

## *Prologue*

The late Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham, was sometimes known as “the Unitarian Bishop”; and between the Anglican Modernist and the Unitarian of the present day there still exists a measure of theological sympathy. This was even more true of the Anglican Broad Churchmen and the Unitarians of a century ago; and probably most people familiar with the subject of the Broad Church or with Unitarianism in the nineteenth century are aware that an affinity existed between them. But the matter has never been the subject of investigation; and it is one thing to be vaguely aware that there was some affinity, and quite another to know just what that affinity was. In this work I have attempted to show, not only that there *was* an affinity, but also what its features were.

The illustrative material in the form of quotations—which are necessarily rather numerous, though they have been cut down to the minimum required to establish the points maintained—has generally been spread, it will be seen, over the whole century, so as to show, where this is the case, that the particular feature referred to was not an isolated phenomenon, but something true of the whole period under discussion. Indeed, it is even hoped that some of the passages cited, and some of the descriptions given, will suitably preserve, and conveniently summarize, a number of the more interesting features of Unitarian and Anglican Broad Church literature. All too often, this material, Unitarian literature in particular, is difficult to obtain and badly preserved.

Lest the latter remarks should be taken to indicate any particular theological bias, I should hasten to add that throughout

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this work I have endeavoured to be as fair and objective as possible, and it is a matter of some gratification to me that one of my first readers, my typist, was unable to decide whether I was an Anglican or a Unitarian! This, however—along with my avoidance of the terms “I” and “we” in the text, both of which I eschew on grounds of personal taste—must not be taken to indicate that in the following pages there will be found any lack of decision where decision is due; and I suspect that both in the selection and arrangement of the material, quite apart from my conclusions, there will be found a personal interpretation which everyone will not share.

A word must be added about the title, which, in spite of the absence of the term in the text, refers to Broad Church *Anglicanism*. This is quite deliberate, as by this term, I wish to avoid any suspicion, which the frequent use of the term “Anglican Broad Church” might be taken to indicate, of a tendency to think of the Broad Church as a separate entity entirely divorced from the rest of Anglicanism; but the constant use, in close juxtaposition, of two words—Unitarianism and Anglicanism—both ending in “ism” is not particularly attractive, and so, in the text, the popular term of the latter half of the nineteenth century, viz., “Broad Church”, has been employed. And though the term “Anglicanism” was not used before, nor “Broad Church”, in respect of an actual living party, very much after, the nineteenth century, I have not felt pedantic enough to avoid the use of the phrase “in the nineteenth century” in the title.

And now the time has come for me to undertake the pleasant duty of expressing my thanks, which in the first place must be accorded to the University of Birmingham for granting me in 1958 the Francis Corder Clayton Scholarship, which enabled me to begin this research; and in this connection, as also for his very kind and helpful encouragement during the first year of my work, I should particularly like to mention the Rev. Professor G. W. H. Lampe, M.A., D.D., now of Cambridge. To the Rev. J. C. Dickinson, M.A., B.Litt., F.S.A., who succeeded him as my supervisor, thanks are also due for helpful criticism,

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and suggestions regarding general presentation. Not least I must express my thanks to the Rev. H. L. Short, M.A., Warden of Manchester College, Oxford, who not only suggested the field for my enquiries, but who has also given very kind help when doubt has occasionally arisen with regard to certain points of Unitarian history. To the Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, the Rev. L. A. Garrard, B.D., M.A., LL.D., my thanks are also due for having provided facilities for research at Oxford. Nor must I fail to mention the valued assistance of the Rev. A. E. Peaston, M.A., B.Litt., F.R.Hist.S., who very kindly provided me with an unpublished list of Unitarian liturgies, some use of which I have made in Chapter 4. To all these good people; to the several correspondents, who have answered a number of enquiries; to the staffs of numerous libraries, not least that of the Reference Library, Birmingham; and to my parents who have endured much inconvenience at home as the work has gone ahead I express my grateful thanks.

It was with an Anglican Dr. Barnes that I began this preface, and it is with the words of a Unitarian Dr. Barnes (1747–1810), the first Divinity tutor at Manchester College, that I will end, when I say of this work, as he did in respect of Manchester College, where several of the leading figures mentioned in the following pages carried out their most conspicuous work: I dedicate it “to Truth, to Liberty, to Religion”.

D. G. WIGMORE-BEDDOES

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