap between the rich and poor, mansions and slums, all prevented the rule of the kingdom of God. Campbell appealed to the Church to foster a fair and just society and to instigate 'a new social organization on a Christian basis ... [it must be] ... truly a spiritual movement.'²⁷¹

Hope was seen in the labour movement which applied the social content of the Christian ideal. Campbell regretted that officially the movement was out of touch with organised religion, but the New Theology was a movement which attempted to blend the two together; it was 'the gospel of the Kingdom of God ... the religious articulation of the movement towards an ideal social order.'²⁷² The New Theology hoped to show that

²⁷⁰The New Theology, p.246.

²⁷¹The New Theology, pp.247,249,251,250,251 and 254 respectively.

²⁷²The New Theology, p.255.

the religion of Jesus is primarily a gospel for this life and only secondarily for the life to come ... We have to make clear to the world that the reason why we want to lift any man up and give him a chance of a better and happier life here is because he has an immortal destiny, and must make a beginning somewhere if he is to reach the stature of the perfect man at last.²⁷³

Prayer and the Miraculous

Prayer is a vital necessity to religious experience, and without it no religious experience has ever existed, or ever can.

As a rule, it will be found that ... [the miracles] ... belong to the poetry of religious experience ...²⁷⁴

These two subjects, prayer and miracle, were added as a kind of postscript to Campbell's conclusion in The New Theology. He had wanted to say something about them but had insufficient space in which to explore the matters comprehensively.

Regarding prayer Campbell said: 'It is not primarily petition but communion with God ... prayer does not change God because it only affords Him opportunity. It is impossible to improve on what God already desires for us before we pray, but upon our prayer depends the realization of that desire.'²⁷⁵ Prayer was 'the secret of all spiritual power'.

Consonant with 'rational' thought Campbell 'explained away' the miracles. Influenced by the rise and development of psychical science, he had no qualms about accepting the healing 'miracles'. He recognised the power of mind over matter as a means of endorsing such miracles. Jesus's healing powers were acute

²⁷³The New Theology, p.256.

²⁷⁴The New Theology, p.261 and p.260 respectively.

²⁷⁵The New Theology, p.261 and p.260.

when people had faith in him but as St Mark reports in 6:5-6: 'He could do no mighty work' in Nazareth 'because of their unbelief.'

Campbell offered some interpretations of nature miracles.²⁷⁶ He accounted for the whirlwind in which Elijah ascended to heaven, and Jesus's walking on the sea, as poetry, 'not history'.²⁷⁷ Campbell argued that this concession enhanced the story and its significance: 'It has been well pointed out that myth and legend are truer than history, for they take us to the inside of things, whereas history only shows us the outside.'²⁷⁸

The Raging Controversy

Ruption ensued on the publication of the The New Theology. The Church was divided, congregations were split, and there was disagreement within families.²⁷⁹ The press vigorously reported the controversy, and books (some supporting the New Theology, others criticising its ideas) were hastily published.

Church bodies debated whether Campbell should still address them. The Lancashire Congregational Union had invited Campbell to speak to them before the furore over the New Theology. Should the appointment be cancelled? Correspondence on the issue in The Manchester Guardian²⁸⁰ was substantial. The

²⁷⁶The 'nature miracles' is the term used to describe the feeding of the five thousand and four thousand, the marriage of Cana, the catch of fish, Jesus's walking on the water, and stilling of the storm, and the curse on the fig tree.

²⁷⁷The New Theology, p.260. Yet Campbell does not tackle the argument that with a monistic philosophy these events could plausibly be 'history'.

²⁷⁸The New Theology, p.261.

²⁷⁹See R. Moore, Pit-men, Preachers and Politics: The Effects of Methodism in a Durham Mining Community (Cambridge, 1974), p.176, p.76 and p.228. See also R. Moore, 'The Political Effects of Village Methodism' in M. Hill (ed.), A Sociological Year Book of Religion in Britain, 6 (London, 1973), pp.174-175, and J. Griffiths, Pages from Memory (London, 1969), pp.11-13.

²⁸⁰From 11 February 1907 in The Manchester Guardian, especially from 22 February 1907.

Union, however, kept the invitation open and Campbell accordingly addressed them.²⁸¹

Representatives from each of the main denominations also voiced their dissatisfaction with the New Theology. The British Weekly contains a number of trenchant leaders on Campbell's theology.

Criticisms were not so much over the aim of the book, or indeed of the movement as a whole, since it was recognised that Christianity did need to be shown as consonant with contemporary society. Even Forsyth had declared 'The old faith demands a new theology. For, in the first place, its nature does, and in the second, its history.'²⁸² However, Forsyth argued that theological liberalism tended to destroy positive belief. The strength of his attack on Campbell was emphasised because he was affronted; he knew the attractions of what Campbell was saying. Indeed Forsyth had been the arch-heretic of Congregationalism twenty-five years before.²⁸³ By 1907, however, Forsyth advocated modern theology, rather than theological liberalism:

... by liberalism I mean the theology that begins with some rational canon of life or nature to which Christianity has to be cut down or enlarged ... While by a modern positivity I mean a theology that begins with God's gift of a super-logical revelation in Christ's historic person and cross, whose object was not to adjust a contradiction but to resolve a crisis and save a situation of the human soul. For positive theology Christ is the object of faith; for liberalism he is but its first and greatest subject, the agent of a faith directed elsewhere than on Him ... We are sons by election rather than creation by adoption, not heredity, by redemption, not right ... The positive starts with the holy and saving Christ, the liberal

²⁸¹W.G. Robinson, A History of the Lancashire Congregational Union 1806-1956 (Lancashire, 1956).

²⁸²P.T. Forsyth, Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind (London, 1907), p.140.

²⁸³Forsyth said: 'Whereas I first thought that what the Churches needed was enlightened instruction and liberal theology, I came to be sure that what they needed was evangelization ...' - Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind, p.193.

with Humanity, rational or affectional ... Positivist theology is creational, liberal is evolutionary.²⁸⁴

Forsyth criticised Campbell's²⁸⁵ belief that 'theologians should come down and accept a theology imposed by three things - physical science, historical study (especially as to the origin of the Bible), and comparative religion'. But, Forsyth went on to say: 'you will hardly believe that there was not a word about the study of the Gospel, our application to the contents of Christ's revelation of God, the implicates of His idea of God, or the principle of His work' since he 'would have had to ask questions which no science of nature, history or religion can answer ... The question is not whether the old evangelical scheme needs some adjustments to adapt it to our present knowledge, but whether its most fundamental conception, the very idea of the Gospel, is true.'²⁸⁶

Fairbairn, too, was highly critical of the New Theology. In The Guardian of 2 April 1907 he referred to The New Theology as 'a farrago of nonsense'. While days later he said 'what was said in haste may be repented at leisure and in public',²⁸⁷ he had by no means submitted to Campbell's views.

Leaders of the Congregational Church criticised The New Theology. John Hunter rightly said: 'I do not think these 'got-up' manifestos serve any good purpose ... they are a sign of weakness, not of strength; of fear, not of faith. They make estrangement wider than it need be ... This pretentious production of Congregational Union chairmen and principals of theological colleges will not

²⁸⁴Forsyth, Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind, pp.142-150.

²⁸⁵though he does not refer to Campbell's name directly but says 'an estimable preacher of up-to-date theology'. I am grateful to Dr Worrall for reference to pp.196-198 in Forsyth's, Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind.

²⁸⁶Forsyth, Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind, p.196 and p.198.

²⁸⁷The British Weekly, 4 April (1907) 4.

appear to a single man who cares for truth as truth and is seeking to get at the reality of things. It does not read like an honest piece of witness-bearing, but more as something that has been drawn up at the dictation of two or three busybodies in the interests of denominational institutions.'²⁸⁸

Congregations were split as a result of the teaching of the New Theology. Indeed a devastating blow struck Hallgate Congregational Church, Doncaster. The assistant minister, Rev Percy W. Jones, appointed in April 1908 had, even by September of the same year, caused concern among the trustees and some of the congregation because of his theological liberalism. Special preachers at the church included Campbell, on 27 September 1909 (and later on 29 November 1910); Rhondda Williams on 11 November 1909 and Dr Duff, a professor and member and deacon of Greenfield Church, Bradford, where Rhondda Williams was minister. The feud between Jones's supporters and opponents was intense. While Jones's supporters amounted to just over half of the congregation, church membership numbers had decreased from 192 on 1 January 1909, to 166 on 1 January 1910. The trustees raised the old Calvinistic trust deed which stipulated that nothing contrary to Calvinism should be preached from the pulpit. Jones and his sympathisers were locked out of the church by the trustees. An application was made in the courts of justice for an interim injunction against Jones, but Judge Joyce said that this was beyond his jurisdiction and the only thing he could do would be to close the church. This was done for some months.²⁸⁹ From May 1910, with his loyal congregation, which numbered over a hundred, Jones worshipped at various places, including the Guildhall and the Corn Exchange. They called themselves the Doncaster Congregational Church, and on 22 November 1910 they amalgamated with Doncaster Unitarian Church and thus

²⁸⁸L.S. Hunter, John Hunter DD: A Life (London, 1921), p.224.

²⁸⁹'Hall Gate Church, Doncaster', The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald, 7 February (1920) 45.

secured premises on Hallgate. Jones was minister and the church was renamed Hall Gate Free Christian Church. The church had a roll of 219 members on 31 January 1911 and 228 members on 30 January 1912.²⁹⁰ Members at Laycross Street Baptist Church, Cardiff, were also expelled from their Church for their sympathy with the New Theology.

Several books were published supporting the New Theology and others blatantly criticised Campbell's arguments.²⁹¹ Campbell found Gore's book The New Theology and the Old Religion the most convincing, and it was this, Campbell said, which finally led to his withdrawal of The New Theology. For this reason discussion of Gore's book has been reserved for the section on 'A Spiritual Pilgrimage'.

Criticism was primarily directed to Campbell's interpretation and expression of Christianity. Nicoll of The British Weekly accused Campbell of being a pantheist. As Hegel had done before him, so Campbell categorically denied the charge; Campbell did, after all, uphold the transcendence of God and did insist on the freedom of the will. Critics were right, however, in pointing out the danger of too great an emphasis on the immanence of God; something to which Campbell came close as he was later to admit.

²⁹⁰Minutes of Doncaster Congregational Church-Hall Gate Free Christian Church, 27 December 1905-21 May 1912. This is kept at Free Christian Church, Hallgate, Doncaster. I am grateful to their minister Rev A.L. Finbow for giving me access to this material, and to Rev Dr Ralph Waller for alerting me to its existence. See also 'Doncaster's Free Christian Church', The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald, 26 November (1910) 598.

²⁹¹For example, T.R. Williams, The New Theology (London, 1907); K.C. Anderson, The New Theology (London, 1907); A.S. Mories, The New Theology (London, 1907); B. Wilberforce, The New(?) Theology (London, 1907); Various, The New Theology and Applied Religion (London, 1908); J. Warschauer, The New Evangel (London, 1907); C.H. Vine (ed), The Old Faith and the New Theology (London, 1907); W.L. Walker, What about the New Theology? (Edinburgh, 1907); H.E. Brierley, Do we Need a New Theology? (London, 1907); H. Egerton, Is the New Theology Christian? (London, 1907) and C. Gore, The New Theology and the Old Religion (London, 1907).

There was also criticism of passages in The New Theology emphasising the identification of God and man. Invoking the Bible and observing contemporary lives, Campbell's critics concluded that people continually failed to be in harmony with God and with one another. Human selfishness was very apparent. Further, such a claim to the 'fundamental identity' of God and man, it was believed, denied the transcendence of God. By 'fundamental identity' Campbell meant that by living selflessly mankind could achieve at-one-ness and unity with God. Mankind could assume the identity of the Godhead. God was Divine love, man had yet to achieve it. God was thus transcendent to mankind, at least in this degree. Perhaps Campbell would have made himself clearer had he adopted the expression of Warschauer, and avoided the word 'identity'. Warschauer said: '... to make immanence synonymous with identity is so crude a misunderstanding ... God is immanent in man, not in the sense of man's being identical, but consubstantial, with God; he is of the same substance as God, but yet distinct from Him, not merged in His being ...'²⁹²

Critics were quick to reject Campbell's reference to God as 'Power'; an attribute they claimed undermined and neglected any moral characteristics of God. Attributing 'Power' to God, however, was only one noun used by Campbell, and it was a noun accepted by orthodoxy which did uphold the omnipotence of God. Further, Campbell's use of the word 'Power' should be seen in the context of the whole. It is very apparent that his God was a very moral Being, so moral, in fact, that Campbell rejected everlasting punishment because he saw it as contradicting the love of God.

²⁹²Warschauer, The New Evangel, pp.115-116. Rashdall expressed similar thoughts to Warschauer; the term immanent, Rashdall said, 'implies that there was something in which God was immanent and with which therefore He was not identical. Therefore the term is not convertible with the assertion 'God is all'. But, in as much as the phrase "Divine Immanence" is constantly used in this sense, it would be well for those who do not sympathise with such pantheistic tendencies to employ it with caution and reserve.' - H. Rashdall, Ideas and Ideals (Oxford, 1928), p.201.

Campbell's idea of the universe as a means to the self-expression of God was highly controversial. It implied that God was 'dependent' on mankind for self-realisation. Once more, however, Campbell's thought needs to be viewed in its wholeness. He did not believe God to be dependent on mankind to the extent that He was at their mercy. Rather it was God who took the initiative, and chose to reveal Himself through the universe.

Campbell's statements of God and man's relation to the universe were condemned as crude and rash, especially his definition of the universe as 'a Divine experiment without risk of failure ...' As Walker's criticism rightly said, an experiment by definition entails the possibility of failure.²⁹³ This criticism paid too much attention to Campbell's language, and language at best is limited. Campbell was emphasising, however clumsily, that God was in control of his universe. God knew what He was doing when He created the universe and while He gave people free will - which would often be used for the wrong purpose - at some stage in their immortal life they would recognise good and choose to serve Him. The divine love would keep on working on an individual until the final stage was reached.

Campbell's concept of evil and sin was unconvincing for many. Sin as a blunder or a search for God in the wrong direction was disturbing; it neglected the fact that sin was often revenge and malice rather than a hope for more abundant life. Campbell stressed mankind's conscience; he urged that selfish and sinful instincts be trained to be selfless. Whatever his intentions the fact was that sin as simply a 'blunder' led to an undermining of its severity. Referring to Campbell, C.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) said: 'The ancient masters of religion ... began with the fact of sin - a fact as practical as potatoes. Whether or no man could be washed in miraculous waters, there was no doubt at any rate that he wanted washing. But

²⁹³Walker, What About the New Theology? p.32. Walker was an ex-Unitarian turned Congregational minister.

certain religious leaders in London, not mere materialists, have begun in our day not to deny the highly disputable water, but to deny the indisputable dirt.'²⁹⁴ Rashdall, too, had said that while he did not accuse Campbell of minimising the heinousness of sin in his own life, he did believe that Campbell led others in this direction.²⁹⁵

Moreover, the claim that evil was necessary in this earthly existence was seen to detract from mankind's responsibility for it. More serious still was the foundation of Campbell's concept of sin and its relation to free-will. He had conceded that in strict logic, from his monistic edifice, there was no room for the freedom of the will; yet he found himself insisting on this 'freedom', however limited. Sin was, therefore, choosing the lower instead of the higher.²⁹⁶ But there was still the problem stemming from monistic philosophy, namely, that God being All must be sin.²⁹⁷ Egerton, who was highly critical of Campbell, pointed out that in Campbell's position man has free-will, but the power within him that is said to be free is the Divine power; from this it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that it is God who is sinning in the sins of men.²⁹⁸ Campbell had made himself vulnerable by his monism. Indeed, Campbell would have sympathised with Coleridge and Martineau's conviction that sin was located in the will of the individual. But whereas Martineau, by not adopting monism, was able to say that the location of sin was in the will of the individual and not in God, Satan or religion,²⁹⁹ Campbell had declared that the imperfection of the world was due to

²⁹⁴G.K. Chesterton, Orthodoxy, (London, 1908), p.22.

²⁹⁵Rashdall, Review of 'The New Theology', The Hibbert Journal, 5 (1906-07) 927.

²⁹⁶The New Theology, pp.36-37.

²⁹⁷N.H. Marshall, 'The Philosophical Method of the New Theology', The Expositor (1907) 176.

²⁹⁸Egerton, Is the New Theology Christian? p.149.

²⁹⁹R. Waller, James Martineau, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p.70 and p.171.

God's will.³⁰⁰ He had not overleapt the logic of monism in this respect. The whole 'problem' of the root of sin was further illustrated in the discrepancy among the new theologians themselves. While Campbell saw sin as the absence of good, Warschauer, also within monism, saw sin more positively as the presence of evil.³⁰¹

It was Campbell's Christology, because of the centrality of Jesus in the Christian religion, that received the most criticism.

Campbell had no intentions of undermining the person of Jesus, and he had insisted that his theology was Christocentric. It must be conceded, however, that he denied the 'uniqueness' of Jesus as understood in popular 'orthodox' Christianity. He did not believe that it was crucial to uphold the virgin birth or the two natures of Christ, yet denial of these doctrines was not intended to belittle Jesus. He did not believe that novelty was prohibited in expressing the truth of Jesus, and he did not sympathise with Gore's belief that a virgin birth protected Christ's sinlessness so he could save mankind who had inherited sin. Further Gore's argument lacked cogency in its failure to recognise that a miraculous birth would not have guaranteed protection from sin for an entire life-time. Campbell stressed that biblical passages which emphasised Jesus's sinlessness, such as in Hebrews, made no allusion to a virgin birth. Moreover, he remained unconvinced by Gore's belief that a Jesus born of a virgin would be less aloof than a Jesus who was a moral genius.³⁰²

³⁰⁰'Popular Theology: Its Changing Sanctions', in The Christian World, 20 September (1906) 3.

³⁰¹Warschauer, The New Evangel, p.119.

³⁰²Gore, The New Theology and the Old Religion, p.93.

Campbell similarly intended to portray the real 'unique' Jesus by dispensing with the dogma of the two natures in Jesus, a dogma which, he believed put Jesus on a different plane to the rest of mankind. However, Campbell retained what he believed to be the truth behind the theory of the two natures, namely, that Jesus was fully God and fully man.

It was Campbell's fellow new theologians who disagreed with his interpretation of the resurrection. In tune with their rejection of miracles, many new theologians consequently reinterpreted the resurrection accounts as purely symbolical. Campbell, however, upheld a physical resurrection. New theologians were aggrieved at what they saw as simple inconsistency. Campbell had, after all, been criticised by Gore for his rejection of miracles. Gore had argued that 'To be tied to the normal and the habitual, when something exceptional is needed, is to be mechanical and not rational.'³⁰³ To this Campbell had replied that Gore's position denied God's continuous action in the world, and that were God in control there would be no need for the exceptional. Why then, fellow new theologians asked, did Campbell accept the exceptional on this occasion? Campbell maintained that the biblical writers literally believed what they wrote: 'He is not here, for He is risen'.³⁰⁴ They believed Jesus was alive: 'I am with you unto the end', 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?'³⁰⁵ and, as we have seen, he believed the resurrection was compatible with monism.

There was also denunciation of Campbell's hermeneutical approach to the Bible, and his insistence on seeing the Bible as written as any other book. Conservatives such as the Metropolitan Tabernacle Men's Bible Class were duly concerned. A

³⁰³Gore, The New Theology and the Old Religion, p.113.

³⁰⁴Matthew 16:6, Matthew 28:6, quoted in R.J. Campbell, New Theology Sermons (London, 1907), p.23.

³⁰⁵Matthew 28:20 quoted in New Theology Sermons, p.61 and Romans 8:39 quoted on p.60.

manifesto was quickly produced deploring what they believed to be Campbell's denial of the inspiration of the Word of God. One of the major criticisms was that Campbell's own interpretation of the Bible was rather arbitrary. He dispensed with passages which sat uneasily with his intellect, like the virgin birth, yet he accepted those which he found intellectually plausible, such as the resurrection of Jesus. The Preacher's Magazine for Preachers, Teachers, and Bible Students was similarly highly critical of Campbell's New Theology.³⁰⁶

Campbell's success, however, in freeing people from the letter of scripture was an important contribution to understanding the Bible. People were encouraged to read and engage with the Bible and warned of the inadequacies of taking odd phrases out of context to be used for good or harm. He wished to enhance the underlying truths of the Bible. Inspired though he believed the Bible to be, he recognised that God could equally chose to inspire other authors. Moreover, he said, scripture was safeguarded from all kinds of atrocities and dangerous subjectivisms since life must be lived in the spirit of truth, the spirit of Jesus, and of a God who is love.

Campbell was also attacked for his conception of the Church. The true Church of Christ, he said, 'in any and every age consists of those, and those only, who are trying, like their Master, to make the world better and gladder and worthier of God ... the labour Party is itself a Church ...'³⁰⁷ This definition was denounced as too broad, inclusive and one which detracted attention from the institution of the Church. Critics had a valid point. The Church was the body of Christ, and leaders of the Labour Party were often more concerned with building the kingdom of man than of God; they felt God unnecessary to the betterment of human

³⁰⁶J. Robinson Gregory, 'The New Theology', The Preacher's Magazine for Preachers, Teachers, and Bible Students, March (1907) 104-115, and J. Robinson Gregory, 'Men and Books a Monthly Survey: The New Theology, Mr Campbell's Book', The Preacher's Magazine for Preachers, Teachers, and Bible Students, May (1907) 193-199.

³⁰⁷The New Theology, p.250 and p.255.

society. Indeed, Robert Blatchford said: '... I am as much a Christian as Rev R.J. Campbell, and Rev R.J. Campbell is as much an infidel as the editor of the *Clarion*.'³⁰⁸ Campbell had also undermined his own argument by drawing on an extreme example. What concerned him was that people, once they were members of a Church and partakers of holy communion, not only saw this as initiation into the Church of Christ but as a license to conduct their lives how they pleased. Campbell insisted, as did orthodoxy, that membership of the Church did not automatically mean a person for the remainder of his life was part of the true Church. Baptism and confirmation were effective for salvation only if there was constant effort to bring life in tune with that of God.

The 'Success' of the New Theology

The New Theology had certainly made an impact. It had affected Church life, theology, and more specifically it had impressed itself upon peoples' lives. How successful was it? 'Success' is by no means an absolute. Frequently it is double-edged, often many layered. The success of the New Theology as propounded by Campbell can be judged in four areas which overlap and need to be seen in a unit, but which can be separated for clarification. First, how successful was the New Theology in fulfilling its aims? Secondly, how successful was it at presenting Christianity to the masses? How popular was it? Did it leave any 'wrecks on the shore'? Thirdly, how successful was it as a system? Was it watertight and self-sufficient? Fourthly, and closely related, how successful was it in its loyalty to orthodoxy?

First, the various 'aims' of the New Theology met with differing degrees of success. The steadfastness of the Gospel amidst changes in the world was successfully and clearly emphasised. Moreover, it was shown that science did not, and could not, discredit Christianity. In the midst of biblical criticism and

³⁰⁸The Clarion, 29 March (1907) 15.

evolutionary theories, the New Theology valued the biblical text and the truth of God as creator. The New Theology successfully showed the value of the creeds, emphasised the role of the Church in society and made the Church aware of its 'political' and 'social' responsibilities. So far as the aim of 'unity' was concerned, the New Theology was able to overcome denominational barriers. It had received sympathy and support from 'liberal' representatives of the Unitarians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics; the churches had been successfully encouraged to recognise their common aims which helped pave the way for the growth of an ecumenical spirit.

Thus Campbell was successful in achieving the general 'aims' of the New Theology. On evaluating the New Theology's teaching, 'success' is more limited. The Gospel as presented in the New Theology was often watered down. There was no fixed agreement between the New Theology and critics as to what exactly constituted the Gospel - what was essential? What was the kernel and what was the husk? The New Theology could, on occasion, be seen as heretical, and as having thrown out the baby with the bath water. On occasions the New Theology was seen to compromise the authority of the Bible, and to be a sell-out to scientific discoveries and philosophy. It was as if Campbell was trying to prevent the Gospel being foolishness to the Greeks, and after all, in the time of Jesus 'Christianity' and Judaism were not married to hellenistic thought. Science, could, in the New Theology, be seen to set the agenda rather than the Gospel.³⁰⁹ The very nature of the New Theology also meant that its success was short-lived. It was so geared to addressing the spirit of the age that when this 'spirit' changed, as it did dramatically during the First World War, much of the specific nature of the New Theology was immediately dated.

³⁰⁹1 Corinthians 1:22-25.

Secondly, Campbell's efforts to make the New Theology 'help and lift mankind'³¹⁰ was successful. Success, however, is double-edged. The sheer number of people attracted to the New Theology revealed its appeal and the power of its Gospel. On the other hand the abundance of mere spectators and critics cannot be denied. Critics did not decry the new theologians' ability to 'help and lift mankind' but they believed that a more orthodox traditional Christianity could do this better. At this stage, however, orthodoxy, on the whole, was not successfully making Christianity credible. Yet in the long run the New Theology did enable orthodoxy to be more convincing and true to the Christian Gospel. As Bishop Westcott said: 'We may learn more from those with whom we disagree most fundamentally than from those with whom we find ourselves in complete agreement. The New Theology challenged 'orthodoxy' into presenting Christianity in a way credible to the modern mind and into speaking out on what orthodoxy itself regarded as the Gospel. Thus, in Gore's reply to Campbell's New Theology we see '... the beginning of Gore's radical emphasis upon prophecy'³¹¹ in which man was absolutely dependent upon God, and made impossible any identification of mankind with God. Similarly, in reaction to Campbell, Chesterton became more insistent on the reality of sin. It is interesting, however, that while the New Theology was the product of the Nonconformist heyday and did foster a trend towards making Christianity credible, it was not a powerful enough movement to bring Church growth in line with population growth. While membership of the Congregational Church continued to increase until 1915, membership of Nonconformity as a whole declined from 1906.

Moreover, the New Theology did not prevent many who had been disillusioned with Christianity and the Church from being even more disheartened. D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930) was a striking example of this fact. J.E. Stewart, A.J.M.

³¹⁰The New Theology, p.257.

³¹¹Carpenter, Gore, p.77.

Rees and M.J. Masson, in their unpublished theses on Lawrence all make reference to Campbell's New Theology.³¹²

Rees argues that the Congregationalism of Lawrence's youth was consonant with the doctrine of Divine Immanence as advocated by Campbell's New Theology. He continues to say that this doctrine made it easier for Lawrence to depart from the 'Christianity' of his youth by the time he was sixteen, that is in 1901.³¹³ Masson convincingly argues that Lawrence's departure from Christianity 'was neither so early nor so easy.'³¹⁴ Indeed, Lawrence himself, in an article in The Evening News, declared his gratefulness to his Congregationalist upbringing.³¹⁵ Further, Masson's thesis showed that the Congregationalism of Lawrence's youth was not 'identical' with the New Theology. She relies on the sermons of Lawrence's minister at Eastwood, Rev Robert Reid, and his published sermons in the local newspaper, The Eastwood and Kimberly Advertiser, from 1903 to 1908. She keenly points out that Reid is 'far from the position of R.J. Campbell and the New Theology'³¹⁶ since Reid emphasised the uniqueness of Christ more in kind than in degree. Her contention is adequately supported by specific reference to

³¹²J.E. Stewart, The Evolution and Source of Some Themes of Spontaneity in D.H. Lawrence's Writing Until 1914, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1968; A.J.M. Rees, The Politics of Industry, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1984 and M.J. Masson, The Influence of Congregationalism on the First Four Novels of D.H. Lawrence, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Durham, 1988.

³¹³Lawrence himself claimed that he had got over Christian dogma by the time he was sixteen, D.H. Lawrence, 'Hymns in a Man's Life', in Phoenix II, Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose-Works, ed., W. Roberts and H.T. Moore (New York, 1968), p.599, quoted in Masson, The Influence of Congregationalism on the First Four Novels of D.H. Lawrence, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p.1.

³¹⁴Masson, The Influence of Congregationalism on the First Four Novels of D.H. Lawrence, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p.25. Masson wrongly states that Campbell withdrew The New Theology twelve years after its publication (p.25) rather than eight years.

³¹⁵The Christian World, 18 October (1928) 2.

³¹⁶Masson, The Influence of Congregationalism on the First Four Novels of D.H. Lawrence, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p.54.

Reid's sermons.

Masson also convincingly shows that the questioning of Christian doctrines and The New Theology was not the turning point for Lawrence. Lawrence, aged twenty-two when The New Theology was published, was not disturbed by liberal theology, and was not particularly impressed by Campbell. Lawrence had heard Campbell preach in October 1911, concluding that it was 'all right' and as good as you would hear in England, but that he could preach as well himself.³¹⁷ Lawrence had also read The New Theology and discussed the book with the 'forward' circle.³¹⁸ Jessie Chambers said that Lawrence was far less interested in the virgin birth, atonement, heaven and hell along with other dogmas, than in the 'question as to how the old religious ideas stood in relation to the scientific discoveries that were sweeping away familiar landmarks.'³¹⁹

Lawrence was also disillusioned with Christianity because of the Church. The Church was intolerant of alternative viewpoints,³²⁰ and the negative reaction to The New Theology by many in the Church, especially within Congregationalism, endorsed Lawrence's frustration and antipathy. Jessie Chambers and J.E. Stewart also recognised that Campbell was one of the personalities Lawrence looked to in his attempt to reconcile Congregational theology with the thought of men such as Ernst Haeckel and Herbert Spencer. Jessie Chambers believed that Campbell was 'one of the true sources of the basic direction of many of Lawrence's attitudes and

³¹⁷J.T. Boulton (ed.), Lawrence in Love: Letters to E. Burrows (Nottingham, 1968), p.140. Boulton says that Lawrence may have heard of Campbell through Rev J.M. Lloyd Thomas, minister of High Pavement Unitarian Chapel, Nottingham.

³¹⁸The 'forward' circle met in the home of Councillor Willie Hopkin every Sunday evening - Stewart, The Evolution and Source of Some Themes, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p.107, from Edward Nehls (ed.), D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, 3 Vols. (Madison, Wisconsin, 1957), I, 134-135.

³¹⁹J. Chambers, D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record (Cambridge, 1980, 1st ed. 1935), p.84.

³²⁰Chambers, D.H. Lawrence, p.86.

images ... the attitudes remained, even when Lawrence (but not Jessie Chambers) had forgotten their source'.³²¹ Indeed, with Campbell, Lawrence endorsed the new science of psychology and the new discoveries in human personality of the subconscious mind. For Campbell the subconscious was the true deeper being; 'the seat of inspiration and intuition'.³²² In the Hegelian pattern, the subconscious was the presence of eternal reality itself. Lawrence also sympathised with Campbell's idea of the immanence of God as evident in Lawrence's poem:

Slow infirm Death has at last gathered
up the waste
Of Godhead in Man despised, carelessly thrown
over.
There are enough of great souls to complete an
efficient Jehovah,
And behold them deplorably dead, by wrong
usage defaced.³²³

Lawrence had certainly been caught up in the religious questionings of his time, and he did not ignore The New Theology. It is ironic, however, that in 1915 Campbell and Lawrence should choose completely opposite paths. From 1907 to 1915 Campbell had been moving away from the rationalism of The New Theology and had adopted a more positive and Catholic concept of the Church. Meanwhile, Lawrence had become more disillusioned with the Church and more hostile to its teaching.³²⁴

³²¹Stewart, The Evolution and Source of Some Themes, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p.107.

³²²The New Theology, p.29.

³²³This was a poem probably written in Autumn 1908. It is from the Nottingham University College Notebook, No.20, in Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts, The Complete Poems of D.H. Lawrence, 2 Vols. (London, 1964), II, p.859, quoted in Stewart, The Evolution and Source of Some Themes, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, pp.109-110.

³²⁴Interestingly, Lawrence never shakes off the influence of his Congregationalist upbringing. Throughout his novels he tackles Christian issues which are embedded in him.

Unfortunately the New Theology did leave 'wrecks on the shore'. Ministers who had been expelled from their Church because of their zest for the New Theology, such as Rev A.S. Crapsey and Rev P. Jones must have been disappointed when the movement disintegrated, and Campbell deserted the cause. Church members and congregations too must have felt bitterly let down by the movement. Campbell had built up their hopes, led them to believe that the kingdom of God was upon them, given them encouragement and faith and then shook the earth under their feet, disillusioned himself with the movement. No numerical evidence exists for the 'wrecks on the shore' but unquestionably there were more than a few. Yet their disappointment and disillusionment would undoubtedly have been aided by the circumstances surrounding the weakening of the New Theology movement. The fact that the war practically ended the New Theology would certainly have eased any personal antagonism towards Campbell.

Thirdly, as a system the New Theology was simultaneously a success and failure. While Campbell insisted that the New Theology represented a method rather than a system the difference he had in mind is hard to understand. The New Theology had a method and applied it into a system; it took as its starting-point monistic idealism and all else followed; Christian doctrines were worked out in the light of this *a priori*. Yet there were discrepancies; the system was not watertight. Campbell was intelligent enough to see that no human system could present God accurately. Thus when it came to issues such as free-will Campbell was forced to 'overleap' logic and reason. It would be correct to say that Campbell's basic assumption was not so much monistic idealism, *per se*, but a belief in a God who could be experienced and yet who was beyond human understanding. Campbell, in many ways, wanted to 'understand' God, or at least to show that belief in God was 'understandable'. The way he chose to do this was through 'monistic idealism'. However, the closeness of Campbell's belief in God and dependence on monistic philosophy proved the downfall of the New Theology. As monism became less fashionable the New Theology fell to pieces. Orchard, in his later

life, appreciated that Absolute Idealism left one nothing to do but to recognise that one's thoughts were thoughts of the Absolute. Further Hegelianism could just as easily serve as a basis for atheism, since, as Hegel had admitted, Being and Not-Being were the same.³²⁵ Such Hegelian philosophy had been used by Feuerbach (1804-72) as a justification for atheism.³²⁶

Fourthly, the New Theology was considered by some 'orthodox' sources to be heretical.³²⁷ As such it could be seen as 'rewriting' Christianity and thus a failure at 'restating' Christianity. 'Orthodoxy', however, is hard to define and the view that 'orthodoxy' is a mirage³²⁸ does not help. If one takes the view that orthodoxy is not such a mirage, and is definable in terms of the creeds, for example, then Campbell was, in his dispensing of the two natures of Christ, clearly unorthodox. Yet it must be emphasised that Campbell was not concerned with orthodoxy or heresy; rather he was motivated by the need to present Christianity. Since he believed orthodoxy to be out of touch with the twentieth century, he had reconciled himself to being unorthodox in his efforts to restate Christianity.

The fact that the New Theology movement was at all successful was because it gained much momentum from Campbell's magnetic personality. Wherever he went thousands gladly followed.³²⁹ Ironically, Campbell who was largely the cause of the success of the movement was also the cause of its 'downfall'. The

³²⁵W.E. Orchard, From Faith to Faith (London, 1933), pp.87-88.

³²⁶A.I.C. Heron, A Century of Protestant Theology (Cambridge, 1985, 1st ed. 1980), p.24. Feuerbach maintained that theology and philosophy were concerned with the nature of man and denied all belief in transcendence. See L.A. Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity (1841, E.T. 1854).

³²⁷The Church Times, 2 March (1956) 10, and D.L. Edwards, Leaders of the Church of England 1828-1944 (Oxford, 1971), p.266.

³²⁸Argued in the Preface of John Hick (ed), The Myth of God Incarnate (London, 1977), p.x.

³²⁹The British Weekly, 5 November (1900) 99.

movement was weakened by his attempts to hold all positions simultaneously. He fell between being too liberal for conservatives and too conservative for liberals. Campbell was also very sensitive to criticism and his high regard of other people's intellects made him very susceptible to their persuasive arguments. Campbell was also confused and uncertain, owing to the unfortunate turn of events. Where ^{was} the New Theology going, what was it postulating and how could the criticisms it had fostered be addressed? The New Theology had been seized upon by the press, public enthusiasts and critics before it had been properly thought out. Issues that Campbell was still airing and about which he was still questioning himself were taken as his final conclusions; his fluid opinions were crystallized by the press. The press, not Campbell, set the agenda for the New Theology movement. Had he been more cautious in what he said in public the New Theology would have had a different history. As it was, he was not so sure about 'the' New Theology as his devotees believed. Stimson rightly detected that Campbell had not at the time found himself, and did not know where he would end. Indeed he perceptively saw that 'Mr Campbell will probably come to see that the New Theology is only a half way house which cannot be his permanent home'.³³⁰

Thus Campbell's 'confusion' and the speed in which the ideas of the New Theology were publicised on paper thwarted its success. Ideas that had caused no uproar when they were preached, once they were not part of a sermon and were on paper for people to study and analyse, were scandalous. In person Campbell was able to talk through his subject and answer questions; on paper he was less convincing and not so magnetic.

One question which arises over the New Theology as propounded by Campbell is whether he and it were, in any sense, 'Catholic' Modernist or Liberal Protestant.

³³⁰H.A. Stimson, 'The Genesis of Reginald Campbell's Theology', The Bibliotheca Sacra, July (1907) 60.

He was certainly a Modernist as Worrall describes him,³³¹ but was he a Catholic Modernist? Catholic Modernism emphasises the fullness of Christianity; the fullness being interpreted in line with the modern world, and the history of the Church. Liberal Protestantism attempts to distinguish the kernel, the essence of Christianity, from the husk. Campbell, in many ways, tried to marry Catholic Modernism and Liberal Protestantism and, The Christian Commonwealth, especially after Campbell was chairman of the editorial board from 1909, included articles on both schools of thought.

