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JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY (1788-1847), A STUDY IN EVANGELICAL QUAKER
BIOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

This study uses an examination of the work and beliefs of Joseph John Gurney (1788-1847), as a means to consider the breakdown of sectarianism and the rise of evangelicalism among British Quakers during the first half of the nineteenth century. This study also considers the manner in which Gurney combined traditional Quaker beliefs with the theology of the evangelical movement.

During the early years of the nineteenth century Friends traditional sectarianism was breaking down. Simultaneously a group of Friends, who were influenced by evangelicalism, were becoming increasingly influential within British Quakerism. Joseph John Gurney was the pre-eminent member of this group. His role in the Beaconite controversy is assessed. His beliefs are compared to those of the other participants in this controversy; extreme evangelicals and traditionalist Friends. Through this comparison it will be shown that Gurney combined elements of traditional Quaker beliefs and contemporary evangelical theology.

Gurney's mission to America, 1837-40, and the claims that this caused the subsequent schism among Orthodox Friends are assessed. It is argued that there were already tensions within American Quakerism and that there would have been a schism even without his presence.

Gurney's role as a member of the ecumenical evangelical movement is considered. It is argued that during his work with members of other religious groups, he adopted an inclusive ecclesiology and avoided issues

which might cause division. Gurney's response to changes within the evangelical movement during the 1830s is considered.

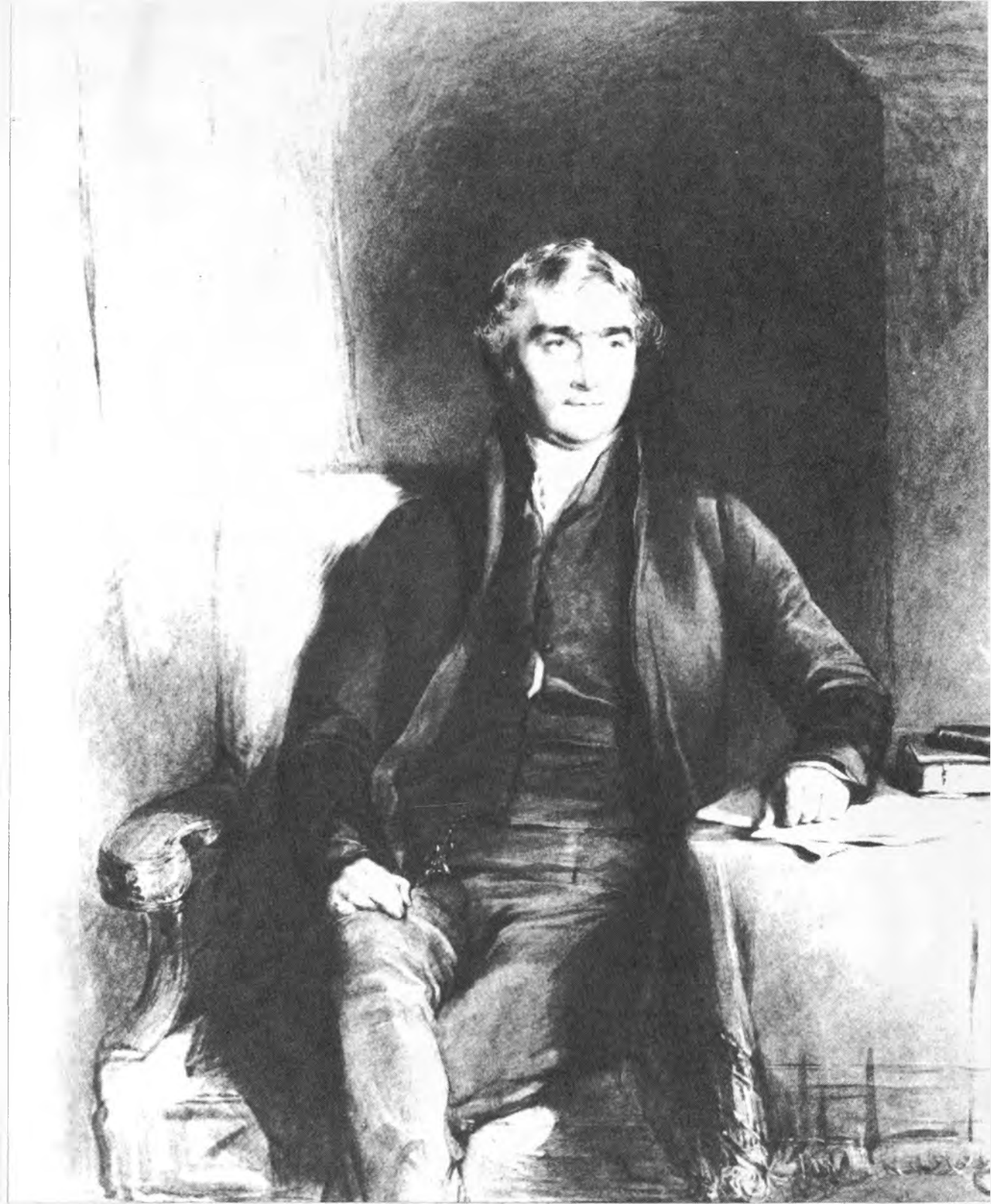
The manner in which Gurney's combination of traditional Quaker and contemporary evangelical beliefs shaped his work as an educator and philanthropist is assessed.

Gurney's attitudes to politics and business are assessed. It will be argued that he rejected some elements of Quakerism's traditional attitudes to these subjects and that this was indicative of wider change within the Society of Friends.

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JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY IN THE PRIME OF LIFE
Painting by G Richmond

INTRODUCTION

During the first half of the nineteenth century the Society of Friends was undergoing dramatic change. Throughout this period Friends were embroiled in doctrinal conflict. On two occasions the central assembly of British Friends (London Yearly Meeting) had to assess the theological soundness of individual members of the church, who had been accused of heterodoxy, and as a result these Friends were expelled from the Society. Later in this period some of the most influential and talented members of the Society of Friends in Britain left the organisation due to their fears that traditional Quaker doctrines were tainted with heterodoxy; while other British Friends simultaneously protested that the Society of Friends was deserting its traditional theology, with its emphasis on the role of the Spirit. Significantly during this period the Society of Friends in America divided into three diametrically opposed groups, one which held heterodox beliefs, another which absorbed the doctrines of evangelicalism, and a third which rejected both of these schools of thought. Alongside these internal doctrinal controversies, Friends' relationships with the wider world altered radically during this period and Quakers were to make unprecedented contributions to the life of the church militant and to all the great philanthropic causes of the age. Moreover Friends were to participate in the significant political, and economic debates of this period. This involvement with non-Quakers was in itself to cause controversy within the Society of

Friends, as many Friends opposed this close association with other Christians.

These events were the result of two interrelated processes working within the Society of Friends: the breakdown of sectarianism and the rise of evangelicalism. Of these two processes the former, the breakdown of sectarianism and a move towards denominationalism, is perhaps the more difficult to quantify. The characteristics which separate sects from denominational groups have been widely discussed, most comprehensively by Bryan Wilson.¹ Particular attention has been paid to the sectarian nature of the Society of Friends and the question of when Friends ceased to be a sectarian group and moved towards denominationalism has been raised; initially by Richard Niebuhr who claimed that this process occurred during the second generation of the movement.² This argument has now been rejected, most forcefully by Elizabeth Isichei who questioned the assumption that sectarian organisations naturally developed into denominations. With regard to the Society of Friends, she argues, denominational and sectarian elements co-existed within British Quakerism even after the second generation of the movement and the Society of Friends remained profoundly sectarian until the middle of the nineteenth century.³ As will be shown, during the early years of the nineteenth century, and partly due to the efforts of energetic Friends during the latter part of the previous century, Friends were still an isolated body and faced prohibitions which limited their participation in almost all areas of public life.⁴ During the next fifty years, however, the relationships between Friends and the wider world underwent significant changes. By

the middle of the century Friends were taking an active role in previously anathematised areas of public life, most dramatically in politics and ecumenical co-operation. These years therefore mark a significant move away from sectarianism and towards denominationalism. This breakdown in sectarianism has been identified with the rise of evangelicalism within the Society of Friends.⁵ During the early nineteenth century an increasingly influential party of evangelicals emerged among British Friends. These Friends who emphasised the evangelical doctrines of the authority of the scriptures and Christ's propitiatory sacrifice challenged Friends' existing sectarian attitudes on many issues and were to draw the Society of Friends towards evangelicalism and help to transform Friends from a sect to a denomination. The twin processes of the breakdown of sectarianism and the rise of evangelicalism did not, however, affect Friends uniformly. Instead, while some Friends wholeheartedly embraced some tenets of evangelicalism and the new opportunities for contact with the wider community, other Friends, usually referred to as "Quietists", opposed the changes within Quakerism. The tensions between these groups led to conflict, and indeed schism.

The key figure in this period of Quaker history is Joseph John Gurney (1788-1847), whose life's work represents both the rise of evangelicalism and the breakdown of sectarianism. If any individual Friend can be taken as representative of evangelical Friends, it is Joseph John Gurney; he, as their leading spokesman and theologian, played a crucial role in establishing evangelicalism within the Society of Friends. Gurney also helped to change Friends' attitudes

to the wider world. His close association with non-Friends, particularly evangelical Anglicans, was well known (and criticised by traditionalist Friends). Earlham, the family home, became not only a centre of Quaker evangelicalism; but also a meeting place for evangelicals of all denominations. Gurney also participated in philanthropy, and politics: activities that challenged traditional Quaker sectarianism. His attitudes to personal wealth and education were also significantly different from those of traditionalist Quakers. Historians have recognised Gurney's importance to the Society of Friends at this crucial time in its history. For example, Edward Grubb argues that more than anyone else, Gurney shaped the Society of Friends during the middle and late nineteenth century⁶ and Thomas D Hamm claims that Gurney was the most important figure in an intellectual movement which transformed Quakerism.⁷

Given that Gurney played such a prominent role in the Society of Friends during a momentous period in its history, twentieth-century historians have played remarkably little attention to him. Gurney's importance was recognised throughout most of the nineteenth century. One biographer, writing in 1857, argued that his name along with those of the others associated with Earlham "...will be dear to many when the old Hall of Earlham shall have crumbled into dust".⁸ Of the works on Gurney produced in the period immediately after his death, the most substantial was J. B. Braithwaite's Memoirs of Joseph John Gurney, (1854). There were close personal links between this author and his subject: Braithwaite took up Gurney's mantle as leader of evangelicalism in the London Yearly Meeting and was personally

affected by the controversies in which Gurney played a major role. In view of this, Braithwaite was probably not sufficiently distant from Gurney's life to provide an unbiased account, although this work does contain some useful anecdotal information which might otherwise have been lost. Other writers during the nineteenth century also recognised Gurney's significance. In 1889 F S Turner, a historian who was opposed to evangelicalism, admitted that Gurney was the only Quaker of his generation to have attained a reputation outside the Society of Friends.⁹ Even in 1895, when Augustus C. Hare produced an account of the Earlham circle (which included Thomas Fowell Buxton and Elizabeth Fry), he assumed that his audience would be familiar with the Gurney name.¹⁰ Notwithstanding the attention which Gurney received during the nineteenth century, during the twentieth century his influence has largely been ignored. With the exception of an abbreviated version of Braithwaite's study which was published in 1902 and a reprint of one of Gurney's most influential works in 1979, only one substantial work on Gurney has been produced during this century. This work, David E. Swift's Joseph John Gurney, Banker, Reformer, & Quaker, (1962), written by a non-Friend, has been criticised for not paying sufficient emphasis to Gurney as a Quaker.¹¹ Swift's book is, however, of importance as it acknowledges the depth and ambiguity of Gurney's theology, which will be discussed later. This lack of interest in Gurney among Quaker historians is reflected among members of the denomination as a whole in Britain. The current edition of Christian Faith and Practice in the Experience of the Society of Friends, a selection of 677 short passages from the works of Friends

which are intended to express the beliefs of Quakerism, contains only one item from Gurney's works.

This lack of interest in Gurney's contribution to the Society of Friends is the result of several factors. The most immediate of these is a desire to ignore the difficult times in which he played such a significant role. The early nineteenth century was not only one of the most dramatic periods of Quaker history; it was also one of the most traumatic. The tensions caused by the breakdown of sectarianism and the rise of evangelicalism led, perhaps inevitably, to schism. In Britain these tensions led to the Beaconite controversy, a period of acrimonious theological conflict between extreme evangelicals, moderate evangelicals, and traditionalist Friends, which resulted in the first group leaving the Society of Friends. In the United States the schisms caused by these tensions were cataclysmic, with American Friends dividing twice: first into heterodox and orthodox camps, and again with the orthodox camp dividing further into traditionalists and evangelicals. These divisions, which naturally caused deep sorrow both at the time and subsequently, have been associated with Gurney. He played a prominent role in both the British and American divisions and has largely been held responsible for both. Consequently Quakers have, in part, ignored Gurney due to his reputation as a harbinger of disaster.

Another, but interrelated, reason for the lack of emphasis on Gurney among Quaker historians is the result of theological change within British Quakerism since his death. While evangelicalism rose to

dominate the Society of Friends during Gurney's life time, during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century liberalism took its place. The rise of liberalism was particularly to affect historians' attitudes to Gurney since one of its earliest areas of impact was on Friends' study of their own past. Isichei suggests that one product of the rise of liberalism was the foundation of the Friends Historical Society.¹² She also argues that the process of denominationalism, with which evangelicalism was associated, was halted by an interest in historical studies among the Quaker leaders of the late nineteenth century. These Friends attempted to discover the true character of Quakerism by studying its historical origins and thereby revived its sectarian elements.¹³ The understanding of Quaker history which these liberal Friends expressed marginalised the contribution of evangelicalism to the Society of Friends. It is true that some of these historians, including their most influential spokesman, Rufus M Jones, expressed some respect for evangelicalism.¹⁴ In general, however, they concluded that evangelicalism was incompatible with Quakerism, which they regarded as a mystical religion. For example, Edward Grubb, the other prominent liberal Quaker historian, argued that early Quakerism was fundamentally a form of mystical Christianity;¹⁵ something which, he argued, Gurney had never experienced.¹⁶ Quaker historians have, therefore, focussed on the gulf that existed between traditional Quaker beliefs, with their emphasis on the authority of the Spirit, and evangelicalism, which stressed the importance of the scriptures. One result of this is that, as Thomas D Hamm suggests in his recent history of those Friends in America who were influenced by evangelicalism, some Quaker

historians have tended to regard evangelicalism as an "invading force" among nineteenth-century Friends.¹⁷ As a result Quaker historians of the late nineteenth century have placed undue emphasis on the numbers of early Quaker evangelicals who were not born into the Society of Friends. Both Jones and Edward Grubb noted that many of the leaders of the evangelical movement were converts who originally came from outside the Society of Friends and were to "bring something into the Society of Friends which would not have arisen within it".¹⁸ Such criticisms ignore the fact that many of the leading members of the evangelical movement, most importantly Gurney, were born Quakers.

As liberal historians have tended to regard evangelicalism as a doctrine which was alien to the Society of Friends, they have argued that the lifestyle and beliefs of the evangelical Friends marked a radical departure from the previous experience of Friends. These claims have been made with particular force with regard to Gurney, who was accused of deserting traditional Quaker lifestyle. For example, Thomas Hodgson noted that Gurney had from his infancy been subjected to influences which were ill-adapted to promote an education in accordance with the principles of Friends and that some of his teachers were from other denominations.¹⁹ Isichei also noted that Gurney felt closer to Anglicans than the poorer members of his own meeting.²⁰ While the opulent lifestyle which evangelical Friends enjoyed was a source of discontent for both their contemporary critics and subsequent historians, their beliefs were to prove even more contentious; it has been claimed that the theological changes which were introduced into the Society of Friends during the early

nineteenth century marked a complete overturning of "true" Quaker doctrine. In particular it has been argued that the evangelical Quakers departed from Friends' traditional emphasis on the internal religious experience towards a reliance on beliefs emphasising the authority of the scriptures. Edward Grubb argued that the theological content of the epistles of London Yearly Meeting changed during this period, with the emphasis moving to correct doctrine and the paramount authority of the scriptures. He further claims that this change in the epistles was to reach its conclusion in the 1836 epistle, which Gurney played a major role in writing, which made the scriptures the final seat of authority.²¹ These criticisms of the evangelicals' theology have been directed most forcefully against Gurney himself. The most frequent criticism is that he rejected the traditional Quaker doctrine of the immediate influence of the Spirit. Edward Grubb argues that, while Gurney admitted the presence of this divine light in all men, he regarded it as little more than a capacity to receive salvation.²² H Larry Ingle argues that by the time he had arrived in America (1837), Gurney had all but rejected the doctrine of the inner light.²³ Gurney's critics have also claimed that he substituted the authority of the scriptures Spirit for that of the Spirit. Perhaps the most extreme statement of this view was Edward Grubb's suggestion that "Just as J. H. Newman, in despair of human reason, took refuge in an infallible church, so J. J. Gurney sought it in an infallible Bible".²⁴ As histories of the Society of Friends have emphasised that the beliefs of Gurney and his supporters did not represent true Quakerism, so it logically follows that their Quietist opponents were regarded as the authentic voice of Friends during this period. This

has led to another factor which has damaged Gurney's reputation among Quaker historians. Given that Gurney's opponents were considered to represent true Quakerism, their criticisms of the evangelicals in general and Gurney in particular have been accepted at face value by liberal Quaker historians. As a result many of the criticisms which Quaker historians have made of Gurney merely echo those made of him by his contemporaries and have not really added any new critical insight to his contribution to the Society of Friends.

It is not only Quaker historians who have tended to emphasise the differences that existed between the evangelical Friends and the Society of Friends in general: historians of the evangelical movement have also emphasised these divisions. For example, Doreen Rosman argues that the evangelical Friends were easily identifiable from their brethren;²⁵ when in fact during the theological disputes of the early nineteenth century it was not immediately apparent which side some Friends would support. David Bebbington's study of evangelicalism in Britain noted the conflict between traditional Quaker spirituality and evangelicalism and argues that the former was forced "underground" by the latter;²⁶ a historiography which is almost identical to that expressed by liberal Quaker historians. Both historians of the evangelical movement and of the Society of Friends have, therefore, emphasised that the evangelical movement did not have its foundations in the Society of Friends and thus represented a turning away from traditional Quaker beliefs. As a result historians have regarded Quaker evangelicalism as representing only a brief detour from the Society of Friends' true path, which therefore can be

dismissed as playing no essential role in the history of the movement. This in part explains why Gurney, the pre-eminent Quaker evangelical, has been disregarded for so long.

The emphasis on evangelicalism as an 'alien' force clearly limits the scope for study of Gurney's contribution to the Society of Friends. Focussing on evangelicalism as a wider movement which only impinged upon the Society of Friends can have its advantages and tends to allay the 'parochialism' which can affect denominational histories, by recognising Quakerism's relationship with the wider church; it does, however, only tell half a story. Indeed one Quaker historian, John Punshon, notes that to dismiss evangelicalism as "...an external influence deflecting Quakerism from its true course is a judgement of value rather than history".²⁷ The whole premise that evangelicalism and traditional Quakerism were irreconcilable has to be questioned. While there were obvious doctrinal issues on which traditional Quakerism and evangelicalism could not apparently be reconciled, there are also remarkable points of coincidence between the two schools of thought. In many cases the lifestyle and reactions to contemporary issues which could be drawn by Gurney and his supporters from traditional Quakerism or from contemporary evangelicalism were identical. Moreover, if the study of this period of the Society of Friends does not automatically presuppose that evangelicalism and traditional Quakerism are incompatible, but instead looks for points of similarity between them, then the achievements of Gurney can be considered in an entirely new light. Gurney did not reject traditional Quaker beliefs in favour of evangelicalism, but rather

attempted to reconcile the two. Throughout his life he was simultaneously influenced by the beliefs of the Society of Friends and by the wider evangelical movement: both these forces had equal play in his life and influenced every area of his activity. This dual commitment has perhaps encouraged historians to place relatively little emphasis on Gurney, as it is easier to disregard him than deal with the paradoxes that his work entailed. The only study which has seriously considered Gurney's dual commitment to the evangelical movement and the Society of Friends is David Swift's. Swift argues that Gurney sought a creative middle way between the Quaker doctrine of the inner light and the evangelicals' emphasis on the scriptures and that he sought to be rationalist, evangelical, and Quaker all at once.²⁸ He also argues that as Gurney persistently attempted to be both an evangelical Christian and Quaker, he stood out as a unique evangelical and a unique Friend.²⁹ Any study of Gurney must pay particular attention to the manner in which he attempted to reconcile these dual sources of influence and how they were to simultaneously affect his participation in all fields of activity. Indeed this drawing together of influences from Quakerism and evangelicalism was the unique contribution which Gurney and his supporters made to both the Society of Friends and the church militant. Both the Society of Friends and the wider evangelical movement were profoundly affected by this "cross fertilisation" of ideas: the Society of Friends was dramatically influenced, for better or worse, by evangelicalism and the evangelical movement was enhanced by the contribution that was made to it by Friends. Therefore, simultaneously studying the evangelical movement and the Society of Friends during this period

provides valuable insights into both, and Gurney, as the pre-eminent example of an evangelical Quaker, is a useful focus for such study.

The widespread deprecation of Gurney's role in the Society of Friends has meant that a key figure in developments occurring within Quakerism has not been given sufficient attention. Gurney's life and thought are in many respects a microcosm of developments within the wider Society of Friends, as the tensions between traditional Quakerism and evangelicalism which affected him were also affecting the movement as a whole. This creative tension was also feeding into and influencing evangelicalism as a whole. Gurney is thus a vital figure in the history of the modern church and an appreciation of his work provides valuable insights.

1. QUAKERS IN BRITAIN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

"The Quakers, as every-one knows, differ more than even many foreigners do from their own countrymen." (Thomas Clarkson, A Portraiture of Quakerism,(1806), Vol. I, p. 11.)

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Society of Friends formed a distinctive body in contemporary society, with its own sense of identity and a belief that it had a unique mission to fulfil. The Society of Friends regarded itself as the only successor to the purified and apostolic church and as a result attempted to isolate its members from the contaminating influences of surrounding society. Friends therefore faced severe prohibitions in every area of their lives, with those individuals who trespassed beyond the boundaries of accepted behaviour being threatened with exclusion from the Society. These prohibitions and the vigour with which they were enforced, led to an appreciable decline in the numbers of Friends. Friends' distinctive moral code was mirrored by a unique corpus of theology, which rejected many of the beliefs and practices of the conventional church. This social and theological isolation of Friends was, however, breaking down during the early years of the nineteenth century. The increasing wealth and urbanisation of some Friends undermined their adherence to the Society's austere way of life and emphasised the differences that existed between rich and poor Friends. The theological unity of British Quakerism was also challenged around the turn of the nineteenth century, as some dissident Friends were to pursue Quakerism's distinctive beliefs to extremes which the movement's leadership considered to be unacceptable. The turn of the nineteenth century was,

therefore, a period of crisis within Quakerism: a crisis which led to the emergence of an evangelical party among British Friends.

It is clear that the main concern of the Society of Friends (which had a membership of approximately 19,800 in Britain at the turn of the century)¹ during the early years of the nineteenth century was to maintain its separate identity and to isolate its members from surrounding society. Friends were anxious to preserve their separate identity, as they believed that they alone represented the apostolic and purified church. Their apologists at the turn of the century argued that the majority of the church had succumbed to false doctrines which Satan had created² and that even the Reformation had not completely purified the established church.³ By contrast they argued that, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Society of Friends had rejected these corruptions⁴ and that it maintained the same testimonies as the Apostles and the primitive church;⁵ a claim which both traditionalist and evangelical Friends would attempt to substantiate later in the century. As Friends believed that they formed a spiritual elite, they inevitably had to draw a boundary line between themselves and wider society. As a result in 1737 London Yearly Meeting established a definition of membership which gave the children of Quaker families membership by right of their parents' convictions.⁶ From this time on, the majority (possibly 80% by 1750)⁷ of the Society of Friends enjoyed this status due to "birthright" membership rather than conversion to Quaker principles. Friends drew another boundary between themselves and the wider world, as "...it was determined that persons belonging to the Society should not intermarry with those of other religious professions."⁸ Given this prohibition on marrying non members and the automatic

membership which was granted to Quaker children, Quaker families tended to intermarry. As a result, by the beginning of the nineteenth century the Society can almost be regarded as an extended family rather than a church. These familial bonds reinforced Friends' loyalty to the group and their conception of themselves as a separate and distinctive body, which reinforced the Society's sectarianism.

Friends' exclusiveness was also reinforced by the severe prohibitions which all Quakers faced. The Society of Friends was determined that its members should not be contaminated by influences from contemporary society. As a result many activities were expressly forbidden to Friends, including all games of chance, music, dancing, and the reading of novels.⁹ The most striking prohibitions, however, were those that related to appearance; Friends were expected to adopt a specific code of dress:

"They stand distinguished by means of it from all other religious bodies. The men wear neither lace, frills, ruffles, swords, nor any of the ornaments used by the fashionable world. The women wear neither lace, flounces, lappets, rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, nor any thing belonging to this class. Both sexes are also particular in the choice of the colour of their clothes. All gay colours, such as red, blue, green, and yellow, are exploded. Dressing in this manner, a Quaker is known by his apparel through the whole kingdom".¹⁰

As Isichei notes, Friends' unusual appearance reinforced their exclusiveness by cutting them off from the rest of the world and strengthening their feeling of group identity.¹¹ Their distinctive dress also made it easier to reinforce the other prohibitions; Clarkson claimed that since their appearance differed so greatly from the rest of Society, any Friend indulging in a prohibited activity would attract attention to himself.¹²

As well as adopting a distinctive life style, Friends were expected to adopt a unique creed; this centred, almost exclusively, on the work of the Spirit and its direct operation in the mind or heart of the believer, which was often described as "immediate revelation". One contemporary Quaker apologist, Catherine Philips, claimed the Spirit: "... is the alone, infallible teacher and leader, appointed of Christ to be so unto the end of time"¹³ and another Friend, Benjamin Holme, argued that the Spirit let men see evil and thereby understand Satan and his temptations.¹⁴ Friends also believed that the Spirit's power was essential to bring the individual to salvation. A Quaker writer, Thomas Calley, suggested that deliverance from sin could not be achieved through the power of the individual, but instead required the power of the Spirit. However, for the Spirit's work to succeed, the individual had to submit himself to its power. Calley suggested that:

"The work of our redemption, in our individual capacities, is an inward work, wherein the heart must be engaged: for it is the heart in which the opposite powers of sin and grace strive, and there being two seeds within us contending for the mastery, that to which we yield obedience, will have the government in us..."¹⁵

Given this emphasis on the role of the Spirit, Friends depreciated the value of any other source of religious instruction or knowledge: as one Quaker apologist, Richard Morris, claimed:

"For if it be impossible to give a blind or a deaf man a true idea of colours or sounds, by any outward descriptions of them: then neither can any outward description or verbal testimony alone, give any man a true knowledge of the things of God".¹⁶

In view of this depreciation of "outward things", Friends at the beginning of the nineteenth century placed comparatively little

emphasis on the scriptures. As Clarkson noted: "... it is a doctrine of the Society, that the Spirit of God is the primary and only infallible, and the scriptures but a subordinate or secondary guide".¹⁷ However, while Friends placed less emphasis on the scriptures than the Spirit, they still revered the former; Benjamin Morris argued: "...we freely acknowledge the Holy scriptures, giving them preference to all other writings in the world..."¹⁸ Moreover, as will be shown later, the leadership of the Society opposed their more extreme brethren's denial of the authority of the scriptures. Just as importantly, given their depreciation of the value of external sources of religious knowledge, Friends at the beginning of the nineteenth century placed little value on the natural faculties through which these could be appreciated and the human intellect was accordingly treated with distrust. Clarkson argued:

"The Quakers... understood... that human reason, or the spirit of man which is within him, and the Divine Principle of life and light, which is the Spirit of God residing in his body or temple, are so different in their powers, that the former cannot enter into the province of the latter. As water cannot penetrate the same bodies which fire can, so neither can reason the same subjects as the spiritual faculty. The Quakers, however, do not deny that human reason is powerful within its own province... They only say that it is incompetent to spiritual discernment".¹⁹

This distinctive corpus of theology, which diametrically opposed many of the beliefs of the established church, would again reinforce Friends' exclusivism and separate identity.

Adherence to these distinctive beliefs and Friends' unique lifestyle was vigorously enforced upon members of the Society. The Society ensured that its members did not desert its principles through a

variety of methods, which included presenting examples of devout and pious Quakers to their brethren. One example of this was a collection of hagiographic biographies of recently deceased Friends, entitled Piety Promoted, which was first published in 1701.²⁰ Friends were expected to use these examples of pious Friends as role models. Although they did not always achieve this, these biographical accounts did encourage a genre of religious journal writing among Friends. Even into the nineteenth century, many Friends (including evangelicals) detailed their religious experiences and codified them in a language which was peculiar to Friends. Alongside examples of devout Friends, the Society used a severe disciplinary code to enforce uniformity among its members. Those Friends who ignored the Society's prohibitions on lifestyle or challenged its distinctive beliefs risked expulsion from the organisation, usually described as "disownment". Disownment was universally regarded as an extremely severe discipline. While disowned Friends could still attend meetings for worship and be buried in Quaker burial grounds,²¹ they lost all status in the Society of Friends and the advantages associated with membership.²² As well as being able to disown dissidents, the Society's organisational structure ensured that voices which challenged the accepted orthodoxy would not be heard. The most significant institution in British Quakerism was London Yearly Meeting, the annual gathering of Friends. This meeting monitored the behaviour of Friends throughout Britain, received reports of Friends who had suffered imprisonment or distraint of property for their convictions, and dictated which activities were permissible for members of the Society. Importantly London Yearly Meeting also served as a final "court of appeal" for Friends who had

been disowned by their local meeting.²³ This last function provided clear indications of what was considered to be acceptable behaviour or belief among Friends. London Yearly Meeting also performed an important social function for Friends, by providing them with an opportunity to meet their relatives and co-religionists. It was probably this social function which explains why such large numbers of Friends attended Yearly Meeting; Thomas Clarkson commented that anyone travelling at the time would see Quakers coming from all parts to the Yearly Meeting.²⁴ Notwithstanding the large numbers of Friends which attended these meetings, the actual decision making power was vested with a small elite group. During the business meetings of London Yearly Meeting, the Clerk (who called Friends who wished to speak and recorded decisions made by the meeting) was surrounded by the most influential members of the assembly. As a result he would only pay attention to those closest to him, ensuring that only established individuals contributed to debates.²⁵ Like their annual assembly, local Quaker contributions were dominated by a relatively small group of Friends. Two types of official were responsible for church discipline in the local congregations: Overseers and Elders. It was the duty of Overseers to ensure that individuals adhered to Friends' prohibitions. They visited anyone who broke these prohibitions and attempted to "reclaim" them to the Society of Friends.²⁶ However, the more important of these local officials was the Elder, whose duties were to encourage young ministers and advise others in the "wisdom of God". Elders tended to dominate local congregations and were widely regarded as having a baneful effect on the spiritual life of the Society. There were always far more Elders than ministers and their

criticisms tended to suppress ministers rather than encourage them.²⁷ Furthermore there was widespread contemporary criticism of individual Elders. For example, James Jenkins described one Elder as a "sectarian bigot" who exalted Eldership at the expense of other church offices and claimed that another Elder checked when couples married to ensure that their children had not been conceived out of wedlock.²⁸

The power which was vested in the hands of relatively few Friends and the vigour with which they enforced uniformity among members of the Society, would appear to prevent any possibility of change or innovation among Quakers. The constraining power which the local and national leadership enjoyed was, however, in part circumvented by two factors: Friends' practice of itinerant preaching and the links which existed between Quakers in Britain and North America. Both these factors were to affect dramatically developments within the Society of Friends during the first half of the nineteenth century. Quaker preachers, or ministers, were able to make a significant contribution to developments among Friends as they enjoyed greater freedoms than their co-religionists due to Friends' understanding of the nature of preaching. Friends' doctrine of ministry, like other elements of their theology, emphasised the role of the Spirit. Isichei notes that Friends believed preaching was a direct revelation from the Spirit, with the minister serving as a mere mouthpiece.²⁹ Philips argued that the Spirit: "... hath the sole power and right to purify, qualify, call, send forth, direct, and assist his ministers...".³⁰ Friends gave this Spirit-led practice of preaching institutionalised status within the church, as they recognised that some individuals would have

a particular calling to the ministry. Therefore, the preaching of a Friend was considered to be acceptable by an Elder, they could be recorded as a minister. Some of these recorded ministers would travel the country³¹ and those meetings which they visited were expected to provide them with hospitality and arrange a special service for the local congregation over which the visitor would preside.³² The institution of this preaching, with its emphasis on the freedom of the Spirit, perhaps allowed Friends to circumvent the authority of the official leadership of Quakerism. Certainly Friends who were not allowed to participate in the decision-making process of Friends, made a disproportionate contribution to its itinerancy: although women were given only a nominal role in the national affairs of the Society of Friends, the majority of these travelling ministers were female.³³ The relative liberty which these ministers enjoyed and their ability to travel extensively among Friends allowed them to propagate new ideas among members of the group. While these ministers could be suppressed, and ultimately disowned, by Quakerism's leadership if their theology veered too far from accepted doctrine, this often merely served to give them national notoriety and would, later in the century, lead to many Friends seceding from the Society in support of popular disowned ministers. Moreover this institution of the itinerant ministry played a vital role in allowing evangelical Quakers to take their beliefs to the bulk of the Society of Friends.

Ministers' liberty of travel contributed to another factor which shaped Quakerism during the first half of the nineteenth century: the close links that existed between British and American Friends. These

links were encouraged by the divided nature of American Quakerism. While all of British Quakerism was covered by one authority (London Yearly Meeting) there were eight independent Yearly Meetings in North America at the beginning of this period (Philadelphia, Baltimore, Ohio, Indiana, New England, North Carolina, Virginia, and New York which also oversaw Friends meetings in Canada). During the early period of American Quakerism it was easier for American Yearly Meetings to communicate with London Yearly Meeting than with each other.³⁴ These links continued into the nineteenth century, as was shown in 1802, for example, when American Friends subscribed £8,365 to English Quakers who had suffered due to the high price of bread.³⁵ The most important consequence of these links was that ministers from America and Britain would visit their brethren in the other nation. From the last years of the eighteenth century until the 1840s, a continuous flow of ministers between America and Britain was to have dramatic effects on the course of Quakerism on both sides of the Atlantic.

The links that existed between American and British Friends and the influence of Friends' preachers contributed to the growing sectarianism of the Society during the second half of the eighteenth century. During this period, due to the work of a group of reforming Friends, the exclusivist elements of Quakerism had been reinforced. This reforming movement, which began in Philadelphia but eventually influenced all areas of the Society of Friends, represented an attempt to create a more distinctive and "purified" community,³⁶ by vigorously enforcing Friends' prohibitions and the disowning all those who

violated them.³⁷ Although many Friends were disowned as a result of this enforcement of Quakerism's prohibitions, by 1775 most of those individuals who remained within the Society of Friends were committed to the reformers' campaign to purify the Society.³⁸ The impact of these reformers in changing the direction of Quakerism is remarkable: in his study on their work, Jack D. Marietta argues that they transformed the Society of Friends into a sect.³⁹ Given this it can be argued that the Society of Friends was at its most sectarian in the period immediately before the turn of the nineteenth century; an idea which stands in stark contrast to some contributions to the debate on Friends' transition from sect to denomination.