With the Liberal Protestants Campbell was willing to discard husks, he wanted to get hold of the real Gospel. He remained, however, more conservative than Liberal Protestant exponents such as Harnack, Réville, and Ritschl, since he retained the creeds, albeit after having imposed on them a 'modern' interpretation. He also, as Vidler pointed out, went beyond the Liberal Protestants in his attempt to answer the fundamental question - why a universe at all? Why has the universe become limited? Moreover, ^{he} taught an eternal Christ, thus going beyond the Liberal Protestant emphasis on the 'historical' Jesus. In this respect, Campbell was comparable with Catholic Modernism.

Reardon too, argued that Campbell's affinities were with the Catholic Modernists, 'or at any rate with their type of immanentism than with the Liberal Protestants of his day'.³³² Thus he did not feature significantly in his Liberal Protestantism.³³³

³³¹B.G. Worrall, The Making of the Modern Church (London, 1988), p.126.

³³²B.M.G. Reardon to Professor Keith Robbins dated 3 June 1971.

³³³B.M.G. Reardon to Professor Keith Robbins dated 3 June 1971. In the book itself, however, Reardon accounts for his non-inclusion of Campbell, among others, due to the 'necessary limitations of space.' (p.65) In Reardon's fleeting mention of Campbell in the book he describes The New Theology as 'superficial' and wrongly refers to the City Temple as Methodist rather than Congregationalist. B.M.G. Reardon, Liberal Protestantism (London, 1968), p.54. Vidler, 20th Century Defenders of the Faith, pp.24-31 gives a very good account of Campbell and the New Theology.

Campbell's emphasis on immanentism, or the oneness and wholeness of life, certainly did tally with the beliefs of Catholic Modernists and many of them were drawn to him. Campbell too saw their movement as a sign of the strength of the New Theology in its broadest sense. Yet increasingly Catholic Modernists, while sympathetic, aired their suspicions. Tyrrell said: 'The antinomy I wrestle with is that institutionalism, or externalism, is at once essential and fatal to religion. Every day I feel more a Catholic (not Roman) and more of a Quaker than ever. It is not comfortable, but I feel I am more likely to be on the right track than if I saw something as clear as Campbell sees in his New Theology.'³³⁴ Tyrrell expressed to Rev A.R. Lilley (1860-1947), in March 1909, both his and Lilley's opposition to 'Campbellism',³³⁵ and in a letter in May of the same year he wrote:

... I regretted the price of association with R.J.C. There is something common, flat and impoverishing about the man and his ideas that I can hardly explain ... He has not once caught on to Modernism. For him it is simply belief in modern thought and not in its conciliation with Christian tradition, and posing as a Modernist he would discredit us in the eyes of all who believe in the Church and destroy our influence with them ... The Church's mythology and magic stands for tracts of experience wholly discounted by men like Lodge and Campbell: or they may do so; and I will not throw away the husks till I am cocksure or Campbell-sure that they are empty or else that their values are saved in the Church of the future.³³⁶

Tyrrell, writing to Lilley stated that he had heard Dawson³³⁷ was longing to shake off Campbell.³³⁸ No evidence, however, has been found to support this claim. Tyrrell wrote to Lilley that on replying to Dawson's telegram asking 'Are we to

³³⁴Tyrrell's letter to Rev Charles Osborne, 30 March 1907, quoted in Petre (ed.), George Tyrrell's Letters, p.114.

³³⁵Letter of G. Tyrrell to A.L. Lilley, 20 March 1909, Lilley MS., 30874, Library of the University of St Andrews.

³³⁶Letter of Tyrrell to Lilley, May 1909, Lilley MS., 30879.

³³⁷Albert Dawson was a deacon at the City Temple and editor of The Christian Commonwealth from 1901.

³³⁸Letter of Tyrrell to Lilley, 25 March 1909, Lilley MS., 30873.

include you?' (That is, on the editorial board of The Christian Commonwealth.) Tyrrell promptly sent a telegram saying 'Better not.' His reason was that 'The only gain would be Dawson's and perhaps Campbell who would appear clothed in the sun, standing on the moon and crowned with one star more.'³³⁹ Indeed to make Campbell chairman, Tyrrell believed, was 'to give it [The Christian Commonwealth] just the colour one did not want'.³⁴⁰ He was concerned that Campbell was not sufficiently a 'Catholic' Modernist; his New Theology lacked the fullness of Christianity.³⁴¹ Similarly, the Anglican, A.C. Headlam, while Principal of King's College, London, believed that Campbell's New Theology ultimately failed 'because he starts as an individualist - and shall we say a Protestant? - and not with the life of corporate Christianity behind him ... The solution of the problems that Mr Campbell raises will always be more adequate and true the more the thinker is Catholic and not merely Protestant, reverent and not only critical, believing in the working of the Spirit of God in the Christian society rather than assuming that the place where God's Spirit works is everywhere but in the historic Church.'³⁴²

Tyrrell and Lilley were right to be wary of Campbell and to be cautious of being identified with him. Campbell differed from Catholic Modernism in one crucial point, and that was he placed no emphasis, at this time, on the Christian Church and tradition. This omission unquestionably made Campbell more obviously a Liberal Protestant, albeit a 'unique' one.

³³⁹Letter of Tyrrell to Lilley, 1 June 1900, Lilley MS., 30880.

³⁴⁰Letter of Tyrrell to Lilley, 27 May 1909, Lilley MS., 30878.

³⁴¹Smith believed that Tyrrell had 'apparently' agreed to contribute occasionally to The Christian Commonwealth, but Tyrrell died in 1909 so the accuracy of Smith's belief cannot be attested. Smith, The London Heretics, p.218. Tyrrell, Lilley and Campbell had, however, at least on one occasion organised a meeting on 'Modernist Catholicism' in the City Temple. - C. Noel, An Autobiography (London, 1945), p.27. This meeting was probably in conjunction with the Liberal Christian League.

³⁴²Headlam, History, Authority and Theology, p.109.

It was partly because Campbell's New Theology was not quite a representative of Liberal Protestantism nor Catholic Modernism that contributed to its downfall. It was too Catholic for many Protestants and too Protestant for many Catholics. One of Campbell's great contributions to twentieth-century theology was his ability to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of Liberal Protestantism and Catholic Modernism. As we shall see, he increasingly came to prefer the stance of the latter, and thus advocated a Free Catholic Church. By 1915, however, he came to the realisation that the fullness of Christianity could not be truly appreciated and emphasised outside of the historic Church and its traditions.

A Nine Days' Wonder? The Legacy of the New Theology

The New Theology 'succeeded' in being more than a 'nine days' wonder'. Moreover, Horne's view that the 'storm speedily subsided, and left neither ripples on the water nor wrecks on the shore', and Worrall's belief that the furore over the The New Theology lasted little more than a year are deceptive.³⁴³ Equally misleading is Davies's perception that although the leader of the movement, Campbell, defected (see below), 'its popularity remained undiminished in the Free Churches until the middle of the third decade of the century'³⁴⁴.

A more accurate verdict would be that the storm was intense for a few years around 1907, but that it subsided gradually from mid-1910. Campbell's position with Congregationalism after 1907 illustrates that ill-feeling towards him, resulting from The New Theology was deep-rooted and still caused hostility. Within the City Temple he must have heard rumours of discontent, for in March 1909 he

³⁴³C.S. Horne, A Popular History of the Free Churches (with additional chapter 1903-26 by A. Peel) (London, 1926 1st edition with additional chapter), p.442 and Worrall, The Making of the Modern Church, p.128.

³⁴⁴Davies, Worship and Theology in England - The Ecumenical Century, (Oxford, 1965), p.125.

called a meeting to see how he stood in relation to his own Church members and seatholders. At the meeting no hint of criticism was expressed.³⁴⁵

Beyond the City Temple hostility towards Campbell was more fierce. The furore of the New Theology certainly lasted more than a year. Owing to ill-health, Campbell was unable to attend the National Free Church Conference in Hull in February 1910. Noone expressed concern for him. On the contrary, in his absence Forsyth referred to him as a 'quack' and 'adventurer'.³⁴⁶ On his return in March Campbell did not let the matter drop. He wanted to see if the Congregational Union would be glad to be rid of him. Accordingly he wrote to the Executive Council expressing his belief that certain individuals were practically excommunicating him while the Union could not legally do so. His request for a response from the Executive Committee regarding his 'practical excommunication', was not forthcoming, so he made known his intention of addressing the Assembly at the May meeting of the Congregational Union.³⁴⁷ The Memorial Hall was, therefore, packed with spectators for Campbell's speech. Horne, as chairman, commendably reminded the Union that it had no jurisdiction over excommunication.³⁴⁸ The issue was dropped, but relations between Campbell and Congregationalists continued to be strained; he was certainly ostracized by many.

There was, however, a reconciliation, albeit a well-rehearsed one, between Forsyth and Campbell, at the autumn meeting of the Congregational Union in 1911, in

³⁴⁵The Christian World, 25 March (1909) 4.

³⁴⁶The Christian World Supplement, 11 May (1911) 21-24 has a full report of the proceedings.

³⁴⁷The Minutes of the Congregational Union of England and Wales are at Dr Williams's Library.

³⁴⁸A. Peel, These Hundred Years: A History of the Congregational Union of England and Wales 1831-1931 (London, 1931), p.394 and Selbie, The Life of Charles Silvester Horne, pp.208-209.

Nottingham.³⁴⁹ Forsyth was reconciled to Campbell's stance over Christ-Myth discussions (see p.251). Yet how much this was a genuine reconciliation and how much more 'public relations' is debatable. There was, however, an increased effort to welcome Campbell back into the Congregationalist fold. On Fairbairn's retirement from Mansfield College, C.H. Dodd, the senior student, approached the Principal, W.B. Selbie, about inviting Campbell to address the students. Campbell went to Mansfield, and Dodd recalled: 'This was no raging, tearing revolutionary ... but a quiet, friendly, essentially humble character, reasonable and moderate in discussion. I felt more than ever that he had misrepresented himself to the public.'³⁵⁰

Indeed, Campbell became more involved in organised Nonconformity as a whole. In 1913 he once again addressed the London Board of Congregational Ministers. He spoke on the Union of Christendom, and expressed his belief that union would come by cooperation rather than by corporate reunion.³⁵¹ Of even more significance was his nomination, by the Sussex Congregational Union, to the Chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. However, he withdrew his name, owing to yet another bout of ill-health, though he agreed to compile a Book of Prayer for Daily Readings for the Union.³⁵²

The commencement of the war in 1914 helped silence the New Theology controversy and there was only a slight demur when Campbell withdrew The New Theology in March 1915 (see p.246). In post-war years the New Theology was not resurrected. It had been a restatement of the Christian belief in a language

³⁴⁹The Christian World, 12 October (1911) 4-6.

³⁵⁰Late Professor Dodd to Professor Keith Robbins, 15 January 1971.

³⁵¹The Christian World, 24 April (1913) 3. He addressed the same Assembly in 1922 - The Christian World, 16 February (1922) 3.

³⁵²The Christian World, 28 January (1915) 3; 15 April (1915) 3; 25 March (1915) 3.

understandable by the age, but the spirit of the age had been dramatically altered by the war, and thus the New Theology was less credible. Where was the evidence of mankind's progression to God? Even after 1918, however, it left 'ripples on the water', and the influence of Campbell was still remembered.

I owe much to his influence ...

... he had an influence on me through his preaching at the City Temple which helped me to carry on with the study of theology and with the training for ordination.

... that was something I have never forgotten - it was before my father died in 1912 ... Dr R.J. Campbell preached ... the Resurrection Story has lived in his presentation ever since - it was a marvellous sermon and the whole service is vivid in my mind even yet - I have been grateful to him all these years.³⁵³

The New Theology had left a legacy and dialogue with it over eighty years later evokes a challenge. It encourages interaction with the issues it raised, issues which are timeless.

The New Theology prompted the Church to be aware of its mission; an important legacy. The Church is shown the importance of being true to itself and to the name it purports to uphold and witness. Is it manifesting the love and compassion of God? Is it promoting justice, honesty and selflessness? Is it judging the spirit of the age? Is it successfully fulfilling its role of being the body of Christ and of witnessing to the living Gospel? Does the Church have a message for today's society caught in the web of searching, far-reaching questions? How can the Church engage in politics? What is the Church's attitude to ethical questions such as war, nuclear warfare, genetic engineering, *in vitro* fertilisation, abortion, euthanasia? Or what should the Christian stance be on environmental issues, and green policies such as pollution and energy saving methods?

³⁵³Letter from the late Lord Sorensen to Professor Keith Robbins, dated 7 December 1970; W.R. Matthews, Memories and Meanings (London, 1969), p.56; Letter from Nellie Fife to the author, dated 2 March 1989.

Campbell's legacy was the basic principles that he offered rather than a blue print answer for each of the difficulties facing the 1990s. He taught mankind to look within and yet beyond themselves for the truth in God, in the selfless way of Jesus.

Campbell's emphasis on the credibility of the Gospel and the immanence and ever-presence of God was an encouragement to rethink Christian beliefs, to live in a Christlike way and to face difficulties and disappointments. Even though the New Theology had the unfortunate consequence of introducing divisions, Church disunity was a grievance to Campbell, and throughout his ministry he sought to stress the underlying common concerns of the various denominations and to activate their interest in developing the shared faith among themselves.

The New Theology had more immediate legacies. It founded the Christian League and the Pioneer Preachers' Order, and it addressed the social movement, the Womens' Movement, and the Free Catholic movement.

Part III: The Practical Aspects of the New Theology and the Parting of the Way

The Christian League

At a meeting on Thursday 10 January 1907 'The New Theology Union' was born under the presidency of Campbell.³⁵⁴ On 23 January 1907, however, the Union changed its name to the less controversial 'Society for the Encouragement of Progressive Religious Thought and Social Service' or 'The Progressive League' as it was more popularly called.³⁵⁵ The object of the League was a 'systematic propagandist work for the promotion of modern religious thought.'³⁵⁶ Arrangements were already underway for the promulgation of the New Theology at Cornwall, Bristol, and in the JCR of Mansfield College on 24 January. As we have seen, Campbell withdrew from the last knowing the antipathy of the Principal, Dr Fairbairn, to the New Theology. Fairbairn was not alone and some ministers did actively dissociate themselves from the League, including E.J. Barson, H.H. Oakley and F.A. Russell.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁴The first organising secretary was Rev F.R. Swan (1868-1938), a congregationalist, enthusiast of the ILP and author of The Immanence of God (London, 1907). Rev Rhondda Williams and J.A. Seddon, MP, were Vice Presidents. Those present at the meeting on 10 January were A.W. Anderson, Sidcup; E.W. Lewis, Clapham; D.R. Fraser, Bristol; F.A. Russell, King's Weigh House; A. Pringle, Purley; G.T. Sadler, Wimbledon; G.B. Stallworthy, Hindhead; J. Warschauer; H.C. Wallace, Anerley. Those who gave their written support included A. Duff, Bradford, T.R. Williams, Bradford, H. Barnaby, Edinburgh; E.W. Parson, Sunderland; J.A. Hamilton, Penzance; A.H. Moncur Sime, Huddersfield; E. Pringle, Keighly; A. Robinson; D.B. Martin, Hereford; W.S. Houghton, Birmingham; E.A. Lawrence, St Anne's; K.C. Anderson, Dundee; J.R. Bailey, Eccles. The Christian World, 17 January (1907) 4.

³⁵⁵The Tribune, 24 January (1907) 5.

³⁵⁶The Christian World, 17 January (1907) 4.

³⁵⁷The Christian World, 24 January (1907) 21. Russell insisted that he had not supported the movement and had not been present at the meeting.

A Constitution was prepared in July 1907, and a summer conference was held from 3 August-9 August 1907³⁵⁸ at Penmaenmawr, North Wales. A report of the proceedings and addresses given were published as The New Theology and Applied Religion, and The Christian Commonwealth, which had financially aided the conference, kept the public informed about the happenings. The Penmaenmawr conference was a considerable achievement; it had attracted about one hundred and fifty people. Its success was attributed to its addressing of the needs 'left untouched by orthodoxy ...'³⁵⁹ but, Campbell emphasised, a new orthodoxy was not on their agenda, and they were not makers of schism. He was distressed on learning that several young men had been driven from their pulpits, and that one of those present had been expelled from his denomination.³⁶⁰ He thus suggested that moral and material support be given to help those who had suffered because of their support for the New Theology.

In Campbell's address, 'The Foundation of the Christian Doctrine of God' he made no startling revelations, but repeated much of what he had said and written earlier. Once more he recognised the impossibility of defining God without limiting Him, while recognising that a working definition of God was needed. His proposed definition was very metaphysical; God was 'the uncaused Cause of all existence, the unitary principle in all multiplicity.' This concept emanated from, though the point is debatable, 'our perception of the essential unity of the universe ... to believe in the universe is to believe in God. We cannot help it.'³⁶¹ Moreover, the problem of limiting God by language was appreciated by Campbell's belief that 'We can frame no doctrine of God that is not at the same

³⁵⁸Not in 1908 as in Hunter, John Hunter, p.225.

³⁵⁹The New Theology and Applied Religion, p.4.

³⁶⁰Most probably referring to Rev A.S. Crapsey who had been expelled for heresy by the Episcopal Church of America. The Interpreter 4 (1907) 109.

³⁶¹The New Theology and Applied Religion, p.15 and p.9 respectively.

time a doctrine of man, for we can know nothing of God except as we read Him in man and in the universe as revealed to man.'

Campbell reiterated his belief that unlike the Old Theology, the New Theology was primarily concerned with the question of why there was a universe at all, and its purpose? Its starting point was creation, not sin. The universe was 'one means to the self-expression and self-realisation of God.' There was nothing outside of God: 'God is the all-inclusive consciousness, and, therefore, the Self beneath all selves.'³⁶² He went on to explain the relationship between the supra-personal Being, God, and human personality. He dismissed pantheism because of its determinism; it made mankind as responsible as a clock wound up and let go. He equally dismissed the conventional Christian ideas that God was in man, and man was like God because here the two were still eternally distinct. On the contrary he argued that 'while our individual self-consciousness is our very own, it is ours that we may put it back in the infinite whence it came.' Essentially there was no separation between Deity and humanity, but from mankind's side there was a sense of separateness, which must be overcome. This union could be achieved only by 'the deliberate and consistent giving of the self to the whole at every step in our upward progress.'³⁶³

Campbell urged his sympathizers to remain in their churches, and hoped that local branches of international organisations would be federated with a centre in London. He desired a wide basis for membership.

The League soon achieved an international audience and in 1908 there was an international gathering of liberal Christians at Montreux. Campbell, Rhondda

³⁶²The New Theology and Applied Religion, p.11 and p.12 respectively.

³⁶³The New Theology and Applied Religion, p.14.

Williams and John Hunter³⁶⁴ were among those attending. The following year the New Theology summer school was held in Aberystwyth.

As President of the Society, Campbell presided at the opening meeting of the autumnal assembly, held on Saturday evening of 9 October 1909, at Thomas Binney Institute, Oxford Street. He said he was encouraged with the success of the movement whose growing numbers reflected its worth. Membership numbers were impressive. In February 1909 there were between three and four thousand members spread over nearly a hundred separate branches with representatives in over two hundred and fifty towns and districts.³⁶⁵ This welcome social meeting, at which there were about one hundred and twenty nationwide delegates, was followed by a public meeting, presided by Sir R. Stapley, in the adjoining King's Weigh House Church.³⁶⁶

The League made efforts to extend brotherliness to the poor, and they had kitchens at King's Cross where mothers could obtain cheap meals. Time was also devoted to theological and educational study. The League depended on financial

³⁶⁴John Hunter never fully identified himself with the New Theology movement, and according to his biography he believed 'It was, of course, largely a Press "stunt", but the sensationalism persisted. This and the egotism of its leaders, its theological crudity, and its religious superficiality, made him dislike the agitation intensely.' - Hunter, John Hunter, p.224.

³⁶⁵The New Theology, Pop. ed. (1909), p.viii. Considering that by 1912 the movement was effectively dead (see below) Sorensen's recollection of membership standing at approximately 15,000 for a time is most probably inaccurate. The late Lord Sorensen's letter to Professor Keith Robbins, 7 December 1970.

³⁶⁶King's Weigh House, which had been the sister church of the City Temple since the sixteenth century, came under the pastorate of Campbell, during his City Temple pastorate, from 1909 to 1912 (see The Congregational Year Book, 1915 and The Times, 21 September (1909) 7), and for a short time he lived in the parsonage and conducted the midweek service. One of its members, Edward Lewis, took the Sunday services until May 1914. During this time King's Weigh House premises were used as the Headquarters of the League of Progressive Theology and Social Sciences. See also E. Kaye, The History of the King's Weigh House Church (1968). The minutes of the church are at Dr Williams's Library.

contributions, and fund-raising events such as the concert on Tuesday 5 April 1910 at the Steinway Hall, at which Campbell's daughter, Hilda May, sang.³⁶⁷

Campbell was disillusioned that many of the members of the League were, probably due to press coverage, subordinating their religious work to its political aspect. Stitt Wilson, for example, had declared 'The Messianic age does not come primarily with a New Theology or a new code of ethics, but with a new social vision'.³⁶⁸ Deeply concerned, Campbell emphatically reminded his congregation at the City Temple, on Sunday evening of 15 May 1910, that the League's constitution provided that they might take no part in party politics. He urged members to quicken the spiritual conscience of their hearers which, in turn, would bring about a fuller recognition of their responsibility to their brothers and sisters. To this end he expressed the need for what he termed the Pioneer Preachers' Order.³⁶⁹ (See pp.225-230.)

The Progressive League continued, but the Constitution was adapted in May 1910, to emphasise the 'Christian' aspect of the movement. Accordingly, the League changed its name to the Christian League, known also as the Liberal Christian League. That same year, the year of the first world missionary conference at Edinburgh which was the precursor of the Ecumenical movement, the interdenominational New Theology summer school was held in Oxford.

Campbell continued to stress the Christian aspect of the League's work. During his Presidential address at the League's autumn assembly, on Thursday 13 October

³⁶⁷The Times, 6 April (1910) 10. Campbell's daughter became a Gold Medalist and a Professional Singer for the Royal Academy of Music. I am grateful to Mrs Pauline Bidwell, her daughter, for this information in a telephone conversation with the author on 18 January 1989.

³⁶⁸Jones, The Christian Socialist Revival, p.429.

³⁶⁹The Times, 16 May (1910) 15.

1910, he suggested that it should become more Christian. He expressed his recognition that the original basis of fellowship with the League was too wide. Loyalty should be to the spiritual ideal associated with Christ, not to politics. He urged that this spirit be carried to the unchurched masses of the population. He applauded the League's success in engaging the efforts of various denominations while refraining from impinging upon, or interfering with their distinctive teaching.³⁷⁰ The Liberal Christian Monthly was launched during the week of 15 October 1910. This journal was the official organ of the City Temple, King's Weigh House and the Liberal Christian League; a sermon by Campbell was to appear in each issue.³⁷¹

Continuing his effort to stress that the League was not primarily a political party, Campbell wrote to The Times,³⁷² referring to Lloyd George's speech at the City Temple in the previous week which had caused a stir. Campbell emphasised that this had not been a political meeting, under the auspices of a political society, since the League took no side in party politics. Further, the League crossed political boundaries: 'some of our best and most influential workers are Conservatives; I am not myself a member of the Liberal party.' Moreover, he had asked several conservatives including Lord George Hamilton, Mr Bonar Law, and Mr Austen Chamberlain to speak with Lloyd George; they had other engagements.

In February 1912 Campbell went to California on a preaching tour; on his return the League received a severe blow. Primarily it had been a one man show. The stress of Campbell's work, and the looseness of the movement's aim, considerably weakened the organisation of the League. Extreme conclusions were being drawn

³⁷⁰The Times, 17 October (1910) 8.

³⁷¹The Inquirer, 15 October (1910) 670. I have been unable to trace any copies of The Liberal Christian Monthly.

³⁷²The Times, 28 October (1910) 6.

from Campbell's own opinions, and he was deeply frustrated at having, in effect, lost control. It was the powerful combination of political and intellectual interests which proved too large a responsibility for him. He gradually withdrew from the movement, and on 10 March 1912, precipitated by poor health which had attended him back from California, he publicly announced his resignation from the League, of which he was still President.³⁷³

In name the League continued, but Campbell's resignation left it a rudderless ship. The movement was effectively dead by the First World War. Campbell's step paved the way for many other dissatisfied members to break their allegiance to the League. What remained, without Campbell, was a Union which lacked strong leadership and specific unifying goals. Conflicting interests, that is between the moderates and the more radical in Christology and politics, proved impossible to harmonise. As Orchard declared: 'I had seen the New Theology movement go all to pieces', albeit not before it had imparted diverse impulses to many who had been attracted to it.³⁷⁴

Christianity and the Social Order³⁷⁵

... to many people Mr Campbell's political position has always been a greater puzzle than his theological one.³⁷⁶

³⁷³A year later, on 8 April 1913, Campbell's daughter, May, married a Jersey, CI, man, Frank Le D'outeur a newspaper assistant editor. The Christian World 20 February (1913) 3. Their daughter, Pauline, was born on 29 December 1913. They had a second child, Denise on 19 October 1919. I am grateful to Mrs Pauline Bidwell (née Campbell) for this information during a telephone conversation with the author on 18 January 1989.

³⁷⁴Orchard, From Faith to Faith, p.96.

³⁷⁵See R.T. Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (London, 1962), pp.344-356 for the Congregational Church's position regarding the social question.

³⁷⁶Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.25.

Campbell's relation to politics was comparable to his interaction with the Church and theology in three ways. First his political stance was as fluctuating as his theological and denominational allegiance; his politics was tied closely to his pursuit of truth. Secondly, in Campbell's involvement with politics, especially with the labour movement, we are once again made aware of how impressionable Campbell was and his susceptibility to accept new views, especially when advanced by strong personalities. Thirdly, the way in which Campbell works out his theology in his politics is worth exploring. His social concern is partly attributable to his concern for the oneness and wholeness of the sacred and secular, and the divine immanence in every man,³⁷⁷ but it is also partly related to his concern that Christianity be shown as relevant to society.

Campbell was born into a world of social and political upheaval. The Industrial Revolution (around 1780-1870 in Britain) was still having a huge impact. Abject poverty was common. As we have seen, it was largely due to the dirt of London that soon after Campbell's birth he was moved to Ireland to take care of his delicate health. Booth and Rowntree revealed the astonishing deprivation in many parts of Britain. Housing was a big problem, with overcrowding and a lack of sanitation. Health was, consequently, poor. Winston Churchill saw little glory in an Empire which could rule the waves but was unable to flush its own sewers. G.R. Sims, in 1889, equally critical, described part of London as 'a dark continent that is within easy walking distance of the general post office.'³⁷⁸ The acuteness of the problems had been forcibly emphasised during the Boer War, when it had taken two years for Britain to crush an uprising by a small colony of farmers.

³⁷⁷Moore, Pit-men, Preachers and Politics, p.57 argues that Campbell's doctrine of the immanence of God in every person was politically dangerous in an unequal society.

³⁷⁸Wood, The British Welfare State, p.4.

The problem of hygiene was related to the general appalling state of education in Britain at the time. The country was finding competition with other industrial nations increasingly difficult. The poor state of education weakened any hope of successfully looking after the interests of, and controlling effectively, Britain's Imperial Colonies. Britain was barely coping with her own citizens and so had little chance of dealing commendably with her colonies spread throughout the world.

Campbell's politics were certainly whimsical. Throughout his Brighton ministry, as we have seen, he had flirted with Liberals, the Labour movement and the Tories. In 1906, however, he declared himself a Socialist in a sermon on Christianity and Collectivism, preached at the City Temple, and in an address on 'Spiritual Socialism' in The Social Mission of the Church. What led to his strange conversion from Liberal Imperialism to Socialism? In many ways it was not a strange transition as Campbell's basic concern had remained intact, and it was certainly not a snap decision.³⁷⁹ In his Imperialism Campbell had declared: 'We are a great people and God has made use of us. He has granted to us certain powers which other races have not. Power brings responsibility, a responsibility we have no right to shirk.'³⁸⁰ In his Socialist days there is no evidence that he departed from this idea. On the contrary, he had come to acknowledge that Britain was not exerting her power responsibly. The rope of the heterogeneous Empire was pulling tighter around Britain's neck. Britain could no longer afford to be lax in its control of the Empire since Germany and the United States were beginning to exert their strength. The task was difficult; Britain had internal social problems,

³⁷⁹Even in 1903 W.T. Stead said of Campbell, 'He is a Socialist of the Chair. At his At Homes on Thursday afternoons he hopes to have conferences with the Socialists and leaders of Labour. He has acclaimed Mr Burns and Mr Keir Hardie as the prophets of these latter days. He, at least, can be relied upon to do what can be done to make the Lib-Lab party a solid and governing reality in the state.' - Stead, The Review of Reviews, May (1903) 462.

³⁸⁰Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.26-28.

various uprisings in the colonies and famine and plague in India.³⁸¹ Campbell envisaged Socialism as the best means of uplifting the country to a level where it was able to make effective use of responsibility and power.

What was it, however, that led Campbell to Socialism, to a belief in common ownership? There is something to be said for the possibility that the 'newness' of 'Socialism' appealed to him. It was not unknown for Campbell to champion 'new' ideas before fully appreciating their implications.³⁸² Keir Hardie had an important influence on Campbell. The two had met in Brighton, when during the Penrhyn quarrymen's strike (1896-98 and 1900-03) a deputation of men had gone to Brighton in the hope of raising funds. Keir Hardie was their spokesman and Campbell chaired their meeting.

Campbell's transition to Socialism was not a complete sell-out to another strong personality, but his 'conversion' coincided with an early recognition that the Liberals were 'deceiving' Nonconformists; they wanted the Nonconformist vote but were not dedicated to addressing the Nonconformist 'ills'.³⁸³ Admittedly, Campbell 'announced' his conversion to Socialism in 1906, the year of the Liberal landslide, but, in many ways, in 1906 the British public, including Campbell saw Socialism as a guiding principle, as a strong force, which could influence the two main parties. It was largely, as Morton said, 'a radical appendage to

³⁸¹B. Porter, 'The Edwardians and their Empire', Edwardian England, (Read, ed.), Chapter Eight.

³⁸²Cf. his ready acceptance of German biblical criticism during his Brighton days.

³⁸³Indeed the Liberal decline became more apparent in the results of the General Elections. In 1906 the results were: 401 Liberal MPs (Labour were to change their name from the Labour Representation Committee to the Labour Party soon after the 1906 general election); 157 Conservatives; 29 Labour; 83 Irish Nationalist - usually the last two firmly supported the Liberals. In the January 1910 election: 275 Liberals; 273 Conservatives; 40 Labour; 82 Irish Nationalist. In the December 1910 election 272 Liberals; 272 Conservatives; 42 Labour and 84 Irish Nationalist. Wood, The British Welfare State, p.14.

Liberalism'.³⁸⁴ It was not seen as a strong political party which could get into government and pass a more congenial Education Act; thus at this stage it was not a real option for many Nonconformists.

1906 was the high-water mark of British Liberalism - they had succeeded in winning a landslide victory at the General Election. Optimism was high both for the Liberals and for the Nonconformists who had proved to be the effective backbone to the party. The Primitive Methodists had even postponed their theological students' examinations so that they could canvas for the Liberals.³⁸⁵ There were over two hundred Nonconformists among the newly elected MPs.³⁸⁶ Nonconformists throughout the country were hopeful that their stand for the Liberals would usher in better times, not least through a satisfactory Education Bill. Bitter disappointment was to follow. The power of the House of Lords enhanced the problem. As we have seen in relation to the Education problem, and Lloyd George's budget in 1909, the House of Lords made it extremely difficult for the Liberals to pass their reforms. Moreover, the Liberal party itself had become overconfident in its assurance that Nonconformists would continue to support it - little time or effort was given to representing their interests. The Liberals also underestimated the growth of Labour as a future serious political party,³⁸⁷ and

³⁸⁴Morton, A People's History of England, p.507.

³⁸⁵Currie, Gilbert, Horsley, Churches and Churchgoers, p.111.

³⁸⁶Robbins, 'The Church in Edwardian Society', Edwardian England (Read, ed.), p.120. However, most of the leading MPs were lapsed Christians, including Asquith, John Simon, Augustine Birrell, and Lloyd George. Lloyd George's son had even gone so far as to call his father 'the greatest Bible-thumping pagan of his generation' - Hastings, A History of English Christianity, p.121 quoting R. Lloyd George, Lloyd George (1960), p.10.

³⁸⁷See A. O'Day, The Edwardian Age: Conflict and Stability 1900-1914 (London and Basingstoke, 1979) for an argument for the Liberal decline before 1914 and also for an argument that the labour movement was not so much a threat as often proposed.

failed to appreciate that Nonconformist dissatisfaction could easily lead to support for Labour.³⁸⁸

From the close of the nineteenth century the labour movement had gained momentum. Trade Union membership increased,³⁸⁹ and pressure groups, like the Fabians, heightened the general public's awareness of the great need of the nation, and emphasised the government's weak response. In 1900 the movement had become more organised having established itself as the Independent Labour Party.

The labour movement as a minority, fighting against all odds against injustice, was soon to be an attraction for Nonconformists. By 1907 Labour representatives were aided by total exasperation with the futile promises of the Liberal party. Campbell's letter to Ramsay MacDonald (1866-1937) on 22 June 1907 indicated this discontent:

No Government ever began with better prospects than the present Liberal administration but so far its achievements have been poor in comparison with the promises given at the General Election. Old Age Pensions are postponed for the present. Nothing more is to be done for the starving child or for the unemployed. We are to hear no more of the Miners' Eight Hours Bill or of Education until next year. What is to be done for Temperance nobody knows. The House of Lords is stronger than ever. Woman's Suffrage is more unpopular on the Liberal than on the Tory benches. The Land Bill only touches the fringe of a great and urgent social reform. What is wanted before the next session begins is a large increase in Labour representation. Had it not been for the Labour Party last session the record of the Government would have been poorer than it is. The sooner the working classes wake up to this the better. It is no use trusting to either Liberal or Conservatives for measures which will go

³⁸⁸See D.W. Bebbington, The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics 1870-1914 (London, 1982) for a discussion of dissent being at its strongest at the end of the nineteenth century when it coalesced with the Liberals to form the Nonconformist Conscience. See Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England, for an argument for the liberal decline before the First World War and for a particularly pessimistic understanding of pre-war Britain.

³⁸⁹By 1900 there were 353,070 Trade Union members, and by 1906, 975,182; 1907, 1,049,673, and membership continued to rise until 1926 when membership was 3,352,347. - H. Tracey (ed.), The British Labour Party: Its History, Growth Policy and Leaders, Vol. 1 (London, 1948), pp.3-4.

to the root of the social evils of the day. The only sensible policy to adopt is to refuse alliances with either Party in the constituencies, and work earnestly for the creation of a labour and Socialist party which in the end will be strong enough to produce a Socialist Government.³⁹⁰

David Lloyd George (1863-1945), the Welsh solicitor turned MP, on becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1908 diverted attention away from prices and wages, the real concern of the masses, and focussed on addressing concerns such as the Lords, landowners and brewers. He was out of touch with those who had elected his party to govern, and thus he weakened the loyalty of the masses to Liberalism. Factions appeared within the ranks of the Liberal party itself. The Party had been divided over Home Rule and the Boer War and by 1907 they were divided on the social question. Gladstonian liberals retained their emphasis on *laissez-faire* while 'new' liberals, including Lloyd George, gave a bit more attention to social legislation, and pioneered the welfare state. Such division and frustration contributed to a lack of confidence in the Liberal party, and lessened their credibility.

The homogeneous nature of Nonconformity in relation to politics was also disintegrating, though it had by no means collapsed by 1910. Unquestionably it was the Nonconformist support of the Liberals during the two 1910 general elections over the need for a new Parliament Act that gave Lloyd George victory and limited the powers of the House of Lords. 1910 was also the year when Horne was Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales as well as being elected to Parliament. In 1910 Campbell canvassed for Keir Hardie at Merthyr Tydfil (see p.208) and accordingly was among the first Nonconformists to withdraw his support from the Liberals. More generally, distrust for the Liberals became more apparent especially when Nonconformists realised that there was little prospect of a settlement on the Education issue. Moreover, the Education issue was the only rallying point of Nonconformity at this time; they were no

³⁹⁰Campbell to Ramsay MacDonald, 22 June 1907. LP.GC.16/177,ii.

longer united by particular grievances as they had been in the nineteenth century. From 1836, for example, Nonconformists could issue licences for marriage, and from the 1850s they had been admitted to the ancient universities and from 1871 to university offices in general. Consequently, towards the end of the first decade of the twentieth century Nonconformist political allegiance was divided; the death-knell of Nonconformity as a strong force behind the Liberals duly sounded. Increasingly middle class Nonconformists turned to the Conservatives and working class Nonconformists turned to Labour. What Kent called the 'renaissance of Nonconformity' certainly experienced a sudden death.³⁹¹

The Liberal party was in a poor state and this opened the way for Labour to oust the Liberals to become the second major political party in the country. The rise of Socialism had, therefore, been aided by the Liberals themselves. Campbell had foreseen the Labour party as the political vehicle with the strongest social interest. He unstintingly supported it out of a concern with the wholeness of the sacred and the secular. He believed that the practical aims of what he called 'primitive' Christianity were 'nearly identical' with those of modern Socialism; Socialism may, therefore, be described as the inheritor of true Christianity.³⁹² The first Christian preachers knew no other Gospel than that of a universal brotherhood on earth.³⁹³

A verbatim address by Campbell on 'Spiritual Socialism' is recorded in The Social Mission of the Church.³⁹⁴ He recognised that while, thankfully, the distinction

³⁹¹See J. Kent, 'A late Nineteenth Century Nonconformist Renaissance', Studies in Church History, ed. D. Baker (Oxford, 1977) 354-360.

³⁹²R.J. Campbell, Christianity and the Social Order (London, 1907), p.19. This book was reviewed by J. Seth, in The Hibbert Journal, 6 (1908) 910-917.

³⁹³Christianity and the Social Order, p.ix.

³⁹⁴R.J. Campbell, 'Spiritual Socialism', C.E. Walters (ed.), The Social Mission of the Church (London, 1906) pp.191-201.

between rank based on birth was diminishing, unfortunately, the gulf between the rich and poor was widening. More disheartening was the moral price paid by many in their effort to become 'successful'. Success had been achieved largely through selfishness. Equally distressing was the discontent of the have-nots, not only with the rich but with the Church. In an effort to refocus the Church on her purpose, he quoted a cynic's reflection on clergy who 'preach to the poor and dine with the rich.'³⁹⁵ He sympathised with this recognition, but he insisted that this hypocrisy was essentially contrary to the Gospel and the purpose of the Church. He quoted the passage from Isaiah which Jesus read at the synagogue in Nazareth: 'He hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor ...'³⁹⁶ in an effort to encourage the Church to be true to its Gospel.

Less concerned with palliatives and charity than in his Brighton days, Campbell realised that 'When you have to stand on a pedestal and hand something down to a man, do what you will, you put the man morally beneath you a little bit, whereas he ought to be able to feel self-respect in earning as you.'³⁹⁷ He had certainly moved towards a socialism 'of' the workers rather than 'for' the workers. The 'poor houses' robbed a person of independence and self-esteem, when every man was entitled to the produce of his own labour and every man who was willing to work ought to have the opportunity.³⁹⁸

Campbell's distress with the social order contributed to his conclusion that 'The Social Gospel is not the whole Gospel ... it is a large part of it, and it is that part which for the greater number of the community makes possible the rest.'

³⁹⁵'Spiritual Socialism', p.192.

³⁹⁶'Spiritual Socialism', p.194.

³⁹⁷'Spiritual Socialism', p.196.

³⁹⁸'Spiritual Socialism', p.196 and p.198.

Increasingly Campbell strengthened his association with organised politics. On 26 March 1907, he addressed a Labour Party meeting in Liverpool³⁹⁹. In July 1907 it was rumoured that he had been invited to contest the Cardiff seat on behalf of Labour.⁴⁰⁰ However, in an interview with The Times reported on 25 July 1907, Campbell said: 'This is the first I have heard of it and I think I had better say nothing about it.' Nevertheless, he did go to Cardiff the following week and undertook Hardie's engagements there, owing to the politician's ill health. In November 1909 there was another rumour that Campbell proposed to stand as Socialist candidate for Cardiff at the next General Election. Amusingly, this was again news to him,⁴⁰¹ though he canvassed for Hardie at Merthyr Tydfil in the run up to the January 1910 General Election.⁴⁰² However, Rhondda Williams said:

R.J. in my judgment, was not a success on the secular platform. I heard him several times at Labour meetings. We spoke at the same gathering in the Leeds coliseum, and in a great hall at Pontypridd, and also at a meeting in Harrogate. Neither time could I feel that R.J. was really happy.⁴⁰³

Brockway expressed the same sentiment, Campbell's speeches, he said, 'were thin politically and made little impression on convinced Socialists, but upon the outside public, particularly those with a religious background, they had an extraordinary effect.'⁴⁰⁴

³⁹⁹The Christian World, 21 March (1907) 3.

⁴⁰⁰The Times, 26 July (1907) 5.

⁴⁰¹The Christian World, 18 November (1909) 3.

⁴⁰²S. Mayor, The Churches and the Labour Movement, p.311. Only a scant reference is made to Campbell in W. Stewart, J. Keir Hardie: A Biography (London, 1921).

⁴⁰³Rhondda Williams in The Bradford Telegraph, 3 December (1937), photocopy, no page number.

⁴⁰⁴Brockway, Inside the Left, p.16.

Campbell attended trades union parades, and became a life member at the Finsbury branch of the Independent Labour Party.⁴⁰⁵ In 1908 he was elected to the executive of the Fabian Society,⁴⁰⁶ but he was always too busy to attend a meeting! He championed the cause of Socialism primarily from his pulpit,⁴⁰⁷ and he reached a wide audience with his publications.

In Christianity and the Social Order Campbell urged the Church to consider 'primitive' Christian thought where other-worldliness was wholly absent, and emphasis was on the establishment of the kingdom of God in this world. Jesus 'never says a word about going to heaven, for the plain and simple reason that all His hopes were bound up with the realisation of heaven here.' Jesus also spoke of an 'ideal social order on earth when He preached the Kingdom of God, and ... He was driven to do so by His clear perception of the ills under which His countrymen suffered in a time when justice for the oppressed was seldom to be had.'⁴⁰⁸ Jesus's message passed on to the early Church whose preaching was of a 'belief in the coming of an ideal social order in which man would no longer feel any desire to strive against or injure one another. The superstitions about the dramatic second coming, the general resurrection, and the catastrophic nature of the change which would then take place, need not deceive us in the least.'⁴⁰⁹

Campbell advocated that the ideal human society would come from supernatural revolution, not social evolution, even in 1907. Yet it would be a 'revolution' in

⁴⁰⁵Smith, The London Heretics, p.212. See also P.R. Thompson, Socialists, Liberals and Labour: The Struggle for London 1885-1914 (London, 1967). Sorensen was mistaken in his belief that Campbell was President of the Finsbury I.L.P. - the late Lord Sorensen to Professor Keith Robbins, 7 December 1970.

⁴⁰⁶The Fabian Society Archives are held at Nuffield College Library, Oxford.

⁴⁰⁷This was evident as early as 1903, in his sermon 'Christianity and the Social Order', City Temple Sermons, Chapter Eight.

⁴⁰⁸Christianity and the Social Order, p.87 and p.85.

⁴⁰⁹Christianity and the Social Order, p.120.

which the kingdom of God on earth would proceed from the working of God within mankind; it would be a revolution in mankind's spirit away from selfish motives to social concern. While Campbell's socialism was based, at this time, on the doctrine of Divine Immanence, his use of the word 'revolution' hints to an 'Incarnational' theology which he endorsed more strongly from the turn of the decade. Thus Campbell believed that Socialism was part of God's work. In favour of 'communal ownership and administration of the sources of wealth ...'⁴¹⁰ he deplored privatisation of natural resources. Privatisation, he maintained, was not democratic since it put the power of capital into the hands of a few and wealth meant power over life, and power over life was necessary to a fuller life.⁴¹¹

He saw the great gap between rich and poor as contrary to the Gospel. Thus he proposed taxing profits and safeguarding the interests of the labour force by fixing a minimum wage in every established industry.⁴¹² Taxes could, he said, rise for the rich because they could afford it, and since they had made their money from a system that produced paupers, they should have to pay more than those who had to go without gain - gain did not rightfully belong to the rich: 'He has no real right to the lions share of the communal income.'⁴¹³

Campbell was more than a preacher speaking and writing on the social order. On descending the spiral stairs from his grand marble pulpit and removing his long black cloak, he mounted the platform at Labour party functions. He gave an address at Balham, under the auspices of the South London Independent Labour Party Council in November 1907, an address which was published as a pamphlet

⁴¹⁰Christianity and the Social Order, p.222.

⁴¹¹Christianity and the Social Order, p.236.

⁴¹²This was to happen for four trades - tailoring, the manufacture of chains, lace and paper boxes - in 1909, with the Trade Board Act.

⁴¹³Christianity and the Social Order, 225.

entitled 'Socialism'. He said that 'Socialists must realize that Socialism is a religion ...' Moreover, Socialism was Christian since it tended towards human brotherhood, hoped for a wider life for all, and encouraged the highest development of the individual. Individuals should be concerned with the upbuilding of the whole since there was no room for selfishness and for the artificial barriers which privilege had erected between people.

Based on Jesus's words 'I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly' the address remarkably resembled Christianity and the Social Order. Hearers and readers were urged to search for the root cause of the social evils which left nearly a third of the total population of the country on or below the 'poverty line' - that line of earnings not exceeding about a guinea a week.⁴¹⁴

Frustration was directed to the idle rich, as these were mainly the one in every twenty people who had no occupation. Once again Campbell admonished the monopoly of natural resources by the few, which meant the exploitation of the many. In its place he advocated that 'The natural resources, which are as necessary to the community as the air you breathe, ought to be as free as the air.'⁴¹⁵ He favoured nationalisation, and he pleaded for the care of the disabled and weak, without the taint of pauperism. He took some consolation from measures like Old Age Pensions and free education as proof that the country was moving in the right direction, albeit very slowly.

Campbell certainly 'theologised' politics, and avoided the 'secularisation' of religion. He thought that as politics is about life, and as life is a gift, so God gave mankind a political responsibility. This view, no doubt, partly stemmed from his

⁴¹⁴R.J. Campbell, Socialism (London, 1907), p.9.

⁴¹⁵Socialism, p.12.

belief in the essential unity of the universe, and of the world and God. He insisted that everything possible must be done to make life full, and fullness necessitated the satisfaction of spiritual and physical needs. A God of love cannot be preached when the poor are allowed to starve, when there is a means to alleviate their suffering. His sympathies echoed the words of the prophet Micah: 'and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?'⁴¹⁶

Campbell was convinced that the social gospel was of universal concern, and as such it extended across denominational barriers and all political parties. The true object of Christianity was 'the realisation of a universal brotherhood on earth, a social order in which every individual would be free to do his best for all and find his true happiness therein.'⁴¹⁷ Christians were, therefore, to recognise, and be thankful, that this was also the fundamental principle of Socialism.

The Women's Movement

Campbell's social concern extended to an enthusiastic support for the women's movement. This concern derived from his keen sense of justice, and his Nonconformist upbringing with its stress on the rights of the individual, and the equality of all before God. Accordingly, he was among the Vice Presidents of the Free Church Suffrage Movement with John Clifford as President. In a sermon published by The Free Church Suffrage Times, he declared 'God is neither mother nor father' for God has no sex, then offered the rather contradictory statement: 'He is without sex, or rather, with both.'⁴¹⁸

Nationally and internationally women had begun to press for their rights. Gone were the days when women quietly accepted that they were left to the mercy of

⁴¹⁶Micah 6:8.

⁴¹⁷Christianity and the Social Order, p.174.

⁴¹⁸The Free Church Suffrage Times, January (1915) 5.

the male population. The first woman to organise the women's movement and make it plausible was Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928). In 1889 she formed the Women's Franchise League, and in 1903 she was persuaded by her daughter, Christabel, to found the Women's Social and Political Union, a more militant organisation. Initially the women's movement advocated its cause through legal means; the women interrupted meetings, demonstrated and button-holed cabinet ministers. Violence increased, however, especially after Mrs Pankhurst's meeting with the Prime Minister, Henry Campbell-Bannerman, in May 1906. The meeting convinced her that the vote for women would not be secured from the Liberal Government.

The demand for women's rights were voiced by many men, under the auspices of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage.⁴¹⁹ It was on the occasion of one of their meetings on 17 December 1907 at the Queen's Hall, London, that Campbell delivered a forceful address on 'Women's Suffrage and the Social Evil'. On this occasion he was preaching to the converted, but he achieved a wider audience when the address was published by the Women's Freedom League in 1909.⁴²⁰

During this speech Campbell revealed his agreement with the Constitution of the Women's Freedom League whose objectives were:

To secure for women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁹I have been unable to trace any documents of this Society.

⁴²⁰R.J. Campbell's, Women's Suffrage and the Social Evil (London, 1909). Also quoted in Dale A. Johnson, Women in English Religion 1700-1925 (New York and Toronto, 1983), pp.261-265. See also The Christian World, 20 March (1912) 403 and 27 March (1912) 418 for Campbell on the women's movement.

⁴²¹Women's Suffrage and the Social Evil (London, 1909), p.2 and The Church Militant, March (1918) 31.

He believed that the only reason women's suffrage was being prevented was pure selfishness by those against the suffragists. Such people, Campbell maintained (perhaps rather unfairly on those whose reasons were governed by conscience and conviction), were acting from selfish motives. Opponents to women's suffrage were not acting from any real desire to safeguard the interests of women or even 'by any patriotic solicitude for the future of the country'. Rather, they were afraid that should women secure the vote it would be a big step in the direction of ending the economic and social dependence of women upon men.⁴²² Moreover, he said: 'Of all the objections that have been offered to the demand for the enfranchisement of women, there is not one which appeals to any higher motive than selfishness ... men like female subservience.'⁴²³

Campbell's speech on 'Women's Suffrage and the Social Evil' was based on prostitution, the 'Social Evil'. Prostitution had 'enticed' scores of thousands of women in London alone. The root of prostitution was economic maladjustment; women sold themselves to men - the sources of wealth. By having money, men kept women at an inferior level, dependent upon their 'generosity', and that women were 'more or less the private property of the men' abhorred Campbell. He was further frustrated that single women who wished to pursue a career were unrepresented in labour, and he found it deplorable that working women were taxed for public purposes while having no say in the expenditure of their contributions.⁴²⁴

Campbell was convinced that the best way of lifting women from their present subservient status was to give them political power so that they could represent their own interests. He was assured that women were capable of the task, since

⁴²²Women's Suffrage and the Social Evil, p.3.

⁴²³The Free Church Suffrage Times, 7 October (1913) 61.

⁴²⁴Women's Suffrage and the Social Evil, p.4 and p.5 respectively.

when given the chance they had shown their abilities in industry and public life. 'Honour, prudence, and fair play unite to bid us take the enlightened course',⁴²⁵ and include the principle of comradeship at work into the hustings.

The women's movement was making little headway towards securing the vote. Mrs Pankhurst and her followers' violence intensified, and she was arrested in 1908 and again in 1909. In 1911 she was arrested for window breaking, and in 1912, while in prison, she went on hunger strike. Other imprisoned suffragists followed her example and in so doing precipitated the Cat and Mouse Act (1913). The Act did not solve the problem since on release from prison the women resumed their violent campaign. When released, Mrs Pankhurst began a campaign of arson which resulted in a term of three year's penal servitude from 1913.

During her imprisonment, Campbell's pamphlet, 'Some Economic Aspects of the Women's Suffrage Movement', was published by the Women's Freedom League. He refrained from endorsing or condoning all that had been done by the militant suffragists, but he expressed his belief that things only got done when the privileged were fearful. This fear was caused by militant tactics and law-breaking. He did not condemn the law-breaking since he stressed that laws were not sacrosanct in a democratic country. Democracy implied that the laws received the consent of those governed, and since women did not consent to these laws which had been made for them by the male sex, they were 'under no moral obligation to obey' them.⁴²⁶ Furthermore, history had shown, Campbell insisted, that no far-reaching reform had been secured without some kind of law-breaking. Moreover, he was convinced that the women's movement had been 'getting somewhere' because of their methods. At least wide coverage in the press had brought the

⁴²⁵Women's Suffrage and the Social Evil, p.6.

⁴²⁶R.J. Campbell, Some Economic Aspects of the Women's Suffrage Movement (London, 1913), p.1.

matter to the attention of the public.

Once again Campbell justified and exonerated the desire of women for a wider and fuller life, seeing the economic situation as the cause of the trouble. He called attention to the injustice of the fact that Britain had a total of about seven million women who were responsible for the care of the home and children, yet for all their hours of work, during which they worked at least as hard as the husband, they had 'no recognized right to any standard wage as remuneration' for their services.⁴²⁷ Moreover, he thought it unjust that the husband should control the wealth of a household (when a wife's work was just as valuable) since in many cases this made the wife slave to the man, and totally at his mercy.⁴²⁸

Campbell also expressed his wish for some state recognition of paid maternity leave, especially as many women retained their jobs right up until their confinement and then resumed their employment from ten to fourteen days after the birth. He argued that there was 'nothing more important to the communal well-being than that of ensuring as far as possible that our future citizens shall be well born'.⁴²⁹ But, he maintained, the present conditions were not fostering or aiding such health. On the contrary, women's quick return to work led to the deaths of many children - 'one in every seven children born in this country dies before it is a year old ...'⁴³⁰ Furthermore, from a report issued by the London branch of the Christian Social Union, he quoted the statistic that mortality among bottle-fed children greatly exceeded the mortality among those nursed by the

⁴²⁷Some Economic Aspects of the Women's Suffrage Movement, p.2 and p.3.

⁴²⁸Campbell was keen for legal changes regarding marriage and divorce: 'No sacrosanct considerations should be allowed to stand in the way of such necessary alteration of the existing law as would prevent the enormous amount of domestic unhappiness which exists at present because of the difficulty of obtaining release from an unworthy partner.' Christianity and the Social Order, p.272.

⁴²⁹Some Economic Aspects of the Women's Suffrage Movement, pp.6-7.

⁴³⁰Some Economic Aspects of the Women's Suffrage Movement, p.6.

mother - 230.4 per thousand compared with 145.1.⁴³¹ He cleverly pointed out the irony of allowing their children - who could have been helped earlier and so become of benefit to the state - to become financial 'burdens' later in life.

Campbell argued for the rights of women to a training for work in the labour market, especially since some women were as good as men in their jobs, and there were, after all, 'over a million more women than men in the United Kingdom ...'⁴³² He also recognised that for the women in employment the trade unions did little to represent them, and so he maintained that until they got the vote women would remain significantly underpaid in contrast to the men for doing the same jobs. He cited the case of women teachers who, as a rule, were paid from one-third to one-half less than their male counterparts. While he recognised that men were more often the breadwinners for their families, he stressed the fact that every tenth woman in the country was a widow and so too would often be the main, perhaps the only, breadwinner for a family. Accordingly he advocated the creation of wages boards to ensure that wages and work were fairly distributed. He concluded that allowing women into politics would prove a 'humanizing influence and a great additional moral force.'⁴³³

However, there was still political reluctance to extending the franchise to women, and on being released from prison in 1914, after only a year, Mrs Pankhurst continued her campaigns. She was given her freedom but only to face war. Yet it was a war which accelerated the women's cause. Women in 1914-18 more easily entered industry and other areas of work simply because they were needed. Women over thirty were finally given the vote in 1918 under the Representation of

⁴³¹Some Economic Aspects of the Women's Suffrage Movement, p.6.

⁴³²Some Economic Aspects of the Women's Suffrage Movement, p.7.

⁴³³Some Economic Aspects of the Women's Suffrage Movement, p.12.

the People Act,⁴³⁴ (and women over twenty-one in 1928). The long struggle of women helped by many men supporters, had proved tough but it was not in vain. Without the war, however, women would undoubtedly not have been given the vote so soon, and their struggle to be admitted to more prestigious offices would have continued for longer. After 1918 the struggle was not over; the norm takes a long time to change and equal opportunities are still being actively sought by many women and men. The door had nevertheless opened in 1918; women had certainly gained more control over their lives.

The Free Catholic Movement⁴³⁵

The Free Catholic Movement was an attempt to 'translate the message of the Free Churches into Catholic rather than Protestant terms'.⁴³⁶ It attempted to apply the ideals of the Unitarian, Rev J.M. Lloyd Thomas (1868-1955),⁴³⁷ as outlined in his A Free Catholic Church (1907). It was 'a new kind of high-churchmanship, aesthetic, and warmly socialist, rather than credal, sacramental and Tory.'⁴³⁸ Moreover, it was an interdenominational movement combining Protestant and Catholic, as well as clergy and laity.

⁴³⁴After this Mrs Pankhurst left the I.L.P., which she had joined in 1892, and died a Conservative candidate for Parliament. In 1918 over twenty-one million people had the vote as opposed to less than eight million in 1910—Hastings, A History of English Christianity, p.21.

⁴³⁵See J.M. Lloyd Thomas, A Free Catholic Church (London, 1907), and his 'The Free Catholic Ideal', The Hibbert Journal, 5 (1907) 597 and 6 (1908) 431. See also Bruce Findlow, 'The Free Catholic Movement', Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, Vol.11 No.4 (1958) 147-162, and C.G. Bolam, J. Goring, R.L. Short, & R. Thomas, The English Presbyterians (1968), pp.281-283.

⁴³⁶F.H.A.M., 'The Free Catholic Movement and John Stone Burgess', The Inquirer, 3 April (1948)

⁴³⁷Lloyd Thomas was a solicitor before entering Manchester College Oxford in 1865 to train for the ministry. He was minister at Liscard, Cheshire (1898-1900), High Pavement Chapel (1900-12) and the Old Meeting Church, Birmingham (1912-31).

⁴³⁸Bolam, Goring, Short, Thomas, The English Presbyterians, p.281.

Lloyd Thomas had been influenced by J.J. Tayler's pamphlet 'A Catholic Christian Church: The Want of Our Time', as well as by Richard Baxter who had declared himself a 'Catholique Christian'. James Martineau's 'Church-Life? or Sect-Life?' (1859)⁴³⁹ also exerted an influence on Lloyd Thomas's thinking. Like Martineau, Lloyd Thomas in 1916 declared that Unitarianism interested him less and less and that he no longer called himself a Unitarian, though he added that there was no other communion which appealed to him more.

Lloyd Thomas was the luminary personality of the Free Catholic Movement. The movement had gradually taken shape from 1912, and owing to the support he had received both within and outside Unitarianism, in January 1916 The Free Catholic: The Monthly Organ of the Free Catholic Movement was launched. Lloyd Thomas was editor. The first volume was published in Manchester and subsequent issues were published in Birmingham. The publication received no encouragement from the Unitarian journal, The Inquirer: 'We fear that we must postpone any criticism in detail of its programme, partly because we have a deep distaste for new sectional movements at the present time, but chiefly because the magazine itself gives us very scanty information' - primarily because it is only sixteen pages long and the articles are short.⁴⁴⁰

On the whole The Inquirer published critical letters on the Free Catholic movement.⁴⁴¹ Indeed readers were informed that correspondence on the movement was closed from 26 February 1916. The main criticism expressed was the fear that the movement fostered further divisions within the Church; other criticisms were that not all Free Churchmen welcomed the sacramentalism, and many

⁴³⁹J. Martineau, Essays, Reviews and Addresses (1891) II, pp.381-420.

⁴⁴⁰The Inquirer, 15 January (1916) 31-32.

⁴⁴¹The Inquirer, 29 January (1916) 55, 5 February (1916) 67, 19 February (1916) 91, 26 February (1916) 105.

doubted whether a sacramental 'Catholic' system could operate effectively in a system without dogma. Yet the movement did have the loyalty of many people and the Society of Free Catholics was formed in 1916, with Lloyd Thomas as President. Its first annual conference took place in early 1918.

Campbell himself had certainly sympathised with Lloyd Thomas in the early days of the movement. He was in accord with the aim of the movement; the belief that Church unity should be sought in devotional practice, rather than dogma. In this respect Campbell followed the thought of the Anglican son of a Unitarian minister, F.D. Maurice (1805-72), in The Kingdom of God (1838). Thus Campbell assented to Lloyd Thomas's exhortation that a Free Catholic Church would select symbols that devotionally unite, not creeds that separate.⁴⁴² In Campbell's words 'what I wanted was theological freedom combined with such a view of our individual and corporate relation to Christ as the sacramental system of Catholicism had historically given.'⁴⁴³

Campbell's City Temple ministry reflected his sympathy for a Free Catholic Church. He made use of the Book of Common Prayer which he knew by heart, and the choir were gowned, emphasising 'wholeness'.⁴⁴⁴ One only has to compare this with his statement at Kensington Church on a Thursday evening in February 1903 to see that his view of the Church had certainly become more Catholic during his City Temple pastorate:

... [when] we Nonconformists try to imitate as closely as possible the Gothic style of building for our churches, we are giving up something.

⁴⁴²Lloyd Thomas, A Free Catholic Church, p.89.

⁴⁴³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.253.

⁴⁴⁴Another Congregational Church to have a gowned choir, following the example of the City Temple, was Penge, under Rev E.J. Barson. However, Barson's son informed the author (H.C. Barson's letter of 20 February 1989) that the reason for such an introduction was for aesthetic reasons; a way of drawing attention to the whole rather than to the individual.

We are attempting, unconsciously, perhaps, to express the catholic ideal in which the altar at which the priest offers sacrifice stands at the East End of the church, and the pulpit from which the prophet speaks is placed at the side.

He went on to say that his ideal church was like Kensington Chapel - built four-square and with the pulpit in the centre.⁴⁴⁵

Campbell, however, was the first to desert the Free Catholic cause, probably in 1915⁴⁴⁶ with his transition into the Anglican Church. Campbell had come to believe that in many ways a Free Catholicism was a contradiction in terms; it was difficult to fully enter into Catholic worship without endorsing the creeds and dogma of Catholicism. His desertion was a severe blow for the group; Lloyd Thomas felt the loss acutely:

Has he not seen ... when Nonconformists have knelt before the altar to receive the Blessed Sacrament how they sometimes broke down in tears? If that was not the living touch of the living Christ upon their souls and the most holy and real communion - I do not know what is. I cannot conceive what more even the Roman Mass can be for a sincere and devout Roman.⁴⁴⁷

Lloyd Thomas was only one of the 'high' Free Churchmen who believed that Campbell's 'conversion' to Anglicanism, and thus his acceptance of the creeds was a betrayal of what Free Catholics stood for. Lloyd Thomas's 'anger' was aggravated by personal reasons; he had stood by Campbell when many ministerial colleagues and laity denounced him. When the Congregational pulpit in Nottingham was closed to Campbell during the New Theology controversy, Lloyd

⁴⁴⁵The British Weekly, 26 February (1903) 521.

⁴⁴⁶Campbell was not a member of the Society, since the Society was formed in 1916 the same year that he loosened his commitments to a 'Free' Catholic cause, yet his article 'Religion and the New Mentality' did feature in The Free Catholic, January (1918) 3-6.

⁴⁴⁷J.M. Lloyd Thomas, Anglo-Catholic or Free Catholic: Comment on R.J. Campbell's Spiritual Pilgrimage (Birmingham, 1916) p.11.

Thomas invited him to preach at the High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham. Indeed, Lloyd Thomas declared in Welsh, after a discussion with Campbell, that he had certainly 'seen the colour of Campbell's bowels'.⁴⁴⁸

The Society, however, did not collapse on Campbell's withdrawal since he had been less involved than figures such as Lloyd Thomas and W.E. Orchard. By 1916 Orchard was regarded as a leading member of the movement. Orchard had keenly encompassed liturgy along with ritualism and symbolism in King's Weigh House, where he had been minister since 1914. Holy Communion was central to worship and the altar was moved in the church so that it became the focus of attention. Orchard was President of the Society from 1918 to 1921.⁴⁴⁹

Orchard had contributed to The Free Catholic regularly from March 1916 and the strength of his personality influenced the Society in a pronounced Catholic direction. By 1918 the objectives of the Society, as outlined on the cover of The Free Catholic, had changed. Thus the first line was altered from 'a Free Catholic Church', to 'the One Holy Catholic Church'. Further, in 1920 Rev Douglas Muir became the first, and last, Free Catholic Friar, though only one short journey in sandals and a habit is recorded in The Free Catholic.

By 1922 the Society was in decline. Lloyd Thomas in the January edition of The Free Catholic said that Nonconformity, as a whole, had not supported the Society, and in the December 1922 issue he gave an account of the poor state of both finance and membership. In September 1925 membership was given as 386 in the Annual Report, though some of these had lapsed. By 1927 The Free Catholic appealed for money, and from this edition onwards members had to pay for their

⁴⁴⁸Miss Lloyd Thomas's letter to Professor Keith Robbins, 14 July 1972.

⁴⁴⁹Kaye and Mackenzie, W.E. Orchard, p.59, and see Chapter 5, 'The King's Weigh House Church 1914-1919: The New Catholicism', for a fuller account of Orchard's connections with the movement.

copies. However, in February 1927 the magazine said that: 'our members with very few exceptions have not ordered the *Free Catholic* for 1927'. Also by 1927 Orchard was moving closer to Roman Catholicism, and J.A. Kensit had implicated 'Catholicizing' with the resignation of two members of the Executive of the Society, including the Chairman, the Baptist, Rev T.A. Bampton. In response Orchard contributed an article. In it he said that he had tried to dissociate himself from the leaders of the movement so as not to harm the Society in any way by making it synonymous with his views. He even offered to resign and not contribute to the magazine so frequently. He declared: 'The way in which the movement is constantly identified with myself is no fault of mine.'⁴⁵⁰

The damage, however, was done. Membership continued to decline. The last issue of The Free Catholic appeared in December 1927; it ceased without notification after having, in December 1927, announced the Annual Conference for 3 January 1928. It is very doubtful that the Society met on this occasion, or again. Five years later Orchard became a Roman Catholic. Lloyd Thomas stood alone. After the formation of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches in 1928, Lloyd Thomas took his Church out of the Unitarian Assembly, and his Church alone adopted A Free Church Book of Common Prayer (1929), though it was used elsewhere by individuals for private devotion.⁴⁵¹ Lloyd Thomas continued to be criticised and F. Maddison of Ealing wrote: '

Mr Lloyd Thomas has long been a puzzle; he is now a pathetic figure. To use the language of Catholicism, he is a mere schismatic, more isolated than ever. He has cut himself off from that historical Unitarianism to which he pays so glowing a tribute, he is apart from Anglican Modernism, and to the Catholic he is anathema. The Old Meeting has just become the Church of Lloyd Thomas ...'⁴⁵²

⁴⁵⁰The Free Catholic, April (1907) 62.

⁴⁵¹This book received a scathing review in The Inquirer, (1929) 594-595.

⁴⁵²The Inquirer, (1930) 179.

The Society, like the Christian League before it, suffered on account of its leadership. Campbell and Orchard respectively, two men whose ideas had been identified with their 'Society' were strong individuals and unconsciously, maybe, they split their Society and hastened its downfall. There were other reasons, however, for the collapse of the Society of Free Catholics. Campbell's withdrawal from the group set a precedent for members to question the effectiveness of the Society, and/or to simply drift away as differences between members became increasingly apparent. The different motives, that is, socialism, mysticism, poetry, liturgy, which had brought them together, became a source of disagreement and contention. For some, the Unitarian influence hindered it; for others the Romish tendency of others was alarming. While the congregation at King's Weigh House, for example, on the whole supported Orchard's Catholic tendency, Lloyd Thomas's congregation at Birmingham were divided and there was a large reduction in membership. Moreover, being as the Society had never attracted a very large following, that is not much more than three hundred, the Society suffered enormously and crumbled quickly once decline had set in.

Furthermore, the Society was divided over its attitude to creeds and orders. As Orchard said, there was no agreement as to whether 'Free Catholicism'

... was a new kind of Catholicism, or simply a way of interpreting and commending historic Catholicism, and as a means of preparing for final reunion with Rome. To me, it was, finally, the latter; but to others anything but that; and if it was anything clearly conceived at all, then something quite new, which was to emerge from a synthesis of Free Church principles with Catholic worship. This had been my own early interpretation, but the practical question soon emerged as to how far worship was to include, exclude or approximate towards that peculiar to Rome; while doctrine and organisation were found to be involved and entangled at every point.⁴⁵³

Thus Campbell's own reservations about the underlying belief in a Free Catholicism resurfaced in other members. Its work, however, was important. The

⁴⁵³Orchard, From Faith to Faith, p.151.

Society was even claimed as one of the three major trends in worship,⁴⁵⁴ and Davies said that it was particularly strong between 1910 and 1929. Indeed Grant described the movement as the 'flowering of liberal ritualism.'⁴⁵⁵ Its work was certainly not in vain. While it had only published one Tract by Orchard on the subject of the Church, Orchard's The Order of Divine Service for Public Worship (1919), and Lloyd Thomas's (ed.) Free Church Book of Common Prayer (1929), are two legacies and important efforts of Free Churchmen to endorse 'Catholicism'. In many ways 'its most enduring legacy was the demonstration that a free religious faith, rooted in mysticism, is not, of necessity, the ally of anti-symbolism and anti-sacramentalism.'⁴⁵⁶ The Society had an admirable and yet difficult task. It succeeded in 'binding' members from diverse church traditions to their common aim of a united church.⁴⁵⁷ It also revealed the earnestness of many people for 'union', and not simply for friendship and indifference to other churches. It also showed the effort required and the difficulties that complicate the whole issue. The ecumenical movement can learn much from the experiences of the Society of Free Catholics.

The Pioneer Preachers' Order

At a meeting in the City Temple parlour, chaired by Albert Dawson, on 3 February 1910,⁴⁵⁸ it was decided to launch a Pioneer Preachers' Order, 'a natural

⁴⁵⁴The other two were (1) Anti-Historical and Anti-Authoritarian, c.1900-1935, with W.B. Selbie, C.J. Cadoux, and A. Peel, and (2) Reformed Churchmanship, c.1936. Davies, Worship and Theology in England - The Ecumenical Century, p.349.

⁴⁵⁵J.W. Grant, Free Churchmanship in England 1870-1940 (London, 1940), p.257.

⁴⁵⁶F.H.A.M., The Inquirer, 3 April (1948).

⁴⁵⁷In 1924 the Executive Committee of the Society comprised of five non-denominational members, three Anglicans, five congregationalists, two Methodists, and one Church of Scotland.

⁴⁵⁸A.J. Heale, 'The Pioneer Preacher's Community', The Inquirer, 10 June (1961) 10. It was not launched in 1912 on Campbell's return from America as the late Lord Sorensen had informed Professor Keith Robbins. The Minute books of the Pioneer Preachers are located at Dr Williams's Library.

consequence of the New Theology movement'.⁴⁵⁹ A committee was formed on 15 February, and there was a public appeal for money and Pioneers in The Christian Commonwealth on 22 February. Campbell's brainchild was immediately well received and initially accommodation for the Order was provided in Highbury Quadrant, London. Aided by well-wishers, and the City Temple congregation, on 25 March 1911 the first four 'Brothers'⁴⁶⁰ commenced their community life at the residential Hostel; Campbell was Warden. The Order was interdenominational.

The Pioneers moved to a new hostel at 28 King's Square, London, and community life was quickly established. Morning and evening devotions were conducted at 8.30 am and 10.00 pm by the Brothers. In May, a small furnished building which seated about twenty people, was consecrated a chapel. On this occasion Campbell dressed each brother with a gown and cap, and the residents, with invited guests, took the Sacraments together. Rules for the community were kept to a minimum, and decisions were taken in 'chapter', with the Prior presiding;⁴⁶¹ initially only males were allowed in the 'Hostel', though it seems that not all the Pioneers were resident. Heale, describes the 'Brothers in residence' taking their stand at public speaking places.⁴⁶²

The Brothers went out in pairs to conduct nationwide missions - reaching the Isle of Wight, South Wales, and Manchester. The Order only expected a small maintenance in return for their services.⁴⁶³ Back in London preaching campaigns and theological instruction were the main features of the day. Centres around

⁴⁵⁹The Inquirer, 10 June (1961) 10.

⁴⁶⁰Francis Barrett-Ayres, Fred Cottier, E.O. Willey, Stanley Mossop. In April and May, Charles Piper, Alfred J. Heale and Claude Taylor joined the community.

⁴⁶¹The first Prior was Heale, a Pioneer from 1910 to 1917, who was elected in June 1911 as Prior.

⁴⁶²Heale, The Inquirer, 10 June (1961) 10.

⁴⁶³The Inquirer, 16 May (1910) 15.

London, at East and West Ham, and South Norwood, established by the Progressive League, were sustained by the Pioneers.

When Campbell resigned as President of the Liberal Christian League, on 10 March 1912 (see p.199), the Pioneers knew that the time would shortly arrive when he would resign as their warden. They were right, and his resignation came several months later. The Pioneer missions and League work nevertheless continued. Campbell had suggested that the Pioneers seek admission into the Unitarian Church,⁴⁶⁴ and in September 1912 the Unitarian, Dr Tudor Jones, of Unity Church, Islington, and lecturer for the 'league', was asked to become warden of the community. With the permission of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Dr Jones was duly appointed. In the November, an application having been made by the Order, the Brothers received recognition from the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

After being enveloped under the Unitarian wing, the Pioneer Preachers were 'responsible for the missionary work and oversight of several Unitarian churches in London and elsewhere.'⁴⁶⁵ Their appointments depended on the consent of the churches concerned, since expenses had to be paid. Applications could be made, however, for grant aid to the London District Unitarian Society, as in Sorensen's case. Many churches did agree to the financial responsibility, especially when, as in the case of Walthamstow, they were assured of pastoral oversight. The Pioneers were so successful that many churches relied upon them on a long term basis. Thus, Forest Gate was wholly run by Pioneers from 1912 to 1934 except during the years between 1922 and 1928 when the lay pastor, E.G. Green was in charge.

⁴⁶⁴See the late Lord Sorensen's papers, in the House of Lords (Sor/160/c), and the Report of Rev J.A. Pearson of the London District Unitarian Society regarding Sorensen and Walthamstow Church.

⁴⁶⁵The Essex Hall Year Book (1920).

The Order continued to attract about one or two new Brothers every year who replaced Brothers who had left for ministerial training or other reasons. Their period of residence and their work in London churches gave these men, who believed they had a call to the ministry, an opportunity to arrive at firm convictions.

Under the wardenship of Campbell the Order had been practically self-organised, but after it was financed by the Unitarian Church some denominational control became inevitable. During the summer of 1913, the Pioneers engaged in the Van Missions, organised by Rev Thomas Spedding, who had been appointed warden of the community in the autumn. The Van Mission began in 1907, with Spedding as the founding father, under the auspices of the Missionary Conference. Like the Pioneers it was taken over by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Its aim was to spread Unitarianism, leaving it to hearers to judge the truth of what was said. Its members were successful in gathering crowds to hear them, but failed to the extent that they often fell away owing to insufficient nurturing 'fellowship'. Both the Pioneers and the Van Missions worked together, but the former outlived the latter. The ill-health of Spedding, war and inflation, convinced the British and Foreign Unitarian Association⁴⁶⁶ that a less expensive method of reaching the general public should be sought. The work of the Van Missions was, therefore, handed to the District Associations which had less enthusiasm for, and skill to continue the cause.