Although the eighteenth century reformers made a vital contribution to the development of Quakerism, their effect on Friends at the turn of the nineteenth century was largely negative. In particular their emphasis on the disownment of dissenters led to a dramatic decline in the numbers of Friends. Clarkson noted that:

"The general opinion...is, and the Quakers, I apprehend, will not deny but lament it, that those who go out of the Society, are upon the whole more numerous than those who come into it by convincement; and therefore that there is, upon the whole, a decrease among them".⁴⁰

Friends were also aware of the constant dangers of being expelled from the group. Indeed as late as 1849 one Friend compared Quakerism to a "...mouse trap turned inside out...": entry into it was difficult, but exclusion easy.⁴¹ Moreover the reformers' emphasis on prohibitions increased tensions between wealthy Friends and their brethren which were becoming apparent at the turn of the century. It is clear that

some Friends were growing increasingly wealthy during this period: Thomas Clarkson noted that while the majority of Friends had originally lived in the country, they were now moving into the towns and suggested that one reason why many Friends preferred to work in towns rather than in agriculture was the large and rapid profits that could be made.⁴² Many of these newly rich Friends rejected the austere lifestyle that the Society of Friends expected of its members. In particular, wealthy Friends were criticised for not extending the plainness of dress that was required of Friends to their houses⁴³ and one of their critics asked if:

"It is consistent with true moderation to have carpets spread on the floors at half a guinea per square yard, or with coverings which would make many comfortable beds for the poor or clothe the naked children?".⁴⁴

Many contemporary Quakers regarded these newly rich Friends only as nominal members of the Society and the growing social divide led by 1798 to two new words being introduced into Friends' vocabulary: "plain", being used to describe these Friends who strictly adhered to Quaker principles, and "gay", which referred to wealthy and nominal members.⁴⁵ These divisions, which would cause tensions within any church, would cause severe strains within an organisation like the Society of Friends where exclusiveness and social homogeneity were such a marked feature. Given the growing wealth of some Quakers and the decline in Friends' numbers, some Quakers during the early nineteenth century considered what measures could be taken to revitalise the Society of Friends. These Friends can broadly be divided into two groups: those who considered that revitalisation

should be achieved through a retrenchment in traditional practice and those who argued for reform of the Society of Friends, which would maintain its distinctive witness yet also incorporate insights gained from a wider theological perspective. The conflict between these schools of thought was to continue into the 1840s.

Ironically the party which supported reform of the Society found that its hand was strengthened by doctrinal crises around the turn of the nineteenth century over the alleged heterodoxy of some Friends. During the early years of the nineteenth century London Yearly Meeting was disrupted by two interrelated disputes, which involved a group of dissident Irish, the "New Lights", and the itinerant American preacher Hannah Barnard. The first of these two controversies, which reached its climax in 1800, involved a group of Friends in Ireland, who opposed both the influence which London Yearly Meeting exercised over them and the accepted interpretation of Friends' beliefs. In the period leading up to this conflict Friends in Ireland had increasingly refused to submit to the decisions of London Yearly Meeting.⁴⁶ One of the leading New Lights, Abraham Shackleton, also made his opposition to London Yearly Meeting's authority clear by criticising the Advices which it issued as being "man-made ministry".⁴⁷ While the New Lights were clearly motivated by opposition to London Yearly Meeting's authority, their theological dispute with established Quakerism was far more significant. The central area of theological conflict in this doctrinal controversy was the relative authority of the Spirit and the scriptures, a question which was to cause conflict and division among Friends throughout the first half of the nineteenth

century. The New Lights emphasised the role of the Spirit to a degree which even their contemporaries found unacceptable. They argued that, given the paramount authority of the Spirit, the scriptures were both unnecessary and fallible. As a result their supporters in Carlow Monthly Meeting argued that Friends placed too much emphasis on the scriptures and refused to refer to them as "Holy".⁴⁸ Abraham Shackleton argued that the New Testament Evangelists were poor historians and believed that any book was unnecessary and tended to prevent the mind from turning wholly onto God.⁴⁹ Because of their rejection of the infallibility of the scriptures, the New Lights raised a uniquely Quaker objection to the inerrancy of the Old Testament: that the wars of the Israelites could not have been divinely commanded. The New Lights enjoyed wide support among Irish Friends: a later commentator claimed that the principal supporters of the New Lights were Ministers or Elders and that virtually every male Minister in Ireland sided with them.⁵⁰ Despite the support which the New Lights enjoyed, London Yearly Meeting disowned them. Moreover it would appear that the leadership of London Yearly Meeting were able to suppress publicity on this controversy, as one of the few English supporters of the New Lights later argued that information on events in Ireland was difficult to obtain.⁵¹

The conflict over the New Lights, although involving large numbers of Friends, was to cause less controversy than Hannah Barnard's case; the dispute over her alleged heterodoxy was to reach the very centre of London Yearly Meeting. Barnard, a minister from New York Yearly Meeting, had travelled extensively among British Friends in 1798. In

1799 she came into contact with the Irish New Lights,⁵² with whom she had much in common since she combined social and theological radicalism. Her social radicalism is clearly expressed by James Jenkins' claim that:

"Her mind... was a repository of strange admixtures. She was at once the public Quaker-preacher, and private teacher of principles at variance with Quakerism... a public, and frequent declaimer against all war, promulgating the sentiments of "Peace on Earth, and good-will to all men" and yet rejoicing at every account announced by the public prints, of Republican victories. The writings of the French republicans had filled her head with their political nonsense about Liberty and Equality, and these notions were reduced to practice when in Ireland; at her public meetings, she frequently disturbed the arrangements made by friends of the place... mingling up rich and poor, clean, and dirty promiscuously together, and in visiting families at Bristol and other places refusing to visit such as objected to sit with their own servants, during the time of such visits".⁵³

While such behaviour would have undoubtedly outraged established Friends, her theology caused even more consternation. Like the New Lights she denied the infallibility of the scriptures and was accused of re-iterating their doubts on the divine sanction for the Israelites' wars.⁵⁴ Furthermore Barnard rejected the accepted interpretation of the New Testament, and claimed that a belief in the miracles of the New Testament was not essential.⁵⁵ She was also accused of not acceding to the doctrine of the Miraculous Conception.⁵⁶ In view of her heterodoxy, London Yearly Meeting suppressed her as a minister. When she applied in 1800 for permission to travel to Germany, the Select Meeting of Ministers and Elders of London Yearly Meeting refused her request and ordered her to abstain from further preaching and return to America.⁵⁷ Barnard appealed against this decision. Her case was eventually brought before the

1801 assembly of London Yearly Meeting, where she defended herself against her critics. This, unlike events associated with the New Lights, attracted great publicity: one contemporary Quaker observer claimed that he could not remember an event which had caused as much excitement.⁵⁸ Notwithstanding the publicity which her case created, London Yearly Meeting reaffirmed the decision that she should desist from preaching.⁵⁹ Barnard therefore returned to America to be disowned by her Monthly Meeting in 1802 for her heterodoxy.⁶⁰ London Yearly Meeting's rejection of the New Lights and Barnard had important consequences for British Quakerism. In rejecting these dissidents, London Yearly Meeting was also rejecting their doubts about the inerrancy of the scriptures and thereby tacitly asserting that the Bible, as well as the Spirit, had authority. The question where the balance of authority between them lay was to vex Friends for the next fifty years.

The shift in Quaker theology and the changing social structure of the Society of Friends worked to the advantage of an increasingly prominent group of Friends: the evangelicals. Even before the turn of the century there was an evangelical party within British Quakerism; it would ultimately dominate London Yearly Meeting. These evangelical Friends attempted to reform and revitalise Quakerism. Their influence on the Society of Friends was truly remarkable and by the 1840s they had transformed British Quakerism. The exclusiveness which was such a marked feature of Quakerism in 1800 was abandoned in favour of interdenominational co-operation. Furthermore evangelicals were to radically re-appraise many aspects of the church life of the Society

of Friends and rejected much which Quakers held dear at the beginning of the nineteenth century. If any one Friend was to typify this evangelical party it was Joseph John Gurney and his conversion to plain Quakerism therefore marks the opening of a vital chapter of Quaker history.

2. JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY'S EARLY LIFE AND ADOPTION OF STRICT QUAKERISM

Joseph John Gurney's role in the reform of the Society of Friends is somewhat ironic, as he might have been lost to Quakerism at an early age. It is quite possible that Gurney, like many of his contemporaries, would have remained as a nominal member of the Society of Friends and never committed himself to its reform. Similarly, given his close association with Anglicans during the formative years of his life, Gurney might have joined the Church of England. Gurney did not, however, take either of these courses and instead became a committed Friend, although events during Gurney's early life before his conversion to strict Quakerism were to affect his work as a member of the Society. Many of the attitudes and interests which shaped the role he played in the Society of Friends were established before he took on the role of a committed Quaker. Just as significantly, events during the period immediately before his adoption of strict Quakerism show how he was simultaneously being influenced by two streams of thought: traditional Quakerism and evangelicalism. His account of events leading to his conversion combines elements which were typical of the religious experience of earlier generations of Friends with those which were popular among contemporary evangelicalism. Gurney's account of these schools of thought affected him during this period show how closely they could converge on some issues. Furthermore his adoption of strict Quakerism also marked a commitment to the wider evangelical movement. Gurney's adoption of the principles of the Society of Friends therefore

represents the first example of Quakerism and evangelical influences simultaneously affecting his life and beliefs.

Notwithstanding his later commitment to the Society of Friends, it is clear that during his early life Gurney, like other members of his family, typified the wealthy, nominal Quaker, which so alarmed traditionalist Friends. Gurney was a birthright Friend; indeed he came from an old and established Quaker family. The first member of the family to join the Friends was John Gurney in 1683. Joseph John Gurney could also claim to be the descendant of Robert Barclay, as this most important of early Quaker theologians was his mother's great grandfather.¹ Notwithstanding the Gurneys' deep Quaker roots, by the beginning of the nineteenth century the family's life style was markedly different from that of their co-religionists. The Gurneys had become one of the major banking families in England² and their wealth and opulence was recognised by their contemporaries. For example, one Quaker visitor noted that the family home, Earlham, "... is very large and magnificent, far from being of a piece with our profession".³ Like many other wealthy Quaker families, the Gurneys did not adhere strictly to Quaker principles and rejected the exclusiveness and austerity of their co-religionists. Joseph John Gurney himself admitted that his father "... was an attached member of the Society of Friends, and a Friend himself in many of his habits, but by no means strict; - fond of social intercourse with his neighbours, and a favourite with them all".⁴ Gurney himself, like his brothers and sisters, were not brought up as plain Friends: by his own admission they indulged in taboo practices, such as attending dances, and pursued an interest in literature.⁵ Given their parents' nominal Quakerism, Joseph John Gurney

and the other children were also exposed to a wider cross-section of the community than would be the case with strict Friends; during his childhood the guests at the family home, Earlham, included Catholics and Unitarians⁶ and, as the testimony to Elizabeth Fry claimed, some of the family's associates "... were at once eminent for talent, and grievously destitute of a sound christian belief".⁷

While Joseph John Gurney later expressed alarm at some of the family's association with non-Quakers, the family's lack of exclusiveness allowed him to receive a far more liberal education than would have been possible for the child of a plain Quaker family. This education established two important features of Gurney's character: his life-long association with Anglicans and his interest in the classics. Gurney's education began at Samuel Browne's boarding school in Norwich and he was afterwards sent to Higham to be taught by Browne's son, John.⁸ This early education established two precedents for Gurney's later education, as his first tutor was a classicist and a clergyman.⁹ Following his time at Higham in 1803, at the age of 15, Gurney (along with his cousin Gurney Barclay) was sent to study at Oxford.¹⁰ As a dissenter study at the actual University was barred to Gurney, since from 1772 students were required to be members of the Church of England.¹¹ But, as Gurney explained in his autobiography, he "... enjoyed the advantage of some public lectures...". His tutor, John Rogers, was another clergyman, albeit a clergyman who had abandoned a considerable living to become a Friend for a time.¹² This education at Oxford encouraged his predilection for and admiration of the Church of England. Rogers himself deeply impressed Gurney as an example of an Anglican clergyman. Gurney explained to his sister Catherine that Rogers

preached every month at one of the country churches and that he and the other students were to take turns in going with him to the service.¹³ Gurney clearly appreciated these services, as he declared that Rogers was "... a most capital preacher; which is a very uncommon thing in Oxford, a place famous or rather infamous for its bad preachers".¹⁴ As well as hearing Rogers preach Gurney attended other Anglican services while at Oxford. He noted that on one Sunday "As there was no meeting we have been to St. Mary's the University Church & heard a very good sermon..."¹⁵ Indeed Gurney seems to have frequently attended the University church, recording that he had heard the Bishop of Gloucester preach a "fine sermon" there.¹⁶ He also declared that he always enjoyed going to the University chapel¹⁷ and on at least one occasion he attended a service at the Cathedral.¹⁸ One reason for this enthusiastic and regular attendance of Anglican services was the nature of Friends' meeting in Oxford; in one letter to his family, Gurney complained that: "The congregation is made up of a Friend Jackson & his wife, who are by no means pleasant people, Gurney & I, & a poor young woman who is entirely deaf & dumb".¹⁹ Significantly Gurney's time at Oxford may have brought him into contact with Anglican evangelicals, as the University was a centre for evangelicalism. J S Reynolds argues that, by the early nineteenth century the evangelicals had gained considerable influence in Oxford University and were laying the foundations for greater influence in the future.²⁰ This is of significance because, with the exception of some of his co-religionists, Gurney's closest associates in later life were members of the evangelical party in the Church of England.

In addition to establishing Gurney's life long association with Anglicanism his education at Oxford provided Gurney with an interest in study and an understanding of the classics that was unusual among contemporary Friends. Gurney detailed the programme for each day's study in a letter to Catherine:

"Mr Rogers has fixed 7 o'clock to be the time of beginning before breakfast. Gurney and I get up a little before 6 & take some exercise in the public walks to fortify us against the literary fatigues of the day, we stay in the study till 9 o'clock which is our breakfast time & the time is employed in algebra, geometry, writing and copying in their turns & beside we constantly read a chapter of Greek Testament before we go up to breakfast. We are allowed an hour from 9 to 10 for breakfasting and taking a run. We then go in & settle to Greek etc till 1 - at 1 we either take a walk or go & bathe till two, when we settle to our studies till 3 which is our dinning time. The remaining 2 hours are taken from the afternoon...Perhaps thee thinks 8 hours too little but we are kept so close to study during those 8 hours that I seem to do more than I did at Mr Brownes".²¹

Gurney's correspondence clearly shows that he enjoyed these studies; this is witnessed by his chagrin when his studies were disturbed by "...the gabbling and laughing.." of one of Rogers' less able students.²² Rogers' teaching clearly emphasised the study of the classics above all else, as Gurney's letters to his family frequently mentioned his work on the classics. For example, he noted in one letter that they had read 150 pages of Herodotus in a week.²³ Gurney's interest in study continued even after he had returned home and taken up his position in the family bank. One example of this devotion to study is recorded in his journal for 1810:

"I wish to complete the Psalms - attending a little to Syriac & Chaldee as I go along- after that to read Solomon - Then Job again. I wish to make myself master of the Jewish laws after that, and translate the Jad Hacchazekah of Maimonides.

I wish to study the new testament, critically; and with a particular view to the great doctrines of the Trinity and the atonement.

I wish to finish ancient history in Plutarch, Sallust, Cicero, Caesar etc- after that to read Tacitus - Then Gibbon.

I wish to read every afternoon a hundred lines of Greek poetry - and will go on with Pindar.

After I finish Michaelis; I shall launch into English history - and follow it up if possible with English law".²⁴

Gurney's devotion to study in general and the classics in particular allowed him scholarly insights which were unavailable to most traditionalist Friends because, Thomas Clarkson claimed, Friends at the beginning of the nineteenth century did not study the classics due to their heathenism, fictitious nature, and martial element.²⁵ Gurney himself noted that he received a more systematic education than was fashionable among the preceding generation of Friends.²⁶ As importantly, his interest in study encouraged him to promote a new emphasis on the use of the intellect among his co-religionists.

Although Gurney's time at Oxford established several of the characteristics which shaped his work as a reformer of the Society of Friends, he remained as a nominal Quaker for several years after his return to Earlham. When he did adopt strict Quakerism it was as a result of a "conversion experience" which drew upon elements from both Quakerism and evangelicalism. Indeed Gurney's experience mirrored that of several of his siblings, as his sisters had already undergone a conversion to a devout and pious due to the example of pious individuals both from the Society of Friends and the wider religious community. The open association which they were allowed with members of other denominations brought the sisters into contact with non-Friends who deepened and strengthened their understanding of the Christian faith. Susanna Corder argued that the

Gurney sisters were first "impressed with some abiding sense of the inestimable value of divine revelation" by a pious Roman Catholic acquaintance of the family.²⁷ Catherine and Elizabeth spent time lodging with Moravians, who brought them to an understanding of the doctrines of the atonement and justification by faith, and the marriage of their cousin, Margaret, to an Anglican rector brought the sisters into closer contact with the Church of England.²⁸ While influences from non-Friends significantly influenced the Gurney sisters, Elizabeth was most deeply affected by the Quaker William Savery. Savery, a travelling minister from Philadelphia, deeply impressed Elizabeth²⁹ and his preaching turned the seventeen year old Elizabeth towards a devout and pious lifestyle.³⁰ The adoption of such a lifestyle by the Gurney sisters had a remarkable impact on the family. Gurney himself claimed that, due to her adoption of a devout approach to her life, Catherine's influence

"... was soon found to be invaluable with her young brothers and sisters - By degrees she became to them, a check on the vanities of the world, a faithful guardian against loose and dangerous views of religion, and a cherisher of all that is good and valuable, whether intellectual or spiritual".³¹

The example of his sisters becoming plain Friends would have deeply affected Gurney, because there were very strong bonds between them. These were in part a result of Gurney's traumatic childhood, which in his own words, "... was not, as far as I remember, by any means the happiest period of my existence". His mother died while he was still young and he noted

"I was a very fearful nervous child - and I believe fractious in temper, not by any means destitute of a relish for enjoyment; but, acutely alive to suffering of mind. Often in the night I was overtaken by an indescribable nervous agitation, as if the walls were falling down upon me to crush me; and many a time did I spring

from my bed, and seek refuge with some kind friend or sister - particularly my sister Elizabeth, who well understood me, and never failed as occasion required to pity and protect me".³²

These close bonds between Gurney and his sisters continued in later life and are shown, for example, by his hope that they would write to him every week while he was at Oxford.³³ Their adoption of serious religion would therefore have had a profound influence on Gurney and perhaps made it inevitable that he himself would become a plain Quaker.

Notwithstanding his sisters' conversion, Gurney did not suddenly adopt evangelicalism and plain Quakerism. Instead he gradually came to "conversion" in a manner which, while consistent with the experience of Friends, was atypical of evangelicals. Gurney declared in his autobiography:

"If religion has indeed grown in me... it has pretty much kept place with the growth of my natural faculties for I cannot now recall any decided turning point in this matter, except that which afterward, brought me to plain quakerism, of which more hereafter³⁴ - In the meantime I would just observe, that cases of this description are, in my opinion, in no degree at variance with the cardinal Christian doctrine of the necessity of conversion, and of the new birth unto righteousness. The work which effects the vital change from a state of nature to one of grace, is doubtless often begun in very early childhood - nay it may open in the soul with the earliest opening of its rational faculties; and that its progress may sometimes be so gradual, as to preclude our perceiving any distinctive steps to it..."³⁵

Thomas D. Hamm suggests that this gradual adoption of a devout lifestyle, without a single abrupt turning point in their lives, was the usual religious experience of Friends.³⁶ Conversely this was not the normal experience of evangelicals; Ian Bradley argues that most of the evangelical Anglicans were able to refer to a particular religious experience and, unlike Gurney, were able to give a precise time and place when they were

converted or able to show an incident which changed the direction of their lives.³⁷ However, while Gurney's belief that he had only gradually been brought to conversion was atypical of evangelicals, his self analysis in the period leading up to his adoption of a devout lifestyle (and indeed throughout the rest of his life) mirrors a practice that was almost universal among evangelicals. Gurney's journal for 1811 began with the following passage:

"It seems that I can never sit down to my quarterly review of my poor self, but in deep humiliation for past faults, & continued imperfections... Surely there cannot be many, who have been so blessed by external, and some internal advantages as I have, & who have so terribly neglected them - I must give an account of what I now am, which will perhaps lead me to consider what I have been during the last few months. If I have improved in any one thing; I desire to return the thanks of my soul to God for all such amendment".³⁸

This almost obsessional self-examination, Bradley suggests, was also common among Anglican evangelicals, nearly all of whom kept diaries containing their days' activities and thoughts.³⁹ Gurney could, however, also have drawn this emphasis on self-analysis from the example of his co-religionists. As has already been mentioned such self-examination was common among Quakers and almost all the leading Friends of this period left extensive journals which recorded their spiritual progress. This self-analysis therefore represents one of the points on which the lifestyle required by Quakerism and evangelicalism concurred. As well as this abiding self-analysis, Gurney extensively read religious works in the period immediately before his conversion experience. This was again typical of the experience of evangelicals, as Bradley argues that religious reading was a common prelude to conversion among them.⁴⁰ Conversely many traditionalist Friends would have rejected reading as a source of religious

knowledge. The actual works that Gurney read during the period immediately before his conversion are of interest as, although he studied works by Quakers such as Job Scott and Issac Pennington, he concentrated on authors who were highly valued by the evangelical community, including Phillip Doddridge, William Magee, and Isaac Milner. Indeed the author Gurney read most frequently during this period was Bishop Butler,⁴¹ who was extremely popular among evangelicals. Gurney's experiences in the period before his conversion to plain Quakerism therefore combine elements of Quakerism and evangelicalism.

In addition to being influenced by ideas from Quakerism and evangelicalism, Gurney was also to come into closer association with strict Friends and members of the pan-denominational evangelical movement in the period before his adoption of strict Quakerism. His attendance at two meetings in the period immediately before his conversion, one evangelical and one Quaker, were to have a profound effect on him. The first of these was the inaugural meeting of the Norwich Auxiliary Bible Society in 1811. Gurney actively participated in this meeting. Earlham was to be used as the venue for the auxiliary's annual meetings and he made his first public speech at this inaugural meeting. Gurney's own account of this meeting stressed its ecumenical nature, as he remarked on the perfectly harmonious mixture of high-church, low-church, Lutheran, and Baptist groups present.⁴² This early involvement in the Bible Society increased Gurney's attachment to the church universal and his commitment to interdenominational evangelicalism. By contrast, Gurney's attendance of London Yearly Meeting during the next year strengthened his attachment to the Society of Friends. He noted in his journal that attendance at London Yearly Meeting

was

"...interesting & I hope profitable. I have been enabled to unite with Friends in their spirituality; & have thought I had reason to be satisfied with their mode of worship... The whole effect of my expedition has been I think seasonable - It has transplanted me from my old cares and distractions, turned me to myself, and I humbly hope brought me nearer to my Gracious master".

More importantly it can be assumed that Gurney would have keenly appreciated the difference between his nominal Quakerism and the plain Quakerism of many other Friends at Yearly Meeting. Indeed he noted that he had been appointed to attend London Yearly meeting "... in despite of my youth and lapelled coat..."⁴³ If Gurney's religious convictions were reinforced through attending London Yearly Meeting, this would have been typical of the experience of Friends; for example, Rachel Priestman acknowledged the role which attending Yearly Meeting played in preventing her from succumbing to the temptations of the world.⁴⁴

While his accounts of the period leading to his adoption of strict Quakerism contain elements which were typical of both evangelicalism and Friends, Gurney's explanation of the manner in which he was drawn to serious religion emphasised the distinctive Quaker doctrines of the Spirit's immediate revelation and necessity of the individual surrendering to its influence. In his biography he claimed that at approximately the age of 21:

"... as I lay in bed one night, light from above seemed to beam upon me, and to point out, in a very explicit manner, the duty of submitting to decided quakerism - more particularly to the humbling sacrifice of "plainness of speech, behaviour and apparel.

The visitation was strong; but my will was stronger - I could not, would not, did not comply - putting off what appeared to me almost unbearable, to a more convenient season".

In retrospect Gurney claimed that this resistance to the Spirit's immediate revelation was "... one of the greatest errors in life..."⁴⁵ However, by 1812 Gurney had sufficiently yielded to this influence to risk social ostracism from his wealthy non-Quaker associates by publicly displaying his loyalty to the Society of Friends:

"... I was engaged to a dinner party at the house of S. J. Southwell, one of our first country gentlemen - three weeks before the time I was engaged - and three weeks was my young mind in agitation - from the apprehension of which I could not possibly dispose myself that I must march into his drawing-room with my hat on! - [Another peculiarity of dress which was observed by strict Friends] From this sacrifice - strange and unaccountable as it appeared, I could not escape. I was like a fish caught on a hook - I had previously adopted the plain language; and now I was permitted, by way of easement, to assume a Friends' attire. In the said attire, and with my hat on, I made my entrance the dreaded moment - Shook hands with the mistress of the house - went back into the hall, deposited my hat, joined the dinner party, spent a rather comfortable evening, and returned home with some degree of peace. I had afterwards the same thing to do at the Bishop's - the result was that I found myself the decided quaker - was perfectly understood to have assumed that character - and to dinner parties, except in the family circle, was asked no more!"⁴⁶

Gurney's emphasis on the role of the Spirit in bringing him to conversion was typical of Quakers' religious experience of Quakers; other Friends were also to record similar experiences. For example, Corder argues that Elizabeth Fry's mind was illuminated by the beams of the "sun of righteousness".⁴⁷ Indeed Gurney was perhaps unusual among Friends in not claiming to experience this phenomenon until he was over twenty: many of his contemporaries claimed to have been affected by the immediate influence of the Spirit at an earlier age, including Mary Birkbeck of whom it was claimed that "... she became sensible to the powerful influences of Divine love..." at the age of

nineteen.⁴⁸ Perhaps the most dramatic experience of a Friend being converted by the power of immediate revelation was that of Anna Braithwaite, who claimed that:

"I was 14 years old when, walking in a field and pouring out my soul in prayer, I thought that if the Lord would, in his mercy, make known to me how I could be saved, my future life should be wholly devoted to Him and to his service; when suddenly a flood of light seemed to shine on my understanding, my heart was humbled and contrited, and the language was distinctly uttered in my soul's ear, "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved".⁴⁹

Gurney's emphasis on the work of the Spirit in leading him to conversion is significant given later claims that he never fully accepted the doctrine of immediate revelation. Equally Gurney's own experience led to his emphasis on the need for individuals to surrender themselves to the influence of the Spirit. This belief was to shape both his theology and his philanthropic activities.

After adopting the manner of a plain Quaker, Gurney soon established himself as a prominent Friend. Only a few months after his conversion to strict Quakerism, Gurney noted that he was "something of a great man" in the Quarterly Meeting, with some Friends even considering that he should be appointed as its Clerk,⁵⁰ and, as will be shown, within a few years he was to begin making significant contributions to London Yearly Meeting's deliberations. As well as rapidly achieving status within Friends' business meetings, Gurney soon established himself as an itinerant Quaker preacher. Although he believed in 1815 that he was unlikely to become a minister,⁵¹ within the same year he participated in an itinerant mission to Exmouth and the Isle of Wight.⁵² Two years later Gurney noted that he had recently spoken during Friends' meetings on a few occasions and believed

that this call to preach would continue.⁵³ This gift for preaching was soon recognised by his co-religionists and in June 1818 he was duly "recorded" as a minister.⁵⁴ This rapid acknowledgement as a minister can, in part, be attributed to his frequent preaching during this period. In 1817 Gurney wrote that he seldom passed a meeting in silence⁵⁵ and spoke frequently at the 1818 London Yearly Meeting.⁵⁶ Gurney's frequent preaching and his acknowledgement as a minister so soon after his conversion to plain Quakerism were unusual for a Friend, as members of the Society of Friends would usually agonise for many years before ministering for the first time. This is perhaps indicative of the difference between Gurney's and the traditionalists' style of Quakerism: with the former being more activist and less introspective, and perhaps typifying the manner in which the Society of Friends would change during his lifetime.

While Gurney's early commitment to itinerant preaching clearly showed his devotion to the Society of Friends, it should also be noted that Gurney was not adopting Quakerism because of its intrinsic merits, but rather because he believed it more clearly expressed the tenets of evangelicalism than other denominations. In his autobiography, Gurney stated that

"I need scarcely say, that my "friendship" was always connected with an undoubting belief, or rather certain assurance, that the Society from the earliest rise to the time then present, was thoroughly orthodox - well grounded in the essential doctrines of the Gospel, especially the divinity and atonement of Jesus Christ".⁵⁷

Moreover his journal entry for the period immediately after he became a plain Friend, like the works of an earlier generation of the society's apologists, claimed that Quakerism represented purified

Christianity:

"In thus entering more completely into a small society of Christians, I feel satisfied on the ground of believing that they hold the doctrine of Christ, in many respects more in its original purity than any other sect".

However, Gurney tempered this belief with concerns that the Society's exclusiveness ran to extremes:

"At the same time my judgements differs from them about the particularities. I think I may say it does about the sacraments, and I seem to see how much Friends would be improved by a more extensive knowledge and profession of the great offices of a saviour's love. I also think that there is a danger of laying too great a stress upon trifles".⁵⁸

He amplified these anxieties in 1824 when he noted that, while he increasingly valued the unique principles of the Society of Friends,

".. if these Peculiar Principles are to be separated from the broad fundamental doctrines of Orthodox Christianity, they lose all their value, & may even become an offence in the sight of God & man".⁵⁹

Given this somewhat ambivalent attitude towards Quakerism, Gurney's involvement in the Society of Friends was likely to be contentious and, as a result, he would find himself at the centre of conflict.

As has been shown, before his adoption of strict Quakerism Gurney was influenced by sources outside the Society of Friends to a degree that would have been atypical, if not unique, among contemporary Friends. His childhood association with non-Friends and his education provided him with insights that were not common among Quakers. Furthermore in his adoption of Quaker principles Gurney went through a "conversion experience" which in many ways mirrored that of non-Quaker

evangelicals. This reinforced the bonds that existed between him and members of the wider evangelical movement. Despite this it must be recognised that Gurney had become a sincere and committed Friend and in many respects, principally his emphasis on the work of immediate revelation, the manner in which he became a strict Quaker reflected the experience of Friends. In addition to influencing Gurney in the period leading to his conversion, evangelicalism and Quakerism were to continue to simultaneously affect Gurney throughout his life.

Gurney's dual commitment to Quakerism and evangelicalism should not, however, be seen in isolation. In becoming a plain, yet evangelically orientated, Friend Gurney was joining a growing party within London Yearly Meeting which was working for the reform of the Society. The members of this group were among Gurney's closest associates and deeply influenced his beliefs. Any study of Gurney's work must therefore also consider his supporters among Friends.



LONDON YEARLY MEETING, c.1840
Painting by Samuel Lucas

3. GURNEY'S SUPPORTERS AND THE RISE OF EVANGELICALISM WITHIN BRITISH QUAKERISM TO 1832

Although Gurney participated in many areas of public life, his most important role was as a leading figure in the evangelical party within the Society of Friends. Members of this group, who combined evangelical doctrines with traditional Quaker beliefs and practices, were at the very forefront of change within the Society and were closely associated with the decline of exclusiveness among Friends. Evangelicalism began to make inroads into the Society of Friends during the last years of the eighteenth century, primarily due to the efforts of itinerant preachers. These preachers found a receptive audience among Friends of Gurney's generation. As a result by the 1840s this evangelical party had risen to dominate London Yearly Meeting. This dominance of London Yearly Meeting is perhaps represented in Samuel Lucas' painting of a session of the assembly painted around 1840 (see opposite). The painting is dominated by a phalanx of the leading figures in the evangelical party, with Josiah Forster (standing), and William Allen and Samuel Tuke to his left. To Forster's right are George Stacey (acting as clerk), Samuel Gurney, William Forster, and Joseph John Gurney. These Friends' dominance of this painting may be a subconscious (or indeed conscious) allusion to the evangelicals' power within London Yearly Meeting. By contrast more traditionalist Friends, Thomas Shillitoe and Daniel Wheeler (rear row to either side of Josiah Forster) are at the very periphery of the painting, perhaps suggesting their lack of influence within the Society. This painting, while useful in indicating the evangelicals' dominance of London Yearly Meeting,

does however reinforce two major misapprehensions about the development of evangelicalism within the Society of Friends. The physical proximity of these Friends in this painting suggests that the evangelicals were a uniform and united body. In reality the evangelical Friends can be divided into two sub-groups: a more militant wing (the Beaconites), which emerged as a distinctive group during the 1830s and which will be considered in its own right later in this study,¹ and a moderate group which supported Gurney and his combination of Quakerism and evangelicalism (Gurneyites). Even the Gurneyites could disagree among themselves on questions of theology, with some of them being far closer to traditionalist Friends than Joseph John Gurney was. There were also marked differences between the moderate evangelicals of Gurney's generation and their predecessors in the evangelical movement within the Society of Friends. Lucas' painting also highlights another major weakness in the analysis of the Society of Friends during this period: that it has concentrated on its developments within the sessions of London Yearly Meeting. For example, both Edward Grubb and Roger Wilson base their analysis of developments in Quaker thought during this period on the epistles produced by London Yearly Meeting.² In reality the evangelical Friends' efforts to evangelise their co-religionists at local level were as important, if not more so, as their rise to power in the Society's central assembly.

The development of the evangelical party within the Society of Friends was principally the result of two factors: Friends' practice of itinerancy and the links which existed between British and American Quakerism. Two American itinerant preachers made a major contribution to the rise of evangelicalism within London Yearly Meeting. One of them, David Sands, who

first visited Britain in 1794 and travelled in the ministry in England, Ireland, and Europe, was brought up as a Presbyterian. He was, however, dissatisfied with some of the doctrines of this denomination and, after attending a meeting held by an English itinerant minister, joined the Society of Friends and was recorded as a minister at the age of 30.³ Edward Grubb argues that Sands did more than any other minister to cultivate evangelicalism among Friends.⁴ The second American evangelical preacher Stephen Grellet, like Sands, was a convert to Quakerism although his religious background was far more exotic than that of his fellow travelling minister. Born in France of a noble family and educated in a Jansenists' College, the young Stephen Grellet saw service in the revolutionary wars in the King's Horse Guards. Following this, he travelled to the New World and became a supporter of the beliefs expressed by Voltaire and similar writers. He became a Friend as the result of hearing the sermons of itinerant English ministers and through reading Penn's No Cross, No Crown.⁵ Grellet made religious visits to the Old World in 1807, 1811, 1818 and 1831.

These American evangelicals were to find supporters for their beliefs among British Friends, who assisted their work. Among these British evangelicals William Allen was to be Grellet's closest companion. Grellet stayed at Allen's home on numerous occasions⁶ and Allen also accompanied Grellet on several of his missions to the Continent, the earliest being in 1818.⁷ Although Allen was primarily noted for his work as a philanthropist, he also played a leading role in the evangelical party among British Friends. Another major figure among the early Quaker evangelicals was George Richardson. His biographer suggests that his

conversion to "vital religion" was partly the result of the ministry of Edward Hatton of Cork who Richardson records, although a stranger, was able "...to see and describe my condition with remarkable clearness". Hatton prophesied that Richardson would become a Quaker preacher and in 1797 Richardson was duly recorded as a minister.⁸ The Tuke family also played a vital role in the rise of the evangelical party. Indeed no study of Quaker evangelicalism could be complete without reference to the Tuke family. Samuel Tuke's biographer, Samuel Taylor, argued that "seldom has the church known a succession in one family; of guardians and witnesses of the truth and public benefactors, such as is seen in the three generations of Tukes in York: William, Henry and Samuel". William, the senior Tuke, was a member of the reforming movement of the eighteenth century⁹ and his son, Henry, and grandson, Samuel, made significant contributions to the evangelical movement. Among the other early Quaker evangelicals, the work of William Forster was of considerable importance. He received a "guarded" Friends' upbringing from his parents and in 1798, at the age of 16, he was deeply influenced by the preaching of the American Friend, Thomas Scattergood. Forster himself started to preach at the age of 18.¹⁰ He enjoyed close friendships with Grellet and Allen¹¹ and he described his "own and the Church's loss" at the death of another leading early evangelical Quaker: J G Bevan.¹² Bevan, who was an elder, was described as "an intrepid advocate for the pure truths of the Christian religion..." among Friends.¹³ While most of the early English evangelical Friends came from a Quaker background, there were some converts to Quakerism among them, including Richard Phillips who came from an Anglican family. Due to doubts about the values of the ceremonies of the established church, he began to worship with Friends at the age of 26 and became a minister in

1791.¹⁴ Elizabeth Dudley also came from an Anglican background. While she had been attracted to Methodism, she eventually joined the Society of Friends at the age of 23 and became one of Quakerism's most able preachers.¹⁵ Other leading figures among these early evangelicals included Frederick Smith, who produced some of their most influential literature, Jonathan Hutchinson, George Harrison, and George Stacey.

These early evangelical Friends found a receptive audience among some Quakers of Gurney's generation. All the leading evangelicals of Gurney's generation were influenced by at least one of these early preachers and there were very close connections between the two generations of evangelicals. One example of this was Joseph Sturge. Although his biographer, Alex Tyrrell, could not identify any "single moment of conversion" when Sturge gave himself to evangelicalism, Tyrrell argues that Sturge's hearing William Forster speak in 1813 marked a turning point in his life. After Sturge heard Forster speak, they travelled together.¹⁶ Although never recorded as a minister, Sturge was an Elder and attended London Yearly Meeting for forty years.¹⁷ Similarly Samuel Tuke was deeply influenced by the earlier generation of evangelicals; during the formative years of his life he heard both Grellet and William Forster preach.¹⁸ Samuel Tuke was also close to Joseph John Gurney, describing him after his death as having been 'a true Christian Quaker'.¹⁹

The early evangelicals' most significant prodigy was Joseph John Gurney. Several of them were to have a profound influence on him during the period around his adoption of strict Quakerism and were to be among his closest companions during later life, none more so than William Forster.