The Pioneers' work continued to flourish. In March 1914, owing to increasing numbers, a new hostel was secured at 23 Highbury Place which was officially opened on 14 May by J.F.C. Brunner MP. October 1914, however, dealt a severe blow to the Preachers, with the loss of Cottier, Mossop, and Piper (three of the early Brothers) who all entered the Unitarian Home Missionary College,

⁴⁶⁶See The British and Foreign Unitarian Association Report (1919) and J. Roberts, 'The Van Mission', Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society (1978) 193.

Manchester. Fortunately, the blow was not deadly since new recruits kept the Order alive, moreover, that some of the Pioneers faced tribunals because of their conscientious objections to the war, did not deter the Order's work. Pioneers continued their invaluable service and leadership to a number of Unitarian Churches, including Forest Gate, Stratford, Walthamstow,⁴⁶⁷ Dingley Place, Peckham, Bessels Green, Woolwich and Leytonshire. They also undertook preaching appointments in various churches under the preaching plan organised by Pearson, as Secretary of the Order.

'The Pioneer Sisters', B.A. Knight and Lydia Seymour (who later married Heale) made a valuable contribution to the work of the Pioneers during the years 1913 to 1917. Living in Caernarvon Road, Stratford, they were financially supported by the London District Unitarian Society and assisted in the week day activities at Forest Gate, Stratford and Walthamstow. They also organised Conferences for women and clubs such as the Young Women's Guild. It is even recorded that Miss Knight conducted three services at Forest Gate between December 1913 and August 1914.

On 30 September 1933 the arrangement between the Pioneer Preachers and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and thus with Unitarian churches was terminated. The Preachers were, however, cared for; D. Hilton became lay pastor at the Hastings Unitarian Church and shortly afterwards was given full ministerial status. R.W. Sorensen, Pioneer in charge at Walthamstow, from 1913 to 1916, remained as the Church's minister until his death in October 1971.⁴⁶⁸ As the London District Pioneer Associations Broadsheet issued on the occasion of a General Assembly Meeting in 1966 declared: 'Most of the Pioneer Preachers went

⁴⁶⁷The Minute Books are still at Forest Gate, and Stratford, though Walthamstow's are at Dr Williams's Library.

⁴⁶⁸The church building itself, a corrugated iron building, had been closed in 1940. The services were continued in the Secretary's house until her death in 1978.

on to the Unitarian College, Manchester, and to Manchester College, Oxford, to train for the ministry. A few entered other denominations. F. Barrett-Ayres entered the Episcopal Church of Scotland, and several, like Finclair, W.G.E. Castell, and V. Callow, had entered, or were to enter, the Established Church in 1922, 1937 and 1940 respectively.⁴⁶⁹

Campbell had certainly foreseen a real need in the Church and community which the Pioneers ably fulfilled.⁴⁷⁰

Campbell's Breakdown

On 15 July 1914 the news came of Campbell's breakdown, whether it was a spiritual crisis as opposed to a physical or emotional one is unknown. With an unfavourable medical report, he offered his resignation to the office bearers at the City Temple, but they were adamant that he should remain their minister; his resignation was withdrawn. To accommodate for his poor health, arrangements were made for occasional assistance. From the early spring he was assisted by Dr Hugh Black, of New York. However, with the outbreak of war and Black's departure, Campbell was prematurely forced to resume his responsibilities. Disappointed with only occasional assistance, he pressed for a more permanent arrangement. The City Temple office bearers were unenthusiastic, largely owing to a fear of attendance plummeting. The allegiance and loyalty of the congregation had suffered when they were required to travel to the City Temple to hear unknown preachers.⁴⁷¹ Campbell struggled on.

⁴⁶⁹The Inquirer, 16 May (1910) 15.

⁴⁷⁰For much of the information on the Pioneer Preachers I am indebted to Mr H.N. Panting, Treasurer of the Forest Gate Unitarian Church. I am also grateful to Rev Dr Leonard Smith, whose father, Rev J. Harry Smith, was a Pioneer Preacher in the mid-years of the second decade of this century.

⁴⁷¹Drop in attendance may also be attributed to the war, though exact figures are wanting owing to the destruction of the Church papers during the April bombing of the Second World War.

With Our Troops in France - War and the After-math

The First World War failed to produce utopia, resembling in this every human endeavour since the beginning of time.⁴⁷²

Britain's declaration of war against Germany, on 4 August 1914, dramatically changed every sector of human life in Britain.

On the outset of war Britain was in a better military position than in 1900; the lessons from the Boer War were slowly being learned. From 1902 to 1914 the British Army was thoroughly reorganised. New headway was made in equipment. General health and sanitation of the British population had improved and so fitter and more able men were recruited for the war effort. Yet astonishingly out of every nine conscripts (aged 18-40) examined after 1916, only three were fit for fighting, four were totally unfit for service, and two were fit only for support duties.⁴⁷³

The country was unprepared for war theologically, emotionally and economically. On the basis of the current popular idealist philosophy, many theologians of the nineteenth-century Liberal Protestant school stressed the progress of humanity towards God. A progressive nation, it was felt, had too much common sense to wage a horrific war. Stress was laid upon the immanent God, which in time of war tied God too closely with mankind's inhumanity to mankind. Emotionally and psychologically the nation was naturally unprepared for bereavement, uncertainty, injury, fear and hardship. War brought its own social problems - loss of men from the workforce and the integration of women into the job market on a massive scale. Economically the country was unprepared, with insufficient reserve to cover

⁴⁷²A.J.P. Taylor, The First World War (London, 1970, 1st ed. 1963), p.286.

⁴⁷³Wood, The British Welfare State, p.19.

the cost of a full scale, long drawn out war, when resources, man-power and trade were limited. The declaration of war came as a shocking surprise to the British, but even foreknowledge would not have eased the situation.

An idealisation of the pre-war years, and a distorted picture of the Edwardian period emerged. Pre-1914 Britain had been entangled with disputes, a militant women's movement, increasing class antagonism, problems over Ireland, an increasing emphasis on rights more than duties 'comfort than upon character, upon body than soul',⁴⁷⁴ and a pronounced utilitarian outlook. In retrospect, these problems were trivialised and were superseded by 'golden' recollections of the years of peace.

The Church was divided over the war. On recovering from his breakdown Campbell returned to his pulpit in September 1914 and fully supported Britain's entry into the war. Lloyd George delivered his conscription speech at the City Temple, on 10 November 1914, with Free Church leaders including Scott Lidgett, Campbell, John Clifford, and Robertson Nicoll present.⁴⁷⁵

Campbell believed war to be evil and something which 'brutalises men and renders even the most gentle and sensitive of us more or less callous to enormities and cruelties that would have appalled us til hard experience familiarized us with them.'⁴⁷⁶ He was confident that Britain's entry into the war was just. No scruples plagued him about praying for God's blessing on the country's arms.⁴⁷⁷ Robertson

⁴⁷⁴R.J. Campbell, 'The New Outlook', The Modern Churchman, September (1919) 245.

⁴⁷⁵The Manchester Guardian, 11 November (1914) 9.

⁴⁷⁶'The New Outlook', p.245.

⁴⁷⁷With our Troops in France, p.54.

Nicoll once more stood at his side and rallied Free Church support for the British war effort.⁴⁷⁸

The Free Churches, like the wider Church in general, were divided in their reaction to the war.⁴⁷⁹ This made things tense and weakened the Free Church cause. In his attitude towards entry into the war Campbell divorced himself further from his fellow associates of the New Theology movement. New theologians, such as Rhondda Williams, were staunch pacifists. Sorensen and Brockway, as pacifists, felt that Campbell had deserted the logic of the New Theology which they believed advocated pacifism.⁴⁸⁰

For many Nonconformist Christian Socialists, such as Campbell, entry into the war was a corporate stand; while for some Liberal Nonconformists, especially the Gladstonians, it was a different story. For Gladstonian liberals and Nonconformists it was difficult to wage war and maintain liberal principles and the Nonconformist conscience. The Defence of the Realm Act, press censorship and conscription were anathema to the Liberal Nonconformists' firm belief in the 'freedom' of the individual and they could not justify a war with other Christian

⁴⁷⁸After Nicoll's death Campbell wrote: 'Estrangement never modified in the slightest degree my admiration of Sir Williams's prodigious ability, and, as time went on, respect for the sincerity and depth of his religious convictions', The Church of England Newspaper, 11 May (1923)11.

⁴⁷⁹There were 16,500 conscientious objectors to the war—these were largely Free Churchmen. Hastings, A History of English Christianity, p.46. S. Mews, 'Neo-Orthodoxy, Liberalism and War: Karl Barth, P.T. Forsyth and John Oman, 1914-1918', Studies in Church History, Vol. 14 (Oxford, 1977) 363-375, offers an interesting perspective on differing attitudes to war. Following the line of thought of Max Weber, the author rightly argues that differences in behaviour are accountable from a permanent intrinsic character of religious belief - not only in temporary external political situations. Thus Barth was against the war effort; Forsyth and Campbell supported it. For Campbell a theology of immanence did not necessitate pacifism. It is argued that in the First World War there was little connection between belief and behaviour; other factors such as nationality, as in the case of Barth, were of importance.

⁴⁸⁰K. Robbins, 'The Spiritual Pilgrimage of the Rev R.J. Campbell', The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 30 (2) 1979, p.274.

nations. It was, however, Asquith's Liberal government which declared war. Thus the war was another stab in the back for the Liberals; it weakened their cause by highlighting their divisions, and by alienating many of their Nonconformist supporters.

In the decade leading to the war church membership and attendance decreased in relation to population growth. The churches hoped that with the crisis of the war, people would once more turn to religion and fill the pews. In 1914 Luke Paget, Bishop of Stepney, commented that the small numbers of candidates for ordination in February 1915, was because most who may have gone for ordination had given their services to the country.⁴⁸¹

Positively, the secular press in Britain was devoting more space to spiritual subjects, and at the beginning of the war the churches did witness an increase in attendance.⁴⁸² This increase was deceptive since overall the years 1913 to 1917 marked a large fall in actual church membership. Loss of faith and the loss of men in the trenches contributed to this decline. Antagonism to the clergy was increased by feelings of outrage that they were excused from service as combatants, and sat comfortably at home while the nation went to war.⁴⁸³ Ill-feeling towards the Church was also intensified by the fact that trade unionists and shop stewards, for example, were refused exemption from service in the military. Moreover, many clergymen had sat on the tribunals which made these decisions. Clergy, however, had no easy time. They had the soul rending task of

⁴⁸¹S. Mews, 'Spiritual Mobilization in the First World War', Theology, 74 (1971) 260.

⁴⁸²Problems of Life, p.9 and 'The New Outlook', p.246. While attendance may have increased, membership decreased. In 1914 Nonconformist membership stood at 2,003,000; Major Protestants at 5,682,000 and Catholics 2,389,000; by 1918 the membership of these Churches was 1,974,000, 5,563,000 and 2,466,000 respectively. - Currie, Gilbert, Horsley, Churches and Churchgoers, p.31.

⁴⁸³The Times, 19 February (1915) 9.

strengthening the weak, comforting the sorrowing and upbuilding faith; along with dealing with their own 'doubts', stress and loss. Thirty per cent of the officers in the army were sons of clergymen, and by February 1916 thirteen sons from bishops' families had died in war.⁴⁸⁴ Some clergy did enlist on the firing line, while others incurred the hardship and perils of the trenches acting as stretcher-bearers. Many ministers and priests became War Chaplains with the challenge of preaching a God of love in the midst of terror. Scores proved of invaluable service, though, naturally, others proved less capable, as illustrated in Robert Graves's Goodbye to All That (1929).

Campbell made known his willingness to enlist in any capacity in the war effort⁴⁸⁵ but was physically unfit and, at forty-seven, was too old for the front line. In February 1915 he sailed to France, where for a couple of weeks he assisted a friend who, working with the war office, had gone to France to look into the prevention or mitigation of 'trench foot'.⁴⁸⁶ This period was sufficient for Campbell to realise that part of his summer holidays should be devoted to working among the troops of the Expeditionary Force. After obtaining a war office permit, in July and August of 1915, he worked under the auspices of the YMCA,⁴⁸⁷ and distributed gifts and comforts donated by the City Temple congregation. Sir Frank Willis, the Deputy Organising Secretary of the YMCA fondly remembered Campbell.

He had but one purpose - to be of whatever - and he would have said whatever little service he could to the men with whom he would come into contact. I shall always remember him as an exceptionally gracious and humble personality ... It was not so much in his addresses ... but in his answering of questions ... While I should not of course wish to

⁴⁸⁴A. Wilkinson, The Church of England and the First World War (London, 1978), p.174.

⁴⁸⁵The British Weekly, 10 September (1914) 570.

⁴⁸⁶With our Troops in France, p.17.

⁴⁸⁷Wilkinson, The Church of England and the First World War, p.19.

suggest that there were not others equally gifted and effective in these respects, I recall no one who surpassed him ... It was not, of course, until many years after my contact with Dr Campbell that I first learned the existence of the meaning of the word 'empathy'. But I would pay my grateful tribute to his ministry to the troops by saying that he was one of the very few really empathetic men whom I have ever seen endeavouring to understand and to minister to human need.⁴⁸⁸

From October through to December 1915, Campbell spent time working with the soldiers. He chose the largest hospital as his 'headquarters' and in his motor car, a gift from the City Temple, he visited other centres when necessary. He eagerly and capably undertook work outside the hospitals preaching at church parades and voluntary religious services.⁴⁸⁹

Religion in the trenches was to the forefront of the minds of many of the troops - whether positively or negatively. Conversations at the end of Campbell's services about religion became so popular that the authorities arranged for separate meetings to be held specifically for questions. These were very successful, and on 'quite a high level, not only in seriousness but intelligence'.⁴⁹⁰ Sceptically, it must be remembered that for many these meetings were simply a time killer and entertainment, a time for sensible intelligent conversation - a relief from fighting. Others were more religiously sincere. In the thick of fighting they looked death in the face, day after day; life took on a new perspective, some turned to religion. They risked and gave their lives for the cause of 'justice', and these sacrifices contributed to a new understanding of the Passion of Christ.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁸Sir Frank Willis to Professor Keith Robbins, 26 March 1971.

⁴⁸⁹With our Troops in France, p.34.

⁴⁹⁰With our Troops in France, p.54.

⁴⁹¹With our Troops in France, p.78.

Among the soldiers there was an impatience with sectarianism. Ministers of all denominations were on 'the friendliest terms with each other',⁴⁹² and the YMCA provided a common ground for all denominations. For the dying it was known for Roman Catholics to accept the rites from Nonconformist ministers - what was important to them was that he was a man of God. Campbell truly believed that 'If the army had to vote upon the question of Christian unity to-morrow, the perplexing problem would soon be settled, and in the most comprehensive fashion. 'Get to-gether' was the motto almost everywhere.'⁴⁹³

Back in Britain churches also adopted a more ecumenical spirit with frequent united services. Denominational divisions looked ridiculous amidst the horrors of war. On Campbell's return from war after his second visit, in the summer of 1915, he partly attributed his decision to re-enter the Established Church to his recognition of the need for Christian unity. H.H. Henson, Dean of Durham, also believed that the war had taught the churches a great lesson, and on Campbell's departure from the City Temple, Henson accepted Dawson's invitation to preach there. Maude Royden, an Anglican, also accepted the pastorate of the City Temple in 1917 in the spirit of unity. 'Unity' was not on the immediate agenda for all ministers who maintained that some fundamental problems firstly needed to be resolved. The Bishop of London wrote to Henson expressing his wish that Henson cancel his acceptance. Henson remained firm: 'This is no ordinary time', he said, since the war had 'called Christian Churches to realize their failures, to correct their faults, to reorder themselves for better service in the coming time.' He continued:

In what spirit ought English churchmen to face the future? In the spirit of exclusiveness? Or, in the spirit of fraternity? Are we to exalt our denominational differentiae into principles? Or, are we rather to realize that profounder agreement, which we all really acknowledge, and

⁴⁹²With our Troops in France, p.35.

⁴⁹³With our Troops in France, p.35.

recognise as brothers 'all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in corruptness'?⁴⁹⁴

Relations between many Protestants and the Vatican worsened owing to a feeling that the Pope was pro-German because of his failure to condemn Germany.⁴⁹⁵ The efforts of such people as Henson and Campbell, however, had time on their side. The growing effect of secularism, which threatened the 'Church' *per se*, encouraged favourable attitudes to ecumenism. From the First World War to the present, there has been substantial progress in readiness to talk about differences among the denominations, and churches have learned the need to stress their fundamental similarities so as to promote a much healthier Church.

The mass slaughter of war revealed to the Church the weakness of its theology and worship. The prevalent doctrine of God's immanence had to be reconsidered, as did the Church's position regarding prayers for the dead. In the Protestant Churches in 1914 praying for the dead had been unknown, but by 1918 it was widespread. In 1917 the Anglican Church issued Forms of Prayer for those killed in the war.⁴⁹⁶ Emphasis on the Communion of Saints was a great comfort to mourners; more stress was put on the devotional value and helpfulness of the sacrament. The 'Protestant' Churches were becoming more 'Catholic'.

Campbell's concern to show the masses that the Church's theology was relevant, even in times of hardship, was apparent in The War and the Soul and Words of Comfort.⁴⁹⁷ The War and the Soul was a collection of articles he had written for

⁴⁹⁴H.H. Henson, Retrospect of an Unimportant Life 1863-1939, Vol.1 and 2 (Oxford, 1942,3, 3rd impression 1944), p.201.

⁴⁹⁵H.H. Henson, War Time Sermons (London, 1915), p.217.

⁴⁹⁶Hastings, A History of English Christianity, p.81.

⁴⁹⁷R.J. Campbell, The War and the Soul (London, 1916) - reviewed in The Times, 15 June (1916) 28, and Words of Comfort (London, 1917).

The Illustrated Sunday Herald. They were an attempt 'to give help and encouragement, and a certain measure of enlightenment, to persons who at present feel their need of these owing to the abnormal conditions which prevail.'⁴⁹⁸ It addressed subjects including 'If I were God', 'Prayers for the dead', 'What is Hell?' In content the articles were very similar to what he wrote in Words of Comfort, a book aimed at reassuring those whose faith had been shaken by the war. Words of Comfort was intended to offer spiritual as well as practical comfort; the League of Mercy, was the beneficiary of the Royalties of the book. He assured his readers of God's presence. God was there as he had been when Jesus cried: 'My God, My God, Why ...?' Evil would not prevail. Even among the destruction of the war, good was evident. Campbell gave an illustration: the experience of three injured soldiers, two English, one German. When one of the Englishmen said that he was thirsty, the German pointed to his backpack. The Englishman rummaged through the bag and found a bottle of water. He raised it to the German's mouth, but the German turned away and refused it on account that since he was dying, the water would be of more use to them. They lived and buried him with deep respect.⁴⁹⁹ Campbell encouraged his readers to accept that there was a purpose to the war; God was in control and the pain suffered was a condition of growth.⁵⁰⁰ God was destroying that he might build up. The war had been preceded by great secularisation and materialism, but those who had died in the war had succeeded in revealing 'that our greatest treasure is not here but there not in temporal ease and success but in eternal beauty and truth.'⁵⁰¹

There was a new emphasis on the positivity of evil, the corruption of human nature and divine transcendence. The war 'proved' that humanity could not

⁴⁹⁸The War and the Soul, p.vi.

⁴⁹⁹Words of Comfort, p.98.

⁵⁰⁰Words of Comfort, p.68.

⁵⁰¹Words of Comfort, p.20 and p.22.

redeem herself; the evolutionary optimism with its lack of stress on evil was shattered. War revealed that hope had to be in the grace of God in Jesus.⁵⁰² Forsyth stressed that only redemption, not an evolutionary process, could save mankind: 'Nothing can give us a footing or hope amid the degeneration of man but his regeneration by God.'⁵⁰³ The inadequacy of pre-war theological emphasis on divine immanence was also evident. From the war experience it seemed necessary to distinguish God from human nature which had caused so much destruction. Karl Barth (1886-1968), the great Swiss-German Protestant theologian taught in the Liberal Protestant tradition, was thoroughly disillusioned when many of his former Professors were among the ninety-three German intellectuals who supported the Kaiser's war policy. In order to dissociate himself from the current theological position with its stress on man's conception of God, Barth began to lay greater stress on the transcendence of God; consequently, his The Epistle to the Romans was published in 1918. Campbell, too, adopted a stronger emphasis on divine transcendence. Yet this did not mean that there was a return to the deistic concept of God, as in the eighteenth century. It would be true to say that what emerged, for Campbell, in preference to the doctrine of divine immanence was the doctrine of the Incarnation where the emphasis was on a transcendent God who chose to enter the world and share the suffering of his people.

Many argued, with Campbell,⁵⁰⁴ for the passibility of God, including the Anglican War Chaplain, G.A. Studdert Kennedy, popularly known as 'Woodbine Willie', after the brand of cigarettes he distributed during the war. God, he said, suffered in and with mankind: 'to think of suffering as something real in Him is to think of the reality of suffering as swallowed up in the joyous victory of love triumphant through sacrifice', and again 'my only real God is the suffering Father revealed in

⁵⁰²Davies, The English Free Churches, p.186.

⁵⁰³P.T. Forsyth, The Justification of God (London, 1916), p.14.

⁵⁰⁴For a quotation from Campbell on the suffering of God see pp.297-298.

the sorrow of Christ.⁵⁰⁵ Likewise, C.E. Rolt affirmed the suffering of God: '... God is God only in the fact that He, in perfect patience, has undergone all that the word suffering can possibly mean ...'⁵⁰⁶

The question of the after-life became much more urgent. Campbell recalled an incident in which a soldier at the front had asked him what the fate would be of a soldier who had died a noble sacrificial death for his country but who had previously lived a 'bit racketsy'. He replied that God would give him a chance; a reply which endorsed increasing attention to belief in an intermediary purificatory state in which souls would be given the opportunity to be cleansed.

Conceptions of heaven and hell were rethought. In the years leading to the Great War, probably since the days of the great oratorical Calvinist Baptist, Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-92), relatively little had been preached on hell. This was encouraged by the rise of humanitarianism; the worst sin deserves no everlasting punishment as such punishment would be incompatible with divine love. This view was explicated by Tennyson:

... were there a God as you say
His Love would have power over Hell till it utterly vanish'd away.⁵⁰⁷

Moreover, punishment had come to be considered remedial as opposed to merely vindictive, which everlasting hell so easily implied, and Campbell believed that the Edwardian age was too sympathetic to human suffering to insist on such a

⁵⁰⁵J.K. Mozley (ed.), G.A. Studdert Kennedy By His Friends (London, 1929), p.221, and G.A. Studdert Kennedy, The Hardest Part (1918), p.10.

⁵⁰⁶C.E. Rolt, The World's Redemption (London, 1913), p.228. See J.K. Mozley, The Impassibility of God: A Survey of Christian Thought (Cambridge, 1926) for a thorough study of this subject.

⁵⁰⁷R.J. Campbell, What is Hell? (London, 1917), p.15. Reviewed in The Times, 22 March (1917) 143.

doctrine. However, he was staunch in his belief that hell must be reemphasised: 'There is a hell'; there has to be a hell in a universe which was moral and the moral order must vindicate those who violate it.

'Hell', Campbell said, 'is being out of harmony with God.'⁵⁰⁸ Thus, Campbell's teaching on heaven and hell had not changed since the days of the New Theology. He interpreted hell as both a place and a state: 'it is both, but especially the latter.'⁵⁰⁹ It was a place in that there must be some difference in the conditions surrounding those in heaven and those in hell. When hell is used in the Bible as a translation of Hades or Sheol, it is a place. On the other hand hell was a state as in the Bible where 'hell' was a translation of Gehenna.⁵¹⁰ Campbell made explicit his exhortation to his readers not to be tempted into thinking they could live as they liked simply because the love of God would always save them since the wrath and love of God were the same thing. The love of God includes His wrath, His antipathy to sin. Campbell had taken up Galatians: 'Be not deceived ... whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'⁵¹¹

Campbell was relieved and utterly joyful on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of November 1918 when the war became 'history'. The debris of the war, however, was to affect every member of society. The war had been a great tragedy. 908,371 British citizens had been killed or had died, and the casualty figure was 3,190,235.⁵¹² Emotionally the country was drained. Social problems were rife. Between 1914-18 illegitimacy had increased by thirty per cent. By the end of the war contraception was more freely available, and between 1910 and

⁵⁰⁸What is Hell? p.29.

⁵⁰⁹What is Hell? p.40.

⁵¹⁰What is Hell? p.43.

⁵¹¹What is Hell? pp.38-39 and p.61.

⁵¹²Jones, Congregationalism in England, p.355.

1920 there was nearly a three-fold increase in divorce. Experience of the war had changed people's ideas, and separation from loved ones during times of change and soul-searching proved detrimental to the family. These social facts inevitably had implications for the Church which, for example, was confronted with the question of whether or not to remarry divorcees.⁵¹³ Conflicting opinions helped weaken the Church's cause.

Hand in hand with the national emotional debris of human loss with all its bitterness and cynicism were the economic problems which affected the country. The war had cost Britain an astronomical £8,601 million;⁵¹⁴ post-war maintenance allowance for the disabled, injured victims of war, as well as the difficulty of reabsorbing millions of soldiers back into civilian occupation made economic problems legion.

With such colossal problems many found consolation in spiritualist organisations and Christian Science.⁵¹⁵ The trend had been visible during the war itself. Campbell heard stories of relics, sacred pictures and crucifixes which had been miraculously preserved. While he was more sceptical than others about such claims, he endorsed the view that these 'stories' were symbolic truths, showing that 'the ruin wrought by earthly evil reaches not so very far.'⁵¹⁶

In the immediate aftermath of the war, church attendance continued to decrease. The war embittered some people who could not worship a God who had 'killed their first-born and left the rest to starve.' The war made it even more difficult to recruit and retain the working class congregation. Thus the Free Churches,

⁵¹³Wilkinson, The Church of England and the First World War, pp.104-105.

⁵¹⁴Jones, Congregationalism in England, p.355.

⁵¹⁵Horne, A Popular History of the Free Churches, p.448.

⁵¹⁶Wilkinson, The Church of England and the First World War, p.195.

Sangster said, who had for the most part appealed to the less well-off, suffered in terms of membership and attendance. The war had a destructive effect on the middle class (though the Church retained members who were mainly middle class), since it loosened family ties; the search for work led many young men away from home, away from their traditional Sunday.⁵¹⁷ As before the war, Sunday increasingly became a day of pleasure rather than of worship, especially with the improvement in the means of, and availability of, transport. Sunday games were on the increase, and the general attraction of the world outside the Church was too enticing for many.

However, a realistic estimation of the overall effects of the war on faith was that it made very little difference. Those who were enthusiastic before the war remained fervent (perhaps more) in their church-going. They saw that the choice was between '... Christ or nihilism, Christ or death.' 'Civilisation ... failed ... precisely in so far as it was not Christian.'⁵¹⁸ Those with no Christian faith before the war largely remained agnostic or atheistic.

After the war Campbell believed that it was the task of the Church to move beyond the nation and to spiritualise the whole world; in Christ there was no Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free. He was encouraged by the League of Nations, but he saw that it was the task of the Church to give this new world order 'a soul, a conscience, a meaning and an end not to be measured only in terms of the visible and temporal.'⁵¹⁹

While Campbell spoke of the Church as a whole, Horne believed that Nonconformists would prove more effective in the post-war period of reaching the

⁵¹⁷P. Sangster, A History of the Free Churches (London, 1983), p.173.

⁵¹⁸'The New Outlook', pp.246,248 and 247 respectively.

⁵¹⁹'The New Outlook', p.248.

masses. He believed that having tried all else, the disillusioned world would once more turn to religion. Considering the increased scepticism about authority, be it of the Bible, or Church, Horne thought that the religion sought would be 'one that is free and tolerant, one that can speak the language and meet the needs of the age. And such a religion the Free Churches can supply.'⁵²⁰ Church numbers did increase and as unemployment decreased so the number of communicants rose. By 1927, church membership reached a peak with over six million Protestants.⁵²¹ However, the trend had increased more substantially in the major Protestant Church than in Nonconformity during the years 1922 to 1929.⁵²² The peak was shortlived and unfortunately Horne's optimism proved ill-founded. Nonconformity declined from 1928, the golden days were over and the impetus for growth past. The reasons were numerous. Christianity was less attractive to the masses, and, for social reasons rather than reasons of belief, nominal Christians attended the Anglican Church; Nonconformists had lost their driving force.

A Spiritual Pilgrimage?⁵²³

You are rejecting what these men reject, but are you believing what they believe?

My doctrinal and other views remain exactly what they were. There is a change of emphasis, but that is another matter.⁵²⁴

⁵²⁰Horne, A Popular History of the Free Churches, pp.449-450.

⁵²¹See Figure 2.3 in Currie, Gilbert, Horsley, Churches and Churchgoers, p.30.

⁵²²See Table 2.4 in Currie, Gilbert, Horsley, Churches and Churchgoers, p.31. Even in the increase in Nonconformity during 1922-27 membership numbers did not exceed the peak of 2,057,000 in 1906.

⁵²³See review in The Manchester Guardian. The book was not published in 1917 as in Davies, Worship and Theology in England - The Ecumenical Century, p.174.

⁵²⁴Gore, The New Theology and the Old Religion, p.18 and The Christian World, 8 June (1911) 3 quoting Campbell's letter to the Liberal Christian Monthly. Compare also The Christian Commonwealth, 18 October (1911) 40-41 where Campbell said that there was no change in his theology over the past five years and upheld his belief that Jesus Christ differed from mankind not in kind but degree.

In March 1915⁵²⁵ Campbell bought the publishing rights of The New Theology to prevent the possibility of any further issues.⁵²⁶ From what is known of Campbell's later life it is evident that the act was not a refutation, or repudiation as Peter d'A. Jones said.⁵²⁷ It was merely a withdrawal. Campbell had, however, experienced and seen what Compton-Rickett called the 'nakedness of the wilderness'.⁵²⁸

In 1915 and 1916, the question was raised as to Campbell's reason for his dramatic action in withdrawing The New Theology and entering the Anglican priesthood the following year. As we shall see, the two were connected. Speculations that the Bishop of Birmingham had requested or demanded Campbell's dissociation from the book were dispelled when he said that the book had been withdrawn months before Dr Wakefield enquired about it.⁵²⁹

Campbell owed it to his Congregationalist friends and devotees to explain his action, and A Spiritual Pilgrimage was his attempt to do so. The book is blatantly biased towards his new Anglican stance, but it does show how Campbell's mind came to be made up, making the withdrawal of the book necessary.

Gore, he said, played the most significant part in revealing the weaknesses of the New Theology. In his series of eight lectures delivered in Birmingham Cathedral and later published as The New Theology and the Old Religion,⁵³⁰ Gore convinced

⁵²⁵Not in 1911 as in Jones, Congregationalism in England, p.351.

⁵²⁶It is questionable whether there would have been any further issues, the last edition having been in 1909.

⁵²⁷Jones, The Christian Socialist Revival, p.430.

⁵²⁸The British Weekly, 10 October (1907) 2.

⁵²⁹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.280.

⁵³⁰Gore, The New Theology and the Old Religion was published in 1907, not 1908 as in Kaye & Mackenzie, W.E. Orchard, p.35.

Campbell of his errors.⁵³¹ Gore's exposition did misrepresent Campbell a little. He mistakingly assumed that Campbell had ignored the transcendence of God and had simply identified Him with the universe. Campbell, however, was not embittered and he admitted that Gore could not be blamed for thinking this since The New Theology had failed to represent his own views accurately. Immanentism had, after all, been allowed to run wild in the book.

It was Gore's question 'You are rejecting what these men reject, but are you believing what they believe?' which undoubtedly challenged Campbell to rethink. Campbell's view of sin, in the New Theology days, was that of the remains of the ape and tiger quality in our ascending humanity. Gore maintained that this failed to do justice to the seriousness of sin, and did not sufficiently emphasise individual responsibility in wrongdoing. Campbell offered a defence of his position; he did, he correctly said, emphasise the seriousness of sin, especially in his sermons, which 'never failed to appeal to the guilty conscience ... or to warn my hearers against trifling with the laws of God.' Yet he conceded to Gore's attack that 'This poor sad world of ours needs a more strenuous gospel than the assurance that our sins are merely wrong turnings on the upward road ...'

The change in emphasis on Campbell's part came more from experience and further reading than from Gore's word in itself. After all, Gore was only one of many who attacked Campbell's concept of sin. Campbell's sermon preached on 27 September 1911, was the first of many in which he emphatically urged the necessity of salvation from without, the Incarnation, owing to the inability of society to save itself. Experience of the war strengthened Campbell's disillusionment with the belief that humanity would progressively, by a slow

⁵³¹These lectures commenced, The Church Times recalled, on the last Wednesday prior to The Church Times, 15 March (1907). The lectures were written 'before' The New Theology. This was contrary to the impression that Campbell gave, he wrote: 'The replies to my book were legion, but one [that is, Gore's] in particular ...' - A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.193.

process of evolution 'reach a static condition of happiness and universal moral elevation.'⁵³² Hope for the world was to be pinned to 'revolution' in the New Testament sense, and not 'evolution'. Consequently, Campbell acknowledged that he gave up his semi-Pelagian view of human nature.⁵³³ He did not, however, succumb to the pessimism of Reformed theology as in Calvin (1509-64) who believed that the image of God in man was destroyed in the Fall. Campbell had moved away from his earlier stance and recognised that more stress needed to be put on Divine Grace.

From 1911 Campbell also began to stress the transcendentalism of God. An Advent Sermon which he preached in America in that year centred on the 'Intrusion of the Transcendental' from Luke 1:31. Here Campbell stated that:

... that aspect of the infinite being of God which has produced the universe of which we form a part; there may be many more aspects of God's infinitude but this is the one with which we have to do ... it is in rising into and partaking of his divine sonship that we find ours ... there is a transcendental world and ... a mighty being once left it in order to take upon Himself our burden and help us to win our fight.⁵³⁴

Elements of Campbell's change of 'emphasis' from the immanent to the transcendent in 1911 are evident. He still, however, referred to mankind's 'rising' into the divine sonship.

Dr W.L. Walker's Christian Theism and a Spiritual Monism (1907) which Campbell read in 1911 exercised an important influence on his thought. Afterwards, he was able to confirm more emphatically his belief in the transcendence and immanence of God. Walker said that science led one to apply

⁵³²A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.266.

⁵³³After the British theologian Pelagius d.c.311. Pelagius had held that mankind could take the initiative and fundamental steps towards salvation.

⁵³⁴A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.256 and pp.258-259.

monism only to the phenomenal world, but he convincingly argued that there was a more all-embracing monism. With Walker, Campbell believed that the initial act of creation with the apparent dualism it set up, was:

... for ever being transcended; it is not an absolute but a strictly relative Dualism, and ... the evolving world is never separate from God in His transcendency. God is in some degree within it, and it is always contained in His Omnipresence ... [In quoting Walker, Campbell said] ... It is in full ethical and spiritual union with God in His transcendency that the creation finds its completion, and the temporary Dualism is for ever transcended ... This complete union with God has only been realised once in time in Jesus Christ, and in its realisation in Him we have the incarnation and revelation of God in Christ.⁵³⁵

Gore also believed Campbell destroyed the saviourhood of Christ. Campbell denied this, but he admitted that the danger of his exposition of the person of Jesus lay 'in asserting without qualification that all that was true of Him was potentially true of every human being.'⁵³⁶ Even by 1916 Campbell did not recant this belief, yet he did qualify it; he said that this was so 'through our inheritance in Him and not otherwise.' This was consonant with Campbell's new emphasis on the inability of mankind to, by itself, progress upwardly, and the seriousness of sin; he came to see more value in the Incarnation whereby God had sent his Son to save the world. Campbell was, by 1916, able to say that 'it was the Eutychian tendency in my statement of the doctrine of the person of Christ which was its greatest defect.'⁵³⁷

⁵³⁵ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.263 and p.264 quoting Walker, Christian Theism and a Spiritual Monism, pp.285-286.

⁵³⁶ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.198.

⁵³⁷ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.198. Campbell had a Eutychian tendency only to the extent that he insisted on one nature rather than on the two natures of Christ. He was not party to what had been condemned as the Eutychian heresy in the fifth century. Eutyches (c.378-454) had denied that the manhood of Christ was consubstantial with ours, and had maintained that there were two natures before, but only one after the union in the Incarnation. This led to monophysitism which said that there was only one nature in Jesus, and that a divine one. Campbell certainly never advocated this. It was probably because Campbell had very little in common with Eutychianism that 'So far as I am aware no one has pointed out the fact'. A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.198.

Campbell was prompted on reading Gore to accept Gore's outline of three 'Protestant defects'; defects which Campbell had recognised and which had contributed to his exposition of the New Theology. On reading Gore, however, Campbell came to appreciate that the New Theology was not the only way to readdress these defects. Catholic Christianity, too, was in reaction to the defect of much nineteenth-century Protestant orthodoxy with its stress on deism. In 'Catholic' communion there was reverence for nature and the natural law for which the new theologians had themselves longed.⁵³⁸

A second defect of Protestant orthodoxy was the insistence upon the infallibility of scripture. The rejection of this belief, however, need not, Gore maintained, lead one to the New Theology; rather, for Catholics the Bible as interpreted by the Church was the standard of faith and not *vice versa*.⁵³⁹

The third Protestant defect was attention to the doctrine of Atonement, that is with the implication of the distance between man and God deriving from sin, at the expense of the Incarnation. Gore brought Campbell's attention to the fact that in Catholicism the close relationship between God and creation was emphasised; the Incarnation was the heart and centre of the faith.

The implications of Gore's book had no immediate dramatic impact on Campbell. While from 1907 onwards Campbell became increasingly aware of the weaknesses of The New Theology, it took eight years after reading Gore's book for Campbell to withdraw his book. Significantly, the year he bought the publishing rights of The New Theology he entered the Anglican Church. That he refrained from hastily refuting the book and turning to Anglicanism shows that his decision was

⁵³⁸A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.201. See Gore's lecture viii, 'The New Theology and the Church of England', The New Theology and the Old Religion, pp.152ff.

⁵³⁹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.202.

no mere surrender to Gore. Hastings Rashdall implied that Campbell had succumbed to Gore when Rashdall questioned how much the Anglicans had 'made him swallow'⁵⁴⁰ on his return to the Church of England. Campbell had never been a conformist for conformist's sake. As Gardiner said: 'Nonconformity is definite; he is mystical. Nonconformity is individualistic; he is a member of the I.L.P. The I.L.P. is for Free Trade; he, I gather from a conversation I had with him, is for Tariff Reform. He conforms to no system, accepts no shibboleth, either spiritual or temporal.'⁵⁴¹ It is, therefore, unlikely that had he been told to refute The New Theology he would have done. Campbell, would only have refuted it had his conscience told him to do so. One cannot, however, dispute the fact that Campbell's acceptance of Gore's view of Anglicanism was 'almost comically complete.'⁵⁴²

Campbell's account in A Spiritual Pilgrimage allowed too much to the influence of Gore. Without denying Gore's significant role other factors were of importance. We have seen, for example, how war contributed to Campbell's rejection of belief in the upward progress of humanity, and reconfirmed his growing emphasis on the transcendence of God and his appreciation of the doctrine of the Incarnation more than that of divine immanence.⁵⁴³ Christological 'developments' also affected Campbell's theology, and were one of the prime reasons for his 'divorce' from his fellow new theologians. The movement which particularly accentuated and formulated Campbell's newer perception of Christology was the Christ Myth Controversy, epitomised by Professor Arthur Drews's Christ Myth (E.T. 1910).

⁵⁴⁰G.L. Prestige, The Life of Charles Gore (London, 1925), p.375 quoting Rashdall.

⁵⁴¹Gardiner, Prophets, Priests and Kings, p.242.

⁵⁴²H. Henson, Diary 14 October 1916. I am grateful to Professor Keith Robbins for this reference.

⁵⁴³Interestingly, the Anglican theological symposium Foundations (1912) with its immanentalism and optimistic liberalism, like The New Theology was dated with the war and the controversy it had aroused was forgotten.

Drews (1865-1935) adopted a 'concrete monism' and he believed that 'religion consisted in a man's consciousness of himself as a supra-individual being and that true religion was based solely on reason, not on history.'⁵⁴⁴ The historical existence of Jesus was, therefore, challenged and Christianity was not found to be dependent upon a historical character, Jesus. Exponents of the Christ Myth theory emphasised the Christ of faith as the object of worship.

The Christ Myth school can be seen as a reaction to nineteenth-century Liberal Protestantism, as represented by Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930), and their endeavour to get back to the historical Jesus. The portraits of the historical Jesus by Liberal Protestants were so various that scepticism arose about reaching 'a' historical Jesus. As Tyrrell effectively indicated, their attempts were unconvincing; they had merely looked down the well of the centuries to see the face of nineteenth-century Liberal Protestants looking back at them. Disillusionment with the movement became increasingly widespread, and paved the way for the Christ Myth School whose emphasis was on the ever-present and indwelling Christ who alone was and is sufficient for the religious life. Interestingly, the thought of Drews was very similar to that of D.F. Strauss (1808-74). Strauss' Life of Jesus (1835) argued that the hermeneutical key to understanding the Gospel accounts of Jesus was the 'mythical'. Indeed, it was Strauss who first raised the question of whether it was possible to differentiate between the Jesus of history and the Christ of Faith. His successors in the Liberal Protestant tradition attempted to do this.

On writing A Spiritual Pilgrimage Campbell believed the Christ Myth school 'need no longer be taken seriously either in Europe or America'; its effects, however, were apparent. He was challenged by the controversy, as others had been by his New Theology, to rethink his position. His sermon on the text 'Who say ye that I

⁵⁴⁴Cross & Livingstone (eds.), The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p.426.

am?’ delivered at the City Temple on 17 April 1910 and his sermon based on the text ‘Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God’ (1 John 4:2) were two attempts to address the Christ Myth issue. On both occasions, Campbell dissociated himself from the line of argument of Drews;⁵⁴⁵ he remained more conservative and endorsed emphatically the historical Jesus. Fellow new theologians were divided on the issue into those who sympathised with Drews, such as K.C. Anderson, and those who clung passionately to the historicity of Jesus. Campbell appealed for a harmony and balance between the two schools. He argued: ‘If to-day we adore the Christ of faith it is because the Jesus of history gave Him a body and a soul ... It is not abstract ideas which make history, it is ideas embodied in personality.’⁵⁴⁶ Before the publication of Drews’s book, Campbell declared that ‘One might, perhaps, dispense with the abstract Christ, or, rather, with the perplexing doctrines that have been spun around Him, but one cannot dispense with the Jesus who made the Christ live.’⁵⁴⁷

The City Temple congregation pressed Campbell for reasons for his attitude to the Christ Myth school. To comply with their wishes and to help them through the Christological dilemma, on Thursday 26 January 1911, he gave a full exposition of his stance. When he quoted his address in full in A Spiritual Pilgrimage he significantly entitled the Chapter ‘The New Theology: The Parting of the Ways’.

In this address Campbell’s argument favoured belief in a historical Jesus. First, he maintained that Christianity prevailed over the other religions which believed in

⁵⁴⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.209 and p.216.

⁵⁴⁶A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.263. One may also compare Martineau who said ‘Where the person is supposed to be unreal, the faith cannot be real.’ - National Duties and Other Sermons and Addresses (London, 1903), p.207 quoted in R. Waller, James Martineau, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, p.154.

⁵⁴⁷Preached at the City Temple in January 1910 and quoted in A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.225.

legends like the virgin birth, because Christianity had a Christ of faith who was a historic person and who exceeded the expectations of spiritual minds.⁵⁴⁸

Secondly, the early Christians were, Campbell maintained, renowned for their moral loftiness and devotion to Jesus. W.E.H. Lecky's History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne (1869) illustrated the distinctiveness of the Christian type of morality and character were originally held in contempt. Campbell concluded, with Lecky, that there must have been a forceful character to maintain this morality against all odds. More outstanding was the fact that the character of Jesus had withstood criticism and remained projected unchanged through the centuries. 'Majesty', for example, 'combined with humility, strength with gentleness, infinite love with inflexible sternness in the treatment of wrong ...'⁵⁴⁹

Thirdly, contrary to the advocates of the Christ Myth theory, Campbell believed that St Paul did believe in the historical Jesus. Drews interpreted 'James the Lord's brother', in Galatians 1, as a figure of speech referring to a certain grade in Christian society. Campbell instantly dismissed this reading.⁵⁵⁰

Campbell proceeded with his main personal reason for upholding the identity of the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith. The explanation was a testimony. First, 'I know Jesus as Jesus. The Jesus of glory is to me a living being dwelling with me day by day, and guiding and directing me in the work I am trying to do.'⁵⁵¹ He admitted the subjectivity of the argument, but felt that the validity of his position was enhanced by the similar testimony of others. Secondly, he

⁵⁴⁸ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, pp.230-235.

⁵⁴⁹ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.241.

⁵⁵⁰ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.239.

⁵⁵¹ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.242.

believed that if a Christ of the flesh had not come the world would be craving for one, and if what Christians throughout the centuries had falsely believed - that is, in a divinely human Jesus - then there was something wrong with the moral government of the universe. Besides, sending one in whom 'the perfect harmony of divine Sonship and Fatherhood stands fully revealed' was, he said, God's best way of lifting mankind back to Himself and of demonstrating that 'there is no hard and fast dividing line between humanity and deity, but that when humanity stands at its own highest it towers up into God and can say with a certitude that no evil can hinder or destroy, for 'I and my Father are one.'⁵⁵²

Campbell's insistence on a historical Jesus was far from a reversion to the Liberal Protestantism of the pre-Christ-Myth days. As Vidler recognises, Campbell's theology was no mere *réchauffé* of the ideas of nineteenth-century Liberal Protestants such as Harnack and Réville.⁵⁵³ In What is Christianity (E.T. 1901, German ed. 1900), Harnack emphasised that true Christianity was the Gospel 'by' Jesus not the Gospel 'of' Jesus. It was in what Jesus had taught and said that the essence of Christianity was to be found. Harnack's Christology was insufficient for Campbell, for whom Jesus was more than a preacher of the Gospel; he was integral to the Gospel. Campbell favoured the Gospel 'by and of' Jesus.

Schweitzer's The Quest of the Historical Jesus (E.T. 1910, German ed. 1906) also influenced Campbell's thought. While the new criticism *in toto* was disputable, Campbell was thankful for Schweitzer's arguments which maintained that the historical Jesus was far nearer the ecclesiastical Christ of the Church's dogmas and thus weakened the portrayal of the historical Jesus by the Liberal Protestants. He applauded Schweitzer's emphasis on Jesus as a person who lived in a particular situation and historical context which undoubtedly influenced his thinking. Thus,

⁵⁵²A Spiritual Pilgrimage, pp.243-244.

⁵⁵³Vidler, 20th Century Defenders of the Faith, p.27.

Jesus believed what his contemporaries believed about the apocalypse and the kingdom of God, namely that it was to break in suddenly from above. Campbell conceded with Schweitzer that Jesus believed he possessed a unique consciousness of God, that he was pre-existent and the Son of God long foretold who was to bring mankind into right relationship with God, and that he had come to die a death of mysterious efficacy which was, unlike his teaching, of prime importance for mankind. Further, Jesus believed that in the new dispensation which would follow his death he would be the judge of the human race.

From this moment Campbell was determined to relate his work more closely to Christology.⁵⁵⁴ By 1916 Campbell concluded that in rethinking his Christology he sympathised more with the Jesus as portrayed by the 'Catholic' Church; Jesus was a Man from heaven: '... a complete break with the natural order of things, the representative of a transcendental order, supernatural, super-rational super-everything ...'⁵⁵⁵

The Christ Myth controversy had, therefore, contributed to Campbell's withdrawal from the Drew school and from fellow new theologians who gave less emphasis to the historicity of Jesus.

Campbell withdrew The New Theology after gradually realising that his dissatisfaction with the 'Catholic' Church had been ill-founded, and that the belief he substituted for this defective body of belief was equally defective. The withdrawal of the book also came with a realisation that even as early in the war as 1915 the New Theology was inadequate and insufficient to the spirit of the 'new age'. It had already dated considerably. Moreover, it would be true to say that Campbell had come to realise the impotence of merely relying of man's

⁵⁵⁴This effort climaxed with Campbell's The Life of Christ: A Short Study, see p.276.

⁵⁵⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.250.

experience for interpreting Christianity and 'understanding' God. He never, however, denied its importance and it was always a starting point for his theological explorations. Increasingly, though, he gave more attention to revelation and tradition for Christianity; thus his greater emphasis on the Incarnation and the Catholic Church. Furthermore, Campbell recognised that the book had misrepresented him, being rashly written: 'It was much too hastily written, was crude and uncompromising in statement, polemical in spirit ...'⁵⁵⁶

A More Perfect System of Belief and Worship? A Natural Progression?

No real dissenting preacher can leave Dissent. If men have left Dissent they have left it because they were never in it, never of it.

... it is no longer an insult to a clergyman's honour, but rather a compliment to his intelligence, to suspect him of saying one thing and believing another.⁵⁵⁷

The timing of Campbell's resignation on 23 September 1915 was perfect. It was subsequent to his discussion with the Bishop of London during which, contrary to his initial wish of easing the transition from Nonconformity to the Establishment by a period of lay communion, Campbell agreed to the Bishop's suggestion that he should seek orders as soon as possible. He was enticed with the opportunity of continuing to preach - a vocation he loved and at which he excelled.

Campbell's mind was made up, and he preached his last sermon at the City Temple on 10 October 1915. He preached on only one more Nonconformist platform as a Nonconformist minister, that of Dr J.D. Jones at Bournemouth on 14 October. Two days later he was received as a communicant of the Anglican

⁵⁵⁶A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.188.

⁵⁵⁷Smith, The London Heretics, p.207 quoting J. Parker, and J. Martineau, Essays Vol.II, p.501 quoted in Lloyd Thomas, A Free Catholic Church, p.47.

Church by Bishop Gore in Cuddesdon, Oxford.⁵⁵⁸ Within days he returned to France to work among the troops, and on his return in December took a short holiday. His ordination as deacon took place on 24 February 1916 in St Martin's Church, Birmingham;⁵⁵⁹ Canon Adderley preached. It was on Trinity Sunday, 18 June 1916, that he received priest's orders from Bishop Russell Wakefield in Birmingham Cathedral.

What was it that led Campbell to leave a Nonconformist Church for the ministry of the Established Church? It was this question that was asked by many of his 'followers' rather than why Campbell had withdrawn The New Theology. Indeed, it was his desire to escape interviewers and possible controversy that drove Campbell to return to France so soon.⁵⁶⁰

The transition to the Anglican Church was certainly connected to his withdrawal of The New Theology. After all, for some a change in denomination did go hand in hand with a disillusionment with liberalism.⁵⁶¹ Before pursuing this thought two quite practical forces can be seen at play in Campbell's entering the Established

⁵⁵⁸This was at Gore's request. Gore did not ordain Campbell as said by D.L. Edwards, Christian England - From the 18th Century to the First World War, Vol. 3 (London, 1984), p.353.

⁵⁵⁹The Church Times, 25 February (1916) 173 and The Christian World, 24 February (1916) 3 - not in the Cathedral and in private as The Christian World of 10 February (1916) 3 said. Campbell's 'reordination' was not unique. During 1916 fourteen Nonconformist ministers were received into the Church of England; eleven were already ordained, the rest were awaiting ordination. - The Church of England Newspaper, 5 January (1917) 3. This was but the beginning of a gradual drift towards Anglicanism; a drift towards a greater emphasis on 'worship'.

⁵⁶⁰The Christian World, 24 February (1916) 3 and The Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.286.

⁵⁶¹This was a similar step to other frustrated liberals. D.R. Davies, On to Orthodoxy (London, 1939), p.13 recalled his own transition to the Establishment. He came to see Christian liberalism as having had four consequences '(1) A false estimation of human nature. (2) The practical banishment of the other-worldly element in Christian Ethics. (3) The denial of the uniqueness of Christianity. (4) The secularisation of life and design.' Orchard's From Faith to Faith recounts his decision to join the Roman Catholic Church in 1932 after he had recognised the impossibility of practising Catholic ceremony and sacramentalism without Catholic doctrine.

Church. First Campbell's poor health, and the consequent dissatisfactory arrangements over assistance contributed to the timing of Campbell's decision. Campbell could have remained at the City Temple for the remainder of his ministry or at least for many more years had a satisfactory arrangement been made with an assistant. His overstrained heart and nervous system was, as we have seen, more acute on his return from the United States in 1912. Although he had lightened his work load his health remained precarious.

Secondly, it would have been difficult for him to find another Congregational Church. The City Temple was unusually 'high' for a Nonconformist Church. An Anglican said:

The City Temple is rich in stained-glass windows; its order of service is largely liturgical - introit, invocation, general confession, general thanksgiving hold permanent place. The musical standard is high. This conformity with Anglican ritual ...⁵⁶²

There were, however, more important intellectual and temperamental reasons for Campbell's decision. Having recognised the weaknesses of The New Theology and come to a deeper understanding of Anglican Catholicism, as understood by Gore, Campbell's conscience allowed him to let his temperament be satisfied. He no longer saw any reason to hold back from his original intention in the 1890s of entering the Anglican priesthood. Moreover, he believed his reasons for deserting the Anglican cause in 1895 were no longer justified.

By 1915 the four reasons Campbell gave for his entry into the Congregationalist Church in 1895 were no longer pressing for Campbell. By 1915 he saw Anglicanism as more accommodating to the growth of the individual towards God, and his new emphasis on the Church weakened his distaste of sacerdotalism, heightened his confidence in the Church of England, and made him see that

⁵⁶²The Church of England Newspaper, 30 March (1917) 8.

appointment to the Church, albeit by a bishop, was still under the guidance of God. Moreover, by 1915 he no longer felt the Established Church unchurched the Church of his upbringing and he also, as we shall see, justified his preference for Anglicanism over Roman Catholicism. In the New Theology days Campbell was fighting against a 'latent Manichaean tendency'.⁵⁶³ In so doing he had gone to the opposite extreme, but by 1916 he had reached the conclusion that the 'Catholic' tradition had got it right. Here sin was not so central and human nature not so hopeless and doomed as in the 'Protestant' tradition – since God's grace was sufficient - and not so unrealistically optimistic as to lessen the importance of sin.

Campbell increasingly came to see his view of Christ was more consistent with 'Catholic' orthodoxy. On reading Walker's book, he had been convinced that '... a true spiritual monism was not inconsistent with a full-hearted acceptance of the Catholic faith concerning the person of Christ and the incarnation.'⁵⁶⁴

The Church, for Campbell, also had become much more important since the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century. He had been particularly impressed with Baron Friedrich von Hügel's Mystical Element of Religion (1908) and Eternal Life (1912).⁵⁶⁵ These books led Campbell beyond his stance in The New Theology by convincing him that '... we could no more have Christianity without the Church than we could have life without embodiment in such a world as ours.' The whole of life must be incorporated into the Church, and it was in

⁵⁶³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.271. Manichaeism was the outcome of the beliefs of Mani 216-76. It was attacked by Augustine because of its dualism. It maintained evil was from an invasion by an eternal hostile kingdom of Darkness equal to that of the good God's kingdom of Light.

⁵⁶⁴A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.265.

⁵⁶⁵Other key works on the Church included J.W. Oman, The Church and Divine Order (London, 1911), P.T. Forsyth, Faith, Freedom and the Future (London, 1912), G. Tyrrell, Christianity and the Crossroads (London, 1909).

this that Campbell 'felt ordinary Protestantism to be most wanting.'⁵⁶⁶ Throughout his Congregationalist ministry he had successfully preached the sacramentalism of all life, but he increasingly felt the necessity of a 'spiritual environment wherein that idea was authoritatively recognised and expressed.'⁵⁶⁷ Moreover, as he told Winnington-Ingrim, the deciding factor⁵⁶⁸ in his decision was his missing of the altar; a missing of the aesthetics of Holy Communion as well as the beliefs which it entailed.

The doctrine of the Church as the body of Christ, with Christ as its head, and with all individual Christians as its members, was a significant reason for Campbell's return to the Establishment. A body must be in harmony to function to the maximum - so too must the Church. Campbell's antipathy to sectarianism was strengthened by the war.

In presence of such a cataclysm as the war, how comparatively trivial our disagreements appear! I came back from that experience more than ever convinced that the question of the reunion of Christendom is one of urgency, not mere expediency, and that its indefinite postponement is inflicting grievous harm upon human society.⁵⁶⁹

Sectarianism impoverished the work of the Church, though Campbell still believed that a Christian life could be lived outside the main current of Catholicism. Moreover, there is nothing to suggest that he would have disagreed with his original belief that no one Church had the monopoly of the Gospel, he increasingly maintained that a 'fuller' Christian development could only hope to be found within the main tradition.⁵⁷⁰ His decision was, therefore, a step towards this

⁵⁶⁶ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.274.

⁵⁶⁷ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.271.

⁵⁶⁸ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.277.

⁵⁶⁹ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.291.

⁵⁷⁰ A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.299.

'fuller' life. Yet it was a step which affronted some Nonconformists, many of whom would have agreed that sectarianism was unhelpful. Nonconformists had, as Campbell himself admitted, been driven from the Church, but they believed that such 'unity' should come, not from 'going over' to the Establishment but from the Establishment's recognition of them as a Church. They, after all, had opened their churches to the Establishment, yet the Establishment still failed to recognise their ministry. Campbell did, however, continue to recognise the Nonconformist ministry, and he did insist that their Churches were true ones: 'Judged by the tests of catholicity and apostolicity, they might be found wanting. But there is one supreme test by which they would not be found wanting: Ubi Christus ibi ecclesia'.⁵⁷¹

However, the importance of Campbell's temperament in his decision should not be underestimated at the expense of his intellectual doctrinal reasons for his change of denomination. Joseph Parker's conviction that 'If men have left Dissent, they have left it because they were never in it, never of it'⁵⁷² was certainly true of Campbell, yet it is ironic that it was Parker's wish that Campbell succeed him at the City Temple. If Campbell had been 'of Dissent' then his new acceptance of orthodoxy need not have necessitated a change of denomination. Forsyth, for example, remained a Congregationalist while holding orthodox and quite Catholic beliefs.

Regarding his conversion from Anglicanism to Congregationalism in 1895, Campbell said: 'If temperament had been allowed to have its way I should have been a ritualist of the first order.'⁵⁷³ In 1897 he admitted that 'had sentiment rather than principle prevailed I had been there [the Church of England] still.' Henson too had said: 'it is obvious from the first that the man is temperamentally

⁵⁷¹A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.311.

⁵⁷²Quoted in Smith, The London Heretics, p.207.

⁵⁷³A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.60.

repugnant to Nonconformity ...'⁵⁷⁴ Temperamentally he was always best suited to the 'Catholic' side of Anglicanism with its sacramental view of life, but he had forsaken it in pursuit of truth. In 1903 Rev S.B. Lane, writing of Campbell's entering the Congregational ministry eight years before, said: 'His predilections, his tastes, his Oxford associations, perhaps what would commonly be described as his 'interest', tended all one way - and he took another, because to him that way lay the truth.'⁵⁷⁵ Moreover, it was mainly temperamental reasons which Campbell sought to justify with intellectual argument which meant that he did not 'convert' to Roman Catholicism. He said his interest in 'Catholicism' encouraged him to examine Roman Catholic doctrine and discipline. He visited Roman Catholic countries, spoke with Roman Catholic scholars and ecclesiastics, and read Roman Catholic works. Consequently, he felt more respect for her Church, but as in 1895, his deep-rooted antipathy to Roman Catholicism meant that to Rome he was not prepared to go. The 'extravagance' of Roman devotions failed to seduce him. He was convinced that the devotions of the Church of England and its 'venerableness, dignity, and strength' were equal to those of the Roman Church, and that it further had the advantage of liberty and comprehensiveness. Furthermore, the Anglican communion was historically the established Church of England, whereas Roman Catholicism was imported to Britain and thus brought a distinctive foreign flavour. Moreover, he partly addressed his earlier belief that if the Anglo-Catholic theory of the Church was correct then he 'should not feel safe outside Rome'.⁵⁷⁶ He said the Church of England was the same Church as the Roman Catholic Church without a break from the Church of Augustine.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁴Henson's diary, 14 October 1916. I am grateful to Professor Keith Robbins for this reference.

⁵⁷⁵The Young Man, August (1903) 267.

⁵⁷⁶A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.274.

⁵⁷⁷A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.274. Even in 1906 Campbell had declared that perhaps 'Protestants' did not allow enough for tradition - R.J. Campbell, 'St John and the Apocalypse', The Apostles in Art, ed. W.S. Sparrow (London, 1906), p.105.

Campbell had thus found reasons, as opposed to pure excuses, to support his temperamental choice of the Anglican Church. His transition into the Anglican communion was certainly a returning to the fold after what he believed to be misunderstanding.

While one can understand Campbell's decision, it cannot be denied that his 'reordination' was controversial and upsetting for many Nonconformists. He insisted that his ordination into the Church of England, was not a denial of his previous ministry, rather 'on the lowest ground', as a way of receiving authority to minister in the Church of England ... I regard myself as no more and no less truly a minister of Christ to-day than I was when I preached in the City Temple.⁵⁷⁸

To minister to the Established Church, Campbell said, he needed to submit to its way of conveying this authority. He needed to be reordained by the laying on of hands. He also valued the laying on of hands as an action symbolic of the fundamental oneness of life; it was a way of maintaining continuity with the past and present. It was also a recognition of the fact that Christ instituted one Church, and it was a way of identifying with this one Church.

There was some concern over Campbell's new position within Anglicanism and correspondence in The Christian Commonwealth revealed this. ~~Correspondence in The Christian Commonwealth revealed concern over Campbell's new position within Anglicanism.~~ John Alfred Kensit,⁵⁷⁹ of the Protestant Truth Society, expressed concern over Campbell's 'orthodoxy', and his 'popish' tendencies. The Bishop of Birmingham reassured Kensit:

⁵⁷⁸A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.312.

⁵⁷⁹Indeed, Sir James Marchant said of Kensit: 'I am one of the few persons in England he has never been able to terrorise', quoted in Kaye and Mackenzie, W.E. Orchard, p.104.

A searching examination has been made by four distinguished clergy into the present belief of Mr Campbell, and they are perfectly satisfied as to his orthodoxy ... I am quite prepared to assure you that no-one need have any doubt as to Mr Campbell's present orthodoxy. We have no desire to start up controversy, but we cannot refrain from recording our conviction that the late minister of the City Temple is far from 'orthodox' in Mr Kensit's sense of the term. Indeed, the word is an elastic and elusive one. Throughout the theological controversy of some years ago Mr Campbell maintained that he was really orthodox - it was the other people who were heterodox. What his recent development really means is that he has gone on to take the Liberal Catholic position - sacramental, but not exclusive.⁵⁸⁰

Among Nonconformists there was also disappointment regarding Campbell's decision, and sympathy can be given to the view of Lloyd Thomas: 'I respectfully suggest that what is wrong with Mr Campbell is not that he is too Catholic, but too sectarian and denominational; not that his conception of the Church is too high but that it is not high enough.'⁵⁸¹ F.H.J., in a review of A Spiritual Pilgrimage, likewise criticised Campbell's step and reasoning:

Is then this late popular and eloquent preacher already become, under the influence of the Anglican Church, and its bishops, so devoid of imagination? Has he lost all knowledge of the spirit of the Nonconformist Churches, or has he, perchance, never really known it ... Christian Unity is not to be attained by organisation and re-organisation, ordination and re-ordination, but only by "walking with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."⁵⁸²

Campbell, however, was encouraged with the goodwill with which many Nonconformists saw his reentering the Anglican Church. Rhondda Williams said: 'in this alone we have sustained the loss of a rich benediction, for while praying he ushered us into the Holy of Holies. His preaching too, was a great power.'⁵⁸³

⁵⁸⁰The Christian Commonwealth, 23 February (1916) 280.

⁵⁸¹Lloyd Thomas, Anglo-Catholic or Free Catholic, p.13.

⁵⁸²F.H.J., 'Mr Campbell's Apology: A Spiritual Pilgrimage', The Inquirer, 21 October (1916) 512.

⁵⁸³T.R. Williams, How I found my Faith (London, 1938), p.96.

As we have seen Campbell retained his links with Union Church, Brighton, and, as we shall see, many of the City Temple congregation attended his services as an Anglican priest at Christ Church, Westminster. This loyalty was largely due to the sincerity of Campbell's vocation and his evident natural temperamental leanings to the Establishment which would have made understandable the shock and sadness. The loyalty extended beyond Campbell's personal congregation and friends. The British Congregationalist read:

Few happenings in Congregationalism have aroused so much public interest for many years as the resignation of the City Temple pastorate by the Rev R.J. Campbell.

But, though during the past year or two Mr Campbell had been more closely linked with, and had taken a more direct interest in, organised Congregationalism, denominationalism has never been his strong point, and he has for many years belonged to all the Churches. If he seeks a wider or a different sphere, it will be with the conviction that in that sphere he can just as truly serve the kingdom of God, and be just as worthy a servant of the Church of Christ. In that service, whatever and wherever it may be, he will carry the prayers and the good wishes of a host of friends, both inside and outside the denomination of which he is still a member.⁵⁸⁴

While this was written before the announcement of Campbell's entry into the Anglican Priesthood, there is no evidence to the contrary that after the announcement there was much bitterness towards Campbell from Congregationalists. If, as Henson said, the Nonconformists had much to forgive in Campbell⁵⁸⁵ then they certainly had forgiven him, such was their devotion. The voices of Nonconformist critics were certainly overpowered by Campbell's supporters.

Campbell's change of denomination was taken with sincerity, and he tackled the question with as much sensitivity as was possible. Primarily, the end of one

⁵⁸⁴The British Congregationalist, October (1915) 321-322.

⁵⁸⁵Henson's diary of 14 October 1915. I am grateful to Professor Keith Robbins for this reference.

ministry and the beginning of another signified a fresh start on his spiritual pilgrimage. At forty-nine he wanted to distance himself from controversy and devote all his energies to fostering unity and to helping others along their own spiritual pilgrimages.

CHAPTER FOUR

1916-56: A DULL ANGLICAN?

... he was never so effective in the Anglican Church as he had been in his Nonconformist days. He would not stoop to the sensational methods that attract crowds of a certain type, while to the thoughtful people many of his sermons seemed little but a succession of commonplaces though charmingly delivered ... After being at a comparatively early age a world-celebrity, he seemed after his return to the English Church to slip swiftly and suddenly into the background, but he was not in the least soured by this experience. His natural goodness and the intensity of his personal religion made him immune against such dangers.

Dr Campbell was more conspicuous and influential as a Nonconformist than an Anglican, his personal gifts as a preacher being particularly suited in the former church.

... the Church of England has succeeded in making a mute, inglorious Milton of even R.J. Campbell.

Since he left the Congregational Church for the Anglican Church Dr R.J. Campbell has fully maintained his great reputation as preacher ... Those who thought that he might lose something of his power and influence as an Anglican clergyman were wrong.

The truth is that I have been a liberal all my life and am never liable to be anything else.¹

The Times obituary of Campbell certainly gave an impression of Campbell as a 'dull' Anglican. Sadly, supported with the view of The Britannica Book of the Year and of Porritt, this was to become the lasting word on Campbell. It offered, however, an inaccurate judgement of Campbell's ministry. The obituary writers' imputation that he was 'dull' is partly true and explained by Campbell's having lived until he was eighty-nine; his last decade having been spent in relative isolation. Age contributed to his retreat into obscurity; he had outlived many of his contemporaries who would have remembered his remarkable ministry. The

¹Britannica Book of the Year (1957), p.338; The Times, 2 March (1956) 11; Porritt, The Best I Remember, pp.123-124; The Manchester Guardian, 17 October (1929) 10; Campbell in The Church of England Newspaper, 16 December (1927) 11.

Manchester Guardian's report, during Campbell's pastorate at Holy Trinity, gave a fairer conception of his ministry in the Established Church.

Campbell's Anglican ministry was valuable, effective and far from dull, even if it was not 'controversial'. The Church of England had not made a 'mute' of him. His ministry was conducted as it had been in Congregationalism; parochial duties were not expected of him. Essentially he was a preacher, but a preacher with a powerful message, a message which took account of the pastoral concerns of his congregation.

Moreover, Campbell's theological position was not so 'orthodox' as claimed by some.² Much of his theological writing reflects the 'heretical' sections of the New Theology, as on the two natures and 'deification' of Jesus. Sensitivity and aversion to controversy and criticism, however, compelled Campbell, on the whole, to make a more careful presentation of his views.

Furthermore, the fact that in Anglicanism he was surrounded by many competent personalities in many ways swallowed him. His intellectual contributions to theological questions were relatively unimportant compared to Gore, Headlam, Streeter and Sanday, to name but a few. His views on the social question were not needed when William Temple, Henry Tawney and J.H. Oldham were ably addressing the issue of the Church and society and ecumenism.

Campbell had certainly found himself in a completely different outfit as one Anglo-Catholic priest as to 'the' minister of the City Temple. He was no longer in the limelight, his views were no longer eagerly sought and published, his theological utterances were no longer the centre of attention, and he no longer had the freedom to 'control' his church as he had done in his Congregationalist

²The Church Times, 2 March (1956) 10.

ministry. As Campbell had grown older he lost much of his reforming zeal and in so doing his political leanings were less evident. As we have seen, he ran the City Temple like an autocrat. In the Church of England the institution and its traditions kept a tighter reign on him. Moreover, he had left the Church which delighted in and boasted of its preachers and sermons, and joined the Church of the sacrament. In so doing Campbell's great gift of preaching while remaining powerful was more marginalised and curbed by the 'greater' importance of worship. Campbell, however, had 'chosen' this path, even if 'duller', and accepted the change that it brought gracefully. It was a path on which he continued his spiritual pilgrimage.

1916-17 - The Birmingham Years

... only a little curate ...³

Willingly, Campbell consented to the desire of Dr Russell Wakefield, Bishop of Birmingham, that with the Incumbent's approval, he should become Curate of St Philip's, Birmingham Cathedral. Accordingly, he began his ministry in Birmingham under the Incumbent, Hamilton Baynes. Baynes had, in 1907, dismissed The New Theology, having been astounded by Campbell's tenacity and apparent lack of awareness that he was claiming to settle questions which had baffled philosophers in all ages. In support of his contention Baynes quoted Campbell: 'It is still the fashion to declare this problem [that is, of evil] insoluble, but I have the audacity to believe that it is not so.'⁴ By 1916, however, there was no evidence of tension between the two clergymen.

³Letter to Lloyd George from his wife, 2 April 1917 in the Lloyd George Papers at the House of Lords, 1/1/2/28.

⁴A.H. Baynes, 'The New Theology and the Doctrine of the Fall', The Nineteenth Century and After, 62 (1907) 430.

As Curate of St Philips, Campbell was excused from parochial work so that his extraordinary preaching abilities could be greatly exercised. Within a short space of time, owing to his work in the Diocese, the Bishop appointed him Diocesan Chaplain (1916-17), and from 1917 to 1924 he was Honorary Chaplain to the Bishop of Birmingham.

Campbell continued to be a prolific writer in his efforts to meet the needs of the age. In addition to his books, his articles regularly featured in the columns of the The Daily Chronicle, The British Weekly, and The Illustrated Sunday Herald.

His sermons continued to be of considerable value and indicative of his thought and theological stance. 'Mystical Consciousness' preached at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square⁵ is illustrative of one of his fundamental postulations held throughout his entire ministry, that is, his insistence on 'the essential unity of all existence in God ...' which reached its highest power in Jesus. Moreover, 'God is not only the eternal reality out of which we came, but that for the sake of which we individually exist. He is the very ground of our being.' Similarly, Campbell still retained his belief that God was doing something by means of life here 'which He could not do without it. He must be expressing some aspect of Himself.' This was the premise used by mystics.

'True mysticism' Campbell maintained, 'has always rested on a paradox - namely, that God is all and all is in God, but that the individual soul is separated from the full consciousness of this and must agonize to obtain it.'⁶ The implications of this were evident in Campbell's statements on evil. Evil was the 'privation of good', and sin, for the true mystic consisted in 'living for the lesser instead of the larger self.' Julian of Norwich had similarly expressed the conviction that: 'Sin is not

⁵'Mystical Consciousness', The Guardian, 9 November (1916) 961-962.

⁶'Mystical Consciousness', The Guardian, 9 November (1916) 961.

the deed: sin is simply the acquiescence of the lower in the presence of the higher.⁷ Campbell endorsed Amiel's belief that 'Christianity if it is to triumph over pantheism, must absorb it'⁸ but in his new ministry he avoided the expressions such as sin was merely a blundering quest for God which had been an attractive bait for heresy hunters.

Throughout Campbell's entire ministry a characteristic feature of his thought was his explicit insistence that mankind strives towards conscious union with the eternal reality - to perfect oneness with God. He here described and endorsed three ways in which efforts had been made to secure this union. The complementary three which had been evident in Jesus were: introspection, that is, a contemplative life; the discovery of God in Nature, as in Wordsworth; and an apprehension of God in the common life of humanity. It was the third which, Campbell believed, should be the most dominant: 'we cannot reach God except through man; to try to win the heights of perfect God-consciousness through solitary aspiration is like trying to fly with one wing.'⁹

The sermon highlights Campbell's continuity with basic postulations of his Congregationalist ministry and the New Theology. Emphasis on the wholeness of life was an orthodox aspect of Campbell's entire ministry.

Campbell's sermons continued to have a power which commended itself to his lay congregation. He spent time in April in Criccieth where he certainly made a good impression. Mrs Lloyd George wrote to her husband: 'The folk here are very sorry he is going this week; they have had a taste for once in their of lives what

⁷Quoted by Campbell in 'The Foundation of the Christian Doctrine of God', New Theology and Applied Religion p.16.

⁸'Mystical Consciousness', p.962.

⁹'Mystical Consciousness', p.962.

good preaching really means and they appreciate it.'¹⁰ Campbell also spent his July holiday acting as Rector in Criccieth.¹¹ His loyalty and dedication to his ministry was unabated in the Anglican Church. He had moved from being the most public figure in the Congregationalist world to being 'only a little curate ...' with great dignity and humility.

1917-22 - The Westminster Years

... He is of ourselves; only once has the world seen perfect man, and that was in Jesus. The divinely human, the humanly divine, He has revealed to us our own possibilities, made us to glimpse a little of the glory that shall be when we know as we are known.¹²

Campbell's ministry in Birmingham was short-lived,¹³ owing to his nomination to Christ Church Vicarage, Westminster, in November 1917, by Canon Carnegie, Rector of St Margaret's Church, Westminster and patron of Christ Church. Campbell accepted. Relieved of parochial duties by an assistant curate, Campbell's energies were channelled to the development of a preaching centre.¹⁴ This was clearly an effort by the Established Church to mirror the success of his Nonconformist 'preaching station' at the City Temple.

¹⁰Mrs Lloyd George's letter to her husband, 2 April 1917 in the Lloyd George Papers in the House of Lords.

¹¹The Christian World, 31 May (1917) 2.

¹²R.J. Campbell, The Life of Christ: A Short Study (London, 1921), p.347.