Gurney accompanied Forster in an itinerant journey in the Norwich area in 1815. As Gurney himself noted, through this journey "My attachment to the principles and practices of Friends was confirmed...". He further noted that this journey "...was the foundation of that warm and intimate brotherhood which has ever since subsisted between us...". Forster later encouraged Gurney in his writing²⁰ and the correspondence between the two Friends was rarely interrupted.²¹ Gurney was also close to William Allen, consoling him over the death of his wife²² and writing to him during his last illness.²³ In turn Allen supported Gurney's mission to America.²⁴ Gurney described Jonathan Hutchinson as "our father in truth"²⁵ and as "evangelical in the true sense of the word".²⁶ While there is no evidence that David Sands had a direct influence on Gurney, it is clear that the latter was aware of the American preacher and was familiar with his work. For example, Gurney stated in 1839 that Sands had been a "truly evangelical preacher".²⁷ There were, however, much clearer links between Gurney and Stephen Grellet. Indeed Gurney may have encouraged Gurney's adoption of plain Quakerism: the latter recorded the former's criticism of his gay dress, during the period while he was deliberating over adopting strict Quakerism.²⁸

As well as his connections with the older generation of evangelicals, Gurney was at the centre of a very important group among the evangelicals of his own generation. Benjamin Seebohm argued that, as well as Joseph John Gurney, many other inhabitants of Earlham were to look to Forster as an example. Seebohm further describes how "an interesting little band of disciples who, about the same time, and under similar circumstances, had a mighty change wrought in their hearts and their lives, by the power of the

same Spirit".²⁹ This "band of disciples" supplied many of the personnel for the evangelical party, including two of the most powerful and influential women ministers in the Society of Friends during this period: Elizabeth Fry, who had such a significant influence on the youthful Joseph John, and their cousin, Hannah Chapman Backhouse. Backhouse was recorded as a minister in 1824.³⁰ Both these ministers were to travel extensively in the ministry, both in Britain and on the continent, with Backhouse also visiting America. Joseph John's uncle, Joseph Gurney, played an important role in the movement. Joseph Gurney was recorded as a minister at the age of 50³¹ and David Swift argues that he had profound influence in leading Joseph John towards adopting plain Quakerism.³² Joseph John Gurney himself described Joseph Gurney as the leader of the Earlham circle.³³ Joseph John's elder brother, Samuel, also played a vital role in the movement, which has been overlooked, his testimony suggests, because he "shunned appointments in civil society". His role in the movement was primarily that of an administrator rather than a spiritual leader. Although never a minister, he held the offices of overseer and elder and he was noted for the assistance which he provided to Elizabeth Fry and Joseph John Gurney.³⁴

In addition to members of the Gurney family, the numbers of the Earlham circle included several women who had been attracted to Joseph John Gurney. Both his second and third wife were ministers. His second wife, Mary Gurney, was recorded as a minister at the age of 30 and was reported to have frequently engaged in ministry. Between 1834 and 1835 she travelled with Joseph John Gurney on his itinerant tours to three Monthly Meetings in London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting.³⁵ The American Eliza

P Gurney, Joseph John's third and last wife, travelled in the ministry with Backhouse from 1832-5 and they later toured Britain together. In 1841 she married Joseph John and accompanied him on many of his later tours. Eliza P. Gurney clearly had considerable influence over Joseph John: The Annual Monitor records that she 'clinched' Joseph John's decision to become a teetotaler and encouraged him to write several of his later works.³⁶

Another woman who joined the Earlham circle was the novelist, Amelia Opie. After the death of her husband she became friends with Priscilla Gurney and gradually moved closer to Friends, eventually joining them. On becoming a Friend she ceased to write fiction, because the writing of fiction conflicted with Friends' principles of strict adherence to the truth, and instead devoted her energies to "serious writing".³⁷ Joseph John Gurney may have helped to bring Opie into the Society of Friends, as she wished to become the second Mrs Gurney, a fact which was obvious to everyone involved except, tragically, Joseph John himself.³⁸

Other second generation evangelicals included Thomas Hodgkin, Peter Bedford, and Josiah Forster. Michael Rose's biography of Thomas Hodgkin notes that he was influenced by the Beaconite Luke Howard, William Allen, and Joseph John Gurney during his early life.³⁹ Peter Bedford was an elder of the Society of Friends and, although never a minister, accompanied preachers on missions in Britain and the Continent.⁴⁰ Josiah Forster was appointed as an elder and travelled extensively in Britain, in Europe, and the United States.⁴¹ In addition to the female members of the Gurneys' immediate circle, other women of Gurney's generation were to play a vital role in the evangelical movement; including Rachel Priestman, who was recorded as an elder in 1829, and travelled in the ministry to the United

States. Closer to home she was involved in evangelistic and philanthropic work among the poor of Newcastle.⁴² All these Friends, both of the first and second generation of evangelicals, played a significant role in establishing evangelicalism within London Yearly Meeting.

One reason for the evangelical Friends' success in dominating the Society of Friends, and a cause of hostility towards them, was the educational advantages which they enjoyed over their co-religionists. It is true that some of them, especially members of the first generation, received only a traditional Quaker education. For example, Allen was sent to a Quaker school in Rochester, before being apprenticed to his father's firm⁴³ and James Sherman, one of his biographers, argues that his education was extremely strict.⁴⁴ Samuel Tuke was sent to a (girls') school run by his grandparents at the age of 7 and was later sent to Ackworth and a school in Hitchin.⁴⁵ Conversely even some of the first generation of evangelicals received a far broader education. In some cases this education included the study of the classics, which, as has already been noted,⁴⁶ was anathema to traditionalist Friends. For example, R M Jones suggests that J G Bevan had a surprisingly good education for the eighteenth century and was a classical scholar.⁴⁷ William Tuke, although educated at a Quaker run boarding school, was taught English, Greek, and Latin.⁴⁸ Sands was also recorded as having learnt Latin as a child.⁴⁹ As significantly, some members of the first generation of evangelicals received at least part of their education from non-Quakers. William Forster was educated at a school in his village and by private tutors and later by a Frenchman who had escaped the Terror in France.⁵⁰ This tendency to a broad education was even more pronounced among the second generation of Quaker

evangelicals. For example, Thomas Hodgkin was taught by a Frenchman who had trained as a priest,⁵¹ before enrolling as a physician's pupil at St. Thomas's and St. Guy's. He also studied at the Universities of Edinburgh and Paris, finally receiving a medical degree from the former.⁵² Hannah Chapman Backhouse's education included Latin, Italian, geometry, drawing, and mathematics.⁵³ Even among those evangelical Friends who received relatively limited formal schooling there was a desire to improve their education. Sturge was largely self educated, after having received one year's education at Thornbury and three years' education at the Friends' school at Sidcot. To improve his education he joined the Endeavour Society at Bristol, which was formed of young Friends and discussed science, languages, and fine arts.⁵⁴ The frequency with which some of these Friends received tuition from beyond the confines of the Society of Friends represents another example of the breakdown of exclusiveness among Quakers.

This broad education, especially among the evangelicals of Gurney's generation, separated them from most contemporary Quakers and they formed something of an intellectual elite within the Society of Friends. This is reflected in their love of reading: most of the evangelical Friends were avid readers. Not surprisingly their favourite type of reading, especially during their formative years, was works by other Friends. For example, Richardson spent much of his leisure time reading Friends' books in which he delighted,⁵⁵ Josiah Forster read the journals of Friends with pleasure,⁵⁶ and Allen enjoyed narratives of the lives of early Friends.⁵⁷ These Friends did not however limit their reading to Quaker works and many of them had wide tastes in literature. Allen could quote the poetry of

Pope, Prior, and Addison by heart.⁵⁸ Samuel Tuke had read Mrs Radcliffe's Mysteries of Udolpho, noting that "the intention of this romance appears to be good", as well as Dr Buchanan,⁵⁹ Coleridge, and Macaulay.⁶⁰ This interest in literature among the Quaker evangelicals even led them to produce an annual magazine containing their own literary works, although only one edition ever appears to have been published.⁶¹ Not all the Quaker evangelicals, however, shared this interest in literature; Sturge avoided reading all fiction except Uncle Tom's Cabin,⁶² which he presumably read due to his interest in the abolitionist cause. More significantly some of these Friends also read works of theology produced by members of other denominations. It was noted of William Forster that "...though...his personal intercourse with Christians of other denominations was somewhat limited, his acquaintance with their religious literature was by no means small"⁶³ and his reading included The Baptist Magazine and The Evangelical Magazine.⁶⁴ Tuke read Maurice's Kingdom of Christ, disagreeing with the author on his views of early Friends.⁶⁵ This interest in literature, both theological and secular, from outside the Society may also be considered as another sign of a breakdown of Friends' exclusiveness.

As well as the close personal ties which existed between them, these Friends were united by a common desire to revive the Society of Friends and all of them devoted much of their energy to this work. Their concern for the state of the Society came from a variety of sources, but the first generation of evangelicals were particularly spurred on by a belief that the Society was in spiritual and numerical decline. In 1801 Frederick Smith lamented the declension and lukewarmness among previously devout Friends.⁶⁶ William Forster commented on the "stripped and declined state

of the Church in many places"⁶⁷ and claimed that "Our numbers may be diminished, and much more than we could at one time have anticipated...".⁶⁸ Interconnected with this belief that the Society of Friends was in decline, was a belief that Friends were assimilating to the standards of contemporary society. In 1806, Frederick Smith wrote

"It must be obvious to those who look impartially at the outward appearance of our Society, that it has lost much of that plainness which distinguished our ancestors; and that many of late years have shown so increasing a tendency to a conformity with the world that, were as great alterations progressively to take place, I fear few vestiges would remain of that simplicity which the truth leads into".⁶⁹

Richardson argued that there were "...many in our Society in thralldom and bondage to the spirit of this world".⁷⁰ There can be no doubt about how seriously these evangelical Friends took this decline in the Society of Friends: Backhouse even believed Satan was laying waste the Society by his most subtle machinations.⁷¹ These anxieties about the apostasy and decline in the Society were shared by the evangelicals' traditionalist brethren: the difference that lay between them was over what methods should be adopted to halt this decline.

While these concerns about the decline of the society were perhaps the main reason for these evangelical Friends' work within Quakerism, they were also motivated by several other factors. Given that evangelicals outside the Society of Friends were in part spurred on by opposition to Unitarianism, it might be assumed that the Quaker evangelicals were motivated by opposition to perceived heterodoxy among their fellow Friends. Certainly these evangelical Friends, especially those of the first generation, frequently expressed their hostility to

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Unitarianism. It was recorded that Sands was alarmed at the speculative and unsound doctrines which were circulating among Friends.⁷² In his introduction to his 1811 publication Reason and Revelation, Smith explained

"one principal object of the present work is to collect into one point of view some leading arguments which have been used by different authors in support of the principles of Christianity, where they have been particularly led to oppose the pernicious principles of deists and infidels of every description...".⁷³

However, such concern among evangelical Friends over Unitarianism should not be over emphasised and by the time that the second generation of evangelicals had risen to prominence, they no longer believed that heterodoxy was a major problem among British Friends. Indeed, during his 1830 mission, Grellet found that English Friends had not been "tried by the spirit of infidelity" which had spread in America.⁷⁴ However, if fear of Unitarianism gaining a foothold within the Society of Friends itself was not as important a motivating force for these evangelical Friends as might be expected, they were anxious to prevent the general public from associating Friends with heterodoxy. Henry Tuke stated that part of his purpose in writing The Faith of the People Called Quakers was "to remove from the Society of which I am a member, the suggestion and imputations of unsoundness" on the doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement which had been made against it.⁷⁵ Indeed the widespread lack of understanding of the Society of Friends by their contemporaries in itself was a major factor which motivated these evangelicals. Bevan believed that the principles of the Society of Friends were frequently not understood or misrepresented⁷⁶ and even as late as 1840 Backhouse doubted that even

one person in a thousand had a clear idea of Friends' beliefs.⁷⁷ This desire to explain Friends' beliefs to contemporary society, which does not seem to have been immediately connected with an attempt to draw individuals into Quakerism, again suggests that the evangelical Friends were less concerned to separate themselves from the wider community than were their more exclusive brethren.

Given this concern for the state of the Society of Friends, these Quakers devoted themselves to its reform. In addition to their educational programmes, which will be discussed separately, there were three major elements to these evangelical Friends' campaign to influence and revive the Society: to dominate the central administration of London Yearly Meeting, to provide a body of literature which expressed their views, and to reach Friends at a local level through itinerant preaching.

The most obvious element to this campaign to reform the Society of Friends was their rise to dominance in the central organisations of London Yearly Meeting. Their success in this was reflected by the frequency with which they held the posts of clerk, both of London Yearly Meeting itself and the most important of its committees, the Meeting for Sufferings. In the period after 1810 the post of clerk of London Yearly Meeting was continuously filled by evangelicals, at first by those Friends who would become Beaconites and later by Gurneyites. Between 1810 and 1814 the post was held by John Wilkinson, to be replaced by William Dillworth Crewdson who left the Society in 1840.⁷⁸ In 1820 he was replaced by the Gurneyite Josiah

Forster, who held the post until 1831 and was replaced by Samuel Tuke, with George Stacey becoming clerk in 1838. Among the assistant clerks the Gurneyites were also prevalent, with J G Bevan, William Allen, Samuel Gurney, and Joseph John Gurney all holding the post. This pattern, with Beaconites dominating at first and Gurneyites taking power later, also occurs with the Meeting for Sufferings, with the Beaconite Luke Howard holding the post of clerk from 1803 to 1810. Later clerks of Meetings for Sufferings included such Gurneyites as William Allen (1810-15), George Stacey (1826-34), and Peter Bedford (1834-1840).⁷⁹ Given this predominant role that evangelicals played on this committee, it is perhaps not surprising that in 1840 Gurney could describe Meeting for Sufferings as a solid body of Friends, many of whom were confirmed in and dependent on the Truth.⁸⁰ These Friends' determination to dominate positions of power within the Society was linked to a willingness to manipulate its machinery to further their cause. Even as early as the Barnard controversy, evangelicals played a prominent role in the proceedings of Yearly Meeting and were both the instigators and prosecutors of the campaign against her. For example, the membership of the committee which considered Barnard's case included Henry Tuke,⁸¹ and her most prominent accusers during the Yearly Meeting's deliberations on her case were Richard Phillips and J G Bevan.⁸² This dominance of the central authority of London Yearly Meeting was crucial to the success of the evangelical Friends: as will be shown, the verdicts passed by the assembly on the controversies among Friends during the early nineteenth century greatly strengthened the position of the evangelicals within British Quakerism.

As well as dominating the positions of authority within London Yearly Meeting, evangelical Quakers attempted to win the minds of the Society of Friends by producing a body of literature which supported their beliefs. Their first major work was Henry Tuke's The Faith of the People Called Quakers in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ(1801); which argued that early Friends were entirely orthodox in their beliefs. To this end Tuke used extracts from the writings of early Friends to prove that they believed in the incarnation, atonement, the trinity (and filioque), and the virgin birth and emphasised the value of the scriptures.⁸³ Not surprisingly Tuke concluded that these extracts proved Friends were entirely orthodox in their beliefs.⁸⁴ Other works produced in this early period which reflected concerns which recur in the writing of later evangelical Quakers, included Bevan's A Summary of the History, Doctrine and Discipline of Friends, which stressed the value of the scriptures,⁸⁵ and Frederick Smith's An Address to Friends of London, which criticised individual Friends for nominalism and falling away from their calling.⁸⁶ Evangelical Friends continued to supply a constant stream of tracts, pamphlets, and books explaining their beliefs throughout this period and the manner in which they aided each other in the production of these works demonstrates the close links which existed between them. The correspondence between these Friends over these works clearly indicates an informal support network existed among them, as they sent proofs of potential works to each other for advice and comment with remarkable regularity. Gurney in particular was to seek advice from his fellow evangelical Friends when preparing works for publication. For example in 1817 Hutchinson returned work (possibly a testimony) to

Gurney, with some pencilled amendments.⁸⁷ Later, in 1828, Joseph John Gurney wrote to Joseph Gurney, explaining that he wished to have a book carefully read through before its publication, by Friends who were experts on the scriptures and appreciated contemporary intellectual trends within the Society and mentioned that he would prefer if William Forster undertook this task.⁸⁸ Gurney's supporters also read (and approved) his works in their capacity as members of the Morning Meeting sub-committee,⁸⁹ which vetted Quaker publications. Gurney's frequent referral of his works to other Quaker evangelicals for comment clearly indicates that they were an influence on him.

While their dominance of the administration of London Yearly Meeting and their apologetic literature were undoubtedly vital to their work within the Society, perhaps the most important element in the evangelical Friends' campaign to win other Friends to their cause was their use of itinerant preaching. Friends' historians have generally ignored or underrated their use of travelling ministry as a means to propagate their beliefs. Wilson argues that evangelical doctrines only superficially penetrated the Society of Friends as, while its supporters could easily dominate London Yearly Meeting, there were no large scale audiences or means for systematic teaching whereby they could reach the general body of Friends.⁹⁰ In reality itinerant preaching allowed the evangelical Friends to carry their message to the bulk of their co-religionists. As Deryck Lovegrove notes in his recent study of the impact of itinerancy among Non Conformists, itinerancy was a very effective vehicle for the communication of ideas.⁹¹ This would be especially true among Friends, given their

lack of an established ministerial system: in 1839 only 121 out of 419 Friends' Meetings had ministers of their own.⁹² As a result the sermons of visiting preachers would have been especially valued and had considerable impact. Evangelical Friends were also likely to have a profound impact on local congregations, because contemporary accounts indicate that some of them were powerful preachers. For example, Backhouse's ministry was considered to be "remarkably reaching and edifying"⁹³ and William Forster was described as being remarkably gifted as a minister.⁹⁴ Joseph John Gurney himself argued that Hutchinson's ministry was highly valued and delivered with much simplicity and religious feeling.⁹⁵ He also claimed of Elizabeth Fry's preaching that the

"sweetness and liveliness of her communications, the clearness and force of her Christian doctrine, and the singular softness, power, and melody of her voice, can never be forgotten by those who heard her".⁹⁶

Given the opportunities which itinerancy offered to the evangelical Friends and their sometimes considerable ability as preachers, it is not surprising that most of them made extensive use of itinerant preaching, the only exception being Samuel Tuke.⁹⁷ Josiah Forster, who is more typical of these evangelical Quakers, visited most of the meetings in Great Britain plus visiting the Continent and some British colonies⁹⁸ and William Forster undertook an eleven-month tour through England, Wales and Ireland in 1809.⁹⁹ It was as itinerant preachers that women were to make their major contribution to the movement. Largely excluded from real power in the Society of Friends and producing few polemical works of literature, they channelled their energies into this preaching. Examples of evangelical women preachers

included Elizabeth Dudley,¹⁰⁰ Abigail Dockery,¹⁰¹ and Mary Fox,¹⁰² whose ministry covered most or all of the British Isles; Elizabeth Fry of Upton,¹⁰³ whose ministry also included the continent; Rachel Priestman,¹⁰⁴ and Hannah Chapman Backhouse¹⁰⁵ whose field of ministry additionally covered the United States of America. This itinerancy also provides another example of the manner in which these Friends supported each others' endeavours, as some of them offered logistical support for others' itinerant missions. For example when Elizabeth Fry and Elizabeth Robson wished to visit the continent in 1816, London Yearly Meeting appointed William Allen as a "caretaker" to accompany them and make travelling arrangements¹⁰⁶ and when a party of Friends, including William Allen and Elizabeth Fry, wished to pay a religious visit to the continent in 1840, Samuel Gurney was appointed by London Yearly Meeting as caretaker to the women in the group.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore Joseph John Gurney helped to finance one of William Forster's missions.

As well as indicating the close links between members of the group, this itinerancy provides an example of the evangelical Friends' simultaneous commitment to evangelicalism and Quakerism, as they were to preach to both their co-religionists and members of the wider community. Their ministry among non-Quakers encouraged the breakdown of the Society's exclusivism. It is true that their primary concern in their itinerant missions was the spiritual state of fellow Quakers. For example, Richardson's visited nearly all of the forty Friends on the Island of Guernsey in their homes during one mission.¹⁰⁸ Their commitment to evangelising members of the Society is further shown by

their determination to preach even to the most isolated bodies of Friends. For example, Richardson visited isolated Friends in North Wales despite considerable difficulties.¹⁰⁹ However, alongside their concern for the spiritual welfare of fellow Friends, these evangelical Friends also preached to non-Quaker audiences. Although it was recorded of Josiah Forster that his ministry was limited to Friends,¹¹⁰ this was exceptional among the group. By contrast Grellet visited areas where there were no Friends¹¹¹ and was the first Friend seen in some parts of Georgia.¹¹² William Forster held a meeting in Coddendam where there were no Quakers¹¹³ and visited parts of Dorset and Hampshire where Friends were little known or understood.¹¹⁴ During this itinerancy among non-Quakers, these preachers were anxious to explain the doctrines of the Society and to dissociate Quakerism from heterodoxy. For example, when Backhouse held several meetings in the same place in America, the third would be on the distinctive elements of Quaker theology¹¹⁵ and while travelling in Ireland Forster went to great pains to refute the impression of Friends created by the New Lights.¹¹⁶ This desire to explain Friends' beliefs to their contemporaries may again suggest a breakdown of exclusiveness. The scale and scope of these evangelical Friends' itinerancy demonstrates the importance which they attached to this work among non-Quakers. The evangelical preachers were concerned to reach even those groups in the general community, who would have been isolated from normal religious life. For example, Sands visited soldiers and prisoners of war¹¹⁷ and Backhouse's ministry included Jews,¹¹⁸ sailors,¹¹⁹ iron workers,¹²⁰ and Indians.¹²¹ Alongside this concern for the underprivileged of society, these preachers were anxious to preach to

the elite of society. Hare suggests that Elizabeth Fry had a concern for the spiritual state of royalty which was later taken up by Eliza P Gurney.¹²² Allen and Grellet met the Emperor of Russia¹²³ and King of Prussia¹²⁴ and Josiah Forster spent the last years of his life visiting the state governors of North America on the business of London Yearly Meeting.¹²⁵ In addition to these meetings with those in secular power, these Friends also visited those with ecclesiastical power. Allen and Grellet met with Archbishops in Finland¹²⁶ and in Moscow.¹²⁷ Later Grellet, "Protestant of Protestants", was to be granted an interview with the Pope and used the opportunity to point out the abuses and errors of the Roman Church to Pius VII.¹²⁸

This work among non-Quakers is significant as it forced the evangelical Friends into co-operation with members of other denominations. Because they preached in areas where the Society of Friends was not established, Friends' Meeting Houses, the usual venue for their services, were not available and they had to deliver their messages from a variety of other types of buildings. Initially they seem to have preferred to use secular buildings: Sands held two meetings in Wigan Town Hall¹²⁹ and William Forster used town halls, court houses, school rooms,¹³⁰ and barns.¹³¹ However, these ministers increasingly used the places of worship of other religious groups for their services. The journals of these Friends contain many references to them using the churches of other denominations for their meetings, usually Methodist, less commonly Baptist, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian. In addition to such venues which belonged to other

orthodox Protestants, they held services in places of worship which were owned by denominations with whom they would have little in common: for example, Grellet preached in Catholic Churches in Rome¹³² and in Haiti, using the second opportunity to preach on the nature of true religion and the fruits of false religion,¹³³ and Backhouse held a meeting in a Unitarian Church.¹³⁴

Such itinerancy encouraged the move among Friends from sectarianism toward denominationalism. Lovegrove has noted that the development of itinerancy among Dissenters was linked to a breakdown of barriers between them and the wider community¹³⁵ and this process seems to have been mirrored among Friends during this period. Their use of the property of other religious groups suggests an ecumenism which was more applicable to a denomination than a sectarian organisation. The determination to preach in areas where Quakerism was not established, suggests that their chief concern was to bring individuals to conversion to Christianity and not to gain new recruits to the Society, which in turn suggests a commitment to the principles of the pan-denominational evangelical movement rather than to evangelisation on behalf of a sectarian organisation. This attitude would again seem to be a feature of denominationalism rather than sectarianism.

The evangelical Friends' itinerancy further encouraged the move away from sectarianism, as organisations which were typical products of denominationalism were established to support the work of these travelling ministers. Like other itinerants,¹³⁶ the evangelical

Friends used their preaching tours to disseminate religious literature. For example, Sands distributed books during his continental mission in 1795¹³⁷ and it was recorded of William Forster that he industriously spread books.¹³⁸ In keeping with their desire to encourage comprehension of, if not acceptance of, Friends' beliefs among the general population, the works they distributed were invariably those of Quaker apologists. In 1795 the books Sands circulated included Barclay's Apology in Latin¹³⁹ and Penn's No Cross, No Crown.¹⁴⁰ During his 1813 mission to the Continent Grellet disseminated copies of Apology in French and Latin¹⁴¹ and No Cross, No Crown and other works by Penn.¹⁴² Later he supplied a copy of Apology in Norwegian to prisoners of war in Rochester.¹⁴³ Given that these travelling preachers circulated works which would not have been used by non-Quaker itinerants, they could not rely upon organisations outside the Society of Friends to finance and organise a supply of this literature. Instead they formed their own societies to meet the supply of these works. As a result a Friends' Book Society had been established by 1823 in Birmingham which bought books suggested by its members from a common fund.¹⁴⁴ Similarly in 1812 "The Bible and Religious Tract Association of the Society of Friends" was founded in Newcastle.¹⁴⁵ The scale of this Association's work should be noted: in its third year it distributed 3,238 pamphlets and 3,280 tracts. As importantly this Association was clearly intended to support the work of travelling preachers; its stated aim, alongside providing books for individuals who showed an interest in the Society of Friends, was to provide works for itinerant preachers to circulate.¹⁴⁶ Given their use of itinerant preaching, it is perhaps to be expected that

evangelical Friends took a leading role in this Association; the committee for the first year included evangelical Friends such as Allen, Bedford, the Forsters, Samuel Gurney, Smith, and Stacey¹⁴⁷ and Richardson was treasurer during its third year.¹⁴⁸ Another organisation founded during this period, "The Association for Printing and Distributing Tracts on Moral and Religious Subjects, Chiefly such as have a Tendency to Elucidate and Support the Principles of Christianity, as held by the Society of Friends", was also clearly dominated by evangelicals; the pamphlets it produced included works by Henry Tuke and William Forster.¹⁴⁹ There were links between this organisation and the Newcastle Association, as the former sent information to the latter and in return received tracts for distribution.¹⁵⁰ In addition to these tract and book societies, other organisations were founded to support the work of the itinerant preachers. For example, in 1821 Allen formed a group of eleven Friends to deal with the correspondence which resulted from his Continental missions, to open up correspondence with parts of the Continent, and to keep channels open for the circulation of Friends' literature.¹⁵¹ The establishment of these committees, which would cause disquiet among traditionalists and were atypical of sectarian organisations, suggests a move toward denominationalism.

Although these Friends co-operated to promote itinerancy and were united by a mutual desire to reform and revitalise the Society, relationships among the Quaker evangelicals who supported Gurney and his combination of evangelicalism and Quakerism were not always cordial and there were instances where they disagreed among

themselves. For example, Joseph Sturge criticised the Gurneys for their support of the Niger expedition,¹⁵² which will be discussed later in this study.¹⁵³ Moreover, it is clear that this was not an isolated incident and there was a keen rivalry between Sturge and other leading evangelical Quakers. Tyrrell argues that Sturge's proposals to reform the Society of Friends were frequently blocked by powerful Friends who felt threatened by his proposed changes. For example, discussion of his proposals during the 1840 London Yearly Meeting that American Friends should be spurred on to greater anti-slavery action was terminated by his fellow evangelicals Samuel Gurney, William Forster, William Allen, and Samuel Tuke.¹⁵⁴ However, Sturge's poor relationships with his fellow Quaker evangelicals may at least in part be the result of his own personality: even an official Quaker publication noted his "indomitable aggressiveness and unyielding firmness".¹⁵⁵ In another example of dissent between evangelicals in 1840 Thomas Hodgkin challenged the ruling of the Elders of the Society of Friends that first cousins could not marry, claiming that this prohibition had no basis in the scriptures.¹⁵⁶ Gurney issued a handbill on the subject, possibly written in reply to Hodgkin's arguments. In this, while admitting that the marriage of first cousins was not directly prohibited in the scriptures, Gurney stated that he did not believe that such acquaintances were "on a level with the pure view of Christian principle" and caused moral and social difficulties.¹⁵⁷

Similarly, while the evangelical Friends were held together by a broadly similar theology, there were significant differences on some

doctrines among them. Even excluding the Beaconites and their criticisms of their fellow Quaker evangelicals, which will be discussed later in their own right, it is clear that there was a lack of consensus between evangelical Friends on many issues. However, the major lines of disagreement were between the two generations of evangelicals rather than between members of the same generation. Both generations were influenced by two streams of thought, contemporary evangelicalism and traditional Quaker beliefs. While there were many points on which these two strands of thought would accord, there were also some areas of disagreement. On some of these issues the evangelical Friends accepted traditional Quaker doctrine, while on others they embraced evangelical beliefs. However, it is clear that the balance between adherence to Quaker or evangelical beliefs among these Friends was shifting during this period, as the second generation of evangelical Quakers repudiated some of the more extreme of Friends' beliefs which were advocated by the first generation.

Of these two sources of ideas, the influence of evangelicalism is most immediately apparent. The writings and sermons of both generations are packed with the tenets of evangelicalism and they called for repentance as a matter of great urgency. Allen warned people against being carried forward on the stream of time, amusing themselves in the pursuit of shadows, and not considering where they might be going¹⁵⁸ and Bevan argued that the fall and redemption were "...subjects the most momentous that can engage the human mind...".¹⁵⁹ Similarly Samuel Tuke believed that "There can be, and there ought to be, no subject so interesting to us as our interest in eternity". The

evangelical Friends were in no doubt as to the fate of those who ignored the call to repentance. Sands stated that all would be judged¹⁶⁰ and Backhouse preached that it was impossible to read the scriptures without reading of those who were consigned to everlasting punishment.¹⁶¹ They naturally called their audiences to the atonement as the means to escape this impending doom. It was recorded of Richardson that his faith in Christ and his atoning blood were confirmed early in his life¹⁶² and Samuel Tuke wrote of the "great doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ for sin...".¹⁶³ Allen (predating a central tenet of Gurney's work) described the sacrifices of the Old Testament as an archetype for Christ's atonement.¹⁶⁴ Similarly, in keeping with contemporary non-Quaker evangelicals, these Friends were extremely critical of nominal believers. Backhouse preached there was a difference between nominal Christians and those born of the Spirit and created anew in Christ. The former, she declared, had the name of Christian, but did not depart from iniquity and were not entitled to an inheritance among the blessed.¹⁶⁵ The evangelical Quakers therefore attempted to warn nominal Christians of the danger they were in. Allen asked them to consider the awful state of mere nominal Christianity¹⁶⁶ and Backhouse was noted for her warm zeal against the lukewarm believer.¹⁶⁷ They were especially critical of the nominal believers among Friends. Backhouse again, perhaps remembering her own nominal Quakerism during her early life, declared that gay Friends were in a miserable state of inconsistency.¹⁶⁸

In addition to their emphasis on conversion and the atonement, the evangelical Friends accepted many of the other central doctrines of

evangelicalism. They stressed the value of prayer, with Samuel Tuke describing it as "more the privilege than a duty of a Christian".¹⁶⁹ William Forster was clearly trinitarian, seeing a "wonderful, delightful and engaging harmony" between the work of the Father, Son, and Spirit.¹⁷⁰ Similarly Harrison argued that the doctrine of the the Union of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was not contrary to reason.¹⁷¹ These Friends, in keeping with the wider evangelical movement, also stressed the value of the Scriptures. Sands described them as being beautiful from end to end¹⁷² and Bevan argued that they were the last and highest dispensation to man.¹⁷³ They also defended the scriptures against the doubts expressed about their authenticity: Bevan argued there was no book of equal age to the New Testament which had its authenticity as well established.¹⁷⁴

Notwithstanding their universal acceptance of some of the central doctrines of the evangelical movement, some of these evangelical Friends rejected certain beliefs which were associated with evangelicalism, including the doctrine of the fall. It is true that a majority of the evangelical Friends accepted this doctrine.

Richardson became convinced of the doctrine at the age of 14.¹⁷⁵ Tuke argued "That moral evil in men, individually, is the root of the chief social evils which exist in the world or in nations".¹⁷⁶ In addition to stressing this positive propensity in humanity to evil, these evangelical Friends believed there was a more passive inclination to do wrong due to the fallen nature. Elizabeth Dudley argued that due to the frailty of human nature there was a liability to err¹⁷⁷ and Richardson, "that the flesh loves ease".¹⁷⁸ Some of the evangelical

Friends of the first generation did not, however, accede to the doctrine of the fall. George Stacey stated that he did not accept the doctrine of original sin and believed that people were born helpless rather than evil.¹⁷⁹ Similarly Jonathan Hutchinson argued that after death the soul of the believer would be restored to the condition of a new born child's soul,¹⁸⁰ suggesting that he believed individuals were born innocent rather than fallen. Stacey and Hutchinson's arguments on this point, like some of the other beliefs held by the first generation of evangelicals, may have been a remnant of earlier Quaker beliefs which were increasingly falling into disfavour due to evangelical influences.

More significantly there were issues on which all the evangelical Friends disagreed with beliefs which were prevalent in the evangelical movement. They rejected Calvinism, even in its moderate form as expressed by some contemporary evangelicals. Indeed Richardson admitted that Friends differed from other denominations on this issue.¹⁸¹ Evangelical Friends therefore vocally denounced the doctrine of predestination whenever they encountered it. For example, in 1801 Stephen Grellet recorded, while travelling in New England that

"...I was frequently introduced into much feeling for the people, whoses minds were brought into perplexity and distress, because of the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation then zealously preached amongst them. Some of them were driven to a state of despair, under the conclusion that they were of the reprobate, and, consistently with that doctrine, could entertain no hope of redemption through Christ, the saviour of sinners. Some of them had even yielded to the temptation to put an end to their existence. I was often led to unfold to them the universality of the grace and love of God, in Christ Jesus, who had died for all, had come to seek and to save

that which was lost; who would that all, coming to the knowledge of the Truth should be saved".¹⁸²

It was also recorded of William Forster that "he did not see eye to eye" with those in Geneva on this doctrine.¹⁸³ These Friends countered the doctrine of predestination by preaching the doctrine of universal grace. In 1834 Richardson preached on the "universality of the grace of God"¹⁸⁴ and Stacey wrote that there were no exceptions to the offer of redemption.¹⁸⁵ Similarly Fry preached that the longer she lived, the more confirmed she became in her belief that the grace of God was universal¹⁸⁶ and argued that He did not want any one to perish.¹⁸⁷

Another point of difference between these Friends and the wider evangelical movement was their appreciation of the Scriptures. While the evangelical Friends valued the scriptures as highly as any non-Quaker evangelical, they argued that their authority could be over emphasised. Bevan did not believe that the scriptures should be described as "The Word of God", as this phrase should only be used to describe Christ.¹⁸⁸ Richardson agreed with this.¹⁸⁹ He also believed that it was possible to make an idol of the Scriptures.¹⁹⁰

The evangelical Friends' opposition to Calvinism and their divergence from contemporary evangelical emphasis on the authority of the Scriptures, resulted from their adherence to Quakerism's traditional belief in the paramount authority of the Spirit. The evangelical Friends placed the work of the Spirit at the centre of their theology. Indeed Edward Grubb argues that it was their stress on the role of the

Spirit in worship which made them Friends and kept them in the Society of Friends.¹⁹¹ Like contemporary non-evangelical Quakers, these Friends emphasised the guidance of the Spirit. William Forster believed that only the immediate influence made it possible for him to worship God or evangelise.¹⁹² It was recorded of Elizabeth Dudley that "The work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, and the perceptible guidance thereof to the humble waiting mind, were fully upheld in her communications"¹⁹³ and of Mary Gurney that

"Our dear friend had a strong sense of the value and importance of that perceptible guidance of the Holy Spirit, by which the Lord's children may experience divine direction under the various circumstances and occasions of life".¹⁹⁴

They also emphasised the role in the Spirit in the process of sanctification. Samuel Tuke believed the Spirit worked on the soul of men.¹⁹⁵ Richardson argued that through the strivings of the Spirit it was possible to win victory over the powers of death and darkness in the soul¹⁹⁶ and Phillips wrote that rebirth was effected through the Spirit.¹⁹⁷

The evangelical Friends also regarded the Spirit as a guide and instructor. Richardson argued that the Spirit led out of all lying and deceit¹⁹⁸ and Allen wrote that the Spirit was the means by which it was possible to know and perform the will of God.¹⁹⁹ In particular they believed the Spirit was necessary to detect the work of the Devil. Grellet claimed that the Spirit "...gave me to see the transforming power of Satan and his temptations..."²⁰⁰ and Allen argued that the Spirit would detect the "cunning of the serpent".²⁰¹

Significantly most of the evangelical Friends, like traditionalist Friends, believed that the Spirit operated in all people. Richardson argued that

"I apprehend that there is no untutored Indian, or other heathen, but who, at some season of his life, has been visited by that gift or grace of God which is, in Scripture, declared to have appeared to all men..."²⁰²

Bevan also wrote that all people were given a measure of this light.²⁰³ The only voice of dissension on this issue would appear to have been Samuel Tuke, who argued that he had never found any evidence for a "universally-enlarged effusion" of the Spirit and believed the Spirit only worked in the soul of the regenerated.²⁰⁴ Tuke's opposition to the universalistic tendency of Friends' doctrine of the Spirit may be a further example of evangelical Friends' theology undergoing change during the early nineteenth century.