¹³Rumours had already spread that Campbell's permanent return to 'London' would be soon - The Christian World, 6 September (1917) 3. Indeed, from 30 September 1917 Campbell assisted Bishop Bury of St Peter's, Vere Street, Westminster. He preached at the church each Sunday while retaining his living in Birmingham. - The Church Family Newspaper, 31 August (1917) 2.

¹⁴The living was £420 per annum - The Christian World, 11 October (1917) 3, a rather small amount compared to his City Temple days.

Replacing the old Brockway Chapel, Christ Church had been erected in 1841-43 as an outlet to provide for the population expansion in the parish of St Margaret's.¹⁵ St Margaret's had contributed money to the building scheme, as did a bequest left by George Darrell, a Prebendary at Westminster Abbey. Christ Church's administration was akin to that of St Margaret's, and burials at the former were included in the burial registers of the latter. Christ Church's history was relatively brief, as it was gutted during the Second World War, and was consequently demolished in 1954.

Little is known of Campbell's ministry in Westminster.¹⁶ Evidence favours that there was only one Sunday service.¹⁷ A large assembly did congregate, but it was 'composed mainly of the same people who had helped to throng the City Temple in earlier years.'¹⁸ Indeed, that Christ Church was still a parish church, despite its close associations with the Abbey, impeded the attempt to establish a strong preaching centre there.¹⁹

To help people cope with the war and its after-math, Campbell continued to reach a wider audience than his own congregation with the publication of weekly articles, especially in The Church Family Newspaper.²⁰ These were so useful that a selection of forty-seven were published as Problems of Life.²¹ Many of the

¹⁵M.E.C. Walcott, Westminster: Memorials of the City (Westminster, 1849) p.286.

¹⁶There is no further information on Campbell in the archives of Westminster Abbey Library and Westminster Public Library.

¹⁷The dedication of The Life of Christ, was to 'My Old Friends of the City Temple and the Sunday morning congregation of Christ Church, Westminster.'

¹⁸The Times, 2 March (1956) 11.

¹⁹See Campbell's testimony to this effect in his letter to the seatholders on his resignation, The Church Family Newspaper, 11 November (1921) 9.

²⁰From 13 December (1918) 11.

²¹R.J. Campbell, Problems of Life (London, 1919), p.168. The book was well recommended by The Guardian, The Methodist Times and The Daily Chronicle.

'problems' related to the war; Chapter 1 was on 'The Spirit of Fatalism', Chapter 3 on 'War and Religion', Chapter 24 on 'After 4 Years', Chapter 33 on 'Communication with the Dead', Chapter 34 on 'The Inconsolable' and Chapter 37 on 'The World's Crisis'. In all cases Campbell offered Christian hope; the cross of Christ was the most profound Christian paradox - it was the greatest tragedy, yet in it lay the greatest hope.²²

Regarding the Christ-Man mystery, 'the meeting-place of time and eternity of human and Divine', Campbell reiterated what he had said in his Congregational days: 'There may have been others, but this is the central one, the one that includes and fulfils all the rest.' Yet in Problems of Life Campbell's expression was much more acceptable to orthodoxy, and it reflected his greater emphasis on the transcendence of God and His Incarnation in Jesus Christ: 'Either Christianity is a supernatural revelation or it is nothing':

The hope of the world is that the revelation of Jesus Christ is not from beneath but from above, not of earth, but of heaven, not of the natural but the supernatural, not in line with the processes of ordinary human development but the infusion of a new creative principle from the Divine Order. This is our faith, and upon this our soul's repose.²³

Campbell had moved from a justification of the resurrection from monism, although he still maintained quite a monistic view of the universe. His argument for the resurrection, in Chapter 38, was from the limitations of human knowledge. Mankind did not know what matter was and what its potentialities were, and, therefore, could not dispute resurrection.²⁴

²²Problems of Life, p.168.

²³Problems of Life, pp.48, 61, and 63.

²⁴Problems of Life, p.175.

It was also in 1919 that Campbell had the honorary degree of doctor of divinity conferred upon him. Post-war Britain was beginning to look optimistically to the future. As Hastings recorded, Fisher's Education Act of 1918 raised the school leaving age to fourteen; the first British D.Phil. was awarded in Balliol in 1919; women could now become graduates; the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1920 and the Church's Enabling Act of 1919 all represented something of the mood of 'emancipation and enlightenment'.²⁵

Campbell had come to believe that the Church of England, intellectually, was probably the freest Church in Christendom and he continued to explore Christian thought.²⁶ The centrality of Christ in Christianity prompted Campbell to write The Life of Christ: A Short Study (1921). This book confirmed that Campbell was no arm-chair scholarly theologian. What he wrote and said was expressed 'for one purpose - that of bringing people closer to God. The book was aimed at the average person who attended church and it had been 'preached' almost in its entirety at the City Temple and at Christ Church.²⁷

Campbell carefully explained that the whole 'life' of Jesus could not, as such, be written since the Gospels were not biography. Thus rather than attempting a definitive life of Jesus and saying who Jesus was, he provided a glimpse at what Jesus did, and what Jesus was: 'What He was must inevitably precede any discussion of who He was.'²⁸ Yet Campbell was insistent, as in the New Theology days, on who Jesus was not. Jesus was not the ethical teacher as portrayed by the nineteenth-century theologians, since He did associate himself with deity in a

²⁵Hastings, A History of English Christianity, p.19.

²⁶The book was reviewed by G.T. Sadler, in The Hibbert Journal, October (1921) 189-191, vol.20, no.1, and The Times, 4 August (1921) 49.

²⁷The Life of Christ, p.viii.

²⁸The Life of Christ, p.19.

unique manner and degree. Nor was He the deluded visionary as portrayed by the eschatological view of Schweitzer.²⁹ But Campbell went beyond his stance in the New Theology and adopted a more Catholic orthodoxy.

The only right method of approach to the Jesus of the New Testament is through the living witness of His continued presence with His Church ... examining what is to be known about Jesus from the record of His earthly ministry as viewed from the standpoint of the church today as in the days before the New Testament was written.³⁰

This emphasis on the importance of the Church in understanding Jesus took into account the criticism that Campbell's New Theology had faced, namely the danger of subjectivism. The Church was a bulwark against willy-nilly interpretations of the Bible. Interestingly, Campbell's endorsement of the Church was consonant with, and added weight to, his stress on wholeness; a stress he had insisted upon throughout his entire ministry. Even by 1921, however, after he had joined a church with a strong credal emphasis, Campbell went no further in his attitude to the creeds than he had in his New Theology days, and he refrained from making 'any dogmatic assumptions at all.'³¹ The creeds, he maintained, testified to the discovery Jesus brought to mankind, but they may fail to explain the relationship of the Father and the Son. We 'have found God in Him: to Him we owe all we know or are able to understand of the spiritual order ...'³²

In The Life of Christ Campbell approached 'events' in the New Testament about Jesus from his 'living church perspective'. As in Problems of Life (1919), he recognised that many clergy and laity had dispensed with the belief in the virgin birth; a progress from his wildly inaccurate and offensive assumption in 1907 that

²⁹The Life of Christ, pp.33, 34, and 39.

³⁰The Life of Christ, p.19.

³¹The Life of Christ, p.19.

³²The Life of Christ, p.346.

all reputable theologians had given it up. Paradoxically, Campbell was more 'liberal', in that in 1921 he had more sympathy with and was more open-minded about conservative viewpoints. Rhetorically, Campbell asked why a supernormal birth should be categorically rejected when the whole life of Jesus was a supreme miracle.³³ He also admitted that the New Testament itself was not so adverse to the virgin birth as 'commonly represented'³⁴ and, incidentally, as he had previously argued. The seemingly contradictions and difficulties of the biblical texts could be explained relatively easily. That St Mark's Gospel mentioned no virgin birth was not surprising seeing that it was largely determined by St Peter's memories. Accordingly, the account was more likely to be found in St Luke, who had been a personal friend of Jesus's family.³⁵ 'Contradictions' in the genealogical accounts in St Matthew and St Luke were no more regarded as an obstacle to the virgin birth since the word 'begat' was taken in its legal sense to mean 'succession' - it thus would be legitimate to skip generations in a genealogical account. Moreover, the point of the genealogy was less for factual purposes to tell the actual physical ancestors of Jesus than for a more symbolic purpose; the importance being placed on the 'moral and religious' significance.³⁶ It was to show that Jesus was born of the house of David, that he was the Messiah expected by the Jews. Joseph was legally the father of Jesus because it was Joseph who had named him.³⁷

Campbell retained a 'liberal', though perfectly orthodox, understanding of the Nature Miracles. It was, he said, 'possible' to attribute a symbolic meaning to them, and that if this interpretation were true there would be nothing lost by

³³The Life of Christ, p.82.

³⁴The Life of Christ, p.82.

³⁵The Life of Christ, p.83.

³⁶The Life of Christ, p.85.

³⁷See also C.E.B. Cranfield, 'Some reflections on the subject of the Virgin Birth', The Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.41, No.2 (1988) 177-189. Cranfield argues strongly in favour of the virgin birth of Jesus.

accepting it as the only interpretation.³⁸ Personally, Campbell preferred the assertion that the truth would better 'be sought in a combination of the literal with the metaphorical'.³⁹ Jesus did, he maintained, enter the storm-tossed fishing boat in which his disciples had been afraid, just as in the following years his spiritual presence remained with the Church. Campbell is unclear, however, regarding which pieces of this 'miracle' he believes are literal and which metaphorical.

Campbell's interpretation of the ascension accorded with his monism.

The ascension was not the carrying up of a physical body to another plane of existence above the sky but its withdrawal into and assimilation to its spiritual background, like the melting of a white cloud into the fathomless blue of the firmament out of which it arose. The whole story is literally and exactly true.⁴⁰

As he had said in the New Theology, the ascension 'only means that when Jesus had done what He wanted the body was dissipated'.⁴¹

Campbell concluded the book with an assertion he had always maintained, and one which no orthodox or radical new theologian would disagree:

... He is of ourselves; only once has the world seen perfect man, and that was in Jesus. The divinely human, the humanly divine, He has revealed to us our own possibilities, made us to glimpse a little of the glory that shall be when we know as we are known ... He is Lord of all; our source, our goal, our Saviour, our Judge; our hope of ultimate victory over all the ills of our present lot and of entrance into everlasting habitations.⁴²

³⁸The Life of Christ, pp.234-235.

³⁹The Life of Christ, p.235.

⁴⁰The Life of Christ, p.273 and p.346.

⁴¹The New Theology, p.225.

⁴²The Life of Christ, p.347.

The way in which Campbell defined and limited his area in The Life of Christ is fascinating. The content of the book is very uncontroversial; it is largely a story of Jesus's life based on the Gospels. Thus consideration of the two natures in one person and the doctrine of the Trinity do not feature. Equally avoided was discussion on redemption, atonement, or the kenosis or self-emptying of the eternal Son in taking on human flesh.

Arthur Sainsbury said that he did not know, but 'should be surprised to learn that he [Campbell] ever became a good conservative.'⁴³ He was right, Campbell remained a liberal at heart:

... in the light of modern experimental knowledge of the mysterious borderland between life and death, all that is recorded in the New Testament regarding Jesus's power to raise the dead is perfectly credible. In every instance that power was exerted within a short time after death or what seemed to be death: it may even have been trance ...⁴⁴

Campbell said: 'It would still be true to describe me as a religious liberal, but I am a liberal with a Catholic outlook, and my liberalism had had to be greatly modified within the past few years. Immanentism is inadequate as an explanation of the Christian facts ...'⁴⁵

Fellow Anglicans were not outraged since Campbell's liberalism was largely within orthodoxy. J. Adderley in his review of the book declared '... the author so obviously both believes in the orthodox interpretation of our Lord's Person, while not being dismayed, but rather encouraged, by scientific research.'⁴⁶

⁴³Arthur Sainsbury's letter to Professor Keith Robbins dated 7 January, no year given, but most probably in the early 1970s. Sainsbury was quoting from his diary entry of 3 March 1956.

⁴⁴The Life of Christ, p.305.

⁴⁵A Spiritual Pilgrimage, p.290.

⁴⁶The Church Family Newspaper, 29 July (1921) 5.

On 20 November 1921, the day of the Dedication Festival, Campbell resigned his charge at Christ Church; it coincided with the date of his institution there four years earlier. His letter to the seatholders read:

... I have ... had to decide to relinquish my parochial charge in order to obtain the time necessary for the amount of preaching and writing I have promised to do in the next six months. I am impelled to this decision by the knowledge that my principal vocation in life is that of a preacher, and most of my experience lies along that line. Anything that interferes with that is to be deprecated, and the responsibility of a parish in the very heart of the busiest part of Westminster does interfere with it to a very great extent; I cannot obtain the requisite leisure for my main work ... They have been four very happy years ...⁴⁷

This was no simple shirking of responsibility; doctors had warned Campbell of a breakdown.⁴⁸ Thus, for recuperation and the fresh sea air, he moved back to Brighton in early 1922, to 75 Marine Parade. He remained a licensed preacher for the London diocese. The breakdown of which he had been warned, however, happened a few months after his move.

1922-29 - The Brighton Years

1922 was a year of convalescence for Campbell, but he felt that the process enhanced his spirituality.

If I were asked to say just what it is that has most vividly impressed itself upon my passive consciousness in these months of enforced sequestration from active service and human fellowship I think the answer would be a strong realisation of the imminence of God in the affairs of mankind. I say imminence, not immanence ... What came to me ... was the overwhelming conviction that God is no mere silent spectator of what is taking place in and around us, but the energising centre of it all.⁴⁹

⁴⁷The Church Family Newspaper, 11 November (1921) 9 contrast The Times, 2 March (1956) 11. It was this frustration felt by Campbell which gave birth to the opinion that Campbell was unhappy at Christ Church.

⁴⁸The Church Family Newspaper, 16 May (1924) 9.

⁴⁹The Church Family Newspaper, 3 November (1922) 9.

On Campbell's recovery, which had been slowed down by an operation for a throat infection and heart attacks,⁵⁰ he occasionally preached at St Peter's Church, West Blatchington.⁵¹ However, Rev A.H. Watts, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Brighton, approached Campbell in view of his helping to occupy the pulpit of Holy Trinity.⁵² This was owing to Watts's own ill-health and the Bishop of Chichester, the Right Rev Winfrid Oldfields Burrows supported the request. Campbell accepted, and beginning in autumn 1923, he preached on Sunday mornings at the Church - a Church which the Diocesan Commission had recommended be closed down. Hundreds attended.⁵³ Campbell was in a similar position to that of 1903 when he agreed to assist for a few months with the Thursday morning services at the City Temple. Shortly before Easter 1924 Watts died of pneumonia and Campbell accepted the perpetual curacy from the Bishop. He was thankful that Rev F.C. Baker became assistant minister with the responsibility of Sunday evening services and for routine work.

Campbell's health steadily improved, but on Thursday 12 June 1924 his wife died. Little is known of Mrs Campbell, though The Church of England Newspaper paid a kind tribute to her:

⁵⁰The Christian World, 15 December (1921) 2 and 17 August (1922) 2.

⁵¹The Church of England,^{Newspaper} 20 June (1924) 9. A brief history of the church is given in Dale, The Brighton Churches, pp.220-223, and in a booklet produced by the Church, 'The Parish Church of St Peter: Some Notes on West Blatchington and its Church'. Francis Dormer Pierce was Vicar of Brighton with West Blatchington from 1917 to 1923, and he was followed by Dr F.C.N. Hicks (1924-1927). Campbell may have taken responsibility for the church in between the ministries of Pierce and Hicks, or, as suggested by the present vicar of West Blatchington - Rev S. Porteous, Campbell may have been one of the 'Priests-in-charge' appointed during the early decade of the twentieth century owing to the population growth. In 1940 West Blatchington became a separate benefice. I am grateful to Rev Stanley Porteous for a copy of the above booklet and for a copy of a minute referring to Campbell's preaching at the church in 1925.

⁵²There are very few records of Holy Trinity in Lewes Record Office. Being a propriety chapel there were no marriage registers, the chapel was not licensed.

⁵³The Church of England Newspaper, 14 December (1923) 3.

She was of a very retiring disposition, hating publicity in any and every form ... Nothing could persuade her to make a speech in public ... She often used to say jocularly, that she had only one duty in life, that of keeping a delicate husband alive ...⁵⁴

She delighted in mothering people, especially the young. The bad weather of January 1923 had brought on a severe valvular heart attack from which she never fully recovered, but it was a paralytic seizure which made her helpless and scarcely conscious for her last three weeks of life, and which was the immediate cause of death. The extent of her support for her husband was fully attested in her last moment of consciousness. Watchers were given the indication that she wished her husband to preach on Whit Sunday. Accordingly he left the hospital having told her where he was going. She later died. She was buried with Anglican rites in the churchyard at West Blatchington;⁵⁵ she had, it was said, loved the Church of England, and her burial service was at Holy Trinity on the Monday. Prebendary Dawson, Headmaster of Brighton College, officiated.

On Tuesday 17 June, the day after his wife was buried, Campbell was installed as incumbent of Holy Trinity. Immediately afterwards, following the doctor's advice, he went on holiday with his brother, Colonel Campbell.⁵⁶

On his return, with characteristic commitment and fervour, Campbell threw his whole energy to the upbuilding of Holy Trinity. Accordingly, his work as Honorary Chaplain to the Bishop of Birmingham and as a licensed preacher to the London diocese were terminated in 1924. He was determined that the church of F.W. Robertson (1816-53), Incumbent of Holy Trinity (1847-53) should always be

⁵⁴The Church of England Newspaper, 20 June (1924) 9.

⁵⁵The Church of England Newspaper, 20 June (1924) 9.

⁵⁶The Christian World, 19 June (1924) 2.

open. Even in his Union Church days, he avidly read Robertson's works and a portrait of him had hung on his vestry wall.⁵⁷

Campbell was proud to take responsibility for Holy Trinity in the footsteps of Robertson. They were men of similar calibre and convictions. Both were born in London, and of Scottish descent. Both had gone to Oxford with the intention of seeking Holy Orders, neither were deeply involved in the life of the University, and both had a quite morbid personality intensified by constant health problems. Both were involved in difficulties with their church officers over the appointment of assistant ministers, and each was acutely sensitive to criticism. The all-sufficiency of Christ as the divinely human Saviour of humanity, and concern with the social question were of great importance to both men. Furthermore, the two were famous for their sermons, and their ability to fill the church; they were both nationally and internationally renowned, as well as having the soubriquet '... of Brighton' added to their names.

Holy Trinity was particularly suited to Campbell; it was a preaching centre, standing in a district almost entirely devoid of a resident population.⁵⁸ The chapel, originally known as Trinity Chapel, had been built by T.R. Kemp in 1817 as an Independent Chapel to accommodate his own dissenting sect which he had led on his departure from the Church of England in 1816. Lacking any great success during his own and his successor George Faithful's ministry, it was bought by the Anglican Rev R. Anderson and his brother James. By a special Act of Parliament, dated 22 March 1826,⁵⁹ Trinity chapel became a Chapel of Ease, and it was consecrated on 21 April 1826. During Rev R.D. Cocking's ministry, in 1878, the

⁵⁷The British Weekly, 23 April (1903) 29.

⁵⁸A Notable Centenary, p.22.

⁵⁹Dale, The Brighton Churches, p.49.

proprietary rights of the Anderson family were purchased by the Established Church for £6,500. The chapel was subsequently known as Holy Trinity.

Campbell's ministry reflected the mood of 'respectable' Brighton. His deep concern for the social question and for relieving the lot of the poor had largely disappeared; even the General Strike of 1926 did not precipitate any significant response from him. The 1920s were, for Campbell, the most politically sober years of his ministry thus far even though they were the years of a great divide between rich and poor. Unemployment was always over a million, the mining industry was in an appalling state and many were trapped in poverty. However, in Brighton Campbell was largely surrounded by those for whom the 1920s were 'golden' years. Motor cars and radios were much more common than ever before, a bus service was operating, new houses were being built. Indeed those in employment benefited greatly, with the rise of the real wage, they were able to afford the new items on the market. The present and future certainly looked optimistic.

In December 1925 Campbell began his first working holiday in Egypt and Palestine, returning in January 1926,⁶⁰ the year of the publication of Essays Catholic and Critical edited by E.G. Selwyn. The volume, which comprised of fifteen essays by a group of Anglo-Catholics, argued that both a 'catholic' and 'critical' perspective enhanced understanding of historic Christianity. It was unique in that it was the most catholic and yet the most liberal book of its kind thus far. The work was totally consonant with Campbell's own beliefs though he was not among the contributors of the symposium.

⁶⁰The Times, 4 December (1925) 17.

In 1927 Campbell married Miss Ethel Gertrude Smith. She had lived with his family since childhood,⁶¹ being a playmate of his daughter. The Evening Standard reported that she had actually been adopted by Campbell and his wife.⁶² For twenty years she had been his secretary and his constant companion since Mrs Campbell's death.⁶³ They married at St Anne's Church, Brighton, at 8.00 am on Monday 17 January. The wedding had been kept a secret, and employees in the Campbell household only heard the news at 10.00 pm on the previous evening. Only a handful of people were at the ceremony, including Campbell's daughter and her husband, whose bridesmaid Miss Smith had been.⁶⁴ Canon Dawson conducted the ceremony, assisted by Campbell's curate, Rev F.C. Baker. The honeymooners, Campbell aged sixty, and Ethel aged forty, spent the larger part of February and March in Algiers.⁶⁵ On their return they were given a reception at the Royal Pavilion by the Holy Trinity congregation and were presented with many gifts.⁶⁶ It was with the devotion and help of his wife that Campbell continued to be so prolific in his writing.

During these Brighton years Campbell wrote two biographies of men he admired, Thomas Arnold (1927) and Livingstone (1929).⁶⁷ His customary ministerial flair also flourished. As in his Congregational days, crowds flocked to hear him, and

⁶¹There is never any reference to her living or moving with the family, nor does she feature on photographs taken of the Campbell family.

⁶²The Evening Standard, 17 January (1927) 1. 'Adoption', however, as used by the paper did not have the same connotations as it does today. The Adoption of Children Act was not passed until 1926.

⁶³The Christian World, 20 January (1927) 2.

⁶⁴There is no reference to Campbell's father being present. His father died the following year.

⁶⁵The Church of England Newspaper, 4 February (1927) 9, and 25 March (1927) 3.

⁶⁶The Church of England Newspaper, 1 August (1927) 3.

⁶⁷Livingstone was reviewed in The Times, 8 October (1929) 22 and The Christian World, 3 October (1929) 6-7.

frequently many were turned away. However, he resisted proposals to enlarge the church, firmly maintaining that what was adequate in its greatest days, that is, Robertson's ministry, was sufficient for his own ministry.⁶⁸ He did, however, increase the available accommodation of the church with folding stools and chairs. As in his previous Brighton ministry, Campbell filled the church. His preaching still had the power to attract large congregations; he did not depend on controversy.

Campbell retained his national standing in his Anglican ministry; something very often overlooked, but recognised by The Manchester Guardian of 17 October 1929 in its declaration that Campbell had made for himself 'a place of peculiar, if unofficial, authority in the Church of England'. His Vision of Life and Other Sermons⁶⁹ fully attested to his 'national' ministry.

'The Advent Summons' was delivered at Westminster Abbey on Sunday 28 November 1925 as was 'The Sacrament of Love' on 19 June 1927. 'The Things that Abide', was preached at St Paul's Cathedral on Thursday 13 October 1927 and it was the Annual Sermon of the Church of England's Men's Society. 'Hidden Wisdom' had been delivered before the Theological Students' Union in Manchester on 4 May 1927.

The collection of sermons reveal Campbell's theology, hopes and beliefs at the time. The ecumenical and fraternal element in his personality was evident in his sermon 'Fraternity in Christ', preached on 5 July 1925 at the City Temple, before the Assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Taking Matthew 23:8 as his text, he exalted the meekness and lowliness of Jesus and

⁶⁸A Notable Centenary, p.26.

⁶⁹R.J. Campbell, Vision of Life and Other Sermons (London, 1928).

insisted that it was through our allegiance in Him that our fraternal relationship to one another becomes realisable.⁷⁰

Similar sentiments were expressed by Campbell a couple of years later:

I wish we could truly say that the Church of England had always been as faithful to the principle of comprehensiveness as she is now. Widely divergent schools of thought find shelter within her fold, and I pray God it may ever be so; it is not a sign of weakness but of strength; there is no Church at once so liberal and so all-embracing. If in the seventeenth century she had kept her vision clear in this matter the Act of Uniformity would not have been passed and the nonconforming clergy would not have been driven out.⁷¹

Further, if this fraternity had prevailed in the eighteenth century, Methodism would have been welcomed, not shunned. In the 1890s, Campbell had left Anglicanism because of her exclusiveness, as revealed in the seventeenth century. This 'exclusivism', in the 1920s he rather naïvely declared to be past.

Throughout his ministry Campbell never involved himself in the ecumenical movement as such with its Faith and Order and Life and Work pressure groups. His sole efforts at fostering Church unity were purely through the sermon, and, as we have seen, through his work on the Free Church Council, the Christian League, Pioneer Preachers' Order and his loose association with the Free Catholic movement. While denominationalism grieved Campbell and always had done, he would have supported the statement of the Lambeth Conference in 1920: 'We do not ask that any one communion should consent to be absorbed in another. We do ask that all should unite in a new and great endeavour to recover and to manifest to the world the unity of the Body of Christ for which He prayed'.⁷²

⁷⁰Vision of Life and Other Sermons, p.45.

⁷¹The Church of England Newspaper, 4 November (1927) 11.

⁷²Hastings, A History of English Christianity, p.97.

The 1920s were years of growing agnosticism, and they were thus years in which Campbell continued to encourage his congregation and readers in their Christian faith. The first sermon in Vision of Life and Other Sermons, preached on 1 Corinthians 8:12, treated present knowledge as seeing through a glass dimly. Campbell noted that a characteristic of the age was 'frustration' with knowledge: '... the more we know the less we know ...'⁷³ He offered encouragement by reminding the people that while there was much in life and the future that was hidden at the present, there was no cause for fear. He drew the parallel between his readers and Jesus. Jesus was unaware of what exactly was to happen in the Garden of Gethsemane, and later from the Cross, cried, 'My God, My God, Why ...?' Yet in Jesus's cry of dereliction God stooped down. Similarly, there was the same hope for the rest of mankind; God would reach down to their need.⁷⁴

This collection of sermons shows a change of emphasis from Campbell's New Theology days in respect of the social gospel. In his Congregational ministry he was fearful that the spiritual nature of mankind was being falsely separated from a social concern. Thus he encouraged the individual to think of life in terms of the whole and to share concern for the mass rather than be solely interested in individuality. By the 1920s the stress was reversed. The reversal was in direct correlation to the change in society. Campbell's message in essence remained the same - the wholeness of life, where attention to spiritual matters included social concern and individual service of the mass. But for society social issues had increasingly become dominant and little attention was given to spiritual concerns. In reaction to this trend Campbell entreated his hearers to remember that mankind was saved one by one, not *en masse*; everyone was responsible for ensuring that his own relationship with God was based on a firm foundation. Campbell forcibly

⁷³Vision of Life and Other Sermons, p.6.

⁷⁴Vision of Life and Other Sermons, p.13.

readdressed the balance and upheld the importance of the social gospel, while insisting that the Gospel must begin with the individual.⁷⁵

Campbell's desire to answer the actual needs of others was apparent in his article 'The Dead are Alive'.⁷⁶ The correspondent A.J.C. had not asked about God but the hope of personal immortality. Campbell diplomatically replied that A.J.C.'s interest should be more in God, but he did not evade the question. He recognised the increasing concern of what happened to the soul after the death of the body; indeed he saw this as a positive sign after the almost exclusive trend in previous years on material values. He gave evidence for his optimism of personal immortality on two levels; the first was scientific and the second was spiritual experience. After being a member of the Psychological Research Society for more than thirty years, and reading and studying the proceedings of their meetings, which he never attended, he concluded: 'I here solemnly affirm that I believe the case for survival is proved.'⁷⁷ He said the evidence, of which he made no further allusions, 'goes to show that self-consciousness and personality can continue independently after the dissolution of the physical organization.' Moreover:

Those whom we call dead are more alive than we are. For a time, at any rate, after passing through the gate of death they seem to dwell in a world very like ours and interpenetrating ours. They know a good deal about us though not everything, and to some extent they can influence us. They carry with them the tastes and feelings, the character and disposition that marked them here. If they loved us here they have not ceased to love us there, and knowing how simple the transition is, and how much for the better, they can calmly await the reunion which will soon take place.⁷⁸

⁷⁵Vision of Life and Other Sermons, p.69.

⁷⁶R.J. Campbell, 'The Dead are Alive', Where are the Dead? (London, 1928).

⁷⁷'The Dead are Alive', p.68.

⁷⁸'The Dead are Alive', p.69.

There was also, Campbell said, spiritual experience of the soul surviving the death of the body, and proof that the continuity of personality as it was now revealed did not describe the highest reach of attainment possible to mankind:

... we have to rise into and partake of the experience of the saints, and few of us are worthy. It is not a question of merely going on but of going up, of entering more and more deeply into conscious union with God ...⁷⁹

Since this was not always achieved in an earthly life-time, and since, Campbell believed, God's goodness and moral purpose required the perfection of his creatures, immortality was necessary. Moreover, the love of God, Campbell argued, would obliterate the thought that God would let his creatures be extinguished. Jesus, too, believed that mankind was constituted for a larger and more glorious life beyond the grave as evident in his talk of laying up treasures in heaven.⁸⁰ Campbell defended what A.J.C. had called his 'nebulous doctrine of the immanence of God' by saying, as he had done during the New Theology days, that it was the only doctrine possible to accept to the modern intelligent mind.⁸¹ As he explained in a sermon published posthumously.

... one of the great difficulties which besets belief in the immortality of the soul disappears when we come to regard the universe as wholly spiritual and when we look to people as a soul temporary expressing themselves through a body, death becomes not a change from place to place, but state to state, not so much a change without as change within.⁸²

⁷⁹'The Dead are Alive', p.69.

⁸⁰The Christian World Pulpit, 13 November (1958) 159.

⁸¹'The Dead are Alive', p.69.

⁸²The Christian World Pulpit, 6 June (1957) 183-184.

In his weekly religious article for The Church of England Newspaper,⁸³ Campbell wrote that 'Christ was a man - granted ... But from the very first those who loved and believed in Him were conscious that something of the eternal and divine clung about Him and radiated from Him.'⁸⁴ It was this that gave Jesus his authority and the same applied for Christianity today - a divine Christ is craved for and without one Christianity would die; the human Christ would not suffice to save it, for, in the words of the founder of the Society of Friends, George Fox (1624-91), He could not 'speak to our condition'. It is not an exemplar we want but a Saviour.⁸⁵

Campbell's view of the Trinity during his Holy Trinity pastorate was evident from an article in The Church of England Newspaper:

Belief in the divine Trinity in Unity is not an arbitrary requirement of our faith; to be accepted without reason given, but an unescapable necessity of our mental and spiritual life. When we get down to the simplest terms of thought ... the assumptions without which we cannot think at all, we come upon three primordial data, - the infinite, the finite, and the nexus between the two. There must be an infinite, for we can put no bounds to existence in our thought; we know there is a finite, for we live in daily subjection to it; and there must be somehow, though we cannot see how, a constant interflow between these two. They cannot be two; they must be one; and that which unites them, proceeding from each to the other, constitutes a third entity for our contemplation. If for these metaphysical values we substitute religious terms, we have first God the Father, the eternal source of all that is; secondly, God the Son, that is God as the eternal principle of creation, the Word by whom the worlds were made; and thirdly, God the Holy Spirit, the ceaseless intercommunion of these twain who are yet one. Morally speaking, the same reasoning holds good. God must contain within Himself all that is necessary to the living of a perfect life. He cannot be dependent upon creation for self-expression⁸⁶ - there are grave objections to such a theory - and a perfect

⁸³Campbell had continued to use the media for expressing his religious beliefs, and there is evidence of his having spoken on the BBC radio which had begun broadcasting in 1924, see The Church of England Newspaper, 1 January (1926) 3.

⁸⁴Again Campbell had changed the emphasis from the New Theology. He no longer said that hearers of Jesus's message thought of Jesus just as a man, but now he says that they were aware that something of the divine radiated about him.

⁸⁵'What think ye of Christ? Does a Non-Divine Saviour Suffice?', The Church of England Newspaper, 24 November (1925) 9.

⁸⁶This makes a change of emphasis in Campbell's thought. In the New Theology he believed that God was dependent upon creation for self-expression, because He chose to be. Here he phrased the same thought in more orthodox terminology and

life implies society. Or, to use theological language, God is ever going forth from Himself in the eternal Son to return to Himself in the eternal Spirit.⁸⁷

On eternal punishment Campbell believed that the recorded prophecies of Jesus's second coming were highly metaphorical. Yet beyond the metaphor was the true meaning. He said that Jesus assumed life went on after death, that sin was punished and righteousness rewarded, but that Jesus also believed in a final consummation wherein God's righteous judgements would be manifested fully and the visible creation brought into harmony with the heavenly order. Thus, Campbell did not believe in eternal punishment.⁸⁸ For Jesus, Campbell said, 'Eternal life is union with God, the perfect assimilation of what is human to what is divine.'⁸⁹ This did not detract from Campbell's belief in the life to come.

The one sure and stable consolation in the presence of loss and sorrow is to abide in Him. No man can doubt that there is a life to come whose conversation is already in heaven; none can mourn the dead as those without hope, to whom the love of Christ is a sweet and abiding reality.⁹⁰

Towards the end of Campbell's Holy Trinity ministry the Church of England was enmeshed in controversy over a revision of the Prayer Book. Essentially the main point of the revision was to bring the Prayer Book back in line with the historic liturgies of both East and West. Anglo-Catholics, in particular, were accordingly

said that God 'cannot be dependent upon creation for self-expression'.

⁸⁷The Church of England Newspaper, 5 June (1925) 9.

⁸⁸Campbell said that 'eternal' was usually taken to mean 'everlasting'. He followed the thought of Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and F.D. Maurice (1805-1872) in believing that 'eternity' had nothing to do with time. See F.D. Maurice, Theological Essays (Cambridge, 1853), a publication which led to Maurice's dismissal from the Professorship of Theology at King's College, which he had held since 1846. Schleiermacher had said: 'In the midst of finitude to be one with the Infinite and in every moment is to be eternal is the immortality of religion'. - F. Schleiermacher, On Religion (New York, 1858), p.101.

⁸⁹The Church of England Newspaper, 21 January (1927) 9.

⁹⁰The Church of England Newspaper, 9 December (1927) 9.

keen on the proposal and it comfortably passed in the Church Assembly. The Bill, however, was defeated by the House of Commons both in December 1927 and June 1928. Campbell supported the revision but his campaigning days, as over the 1902 Education Act, were over. He contributed just two articles to The Church of England Newspaper on the revision - 'A Plea for Liberality' and 'The Lord's Body'.⁹¹

Campbell envisaged himself primarily as a preacher and believed that a greater desire for service was the outcome of faithful preaching. Out of concern that there should be accommodation for the congregation's increasing desire for service to God, the Church and community, a scheme was inaugurated for a Robertson Hall - in memory of F.W. Robertson.⁹² Funds for the estimated cost of £14,000 were forthcoming after the scheme was launched with a garden party, for some seven hundred guests, at Brighton College in September 1925.⁹³

The scheme got underway, but soon afterwards Campbell resigned from Holy Trinity on the assurance that the scheme would go ahead. His letter of resignation was printed in the November 1929 edition of Holy Trinity Magazine.⁹⁴ He said he wished to leave from the end of November in preparation for his new post in Chichester but that he hoped to go back to Holy Trinity for Christmas and resign his charge after the first Sunday in 1930. Thus in January, at the Royal Pavilion, Holy Trinity paid their farewell tribute to Campbell. Bishop Russell Wakefield and Rev F.C. Baker presided. As usual on these occasions, Campbell was given

⁹¹The Church of England Newspaper, 4 November (1927) 11 and 11 November (1927) 1 respectively.

⁹²A Notable Centenary, p.25.

⁹³The Church of England Newspaper, 25 September (1925) 7.

⁹⁴The Church of England Newspaper, 1 November (1929) 9.

extravagant gifts, presented by Sir John Otter, JP.⁹⁵ Campbell had relinquished his benefice in Holy Trinity though no stipend was attached to his new office.⁹⁶

The brainchild of Campbell, the Robertson Hall Scheme, protected Holy Trinity from destruction in the late 1940s when the diocesan authorities wished to close the church because of its small congregation. Owing to rent derived from the Robertson Hall the congregation was financially independent, and the church remained open.

The impetus Campbell gave to Holy Trinity did not last far beyond his ministry; and from 1971 no perpetual curate was appointed; the church was left to conduct its affairs on an *ad hoc* basis. Lack of firm leadership was not conducive to church growth and at the end of December 1984 it was closed down. The small remaining congregation moved to worship at the Chapel Royal.⁹⁷ The church building, which played such a prominent part in the religious history of Brighton, still remains, and is to be occupied by the Brighton Museum.

⁹⁵Baker had been Campbell's assistant until 1 August 1929 when he was inducted at St Stephen's, Coleman Street, E.C. The Church of England Newspaper, 17 January (1930) 7.

⁹⁶The Church of England Newspaper, 4 April (1930) 9.

⁹⁷Dale, The Brighton Churches, p.55.

1929-46 - The Chichester Years, and 1946-56 - The Closing Years⁹⁸

In 1929, the year of the economic crash and the beginning of the world slump which precipitated soaring unemployment, Campbell accepted his new appointment by ^{the} Bishop of Chichester, G.K.A. Bell (1881-1958)⁹⁹. In their joint pastoral letter of July 1929 the Archbishops of Canterbury and York set forth a Way of Renewal. They requested that the Bible and Creeds be studied as part of the corporate life of the Church. Thus Bishop Bell created an office of Canon-Teacher in his diocese for this purpose. Campbell was the ideal person for the position.