Their emphasis on the Spirit's work in sanctifying the believer led these evangelical Friends to oppose the contemporary non-Quaker evangelicals' assertion that justification preceded sanctification. Samuel Tuke argued that there was sanctification by the Holy Spirit before justification, although he realised the Protestant Reformers would have disagreed with this.²⁰⁵ Richardson appears to have agreed with Tuke, arguing "It is most obvious that the carnally-minded must be purified, before they can enjoy the communion of the saints in heaven, or the company of purified spirits".²⁰⁶ As will be shown later,²⁰⁷ the relationship between justification and sanctification

was to be a crucial issue in the theological conflicts among Friends during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Another element in their beliefs which separated the evangelical Friends from contemporary evangelical culture was their insistence that Quakerism was the only truly reformed Church. In keeping with traditionalist Friends, Samuel Tuke argued that

"...it is to me one of the recommendations of the Society to which I belong, that there is in it so little of the imposition of the human lines of faith. Indeed it seems to have been one of the great objects for which the Society was raised, to demolish those lines, and to establish again that liberty of the Spirit, which had been so much lost during the Apostasy, and so imperfectly restored at the Reformation".²⁰⁸

Like other members of the Society of Friends, they were convinced that these early Friends had restored the practices and beliefs of the early church. For example, Backhouse believed that the principles of early Friends bore unequivocal testimony to the faith of the Apostles.²⁰⁹ More pragmatically they argued that the unique prohibitions which the Society placed on its membership served a useful purpose in separating the believer from the corruptions of the world. Backhouse, for example, believed that the manners and appearance of a Friend provided a bulwark against the world,²¹⁰ although she also regarded plainness and absence of ornament as a requirement for all Christians.²¹¹ Bevan described the principles and practices of Friends as a hedge²¹² and Hutchinson described simplicity as a preservation from the fearful, costly, and troublesome whirlpool of fashion and the sinful delights of a fallen and degenerate world.²¹³

Another theme in their theology which the evangelical Friends drew from traditional Quaker theology was an emphasis on suffering and self-abasement. For example, Sands suggested to a young Friend that prosperity was the blessing of the Old Testament, but adversity was the blessing of the New Testament²¹⁴ and Backhouse starkly stated that those who did not suffer with Christ would not rule with Him.²¹⁵ However, there was an equal emphasis on this suffering being voluntarily accepted. William Forster declared that

"...It is my belief that as Friends keep their minds open to the work of the Holy Spirit, they will find that the cross is thus laid upon them; not by themselves, but by the Lord Jesus himself. And believing, as I do, that many who have gone before us would not have attained to the degree of growth and experience which they did, had they not walked in this self-denying path, I would offer a word of encouragement to some that they be attentive to the gentle influence of the Holy Spirit in this respect".²¹⁶

Phillips similarly argued that the Spirit encouraged the believer to take up the cross.²¹⁷ It was recorded of Backhouse that "However much her nature might shrink, she turned not from the suffering that attends to the faithful bearing of the cross".²¹⁸ Alongside this emphasis on suffering the evangelical Friends reiterated the traditional Quaker assertion that it was necessary to surrender the will to God. Smith argued that it was necessary to strip the mind of all self knowledge and totally give it up to the divine influence²¹⁹ and Richardson believed that "the will should be nailed to the cross", before it was possible to be a true disciple of Christ.²²⁰ It should, however, be noted that this emphasis on the need for suffering was far more prominent among the first generation of evangelicals than the

second. Even William Forster noted

"As I grow older I take a much more cheering and comforting view of the religion of the Gospel. I see the good, the necessity, and the value of the cross, - of humiliation and the prostration of self. But my sense of the hope, the joy, the victory, the power and glory, which are the blessed portions of the devoted believer, the permanency of the covenant, and the stability of our foundation in Christ, so far outweigh all these considerations, in the balance, that at times it seems like laying hold of eternal life".²²¹

Indeed the whole emphasis on self-abasement was in part countered by Junia Price (one of the evangelical women ministers, who was engaged in itinerancy in South Wales) who suggested that the "enemy" was

"...apt to take advantage of my low opinion of myself, to persuade me that I have mistaken my calling, and to seek to shake my faith in Him in whom I have must surely believed, and therefore have spoken".²²²

The decline in emphasis on this doctrine once again suggests that evangelical Quaker theology was undergoing change during the early part of the nineteenth century.

While these evangelical Friends held many Quaker doctrines with equal conviction to their traditionalist contemporaries, even to the point of rejecting some elements in contemporary evangelical thought, they eschewed Friends' traditional beliefs on several points. The most significant of these was their rejection of Friends' traditional separation of the intellect from the spiritual life. The evangelicals did not, however, make a clean break with the traditionalists' suspicion of the intellect and there were still shades of anti-intellectualism in some of their works. Their opposition, however,

was based on a belief that the value of the intellect was limited, rather than that it was harmful in itself. For example, Sands argued that Christianity could only be known by experience, not mere reasoning,²²³ and Samuel Tuke argued that reason on its own could never bring a person under the government of God.²²⁴ Similarly they were concerned about the dangers of deluded reasoning. Phillips argued that reason might contend against the work of the Spirit, when its real function was to obey the dictates of the Spirit.²²⁵ Bevan pointed to the example of "fallacious reasoning" being used to seduce Eve and warned that the sceptical mind could be drawn from salvation by biased reasoning.²²⁶ Similarly they argued that some elements of Christian doctrine were beyond intellectual comprehension. For example, Bevan argued that

"When they [the scriptures] treat on subjects above his comprehension; or when the inspired persons relate or prescribe in the name of the Almighty, things differently from what man's limited reason may be tempted to judge best; he [the Christian] does not therefore revolt: he rather waits in humble trust; and at most keeps his judgement suspended; attributing the difficulty to his own scanty powers, and not to the sacred record, established as it is by the voices of those whose authority he cannot question".²²⁷

Notwithstanding these reservations, the evangelical Friends did reject the traditionalists' complete antithesis between the use of the intellect and the religious life. Backhouse, while fearing that intellectual cultivation might injure her spiritual life,²⁸⁸ believed that study (if kept secondary) could be a handmaiden to virtue.²²⁹ Alongside this belief that the intellect could be useful to the religious life, the evangelicals suggested it was actually needful for religion. Harrison argued that the believer could "entertain a hope

of conceiving an appropriate idea" of God's moral attributes through the use of the intellect²³⁰ and Smith argued that the mind could be used to the glory of God.²³¹ However it was Bevan who was to make the most radical claims on the importance of the intellect. He argued that only humanity was capable of both reason and religion and the former made the latter possible, and therefore argued that it was ".. evident that religion is inseparable from reason...".²³²

This move away from traditional Quaker beliefs by evangelical Friends became more pronounced during the early nineteenth century, as the first generation of evangelicals advocated several beliefs which not publicly endorsed by the second generation. For example, the preaching and writing of the first generation was marked by apocalyptic and prophetic pronouncements that God's wrath was about to be inflicted on the ungodly. Sands preached that the judgements of an offended God were about to be poured out on the inhabitants of Philadelphia, which he compared to Sodom;²³³ whilst Grellet compared Louisville to Sodom.²³⁴ Other evangelicals of the first generation pointed to examples where they believed that God's judgement was already being carried out. In 1795 Harrison argued that the war and the current pestilence in London were the scourge of heaven and claimed that recent British defeats in Westphalia and the West Indies were divine vengeance on the British for their involvement in the slave trade.³²⁵ By contrast, although at least one of the evangelicals of the second generation described how he believed that God's wrath was being inflicted on contemporary society in his unpublished works,²³⁶ these Friends did not publicly express these

apocalyptic beliefs. Similarly the first generation espoused the doctrine of perfectionism. Phillips wrote that believers were called to become perfect²³⁷ and Richardson declared that "...I am fully persuaded that a state of freedom from sin is attainable in this life".²³⁸ This doctrine was, however, called into question by the second generation of evangelicals. Indeed Taylor argues that while Samuel Tuke wanted to attain perfection when he was young, as he grew older he felt that he had not achieved it and, although he still clung to this belief, he had misgivings about it. Simultaneously, Taylor argues, other ministers were to dwell less on this doctrine.²³⁹ James Jenkins also noted that this doctrine, which had once been maintained by Friends, had largely been abandoned.²⁴⁰ It should, however, be noted that, although this belief did not play a prominent part in the writings or sermons of the second generation of evangelicals, at least one of them supported it during their younger years. Joseph John Gurney, writing in his journal at the age nineteen, believed that Jesus Christ called for perfection.²⁴¹ This doctrine would also occasionally surface in his later writings and may have helped to shape his thinking on a number of issues.

Although the evangelicals of Gurney's generation owed a tremendous debt to their predecessors, there were significant differences between the two groups. Gurney and his circle rejected some of the enthusiasms of the generation of Bevan, Grellet, and Sands, enthusiasms which were perhaps closer to the world of George Fox and the seventeenth century than they were to the nineteenth century. The second generation's willingness to abandon, or only covertly hold, the

more radical doctrines can in part be attributed to fears that supporting these beliefs would place them beyond the pale of acceptable contemporary religious thought and thereby hamper the growing co-operation with non-Quaker evangelicals. This sacrifice of distinctive traditional beliefs in order to associate more closely with members of the wider community once again indicates a shift away from sectarianism and toward denominationalism.

Members of this evangelical party within London Yearly meeting were to have a profound influence on Gurney. They were to be among his closest friends, mentors, advisors, and helpers. His work in a variety of public spheres built on work which had already been undertaken by other evangelical Friends and drew upon their ideas. As significantly Gurney was to play a vital role in leading this party through the difficult years of the early nineteenth century. During the 1830s and 1840s the rise of evangelicalism and the breakdown of exclusiveness led to serious conflict within the Society of Friends. This controversy focussed on one individual: Joseph John Gurney.

4. GURNEY AND THE BEACONITE CONTROVERSY 1832 TO 1836

The tensions within London Yearly Meeting, caused by the breakdown of sectarianism and the rise of evangelicalism, climaxed in the Beaconite controversy of 1832-6. This controversy, which centred around the publication of Issac Crewdson's A Beacon to the Society of Friends, brought the deep divisions within British Quakerism to the surface and during this conflict three distinctive groups, each with their own programme for the reform of the Society of Friends, became apparent. The traditionalist Friends, Quietists, advocated retrenchment in Quaker practice and doctrine and regarded the growing power of the evangelicals as a sign of apostasy. At the same time a small, but active, group of disaffected evangelicals, the Beaconites, wished completely to remove the barriers between London Yearly Meeting and other Protestant denominations, even fearing that the Friends' traditional doctrines were tinged with heresy. This group was ultimately to leave the Society of Friends. The third group, the Gurneyites, as has been shown,¹ adopted elements of evangelical belief while retaining a number of distinctive Quaker doctrines and practices. This group, caught between two extremes, received criticisms from the other two groups. Among the Gurneyites, Joseph John Gurney played the most prominent part in this controversy, by attempting to hold the divergent parties together and by maintaining his brand of evangelicalism as the recognised faith of the Society of Friends.

Doctrinal controversy was perhaps inevitable given the diversity of theological parties within London Yearly Meeting during this period.

Quaker historians have observed that there were three theological tendencies among Friends during the early nineteenth century: a move towards evangelicalism; a reaffirmation of the inner light as the sole basis of religion (Quietism); and a more limited move toward rationalism and even deism.² Of these theological tendencies the smallest and least significant was deism. London Yearly Meeting's rejection of the Irish New Lights and Hannah Barnard for holding deistic beliefs made it clear that this branch of thought was considered to be unacceptable and that any Friends who continued to propagate deist doctrines risked disownment. As a result few Friends openly subscribed to deism during the early nineteenth century.³ London Yearly Meeting's opposition to Unitarianism was to be reiterated in 1814; when Gurney played a major role in a campaign by evangelicals to have a leading deistic Friend disowned. This Friend, Thomas Foster, had supported Hannah Barnard by presenting her appeal to London Yearly Meeting⁴ and had published a critical account of Friends' proceedings against her. London Yearly Meeting would have found Foster's beliefs as abhorrent as those of Barnard. His published works clearly expressed his support for Unitarianism, claiming that his cause was the same of that of Servetus and William Penn (who had been imprisoned for the Unitarian doctrines contained in his Sandy Foundation Shaken).⁵ Foster's theology emphasised rationalism, arguing that simplicity was one of the distinguishing features of all divinely revealed truths and "mystery" was the characteristic of false doctrine.⁶ Foster therefore rejected all doctrines which were not plainly expressed in the scriptures. He opposed the doctrine of the Trinity, claiming that it was not contained in the scriptures and had not been introduced until the third century of church history.⁷ He similarly claimed that the doctrines of the deity of

Christ and of the Spirit being a distinct person were unscriptural.⁸ Foster also had reservations about the inerrancy of the scriptures, claiming only certain parts of them were divinely inspired⁹ and some of the passages had become corrupted during the history of the church.¹⁰ While Foster was clearly influenced by rationalist thought from outside the Society of Friends, as is shown by his quoting of Joseph Priestley,¹¹ he also claimed that the early Friends had been Unitarians. For example, he described William Penn as a "strict Unitarian", who rejected the "unscriptural and unreasonable doctrine" of God having three separate persons,¹² and argued that early Friends had never claimed that the scriptures were infallible.¹³ Given his belief that early Friends supported the doctrines of the Unitarians, Foster opposed both the rising power of the evangelical movement and some elements in Quietist practice. He bitterly attacked the change of theological emphasis among contemporary Quakers; claiming that there were signs of a "declension from the primitive simplicity and purity of the Christian faith", as professed by early Friends.¹⁴ In particular he criticised the authorities of London Yearly Meeting for sanctioning a work which expressed "the common doctrine of the Trinity"¹⁵ and Henry Tuke for his belief in the doctrine of original sin.¹⁶ Foster combined his opposition to evangelical theology with claims that London Yearly Meeting was increasingly using its disciplinary procedures to enforce adherence to these beliefs among its members. He claimed that in recent years there had been moves to enforce an "external sectarian uniformity" within the Society,¹⁷ while Friends had traditionally allowed a plurality of beliefs among their membership.¹⁸ In addition to his criticisms of the evangelicals and their use of the disciplinary apparatus of Yearly Meeting to enforce their views, Foster made some scathing

attacks on the practices of the Quietists. He rejected the claims of some Quietist preachers to be able to discern information concerning members of their congregations through the power of the Spirit¹⁹ and the traditional Quaker belief that silent worship required a cessation of all mental activity.²⁰ Foster would have further antagonised Quietists by his suggestion that Friends should establish systematic religious instruction for their members and that the practices established by early Friends were not sacrosanct or immutable.²¹

Although Foster avoided disciplinary proceedings himself for a considerable time by publishing his criticisms of the evangelicals and Quietists anonymously, he was eventually disowned by his Monthly Meeting, principally on the grounds that he was a member of the Unitarian Book Society. He appealed against this to his Quarterly Meeting, which confirmed the decision of the Monthly Meeting. Foster then appealed to the 1814 London Yearly Meeting, which appointed a committee to consider his case.²² This committee is of particular importance to this study as its clerk was Joseph John Gurney. Under Gurney's leadership, this committee unanimously supported the decision to disown Foster.²³ Foster then appealed against the decision to have him disowned before the entire assembly of London Yearly Meeting. In his lengthy address to the assembly of London Yearly Meeting he argued that he was justified in becoming a subscriber to the Unitarian Book Society as its principles were identical to those of the early church, explaining the beliefs of the Unitarians by copious quotation from Robert Aspland's Plea.²⁴ The assembly of the Yearly Meeting, however, affirmed Foster's disownment on the grounds that the beliefs expressed by the Unitarian Book Society and early Friends' authors were incompatible.²⁵

Gurney recorded that "... the whole body consisting of [a] full 1000...Friends, young and old, plain and gay, united, without a single dissident voice, in confirming that decision"²⁶ It is clear that the motivation to have Foster disowned came principally from evangelical Friends. At least four of the six Friends appointed by the Quarterly Meeting to defend their decision at the Yearly Meeting, George Stacey, William Allen, Luke Howard, and Josiah Forster, were evangelicals.²⁷ The evangelicals' campaign against Foster was assisted by Gurney's actions as Clerk of the appeals committee. In his addresses before the committee and the assembly of London Yearly Meeting, Foster claimed that the authorities of London Yearly Meeting had encouraged the circulation of a pamphlet intended to discredit him. Gurney, however, as Clerk of the appeals committee stated that this was irrelevant to the case at hand; he claimed that this pamphlet was not widely known among Friends and had not influenced the committee's decision.²⁸ Gurney's action in this matter prevented discussion of an issue which might have discredited the campaign against Foster. The evangelicals' determination to have Foster disowned is explained by the fears expressed in Gurney's autobiography that Foster's public support for Unitarianism would suggest to the general public that the Society of Friends in itself was heterodox. But by disowning Foster it could be claimed that the Society had also purged itself of association with his heterodox beliefs. Therefore, Gurney argued that as a result of the Foster case "Surely we may claim to be numbered among the Churches of Christ".²⁹ More importantly the outcome of Foster's appeal removed all possibility of a Unitarian party developing within London Yearly Meeting during this period, by reinforcing the precedent set by the Barnard case that deism was unacceptable in the Society of Friends. As a result Deists

did not play a role in the controversies of the 1830s (although some of the Quietists' supporters seem to have been quite sympathetic to elements in Unitarian theology). It should, however, also be noted that even after the Foster case some evangelical Friends were anxious that Unitarianism might gain an influence within the Society of Friends and, as will be shown later, their alarm at possible heterodoxy within Quakerism encouraged the Beaconite controversy.

Although any Unitarian influence had effectively been removed from London Yearly Meeting, by the 1830s the evangelicals were increasingly being opposed by traditionalist Friends, usually described as "Quietists".

Although historians have tended to underrate the Quietists' ability to counter the evangelicals' growing influence, this group presented a far more serious problem to the evangelicals than the deists had. It is true that the number of Quietist Friends was dwindling; Isichei suggests that by the 1830s most of their leaders were old and no one was willing to take their place.³⁰ Indeed the Quietists themselves realised that they were in decline, describing themselves as a remnant of the "old school".³¹

Despite this there was still a vocal group of Quietists, including John Barclay, Sarah Grubb, Thomas Hancock, Ann Jones, Elizabeth Robson, Thomas Shillitoe, and Daniel Wheeler, who used their preaching and publications to condemn the breakdown of sectarianism and the rise of evangelicalism. The Quietists were also supported by some non-Friends, including Henry Martin, who had been brought up as a Friend, but who, "for some reason", had resigned his membership a few years before the Beaconite controversy.³²

Importantly, while some of these non-Quaker Quietist supporters were more radical than those who had retained their membership, traditional Friends

clearly valued their support; John Barclay compared Henry Martin's contribution during the Beaconite controversy favourably with those of the influential Quietist, John Wilbur.³³ As well as underrating the strength of the Quietist party within London Yearly Meeting, historians have generally dismissed their ability to challenge the theology of the evangelical movement. For example, Swift suggests that the Quietists were unable to make coherent criticisms of the evangelicals, as they did not believe in the value of systematised theology and lacked the theological training of their opponents.³⁴ In reality the Quietists were able to mount a significant challenge to the evangelicals' doctrines during the Beaconite controversy. Notwithstanding their lack of formal theological training the Quietists had their own distinctive set of beliefs, drawn exclusively from early Friends' writings, and vehemently defended these as the authentic faith of the Society of Friends. Similarly, the evangelicals' growing influence and power within London Yearly Meeting did not assure them of victory over the Quietists; traditionalist Friends did not allow themselves to be overawed by their opponents and instead frequently and publicly criticised them. For example, John Barclay stated that there were "...so many active, benevolent, and, in some instances; weighty Friends..." who were mistaken in their views³⁵ and Shillitoe believed that some Friends, while active in the concerns of the Society, were strangers to religious exercise and therefore "...cannot become helpers in the Lord's cause, and lights to the world".³⁶ Moreover the Quietists were able to achieve at least one notable victory at national level against their evangelical opponents; Roger C Wilson states that the 1827 London Yearly Meeting epistle affirmed the doctrines of traditionalist Friends.³⁷

The Quietists were determined to challenge the increasing influence of evangelicalism within London Yearly Meeting, as they regarded this as a grave threat to the faith of the Society of Friends. It is, however, important to distinguish between the beliefs of the Quietists and deists, as they were frequently associated with each other by their evangelical critics. This accusation has been repeated by some historians, including Isichei who suggests that the Quietists had held vaguely Unitarian beliefs, and only moved away from these due to criticisms from the evangelicals.³⁸ In reality the Quietists opposed Deism as vehemently as the evangelicals did and therefore unreservedly condemned the Irish New Lights. For example, the American Quietist, John Wilbur, believed the New Lights had been led away by Satan due to "...their self-love, self-righteousness, and their great want of meek Christian principle".³⁹ Unfortunately for Gurney and his supporters, the Quietists also believed that evangelicalism presented as great a danger to the Society of Friends as had the New Lights. The Quietists opposed Unitarianism and evangelicalism as they regarded them both as forms of apostasy, due to their interpretation of church history. The Quietists claimed that the Society of Friends was the only completely reformed church. The Reformation, the Quietist John Wilbur argued, was only partial and in rejecting the errors of the Catholic church, the Protestants had fallen into new errors and had erroneously replaced the Church with the scriptures as the sole source of authority and substituted one error, justification by works, with another, justification by faith.⁴⁰ Moreover the Protestants, due to the influence of the "enemy", had concentrated on the atonement and therefore lost sight of the practical operation of the Spirit. By contrast, Wilbur argued, George Fox restored both God's covenant and the testimonies and doctrines

of the Primitive Church.⁴¹ He further claimed that the living experience of the Spirit's power, which had been present in the Primitive church; was lost in the "time of apostasy"; was only partially restored by the reformers; but fully revived by early Friends.⁴² Given that the Quietists believed that the early Friends had restored the church to its full glory, they regarded the works of theology produced during the first period of Quakerism with tremendous respect. For example, Wilbur suggested that while they were lower than the Scriptures, "...they do deservedly, and ever ought to stand, far above all modern writings".⁴³

While the Quietists were convinced that their predecessors had established a completely reformed church, they were fearful that the church could be led astray again and regarded a relapse into apostasy as a constant danger; with Wilbur warning that the devil continually worked to lead men into degeneracy and apostasy.⁴⁴ Due to their ecclesiology and fears of apostasy, the Quietists were alarmed by the changes in the Society of Friends during the early nineteenth century. They expressed great anxieties at the breakdown of Friends' exclusiveness, with John Barclay arguing that Friends were being assimilated into the world.⁴⁵ They, therefore, called for a retrenchment in traditional Quaker practices and, in the face of the breakdown of sectarianism, argued that Friends should be as unchanging as the Rock of Ages.⁴⁶ They also bitterly opposed evangelicalism and regarded even the attempts of Gurney and his supporters to reform the Society of Friends by introducing innovations while maintaining much of traditional Quakerism with extreme displeasure and as a step toward apostasy. Ann Jones warned that, while the Lord was against those who rejected the doctrine of work of the Spirit in the heart, He also

opposed those who sought a "compromise" with regard to this article of faith.⁴⁷ Most importantly they criticised the evangelicals' ecumenism and claimed that these links with other denominations betokened assimilation with the world.⁴⁸ The Quietists' principal fear was that the Society of Friends was being re-assimilated into the unreformed church. For example, Sarah Grubb warned that "We are fast going back to Episcopalianism; little being wanting, with many, to range on this side, except partaking of the outward ordinances of that Church".⁴⁹ Significantly the Quietists identified Gurney in particular with this process of assimilation, with Shillitoe stating "I declare that J J G is an Episcopalian, not a Quaker".⁵⁰

Notwithstanding their vocal criticisms of the evangelicals, there were close links between some Quietists and the Gurneyites. Indeed many of those Friends who sided with the Quietists during the Beaconite controversy might equally have been expected to join with the Gurneyites: in particular Thomas Shillitoe (who Edward Grubb admitted was impossible to classify)⁵¹ and Daniel Wheeler who had co-operated with the Gurneyite, William Allen, during itinerant preaching⁵² and received the support of another Gurneyite, Samuel Tuke, for his proposed visit to Van Diemen's land.⁵³ As well as these similarities between members of the Quietist and Gurneyite parties, there were close personal links between members of the two groups. For example, Joseph John Gurney and John Barclay were cousins⁵⁴ and Sarah Grubb visited Earlham before the controversy began.⁵⁵ Despite these links between Gurneyite evangelicals and Quietists, there is evidence of a

growing rift between the two camps during the period leading up to the publication of the Beacon, as is shown by the hostility between Gurney and Sarah Grubb and their criticisms of each other's preaching.

Gurney noted that "Sarah Grubb preached an admirable gospel sermon with clearness and authority; but in one part was mystical beyond common apprehension" at the 1820 Yearly Meeting;⁵⁶ in the next year Gurney recorded that she "...plainly told me that she thought me too ready to speak and I thought hinted at having entire disunity with my gift".⁵⁷ In 1832 Gurney described her preaching as a "prophetic strain of high Quakerism"⁵⁸ and noted his disapproval of her ministry at a meeting in 1834.⁵⁹ This progressive deterioration in relationships between the leading evangelical and Quietist is indicative of deeper conflicts within London Yearly Meeting.

At the same time that relationships were deteriorating between Quietists and evangelicals, there were also growing tensions among those Friends who have traditionally been grouped together as evangelicals. While the evangelicals began to dominate London Yearly Meeting during the early nineteenth century, most of them were unwilling to challenge the principles and institutions of the Society of Friends. Instead they attempted to work within the existing structures and therefore avoided conflict with their more traditionalist brethren. Other evangelical Friends were, however, more willing to disregard the reservations of traditional Friends and more openly declared their support for evangelicalism and their dissatisfaction with the current state of London Yearly Meeting. For example, John Wilkinson complained during the 1809 Yearly Meeting at

the poor quality of the preaching among Friends⁶⁰ and at the 1811 assembly noted that few Friends were coming forward as ministers.⁶¹ Another indication of the dissident evangelicals' dissatisfaction with the state of British Quakerism, was Issac Crewdson's criticism of the time devoted to discussion of a point of business ethics at 1822 London Yearly Meeting, which he claimed was an issue of minor importance compared "to some other things".⁶² These more militant evangelicals began to form a distinctive group within the Society of Friends and by the beginning of the 1830s a dissident group of evangelicals, lead by Issac Crewdson and based principally in Manchester, was beginning to coalesce. This group was determined to use the resources of the Society of Friends in Manchester in their evangelistic campaigns. Wilson argues that the local Meeting House was rebuilt and enlarged in the 1820s to provide a preaching centre for the evangelistic activities of Crewdson and his supporters.⁶³ The activities of this group were, however, increasingly to alienate them from their Quietist contemporaries, who vocally opposed the evangelistic projects of Crewdson and his followers. This group of militant evangelicals initially came into conflict with Quietists over their project to provide religious tracts for working-class non-Friends. Traditionalist Friends objected to references in these tracts to the atonement and to the scriptures being the word of God, and had their publication stopped.⁶⁴ The Manchester Friends also opposed the dissident evangelicals' efforts to promote religious education among young Quakers. In 1833 one of Crewdson's supporters, William Boulton, began holding meetings for the reading of the scriptures and invited twelve young men. Although the number of young

Quakers attending these meeting eventually rose to twenty five, they were opposed by traditionalist Friends and in 1834 one Quietist minister criticised the whole venture as tending to "...promote a growth in the branch, but not to deepen in the root...".⁶⁵ This conflict over education heightened tensions between these evangelicals and the Society of Friends. Indeed they were later to claim their involvement in religious education for young Friends was the cause of opposition towards them.⁶⁶

This group of increasingly alienated evangelicals formed the basis of the "Beaconite" party. With the exception of Manchester Meeting, where at least 100 of the approximate 400 members of the Meeting sympathised with them,⁶⁷ the major centre of the dissident evangelicals' power was Kendal meeting,⁶⁸ where their influence has been attributed to the propagation of evangelicalism through the preaching of the Beaconite supporter, Anna Braithwaite.⁶⁹ It is important to note that, although the actual numbers of Friends who joined this group were relatively small, they included many wealthy and influential Friends. Crewdson was a major silk and cotton manufacturer⁷⁰ and Luke Howard, the other major Beaconite leader, claimed to have contributed £3,000 to Friends' purposes (and undoubtedly antagonized Quietists by suggesting they should take the generosity of rich Friends into account before disowning them).⁷¹ Another sign of the Beaconites' wealth was their ability to purchase a chapel valued at £4,000 when they left the Society of Friends.⁷² Other leading Beaconites included John Wilkinson, a former clerk of London Yearly Meeting,⁷³ and Samuel Lloyd, the banker.⁷⁴ Many of the

leading Beaconites were also energetic preachers. For example, Anna Braithwaite travelled extensively among British Friends as an itinerant preacher between 1830 and 1833.⁷⁵ It has also been claimed that John Wilkinson "thought nothing" of preaching continuously for an hour.⁷⁶

In the period leading up to the publication of the Beacon, the rift between these evangelicals and the Society of Friends was becoming more apparent. Gurney himself noted in 1832 the dangerous tendency of some Friends in Manchester, while delighting in the evangelical "foundation", to disregard the Quaker "superstructure".⁷⁷ Gurney was particularly concerned by these Friends' increasing alienation from Quakerism, due to his close friendship with many of them. Gurney had visited Issac Crewdson and Luke Howard during an itinerant tour in 1825⁷⁸ and later praised Howard for his work at Ackworth School.⁷⁹ Gurney was related to Crewdson, whom he described as a "dear friend", and when John Wilkinson originally distanced himself from the Society of Friends in 1832, Gurney brought him back to the Society, although Gurney later admitted that it might have been better to leave him alone. Even after the controversy had run its course Gurney stated that he loved the seceding evangelicals as friends⁸⁰ and he paid at least one itinerant visit to them.⁸¹ These close personal links between Gurney and leading Beaconites have encouraged a tendency among historians to regard Crewdson's followers and the Gurneyites as a homogeneous group. Quaker historians, who have often come from the liberal wing of the Society of Friends, have emphasised the similarities between the Gurneyites and the dissident evangelicals.

For example, Arthur Mekeel suggests that both Joseph John Gurney and Isaac Crewdson deserted the Society of Friends' doctrine of immediate revelation in favour of the Calvinist belief in the sufficiency of the revelation of the scriptures and believed there was no difference between their theologies.⁸² Rufus M. Jones believed Gurney, although not as extreme as Crewdson, leaned towards his beliefs.⁸³ In reality, as will be shown later, there were clear distinctions between the beliefs of the two groups of evangelicals; which became apparent during the Beaconite controversy.

By the 1830s conditions within the Society of Friends were ripe for controversy, with a vocal group of traditional Friends opposing any change in the Society and a dissident group of evangelicals finding their plans being frustrated. Gurney himself recognised the possibility of conflict and was alarmed at "somewhat different views of divine truth" expressed at 1832 London Yearly Meeting, fearing this would lead to unwelcome "diversity".⁸⁴ These fears were not without foundation. Although conflict was perhaps inevitable, influences from America increased tensions within London Yearly Meeting. The most immediate impact of American Quakerism on London Yearly Meeting during the Beaconite controversy was the influence of two travelling American ministers. The first of these was the evangelical Elisha Bates, an Ohio publisher and minister, with whom Gurney found that he had much in common. Both wielded considerable power in their own Yearly Meeting; Bates was appointed as clerk of Ohio Yearly Meeting for six years⁸⁵ and also served as its publisher.⁸⁶ Bates, like Gurney, was also committed to philanthropy and they both opposed slavery,⁸⁷ war,

and capital punishment, and supported prison reform, the Bible Societies, and the promotion of education.⁸⁸ As with the Beaconites, Gurney, initially at least, enjoyed cordial relations with Bates and was clearly impressed by him. Gurney recorded his favourable impressions of Bates and, on meeting him in 1834, declared that they found themselves in "full agreement all round".⁸⁹ Notwithstanding this, there were soon signs of discord between them: even later in 1834 Gurney noted that he could not agree with Bates' opinion of British Friends.⁹⁰ Moreover, they were to find themselves on different sides during the Beaconite controversy, as during his visits to Britain in 1833-4 and 1836 Bates sided with Crewdson's camp⁹¹ and played a vital role in developing and propagating the doctrines of the dissident evangelicals.

While one American itinerant minister helped to strengthen the extreme evangelical camp, another minister from the United States assisted the Quietists. This Friend, John Wilbur, was also to become the most influential of Gurney's opponents. Wilbur's background was very different from that of Gurney, as he was the child of a strict Quaker family and noted his "limited pecuniary circumstances" during his early life.⁹² Despite his humble background, Wilbur enjoyed great influence in the Society of Friends as a preacher. Even by the standards of contemporary Quaker ministers he devoted tremendous energies to itinerant preaching: for example he attended 348 Friends' services, 90 sittings of their business meetings, and held 114 public meetings in a period of twenty months.⁹³ Wilbur was firmly attached to traditional Quaker beliefs and while in Britain he became one of

the leading advocates of the Quietist cause. Like the native Quietists, Wilbur was alarmed by the rise of evangelicalism among British Friends. He claimed that he had discovered a spirit which was leading Friends away from Quakerism's traditional doctrines and into a dependence on man's wisdom and learning⁹⁴ and, due to his anxieties about developments among British Friends, the state of London Yearly Meeting brought him literally to tears.⁹⁵ Given his opposition to evangelicalism, it is perhaps inevitable that he would come into conflict with Gurney. When they met in 1832, Wilbur expressed his unease at the doctrines contained in Gurney's writings.⁹⁶ Similarly Gurney criticised Wilbur's beliefs. Gurney believed that Wilbur's preaching at one public meeting, although sound on the divinity and atonement, was "... not full enough as to the freedom of redeeming love".⁹⁷ Gurney also claimed that Wilbur's statement, that Christ might have to die a thousand times for one person after their redemption, was improper.⁹⁸ Wilbur and Gurney found themselves at loggerheads during the Beaconite controversy and, as will be shown later, came into conflict during Gurney's tour of America with disastrous results.