A few months later Campbell accepted a Residentiary Canonry in Chichester Cathedral,¹⁰⁰ though he kept his country house, and in October 1930 he became Chancellor of Chichester Cathedral; a post which brought 'not much grist to the mill' but of which the honour was well deserved.¹⁰¹

Campbell fulfilled his teaching commitments throughout the diocese, and conducted special courses for both clergy and laity. Many of these courses were held at the retreat house of Elfinward, at Hayward's Heath. He also undertook extra pastoral care as Chaplain of Bishop Otter College, Chichester from 1933 to 1936.

⁹⁸The records of the Cathedral, from Campbell's period at Chichester, are held in the West Sussex County Record Office. Regarding Campbell, only a copy of his 'Way of Renewal' letter exists, as well as a record of meetings of clergy between July 1932 and May 1936, which were addressed by Campbell and entitled 'The Way of Renewal'. This group met until 1943, and described its activities as 'Clerical Study'. I am grateful to Mrs Patricia Gill, County and Diocesan Archivist, West Sussex Record Office, Chichester, for this information. Campbell does not appear in a draft index of Bishop Bell's collection held by the Lambeth Palace Library.

⁹⁹Bishop of Chichester 1929-1958.

¹⁰⁰The Church of England Newspaper, 4 April (1930) 9.

¹⁰¹The Church of England Newspaper, 31 October (1930) 3.

Articles by Campbell were still written for The Church of England Newspaper. Attention focussed on questions of Christian belief, and owing to the specificity of the questions Campbell's response to the more general political and social events of his time are wanting. His answers to correspondence, however, amply illustrate his theological stance. It was natural that the questions addressed to Campbell concerned Christian belief. Growing secularisation, as epitomised in authors such as D.H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf, were causing concern and fostering doubt about Christianity. The philosophy of Bertrand Russell also represented growing modern belief that Christianity was dated, and linguistic analysis, with its proponents such as A.J. Ayer, was synonymous during the 1930s with logical positivism which classified as meaningless all statements of God and theology as well as metaphysics.¹⁰²

Campbell stood firm in his belief. Secularisation and antipathy to religion, however, were proving less convincing and inadequate to many people. Indeed as British culture became more secularised people such as T.S. Eliot and C.S. Lewis turned to Anglicanism, in 1927 and 1929 respectively. The 1930s, on the whole, witnessed a growing movement towards religion and Catholicity. The 'fear' of Hitler and Stalin and disillusionment with secularism, as Hastings said, encouraged this trend.¹⁰³ There remained a need, however, for Campbell to help people in their questionings concerning Christian beliefs.

On the question of the suffering of God he articulated his

... regret that Patripassianism had ever been condemned as a heresy ... Suffering in God may be a formal heresy, but the essence of divine love partakes of it and transmutes it into bliss, love is self-giving, and self-giving is joy - joy from which pain is true for God as for man, and on

¹⁰²It was not until after the war that Ludwig Wittgenstein's own doubts about linguistic analysis itself was taken as an opening for God-talk.

¹⁰³Hastings, A History of English Christianity, p.290.

the field of history the passion of Christ as its manifestation - the expression in time of a fact that is eternal.¹⁰⁴

He also tackled the mystery of the Incarnation.

If, as we have noted, reality is a graded whole extending from the lowest form of matter to the highest expression of spirit, and if each lower grade only becomes significant and fulfils itself as possessed and indwelt by the next higher, then we should reasonably expect humanity to manifest adequately its true nature when it becomes in the highest sense the vehicle and instrument of Deity ... [in Jesus] ... the eternal and uncreate become manifest in such a way that humanity attained perfection by becoming indissolubly blended with Deity.

Campbell had thus retained his monistic philosophy, and he continued, 'I know the Saviour I want is one of whom I can say ... 'My Lord and my God'. It would not suffice for my need that He should be only a heroic brother man divinely inspired.'¹⁰⁵

As part of Campbell's commitment to a 'Way of Renewal' he presented a series of twelve lectures during the winter of 1930-31 in St Margaret's Church, Lothbury. These lectures provided the content of Christian Faith in the Modern Light.

The lectures which were produced unaltered in their published version were aimed at intellectual laity. In Chapter Three on 'Jesus Christ and the Modern World', Campbell approved of the interest in Jesus's teaching at the present, especially his social teaching, but he emphasised that it was Jesus's life and death which created the Christian religion, not merely His teaching.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴The Church of England Newspaper, 30 May (1930) 9.

¹⁰⁵The Church of England Newspaper, 24 December (1930) 7, and with some minor differences, is found in R.J. Campbell, Christian Faith in Modern Life (London, 1932), p.81.

¹⁰⁶Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.44.

Campbell's attitude towards the creeds was unaltered. They were 'clumsy tools for giving expression to the rich and joyous experience of God in Christ, remaking men's lives and transforming their whole outlook upon the future.'¹⁰⁷ He endorsed, once again, the efforts of the creed-makers to insist on the paradox of the full humanity and full deity of Jesus.

In Chapter Seven, Campbell gave a brief synopsis of the understanding of the 'historical' Christ in modern critical theories. As in The Life of Christ (1921) the weaknesses of the 'Back to Christ' movement, the pitfall of the reverse of this trend in the Christ Myth theories, and the drawbacks of Schweitzer's attempt were all shown. Yet he went beyond his book of 1921 in his appraisal of A.C. Headlam's (Bishop of Gloucester) The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ (1923) and Jesus Christ in History and Faith (1925). Headlam said that Jesus knew Himself as no one else could, and if the evidence for his self-revelation be taken as its true value, we could come to no other conclusion than that, here was a being who transcended all our categories of what was normally human and admirable. Campbell recognised that there were inevitable gaps in Headlam's understanding, but he believed there were 'no fissures'.¹⁰⁸

Campbell was even more complimentary of Gore's Jesus of Nazareth (1929). 'No book', he said, 'issued in the last few years has produced a greater effect for good.'¹⁰⁹ He sympathised fully with Gore, for whom

The final determination between faith and unfaith in the case of Jesus certainly rested upon the consideration - Do I or do I not find room in my mind for the idea of God as the Creator and the Redeemer of men in general and of myself in particular, who came near to mankind and to me at last in a human character - in Jesus of Nazareth? If we can find in our mind no room for this Divine Saviour, we shall find means no doubt to

¹⁰⁷Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.83.

¹⁰⁸Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.108.

¹⁰⁹Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.108.

dispose of the evidence. But if we find room for the idea, we shall also find the evidence very cogent - enough, or more than enough, to make the self-committal of faith the reasonable reaction.¹¹⁰

Chapter Eight revealed Campbell's position on the influence of belief in Christ upon belief in God. He regarded as erroneous the idea that we know nothing of God apart from Christ, since we would still know God as unity, personal, moral, and active in history, as well as the reality of divine grace, the answer to prayers, and the refuge to our souls. ~~without Christ.~~ With Christ, however, Campbell maintained these were more deeply known.

On the Trinity Campbell's thought had not changed from his New Theology days, and he was certainly within orthodoxy:

Metaphysically it has always been full of difficulty; it was an attempt to state a profound and precious spiritual experience that the doctrine was framed, and the admission must be made that no cogent reason can be shown why the being of God should be a Trinity instead of a quaternity or consist of still other personal constituents.¹¹¹

Campbell's treatment of evil also resembled his earlier thought. The 'evil that is sin is the alliance of the human will with what the enlightened moral sense condemns; it is following the lower in presence of the higher, doing that which is easy in opposition to that which is right.'¹¹² Further, the essence of sin is divisiveness, self-seeking. Campbell continued to say that because of sin there is need for atonement, forgiveness, and regeneration and the satisfaction of that need is the 'very core of religion'.¹¹³ In the subsequent Chapter on 'The Meaning and Scope of Redemption', Campbell defined the atonement as Christ suffering 'for'

¹¹⁰Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.110 quoting Gore, Jesus of Nazareth, p.205.

¹¹¹Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.123.

¹¹²Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.151.

¹¹³Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.153.

us, not in our stead as the classical, but not necessarily orthodox, Protestant ^{ut} substitutionary theories had proposed:

It is we who need to be reconciled to God, not God to us, though it would be true to say that God's estranged from us while the barrier of sin remains between us. No one will deny that it is the cross of Christ that in all the Christian centuries has proved to be the power of God unto salvation - short of the sinless one who died for us, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.¹¹⁴

Campbell believed there was a great need for atonement, and he emphasised that mankind could not achieve it alone. He further regarded his present day as being in great danger of 'underrating the need of personal salvation as formerly church-goers were in danger of underrating the practical application of Gospel precepts to the social needs of the time.'¹¹⁵

The final Chapter on 'The Supreme Experience' further illustrates the continuity, and yet development, of Campbell's thought throughout his entire ministry. As in the New Theology days, Campbell, in 1932, still maintained that 'The wrath of God and the love of God are the same thing viewed from opposite standpoints.' Yet a significant development of thought was evident in his greater recognition that Jesus's words were

not compatible with the belief that the world will go on getting better and better until all unideal elements have been strained out of it, but rather wheat and tares will grow together until a general harvest when God will intervene in judgment to institute an entirely new order of things metaphorically described as a new heaven and a new earth.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.166.

¹¹⁵Christian Faith in Modern Light, p.158.

¹¹⁶Christian Faith in the Modern Light, p.175.

Campbell's hermeneutics and choice of biblical passages certainly fitted his understanding of humanity, Christology, and so forth, rather than the Bible governing his understanding.

In 1932, precipitated by the growth of the Anglo-Catholic movement, United Methodists, Wesleyans and Primitives, united to form the Methodist Church. While Campbell would have been encouraged with the spirit of union he would positively have been disheartened by the attitude of Sir Robert Perks. Perks saw a united Methodism as an answer to the movement towards Rome in the Church of England.¹¹⁷ Anathema to Campbell would have been Perks's concept of the unity of Protestants to stand against Catholicism. Campbell was interested in the 'unity' of Christendom. The formation of the Methodist Church, however, was a step in the right direction.¹¹⁸

In 1934 Campbell published a collection of ten verbatim sermons entitled Grace Abounding.¹¹⁹ Once more while pleased that attention was being paid to the ethical Jesus, he lamented the fact that this was now being emphasised almost to the exclusion of thought of the world to come. He said that the Christian hope was for 'eternal life' rather than immortality; it was life that begins here and now and is 'completed in the beatific vision in the world to come.' Moreover, he was disgruntled that the Church was all 'too ready to compromise with the spirit of the age.'¹²⁰ Campbell was certainly seeing the implications of his earlier emphasis and was not impressed by what he saw.

¹¹⁷Hastings, A History of English Christianity, p.214 quoting R. Currie, Methodism Divided, (1968), p.283.

¹¹⁸As was, of course, the unity of the Free Church and the Church of Scotland in 1929.

¹¹⁹R.J. Campbell, Grace Abounding: Sermons for Lent and Easter (London, 1934).

¹²⁰Grace Abounding, pp.22-23, p.137, and p.139 respectively.

Regarding the person of Jesus, Campbell's portrayal was comparable in essence and in rashness to that propounded by himself and other new theologians earlier. Indeed, his view of the two natures could quite easily be seen as heretical.

No competent theologian to-day talks about the two natures in Christ - the divine and the human - as though they were entirely separate and distinct¹²¹ ... The only proper way of arriving at assurance of His divinity is to begin with His essential humanity and see how far it takes you. Perhaps you will find that there is no dividing line between the two after all. It is just because the humanity of Jesus is so transcendently wonderful that those who loved and believed in Him could not stop short of worshipping Him as God.¹²²

Increasing ill-health, and increasing deafness, exacerbated by grief at the death of his daughter on 5 May 1935, caused Campbell to resign his residential canonry in 1936, as well as terminating his responsibilities as Chaplain. He remained Chancellor of the Cathedral. Thus in 1936, the year of the Jarrow hunger march and the death of King George V and the succession and abdication of Edward VIII, Campbell moved to his home Heatherdene in Fairwarp, Uckfield, Sussex. His spinster sister, Mary Louisa lived with him.

Campbell continued to be a prolific writer. Problems of Faith and Life¹²³ was a selection of his contributions to the correspondence column in The Church of England Newspaper during the previous twenty years. Each chapter of the book was his reply to a letter. A cross-section of people had responded to Campbell's column, and he tackled issues including prayer, suffering, and the mystery of the cross. The substance of his replies echoed the thought of the New Theology but showed how the development of his thought had made his utterances more

¹²¹In Union Church Magazine, March (1899) vi, Campbell had said that the self-consciousness of Christ was 'separate' though not 'distinct' from that of the other Persons in the Godhead.

¹²²Grace Abounding, p.38. Cf. Campbell's sermon 'Humanity in Deity' in 1899 discussed on p.71.

¹²³R.J. Campbell, Problems of Faith and Life (London, 1936).

orthodox. Thus: 'Wherever we see self-sacrificing love at work in the world today we see the Atonement of Christ - not re-enacted but applied to human need and brought savingly to bear upon the hardness of the human heart.'¹²⁴

The Peace of God¹²⁵ was one book of a series in which the authors had agreed to maintain that only in the communion of the soul with God through Christ was mankind's true life to be found. Moreover, they argued that this was compatible with the results of modern research and criticism. Campbell compactly expressed the need of peace in a world in which material values subordinated the internal life of the spirit. He believed that the nature of peace was the sense of being at one with what had no beyond; where there was no self-worship, no sin. Repentance was the path to peace; there was the need to look to God to worship him and to follow his will. Only then could abiding peace be secured in an assurance that 'God is leading you by a way that you know not ... All your life is a special providence ...'¹²⁶

Around 1938 Campbell published an article entitled 'The Master's Reflection in the Mirror of Reminiscence: An Outline of St Mark's Gospel'. Here he argued that St Mark knew St Peter, evidence of which appeared in the fact that the weaknesses of St Peter were portrayed alongside of his strengths.¹²⁷ He retained a liberal rational concept of the miracles within orthodoxy; they were the 'tokens and anticipation' of 'the one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves' namely the ultimate victory of God's redeeming love over all the powers

¹²⁴Problems of Faith and Life, p.100.

¹²⁵R.J. Campbell, The Peace of God (London, 1936).

¹²⁶The Peace of God, p.114.

¹²⁷'The Master's Reflection in the Mirror of Reminiscence: An Outline of St Mark's Gospel', The Story of the Bible 3 (c.1938), pp.1053-1054.

of evil, the consummation wherein all things become new.¹²⁸ The healing miracles were valid since they 'are credible from what we now know of the therapeutic power of the mind over the body' - one often needs faith to heal, and Jesus too, where faith was lacking achieved little (Mark 6:6). Regarding the raising from the dead of Jairus's daughter, Campbell insisted that it was a calling of a soul back to life from a 'cataleptic trance'. He believed that 'Jesus is reported to have said as much and excited incredibility thereby.'¹²⁹

The nature miracles were regarded by Campbell as a legendary development from some incident, the main purpose of which was its spiritual significance, and the fact that it emphasised the divine and unearthly quality of Jesus's words and works.¹³⁰

Campbell also taught that the significance of Jesus being seen alive after his death was not to prove personal survival after death, but to make Jesus's friends and enemies believe that all that He stood for was at the heart of things. It was this which transformed the timid Galileans into great disciples whose work was still being continued.¹³¹

In Campbell's thought during the 1930s there was definitely a stronger orthodox emphasis than in his New Theology days, yet he did not go so far as to adopt neo-orthodoxy as epitomised by Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Barth and Hoskyns, with its rediscovery of Kierkegaard and of the works of P.T. Forsyth and F.D. Maurice.

¹²⁸'The Master's Reflection in the Mirror of Reminiscence', p.1061.

¹²⁹'The Master's Reflection in the Mirror of Reminiscence', p.1071.

¹³⁰'The Master's Reflection in the Mirror of Reminiscence', p.1071.

¹³¹'The Master's Reflection in the Mirror of Reminiscence', p.1075.

Campbell conducted the wedding of his twenty-six year old granddaughter, Pauline, at St Peter's Church, Vere, London, on 30 September 1939. His health, however, degenerated, especially with the onslaught of the Second World War. Germany invaded Poland on 1 September 1939 and from 11.00 am on 3 September Britain was at war with Germany. The devastation and destruction were made all the more poignant by the death of his wife on 23 April 1943. As ever, Campbell gave of his utmost, and from 1940-43 undertook charge of his parish.¹³²

The death of Mrs Campbell, and death on a colossal scale, prompted Campbell to draw up his will on 26 August 1944 at the age of seventy-seven. He wished for the Trustees - the Public Trustee and his sister, Mary Louisa - to employ Messrs Stevenson and Pope of 26 Marlborough Place, Brighton, as solicitors in connection with his estate.¹³³ Mary Louisa was the main benefactor, and on her death the estate would be handed to his granddaughters, Pauline Mary Bidwell and Denise Campbell Grimsey.

Campbell lived for another twelve years. The war contributed dramatically to his feelings of mental and physical exhaustion. He had lived through a period of rationing, air-raids, injury and death and had experienced from a distance the horrific news of the first two atomic bombings. 400,000 British people were killed during the war and nearly 50 million were killed in total. Campbell was

¹³²The Church Records at Fairwarp are still at the church. Rev Ian Gibson's letter to the author, 28 October 1990. I am grateful to Mr F Tester for these dates in his letter to the author dated 3 December 1990.

¹³³This was the firm with whom Campbell had dealt with over Union Church. Michael H. Pope was also one of the Executors of the will of Mary Louisa Campbell who died 28 November 1966 in a small hotel in Hove. I am grateful to Professor Keith Robbins for this information from his correspondence with Michael H. Pope, Stevens, Son and Pope Solicitors and their response dated 24 November 1970. On my own enquiries, to Stevens Drake and Pope, I was informed, on their reply dated 15 January 1989, that there was no record of the firm's handling Campbell's affairs.

considerably weakened by the stressful aftermath of the war, and in 1946, with increasing deafness he deemed it appropriate to resign as Chancellor of the Cathedral and from his Heathfield stall. In the same year he received the title of Canon (Emeritus) of Chichester Cathedral.

With more time on his hands he began to rethink much of his life. On 28 February 1946 he added a codicil to his will. A legacy of £500, free of duty, was to be paid to Geoffrey Hignett (of Bath) in memory of an old friendship, or it was to be considered part of his estate were Hignett to die before Campbell, as in fact he did in 1954.

In 1948 Campbell published his last book; twelve years after his penultimate publication. Its premise was that the soul survives death, and was called The Life of the World to Come.¹³⁴

Survival after death, Campbell maintained, was assured on religious grounds and by 'psychical methods of inquiry into the supernormal in human experience.'¹³⁵ The book was aimed at those who were convinced that the soul survived death but who were prejudiced against Christianity. He said:

Spiritualism would have little appeal were it not for the aching heart. It is not always true that time heals the wound of bereavement. There are many with whom the sense of loss is as fresh after many years as when first sustained. It is to these with a deep sense of kinship that the author writes. Do not let your longing for the resumption of a faithful and beloved companionship lead you to put your trust in anything inconsistent with "the unsearchable riches of Christ". And to you who resent the inability of the Church to give the comfort you want he would plead: Do not blame your Lord for that, much less thrust Him aside. Blame us, His unworthy interpreters.¹³⁶

¹³⁴R.J. Campbell, The Life of the World to Come (London, 1948).

¹³⁵The Life of the World to Come, p.2.

¹³⁶The Life of the World to Come, p.3.

Campbell believed that in pain and loss Christ was there and he concluded his book: 'May we all be able to state the confession of faith that Frederic Meyers credits him [Paul] with in his *St Paul*:

Yea, through life, death, through sorrow, and through sinning
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed;
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning for the end is Christ.¹³⁷

By 1950 Campbell had still not heard from Hignett, but was determined to attempt a reconciliation. Campbell wrote to Hignett again in 1950. Campbell, however, had obviously wounded his old friend too badly. The two were never reunited and the money remained uncashed.

Campbell spent his last years in quiet obscurity in Fairwarp. He died on 1 March 1956. His spiritual pilgrimage had ended, but as he would have believed, his soul was beginning another and being prepared for eternal life with God. He was buried in the ground of the Norman Church, St Peter's, West Blatchington, Hove, East Sussex. Here, by the Church wall, in an idyllic setting, overlooking West Blatchington Mill, Campbell was laid beside his first wife, his daughter and the ashes of his second wife. A Celtic cross, of a 'liver-coloured' marble marks the site of the grave.¹³⁸ He had lived life to the full and given of his best in everything he did. Had he died at an earlier age announcements of his death and obituaries would have been more abundant. His last few years, however, had been extremely peaceful; something he particularly appreciated. As he himself admitted in a letter to the novelist, Margaret Lane: 'No one could more carefully avoid publicity than I have done for a generation.'¹³⁹

¹³⁷The Life of the World to Come, p.192.

¹³⁸I am grateful to Mrs Jill Allen for this information.

¹³⁹The Times, 7 March (1956) 13. Margaret Lane's letter to the Editor of The Times dated 4 December 1947.

One can appreciate how vital this tranquillity was for Campbell, yet there is a certain pathos in how his 'solitary' years cast him into obscurity. A generation had almost elapsed with little awareness of Campbell. The obituaries were, consequently, poorly written. The British Weekly, in which Campbell had featured from 1898 and substantially from January 1901 to June 1906, published no obituary and did not mention his death. The Church of England Newspaper in its obituary took its starting point from the commencement of Campbell's ministry as an Anglican, there was no reference to his Nonconformist ministry.¹⁴⁰

The Church Times did little better, but in its rather off-putting and staccato style gave more of an account of Campbell's theological manoeuvres than an appreciation of the man himself. It said that Campbell

ended his long life in a contented obscurity which contrasted strangely with his meteoric fame as a Nonconformist preacher with Modernist views. At one time he drew vast congregations to the City Temple ... and provoked a storm by his book on The New Theology. Later he withdrew this heretical book from circulation; was reconciled to the Church, and entered the priesthood ... Once he had withdrawn the book from circulation, he wished to forget the controversy which it had provoked. He moved slowly and deliberately back to his earlier position as an orthodox Anglican.¹⁴¹

Campbell the pastor is undervalued in the obituary's statement that at Christ Church, Westminster, Campbell found himself so unsuited to the 'routine work of a parish' and was 'distracted by all who came to see him and eat away his privacy and leisure', that he resigned sick in 1921.

An Anglican bias was clear in the obituary: Campbell was described as a Nonconformist 'preacher' who had entered the 'priesthood' of the Established Church. The obituary was also unfavourable to The New Theology, denouncing it

¹⁴⁰The Church of England Newspaper, 2 March (1956) 14.

¹⁴¹The Church Times, 2 March (1956) 10.

as 'heretical', which Campbell would have firmly denied even in his later life.

The obituary in The Methodist Recorder perceptively dismissed The New Theology as 'flimsy stuff'. It expressed, perhaps rather unkindly, surprise that Campbell had written the book at the age of forty, when 'most people's theology has blown off its effervescence and settled down.'¹⁴² On the whole, however, this was undoubtedly a much more accurate and favourable obituary. It succeeded in presenting Campbell as a person: 'There remains the picture of an ardent, lovable man, touched with genius, preaching with fervour, zealous in the presentation of the evangelical message, of whom the older generation will think with affection and gratitude.'

Despite its mistakes, the obituary in The Christian World also made a significant contribution to understanding Campbell. It mistakingly gave Friday as the day of Campbell's death rather than Thursday, and misleadingly described Campbell as being influenced by Northern Irish Methodism, rather than Northern Irish Presbyterianism.¹⁴³ The article is favourable to Campbell and presents him both as a Nonconformist and an Anglican. It described Campbell 'without doubt [as] one of the greatest preachers of his time', and as one who 'holds his place in the history of the English pulpit'; a spiritual seer and teacher. The obituary, however, carries a distinctive Nonconformist flavour. It describes the 'idolatry' - the 'fervour of personal regard' - for Campbell from his followers, and it lightens the impact of Campbell's withdrawal of The New Theology by saying that he gradually moved away from his earlier position without literally 'recanting'. Interestingly, it says that 'It was after that storm [that is, the New Theology] had died down that R.J. Campbell rose to his great heights as a preacher.'

¹⁴²The Methodist Recorder, 8 March (1956) 10.

¹⁴³E.H. Jeffs, 'Death of Dr. R.J. Campbell: A Mighty Ministry and Famous Controversy', The Christian World, 8 March (1956) 2.

Furthermore, it emphasised and recognised that Campbell's movement to the Anglican ministry was because of the sacrament and Altar; no repudiation of Nonconformity and 'no superstitious nonsense about the validity and non-validity of ministries' was involved. The Nonconformist prejudice surfaced: 'Many of us could not help thinking that there was not the same drive, power and challenge in his preaching as an Anglican as in that which had so adorned the pulpit of the City Temple. It was a shrewd observation of one of his Free Church friends that 'Campbell needed Free Prayer to set him on fire in the sermons.'

The secular media also featured obituaries on Campbell. The Times¹⁴⁴ was much more sympathetic to Campbell than many of the religious newspapers. The account gave an accurate and detailed account of Campbell's life.

While one can agree with the obituary writer that Campbell was 'never so effective in the Anglican Church' as in Nonconformity, and that 'to thoughtful people many of his sermons seemed little but a succession of commonplaces though charmingly delivered', this should not undermine his very successful Holy Trinity ministry which was comparable to his success in Union Church and the City Temple.

Moreover, that Campbell on his return to Anglicanism was not the world-celebrity that he had been, was not a reflection of his ministry, it was more a consequence of not having a church in the limelight. His being surrounded by capable, well-known Anglicans, and his increasing mellowness as he grew older also contributed.

The Times obituary pays a great tribute to Campbell: 'the spiritual counsel and religious instruction given by him in his later years may well have had more

¹⁴⁴The Times, 2 March (1956) 11. See also 'Obituary: The Rev R.J. Campbell: Benign and Winning Personality', The Times, 7 March (1956) 13.

lasting value than anything he accomplished at the height of his fame as a popular preacher. To-day a multitude of souls must still be grateful for the help given them by R.J. Campbell and will cherish his memory with gratitude.'

The Manchester Guardian in its obituary of Campbell was similar to that in The Times the day before. Written by Rev Cecil Northcott, it reported on the 'comparative silence' of Campbell after his entry into the Anglican ministry, and the fact that he 'never drew an Anglican following as he had done a Nonconformist one'. The obituary ended with a kind tribute to Campbell: '... R.J. Campbell himself was immune from concern about himself. His deep personal religion, which in his great preaching days he conveyed to thousands, was always his abiding solace.'¹⁴⁵

Campbell, the private, sensitive man, would, if he could, look askance at efforts to resurrect his life and thought, fearful that, as voiceless, he would be unable to defend himself from attacks and misconceptions. I hope, therefore, that this work succeeds in redressing the imbalance and narrow-mindedness of previous critics, many of whom, having only 'received wisdom' and following the footsteps of what they believe to be authoritative sources, have seen fit merely to dismiss him.

I have endeavoured to give Campbell a fair hearing bearing in mind his whole history. I have presented his life and work as a unity arising from his personality and experience. Moreover, I have tried to show that Campbell still has much to offer those who read his publications and who read about him. Further a kind of timelessness pervades his sermons;¹⁴⁶ they were written almost a century ago, but his message transcends time. Mankind will always speculate as to the mystery of

¹⁴⁵The Manchester Guardian, 3 March (1956) 12.

¹⁴⁶Four sermons were published posthumously in The Christian World, 170 (1956) 31-32, 171 (1957) 183-184, 174 (1958) 159-160, 75 (1959) 85-88. I am grateful to Rev Dr William Morris for this information.

God, the person of Jesus, the problem of evil, and the relationship between man and God. The secret of Campbell's gift was his response to the deepest needs of human nature, and his addressing of questions which perplex humanity *per se*.

Moreover, a study of Campbell's life, a life which helps epitomise his social context, has illuminated and made more vivid, the life, times and thought especially of Edwardian England. Not only was he a subject responding to his surroundings, but he also helped shape the history of that period and caused others to respond to his message.

Campbell exemplified zest for the whole of life and his entire ministry was that of a remarkable man on a spiritual pilgrimage. His one burning desire was to love God, to strive to be like Him, and to bring others closer to Him.

It is a loss to the 1990s that Campbell's works are not easily accessible, and that discussion of his contribution to life and theology are overlooked. Without wishing to idolise or overrate him, as is the temptation in a biography, I hope that I have contributed to an enlarged appreciation of Campbell. He had an undeniably great gift of speaking to the heart, and in that, we remain his debtors. Campbell:

... may surely rest content with the knowledge that what is good and true in his teaching will survive in spite of all efforts to extinguish it, and what is false and faulty will perish.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷Wilkerson, The Rev R.J. Campbell, p.131 quoting Rev J.G. Stevenson (Brighton).

APPENDIX A**CAMPBELL'S UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE**

(The Labour Party General Correspondence Archives 16/176-179)

(LP.GC.16/176)

Hill Lodge,
Enfield. N.
22.6.07.

Dear Mr MacDonald,

Unfortunately I have scarcely a free hour for the next few weeks. If the enclosed letter is not quite what you want please wire c/o Earl Russell, Telegraph House, Chichester on Monday, and I will amend it in accordance with your suggestion.

Yours very sincerely,

R.J. Campbell [signed]

(A telegraph was sent to MacDonald from Campbell on 24 June 1907 which read: 'Certainly alter as suggested. Campbell' - LP.GC.16/179)

The letter enclosed which Campbell above refers to:

(LP.GC.16/177.ii)

Hill Lodge,
Enfield. N.
22.6.07.

My dear Mr Ramsay MacDonald,

If it had been possible for me to accept your suggestion that I should pay a visit to Jarrow I would willingly have done so, but my engagements do not permit of it. Let me say, however, that I sincerely trust Mr Curran will be returned triumphantly. If the Trade Union & Socialist vote of the constituency is polled solidly there can be little doubt as to the issue. No Government ever began with better prospects than the present Liberal administration but so far its achievements have been poor in comparison with the promises given at the General Election. Old Age Pensions are postponed for the present. Nothing more is to be done for the starving child or for the unemployed. We are to hear no more of the Miners' Eight Hours Bill or of Education until next year. What is to be done for Temperance nobody knows. The House of Lords is stronger than ever. Woman's Suffrage is more unpopular on the Liberal than on the Tory benches. The Land Bill only touches the fringe of a great and urgent social reform. What is wanted before the next session begins is a large increase in Labour representation. Had it not been for the Labour Party last session the record of the Government would have been poorer than it is. The sooner the working classes wake up to this the better. It is no use trusting to either Liberals or Conservatives for measures which will go to the root of the social evils of the day. The only sensible policy to adopt is to refuse alliances with either Party in the constituencies, and work earnestly for the creation of a 'Labour and' Socialist party which in the end will be strong enough to produce a Socialist Government. The return of Mr Curran will be one more step in this direction, and I trust that no effort will be spared to secure election by an overwhelming majority.

Believe me.

Yours faithfully,

R.J. Campbell [signed]

CORRESPONDENCE OF CAMPBELL'S FOUND IN THE LILLEY PAPERS.
ST ANDREWS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

(MS.30592/2)

Hill Lodge,
Enfield. N.
5.4.09.

Dear Mr Lilley

Thank you for the great kindness of your letter. We must meet again after Easter, if you can spare time. It seems a pity that we should not go on now we have made a beginning.

Yours very sincerely

R.J. Campbell [signed]

LETTER FOUND IN THE ARCHIVES OF BRIGHTHELM

Heatherdene,
Fairwarp,
Nr. Uckfield,
Sussex.
Nutley 34.

Jan 13th/48.

Dear Miss Mole,

Thank you very much for your kind inquiry and expression of goodwill.

In reply thereto I can say from my heart that no man on earth has greater constant cause for gratitude to God for all His mercies, and to my sister and her helpers for their unfailing kindness. For a man of my age I am in good health: the only marked infirmity I suffer from is deafness; and that I do not mind very much as I have good sight and spend most of my time in my study among my books.

I am deeply touched by the sentence you quote: 'Our happiest hour is when at last the soul is freed'; for I confess I do look forward to that hour, though not from any morbidness or discontent with my lot here. As I shall be 81 in a few days there cannot be so very much longer to wait for the end of my earthly day.

With much regard.
Sincerely yours

R.J. Campbell [signed]

LETTER PRINTED IN THE CHURCH MEETING MINUTE BOOK OF UNION
CHURCH, BRIGHTON - 7 APRIL 1895

Christ Church
Oxford
April 15th 1895

Dear Mr Gooby,

I desire through you to intimate to the Church and congregation of Union Street, my acceptance of the call extended to me.

You are aware that I shrank from a ministry and some such distinct evidence of the will of God as this summons to labour in Brighton was necessary before I could feel it right to undertake such a work. In the voice of the Church I hear the voice of our common master and am ready to obey.

I will say no more at this time. I trust to have early opportunity of making known more clearly to the Church at Union Street my grateful appreciation of the unanimity, warmth, and kindness of the message to me.

Most sincerely yours

R.J. Campbell

APPENDIX B

R.J. Campbell, 'Popular Theology: Its Changing Sanctions', in The Christian World 20 September (1906) 3

As chairman of the London Board of Ministers, Rev R.J. Campbell gave an address, on 'The Changing Sanctions of Popular Theology,' to the Congregational ministers of London last week, which has excited so much controversial interest that the next meeting of the Board is to be devoted to a discussion of his remarks. At our request, Mr Campbell has supplied the following synopsis of his observations:

(1) The word sanction is a legal term to denote that which gives binding force to a statute. We may conveniently extend the use of the term to other departments of human interest. The dicta of literature, art and science, all have their appropriate sanctions. So has theology. Popular theology rests upon certain assumptions or presuppositions generally taken for granted by pulpit and pew. These are its sanctions, and can easily be discerned in almost any sermon.

(2) But every preacher must frequently have felt the difficulty of relating his religious conceptions to the secular standpoint of his hearers. Their sanctions of thought and action during six days out of seven are different from those of Sunday. The former presumes an attitude to life and human destiny which the latter do not. Many feel the antagonism between the two sets of sanctions without knowing why. This antagonism is the main reason why the hold of the Church on the mind of to-day has weakened. Yet the pulpit is not wholly nor yet mainly to blame. The church-going laity often insist on the old sanctions, in spite of changing conditions, and in spite of the fact that they are living their own lives under both sets of sanctions alternately.

(3) The problem before religious thought, and therefore before the pulpit, is that of harmonising the two kinds of sanctions. We have to relate our pulpit theology to life as a whole, and cannot afford to leave any of the factors of modern mental life out of account. We have, therefore, to accept frankly and fully the already changing sanctions of religious thought in regard to such subjects as the Fall, Sin, Atonement, Salvation, Holiness, Righteousness, Justice, Love, Judgement, the person of Jesus, and the meaning and scope of His work. All these hang together, and must be related to the ordinary man's experience of life.

(4) The Fall, in literal sense, is untrue. The Genesis story is originally literature, not dogma. It became dogma comparatively late, and in an unspiritual age following on political calamities. It has no influence on Old Testament literature, nor does Jesus mention it or imply it in His teaching. It was taken over into popular thought partly through St Paul's rabbinical thought-forms, partly through observation of the gradual break-up of the Roman Empire, leading men to despair of the present. The theory of the Fall is in direct conflict with the finding of modern science or with a true historical method. Yet many preachers go on using language which appears to assume the doctrine of the Fall because without it they do not know what to say about sin and salvation. The truth is that the un-ideal character of the world is not due to man's fault but God's will, and has its purpose, a purpose not wholly hidden from us. It is the demonstration of the essential nature of good.

(5) Sin is assumed in popular theology to be not only individual disobedience to the will of God, but an inherited taint of nature and defect of will which render such disobedience inevitable. We are to be held blameworthy, and yet cannot help ourselves. This is a false view. Sin is simply selfishness. It is that which makes against lifewardness for the race. It is offence against the God within, a violation of the law of love. All the soul's activities are between two poles, self on one hand and the common good on the other. To live for all is to live from our own

true centre; to live the individual life in terms of the whole is the true self-fulfilment. Apply this definition to any department of human interest whatever, national, international, or individual, and it will be seen to be that which the leaders of humanity, its seers and administrators, are already assuming.

(6) Atonement and Salvation ought only to be construed in terms of the foregoing. That man is saved who is trying to live for God, that is for love, that is for the common life instead of for self and material gain. Imbue a man with this spirit, and forthwith his life becomes a part of the Atonement, the uplifting and ingathering of the race of God. He becomes a saviour, a sin-bearer, a burden lifter for mankind. Divine love acts through him, and can never cease acting until sin and sorrow are done away.

(7) Holiness, Righteousness, Justice, Love mean substantially the same thing both in God and man. They imply each other, and ought never to have been separated as they have been in popular theology.

(8) Judgement is ever proceeding. Every sin involves suffering sooner or later, in this world or the next. Selfishness and suffering involve each other, although pain does not necessarily purge sin, it only awakens the sinner to the perception that a selfish life is a false life. Popular presentations of the remission of sins by faith in the finished work of Jesus are untrue, unethical, and contradicted by the facts of everyday life. Salvation takes effect not in spite of, but rather because of the consequences of wrong-doing. In proportion as a selfish man becomes loving the life of God enters into and possesses his soul. It will take longer than this earth-life for this change to be wrought in most people. The doctrine of eternal (in the sense of everlasting) punishment is therefore not only morally repellant, but absurd. To hold such a doctrine is to deny the Atonement, which means the victory of love. Everlasting sin and woe in the universe would mean the victory of hate.