In addition to Bates' and Wilbur's presence in Britain during this period, reactions to the Hicksite separation of 1828/9, the first of the two great schisms among American Friends, encouraged conflict within London Yearly Meeting. This schism was the result of controversy surrounding the teachings and personality of Elias Hicks, an energetic itinerant preacher whose tours covered 40,000 miles and who had visited all the American Yearly Meetings during his

lifetime.⁹⁹ The points of dispute between Hicks and his opponents, the "Orthodox" Friends, are remarkably similar to the issues at the centre of the Irish New Lights controversy and lay not in Hicks' belief in the work of the Spirit, but rather in the conclusions it led him on to other Christian doctrines. He was an adoptionist, suggesting that Christ had achieved divinity through complete obedience to the Spirit. Furthermore Hicks believed that the Bible was inferior to the Spirit, rejected the orthodox understandings of hell, the atonement, original sin, and the devil¹⁰⁰ and claimed that the doctrine of the Trinity was irrational.¹⁰¹ The controversy over Hicks led to his supporters and the Orthodox Friends in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting separating in 1827. This was followed by similar divisions in New York, Ohio, Baltimore, and Indiana Yearly Meetings.¹⁰² This separation once again shows the close links which existed between British and American Friends, as this schism has frequently been attributed to the influence of these itinerant British preachers who travelled in America during this period. British Quaker ministers had travelled extensively in the United States in the period before the Hicksite schism.¹⁰³ Among them Anna and Issac Braithwaite, Ann and George Jones, Elizabeth Robson, Issac Stephenson, and Thomas Shillitoe played a significant role in the Hicksite controversy, as opponents of the Hicksites.¹⁰⁴ These visiting English Friends challenged Hicks during services by contradicting his doctrines after, or even before, he spoke.¹⁰⁵ Indeed British Friends played such a prominent role in the controversy over Hicks that H Larry Ingle claims that they were the major impetus for the conflict and that without their presence American Friends might have overcome their difficulties.¹⁰⁶

Some of the British Friends travelling in America, as well as participating in the controversy over Hicks, personally informed Gurney of events occurring among American Quakers. For example, in 1821 he noted that he had received good accounts from William Forster.¹⁰⁷ Through his close contacts with preachers travelling in America, Gurney was constantly kept in touch with developments in America and the growing division over Hicks; as early as 1823 he received news from Forster that too many of the American Friends were "following their own devices and not holding the Head"¹⁰⁸ and in 1824 was informed by Jonathan Backhouse of a "root of evil" in America.¹⁰⁹ Gurney was naturally alarmed when events reached their climax and by 1827 declared that a hurricane was blowing in America.¹¹⁰ One reason for Gurney's alarm over events in America was his fear that they might affect British Quakerism and he noted in 1828 that the disturbances had been mentioned at London Yearly Meeting.¹¹¹ He was, however, able to record in 1829 that the discussion at London Yearly Meeting following the receipt of an epistle from the Hicksite Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia showed the unity of the British assembly in holding orthodox views.¹¹² Here Gurney was undoubtedly referring to the assembly's decision to side with the Orthodox Friends, by refusing to recognise the Hicksite Yearly Meetings, or communicate with them, and refusing to receive itinerant preachers from these Meetings.¹¹³

Notwithstanding this decision, other Friends did not share Gurney's confidence that London Yearly Meeting uniformly opposed Hicksism. In particular Crewdson and his supporters reacted most strongly to events in America as they feared that the American's heterodoxy would spread

to London Yearly Meeting. As a result in 1835 Crewdson published A Beacon to the Society of Friends with, he later claimed, the purpose of exposing the "blasphemous error" of Hicks and his followers.¹¹⁴ In the Beacon Crewdson described the schisms among American Friends in the most dramatic terms, which largely set the tone for works produced later in the Controversy: "

In contemplating that desolating heresy, which in the United States of America, has largely swept thousands and thousands of our small section of the Christian Church, into the gulf of Hicksism and Deism, - a heresy, in proportion to our numbers, probably unparalleled in extent in the history of the Church of Christ, - it may be useful to bring before the view of our Society in this country, some of the errors that have led to such fatal results."¹¹⁵

Crewdson therefore used the Beacon to launch into a vitriolic attack on what he regarded as Hicks' heretical doctrines, many of which the Quietists and Gurneyites regarded as being essentially sound Quaker doctrine.

Crewdson's attack on Hicksism did not meet with approval and instead aroused suspicions among some Quietists that traditional Quaker beliefs were threatened. The over reaction of the dissident evangelicals to the Hicksite controversy had already alarmed some traditionalist Friends; as Gurney noted during the 1832 London Yearly Meeting that Anna Braithwaite had expressed her fears that responses to events in America were believed by some to have been carried too far. This in turn had "excited a rather anti-evangelical feeling in many".¹¹⁶ The Quietists argued that, as Hicksism had not become established in Britain, the Beacon should not have been published. Martin claimed that there was no tendency among Friends in Britain to fall into Hicksism as it was largely unknown.¹¹⁷ Another Quietist suggested that Friends were firmly established in the right

foundation and declared that "My persuasion, on the contrary, is, that the great danger lies with some in this country going to the very opposite extreme..."¹¹⁸ (presumably towards evangelicalism). The Quietists, doubtful of this book's expressed purpose of attacking Hicksism, suggested that Crewdson had more sinister motives. One Quietist suggested that Crewdson was using concern over Hicksism as a vehicle for his own opinions¹¹⁹ and Martin accused the evangelical Friends of using an attack on Hicksism as a disguise for an attack on Quakerism.¹²⁰ The Gurneyites also expressed severe reservations about the Beacon, none more so than Gurney himself who argued that it was almost impossible for any prominent member of the Society of Friends to avoid commenting on it.¹²¹ Interestingly the Beacon's criticisms of traditional Quaker doctrines may have caused Gurney to momentarily question their orthodoxy; as after reading Crewdson's work he re-read Barclay's Apology.¹²² Despite this, although Gurney was less suspicious of the Beacon than the Quietists, he was still critical of it. While he admitted that the Beacon was written for the honest purpose of warning against infidelity and defending sound Christian doctrine, he believed that the book had "...an undeniable tendency to undermine the precious doctrine, even as allowed by orthodox Christians generally - of the immediate teaching, guidance, and government of the Holy Spirit"..¹²³ Gurney wrote to Crewdson in person, expressing some doubts about whether Hicks' "blasphemies" should be printed in the Beacon, even for the purpose of refuting them, as this tended to disparage the truths which Hicks claimed to support:¹²⁴ immediate revelation and the spirituality of Christian religion. This unfavourable reaction from both Quietists and Gurneyites to what Crewdson considered to be a vital defence against heresy, further alienated Crewdson's supporters from the rest of the

Society of Friends. One spectator (possibly Crewdson writing anonymously) suggested that the Beacon's author should have been celebrated as a Christian watchman,¹²⁵ rather than being treated as an enemy for opposing the worst heresy Quakerism had ever encountered.¹²⁶

Reactions to the Beacon brought the existing tensions within London Yearly Meeting between traditional Friends and dissident evangelicals, which had been heightened by influences from America, to a crisis; Howard described it as a gathering storm which had finally broken.¹²⁷ The growing controversy over Crewdson and his supporters was clearly disrupting Manchester Meeting. One eye witness account of the meeting in February 1835 reported that one Quietist preacher used her sermon to attack Crewdson and John Wilkinson's ministry was interrupted by a Friend who did not believe that the Beaconite should preach. The eye witness reported that "I have never beheld a Meeting in such a state. Very many in tears on both sides of the meeting and it was really a most distressing season".¹²⁸ The Manchester Beaconites undoubtedly further added to tensions among local Friends, by attempting to persuade the Monthly Meeting to forward a minute to the Quarterly Meeting, and in turn to the Yearly Meeting, suggesting that measures be taken to restore doctrinal unity among Friends. This minute, like other later Beaconite "recommendations", was rejected by their brethren.¹²⁹ As a result of the growing conflict in Manchester over Crewdson London Yearly Meeting appointed a committee, which took over an existing investigation by the Quarterly Meeting into Crewdson and his supporters.¹³⁰ This committee was dominated by Gurneyites; its membership, in addition to Joseph John Gurney and his brother Samuel, included Allen, Bedford, both of the Forsters,

Richardson, Stacey, and Samuel Tuke (who was clerk of London Yearly Meeting at that time).¹³¹ Notwithstanding the large proportion of leading Gurneyites on the committee, it is apparent that there was considerable doctrinal dispute even among its own membership. While George Vaux suggests that only one member of the committee, Dr Edward Ash, sympathised with the Beaconites,¹³² Ash himself claimed, in retrospect, that there was such theological diversity among the committee that its membership represented the entire spectrum of doctrinal positions within the Society of Friends.¹³³ Given the theological tensions within contemporary British Quakerism, doctrinal differences naturally surfaced during the deliberations of the committee, with Ash claiming that the course taken by the committee as a whole was objectionable to some individual members. Significantly even the evangelical members of the committee were to find themselves at loggerheads, with "two of the most gifted members of the committee", Samuel Tuke and Joseph John Gurney being unable to agree with each other with regard to the doctrine of justification by faith, a doctrine which was to become a major issue during the Beaconite controversy.¹³⁴ Given this controversy even within its own membership, Gurney's role on the Yearly Meeting committee was to cause him great anxiety and pain: he noted in his journal that this work (coming soon after the death of his second wife) led to him "...not infrequently finding relief in tears...".¹³⁵ Notwithstanding the difficulties that this work presented to him, Gurney played a vital role in the work of the committee: he served as its spokesman¹³⁶ and the documents produced by the committee¹³⁷ are written in a style which is remarkably similar to that of his own publications. Moreover Dr Ash recognised that Gurney played a prominent part in the deliberations of the committee by providing

a large body of evidence, which he had been previously collecting, to refute the Beaconites' claims of heterodoxy within London Yearly Meeting and by clearly stating his principal objections to the Beacon.¹³⁸

Given the central role that he played on the committee and the high proportion of its membership who, broadly, supported his combination of Quaker and evangelical, it is probable that Gurney was instrumental in dictating their policy, especially their determination to limit the controversy over the Beacon and prevent matters from coming to a head. In his autobiography Gurney wrote that he had hoped that the controversy would die out without any need for the committee to take any action and that the parties would be reconciled¹³⁹ and similar sentiments were expressed by Samuel Tuke, who argued "I do not think there was anything which the Committee so much desired as a sound reconciliation".¹⁴⁰ While Gurney's unwillingness to condemn Crewdson may in part have been caused by their friendship, Gurney also realised that such an action would have caused greater doctrinal conflict within the Society of Friends. Gurney privately admitted that to have disciplined Crewdson over the "doctrinal question" would have split the Society of Friends.¹⁴¹ To have ignored Crewdson would have been as dangerous a course. Gurney was later to state that "It was impossible to conceal from ourselves that if our dissatisfied Friends were allowed their unbridled course amongst us, there would soon be an end to quakerism, even in its purest and most evangelical form".¹⁴² The manner in and speed with which the Beaconites lost any separate identity when they seceded seems to confirm this view. This policy of reconciliation was not, however, practicable, and the controversy had already gone too far for the Beaconites and Quietists to be reconciled.

Both sides now expected to be vindicated and the other party to be condemned. In particular, the Beaconites hoped that the committee, dominated by Gurneyites, would support them and thereby clearly endorse evangelicalism as the accepted faith of the Society of Friends. Boulton suggested to the committee that

"I conceive, that on your proceedings, humanly speaking, depends the issue in question, whether our society shall be blessed with all the blessings of the gospel, and be made an instrument of its further extension, or shall be distracted by a continued controversy, until it be finally exterminated".¹⁴³

As it became clear that the committee was not going to support Crewdson's work, relationships between the Beaconites and the committee deteriorated, with the latter (and by inference the Gurneyites) being accused of damaging the cause of evangelical religion and defending Hicksism. Crewdson himself claimed that the committee had not sought to challenge Hicks' errors, but rather it had devoted its main strength to suppressing him as an author and a minister. This, he argued, could be interpreted as tacit approval to Hicksism.¹⁴⁴ He further claimed that the committee's approach seemed like an apology for Hicksism.¹⁴⁵ As a result, far from resolving the conflict between factions among Manchester Friends, the committee's actions merely served to further alienate the Beaconites from the Society.

In addition to coming into conflict with the Beaconites, the committee was criticised by the Quietists. As they believed that the doctrines expressed in the Beacon threatened the faith of the Society of Friends, the Quietists called for the harshest penalties to be inflicted on Crewdson. Even in 1835 Martin pressed for Crewdson to be disowned on the grounds that his

public ministry was at variance with Friends' beliefs.¹⁴⁶ The committee's reluctance to follow this course of action aroused Quietists' suspicions and ironically, just as the committee's refusal to accede to Crewdson's beliefs led to accusations that they supported the Hicksites, so did their refusal to discipline Crewdson arouse Quietist suspicions that Gurney and his followers were in league with the Beaconites and supported their beliefs. For example, one Quietist argued that "...it has always been incomprehensible to me that Friends who condemn Issac Crewdson's writings can unite with Joseph John's which in many parts they resemble".¹⁴⁷ Moreover the Quietists argued that "Gurneyitism" was in principle the same as "Beaconism",¹⁴⁸ although the former was more insidious and plausible.¹⁴⁹ It is worthy of note that, as has been shown, modern Quaker historians have made the same accusations of links between the Beaconites and Gurney. As significantly the Quietists regarded Gurney as the chief architect of the controversy. When the Beaconites resigned the Quietists claimed Gurney was responsible for the controversy, arguing that he was as much the cause of the defections among British Friends as Hicks had been among American Friends.¹⁵⁰ The attitude of British traditionalist Friends towards Gurney is of particular importance because, as will be shown later,¹⁵¹ they played a significant role in shaping the attitude of American Friends towards Gurney.

Gurney was therefore to find himself caught between two opposing and irreconcilable forces. He clearly appreciated this and, as importantly, regarded himself as a moderating force holding the middle ground of Quakerism. Even in 1834 he noted extremes of a painful nature during London Yearly Meeting¹⁵² and in 1835 he believed that "Extreme opinions on

either side appear increasingly to manifest themselves".¹⁵³ As the Controversy developed Gurney continued to argue that he held the middle ground in Quakerism, stating in 1836 that "...I am truly thankful to find myself still in the centre of the boat of the Society...".¹⁵⁴ During that year's Yearly Meeting Gurney stated that, with regard to issues raised in the Beaconite controversy, he did not hesitate to be declared a middle man; claiming that while avoiding Scylla there was a danger of falling into Charybdis.¹⁵⁵ Although Gurney appreciated the differences between Friends that the publication of the Beacon had made apparent, the course of action which he pursued merely increased the tension between the factions; the committee's policy was entirely inappropriate for the increasingly heated atmosphere that the controversy generated. The committee initially wrote to Crewdson bringing his attention to points made in the Beacon which did not accord with scripture.¹⁵⁶ Crewdson responded that his book was scripturally sound.¹⁵⁷ The committee replied and, while expressing their relief at Crewdson's views on some points of Christian doctrine, maintained their dissatisfaction with the general tendency of the Beacon and believed that Crewdson should have clearly set out the doctrines of the Society of Friends in his book.¹⁵⁸ Crewdson in turn responded by asking that his book be tested by the scriptures alone.¹⁵⁹ The penalties the committee inflicted on Crewdson were also inappropriate for the situation and satisfied neither side. In December 1835 the committee stated that Crewdson had broken harmony and unity with fellow Friends and therefore suggested that he refrain from ministering and attending the meetings of ministers and elders.¹⁶⁰ Crewdson, however, ignored the committee's recommendations and in 1836 began preaching again. This, Gurney later recorded, led to the division between local ministers and Elders becoming

even wider.¹⁶¹ The situation continued to deteriorate and the committee and Crewdson became increasingly embroiled in a bitter conflict, with Crewdson demanding that his doctrines be tested by the scriptures alone and the committee, fearing that this would simply encourage further controversy, vacillating and becoming more and more vague in their criticisms of Crewdson.¹⁶² It is clear that, notwithstanding the committee's attempts at reconciliation, the divisions between Quietists and evangelicals were insurmountable by 1836.

As well as disrupting the Manchester meeting, the conflict over Crewdson and his followers was by this time causing controversy at national level. As a result tensions were running high at the 1836 Yearly Meeting: one eye witness believed Luke Howard would have interrupted Ann Jones' sermon, were it not for William Forster's intervention.¹⁶³ Elisha Bates also caused controversy at the London Yearly Meeting when he arrived unexpectedly and questioned the Society's doctrine on the Scriptures.¹⁶⁴ The Beaconites further added to the tension within the assembly, when their supporters in Westmorland Quarterly Meeting submitted a request that the Society of Friends should issue a declaration stating that the authority of the scriptures was paramount.¹⁶⁵ Gurney actively participated in the discussion which this request generated; he and Josiah Forster made long speeches.¹⁶⁶ More importantly Gurney played a crucial role in preparing London Yearly Meeting's response to Westmorland's requests; this will be discussed later in this chapter.¹⁶⁷ Although the chief result of the Beaconites' activities was to disrupt both the local and national Society of Friends, it should be noted that they were more concerned with reforming the Society than condemning it. The Beaconites

were increasingly to put forward a programme for the radical reform of the Society of Friends, which would have hastened the move from sectarianism to denominationalism.

This programme reflected their dissatisfaction with the ecclesiology of traditional Quakerism and, while the Quietists had emphasised exclusivism, the Beaconites emphasised ecumenism. Donald Good argues that Bates' conflict with Friends was caused by his emphasis on "interdenominationalism": a belief that all denominations were part of the universal church and their members should co-operate together because of their commonly-held adherence to the doctrines of Christ's divinity and the authority of scriptures.¹⁶⁸ As part of this doctrine, Bates believed that anything within a denomination which hindered ecumenical co-operation and goodwill between believers because of its exclusiveness, was a threat to the wellbeing of the whole Church and was in need of revision. Bates therefore wished to reform the Society of Friends by removing anything that would separate it from the other denominations.¹⁶⁹ Other Beaconites also stressed interdenominationalism: Crewdson asked "...where is the warrant in the New Testament for any sect of Christians, to assume that the favour of God is peculiarly towards them?".¹⁷⁰ Another Beaconite emphasised interdenominationalism so strongly that she was reluctant to be baptised, as this would lead to membership of a particular religious body; which she opposed due to having "so little sectarian feeling".¹⁷¹ The Beaconites' desire to break down the exclusivism of the Society of Friends was most clearly expressed by Luke Howard. Howard suggested that while it was right for Friends at present to remain as a particular people: "The

day will come, however, soon or late, when we must merge (if we remain so long a Society) into the great assembly of the visible Church".¹⁷²

More importantly, in an attempt to prevent evangelicals seceding from the Society of Friends, Howard put forward proposals to abandon the exclusivist conditions of membership within the Society.¹⁷³ In these proposals he argued that it was unlikely that the doctrinal differences between Friends would soon be reconciled and claimed that the Society of Friends had never formed a separate group or originally been brought together on the basis of a particular doctrinal stance or mode of worship, but rather by their united opposition to wars, oaths, and a "ceremonial Priesthood". Howard therefore proposed that the church order of the Society of Friends should be altered to allow those individuals who disagreed with the traditional doctrines and mode of worship of Friends to maintain their membership; to administer Friends' charitable trusts; receive benefits from Friends' funds (membership of the Society of Friends carried significant financial benefits); and to unite with Friends in their petitions to Parliament against war. These proposals were presented by Howard to Pontefract Monthly Meeting with the intention that they would be discussed by progressively higher circles within British Quakerism, and ultimately at the Yearly Meeting. However, his proposals were refused outright by the Monthly Meeting.¹⁷⁴ Howard's demands for doctrinal plurality, however impracticable, clearly show how far the Beaconites had gone in rejecting traditional Quakerism. As importantly they represent the Beaconites' dissatisfaction with London Yearly Meeting's sectarianism and a desire to adopt more open conditions of membership, a feature associated with denominationalism.

Given this emphasis upon interdenominationalism, the Beaconites naturally began to challenge the distinctive practices of the Society of Friends, and in particular the unquestioning acceptance of the authority of early Quaker authors. Although Howard had expressed doubts about some of Job Scott's beliefs in 1825,¹⁷⁵ it was only after the Beacon was published that the dissident evangelicals began to consistently criticise the writings of early Friends, concentrating on Robert Barclay's works. In 1835 Howard argued that Robert Barclay's arguments were dubious, although the manner in which the latter expressed himself cleared him of accusation of defect in his Christian character.¹⁷⁶ Crewdson was more extreme in his criticisms of Barclay, describing

"...the unscriptural and mischievous theory of Barclay, with regard to an universal inward preaching of the Gospel; a theory which, I conceive, is in the highest degree delusive, and at variance with the whole scheme of revelation".¹⁷⁷

The Beaconites were ultimately to dismiss Barclay's work as a delusion of the Devil¹⁷⁸ and "Platonic fallacies".¹⁷⁹ These growing doubts over the orthodoxy of Barclay and other early Quaker authors were naturally combined with calls for them to be replaced with the scriptures as the source of authority for the practice and doctrine. Good argues that Bates rejected the authority of the writings of early Friends, as they were too numerous to be read by the average Quaker and no one could be sure exactly which of these works were authoritative. Instead Bates believed the only test for church practices should be the scriptures.¹⁸⁰ Similarly Boulton argued that "In reference to the questions which are agitating our body, I conceive that there is no way of settling these differences, short of a direct appeal to scripture".¹⁸¹

In view of their rejection of the authority of traditional Quaker authors and their emphasis on testing doctrine by reference to the scriptures, the Beaconites gradually came to the conclusion that the church practices of the Society of Friends for which they could find no Biblical authority should be abolished. In particular they questioned Quakerism's abstinence from the outward sacraments of baptism and communion. For example, Crewdson rejected the traditional Quaker belief that water baptism could be rejected as merely a Jewish rite, saying that the baptisms in the New Testament were carried out in Jesus' name and on his authority.¹⁸² The Beaconites also claimed that disuse of the outward sacraments had helped to undermine the orthodoxy of the Society of Friends. Baptism, they argued, was the means by which the believer overtly avowed himself a disciple of Christ¹⁸³ and rejection of this ordinance had ".. thrown us more into the condition of a social compact than of a church".¹⁸⁴ Similarly they argued that the Lord's Supper had a humbling effect¹⁸⁵ and its disavowal by Friends contributed to the departure of attention from Jesus Christ towards an "inward principle".¹⁸⁶ As well as questioning Friends' rejection of the outward sacraments, some of the Beaconites believed that their conviction of the authority of the scriptures and their allegiance to the interdenominational church left them no alternative to being baptised. Bates was himself baptised in August 1836, believing this to be consistent with scriptural authority. As a result he was disowned by Ohio Yearly Meeting in May 1837 and joined the Methodists two years later.¹⁸⁷ Other leading Beaconites took a similar course with Crewdson being baptised in an Independent chapel¹⁸⁸ and later baptising other dissident evangelical Friends himself.¹⁸⁹

While Gurney was undoubtedly alarmed by the increasing radicalism of the Beaconites, he was more concerned by the views being expressed by some of the Quietists' supporters. At the height of the controversy Gurney argued that, while he hoped that concern over Crewdson would die out, he believed that it was his place to guard against the opposite danger.¹⁹⁰ Crewdson's critics alarmed Gurney because he believed that some of the works produced by them in response to the Beacon were themselves heterodox. For example, he declared that he was really astonished by the publications of one Quietist supporter, Dr Hancock, and believed that the best way for the Quietists to settle their differences with the Beaconites would be to renounce such works.¹⁹¹ He, therefore, felt compelled to reply to the publications of the more radical Quietist supporters. Unfortunately at least one of these replies intensified Quietist suspicions about Gurney's loyalty to traditional Quaker beliefs. The most radical of the Quietists' supporters who emerged during the Beaconite controversy was Henry Martin. Martin, who it should be remembered was not a member of the Society of Friends, argued that some of the message given to the prophets and by Jesus had been lost or misconstrued¹⁹² and, as some of the books referred to in the Bible were lost, the scriptures were not infallible.¹⁹³ Nor surprisingly, Gurney found these arguments unacceptable and claimed that Martin's use of the scriptures would be worthy of Hicks.¹⁹⁴ Gurney replied to Martin's arguments in his Brief Remarks on Impartiality in the Interpretation of Scripture. This work, written specifically to refute Martin's criticisms of the scriptures, was disproportionately stressed by Gurney's critics as a sign that he rejected traditional Quaker beliefs. Although this work was printed only for private circulation, Quietists had

manuscript copies of it distributed among their supporters and claimed that it showed that Gurney had abandoned traditional Quaker beliefs. For example, John Barclay claimed Brief Remarks "...takes the modern and usual professor-like view of many texts, which may be called Quaker texts, and which we have appreciated and made use of differently from others"¹⁹⁵ and Wilbur argued that the work supported the doctrines expressed in the Beacon.¹⁹⁶ Quaker historians have also emphasised Brief Remarks as an exposition of Gurney's theology, with Edward Grubb arguing that this work showed Gurney was closer to Richard Baxter and John Bunyan than early Friends.¹⁹⁷ None of these criticisms of Gurney's Brief Remarks recognise that this work was written for a specific purpose and was not a complete exposition of Gurney's beliefs.

Gurney, as has been shown, was at the very centre of the Beaconite controversy. On the one hand he led London Yearly Meeting's attempts to reconcile the Beaconites to the Society of Friends. On the other he countered the claims of the most radical Quietists and therefore attracted the traditionalists' wrath as an example of the modern, apostate Quaker. Through occupying this central position in the controversy, Gurney was inevitably drawn into the intense theological debate caused by this conflict. During the Beaconite controversy the differences between the theology of the Quietists and the dissident evangelicals became as apparent as their differences over church order. Indeed the differences between their ecclesiologies were mirrored in other elements of their theology. The Quietists, who emphasised exclusiveness, also centred their theology on the authority of the immediate revelation of the Spirit to the exclusion of the sources of instruction and guidance which were accepted

by other Protestant Churches. Conversely the Beaconites, who emphasised ecumenism, stressed the authority of the sources of historical revelation, which would also have been acknowledged by members of other denominations.

Given that the Beaconites' theology was largely expressed in terms of opposition to the beliefs of the Quietists, it is essential to understand the doctrines which were presented as traditional Quakerism during the Beaconite controversy. The Quietists' theology emphasised the role of the Spirit above all else. It is true that members of other churches, even evangelicals, would have accepted some elements of their doctrine of the Spirit. In particular, many non-Quietists, including the Beaconites, had some sympathy with the Quietists' emphasis on the Spirit as the sustainer of the devotional life. Moreover, few evangelicals would have argued with Wheeler's assertion that faith came from the Spirit, which also provided liberty from sin and allowed the believer to serve and worship God.¹⁹⁸ Similarly Wilbur's assertion that the Spirit's power would prevent individuals from sinning¹⁹⁹ would have not offended even the Beaconites.

Other Quietist claims about the role of the Spirit, however, alarmed the evangelicals, particularly the distinctive feature of traditionalist Quaker theology, a belief that the Spirit operated directly in the heart, by immediate revelation, to guide and instruct the believer. The Quietists assigned great weight to the Spirit's function as an instructor. Wheeler argued that through this immediate revelation of the Spirit it was possible to perceive the "snares of the adversary" and to detect alluring, but spiritually deadly, "false religion".²⁰⁰ Some Quietists even claimed

that this immediate guidance of the Spirit gave them miraculous powers; Sarah Grubb claimed it showed her the "state of souls" in religious services²⁰¹ and, on one occasion, the identity of a thief.²⁰² More importantly they regarded the doctrine of immediate revelation as being central to Quakerism. Shillitoe declared that "... our first Friends were raised up as a people, to bear testimony to the sufficiency of this pure principle of light and life in all mankind..."²⁰³ and Hancock believed that rejection of this doctrine would be an act of apostasy.²⁰⁴ They were therefore alarmed at the apparent lack of emphasis on the doctrine of immediate revelation among contemporary Friends. For example, John Wilbur believed that the historical and outward revelation was over emphasised at the expense of spiritual reality at the 1833 London Yearly Meeting²⁰⁵ and Sarah Grubb feared that Friends were being led away from attention to the inward religious life, by a "spirit of subtlety".²⁰⁶

In particular the Quietists were alarmed by the evangelicals' introduction of prepared lecturing and preaching as a supplement to spontaneous Spirit-guided ministry, and considered that some of the ministry at London Yearly Meeting was generated, not by the Spirit, but by the human intellect.²⁰⁷

As a result Wilbur noted that a Friends' minister believed that it was possible to

"...teach the people properly enough without waiting upon God for the influence of his Spirit. The discovery of such a sentiment as this, entertained by a professed minister of our Society, was, indeed, a great grief to me".²⁰⁸

They pointed to Gurney in particular as an exponent of this new practice of prepared preaching; John Barclay noted that Gurney gave lectures on

religious subjects, saying this was a "...sort of new gift that has sprung up these days..." which allowed the performer to follow the direction of his brain rather than speaking by direct revelation.²⁰⁹ It is possible that the Quietists centred their criticisms of the evangelicals' promotion of a separate gift of preaching on Gurney because he had brought this matter to their attention in his 1824 Observations on the Religious Peculiarities of the Society of Friends:

"Here I would observe that there appears to exist a material distinction between teaching and preaching. While in the performance of either of these Christian duties, the dependence of the true Christian will be placed on the grace and Spirit of God, it may be freely admitted that in teaching, a much greater liberty is given for the use of our merely human faculties, than in the higher and more important office of prophesying or preaching".²¹⁰

While their belief in the immediate revelation was sufficient in itself to bring the Quietists into conflict with the Beaconites, some of the conclusions which the Quietists drew from this doctrine were just as unacceptable to the dissident evangelicals. Quietist theology ran counter to all the distinctive central tenets of evangelicalism, most obviously to its biblicism. It is true that the Quietists regarded the scriptures with great respect, describing them as being replete with sublime truths, wonderfully preserved from earliest times, given by inspiration of God, and being profitable in instruction to faith in Jesus Christ.²¹¹ The Bible was also considered to be the method by which the revelation of the Spirit was made known to men.²¹² The Quietists did not, however, accept that the scriptures had greater authority than the Spirit. They argued that, when forced to decide between the supremacy of the scriptures and the Spirit, they would place the latter higher.²¹³ To place the scriptures higher

than the Spirit, Martin argued, was to depreciate the authority of the Spirit.²¹⁴ Another Quietist supporter admitted that the scriptures were the most valuable collection of inspired writings to enter the world, but also argued that he would not limit the divine power by claiming that they were the only collection of divinely inspired writings.²¹⁵ Given their reservations about the authority of the Scriptures, the Quietists, in contrast to evangelicals, deprecated the value of their study. They argued that a literal faith in the scriptures or an intellectual understanding of them would not in themselves lead to salvation. Grubb stated that it was possible to search the Bible with the intellect and still not come to God as this intellectual search would refuse Christ in his inward and spiritual appearance.²¹⁶ Moreover the Quietists regarded the evangelicals' emphasis on biblicism as a threat to the faith of the Society of Friends which betokened assimilation with the unreformed church. For example, Martin warned that if the scriptures alone were seen as the Word of God this would undermine all Quakerism²¹⁷ and Grubb regarded the placing of the scriptures above the Spirit as Episcopalianism.²¹⁸ Most dramatically Wilbur described the tendency of many Friends to substitute the authority of the scriptures for that of the Spirit as the work of the Devil.²¹⁹

The Quietists, in addition to rejecting the evangelicals' biblicism, also eschewed their emphasis on activism; their doctrine of conversion; and, perhaps most importantly given the Beaconites' fears of Hicksism, their Christocentricity. Christ, certainly in any form that the evangelicals would recognise, did not play a major role in Quietist theology. Instead the Quietists emphasised Christ as an internal and mystical spiritual force, not distinguished from the Spirit. Hancock described the invisible

workings of Christ's spirit in the heart as one of the great doctrines of Christianity and recognised that this differed from accepted Christian doctrine which was limited to an "outward expectation of the truth".²²⁰ He further described ".. the appearance of Jesus Christ, - outwardly to the Jews in the days of his flesh, but inwardly both to them and the gentiles by his free Spirit".²²¹ Importantly Quietists' theology placed great emphasis on this somewhat unorthodox christology. They described the light of Christ's spirit in the soul as the 'seed' from which the Kingdom of God grew²²² and argued that it was of vital importance to true Christian divinity to feel and know Christ as a spirit.²²³ The Quietists' doctrine of salvation also alarmed many evangelicals, as it stressed the need for a gradual process of internal change and placed relatively little emphasis on a belief in the historical atonement. God, the Quietists argued, had to be known in the soul²²⁴ and humanity needed to be born again of incorruptible seed, with sin dying and righteousness being born in their lives.²²⁵ The Quietists believed that this process of internal change could only be achieved through the immediate revelation of the Spirit. Wilbur argued that all those who yielded to the reforming power of the Spirit would be both saved and regenerated²²⁶ and claimed that through the "washings of regeneration", those who submitted themselves to the needed restraints and endured the cross, would become new creatures.²²⁷ Given their emphasis on this gradual process of inner reform, the Quietists criticised the evangelicals' emphasis on the atonement as the source of salvation. Wilbur argued that although the atonement had in the past been too little referred to among Friends, it was now emphasised and he feared that this might run to extremes; it suited humanity's nature to believe in historical revelation rather than to

know Christ spiritually.²²⁸ The Quietists also believed sinister spiritual forces had caused this shift in Quaker theology, with Wilbur arguing that if the "enemy" ".. can destroy our faith in his work in the heart he will not oppose our faith in the atonement".²²⁹ The Quietists' criticisms of the evangelicals for their stress on the doctrine of atonement were, therefore, extremely vitriolic. Wilbur stated that many of the leading members of the Society of Friends had "imbibed and adopted some of the defective views of others" in stressing the outward work of Christ to the exclusion of the other part of the covenant²³⁰ and criticised Gurney in particular for concentrating on the atonement.²³¹ The Quietists similarly opposed the evangelicals' emphasis on justification, arguing that they ignored the vital process of sanctification. John Barclay argued that it was possible to have complete literal faith, but added that this would not prevent the wrong wisdom being established and truth crushed.²³² Most alarmingly for the evangelicals, the Quietists' stress on salvation through the immediate revelation led them to express a form of universalism. They argued that all humanity received the Light in redeeming love,²³³ with Shillitoe claiming that there was a pure principle of light and life in all mankind.²³⁴ Grubb claimed that all humanity could partake in salvation through Christ's grace even without knowledge of the scriptures.²³⁵ The Quietists also rejected a fourth central tenet of evangelicalism: its activism. Unlike the evangelicals who, as will be discussed later in this study, emphasised involvement in the world, the Quietists' theology demanded a cessation of "creaturely" activity and a complete surrender of the will to God. Grubb preached at the 1820 London Yearly Meeting that the will, wisdom, and activity of the "creature" could not promote the cause of truth and righteousness.²³⁶ She also argued that to engage in

the ministry "... the will must be crucified again and again".²³⁷ Given this emphasis on the cessation of mental and physical action, the Quietists regarded mysticism as a great and holy principle.²³⁸

Quietist theology, therefore, stressed the work of the immediate revelation of the Spirit, rejected the evangelicals' emphasis on historical revelation, especially their biblicism, Christocentricity, and soteriology. The traditionalist Friends further disavowed the evangelicals' stress on justification by faith and activism. The Beaconites by contrast defended the tenets of evangelicalism and, as a result, criticised Quietist theology. They also accused the Gurneyites of heterodoxy. Indeed one of the few issues on which all three groups agreed was the role of the Spirit in sustaining the believer's devotional life. Crewdson acknowledged that it was impossible to wait upon God²³⁹ or understand the scriptures without the Spirit's power.²⁴⁰ Similarly, like the Quietists, the Beaconites believed that the Spirit worked to enlighten and sanctify the heart.²⁴¹ The Beaconites', however, completely rejected the Quietist doctrine that the Spirit instructed the believer or revealed religious truth. The work of the Spirit, Boulton argued, was not to reveal the truth, but to guide the sinner into the Gospel²⁴² and Crewdson denied that the Spirit could bring knowledge of Christianity without the "outward revelation"²⁴³ of the Scriptures.²⁴⁴ Revelation was therefore limited to the New Testament period when the Apostles and Evangelists were able to preach the Gospel through the special gift of the Spirit.²⁴⁵ They also limited the work of the Spirit to those who had received the historical revelation, by arguing that the indwelling of the Spirit "...is the privilege of believers only...".²⁴⁶ The Beaconites furthermore rejected the Quietists' doctrine

that immediate revelation could be a source of inspiration for preaching. Howard argued that, given the frequent scriptural errors in Friends' preaching, the inspiration for this ministry could not be from God and this preaching must therefore contain much of the spirit of the minister or of others.²⁴⁷ Indeed, if any one issue divided the Beaconites from the Society of Friends it was their opposition to the doctrine of immediate revelation, which the dissident evangelicals constantly reiterated during the Beaconite controversy. Even in 1832 John Wilkinson had caused considerable controversy by his criticisms of the doctrine of the "light within" at the conference for the revision of Friends' books of discipline.²⁴⁸ Furthermore Crewdson claimed to have written the Beacon to draw Friends' attention to "...the pernicious theory...that the revelation of the Spirit through the scriptures is only a secondary rule - that the Spirit himself is a higher rule".²⁴⁹ Crewdson also wrote that the Hicksite schism

"...appears to have originated in the assumption, that we are authorised to expect to be taught the true knowledge of God of his salvation, - our duty to him, and to our fellow-men, immediately by the SPIRIT, independently of His revelation through the Scriptures, - an assumption which is unsupported by scripture, contradicted by fact, and one which renders its votaries a prey to many fatal delusions"²⁵⁰

and, Crewdson, warned that those who advocated this doctrine risked opening a flood gate to dangerous error and the introduction of another Gospel.²⁵¹ Moreover, they argued, to claim to be open to revelation without the scriptures was a delusion of the Devil.²⁵² Their criticisms of this doctrine also highlighted the differences that existed between them and Gurney's supporters, as Crewdson declaring that with regard to the

doctrine of the inward light, the committee "...have fallen into a very serious error".²⁵³

Given their rejection of immediate revelation, the Beaconites naturally stressed the importance of the sources of historical revelation and regarded the scriptures as the only reliable source of doctrine and inspiration. The Beaconites described the Bible as the only authorized account of God's person and activity²⁵⁴ and claimed that a belief in the scriptures was inseparable from salvation.²⁵⁵ They were naturally more concerned than the Quietists to separate the roles of the Spirit and the Scriptures: Boulton argued that, although there was a perfect harmony between the Spirit and scriptures, failure to apply these gifts to their proper department dishonoured God.²⁵⁶ As well as their emphasis on historical revelation the Beaconites also stressed the importance of the atonement, which Crewdson regarded as the "cardinal doctrine of Christianity",²⁵⁷ and claimed that this doctrine was irreconcilable with a belief in the inward light.²⁵⁸ Again they accused the Gurneyites of heterodoxy on this point, with Crewdson arguing that although evangelical ministers united in supporting the doctrine of atonement, the committee confused this article of faith with obedience to the inward light.²⁵⁹ As importantly the Beaconites condemned the universalistic tendencies of Quietist theology, although they did concede that the Spirit might work to a limited extent among those who did not possess the scriptures. For example, Crewdson stated that the light was not limited to those who knew the scriptures and he did not presume to determine the degree or manner of divine will where the Bible was not known²⁶⁰ and Howard believed that those who had not heard the scriptures would not perish for lack of them,

if they submitted themselves to the inward power. The Beaconites, however, made their doubts about the sufficiency of this divine illumination clear by their emphasis on the need to evangelise the unconverted. Howard stated that knowledge of the scriptures was profitable and regarded the effects of heathenism or Mohammedanism on the mind as being as damaging as those of slavery on the body.²⁶¹ Given their belief that the heathens needed to be evangelised to be saved, the Beaconites emphasised activism and condemned the Quietists' emphasis on contemplation as being unscriptural and spiritually dangerous. Instead of waiting for the mind to be freed from trouble, Crewdson argued, the very sense of being burdened was the means by which people were called to Christ.²⁶² Quietism, he suggested, was not taught in the scriptures as a means to redemption, but prayer was instead emphasised.²⁶³ He also declared that Christ did not preach an empty mind.²⁶⁴ More importantly the Beaconites rejected the necessity of silent worship, arguing that silence, although profitable in every religious experience, should not be forced on everyone and exhorted Friends to examine the scriptures with regard to their mode of worship.²⁶⁵

Given the tremendous differences between the beliefs of the Quietists and the Beaconites, Gurney's attempts to reconcile them might appear to be futile. Gurney, like the Beaconites, absorbed the major doctrines of the evangelical movement; but he also maintained some traditional Quaker beliefs. This is clearly shown in his ecclesiology, which combined elements of the beliefs of the Quietists and Beaconites. Like the Quietists, Gurney believed that Quakerism was the only truly reformed church. He declared that

"Making a due allowance for the difference between heathen and Christian countries, we may perceive a remarkable similarity between the first settlement of the meetings of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland, and the planting of the primitive Christian Churches".²⁶⁶

He also declared that the early Friends had been "...led out of the various forms and ceremonies to which they had been previously accustomed" by the immediate revelation of Christ.²⁶⁷ Despite this he shared some of the Beaconites' doubts about the sufficiency of the early Quaker authors as a source of authority. Gurney accepted that the early Friends were capable of error and, as the Society of Friends had come into being in a period of great excitement, some of them had been "carried off their centre by a warm imagination". Gurney therefore stated that "...I am by no means prepared to justify all they did, or all that they said...".²⁶⁸ For example, he declared of Barclay's Apology: "I know it has its defects, in particular, I am far from fully approving the manner in which this writer treats the subject of the Holy Scriptures".²⁶⁹ He also believed that Barclay and the other early Quaker writers were in error in their use of Scripture to explain the doctrine of inward light or influence of the Spirit.²⁷⁰ He rejected the claims of the Quietist, Dr Hancock, that Barclay's Apology should be used as the standard test of Quaker doctrines.²⁷¹ Gurney therefore argued that the works of early Friends should not be regarded as being authoritative. Instead he claimed that the scriptures alone were the "only fit and outward judge" by which doctrines and practices were to be tested.²⁷² Gurney resolved this apparent contradiction of regarding Quakerism as the truly reformed church, while not conceding that its accepted apologists were authoritative, by arguing that the practices and doctrines of the Society of Friends were based on those of the New

Testament, rather than on the works of early Friends. He, therefore, argued that he would define Quakerism, not by reference to the works of Barclay, Penn, or Pennington, but instead as the religion of the New Testament.²⁷³

In addition to combining elements of traditional Quaker and evangelical ecclesiology, Gurney attempted to reconcile elements of Quietist and Beaconite theology in his doctrine of the Spirit. Like the other two camps Gurney stressed the necessity of the Spirit's work in the believer's life, claiming that the strength of the Spirit was required to secure a change from love of the world to love of God and to impart a living energy to praise and prayers.²⁷⁴ However, unlike either of the other factions, Gurney emphasised the Spirit as a person rather than an impersonal force. Gurney believed that the Spirit had personal authority, exercised personal powers, and therefore should receive personal allegiance.²⁷⁵ More significantly, unlike the Beaconites, he defended the doctrine of the immediate revelation of the Spirit. The immediate and perceptible guidance of the Spirit was, he argued, the "grand practical characteristic" of the new covenant²⁷⁶ and was required to understand the scriptures, reveal humanity's darkness, and to act on the conscience.²⁷⁷ Gurney rejected the Beaconites claims that the doctrine of immediate revelation was unscriptural.²⁷⁸ He also claimed that this doctrine was compatible with evangelicalism, stating that the doctrine of immediate teaching, guidance, and government of the Holy Spirit was allowed by orthodox Christians. Furthermore he declared that the doctrine of a light which allowed the conscience to perceive the great dictates of the divine law even without outward revelation was usually accepted among evangelical Christians.²⁷⁹

Gurney, therefore, criticised the Beaconites for their attacks on this doctrine. He wrote to Crewdson, saying

"Is it too much to assert, that it is one principal object of the book - the obvious and apparent intention of the author, in many of its pages - whether more or less directly indicated, - to disparage the doctrine of an inward and universal light?".²⁸⁰

Furthermore Gurney refuted Crewdson's suggestion that the immediate revelation of the Spirit was largely granted only to the apostles; arguing instead that "...the promise of the Spirit, in all its richness and variety, is the inheritance, in this world, of the Holy Catholic Church in all ages".²⁸¹ Gurney also upheld the doctrine of the immediate revelation during his itinerant tours, as during these he had no pre-prepared sermon and instead waited on the immediate influence of the Spirit to provide his message. Gurney argued that the preacher was made competent to minister only by the Spirit²⁸² and Gurney's theology assigned an almost Montanist role to the Spirit as the source of inspiration for the preacher. For example, he described preachers under the immediate influence of the Spirit as "good scribes".²⁸³ He further claimed to have no control over his own ministry and that he could neither stop or start it.²⁸⁴ The manner in which Gurney received this gift of ministry could be dramatic. For example at one meeting at Beccles, Gurney believed for a long time that he would have nothing to say to his audience, but he eventually arose to make a remark or two on worship and after this the words flowed for over an hour.²⁸⁵ Because he depended upon the immediate guidance of the Spirit to supply his sermons, Gurney ran the risk of holding a public meeting and having nothing to say. This actually occurred on at least one occasion: at a crowded meeting in 1818, where not a word was spoken by anyone;

although Gurney hoped that the meeting had been a useful lesson to many.²⁸⁶ As well as his individual sermons the actual courses of Gurney's tours were not planned in advance and instead left to the dictates of the Spirit. It is clear that Gurney commenced his tours without being sure where, under the direction of the Spirit, they would take him. For example, his 1829 letter to Jonathan Hutchinson, giving details of an intended tour, is remarkably vague and shows Gurney had some doubts even about which county he would visit.²⁸⁷ Even after the tours had began, he seems to have had no idea where they would eventually take him, with Gurney stating during a tour in 1826 of the West Country, that "things were enveloped in obscurity" beyond his next two meetings²⁸⁸ and during an 1842 tour that he could not "see the way very clearly" for the rest of the journey.²⁸⁹ As well as being uncertain where his journeys would take him, Gurney was also unsure as to their duration. On the eve of one journey in 1825, he stated that at present he did not expect to be away from home for very long²⁹⁰ and in 1828 he believed that a tour would probably last less than two weeks.²⁹¹

While Gurney opposed the Beaconites' disavowal of the doctrine of immediate revelation, he also criticised the Quietists for placing too much emphasis on this doctrine. He argued that regarding immediate revelation as the true foundation of faith was improper and dangerous.²⁹² The Quietists, he argued, placed too much emphasis on this doctrine and, therefore, tended to oppose the fundamental principle in the scriptures of the atonement. Furthermore he accused them of exciting prejudice against the Holy Spirit by presenting it in a "perverted and unscriptural way".²⁹³ In addition to criticising the Quietists' over-emphasis on the work of the

Spirit, Gurney rejected some of the Quietists' more extreme claims about immediate revelation, in particular the implication that could be drawn from their beliefs that this internal revelation abrogated the value of external revelation and that humanity had an inherent capacity or "seed" within the heart which was capable of bringing salvation. Indeed he wrote to Dr Hancock arguing that the New Testament references to a seed referred only to the influence of the Spirit, working in connection with a knowledge of the gospel.²⁹⁴ Gurney also rejected Dr Wardlaw's accusation that Friends had ever believed in a "principle of inward light" other than as a gift from God²⁹⁵ and argued that it would be folly for those who possessed external revelation to throw themselves back on the merely partial illumination which was received by humanity in general.²⁹⁶ With regard to the extent of the work of the Spirit beyond the Christian church, Gurney argued that all mankind received a measure of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ.²⁹⁷ The Spirit, he argued, operated even in ancient philosophers²⁹⁸ and in the purest of non-Christian religions, Platonic philosophy and the beliefs of the American Indians, "...there may, in my opinion, be observed no unambiguous traces of a certain measure of divine illumination...".²⁹⁹ He warned, however, that this illumination was not sufficient in itself. The heathen's idea of God, Gurney argued, was "fluctuating and imperfect".³⁰⁰ Gurney, therefore, stated that even the ancient philosophers' idea of God was partial and incomplete³⁰¹ and the moral effects of Christianity could not be seen in other religions.³⁰² More importantly Gurney regarded the belief that salvation was open to all humanity as a total disregard of Christian teaching,³⁰³ because the heathens were in a state of darkness respecting the divine being, which was only removed when the scriptures were made known.³⁰⁴ Gurney,

therefore, believed that the higher and special influences of the Spirit were experienced only by the Christian.³⁰⁵ While this lack of emphasis on the work of immediate revelation outside the church might be regarded as a denial of traditional Quaker beliefs, it is also an inevitable consequence of Gurney's adoption of evangelicalism. Living in an era of missionary activity, Gurney opposed any theology which might have cast doubts on the need to evangelise the unconverted.

In addition to these reservations about some aspects of the doctrine of immediate revelation, Gurney, like the Beaconites, criticised those elements in Quietist theology which conflicted with evangelical belief, although he was critical of some of the Beaconites' doctrines which veered too far from traditional Quakerism. Of the doctrines expressed by the Quietists, Gurney, like Crewdson and his followers, found their Christology the most alarming. He wrote of Martin's work: "To denote our Lord Jesus Christ, a Rule, as does this author....involves the danger of a very fatal heresy; it obviously tends to divest him of his personality, and convert him into a principle".³⁰⁶ Gurney warned that the argument that Jesus Christ's flesh and blood were purely figurative and that His real influence was through His Spirit in the heart would eventually lead to the conclusion that His death on the cross achieved nothing.³⁰⁷ This over-emphasis on the internal work of the Spirit alarmed Gurney because he regarded the historical revelation of the atonement as the supremely important element of the Christian faith. All, he argued, were guilty before God and due for punishment;³⁰⁸ but Jesus Christ had died in their place³⁰⁹ with his atonement being the means by which God could forgive a sinful race while maintaining His law.³¹⁰ Gurney did, however, link this evangelical

emphasis on the atonement to the Quietists' stress on immediate revelation. He stated that Christ's immediate revelation and physical sufferings should be regarded in unison as they were part of a perfect whole and not contrasting doctrines.³¹¹ As importantly, unlike the Beaconites and in keeping with the Quietists, Gurney argued that both justification and sanctification were required for salvation. While Gurney stated that change in character and conduct were important, these were not enough in themselves to purchase eternal life;³¹² he also believed that a bare act of faith by the sinner was insufficient, as regeneration was also required.³¹³ It is, however, important to note that while Gurney believed that justification and sanctification were closely associated he, unlike Quietists, drew a distinction between them. Indeed he admitted to Crewdson that

"Many of the early Friends, used the term justification in a wider, and as I apprehend, less accurate, sense than that in which it is usually understood among Christians. They considered that justification consisted of two parts; first the forgiveness and reconciliation of the penitent and converted sinner through the imputation of his righteousness; and secondly, the actual purification of the soul from sin, by the cleansing influence of the Holy Spirit...It appears to me best and safest to confine the term justification to the former sense here mentioned.. nothing is more easy than to slip from the misapplication of a term, into error of opinion".³¹⁴

Given his evangelical beliefs, Gurney, in contrast with the Quietists but like the Beaconites emphasised the value of the scriptures. He described them as divine truth in just and true proportions³¹⁵ and given by inspiration of God.³¹⁶ He also, like the Quietists, regarded the scriptures as the chosen method for the Spirit to communicate with church members.³¹⁷ More importantly, in questions of doctrine, Gurney placed the authority of the scriptures above the Spirit.

Paradoxically Gurney, who had accepted the Quietists' doctrine of the immediate inward revelation, also accepted the paramount authority of the scriptures. Indeed he privately admitted that he concurred as strongly with the Beacon's statements on the authority of the scriptures, as he differed with it over immediate revelation.³¹⁸ He therefore believed that while the scriptures and the Spirit should not be compared to establish a preference,³¹⁹ the former had greater authority, although the Spirit pre-dated them and had a wider influence.³²⁰ Furthermore he argued that the authority of the scriptures was sufficient and final and that no preconceived or unauthorised opinions should be added to them.³²¹ Given this emphasis on the doctrinal authority of the scriptures, Gurney believed that they should be used to test the validity of supposed promptings of the Spirit. As a result he stated that impressions should be tested by the Bible rather than vice versa.³²² Most dramatically, it was claimed by one of the Quietists, Gurney had declared at the 1836 London Yearly Meeting that unless the Society of Friends acknowledged that the scriptures had greater authority than impressions made on the mind, he would leave the Society of Friends.³²³ This belief in the authority of the scriptures would apparently contradict Gurney's belief that the Society of Friends, which stressed the authority of the Spirit, was the only truly reformed church. Gurney, however, argued that the Society of Friends had always emphasised the authority of the scriptures, and claimed that no other denomination had borne a more explicit testimony or made more frequent reference to the "divine authority of scriptures"³²⁴ and that early Friends had never advocated the disuse of the Bible.³²⁵ Although Gurney rejected the Quietists'

depreciation of the authority of the Bible, he was not uncritical of the Beaconites' emphasis on biblicism and accused them of overstating the importance of the Bible as a means to salvation. He argued that the Beacon showed a real danger of placing the scriptures in the position which should rightfully be occupied only by the Saviour and reminded Crewdson that freedom from sin came not from the scriptures but from the grace they announced.³²⁶ Gurney also rejected the doctrine that the Bible was in any way the exclusive "Word of God",³²⁷ unlike the Beaconites who argued that in some passages of Scripture the term "Word" might refer to the message itself.³²⁸ It is also worth noting that Gurney was not what would later be described as a "fundamentalist" and had some limited reservations about the inerrancy of the scriptures: he believed that the story of Lazarus and the poor man was probably "fictitious" or a parable intended only to convey understanding of doctrine.³²⁹

On another issue which had divided the Beaconites and Quietists, activism and contemplation, he again occupied the middle ground between their positions. Like the Beaconites he had strong reservations about mysticism, describing it as a web, producing and concealing the seeds of death.³³⁰ He did not, however, accede to the Beaconites' blanket condemnation of contemplation, although he explained this practise in a manner which would be acceptable to evangelicals. Gurney therefore stated that all Christians should retire during the day to practice self-examination and prayer, as this would produce greater diligence in communion with God and result in a more conspicuous bearing of the mark of the Spirit.³³¹

While Gurney was able to combine evangelicalism and traditional Quakerism, other Friends could not and it became increasingly obvious during the Beaconite Controversy that Quietism and Beaconism could not co-exist. The Beaconites' rejection of Quaker practices, combined with the Yearly Meeting committee's refusal to vindicate them, pushed them into a situation where they had to separate from the Society of Friends and the actions of Gurney and the other members of the committee merely hastened this. The committee ultimately decided to leave it to the local Monthly Meeting to discipline Crewdson. In their recommendations to the Monthly Meeting, the Committee, once again, tried unsuccessfully to avoid doctrinal controversy. Gurney suggested that while disciplining Crewdson the Monthly Meeting should take no action on doctrinal grounds as, although the views expressed in the Beacon tended to disparage the Friends' beliefs on silent worship, they were united with Crewdson on essential doctrine.³³² While the Monthly Meeting might have been expected to deal with Crewdson harshly, given his disruption of the local meetings, it merely placed a temporary ban on him acting as a minister, which Gurney considered was a "mild and lenient sentence".³³³ Crewdson, however, found even this sentence too much and he and fifty of his followers resigned,³³⁴ provoking a chain of defections among evangelical Friends with approximately 300 eventually resigning.³³⁵ Certain evangelically-dominated congregations were to lose disproportionately high numbers through these resignations. During the Controversy, the membership of Kendal Meeting fell from around 300 to approximately 100³³⁶ and Tottenham meeting, another evangelical stronghold, suffered serious losses.³³⁷ Resignations among the Braithwaite family are of some interest to this study, as J B Braithwaite, Gurney's

biographer, was one of only two members of the family to retain their membership of the Society of Friends.³³⁸ Approximately 100 of those Friends who resigned joined a schismatic Meeting for Worship founded by Crewdson. This meeting, freed from the constraints of traditional Quakerism, lost any distinctive Quaker features and became indistinguishable from any other Non-Conformist chapel. Given this lack of distinctive identity it is perhaps inevitable that this meeting did not flourish and when Crewdson died in 1844, the building was sold to the Baptists. Other Friends who had resigned during the controversy demonstrated their allegiance to interdenominationalism by joining the Church of England and other Non-Conformist churches (particularly the Brethren).³³⁹

By the time that this chain of resignations began even Gurney had realised that reconciliation was impossible. He believed that Crewdson's resignation might be for the best, due to the damage the controversy was causing to the Society of Friends.³⁴⁰ Notwithstanding this, Gurney was deeply affected by the resulting chain of resignations and recorded that John Wilkinson's resignation, which he regarded as an open attack on the Society of Friends, was very upsetting. He also feared that other resignations would follow³⁴¹ and when they occurred Gurney admitted that he was more affected than surprised.³⁴² However, it is important to note that Gurney, whatever his sympathies were with individual Beaconites, stated that it was impossible to follow them out of the Society of Friends as he found himself much at peace with being a Quaker.³⁴³ Gurney further claimed that his principles as a Christian were not shaken by what had occurred during the controversy, but rather "...have been confirmed by what

I have witnessed in connection with the late painful divisions"³⁴⁴
Gurney's response to this controversy is indicative of the effect of the
Beaconite controversy on the Gurneyite party as a whole, which survived
and indeed prospered due to this conflict. Despite the defections of many
leading evangelicals, the Gurneyites retained their position of power
within London Yearly Meeting and neither of the opposing parties had
inflicted lasting damage on them. Although Crewdson and his followers
continued to issue pamphlets criticising Friends, the controversy died down
and they took relatively few Friends with them when they left the Society.
Despite the serious decline in membership which this controversy caused in
a few evangelically dominated meetings, Vaux claims that even in
Manchester, the centre of Beaconite power, the resignations of the
Beaconites did not make any appreciable difference to the size of the
congregation.³⁴⁵ Similarly the Quietists were unable to make a significant
recovery during the controversy and Turner, a historian who seems to have
favoured their cause, claimed this was their last rally in the United
Kingdom.³⁴⁶ Although in actual fact the Quietists were able to mount
another campaign of criticism of the evangelicals in the 1840s, their
power was clearly spent. Indeed in 1841 one Quietist admitted

"I believe, two thirds of our members are what is called
Evangelical. In the men's Yearly Meeting, that party sways
entirely, and in our Select Yearly Meeting; but not so much in
our women's Yearly Meeting, though much more than formerly".³⁴⁷

In addition to retaining their dominance of positions of power within
British Quakerism, the Gurneyites were able to establish their beliefs as
the recognised doctrine of the Society of Friends during this controversy.
In 1836, due to doubts which had been expressed following the request

from Westmorland Quarterly that the Society should issue a declaration stating that the authority of the Scriptures was paramount, London Yearly Meeting's general epistle included a declaration on their doctrines.

Gurney, who advised on the contents of the declaration, described it "...as clear and important a document - considered as a confession of faith as was ever put forth by a body of professing Christians".³⁴⁸ The epistle affirmed the authority of the Scriptures and warned that anything done or said contrary to them under the claim of immediate guidance was a delusion. It also stated that Christ ruled by the Spirit in the heart, but denied belief in any spiritual light in humanity except that of the Holy Spirit bestowed through Christ.³⁴⁹ These doctrines, which concurred with Gurney's own beliefs, were to be accepted as the beliefs of Quakerism for the rest of the period under consideration: Edward Grubb argues that the tenor of this epistle was to dominate London Yearly Meeting for the next fifty years.³⁵⁰

By the end of the 1830s evangelicalism was established as the doctrine of London Yearly Meeting. It was not, however, a form of evangelicalism which rejected traditional Quaker beliefs, but rather one which curbed what Gurney would have regarded as Quietistic excesses. Therefore the doctrine of the immediate revelation was retained, but set in the context of evangelicalism. As a result it can be claimed that the years of the Beaconite controversy mark a watershed in the history of London Yearly Meeting. While the fate of the Beaconites undoubtedly occupied most attention at the time, the inability of the Quietists to regain a significant influence within London Yearly Meeting is much more significant. Quietism, and by inference sectarian Quakerism, had been put

to the test during the Beaconite controversy and found to be no longer the dominant influence in London Yearly Meeting. At the same time the non-denominational evangelical movement's doctrines were gaining ground. The Beaconite controversy, therefore, marks an important point in British Quakerism's transition from sect to denomination.

While this process of transition was relatively gentle within London Yearly Meeting, events associated with the rise of evangelicalism within American Quakerism were much more dramatic and painful. Several of the major figures involved in the Beaconite controversy are also closely associated with the schisms that evangelicalism caused among American Friends - none more so than Gurney.

5. GURNEY'S MISSION TO AMERICA 1837 TO 1840.

The tensions between evangelicalism and traditional Quakerism which had come to the fore in London Yearly Meeting during the Beaconite controversy were also present within contemporary American Quakerism and led to a second schism in the Society of Friends in the United States. Gurney played a prominent role in this schism as he had in the Beaconite controversy, due to events surrounding his 1837-40 mission to American Friends. During this mission Gurney came into conflict with all sections of contemporary American Quakerism. He engaged in extensive, but ultimately unsuccessful, evangelistic work among the Hicksites, during which he hoped to draw large numbers of them back into the Orthodox camp. More importantly Gurney preached among Orthodox Friends and during this work he was to find himself, once again, being opposed by both dissident evangelicals and Quietists. The latter group, which included many prominent Friends, were to provide Gurney with his most consistent critics during the tour and their dissatisfaction with him ultimately precipitated the second schism within American Quakerism. Gurney can in part be held responsible for this schism as his attitude during the tour and misapprehension of the state of contemporary American Quakerism, both of which were influenced by accounts of earlier missions to America, were entirely inappropriate for the circumstances in which he found himself.

One of Gurney's most significant fields of endeavour during his American tour was preaching among those Friends who had joined the "Hicksite" denomination after the first schism in American Quakerism. Gurney arrived

in America with preconceived views on the cause and outcome of the first schism and was clearly influenced by accounts he received from British Friends who had travelled in America in the period before his own mission, in particular Hannah Chapman Backhouse and her husband, who had visited the United States after the first schism. Due to these accounts Gurney probably over-emphasised the strength and unity of the Orthodox camp. For example, in 1828 he stated that accounts from America were on the whole satisfactory and after the "Friends" had separated from the "Radicals" during New York Yearly Meeting they had conducted their proceedings satisfactorily.¹ In 1829 the Robsons informed Gurney that 4,000 people had attended the Orthodox Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, which, unlike its Hicksite counterpart, was a success, news which he found cheering.² In 1830 he received news from the Backhouses that the Baltimore Yearly Meeting, although very reduced, was peaceful.³ They also informed him in 1831 that the Yearly Meetings at New York and Philadelphia were satisfactory.⁴ As well as over-estimating the strength of the Orthodox party, Gurney oversimplified the causes of the schism, by claiming that the controversy had been caused by a few individuals, an accusation he was later to make with regard to the Quietists' opposition to his own tour. For example, he claimed that the otherwise peaceful assembly of Ohio Yearly Meeting had been thrown into uproar and confusion by a number of persons who had lapsed from the faith. He regarded Hicks' influence as the pre-eminent cause of the controversy. Gurney described Hicks as a man of plain and simple habits who at one time had been a zealous preacher and was loved by thousands. Due to this admiration Hicks succumbed to egotism and gradually imbibed "those false views of religion which flatter the natural pride of man's heart".⁵ Gurney dismissed the Hicksites'

criticisms of the Orthodox Friends, by claiming that Hicks and his followers were deists (perhaps inaccurately given Hicks' opposition to rationalism). As early as 1830 Gurney referred to the Hicksites as "... the new deistical sect...".⁶ He also linked events in America and Ireland, presumably referring to the New Lights controversy.⁷ Gurney's explanation of the first schism is of importance as it indicates that he took an oversimplistic view of events within American Quakerism and did not appreciate the diversity of opinions he would encounter during his own tour. Moreover his explanation of the controversy over Hicks allowed him to reject any opposition he encountered from Quietists as being tinged with Hicksism. Gurney, therefore, consistently underestimated the significance of the Quietist opposition he faced, with disastrous consequences.

The accounts which Gurney received from British Friends travelling in America, while misleading, encouraged him to engage in an extensive evangelistic tour among the Hicksites, during which he attempted to restore them to the Orthodox camp. He declared that he made a "special point of visiting the Hicksites"⁸ and that he had a concern for that "vast deluded community".⁹ Gurney's work among the Hicksites was in part a continuation of the work of other evangelical Friends; Grellet laboured with Friends who joined with the Hicksites in America,¹⁰ as did Backhouse, who held meetings specifically for these Friends.¹¹ Gurney himself considered that his work among the Hicksites was in part a continuation of the work of earlier British Friends; he noted that the Backhouses had "turned a face of kindness" to the Hicksites.¹² During this work among Hicksites Gurney adopted a variety of methods to communicate with them. On the most immediate level large numbers of them attended his public

meetings. In 1838 he noted that, although the Hicksites excited his deep compassion, he did not know how to communicate with them and hoped that curiosity would draw them to his meetings.¹³ Gurney therefore eagerly recorded instances where Hicksites attended his services. For example, in 1837 Gurney noted that Hicksites, along with Orthodox Friends and others, attended his meeting at Smithfield;¹⁴ and further hoped "considerable impression" had been made on the minds of the Hicksites by five public meetings in Baltimore.¹⁵ In 1838 Gurney noted Hicksites flocked to one of his meetings in their hundreds¹⁶ and 1839 he noted that they came from a considerable distance to attend one of his public meetings.¹⁷

As well as preaching to Hicksites through his services for the general public, Gurney held meetings specifically for them. In 1838, when the New York Yearly Meetings of Orthodox and Hicksite Friends met simultaneously, Gurney held a public meeting in a neutral place, hoping that considerable numbers from both groups would attend.¹⁸ Gurney also held meetings for Hicksites in their own meeting houses. For example, in 1839 he held two large "overflowing" meetings in Hicksite meeting houses.¹⁹ Importantly many Hicksites appear to have attended these services; when the Hicksites allowed Gurney to use their meeting house at Goose Creek, most of them attended the service.²⁰ Gurney's mission to the Hicksites was even to take him into their centres of power. In 1838 he noted that he had entered "a notorious high place of the Hicksites" in Pennsylvania and held a service in their meeting house.²¹ Gurney even travelled to Hicks' home town and "capital", Jericho, in 1839.²² While in Jericho, Gurney held a service in their meeting house, which he described as "Dagon's temple", noting that this was the first orthodox meeting held there since the

separation, and he used Hicks' place in the ministers' gallery to preach the "glorious gospel".²³ Gurney did, however, show some caution during his meetings in Hicksite properties, fearing that too close an association with them would suggest that he approved of their beliefs. For example, when Gurney's request to hold a meeting for the young people among the Baltimore Hicksites was refused, the Hicksite leaders instead offered him the opportunity to attend their meeting for worship. Gurney declined this invitation, believing it would "give the mark of religious fellowship with them".²⁴ Gurney also refused an invitation to attend a Hicksite Yearly Meeting in 1838, as he believed that they wished him to be present so as to identify themselves with Friends.²⁵ Notwithstanding his determination not to be too closely associated with the Hicksites, Gurney made a favourable impression with some of them. He noted that even the Hicksites acknowledged the content of one of his sermons as "the good old doctrine"²⁶ and believed that many of the Hicksites at his 1837 meeting in Stillwater seemed "impressed and affected".²⁷ Despite this Gurney encountered some Hicksites who opposed his preaching and noted that while many of them seemed well disposed toward him and his preaching, others were "vehemently contra".²⁸ For example, in 1838 two of his public meetings were disrupted by Hicksite preachers;²⁹ and he was refused the use of a Hicksite Meeting House at Deer Creek.³⁰ There was, however, at least one occasion when Gurney and his Hicksite opponents observed a mutual truce. In 1839 Gurney attended a Hicksite funeral, noting that nothing was said by either himself or the Hicksite preachers present;³¹ he believed that they seemed to "neutralise" each other.³²

Given the hostility and opposition Gurney sometimes encountered during his services for Hicksites, he naturally used more informal methods to proselytise them and therefore paid numerous visits to individual Hicksites. As early as 1837 Gurney was visited by one of their leading preachers ("an oily old gentleman").³³ Gurney took tea with a "serious Hicksite" in Philadelphia, using the opportunity to present Christ³⁴ and held a private conversation with one of their ministers, whom Gurney believed "substituted bad metaphysics for evangelical religion".³⁵ Notwithstanding Gurney's covert aim of evangelising the Hicksites through these informal meetings, it would appear that real friendship developed between Gurney and some Hicksites; he noted that they freely offered hospitality to him³⁶ and were very friendly towards him, sending him gifts and invitations.³⁷ Gurney, however, admitted that he was at a loss to understand the state of mind of these friendly Hicksites and doubted if many of them would rejoin the Orthodox Friends.³⁸

These close personal contacts with individual Hicksites, however, did nothing to diminish Gurney's hostility towards their theology and instead hardened his belief that their doctrines were heterodox. It must be noted that Gurney attempted to understand Hicksite theology, even to the extent of wishing to hear one of their sermons. When this wish was fulfilled by a Hicksite preacher who spoke at one of Gurney's meetings, the latter was unimpressed by the presentation. He came to the conclusion that the Hicksites rejected the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the atonement.³⁹ Given his own evangelicalism Gurney naturally argued that these Hicksite beliefs were irreconcilable to the doctrines of the Orthodox Friends. Reconciliation, he believed, could not be achieved unless the

Hicksites acknowledging acknowledged Christ's divinity and atonement. Gurney did, however, believe that many of the individuals who worshipped with the Hicksites did not subscribe to heterodoxy. He claimed that, while the content of the Hicksite sermon he heard was the doctrine of most of the Hicksite leaders (with some going still further), some members of their congregations attended their meetings due to ignorance or family connections.⁴⁰ Gurney also argued that some of the Hicksites probably agreed with the Orthodox Quakers in principle, or else were in the depths of ignorance.⁴¹ Gurney, therefore, believed that he should expose the errors of the Hicksite leaders to their followers. As a result he used his meetings with Hicksites to condemn their doctrines and to point out the differences between their beliefs and those of the Orthodox Friends. For example, at one meeting in 1838, Gurney described the differences between Hicksite and "true Quaker" beliefs⁴² and in 1839 he preached on the distinctions between Quaker and Hicksite principles "very clearly"; but, he hoped, without offence.⁴³ Significantly Gurney's sermons to Hicksite congregations emphasised those evangelical doctrines which he believed that their leadership had rejected. At Flushing, in 1839 he preached on the doctrines of the atonement and the new birth to a largely Hicksite congregation.⁴⁴ Towards the end of his tour he was also to publish his criticisms of the Hicksite leaders in a work intended to highlight the differences between Hicksism and Orthodox Quakerism. When he was unable to obtain the Baltimore Hicksites' Meeting House for a service, Gurney instead wrote an address to the Hicksites to explain the difference that existed between their leaders and the Society of Friends.⁴⁵ In this pamphlet, A Letter to the Followers of Elias Hicks in the City of Baltimore and its Vicinity, (1840), Gurney accused Hicks and many of their leading

preachers of believing that Christ was only a human prophet. This, he claimed, denied both the doctrine of Christ's propitiatory death and the beliefs of the early Friends. He therefore called on those Hicksites who believed in Jesus of Nazareth to leave their organisation.⁴⁶ The Hicksites, however, rejected Gurney's criticisms and Baltimore's Hicksite Yearly Meeting issued their own pamphlet in reply to Gurney's work. In this they accused Gurney of attempting to bring them into disrepute with the members of other denominations and of misunderstanding their doctrines, and stated that the Hicksites fully believed in the divinity of Christ.⁴⁷ More importantly Gurney was unable to record that any Hicksites joined Orthodox Friends as a result of his ministry. Gurney's preaching among the Hicksites thus did not achieve the goal he obviously aimed for - their return en masse to Orthodox Quakerism - and, although Gurney was able to attract a large audience among Hicksites, his work among them ultimately met with complete failure.

While Gurney's preaching among the Hicksites absorbed a large proportion of his mission, his work among the other branch of American Quakerism, the Orthodox, was far more significant. This work among Orthodox Friends, although plagued by troubles during its later stages, brought Gurney into contact with a Quakerism which was both more vibrant and numerically stronger than its British counterpart and which clearly impressed Gurney. In particular he recorded favourable impressions of the annual gatherings of their Yearly Meetings he attended during his first years in America. He declared that he had

never seen such an assembly of people as the 1837 Indiana Yearly Meeting, although he thought that the estimate that 6,000 attended was an exaggeration⁴⁸ and claimed that people attended due to custom rather than religious zeal.⁴⁹ Gurney noted that the 1837 North Carolina Yearly Meeting was large, agreeable, and interesting.⁵⁰ Even in 1838 Gurney noted that Baltimore and New England Yearly Meetings, although small, contained many valuable members.⁵¹ Gurney was also impressed by the depth of the spiritual life and commitment to Friends' principles among individual Orthodox American Quakers. Indeed he was surprised while travelling in Indiana in 1837 to find "so extensive a work of Christianity" among isolated groups of Friends⁵² and declared that there appeared to be a real revival of religious feeling among Quakers in one part of the state.⁵³ Travelling in North Carolina in the same year, he noted that he was pleased to find so much of the truth among Friends⁵⁴ and declared that the bulk of Friends in Philadelphia were satisfactory and agreeable.⁵⁵ While travelling in New York state in 1839, Gurney noted vital religion in "out of the way places where poor Friends seldom or ever hear a sermon".⁵⁶ These favourable impressions of American Quakerism confirmed Gurney's preconceived opinions of the state of the Society of Friends in the United States and reduced the possibilities of his discerning the divisions that existed among Orthodox Friends.

Gurney did not, however, travel among Orthodox Friends merely as an observer. Instead he made several practical contributions to the Society of Friends in the New World, especially in response to the problems Canadian Quakers encountered during the 1839 Rebellion.