(9) The Person of Jesus. What popular theology says of Jesus is true of the ideal humanity which is ever in the heart of the Father. Jesus was and is divine, but so are we; His mission was to make us realize our divinity; that is our oneness with God. The life to which we are called is the life He lived. His uniqueness consists in the fact that in Him that life was manifested for the world to see. Faith in Him is faith in God, faith in love, faith in the ideal within ourselves, and faith in the great atonement of the race with God.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY

AR	The Albany Review
BS	The Bibliotheca Sacra
BM	The Birmingham Mail
BT	The Bradford Telegraph
BC	The British Congregationalist
BW	The British Weekly
CDG	Chichester Diocesan Gazette
CC	The Christian Commonwealth
CCS	The Christian Commonwealth Supplement
CLUS	The Christian League of Women's Suffrage
CLUH	The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald
CW	The Christian World
CWP	The Christian World Pulpit
CWS	The Christian World Supplement
CFN	The Church Family Newspaper
CEN	The Church of England Newspaper
CT	The Church Times
CL	The Clarion
C	Concilium
CQ	The Congregational Quarterly
DM	The Daily Mail
DN	The Daily News
DT	The Daily Telegraph
DR	The Downside Review
EC	The Evangelical Catholic
ES	The Evening Standard
E	The Expositor
ET	The Expository Times
FF	Faith and Freedom
FR	The Fortnightly Review
FC	The Free Catholic
FCST	The Free Church Suffrage Times
FCM	The Free Churchman
G	The Guardian
HPJ	The Heythrop Journal
HJ	The Hibbert Journal
HJS	The Hibbert Journal Supplement
ILN	The Illustrated London News
TI	The Inquirer
I	The Interpreter
JEH	The Journal of Ecclesiastical History
MG	The Manchester Guardian
MR	The Methodist Recorder
MT	The Methodist Times
MC	The Modern Churchman
NR	The National Review
TN	The News
NCA	The Nineteenth Century and After
NWOE	The North Wales Observer and Express
NT	The Nursing Times
PP	Past and Present
PM	The Preachers' Magazine for Preachers, Teachers, and Bible Students
RR	The Review of Reviews
RTP	The Review of Theology and Philosophy
SJT	The Scottish Journal of Theology
SCH	Studies in Church History

SDN	The Sussex Daily News
T	Theology
TT	The Times
TWR	The Times Weekly Review
TUHS	Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society
TR	The Tribune
UCC	Union Church Calendar
UCM	Union Church Magazine
USCCM	Union Street Congregational Church Magazine
URCHS	United Reformed Church History Society
TW	The World

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- 'Our Great Inheritance: The Meaning of Empire', CEN, 29 May (1925) 9
- 'The Holy Trinity: An Unfathomable Truth', CEN, 5 June (1925) 9
- 'The Christian Consciousness: A Word in this Restless Age', CEN, 12 June (1925) 9
- 'Spiritual Correspondence: Poetic Imagination', CEN, 19 June (1925) 9
- 'The Light of Grace: Problem of Job', CEN, 26 June (1925) 9
- 'Seeking to know God: Problem of Suffering', CEN, 3 July (1925) 9
- 'Suffering of Animal Creation: The Supreme Revelation', CEN, 10 July (1925) 9
- 'Love and Law: Instal Christian Principles', CEN, 17 July (1925) 9
- 'The Lost End of St Mark: What did it Contain?', CEN, 24 July (1925) 9
- 'The Providence of Faith: Modern Tendency', CEN, 31 July (1925) 9
- 'Christ and the Moral Ideal: A fact to which many are blind', CEN, 7 August (1925) 7
- 'The Soul's Refuge: A Re-Assuring Truth', CEN, 14 August (1925) 9
- 'St Paul's Christ: A Quenchless Joy', CEN, 21 August (1925) 7
- 'Salvation by Faith: A Fact Needing to be Emphasised', CEN, 28 August (1925) 9
- 'The New Deism: Modern Dangers', CEN, 4 September (1925) 9 'The Great Commandment: Heart of all Truth', CEN, 11 September (1925) 9
- 'The Mystery of Forgiveness: Question of Retribution', CEN, 18 September (1925) 9

- 'The Living Christ: Discussion of To-day', CEN, 25 September (1925) 7
- 'The Primacy of Christ: A Necessity of Faith', CEN, 2 October (1925) 11
- 'Forsaking All for Christ: The Greatest Blessedness', CEN, 9 October (1925) 13
- 'Waiting Upon God: Abiding Worth of the Psalter', CEN, 16 October (1925) 11
- 'Knowledge of Divine Love: Is the Bible Sufficient?', CEN, 23 October (1925) 9
- 'Faith in the Moral Order: The Touch-Stone', CEN, 30 October (1925) 9
- 'A Notable Centenary: Appeal to C.E.N. Readers', CEN, 6 November (1925) 9
- 'The Return to Christ: Is a Revival of Religion Probable?', CEN, 13 November (1925) 9
- 'State War and Class War: A Healing Principle', CEN, 20 November (1925) 1
- 'The Message of Advent: A Stupendous Event', CEN, 27 November (1925) 1
- 'The Christ of St John: Historical Value of the Gospel', CEN, 4 December (1925) 11
- 'The Christian Attitude to Death: What Life in Christ Implies', CEN, 11 December (1925) 1
- 'The Christian Consciousness: The Supernatural Character', CEN, 18 December (1925) 9
- 'What think ye of Christ: Does a Non-Divine Saviour Suffice?', CEN, 24 December (1925) 9
- 'The Living God: Wherein Religion Consists', CEN, 1 January (1926) 9
- 'Christ and the Mystery Religions: The Gospel of Salvation', CEN, 8 January (1926) 9
- 'An Important Manifesto: The Moral Leadership of Christ', CEN, 15 January (1926) 9
- 'Prayer Holy and Unholy: A Vital Distinction', CEN, 22 January (1926) 9
- 'Prayer and Natural Law: A Helpful Treatise', CEN, 29 January (1926) 1
- 'The Vision of the Beautiful: A Great Englishman's Preference', CEN, 5 February (1926) 9
- 'A Traveller's Jottings: The Church in Egypt', CEN, 12 February (1926) 9
- 'A Traveller's Jottings: A Desert Journey', CEN, 19 February (1926) 9
- 'A Traveller's Jottings: The Church in the Sudan', CEN, 26 February (1926) 9
- 'A Traveller's Jottings: The Church in the Sudan', CEN, 5 March (1926) 9
- 'A Traveller's Jottings: The Church in the Holy Land', CEN, 12 March (1926) 9
- 'A Traveller's Jottings: Impressions of Palestine', CEN, 19 March (1926) 9
- 'Jesus as an Historical Person: The Supreme Reality', CEN, 26 March (1926) 9
- 'The Power of Darkness: Lesson of Gethsemane', CEN, 1 April (1926) 9
- 'A Persecuted People: The Armenian Question To-day', CEN, 9 April (1926) 9
- 'The Greater Resurrection: Science and the Christian Hope', CEN, 16 April (1926) 9
- 'The Sheep and the Goats: God's Judgment upon Sin', CEN, 23 April (1926) 1
- 'Whom he loveth he chasteneth': The Mystery of Divine Discipline', CEN, 30 April (1926) 9
- 'Hidden Wisdom: Man's Greatest Need', CEN, 21 May (1926) 9
- 'Union with Christ: The Spirit of Power', CEN, 28 May (1926) 9
- 'Preparation for Christ: An Egyptian Illustration', CEN, 4 June (1926) 1
- 'The Sacrament of Love: Christ as the Object of Devotion', CEN, 11 June (1926) 9
- 'The World for Christ: Our Personal Responsibility', CEN, 25 June (1926) 9
- 'The Way of Love: Life's Highest Value', CEN, 2 July (1926) 9
- 'The Old Testament and Modern Life: Idealism and Character', CEN, 9 July (1926) 1
- 'The Quest for Reality: Supreme Ends of Life', CEN, 16 July (1926) 9
- 'Freedom Through Christ: False Claims of To-day', CEN, 23 July (1926) 1
- 'Christ's Conception of Good: His Attitude Towards Pharisees', CEN, 30 July (1926) 1
- 'Under the Juniper Tree: Weariness in Well-doing', CEN, 6 August (1926) 7
- 'The Council against Care: Can it be Obeyed?', CEN, 13 August (1926) 1
- 'The Things Above: Inner Witness to their Validity', CEN, 20 August (1926) 7
- 'The Mission of Christ: A Living Experience', CEN, 27 August (1926) 1
- 'The Good Fight: Our Great Objective', CEN, 3 September (1926) 7

- 'Vision and Life: Relative and Absolute Knowledge', CEN, 10 September (1926) 1
- 'Christ's Uncompromising Demand: The Price of the Higher Life', CEN, 17 September (1926) 7
- 'Constancy in Prayer: A Method Tested by Results', CEN, 24 September (1926) 9
- 'The Eternal Christ: Church Congress Theme', CEN, 1 October (1926) 1
- 'Christ and St Francis: A Method and an Object', CEN, 8 October (1926) 11
- 'The Primate and the Coal Strike: Christian Principle and Economics', CEN, 15 October (1926) 1
- 'The Body of Christ: The Sacrament Principle', CEN, 22 October (1926) 9
- 'The Christian Vocabulary: Spiritual and Carnal Love', CEN, 29 October (1926) 9
- 'Union with God: Our Spiritual Consummation', CEN, 5 November (1926) 9
- 'Remembrance Day Reflections: Abiding Worth of Sacrifice', CEN, 12 November (1926) 1
- 'The World Call to the Church: Some Significant Facts', CEN, 19 November (1926) 9
- 'Advent Meditations: Scholarship and the Historical Christ', CEN, 26 November (1926) 1
- 'Advent Meditations: The Christ of Faith', CEN, 3 December (1926) 17
- 'Advent Meditations: Science and the Significance of Christ', CEN, 10 December (1926) 1
- 'Advent Meditations: Belief in the Second Coming', CEN, 17 December (1926) 9
- 'The Incarnation and the Modern Mind: Revelation of Reality', CEN, 24 December (1926) 9
- 'The Nativity Stories: Our Attitude to the Supernatural', CEN, 31 December (1926) 9
- 'The Light of Long Ago: Manifestation of Christ', CEN, 7 January (1927) 1
- 'An Outline of Christianity: The Story of Our Civilisation', CEN, 14 January (1927) 9
- 'What Does Eternal Punishment Mean?: Our Lord's Teaching', CEN, 21 January (1927) 9
- 'At Church Abroad: An Epiphany Warning', CEN, 4 February (1927) 9
- 'Children of the Desert: The Faith of Islam', CEN, 11 February (1927) 11
- 'A Great Forgotten City: A Christian Setback', CEN, 18 February (1927) 9
- 'Past and Present in Carthage: A Visit to an Ancient Metropolis', CEN, 25 February (1927) 7
- 'A Memorial of Christian Antiquity: Excavation in Rome', CEN, 25 March (1927) 9
- 'Vanished Cities of Northern Africa: A Charming Survey', CEN, 8 April (1927) 9
- 'The Way of the Cross: Christ's Triumph Over Evil', CEN, 14 April (1927) 1
- 'Religious Difficulties: 'C.E.N.' Questionnaire', CEN, 22 April (1927) 1
- 'The Resurrection of Christ: Its Spiritual Outcome', CEN, 29 April (1927) 9
- 'The Questionnaire: Overwhelming Response', CEN, 6 May (1927) 9
- 'The Questionnaire: The First Estimate of Results', CEN, 13 May (1927) 1
- 'The Questionnaire: Confessions of Faith', CEN, 20 May (1927) 1
- 'The Questionnaire: Further Testimonies', CEN, 27 May (1927) 9
- 'The Mystic City: The Goal of all the Saints', CEN, 3 June (1927) 9
- 'The Blessed Trinity: A Living Experience', CEN, 10 June (1927) 9
- 'Holy Baptism: The Mystery of Regeneration', CEN, 17 June (1927) 9
- 'Sacred and Profane Love: The Training of the Soul', CEN, 24 June (1927) 1
- 'The Death of Christ: The Mystery of Redeeming Love', CEN, 1 July (1927) 9
- 'The Armenian Christians: A Pressing Need', CEN, 15 July (1927) 9
- 'Making a Better World: The Christian Dynamic', CEN, 22 July (1927) 1
- 'The Soul's Retreat: A Spiritual Necessity', CEN, 29 July (1927) 1
- 'Spiritual Possession: Our Heritage in Christ', CEN, 5 August (1927) 7
- 'The Desire for Immortality: What Does it Mean?', CEN, 12 August (1927) 9
- 'As a Little Child: The Condition of Spiritual Gain', CEN, 19 August (1927) 7
- 'A Neglected Ideal: Things that Abide', CEN, 26 August (1927) 1
- 'The Two Kingdoms: The Indwelling Christ', CEN, 2 September (1927) 7
- 'What is Man? Two Answers', CEN, 9 September (1927) 9
- 'The Hidden Glory: Christ Mystically Apprehended', CEN, 16 September (1927) 9

- 'Spiritual Love: 'The Devil's Lie', CEN, 23 September (1927) 9
- 'Faith and Probation: Our Moral Ordeals', CEN, 30 September (1927) 9
- 'Spiritual Evolution: Our Destiny in Christ', CEN, 7 October (1927) 1
- 'The Swelling of Jordan: Character and Conflict', CEN, 14 October (1927) 11
- 'The Sacramentalism of Life: What Dr Barnes Said', CEN, 21 October (1927) 1
- 'Religious Indifference: How far is it Real?', CEN, 28 October (1927) 13
- 'Prayer Book Revision: A Plea for Liberality', CEN, 4 November (1927) 11
- 'Prayer Book Alternatives: 'The Lord's Body'', CEN, 11 November (1927) 1
- 'The Prince's Sermon: League and Arbitration', CEN, 18 November (1927) 9
- 'Mankind in the Making: Was there a Fall?', CEN, 25 November (1927) 1
- 'A New-Old Mystery: Grace in Affliction', CEN, 2 December (1927) 13
- 'Christ and the Life to Come: Our Only Hope', CEN, 9 December (1927) 9
- 'Does God Need Man? Divine Purpose in Creation', CEN, 16 December (1927) 11
- 'God With Us: A Heartening Promise', CEN, 23 December (1927) 9
- 'Faith and the Future: Some Signs of the Times', CEN, 30 December (1927) 9
- 'A Word for the New Year: The Renewal of Faith', CEN, 6 January (1928) 9
- 'Spiritual Certitude: How it is Obtainable', CEN, 13 January (1928) 9
- 'The Passing of Thomas Hardy: An Appreciation', CEN, 20 January (1928) 1
- 'The Nature of Temptation: Larger Meaning of the Word', CEN, 27 January (1928) 11
- 'The Reserves of Faith: An Ancient Precept', CEN, 3 February (1928) 9
- 'The One Thing Needful: God's Gift of Peace', CEN, 10 February (1928) 11
- 'A Veiled Revelation: Doing and Bearing', CEN, 17 February (1928) 11
- 'The Lifted Veil: Knowledge that Saves', CEN, 24 February (1928) 9
- 'The Sense of Sin: Call to Repentance', CEN, 2 March (1928) 9
- 'Vision and Vocation: Divine Grace and Human Need', CEN, 9 March (1928) 9
- 'The Mystery of Creation: Christus Consummator', CEN, 16 March (1928) 11
- 'The City of God: A Vision of Long Ago', CEN, 23 March (1928) 9
- 'The Call of Christ: How Vocation is Attested', CEN, 30 March (1928) 7
- 'What is a cross: Symbol of the Cross', CEN, 5 April (1928) 9
- 'The Risen Lord: Purpose of the Resurrection', CEN, 13 April (1928) 1
- 'Christ Abiding: A Missing Pulpit Note', CEN, 20 April (1928) 9
- 'God's Elect: A Great Moral Pioneer', CEN, 27 April (1928) 11
- 'The Ancient Sin: Calling Evil Good', CEN, 4 May (1928) 11
- 'The Changing Idea of God: A Present Day Problem', CEN, 11 May (1928) 1
- 'Immortality or Eternal Life - Which?: A Question of Perspective', CEN, 18 May (1928) 1
- 'The Way to the Father: How do we know it?', CEN, 25 May (1928) 9
- 'The Gift of the Holy Ghost: Its Meaning for To-day', CEN, 1 June (1928) 1
- 'Vision and Vocation: A Call to the Quickened Conscience', CEN, 8 June (1928) 9
- 'The Mirror of Divine Love: An Old Problem Re-stated', CEN, 15 June (1928) 1
- 'Where are the Dead? Modern Sadducees', CEN, 22 June (1928) 13
- 'Spiritual Greatness: The Gift of Christ', CEN, 29 June (1928) 13
- 'The Mystic Pathway: A Hidden Refuge', CEN, 6 July (1928) 9
- 'St John's Gospel: The Divine Wisdom', CEN, 13 July (1928) 1
- 'Doctrine of Election: The Potter's Wheel', CEN, 20 July (1928) 1
- 'Wesley and the Evangelical Revival: A Timely Study', CEN, 27 July (1928) 9
- 'A Holiday Bibliography: Problems of Faith and Knowledge', CEN, 3 August (1928) 7
- 'The Two Citizenships: Which Comes First?', CEN, 10 August (1928) 1
- 'Spiritual Darkness: Christ the Light Bringer', CEN, 17 August (1928) 9
- 'Where is the Kingdom? What 'Other-worldliness' Means', CEN, 24 August (1928) 7
- 'The Shadow Over Life: Light in Darkness', CEN, 31 August (1928) 7
- 'Voices of the Time: What has Christ to Offer?', CEN, 7 September (1928) 9
- 'The Great Imperishable: Can we make sure of it?', CEN, 14 September (1928) 9
- 'Faith Past and Present: Gain and Loss', CEN, 21 September (1928) 9
- 'The Life of Prayer: How God Answers', CEN, 28 September (1928) 11

- 'The Hidden Life of Man: Can we Really know Ourselves?', CEN, 5 October (1928) 1
- 'Mystery of the Future Life: Nature of Personality', CEN, 12 October (1928) 8
- 'Longing for Certainty: The Portal of Peace', CEN, 19 October (1928) 11
- 'The Image of the Invisible: A Layman's Letter', CEN, 26 October (1928) 11
- 'The Tercentenary of John Bunyan: Criticisms of Alfred Noyes', CEN, 2 November (1928) 11
- 'Dwelling in the Love of God: A Challenge and its Answer', CEN, 9 November (1928) 1
- 'The Church Triumphant: Before the Glassy Sea', CEN, 16 November (1928) 15
- 'The Incarnation: A Criticism and a Reply', CEN, 23 November (1928) 11
- 'The Two Wills: A Mystery and a Lesson', CEN, 7 December (1928) 8
- 'United States and England: The New Naval Rivalry', CEN, 1 March (1929) 9
- 'The Priesthood of Believers: Principle and an Application', CEN, 12 April (1929) 9
- 'How God Works: The Test of Responsibility', CEN, 19 April (1929) 1
- 'The Resurrection of Christ: Some of the Problems', CEN, 26 April (1929) 11
- 'Our Hope in Christ: An Inheritance Restored', CEN, 3 May (1929) 8
- 'The Living Christ: He is no Abstraction', CEN, 10 May (1929) 11
- 'The Silences of God: A Benevolent Meaning', CEN, 17 May (1929) 9
- 'Christianity and Politics: Principle and Practice', CEN, 24 May (1929) 1
- 'The Christian Consciousness: Its Validity and Range', CEN, 31 May (1929) 9
- 'The Divine Love: A Common Error', CEN, 7 June (1929) 9
- 'The Light of Grace: How we are Guided', CEN, 14 June (1929) 9
- 'A Sufferer's Faith: My Redeemer Liveth', CEN, 21 June (1929) 7
- 'The Christian and the World: An Ancient Problem in Modern Light', CEN, 28 June (1929) 7
- 'Unbelieving Prayer: Baffling God', CEN, 5 July (1929) 9
- 'The Royal House: Symbol of our Race', CEN, 12 July (1929) 4
- 'The Silence of God: Is Prayer Answered?', CEN, 19 July (1929) 9
- 'Life without God: The Secular Mind', CEN, 26 July (1929) 9
- 'The Voice of God: How do we Hear it?', CEN, 2 August (1929) 9
- 'The New Manhood: A Promise and a Summons', CEN, 9 August (1929) 1
- 'A Continuous Miracle: Christ in the Soul', CEN, 16 August (1929) 10
- 'The Veiled Glory: And the Vision Beautiful', CEN, 23 August (1929) 7
- 'Lowering British Prestige in the East: 'Clear out of India'', CEN, 30 August (1929) 1
- 'The Ghastly Stain of Sin: An Argument with the late Fr Bernard Vaughan', CEN, 6 September (1929) 1
- 'Sacred and Profane Love: An Old Testament Ideal', CEN, 13 September (1929) 9
- 'We are not free: Our Will and Our Creator', CEN, 20 September (1929) 9
- 'Dr Campbell Replies to Readers: Forgotten Souls', CEN, 27 September (1929) 9
- 'When a Trickle Shall Become a Flood: 'Go on digging the wells'', CEN, 4 October (1929) 9
- 'Father Vernon's Secession: The Problem of Authority', CEN, 11 October (1929) 11
- 'Divine Purpose in Creation: Mr Bernard Shaw's Retort to R.C. Priest', CEN, 18 October (1929) 1
- 'Man's Wrath and God's Love: An Aspect of Redemption', CEN, 25 October (1929) 11
- 'Dr Campbell on Sir Oliver Lodge: Wherein Lies Reality?', CEN, 1 November (1929) 9
- 'Competing Creeds: Rome is not Gaining', CEN, 8 November (1929) 1
- 'Does the Soul Survive? Sir Oliver Lodge's Reply', CEN, 15 November (1929) 7
- 'In the Position of Charles the Second: 'Reply to Mr Noyes'', CEN, 22 November (1929) 9
- 'Our Relations with Russia: Conflicting Views and an Answer', CEN, 29 November (1929) 1
- 'Clemenceau's Thoughts on Man's Destiny: A Sad Swan Story', CEN, 6 December (1929) 13

- 'The Christmas Spirit: A Personal Experience in Snowbound America', CEN, 13 December (1929) 11
- 'Can a Man Live a Good Life without Religion?: A Layman's Contention', CEN, 20 December (1929) 9
- 'The Poet Laureate's Message: Testament of Beauty', CEN, 27 December (1929) 9
- 'Faith that Overcometh: Blindness to Life's Supreme Objectives', CEN, 3 January (1930) 9
- 'The Situation in England To-day: Do Englishmen put their hearts into their jobs?', CEN, 10 January (1930) 7
- 'The Mystic Ray: A Christian's Personal Experience', CEN, 17 January (1930) 9
- 'Civilisation's Moral Setback: Spiritual Bankruptcy', CEN, 24 January (1930) 9
- 'The Horrors of Slavery: Wretched beings still conveyed to the Markets', CEN, 31 January (1930) 9
- 'Miracle of Genuine Goodness: Not Producing Enough', CEN, 7 February (1930) 7
- 'Sir Oliver Lodge's Book: The Reality of a Spiritual World', CEN, 14 February (1930) 9
- 'English Girls in Canada: Hardships and Suffering', CEN, 21 February (1930) 9
- 'How to End War: Mr H.G. Well's View', CEN, 28 February (1930) 9
- 'Is there an Increased Interest in Religion?', CEN, 7 March (1930) 9
- 'Cry Out of the Darkness: 'Comfort is What is Needed'', CEN, 14 March (1930) 9
- 'The Influence of Jesus Christ in the World: A New Conception of God', CEN, 21 March (1930) 9
- 'Love to God for Himself: A Precious Experience', CEN, 28 March (1930) 9
- 'What Conversion Means: John Henry Newman's Experience', CEN, 4 April (1930) 9
- 'The Revelation of Easter: Its Lasting Triumph', CEN, 17 April (1930) 9
- 'A Reader's Pathetic Confession: 'I Feel Derelict, Alone, Unhelped'', CEN, 25 April (1930) 9
- 'Our Lord's Post-Resurrection Appearances: Problems of the Records', CEN, 2 May (1930) 9
- 'Christian Teaching on Love: The Marvel and Might of Christian Life', CEN, 9 May (1930) 9
- 'Religion as a Living Experience: Widespread Confusion of Thought', CEN, 16 May (1930) 9
- 'The Mystery of Existence: Scientists Moving Towards a Spiritual Interpretation', CEN, 23 May (1930) 1
- 'Can God Suffer?: Mystery Beyond Power of the Human Mind', CEN, 30 May (1930) 9
- 'Archbishop Lord Davidson: 'Completely Taken by Surprise'', CEN, 6 June (1930) 9
- 'Diversity of Christian Tongues: A Sad Spectacle', CEN, 13 June (1930) 7
- 'Beauty in Worship: Where the Arts Can Help Us', CEN, 20 June (1930) 7
- 'The Nobility of Love: One Necessity of the Soul', CEN, 27 June (1930) 13
- 'God or Christ?: A Present Day Antithesis', CEN, 4 July (1930) 9
- 'The Lambeth Conference: Praying that our Leaders will go Straight to the Mark', CEN, 11 July (1930) 7
- 'A Young Man's Difficulties in Relation to the Christian Life: Price of Spiritual Truth', CEN, 18 July (1930) 9
- 'At the Wicket Gate with God: Knock, and Enter', CEN, 25 July (1930) 7
- 'Asceticism and Spirituality: The Magic Lure of Holiness', CEN, 1 August (1930) 1
- 'The Mystical Experience: Seek God for his Own Sake', CEN, 8 August (1930) 8
- 'The Discipline of Life: Calling for much Self-Sacrifice', CEN, 15 August (1930) 7
- 'You, Reader, Are Yourself a Mystic: Being Conscious of God's Presence', CEN, 22 August (1930) 7
- 'The Soul of a Great Playwright: Faith and Life', CEN, 29 August (1930) 7
- 'Oberammergau Passion Play: Spirit of Devotion', CEN, 5 September (1930) 9
- 'Our Need of God: A Renewed Revelation', CEN, 12 September (1930) 7

- 'Dean Inge's New Book: The Most Scathing Censor we Possess', CEN, 19 September (1930) 1
- 'Sin and Atonement: What do they Mean To-day?', CEN, 26 September (1930) 9
- 'The Tale that Science has to Unfold', CEN, 3 October (1930) 9
- 'Religion the Life-Blood of Education: Need of a New Orientation', CEN, 10 October (1930) 1
- 'Religion Without God: Christ Holds the Master Key', CEN, 17 October (1930) 9
- 'Science and Christian Experience: The Handmaid of Religion', CEN, 24 October (1930) 1
- 'Philosophy of the Good Life: Bishop Gore's Gifford Lectures', CEN, 31 October (1930) 9
- 'Remembrance Day: Moral Tasks of To-day', CEN, 7 November (1930) 9
- 'The Fruition of Desire: Treasure in Heaven', CEN, 14 November (1930) 9
- 'Religion and Current Ideas: Need for Recovery of Spiritual Certitude', CEN, 21 November (1930) 7
- 'Which God Shall we Worship?: The God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ', CEN, 28 November (1930) 9
- 'Place of Christ in the Modern World: A Fact of Experience', CEN, 5 December (1930) 13
- 'Human Nature and its Needs: Where Can we Seek Deliverance?', CEN, 12 December (1930) 11
- 'The Quest for Reality: Its Quality and Value', CEN, 19 December (1930) 9
- 'The Mystery of the Incarnation: My Lord and My God', CEN, 24 December (1930) 7
- 'Old Problems Newly Faced: Let us Lift up our Hearts', CEN, 2 January (1931) 9
- 'How do we Know God?: Validity of Experience', CEN, 9 January (1931) 7
- 'His Father's Business: When the Veil is Lifted', CEN, 16 January (1931) 9
- 'God in History: Testing the Work of our Christian Profession', CEN, 23 January (1931) 9
- 'Christ or the World: St Paul's Great Example', CEN, 30 January (1931) 9
- 'One of Faith's Victories: A Heartening and Inspiring Story', CEN, 6 February (1931) 1
- 'Christ and the Eastern Mind: A Problem and an Appeal', CEN, 13 February (1931) 9
- 'Can We Believe in Answers to Prayer?: An Emphatic Conviction', CEN, 20 February (1931) 1
- 'The Lambeth Series: Helpful Booklets by Notable Writers', CEN, 27 February (1931) 9
- 'The God we Worship: Why be Afraid of Anthropomorphisms?', CEN, 6 March (1931) 9
- 'The Way to Treat a Sinner: Our Lord's Example', CEN, 13 March (1931) 9
- 'Twixt Darkness and Light: Calvary and Easter', CEN, 20 March (1931) 9
- 'The Offence of the Cross: Misconceptions on the Subject of the Atonement', CEN, 27 March (1931) 1
- 'Beyond Calvary: The Christian Hope', CEN, 2 April (1931) 9
- 'The Risen Lord: Post-Resurrection Appearances', CEN, 10 April (1931) 9
- 'Christ, the Lord: The Resurrection Faith', CEN, 17 April (1931) 9
- 'Relations of Life and Matter: What Science is Telling Us', CEN, 24 April (1931) 1
- 'Personal Experience of God: Views of Master Minds', CEN, 1 May (1931) 1
- 'The Christian Way of Life: Its Challenge to the Age', CEN, 8 May (1931) 7
- 'Criticism and Faith: A Theological Riddle', CEN, 15 May (1931) 9
- 'Christian Faith and Life: Archbishop of York's Teaching', CEN, 22 May (1931) 7
- 'Mystical Side of Christianity: A City Man's Appeal', CEN, 29 May (1931) 7
- 'The Spirit in Action: Greatest Lack in Christian Life', CEN, 5 June (1931) 1
- 'The Blessed Trinity: The Holy Spirit a Distinct Person?', CEN, 12 June (1931) 9
- 'The Invincible Christ: The Spiritual Appeal', CEN, 19 June (1931) 11
- 'The Greatest Commandment: Can We Love God?', CEN, 26 June (1931) 8
- 'Spiritual Vision: The Supreme Quest', CEN, 3 July (1931) 9
- 'Strength in Reserve: Preventive Grace', CEN, 10 July (1931) 9

- 'Oxford Group Movement: Personal Impressions', CEN, 17 July (1931) 9
- 'Materialism has Defeated Itself: Reawakening of a Conscious Need for Christ', CEN, 24 July (1931) 1
- 'A Reader's Questions: Was Our Lord Always Happy?', CEN, 31 July (1931) 7
- 'Will Jesus Christ Come Again in Visible Form?: Can We Share the Apostolic Belief?', CEN, 7 August (1931) 7
- 'The Heart of Atonement: Power of the Cross', CEN, 14 July (1931) 9
- 'The Life to Come: Being Prepared', CEN, 21 August (1931) 7
- 'Problems of Faith and Life: A New Series', CEN, 28 August (1931) 9
- 'Problems of Faith and Life: Remission of Sins', CEN, 4 September (1931) 7
- 'Problems of Faith and Life', CEN, 11 September (1931) 9
- 'Problems of Faith and Life: The Riddle of the World', CEN, 18 September (1931) 7
- 'Problems of Faith and Life: Some Vital Truths', CEN, 25 September (1931) 9
- 'Problems of Faith and Life: The Lesson We Have to Learn', CEN, 2 October (1931) 9
- 'Books which have Influenced me: A Varied List', CEN, 9 October (1931) 7
- 'Problems of Faith and Life: Questions about Prayer', CEN, 16 October (1931) 9
- 'Problems of Faith and Life: Communion with God', CEN, 23 October (1931) 9
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- 'Campbell on the Objectives of the Progressive League', TT, 21 May (1910) 15
- 'Campbell at the City Temple on the Metropolitan Hospital Fund', TT, 13 June (1910) 5
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 'Campbell leaves for New York', TT, 20 October (1911) 9
 'US Tour: Corrects Press Misreports', TT, 12 December (1911) 4
 'Campbell leaves News York for England', TT, 10 January (1912) 10
 'Campbell arrives in England', TT, 31 January (1912) 9
 'Campbell resumes ministry at the City Temple', TT, 5 February (1912) 13
 'Campbell's Health and Welcome Home Gathering at the City Temple', TT, 9 February (1912) 7
 'Campbell's Health: Resigning Appointments', TT, 20 February (1912) 6
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 'Campbell to Preach at Lyndhurst Road Church', TT, 11 December (1912) 6
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 'Terms of Change of Communion', TT, 22 September (1915) 5
 'Farewell to R.J. Campbell', TT, 22 September (1915) 11
 'R.J.C. leaving London for Period of Rest', TT, 20 September (1915) 11
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 'Campbell's 'The War and the Soul' reviewed', TT, 15 June (1916) 28
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 'Campbell's 'A Spiritual Pilgrimage' reviewed', TT, 5 October (1916) 5
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- 'Campbell at Westminster Abbey', TT, 20 June (1927) 16
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- 'Campbell's 'Livingstone' reviewed', TT, 8 October (1929) 22
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- 'Campbell at Church Congress on Spirit of Youth', TT, 10 October (1930) 17
- 'Canon R.J. Campbell, Chancellor of Chichester Cathedral', TT, 21 October (1930) 11
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Letters to PROFESSOR KEITH ROBBINS from:

C. Allen, British Library of Political and Economic Science, 1 November 1971

John Beer, Peterhouse, Cambridge, 10 June 1972

Rev Dr Gareth Bennett, 14 July 1972

Mrs Pauline Bidwell, 1 January 1971 and 21 October 1975

Maurice Bond Esq, House of Lords Record Office, 15 February 1973

H.S. Cobb, House of Lords Record Office, 19 February 1973

Miss Elizabeth Dawson, 6 December 1970

The Dean of Chichester, 9 May 1967

Professor C.H. Dodd, 15 January 1971

G. Edwards, 17 January 1971

Rev Michael Edwards MA, 17 July 1971

Mr Hammond, Honorary Curator of the City Temple, 5 November 1970 and 18 November 1970

Mr G.W. Hignett, no date

C.E. Jarvis, Trust Officer, Public Trustee Office, London, 21 December 1970
 Mr Eric Ledger, 20 November 1970 and 21 November 1970
 Mr Thomas M. Loomer, 3 January 1971, 5 June 1971 and 11 November 1971
 Miss Gwyneth Lloyd Thomas, 14 July 1972
 W.R. Matthews, 17 March 1971
 Rev Dr Geoffrey F. Nuttall, 9 December 1970, 18 March 1971, one undated, 7
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 Norman Pittenger, 9 June 1971
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 Rev B.M.G. Reardon, 3 June 1971 and 9 April 1972
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Correspondence made to the author from:

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 The General Register Office, Smedley Hydro, Southport, Merseyside
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 Mr Stephen Bird, The National Museum of Labour History, 6 February 1991
 Mr John Creasey, Librarian, Dr Williams's Library, Gordon Square, 17 January
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 Mr Graham Dalling, Enfield County Council, February 1991
 Mrs Olive Geddes, Research Assistant, Department of Manuscripts, National
 Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, 11 January 1989, 19 January
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 Lilian Gibbens, Researcher for Westminster Past, Archives and Local Studies,
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 Mrs Patricia Gill, County and Diocesan Archivist, West Sussex Record Office,
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 Garry Hewett, Public Services, The British Newspaper Library, Colindale, 24

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Mr David James, District Archivist, West Yorkshire Archive Service
N.W. James, Curatorial Officer, The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts,
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Nicholas Kingsley, Principal Archivist, City of Birmingham Public Libraries
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Dr Peter McNiven, The John Rylands, University Library of Manchester, 30 May
1989

Mrs E Nixon, Assistant Librarian, The Muniment Room and Library, Westminster
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J. Parker, Librarian, Manchester College, Oxford, 17 October 1990 and 29 October
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John Roles, Keeper of Local History and Archaeology, Art Gallery and Museums
and the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, 17 March 1989

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Nottingham, 8 February 1989, 20 February 1989

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Dr W.J. Sheils, Research Archivist, The Borthwick Institute of Historical Research,
York, 9 February 1989

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R.C. Snelling, The British Library, The Manuscript Collection, Great Russell
Street, 30 January 1989

Miss Rosemary Taylor, Senior Assistant Librarian, Institute of Historical Research,
Senate House, 9 November 1988

Miss E.M. Willmott, Specialist Librarian, City of Bradford Central Library, 31
March 1989

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January 1989

Unitarians

Rev John Clifford, Unitarian Information Officer, Essex Hall, 27 January 1989

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Rev John Roberts, 28 March 1989

Mr Alan Ruston, Unitarian Historical Society, 8 March 1989

Rev Dr Leonard Smith, January 1989, 24 March 1989

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Mrs Jill Allen, Church Archivist, Brighthelm, 3 February 1989, 27 February 1989,
25 September 1989, January 1990, 8 February 1990, 3 March 1990, 2 February
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Miss Nellie Fife, 2 March 1989

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Mr S.R. Smith, Caterham School, 27 February 1989

Rev David Staples, Free Church Federal Council, 29 January 1991

Rev John Travell, Penge Congregational Church, 6 February 1989

Dr Woodhouse, March 1989

The Church of England

Mrs Irene Berry, 31 December 1988

Rev Ian Gibson, 28 October 1990

Rev Barry Jackson, 2 February 1989

Canon D.H. Palmer, 3 February 1989

Rev Michael Porteous, 29 January 1991

Rev Geoffrey H. Roper, 6 March 1989, 5 September 1989

Mr F. Tester, 3 December 1990

Canon Dominic Walker OGS, Rural Dean, Brighton, 20 February 1989, and Sue Atkins (Secretary to the Rural Dean), 21 January 1991

Individuals

Dr J.C.G. Binfield, 11 November 1988

Mr Antony Dale, February 1989, 1 March 1989

Stevens Drake and Pope, Solicitors, Brighton, 15 January 1989

Mrs Sylvia Dunkley, 17 February 1989, 24 February 1989, 23 March 1989, 5 June 1989

Charles Hignett, 8 March 1989

Ms Elaine Kaye, 31 January 1989, 25 May 1989

Professor J.C. O'Neil, 19 January 1989

Professor Keith Robbins - see above

Professor R. Tudur Jones, 11 October 1988

Dr B.G. Worrall, 7 November 1988

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