Arthur Dorland notes that when Friends were being pressurised to take the oath of allegiance, Gurney assisted in the preparation of a petition to the governor and interviewed him personally. As a result Friends were not required to take the oath.⁵⁷ Gurney also pleaded for the lives of two men, the sons of a Quaker, who had been sentenced to death for their part in the rebellion.⁵⁸ This plea was apparently successful, as Gurney noted that the Moores, "semi-Friends", had been saved from execution by the letter sent at his request by Friends in London.⁵⁹ Gurney also hoped to have created a Friends' Meeting in Oswego.⁶⁰

Notwithstanding these contributions to the well-being of the Society in the New World, Gurney's response to the tensions among Orthodox Friends rather than his practical work among them was to become the prominent feature of his tour. He became, unwillingly, a central figure in events leading to the second schism. This schism was caused by conflicts between evangelicalism and Quietism which were reaching crisis point by the time Gurney arrived in America. One sign of this growing rift among Friends is the antagonism Gurney encountered during his mission from both dissident, or "Beaconite", evangelicals and traditionalist Friends within the Orthodox denomination. Of these two sources of criticism from within Orthodox American Quakerism, Gurney was perhaps able to deal more successfully with the attacks made upon him by dissident evangelicals; particularly those made by Elisha Bates, who, although he had been disowned by the Society of Friends before Gurney arrived in America, was determined to disrupt the English preacher's mission. As a result Bates attended Gurney's

meetings in Ohio in 1837 and challenged him to a public discussion on those points in Gurney's preaching with which Bates disagreed. Gurney declined this challenge; he believed that the course Bates had taken was objectionable and Friends not Bates were the injured party. Moreover Gurney feared that Bates was trying to provoke him into public controversy⁶¹ and that the Beaconite Bates would publish an account of Gurney's meetings and their correspondence, which would totally misrepresent him.⁶² Bates' campaign to disrupt Gurney's tour was not, however, successful. After Gurney refused to enter into a public debate with Bates, the latter published a handbill inviting Friends and the general public to a meeting where he would reply to Gurney's arguments. Gurney noted that Bates' lecture attracted an audience of only about a hundred, while the Friends' meeting held on the same day was overflowing. After this initial conflict Gurney does not appear to have come face to face with Bates again, refusing to visit him due to his conduct.⁶³ Although Bates was present at Gurney's meeting at St. Clairsville, the service passed off without communication between them. While his personal conflict with Bates ended soon after he arrived in America, Gurney was concerned that the Beaconites attacks on the Society of Friends could undermine support for traditional Quaker beliefs.⁶⁴ For example, he believed that Bates' influence in Ohio was "far indeed from being wholesome".⁶⁵ Gurney, therefore, publicly defended Quaker doctrines and spoke at Baltimore in 1838 to counteract Bates' lectures in the area which misrepresented Friends' theology.⁶⁶ More importantly Gurney strove to convince those Friends whom Bates might encourage to leave the Society of Friends to retain their membership. Gurney was particularly

anxious that some of Bates' relatives might follow him out of the Society of Friends. As a result, Gurney visited one of Bates' nephews, who Gurney found was firm in Friends' principles.⁶⁷ While in Virginia Gurney noted that he was concerned for several of Bates' relatives who lived in the area and hoped that the majority of them would not leave the Society of Friends. Gurney also met Bates' older brother, who, he believed, was a respectable elder of the Society of Friends, and hoped that the visit was of use to him and that he would not "become unsettled".⁶⁸

In addition to attempting to prevent Quakers from leaving the Society of Friends due to Bates' influence, Gurney strove to reassure a group of dissident evangelical Friends who had separated from the Society of Friends that Orthodox Quakers were not heterodox in their beliefs. In 1839 many of the leading members of Adrian Monthly Meeting in Michigan resigned, due to their doubts about the theological soundness of the majority of the meeting.⁶⁹ Gurney was alarmed by this secession and (to save him from a long journey to see them in person) wrote an epistle to Friends in Adrian,⁷⁰ which was later published. This pamphlet Letter to Friends of the Monthly Meeting of Adrian, Michigan, (1839), clearly shows that Gurney still opposed the beliefs of Bates and, by inference, those of the British Beaconites; Gurney described it as a "defence of true scriptural Quakerism against Batesism".⁷¹ More importantly Letter to Friends of the Monthly Meeting of Adrian, Michigan provides a useful exposition of Gurney's theology in relation to essential Quaker doctrines at this late date in his life. The pamphlet dealt with one of the central themes of

Gurney's theology: the reconciliation of Quakerism and evangelicalism. In this pamphlet Gurney argued that the seceding Friends had no reason to doubt the orthodoxy of the Society:

"I understand that among the causes alleged for this secession, is the supposed existence of a difference of opinion in the Society, on the important topics, of the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and justification by faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Now although it is possible that individuals amongst us, may have inbibed erroneous sentiments on these points, it may be safely asserted that the Society of Friends, as a body, have always maintained a sound and scriptural view respecting them".

With regard to the scriptures Gurney argued that, while Friends objected to their being described as the "word of God", Quakers believed that they were given by God and "unutterably stamped with the seal of divine authority". With regard to justification, Gurney once again admitted that there was some possibility for confusion over Quaker doctrine on this issue; as the early Friends had used the term to mean both being forgiven by God and the work of sanctification. Importantly this pamphlet showed Gurney's dual commitment to Quakerism and evangelicalism, by linking the evangelical emphasis on Christ's sacrifice, regeneration, and the value of the scriptures with the Quaker stress on the work of immediate revelation. Gurney stated that the Society of Friends had not restricted the benefits of Christ's sacrifice to those who had knowledge of the scriptures, but believed that the death of Christ led to a measure of this Spirit being bestowed on all humanity. All those who were obedient to the light given to them, Gurney argued, would be accepted by the Father. He further argued that the Society of Friends had always believed that the influence of the Spirit operating immediately on the mind was the source of all

knowledge of the things of God and that it was impossible to receive the saving truths of scripture without the aid of the Spirit.⁷² Contemporary responses to this pamphlet are of interest, as even in 1839 Gurney found that he was being opposed by a pro-Bates party among Orthodox Friends. When he placed Letter to Friends of the Monthly Meeting of Adrian, Michigan, before the New York Meeting for Sufferings, two of its seventeen members opposed it.⁷³ This opposition to Gurney's anti-Batesian pamphlet, combined with the readiness with which some Adrian Friends followed Bates out of the Society of Friends, shows that evangelicalism (even of the Beaconite variety) was already firmly entrenched in the Society of Friends in America and clearly indicates that there were causes of tension within Orthodox Quakerism even before Gurney arrived in the United States.

While the tensions caused within Orthodox Quakerism by Bates and his supporters caused Gurney considerable discomfort, the growing hostility of American Quietists towards evangelicalism in general, and Gurney in particular, were to become the most significant feature of his tour. The consequences of this conflict have influenced historians' opinions of Gurney more than any other aspect of his work. Gurney seems to have been completely unaware of the impending conflict during the first part of his tour and instead remarked on the favourable reception he received. He noted that the 1837 Ohio Yearly Meeting gave him a kind and hearty reception and that he found no difficulty with Friends there.⁷⁴ In 1838 he noted that there was a general flow of love and unity towards him⁷⁵ and he even claimed that he got on well at John Wilbur's meeting.⁷⁶ These statements are, however, just the first indications of Gurney's constant inability to appreciate how deeply some American Quietists opposed his

tour; some of them had voiced opposition to him even before the tour had begun. Quakers in the United States had ample opportunity to form an opinion of Gurney, due to his popularity as an author among American Friends. As J. W. Frost suggests, Gurney's publications, especially his A Letter to a Friend on the Authority, Purpose, and Effects of Christianity, were influential in America even before the Hicksite separation.⁷⁷ Gurney himself noted that his Portable Evidences had been widely circulated in America.⁷⁸ The fame of his works in the United States fuelled the American Quietists' hostility towards him, which was apparent even before the tour began. An indication of the depth of this latent hostility towards Gurney can be found in the letters John Wilbur received in 1833 from Moses Brown of Providence, which accused Gurney of being "too much of the new school" and hoped that he would be "whipped" in his pamphlet war over the Beacon⁷⁹ and from Stephen Gould of Newport which claimed that Gurney's publications had caused the present state of things in Britain;⁸⁰ re-iterating a claim made by British Quietists. As significantly Thomas Hodgson noted that Philadelphia Yearly Meeting had objected to London Yearly Meeting's 1837 epistle, which Gurney had been instrumental in writing.⁸¹ This existing antagonism towards Gurney among American Friends would only have been strengthened by reports from British Quietists who voiced opposition to his tour. Gurney noted that when his concern to visit America was put forward at the London Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, although his actual intention to go to America was not opposed, some Friends did not believe that the time was right (this can be taken to be a subtle attempt to prevent Gurney's journey). Gurney identified those who wished to delay his journey as the Quietists (mentioning Sarah Grubb and Ann Jones) and the Beaconites.⁸² He also

noted that there was much tribulation at this meeting before "the way was cleared".⁸³ News of this conflict reached America, to Gurney's detriment. In 1838 Gurney attributed the opposition he experienced in Philadelphia to "...the supposed judgement, in my case of G & A Jones"⁸⁴ and noted while in America that events during the Meeting of Ministers and Overseers had produced an "exaggerated echo" in Philadelphia.⁸⁵

Unfortunately Gurney's attitude during this tour would have done nothing to allay the fears and doubts of many American Friends. It is clear that he entered into the journey with pre-conceived opinions and regarded the first schism as a simple conflict between orthodoxy and deism. It seems unlikely that those British preachers who had previously visited America had made him aware, even if they realised it themselves, that there were deep divisions among the Orthodox Friends. This led to what was perhaps Gurney's greatest error during his American tour; an over-eagerness to enter into controversy. His correspondence during the tour seems to reflect this state of mind, as he frequently used metaphors to describe himself attacking heterodoxy. For example, in 1837 he stated that some Hicksites were "within reach of the artillery of the gospel"⁸⁶ and in 1838 that opposition was "pretty well battered to pieces".⁸⁷ Although too much can be drawn from Gurney's use of this imagery, it does perhaps suggest a state of mind that was singularly inappropriate to the contemporary state of Orthodox American Friends. Perhaps the clearest indication of this lack of caution was the manner in which he unreservedly threw himself into an extensive ministry among North American Orthodox Friends. As Hamm suggests, Gurney arrived in America with a reputation for powerful preaching and seldom failed to live up to it.⁸⁸ Gurney himself noted that

he usually preached in meetings in the United States, believing that the Americans were too much constrained to be quiet.⁸⁹ Moreover Gurney's services clearly attracted large numbers of Orthodox Friends; at the very commencement of his American journey, he appointed the largest meeting ever held in a Philadelphia meeting house.⁹⁰ Later in 1837 he noted that Friends in Ohio had flocked from all neighbouring meetings to his service⁹¹ and recorded pouring forth prayer at the close of the 1838 New York Yearly Meeting.⁹² Gurney's determination to preach before Orthodox Friends, combined with the numbers of them who attended his services, may have contributed to the controversy that centred around him; his prominence as a preacher would have made it impossible for his critics to ignore him. It is important, however, to note that Gurney believed that there was nothing innovative about his preaching during this tour, as in 1837 he stated that he was "...moving about in the character, and on the principles of an old fashioned quaker preacher..."⁹³ and declared that the "old way" was plainly preached.⁹⁴

Given this existing hostility to Gurney, which reports from England and his own attitudes reinforced, opposition from Quietists towards him was gradually to become more apparent during his American mission. In one precursor to these troubles Gurney became involved in a local dispute on the physical resurrection among Friends at Duck Creek in New England⁹⁵ and considered that it was his duty to instruct the "dissenters" who rejected this doctrine.⁹⁶ The Friends of Duck Creek had, however, pursued him with a letter of complaint. While Gurney believed that this letter had little effect,⁹⁷ he faced far more serious opposition from Quietist Friends. This opposition consisted of several interrelated parties. The first and most

consistent source of Quietist opposition towards him came from within the leadership of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, which was to present particular difficulties for Gurney as he made Philadelphia his base while in America.⁹⁸ Gurney noted that there had been opposition to him in Philadelphia even from the beginning of his tour.⁹⁹ This hostility in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting towards Gurney became more apparent in 1838, when Gurney noted that there had been opposition to his certificate being accepted¹⁰⁰ and that there were some difficulties which might impede his course for a time.¹⁰¹ In particular Gurney noted that there was some opposition to his proposed visits to families¹⁰² and to his holding a young peoples' meeting.¹⁰³ Gurney declared in 1838 that this opposition, which he believed was due to personal prejudices rather than hostility towards the gospel,¹⁰⁴ was declining.¹⁰⁵

This optimism was, however, unfounded and Gurney tragically underestimated the power of the opposition towards him in Philadelphia. His opponents in Philadelphia were not a marginalised group, but were at the very centre of power in the Yearly Meeting. As Ingle suggests, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting during the Hicksite separation was dominated by Jonathan Evans and his sons.¹⁰⁶ Jonathan Evans was clerk of the Yearly Meeting for 30 years from 1809¹⁰⁷ and, despite never having preached himself, was clerk of the Select Meeting of Ministers and Overseers.¹⁰⁸ He combined this influence within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting with considerable personal wealth, leaving nearly \$94,000 in his will.¹⁰⁹ Despite his opposition to Hicksism, Jonathan Evans also opposed evangelicalism in general and Gurney in particular.¹¹⁰ Evans' opposition to both Hicks and the evangelicals stemmed from his adherence to Quietist theology, which is clearly

expressed in his correspondence. While, in response to Hicks' arguments, Evans claimed that the Society of Friends had always accepted the doctrines of the atonement, intercession, and mediation of Jesus Christ,¹¹¹ he emphasised the role of the Spirit above all else. He called upon his sons to be obedient to the instruction of the Spirit in their hearts, which would bring them to reconciliation with God,¹¹² and argued that the Society of Friends had been raised up to bear a witness to spiritual religion.¹¹³ Furthermore, like the British Quietists, he believed that the Society of Friends was in danger of apostasy, claiming during the closing days of his life that a spirit was at work within Quakerism which would draw them away from their spirituality and destroy the "ancient profession and doctrines" of the Society of Friends.¹¹⁴ Gurney was clearly aware of this opposition from members of the Evans family, noting that the opposition to his holding meetings with families in 1838 had come solely from one of Jonathan Evans' children, Charles Evans.¹¹⁵ At Jonathan Evans' death in 1839, Gurney noted that his power in Philadelphia "seemed rather too great for the comfort of some of us" and he "was somewhat blind in one eye" (presumably referring to his attitude to evangelicalism).¹¹⁶ However, other members of the Evans family did not share Jonathan Evans' hostility towards Gurney; Edward Grubb suggests that Gurney was able to win over some of the former's children.¹¹⁷ Indeed Gurney's friendship with members of the Evans family pre-dated his arrival in America. In 1826 Gurney noted receiving correspondence from Thomas Evans,¹¹⁸ who also accompanied Gurney on his first itinerant tour in America.¹¹⁹ Gurney appreciated the conflict within the family, noting that Thomas Evans was placed under circumstances of particular trial.¹²⁰ This division among the Evans family, with members of the younger generation

supporting Gurney, indicates that Gurney's beliefs struck a chord with the rising generation of Friends, and suggests in turn that Gurney, rather than introducing new doctrines, reflected a changing mood within American Quakerism.

In addition to this anti-Gurney party among Philadelphia Friends, opposition to Gurney was present in the other American Yearly Meetings, although it was to take longer to become apparent. Indeed in 1838 Gurney noted no opposition towards him at the New York Meeting of Ministers and Elders¹²¹ and said that the only opposition at the Yearly Meeting itself was from a few individuals from "other parts".¹²² There were, however, clear signs of opposition to Gurney in New York Yearly Meeting even at this early date; Gurney found himself being criticised during a family visit by one young Quaker; who regarded Gurney's works as "notoriously heretical" and took a line (Gurney believed) somewhat similar to the Quietist publication The Truth Vindicated. Moreover Gurney noted that the family as a whole had opposed his mission during the Yearly Meeting.¹²³ It is clear that this was only one example of the deep-rooted hostility towards Gurney outside Philadelphia Yearly Meeting which was apparent by 1838. Gurney recorded that there was an unsuccessful attempt to oppose him at a Quarterly Meeting in New England¹²⁴ and there was an outbreak of the "old spirit of jealousy" at the Select Quarterly Meeting in New York later in the same year.¹²⁵ He also faced opposition at the Baltimore Yearly Meeting.¹²⁶

Although Gurney faced opposition from Quietist parties within all the Orthodox Yearly Meetings which he visited, the most significant of his

traditionalist opponents during his mission were John Wilbur and other British itinerant preachers. It seems almost inevitable that Wilbur, given his role in supporting British Quietists during the Beaconite Controversy, should have attacked Gurney during his American tour. Significantly Wilbur was clearly connected with the Quietist party in Philadelphia; Jonathan Evans wrote to Wilbur in 1837, noting his opposition to Gurney's work in Philadelphia and hoping that Friends in New England would "...be on their guard...".¹²⁷ The conflict between Wilbur and Gurney recommenced early in the tour. Wilbur met Gurney at New York Yearly Meeting in 1837 and informed the English preacher that, as he was unsound on the doctrines of Friends, he should not be in America. Wilbur also made his views known to other Friends and continued to oppose Gurney when he visited New England in 1837¹²⁸ and 1838.¹²⁹ It is also possible that Gurney was referring to Wilbur when he accused a Friend who had once travelled in Britain of spreading reports against him in New York during 1838.¹³⁰ Wilbur's consistent opposition to Gurney is of particular importance because, as will be shown later,¹³¹ it was to bring the Quietist into conflict with his own Yearly Meeting and precipitated the second schism. The anti-Gurney party in America also received assistance from other Friends who had supported the Quietist cause during the Beaconite Controversy. English traditionalist Friends were to make a significant contribution to the anti-Gurney party in the United States: Daniel Wheeler and the Robsons visited America concurrently with Gurney. There were clear links between these British Quietists and the anti-Gurney party in Philadelphia, as the journal of another of Jonathan Evans' sons, William Evans, refers to both Elizabeth Robson and Daniel Wheeler as "our friend".¹³² In addition to those British Quietists who assisted the American traditionalists by their presence,

other members of their party provided information to aid the anti-Gurney party in the United States. Gurney claimed that his opponents circulated information to discredit him, with "disaffected Friends" in England sending over biased reports and circulating copies of his tract on the interpretation of scriptures.¹³³ One indication of the damage which these reports from British Friends was causing him was his request in 1839 that his children send copies of letters he had received from the Quietist, Thomas Shillitoe, which were needed to stem the tide of false reports.¹³⁴

The reports from the British Quietists were, however, only part of a campaign by the various anti-Gurney groups to produce publications which would discredit Gurney. In 1838 Gurney believed that an indirect attack on him was contained in a periodical read by Friends in Philadelphia¹³⁵ and that papers about him were being circulated.¹³⁶ Furthermore a widely circulated work produced by his opponents contrasted extracts from Gurney's works with those of early Quaker authors, in an attempt to show that his doctrines differed from those of the original Society.¹³⁷ These publications can only have heightened the tensions that existed among American Friends. By criticising Gurney, who, as the huge congregations his services attracted show, enjoyed great popularity among some Orthodox Friends, the Quietists must have encouraged polarisation among Friends into pro- and anti-Gurney parties.

It is important to understand why such a wide body of Friends found Gurney's doctrines objectionable and how he understood their criticisms of him. The anxieties of traditionalist American Friends over Gurney were identical to those expressed by the British Quietists during the Beaconite

Controversy; as is shown by Jonathan Evans' reactions to the English preacher. Evans accused Gurney of replacing "...the mortifying operation of the cross of Christ..." with the doctrine of justification by faith, in an attempt to gain respect from the members of other denominations.¹³⁸ He criticised Gurney's belief in the doctrine of the Trinity of three distinct persons and argued that the Spirit and not the scriptures were the primary rule of faith and practice.¹³⁹ Significantly Evans also reiterated one of the central criticisms made of Gurney by the British Quietists; that he was attempting to introduce Episcopalian doctrines into the Society of Friends.¹⁴⁰ Gurney also seems to have been accused by American Quietists of making the Bible the sole source of religious knowledge, underrating the importance of the light in all men, placing justification before sanctification, and advocating the doctrines of imputed righteousness and original sin,¹⁴¹ all of which are criticisms which British Quietists would have made of Gurney. Given that the criticisms made of Gurney during his American tour are so similar to those made of evangelicalism in general during the Beaconite controversy, it can be argued that those American Orthodox Friends who opposed him were not concerned to attack Gurney in his own right, but rather as a personification of all the ills they associated with the growing evangelical movement. This emphasis on Gurney as the personification of the evangelical party within American Quakerism recurs in later studies of events during this period and has tended to distort accounts of the role Gurney played in the second schism. While it is clear that Gurney's critics were merely reiterating British Quietists' opposition to evangelicalism, Gurney seems to have completely misunderstood both the nature and strength of opposition to him. Gurney identified his critics, inaccurately, with the Hicksites. During 1839 he

stated that the conflict was between "sound, scriptural, sober Quakerism and a kind of $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ Hicksism"¹⁴² and described the unfaithfulness of Friends towards him in Philadelphia as "Hicksite".¹⁴³ Given that he believed that his opponents' beliefs were heterodox, Gurney would probably have refused to take their criticisms of him seriously. This tendency would have been encouraged by his belief that that they represented only a small proportion of American Friends. Gurney claimed that most of his opposers had been misled by two or three people who had preyed on their ignorance.¹⁴⁴ In view of his depreciation of the theological soundness and numerical strength of his opponents, Gurney attempted merely to ignore them. In 1838 he believed that the best way to deal with the opposing spirit was by an "unopposing quietness".¹⁴⁵

Despite Gurney's attempts to ignore the Quietists' opposition to him, by 1839 controversy over his mission had reached fever pitch and it appeared that events would come to a climax during the annual assembly of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. At the beginning of the year Gurney noted that the "spirit of ultraism and disaffection" in Philadelphia seemed to be "working itself up into a higher fever than ever".¹⁴⁶ He again showed a lack of caution by deciding to attend the assembly, even after he had been asked not to go, as he was promised a "regular storm".¹⁴⁷ Instead he rested so that he might be fit for the expected "Philadelphia storms".¹⁴⁸ The expected controversy did indeed emerge during the Yearly Meeting. Wheeler and the Robsons were present and suggested that Gurney should bring the opposition to him to a head by asking that a committee be appointed to investigate the matter. Gurney wisely did not comply with this advice.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore Gurney claimed that he was attacked during

some sermons. Despite this, and the earlier warnings of disaster, the expected conflict during the Yearly Meeting ended in anti-climax. Gurney argued that when the "dissenters" had tried to bring matters to a battle "the fire flashed in the pan".¹⁵⁰ He also described the Yearly Meeting as "agreeable".¹⁵¹ After the meeting had ended Gurney said that although it had been looked forward to as a time of conflict, it had been quiet and satisfactory. It should, however, be noted that Gurney's attitude during the meeting did nothing to encourage this favourable outcome. Indeed it is probable that he generated more ill-feeling by presenting a confession of faith at the end of the meeting to gratify his friends and silence his enemies.¹⁵²

While the 1839 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting did not end in the expected conflict between Gurney and the Quietists, the remainder of his American tour was still to be plagued by opposition from traditionalist Friends. While travelling in the West Point area later in the year, Gurney claimed that his opponents had been in the area and had endeavoured to excite opposition against him, but without success.¹⁵³ Gurney noted that there were rumours of unjustified opposition to him in New York.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore Gurney was advised after the 1839 Baltimore Yearly Meeting not to attend the next year's Meeting.¹⁵⁵ Despite this continuing controversy, Gurney completed his final year in America with relatively little conflict, primarily because he did not attend the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for that year. He realised early in the year that it would not be possible to return from his journey to the West Indies in time to attend Philadelphia Yearly Meeting¹⁵⁶ and admitted that there was advantage in him not being there.¹⁵⁷ When Gurney did visit Philadelphia after the Yearly Meeting, he

claimed that his stay was comfortable and unruffled, despite previous rumours of opposition.¹⁵⁸ Gurney's last year in America also seems to have passed off peacefully outside Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. He noted that the Yearly Meeting at New York was the best he had attended in America¹⁵⁹ and, although he had expected some opposition at New England Yearly Meeting, it passed off well.¹⁶⁰

Given the lack of controversy during the last year of the mission, it is perhaps understandable that Gurney returned to Britain on a note of triumph. Although he admitted that the anxiety he experienced over Philadelphia had been similar to that he had felt over his proposal to stand as a member of Parliament (which will be considered later in this study),¹⁶¹ he claimed that "...I can look back on my exercises and labours in Philadelphia with satisfaction...".¹⁶² Furthermore Gurney argued that, notwithstanding the "strange treatment" from some Friends in America, the mission had been a blessing to the Society of Friends in America and that the utter defeat of the dissidents would be instructive in Philadelphia where "so much of the odd feverish spirit still prevailed".¹⁶³ Gurney had, however, once again misjudged the temperament of American Quakerism. Conflict in America over Gurney and the evangelicalism he represented continued and resulted in a schism which far outweighed the damage caused to the Society of Friends by the Beaconite controversy. Moreover this schism was to overshadow Gurney and his work in London Yearly Meeting during the last years of his life.

6. GURNEY'S ROLE IN LONDON YEARLY MEETING AFTER 1840

After his return to Britain in 1840, Gurney faced another period of controversy within London Yearly Meeting. The conflict among American Friends between Quietism and evangelicalism continued and ultimately led to a second separation, which has largely been attributed to Gurney's influence. This schism had repercussions for Gurney and the other leaders of London Yearly Meeting, as it encouraged a renewed bout of criticism of evangelicalism from the British Quietists. In addition to these problems, Gurney had to come to terms with several of his relatives abandoning the Society of Friends. Gurney's responses to these problems are of particular interest to this study, as they indicate whether, as has often been alleged, Gurney abandoned traditional Quaker beliefs in favour of evangelicalism in the later part of his life.

Of the events which occurred within Quakerism during the 1840s, the most important was clearly the second schism in America. Although Gurney left America believing that his mission had been a success, the conflict which had dogged him during the tour continued. After 1840 attention moved away from Gurney and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to John Wilbur and New England Yearly Meeting, where, Wilbur's supporters argued, the leaders of the Yearly Meeting were determined to support Gurney and put down opposition.¹ The leaders of New England Yearly Meeting claimed that Wilbur's criticisms of the British preacher were defamatory and attempted to silence him. This conflict led to the leaders of the Yearly Meeting utilising Friends' disciplinary system to have Wilbur disowned in 1843.

Five hundred New England Friends sided with Wilbur and formed a separate Yearly Meeting in 1845.² Although Baltimore, New York, and North Carolina Yearly Meetings united against Wilbur and his supporters and did not split, Ohio, Philadelphia, and Indiana divided once again over this dispute.³ The two new camps of Orthodox Friends rapidly moved apart. Those Yearly Meetings which had opposed Wilbur, the "Gurneyites", eventually adopted the church order of the mainstream Protestant churches, including the introduction of paid clergy and programmed religious services. By contrast, the "Wilburite" Yearly Meetings retained traditional Quaker theology and practices.⁴

In view of the level of criticism which Gurney had faced from American Quietists during his mission and the emphasis placed on him as a cause of this controversy, it might be imagined that he attempted to influence events in the United States following his departure. In reality after returning to Britain, Gurney decided not to play an active role in controversies among American Friends. For example, in 1841 he decided to "leave well alone" with regard to events in Philadelphia.⁵ The controversy among American Friends did, however, pose problems for Gurney and the evangelically-dominated leadership of London Yearly Meeting, since communications from the American Yearly Meetings threatened to cause further conflict among British Friends. When New England Yearly Meeting separated, London Yearly Meeting had to accept the epistle of either the old or the seceding Yearly Meeting. If the latter was accepted this would be a tacit acceptance that they were the genuine Meeting and that Wilbur represented authentic Quakerism. However the epistle of the Wilburite Yearly Meeting was refused. Other documents from America might also have

caused controversy, as the 1846 London Yearly Meeting also received an epistle from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, calling for certain authors to be disowned, which Gurney believed was aimed at him. He was, however, satisfied by the discussion of the epistle at London Yearly Meeting and observed that the reply was written by his friend, William Forster.⁶

Moreover Gurney would undoubtedly have been relieved by the policy which London Yearly Meeting followed during the second schism; it recognised only the pro-evangelical Yearly Meetings and repudiated those of the Wilburites.⁷

Notwithstanding his lack of caution during his American tour, Gurney demonstrated a remarkable reluctance in commenting on events occurring in America and produced only two statements on the separation, one of which was intended to resolve one of the practical problems caused by the schism. The separations in America had led to legal battles over which of the parties should possess the Meeting Houses. In one case, that of Swansea Meeting House in New England, the Wilburites claimed that Gurney's doctrine was unsound and that, because the old Yearly Meeting had supported him, it was by inference heterodox. In its defence the other party asked Gurney to supply it with a testimony in answer the allegations.⁸ As a result in 1846 Gurney drew up an exposition of his beliefs with regard to the scriptures, the immediate operation of the Spirit, justification, the Trinity, the resurrection of the body, and the Sabbath, which was affirmed before the mayor and two magistrates in Norwich, to be used by "Friends" (the Gurneyites) in their defence.⁹ Notwithstanding the intended purpose of this document, Gurney also believed that it would counter some of his opponents' criticisms that his

beliefs differed from those of early Friends.¹⁰ This declaration gives another clear expression of Gurney's theology at the end of his life and shows that he still emphasised the role of the Spirit. He argued that the scriptures were entirely subordinate to the Spirit in both dignity and power and could never be understood except by the immediate influence of the Spirit. The declaration also reiterated Gurney's combination of evangelicalism and traditional Quakerism; he argued that all humanity received a measure of the immediate influence of the Spirit through Christ's sacrifice. This pamphlet also once again stressed the links between justification and sanctification.¹¹ Although this declaration had been intended only for use in a legal case, it was widely publicised among Friends. In 1847 it was published in America, in the belief that it would have a healing effect on the differences in the Society of Friends,¹² and The Friend gave it similar publicity in Britain, claiming that would be instructive to members of the Society.¹³ As well as printing Gurney's declaration, the pro-evangelical The Friend also carried Gurney's only other printed response to events in America. In 1846 it printed a letter from Gurney which commented on criticisms Wilbur had made of him. Gurney stated that he did not intend to answer the American's accusations, as they came from an individual who had been disowned by his Yearly Meeting.¹⁴ The editors of The Friend drew their readership's attention to Gurney's letter.¹⁵ In response the pro-Quakerist The British Friend carried several letters attacking Gurney. One of these objected to the tone in which Gurney had described Wilbur, pointing out that the case of his disownment had not yet been settled.¹⁶ Another letter accused Gurney of unchristian behaviour in refusing to be reconciled to Wilbur and argued

that Gurney's beliefs were discordant with those of the early Society of Friends.¹⁷

Notwithstanding Gurney's reluctance to become involved in the controversy among American Friends, or even to comment on it, this second schism overshadowed all his achievements within the Society of Friends, and many Quaker historians have claimed that Gurney was the cause of this separation. It is true that few of Gurney's opponents went as far as Hodgson who argued that Gurney had come to America and found Friends a harmonious community and left them divided.¹⁸ However, other commentators on the second schism, while not going as far as Hodgson, have apportioned the blame for this separation to Gurney. Edward Grubb argued that Gurney's writings and personality were the centre of conflict between conservatives and evangelicals¹⁹ and that his visit was directly or indirectly among the chief causes of the separations.²⁰ It can, however, be argued that many of these historians have been unduly influenced by the accounts of contemporary Quietists, who personified the evangelicalism they so vigorously opposed in Gurney. Conversely other historians have emphasised internal tensions within American Quakerism which led to the schism, particularly Thomas D Hamm who argues that evangelical influences were gradually permeating American Quakerism²¹ and between 1830 and 1860 the majority of American friends moved closer to the dominant evangelical culture in the United States. These Friends were to find their spokesman in Gurney.²² Hamm accordingly argues that Gurney was as much a symptom as a source of change and that the majority of Orthodox Friends would probably have taken the same course even without his involvement.²³ Gurney also claimed that there were latent tensions existing within

American Quakerism, which he merely triggered. During his conflicts in the 1839 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting he wrote to his children, suggesting that he was not aware of having personally given the least occasion for the controversy and "this uneasy spirit" had been spreading itself long before he had arrived. If he had anything to do with the conflict, he argued, it was as an "occasion or cat's paw".²⁴ Certainly this seems the most plausible explanation, as it does seem hard to credit that such a diverse maelstrom of forces opposing Gurney could have appeared unless there was some deep underlying conflict within American Quakerism.

Gurney's accounts of his American tour also emphasised the tensions that existed between Orthodox Friends, through his repeated claims that he was defending the centre ground of the Society of Friends against opposing extremes. In 1838 Gurney wrote that he was under the watch of two "extreme parties" in Philadelphia.²⁵ Later he claimed that he was being opposed by three parties, as he noted that a young Hicksite was taking down everything he said at meetings; the Beacon party was also on the watch; "not to mention our high church party".²⁶ Even during 1839 Gurney recorded that he was being opposed from different sides.²⁷ Gurney's claim to occupy the middle ground within American Quakerism is, of course, open to question; but his accounts of being opposed from different sides re-emphasise the spectrum of theological opinions which existed among Friends. These theological standpoints were ultimately irreconcilable and there would have been a second schism even without his influence. It must, however, be admitted that had he entered into his American tour with more caution, the schism might have been less dramatic and might not have been associated with his name.

Although Gurney largely disassociated himself from developments among American Friends after his return from the United States, he faced renewed criticisms from British Quietists, which were encouraged by the Wilburite separation and he feared that London Yearly Meeting was about to be embroiled in a new theological controversy. During the 1840s there was a renewed wave of Quietist protest against evangelicalism among British Friends. The most important result of this was the founding of the Quietist magazine, the British Friend,²⁸ which on one occasion declared that "Friends have no cause to be ashamed of being by others thought non-evangelical".²⁹ This publication set itself against the evangelical-dominated hierarchy of London Yearly Meeting and asked its readers to judge issues for themselves rather than look to leading Friends for an opinion.³⁰ Another example of the Quietist protests against evangelicalism are the criticisms which Gurney faced within his local meeting from Mary Ann Bayes. Bayes was a preacher of considerable reputation, who visited most parts of Britain and had held numerous public meetings. While she does not seem to have played a prominent role in the Beaconite controversy, she clearly sympathised with the Quietist party, and her preaching emphasised humanity's inability to comprehend religious truths through use of the intellect and described Christ as the "light that lighteth every man". Furthermore, like Gurney's earlier Quietist critics, she believed that the Society of Friends had been specially commissioned to uphold these truths.³¹ Given her adherence to Quietism it was perhaps inevitable that she would come into conflict with Gurney. In 1843 Gurney recorded that there was some reluctance to approve his certificate for a journey to France and Switzerland and M A Bayes declared that she washed her hands of Gurney's concern, which Gurney stated was the first

expression of this kind in his own meeting.³² This conflict with M A Bayes intensified in 1845 and it became clear that her opposition to him was based, at least in part, on influences from America. In that year Gurney asked her and her husband to explain why they opposed him and discovered that they had based their criticisms of him on Wilbur's comparison of works by Gurney and early Friends.³³ Gurney tried unsuccessfully to resolve this conflict and early in 1846 held an interview with them.

Although all the issues discussed are not entirely clear from Gurney's account, it would appear that the points of disagreement included Gurney's emphasis on the value of the intellect, and his beliefs with regard to the Trinity, the Sabbath, and justification. These differences were not satisfactorily settled³⁴ and the conflict between them continued. Gurney noted in 1846 that one of the female Friends of his Quarterly Meeting (possibly Bayes again) was veering towards Hicksism³⁵ and that she had spoken at one Quarterly Meeting making her "customary attack" on riches and learning as something evil in themselves;³⁶ this, as will be shown later,³⁷ represents typical Quietist criticism of the evangelicals.

Although this localised conflict between Bayes and Gurney is not important in itself, it does suggest that there was growing opposition to Gurney in the period after his American tour. Moreover Gurney feared that British Quakerism might once again be plunged into controversy. Gurney clearly felt that, although all would be right in the end, they were in for a time of conflict within the Society of Friends³⁸ and that there were clear manifestations of disunity.³⁹ Once again Gurney envisaged that this conflict would come from opposite extremes, as in 1846 he claimed that

Hicksism and Beaconism, or something similar, were present in the Society of Friends.⁴⁰

Faced with growing opposition and the threat of renewed theological controversy, Gurney adopted tactics to counter his critics which differed radically from those he had used during the Beaconite controversy, when he had attempted to suppress the doctrinal issues involved. Instead during the 1840s he attempted to bring the doctrinal points at issue under the full scrutiny of Friends. In 1840 he wrote to Friends in Philadelphia stating that he was willing to make any alteration to later editions of his work which truth or propriety would require; admitting that this would lead to the alteration or omission of a few passages from later editions of his works.⁴¹ Similarly in 1845 he had asked that the Bayes indicate those passages in his works which they found objectionable and undertook to submit them to the Morning Meeting of London Yearly Meeting for examination.⁴² Gurney clearly regarded these challenges as the means to undermine his opponents and issued a general ultimatum to his critics along these lines. In his letter to The Friend he stated that if any Friend of "weight and consistency" could furnish him with a signed statement listing those passages they considered objectionable, he would place them before the Morning Meeting at the earliest opportunity. If the Meeting was not satisfied with any of his statements, Gurney claimed, he would modify, strike out, or even publicly renounce them.⁴³ This was not, however, enough to placate his opponents; The British Friend claimed that the Morning Meeting would be held in the absence of the accusers; that the Meeting had already agreed to these works being published and would not contradict itself; and implied that the members of this committee were

Gurney's supporters.⁴⁴ Although there were doubts about Gurney's sincerity in agreeing to revise his works, he was engaged in re-writing them during the last years of his life. In 1846, while reviewing his work within the Society of Friends, he said that he was quite willing to make any corrections which were required to his works.⁴⁵ He also called upon his supporters among evangelical Friends to support him in this work. For example, in late 1843, Gurney asked three Friends, including Josiah Forster and George Stacey, to examine his Essays before they were republished, for sentiments which Friends would oppose, as a kindness to Gurney and "for the sake of that cause which is dear to us all".⁴⁶ Gurney also asked Richardson for his comments on Essays, as well as on a tract about the atonement.⁴⁷

These doctrinal controversies, while difficult, were probably less harrowing for Gurney than another problem he faced during the 1840s; the defection from the Society of Friends by several of his closest relatives. In 1843 Gurney recorded his fears that Samuel Gurney's daughter, Priscilla, and her husband William Leatham would renounce their membership of the Society of Friends and join the Church of England. Gurney attempted to prevent them from leaving the Society of Friends. After their attempt to be baptised failed when Gurney's friend, Francis Cunningham, refused to carry out the ceremony, Gurney held a long conversation with them, advising them to delay their resignation.⁴⁸ He later corresponded with them on this subject,⁴⁹ explaining why, in his opinion they could not unite with the doctrines of Anglicans⁵⁰ and Non Conformists.⁵¹ Gurney's efforts were, however, to no avail and the Leathams continued in their intended course and joined the Church of England.⁵² More significantly Gurney's own son,

John Henry, left the Society of Friends. It is clear that Gurney had been aware for some considerable time that John Henry was not fully committed to the Society of Friends. During his American tour Gurney had written home to his children, informing them that they would find no better religious organisation to join than the Society of Friends and called upon John Henry to "abide under the anointing" and never to set his intellect up against it.⁵³ Despite this Gurney's worst fears were to be realised; in 1845 he noted with "deep sorrow" that John Henry had departed from the minor testimonies of the Society of Friends,⁵⁴ an offence which still called for disownment. In 1846 Gurney noted that he was very low at the prospect of John Henry's separation from the Society of Friends.⁵⁵ John Henry was formally disowned at the Monthly Meeting in September 1846; after a short report from two Friends who had visited him, one of them being Gurney's old friend, William Forster. Although Gurney believed that the disownment was unavoidable and perfectly rational, he admitted that he found it inexplicably affecting and wept; he believed that John Henry would never attend another meeting.⁵⁶

These personal defeats and the controversy caused by the second separation, while important, should not be allowed to completely overshadow the success of Gurney and the evangelical party among British Friends. The doctrinal controversy that Gurney had feared during the 1840s did not emerge; perhaps, as Wilson suggests, this was because the death or resignation from the Society of Friends of leading figures of the Beaconite controversy reduced tensions within British Quakerism.⁵⁷ The Gurneyites' control of British Quakerism, therefore, remained largely unchallenged and evangelicals would continue to dominate the Society of

Friends during most of the nineteenth century. This is shown by the 1869 Fritchley separation, where Quietists considered themselves to be so alienated from the leadership of the British Society of Friends that they left London Yearly Meeting to form their own organisation. Moreover, while Gurney's own children were not to remain in the Society of Friends to carry on his work, other young Friends, both in America⁵⁸ and Britain (most importantly J B Braithwaite), regarded Gurney as their mentor and spiritual "father" long after his death. As significantly many of his contemporaries among evangelical Friends had come to regard him as their leading apologist. This is shown by their distribution of his works to non-Quakers during their itinerancy, where they had previously circulated the works of Barclay or Penn. In 1845 William Forster distributed copies of Gurney's The Lock and Key,⁵⁹ and presented fifty copies to colleges in Geneva in 1851.⁶⁰ Similarly, during his travels in America, Josiah Forster had 1,500 copies of The Lock and Key printed to be used in schools and to be distributed in the Southern States.⁶¹ Allen, finding no Friends' books in the library of the University of Bonn, supplied appropriate works including a set of Gurney's works, which were donated by the author.⁶² Indeed it would appear that the evangelical Friends regarded Gurney's works as being on a par with the Quaker classics. In 1849 Samuel Tuke suggested that Josiah Forster take copies of Fox and Barclay, and Gurney's Observations on The Distinguishing Views and Practices of The Society of Friends with him on a visit to the Continent.⁶³

Given this respect that contemporary evangelical Friends and the rising generation of Quaker leaders accorded to Gurney, it must be asked whether, during these difficult last years of his life, Gurney revised his stances

on Quaker doctrines and deserted traditional Friends' beliefs in favour of evangelicalism. Certainly some of his fellow evangelical Quakers had begun to shift away from traditional Quaker doctrines, due to the criticisms made during Beaconite controversy. Samuel Tuke, while adhering to the doctrine of the light of Christ being in all people, stressed that it developed a larger and fuller dispensation among Christians. He claimed never to have looked for revelation except in the scriptures and argued that early Friends had merely been reacting against a lack of emphasis on the Spirit and had never set the Spirit in opposition to the scriptures. There was therefore no reason, Tuke argued, to expect any revelation beyond the scriptures.⁶⁴ Even before the Beaconite controversy, in 1831, Hutchinson wrote to Gurney, expressing his views on early Friends. He argued that contemporary Friends should have nothing to do with early Friends, being called neither to imitate nor to defend them. Hutchinson further claimed that the early Friends' work showed a great redundancy of expression and was almost obsolete.⁶⁵ Gurney might be expected to have been influenced by this shift in theology among his supporters. Moreover, his willingness to revise his works might imply that his beliefs were undergoing change during the last years of his life. If this were true it would appear that he was moving toward traditional Quakerism and away from evangelicalism, as his published works during the later years of his life stressed the importance of the immediate influence and supremacy of the Spirit. As has already been shown, the works he published in connection with the American controversies (particularly his address to the Friends of Adrian, Michigan and the declaration for the Swansea court case) restated his belief in an immediate influence of the Spirit in all humanity and the supremacy of the Spirit over the scriptures. Furthermore in his 1842 revision of

Observations he argued that even the most elementary scriptural instruction required a measure of the influence of the Spirit⁶⁶ and only the anointing of the Spirit could prepare an individual for duties within the Church.⁶⁷ Gurney was equally adamant in stressing the importance of the Spirit in his Papal and Hierarchical System, Compared with the Religion of the New Testament, (1843); where he argued that interpretation of the scriptures was dependent on the illumination and teaching of the Spirit,⁶⁸ described the immediate rule of Christ over his Church,⁶⁹ and stated that preaching was entirely dependent upon the Spirit.⁷⁰ This emphasis on the Spirit as ultimate authority also recurs in his private correspondence during this period. In one of his letters urging William and Priscilla Leatham not to leave the Society of Friends, Gurney argued that the principal doctrine of Friends was that a measure of the influence of the Spirit was given to all humanity through the death of Christ, which could bring them to fear God.⁷¹ In 1845 he was to declare in his journal that "...the Guidance & Government of the Spirit, is held by us more extensively & exactly than by many others...".⁷² Only four months before his death, Gurney reiterated his belief in the immediate teaching of Christ to his Church.⁷³ It is therefore clear that during the later years of his life Gurney, although still deeply influenced by evangelicalism, remained firmly attached to Quaker doctrine.

Gurney's adherence to the authority of both the Spirit and the scriptures in the light of his insistence during the Beaconite controversy that Friends had always emphasised biblicism, may seem to present a paradox in his theology. It must be asked how Gurney was able to reconcile this emphasis on two equal sources of ultimate authority. While it can be

argued that Gurney never successfully resolved the paradox and that it remained as a creative tension throughout his life, his theology on two issues, which were largely ignored by both extreme evangelicals and Quietists, allowed him to show immediate and historical revelation working in unison and not as contending forces. The first of these issues is the incarnation, which both the Quietists and Beaconites ignored except to defend themselves from criticisms of heterodoxy with regard to this doctrine. While the Quietists emphasised the work of Christ within the heart as opposed to His incarnation, they rejected the doubts about Jesus' divinity which were associated with Foster and Hicks; any man who denied the divinity of Christ and the need for his saving grace, Wilbur stated, was only contributing to his condemnation.⁷⁴ Notwithstanding their assertions of orthodoxy on this issue, the Quietists did not emphasise the doctrine of the incarnation. Similarly the Beaconites' writings placed comparatively little emphasis on Christology. They were content to defend themselves against Gurney's criticisms that they placed the scriptures in the place of Christ, describing Christ as the Word of God in its highest sense.⁷⁵ Even their Christology was explained by reference to the Scriptures, as they described Christ as the only plan of salvation revealed in the Bible.⁷⁶ By contrast with both Quietists and Beaconites Gurney developed a systematic Christology in his writings. Indeed the incarnate Christ played a prominent role in his theology. Like the Quietists, he regarded Christ as a teacher, describing Him as the founder of a system of religion professed to have been commissioned by the Father to promulgate a revelation of his divine truth⁷⁷ and His life as the perfect pattern for the moral effects Christianity was intended to produce.⁷⁸ Gurney's doctrine of the incarnation, however, went further than the Quietists and,

although he stressed Christ as the bearer of God's message, Gurney regarded Him not as a mere messenger but as the Lord of heaven⁷⁹ and the effective mediator between God and humanity.⁸⁰ Gurney's writings developed a comprehensive doctrine of the incarnation, stressing both its divine and human elements. The incarnate Christ, Gurney argued, was the nature of man and God united in a manner which was impossible to understand.⁸¹ He emphasised the divinity of the incarnate Christ and argued that Christ's divine nature was revealed as He was endowed with the name and works of deity.⁸² He also pre-existed in glory with the Father,⁸³ with Gurney attributing the person of the Old Testament Angel of Jehovah to the pre-incarnate Christ.⁸⁴ Yet Gurney placed an equal emphasis on Christ's human nature. Christ, Gurney argued, during the incarnation was really and absolutely a man having the nature of man,⁸⁵ and was a creature of God endowed with a human body and soul.⁸⁶ Gurney's doctrine of the incarnation was also closely interrelated to his belief in immediate revelation, as he emphasised the role of the Spirit in anointing and sustaining the incarnate Christ. He argued that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and anointed by the Spirit for His work on Earth.⁸⁷ Gurney further argued that it was by the Spirit that Christ became prophet and king.⁸⁸ It is, however, important to note that while Gurney stressed the importance of the Spirit in the incarnation he in no way accepted the doctrine of the adoption and instead was concerned to place Christ in the context of the Trinity; arguing Christ, Father, and Spirit were God and God is one.⁸⁹ Gurney also placed considerable emphasis on the incarnate Christ's physical sufferings, arguing Christ partook in humanity's suffering nature and was touched with humanity's infirmities,⁹⁰ becoming "our near kinsman".⁹¹ This emphasis on the

incarnate Christ was not a prominent feature of Quietism, as is shown by Thomas Hodgson's later criticisms of Gurney for describing Christ as a "person". Hodgson argued that Friends considered this objectionable "in speaking of the awful nature of the Godhead".⁹² The Quietists' and Beaconites' under-emphasis of the incarnation and Gurney's comprehensive treatment of the issue, suggests that the latter was using this doctrine to address theological problems which the other two parties did not need to consider. In particular Gurney's doctrine of the incarnation allowed him to combine his emphasis on immediate and historical revelation. If it is accepted that that Christ's life, including the atonement, must be at the centre of historical revelation for an evangelical, Gurney naturally concentrated on the incarnation. Indeed the emphasis in Gurney's Christology on His humanity and physical sufferings rooted his understanding of Christ in history. He also, however, emphasised the role of the Spirit and immediate revelation in the incarnation. Gurney's Christology, therefore, allowed him to describe historical and immediate revelation working in tandem and hence to reconcile these doctrines. Just as importantly his emphasis on the incarnation and the Quietists' disregard for this doctrine represented the differences between their styles of Quakerism. Through the incarnation Gurney was able to express his concern to see God in the world. Therefore, unlike the Quietists, his Quakerism emphasised the need for active participation in the world and devotion to philanthropy; this, as will be shown later in this study,⁹³ formed a prominent element in Gurney's activities.

Gurney also attempted to reconcile immediate revelation to historical revelation by arguing that the former could only, like the latter, be

perceived through humanity's intellectual faculties. The Quietists, of course, completely divorced reason from immediate revelation. For example, Martin argued the spiritual things of God could not be comprehended by the faculties given to humanity, which should therefore be suspended,⁹⁴ and Grubb stated that God's self-disclosure should be relied on entirely, without any natural wisdom being used.⁹⁵ Ann Robson argued that the believer should renounce any dependence on reason or any other power of their own and depend entirely on the influence of the Spirit.⁹⁶ The Quietists even believed that use of rational faculties could obscure the true religious life; John Barclay contrasted the flow of divine inspiration received from God with "...the stagnant pools which man's wisdom dams up, or the broken cisterns which his foolishness hath formed".⁹⁷ The Beaconites, who emphasised historical revelation, might have been expected to have vigorously attacked the Quietists' denial of the use of reason. However, they do not appear to have raised the Quietists' disregard of the intellect as a major issue during the Beaconite controversy. By contrast Gurney defended the use of human reason, which he linked to the immediate revelation of the Spirit. He argued that while nothing short of the illumination of the Holy Spirit could give sufficient and saving knowledge of the scriptures, the use of natural facilities should not be suspended; there was a duty to exercise diligence and care in understanding the Bible.⁹⁸ More significantly he argued that the immediate revelation of the Spirit operated through the intellect. Gurney declared of the immediate guidance of the Spirit that

"...I conceive that it forms no exception to the universality of this divine law as the gift of God to man, or to that of the conscience as one of the faculties of our nature, that the former is not perceived, and that the latter does not operate, when the intellect is not developed. Our moral faculties are

bestowed upon us as rational beings; and where ever reason is dormant, they will of necessity be dormant also. Such is the case with infants, with idiots, and, to a considerable extent, with some of the most degraded tribes of uncultivated men".⁹⁹

He also argued that this internal revelation was bestowed upon humanity as rational beings.¹⁰⁰ Gurney did, however, argue that the intellect in itself was insufficient without immediate revelation and stated that while Christianity was in perfect harmony with reason, some of the essential doctrines "...are indeed far above the reach of the natural understanding of man..." and could only be comprehended by the influence of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰¹ While Gurney's emphasis on the intellect and the Quietists' antipathy to the use of reason might suggest this was a simple theological division between evangelicalism and traditional Quakerism, the Beaconites' disregard for this issue suggests otherwise. Instead Gurney's emphasis on the reconciliation of the intellect and immediate revelation is another example of his attempt to unite traditional Quaker beliefs with evangelicalism; he expressed the doctrine of immediate revelation in a manner which would do equal justice to historical revelation, with both of them being perceived through the same intellectual faculties. As importantly Gurney's reconciliation of immediate revelation and reason and his rejection of the Quietists' blanket disavowal of the use of the intellect radically affected many of his other areas of work and allowed him to promote activities which fostered the use of the intellect.

This combination of Quakerism and evangelicalism had serious implications for individual Friends' attitudes towards the wider world. Where Friends adopted evangelicalism, with its stress on participation in the world and use of the intellect, it forced them to reconsider their attitudes to

ecumenism, education, philanthropy, politics, and business. During the early nineteenth century evangelical Friends were to make important contributions in all these fields, none more so than Gurney himself. The rest of this study is, therefore, dedicated to examining Gurney's participation in public life beyond the pale of the Society of Friends and to showing how his dual commitment to evangelicalism and Quakerism affected his contribution to the wider church and wider society.

7. GURNEY'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE PAN-EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT

Alongside his work within the Society of Friends, Gurney was an active participant in the interdenominational evangelical movement. Many of his closest associates were members of other denominations, principally of the Church of England; the great majority of his publications were written for an interdenominational audience; and he was also an active member of the great interdenominational religious charities, principally, but by no means exclusively, the British and Foreign Bible Society. While this double allegiance between being a member of the Society of Friends and of the wider evangelical movement was undoubtedly a source of strength for Gurney, it also led to a tension between his loyalty to the sect and loyalty to the wider movement. Although there was considerable common ground between Gurney's brand of Quakerism and the evangelicalism which was espoused by members of other denominations; there were points of disagreement. Moreover, Gurney's Quaker beliefs were frequently criticised by other evangelicals. Gurney therefore developed an ecclesiology which would reconcile his involvement with this movement and his loyalty to the Society of Friends. This theology, which was combined with a pragmatic approach to association with members of other denominations, in many ways mirrored the spirit of the wider evangelical movement during the nineteenth century. However, as the movement changed during his later life, Gurney was to become an increasingly isolated figure and as a result increasingly emphasised sectarianism at the expense of his support for ecumenism.

Gurney's earliest and most enduring association with non-Quakers was with evangelical Anglicans. At the most immediate level, Gurney came into contact with several figures who would establish themselves as leaders of the evangelical party within the Church of England through their marriages into his family. In 1816 Richenda married Francis Cunningham. Another of his sisters' marriages brought Gurney into closer association with Thomas Fowell Buxton, who was to become one of his most important friends within the Church of England. Buxton, later to become an M.P. and leader of the anti-slavery movement, had originally been introduced to the Gurney family at the age of 16. He eventually married Joseph John's sister, Hannah, and was a close friend of Joseph John.¹ His sisters' marriages to evangelical Anglicans reinforced Gurney's respect for members of the Church of England. While Richenda's marriage alarmed Hannah Chapman Backhouse, Gurney approved of his sister's relationship with Cunningham, noting his devout nature,² adding that, given the state of trade, he would prefer to see his sister marry a clergyman than a banker.³ He also declared to Hannah Chapman Backhouse that his Anglican in-laws did possess a real faith and that they were determined to do God's will.⁴ In addition to these in-laws, many other evangelical Anglicans visited Earham. The close links between the Gurneys and evangelical Anglicans are shown by Buxton's meeting with influential evangelical members of the Church of England for the first time through his association with the Gurneys. For example, the Gurneys' brought Buxton into contact with Edward Edwards.⁵ Edwards had already had a profound influence on the Gurney family; Joseph John Gurney's own autobiography notes that he had encouraged piety among the Earham circle.⁶ Fowell Buxton also met William Wilberforce through Joseph John Gurney.⁷ Wilberforce himself, like many other leading evangelicals,

came into contact with the Gurneys through the annual meetings of the Norwich Auxiliary Bible Society. When, at Gurney's request, Wilberforce spoke at the 1816 anniversary meeting of the Norwich Auxiliary, the whole Wilberforce family, along with other guests, stayed at Earlham. This visit provided Gurney with another example of Anglican piety. Gurney described the visitors to Earlham as

"...a large party composed of persons of several denominations, who were all anxious to promote the extension of the Kingdom of the Redeemer, and Wilberforce was the star and life of our circle".⁸

The Norwich Auxiliary Bible Society also brought Gurney into contact with another influential evangelical Anglican. In 1817 Charles Simeon attended the annual gathering of the Norwich branch and, like Wilberforce, stayed at Earlham. He thereafter became a regular visitor to Earlham and he was rapidly drawn into friendship with Gurney.⁹ Like Wilberforce, Simeon clearly impressed Gurney. Gurney described Simeon as being "...full of love, zeal & action bodily and mental..";¹⁰ Gurney believed he combined uncommon power and piety.¹¹ Gurney also recognised Simeon's importance in promoting the evangelical cause and argued that he had been the means of instilling a knowledge of religion into the minds of thousands of young men at Cambridge.¹² In addition to bringing Gurney into contact with Wilberforce and Simeon, the annual meetings of the Auxiliary Bible Society served as an opportunity for him to meet members of other denominations throughout his lifetime. For example, in 1844 Gurney noted that 23 or 24 clergymen attended the meeting.¹³ Given the number of acquaintances which he made through these meetings, it is not surprising that Gurney argued that one of the great advantages of the Bible Society was that it "...opens

an easy door of communication between persons who have no previous acquaintance with each other..."¹⁴ Visits by members of other denominations to Earlham were, however, by no means limited to the occasion of the Bible Auxiliary's annual meetings. Indeed Gurney described Earlham as an "open house for the religious world".¹⁵ For example, from 1816 onward Anglicans and dissenters gathered at Earlham to worship in the manner of Friends.¹⁶ Other visitors to Earlham included the Scottish economist and minister, Dr Chalmers, who, as will be shown, profoundly affected Gurney's attitude to the treatment of the poor,¹⁷ and the Anglican evangelical Edward Bickersteth was another of Gurney's associates.¹⁸

Given Gurney's commitment to the Society of Friends, it must be asked why he found himself drawn into close friendship with evangelical Anglicans. This can in part be accounted for by the many characteristics which were common to both evangelical Anglicanism and strict Quakerism. For example, the life style required of strict adherents to Quakerism and of evangelical Anglicans was remarkably similar. As has already been noted,¹⁹ the lifestyle required by the Society of Friends emphasised seriousness and placed many prohibitions on its adherents. Similarly one of the most striking feature about the Anglican evangelicals was their serious approach to life. Bradley (who indeed calls his study of the Anglican evangelical movement The Call to Seriousness) argued that they were determined to live useful lives and not to waste time on Earth. This led to excessive seriousness, self denial, and the shunning of apparently innocent pleasures.²⁰ The emphasis on seriousness and concern to use time profitably was shared by Gurney as a plain friend. For example, his

concern to use time profitably can be seen in his anxieties that he was devoting too much time to sleep. In his journal for 1814 he noted that he believed that excessive sleeping was "creeping too close to the fire"²¹ and in 1819 claimed that sleeping had for too long been a "successful enemy".²² Moreover, the Anglican evangelicals might have felt some sympathy with the Quakers' adoption of distinctive plain dress. David Newsome argues that the evangelicals believed that outward appearance was very important and a sign of conversion.²³ The plain Friends' desire to be seen as a separate people was also comparable with the evangelicals' approach to life, which shared with Quakerism this sense of being to a degree separate from the world.²⁴

Another point on which the evangelical Anglicans and Quakers would have agreed was on their insistence that religion was a living experience, rather than a theological system. As has been shown both evangelical and Quietist Quakers, rather than espousing an elaborate doctrinal system, emphasised that an individual needed to experience religious conversion, a process which they invariably associated with submission to the Spirit's power. Similarly, Elliott-Binns argues that evangelical theology was generally simple and existed to save souls and make believers worthy of their profession rather than to satisfy intellectual curiosity. As a result the evangelicals' main concern was the application of the gospel rather than the construction of any elaborate doctrinal system²⁵ and, as Bradley argues, they did not have a theological system, being more concerned with religion as a way of life.²⁶ As well as both stressing the need for religious experience, both evangelicalism and Quakerism emphasised the work of the Spirit. The evangelicals claimed a direct experience of

Christ's power and actual guidance of the Holy Spirit.²⁷ Similarly, like Quakerism, evangelicals believed that the Spirit guided not only the whole church but also each believer as an individual.²⁸ It should, however, be added that most evangelicals did not go as far as Quakers in stressing the role of the Spirit and, as will be shown, many members of the movement were critical of Gurney's belief in immediate revelation.

Paradoxically, as well as being drawn towards the Anglican evangelicals by the characteristics they shared with strict Quakers, Gurney would have also found that he had much in common with these churchmen which separated him from his Quietist brethren. As has been shown, Gurney devoted much of his energy to reading and study, particularly of the classics. Similarly, Rosman suggests, the evangelicals regarded reading as the most enjoyable of leisure pursuits²⁹ and supported the study of the classics as this would allow them to read the scriptures in their original form.³⁰ The evangelical emphasis on reading and study was at least in part a result of their emphasis on reason. Reason, they believed, in its right place could be the handmaiden of religion. They also suggested reason was less affected by the Fall than humanity's other faculties and claimed that the intellect and spirituality were associated.³¹ Similarly Gurney's theology, as has been shown,³² emphasised the role of the intellect, a feature of his beliefs which separated him from his traditionalist co-religionists.

Since Gurney would have found that much which he valued in Quakerism was also apparent in evangelical Anglicanism, and that members of this group were more sympathetic to some of his beliefs than were many of his

brethren, it is inevitable that Gurney came under pressure to become an evangelical member of the Church of England. Indeed, the Gurney family as a whole seems to have been drifting towards Anglicanism; of Gurney's nine siblings, five became Anglicans.³³ Moreover evangelical Anglicans encouraged Gurney himself to make this transition. Simeon was particularly keen for Gurney to join the Church of England and offered to come to Earlham to administer communion.³⁴ Gurney would have also been encouraged to leave the Society of Friends by its lack of success when compared with the achievements of evangelicals in other denominations; in 1826 he declared that, although he intended to maintain his membership of the Society of Friends,

"My soul has been deeply revolving how far my peculiar principles can stand the double test to which they are now exposed, that of the solitude, poverty, nakedness & apparent decline to which we poor, & misunderstood Quakers are exposed; and on the other hand that of the flowing association, the high tone of Religious feeling, & the Evangelical prosperity of the many pious persons, not Friends, by whom I am surrounded, & with whom I have been lately permitted very sweetly to unite in essentials, and in the social, though not public worship of almighty God. Can I under such circumstances, and especially under that probably deepening and heightening of the picture, to which I may look forward, live and die a Quaker?"³⁵

Notwithstanding these temptations to join the Anglican church, Gurney remained a loyal member of the Society of Friends throughout his life. It should, however, be added that his close association with evangelical Anglicans led to tension in his religious life and as much as anything else encouraged him to consider how he could reconcile his membership of the Society of Friends with his association with members of the wider church.

While Gurney's closest contacts outside the Society of Friends were Anglican evangelicals, he also enjoyed cordial relations both with non-evangelical churchmen and with dissenters. For example, in 1826 he received an appreciation of his literary work from "one who has commonly had the reputation of a high churchman".³⁶ Gurney also seems to have had remarkably cordial relationships, for a member of Fox's sect, with members of the episcopalian bench. In 1837 Gurney compiled a list of "persons of superior mind or talent" with whom he had a close friendship. This included four Bishops,³⁷ and the names of fourteen Anglican or Catholic Bishops appeared in a second list of persons whom he was "partially acquainted with".³⁸ Gurney was clearly held in high regard by some of the Bishops. For example, the Bishops of London and Salisbury expressed their appreciation of him.³⁹ Furthermore Gurney enjoyed a warm friendship with the (evangelical) Bishop of Peterborough, and on one occasion they combined their resources to study the scriptures.⁴⁰ Beyond the Anglican church, Gurney enjoyed cordial relationships with members of other denominations. While Gurney numbered many Non-Conformists among his friends, his most important association with other dissenters was in their role as supporters of his itinerant missions. Like other Quaker evangelicals, Gurney frequently preached in areas where Quaker Meeting Houses were not available and therefore had to use other buildings to house his meetings. As a result Gurney held meetings in a variety of secular buildings, including a boarding house,⁴¹ a hotel,⁴² a school house,⁴³ a court house,⁴⁴ and a town hall.⁴⁵ He also took advantage of the "captive audiences" on the ships on which he travelled and during his journey to America he held several deck top meetings.⁴⁶ More significantly, Gurney extensively used the property of other denominations, including an Independents' chapel in

Lancashire in 1836⁴⁷ and John Bunyan's Meeting House in 1828.⁴⁸ While in Jamaica Gurney divided the venues for his meetings equally between Baptist and Methodist Churches, noting that both were offered freely,⁴⁹ and he even used a Unitarian chapel for one of his meetings while he was in America.⁵⁰ While he used the buildings of many denominations during his itinerant tours, the mainstay in supplying Gurney with venues for his services during his British tours were the Methodists. Gurney's most successful use of a Methodist property in the United Kingdom came in 1828 when he used the largest Methodist church in England for a meeting in Huddersfield which was attended by 3,000 people; the largest congregation that Gurney could remember being assembled. Not surprisingly Gurney noted that the service was an "extraordinary" time.⁵¹ Gurney's use of the property of other denominations is another clear example of co-operation between evangelical Friends and the members of other denominations and as such is an example of the breakdown of sectarianism within the Society of Friends during this period.

Gurney's itinerant tour of the United States also reinforced his respect for members of other denominations in general and dissenters in particular. During his journey Gurney was drawn into extensive association with non-Quakers and paid many social visits to ministers of other denominations. For example, Gurney noted that he had met Episcopalian, Methodist, and Presbyterian ministers in Smithfield;⁵² that he dined with the ministers of several denominations in Albany;⁵³ and that nothing could exceed the cordiality which he had received from Methodists in Montreal.⁵⁴ Moreover, Gurney was clearly impressed by the achievements of the various denominations in the New World. He argued that the Baptist missionaries

had for many years been the unflinching, untiring friends of the negro;⁵⁵ that the Moravians were very useful in the British West Indies;⁵⁶ and that the Methodists, Moravians, and Anglicans were all usefully at work in Antigua⁵⁷ where, under "different administrations", Christian education was making rapid progress.⁵⁸ He also declared that the Presbyterians of North America were both numerous and of a highly respectable character.⁵⁹ Gurney even observed a Baptist revivalist meeting, having no doubt that a work of grace was going forward under this "somewhat bursting and exciting instrumentality", although he felt that it was right for himself to "perch on a somewhat higher and quieter shelf".⁶⁰ Once again his American tour brought him into close association with Methodists. As Swift suggests, Gurney's American tour also increased his respect for Methodists.⁶¹ Indeed Gurney noted very early in his tour that the Methodists were both numerous and useful⁶² and later stated that they were one of the "best hopes" for the Province of Upper Canada.⁶³ As well as providing Gurney with hospitality and venues for his services, members of other denominations also provided material he used in his published works. Gurney acknowledged that he used a remark by Dr Chalmers as the starting point for one of his works.⁶⁴ He also quoted Wilberforce,⁶⁵ and made use of the work of the evangelical poets, Cowper and More.⁶⁶ Furthermore the Christian Observer's review of one of his works suggested that he had adopted ideas from Paley and Doddridge.⁶⁷

Gurney's close association with members of other denominations and the temptations to join the Church of England led to tensions with his belief that the Society of Friends was the only truly reformed church. He therefore developed an ecclesiology which could reconcile his involvement

in both the sect and the movement as a whole. This ecclesiology emphasised the role of a universal church which transcended denominational barriers. He argued that the true and universal church was "...composed of all who are brought to repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ...".⁶⁸ As one example of this universal church, Gurney described the founding meeting of the Norwich Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society as a time when all pulled down barriers of distinction and melted into one common Christianity.⁶⁹ Gurney argued that this true and universal Church extended to all corners of the Christian Church. Although he believed that "...the antichrist of the New Testament and Rome spiritual...are ONE and the same...",⁷⁰ he claimed that some Roman Catholics, along with members of all other orthodox denominations were "...drinking of the same Spirit; and...are "baptised" by that "one spirit, into one body...".⁷¹ Gurney believed that the work of this universal church, which transcended all denominational barriers, could be damaged by an emphasis on distinctive sectarian practices and beliefs. He argued that the spread of Christianity had been hindered by its becoming mixed up with human inventions and systems. By contrast, he argued, if believers were to leave these things in favour of Christianity in its pure original power the faith would spread in every direction.⁷² In particular Gurney believed that if too much emphasis was placed on questions of mode of worship and church government and on theological questions such as millennialism (a subject which was to become a bugbear to him in later life) "...the frequent consequence is a harsh judgement of our brethren, and a breach of that love and charity which ought always to bind together the members of the Church militant."⁷³ Gurney therefore argued that sectarianism should be eradicated. He believed that the Spirit would lead believers away from

any sectarian peculiarities. These sectarian peculiarities, he stated, must perish.⁷⁴

This opposition to sectarianism would appear to call into question Gurney's allegiance to the Society of Friends. As has been shown, their emphasis on the universal church and their belief that Quakerism retained peculiarities which separated it from the rest of the church militant were factors which contributed to the Beaconites leaving the Society of Friends. However, Gurney was able to combine his membership with the Society of Friends with his stress on the universal church as he believed that Quakerism, alone among the denominations, was the only reformed church and freed from sectarianism. He declared that Quakerism was "not a narrow system but the absence of system."⁷⁵ Even in 1840, he declared that Quakerism was "nothing else than evangelical and spiritual Christianity of the New Testament without addition without diminution and without compromise".⁷⁶ As Gurney believed that all the other religious groups were tainted by human systems, he argued that the Society of Friends had been led to uphold its distinctive Christian testimonies for the welfare of the Church at large and the world.⁷⁷ In 1832 Jonathan Hutchinson wrote to Gurney stating that the Society of Friends had been founded as "a light and a waymark even to the religious world".⁷⁸ Importantly Gurney believed that the example which Friends provided would increasingly be followed by members of other denominations. He argued that as the church advanced there would be a growing appreciation of the views of Friends.⁷⁹ This conviction encouraged Gurney's emphasis on ecumenism. He would have believed that participation in the wider religious community by himself and his fellow evangelical Friends could have hastened the diffusion of these

Quaker beliefs among other Christians. Equally he would have been alarmed by changes in the British churches during his later life, which marked an apparent reversal of this trend among members of other denominations to adopt the beliefs of Quakerism.

Gurney's doctrine of a universal church which was damaged by sectarianism, shaped his involvement in ecumenism. This approach to interdenominational activity was compatible with the spirit of the early nineteenth century evangelical movement. Evangelicals during this period claimed that the church of Christ consisted of all believers.⁸⁰ For example, although Anglican evangelicals regarded the established Church as the ideal visible church, they also acknowledged an invisible church.⁸¹ However, as will be shown, this inclusiveness was to be increasingly challenged within the evangelical community during Gurney's lifetime.

Gurney's ecclesiology is significant because he participated within the evangelical movement in two important spheres: as an active member of many of the great evangelistic societies; and as an author who was widely regarded among evangelicals. The latter role, however, brought him into conflict with many evangelicals who criticised his espousal of uniquely Quaker doctrines. Although, as has been shown already, there were considerable areas of common ground between Quakerism and evangelicalism, given Gurney's emphasis on the unique beliefs of the Society of Friends it was inevitable that he would disagree with evangelicals in other denominations on some issues. As with his conflict with the Beaconites, the crucial point of disagreement between Gurney and other evangelicals was over his belief in the immediate revelation and guidance of the Spirit.

It is, however, easier to appreciate some of the implications of Gurney's doctrine on this issue when his views on this subject are compared to those of members of the wider evangelical movement.

Gurney believed that the immediate revelation of the Spirit clearly guided the believer in his daily life. In a letter to Anna Backhouse he suggested that by the "everlasting word of truth communicated directly to the soul", it was possible to receive and apply the message of the scriptures, and to discern good from evil, expedient from inexpedient, and false from true.⁸² He claimed that even the most mundane areas of the believer's life could be directed by this immediate revelation. The Spirit, he argued, would "put us forth and keep us at home, make us quiet in our rest and guide us in our activity".⁸³ Many contemporary evangelicals would have been alarmed at the degree of influence which Gurney attributed to the Spirit in the life of the believer, especially as he seemed to claim that in this area the authority of immediate revelation was more important than that of the Bible; he suggested that the scriptures in general

"...consist in general directions. Now, the inward manifestations of the Spirit of Christ, while they confirm the principles on which those general directions are founded, will instruct us how to apply them in our daily work, and under the various circumstances and exigencies of life."⁸⁴

Gurney stressed that this guiding influence which the believer received in their daily life was of a divine origin and was not a natural faculty in humanity, stating that the influence of the Holy Ghost was

"A supernatural influence, an influence which forms no part whatever of the constitution of the human mind; an influence which is as distinct from the soul, as the wind which meets us

when we are walking or riding, is distinct from the body."⁸⁵

Gurney argued that the Spirit not only guided the individual, but also the worship and the church life of the Society of Friends as a corporate body. He claimed that the immediate influence of the Spirit equipped individuals for particular religious service⁸⁶ and that the Society of Friends believed that it was "...the undivided prerogative of the Great Head of the Church himself, to choose, to prepare, and to ordain, his own ministers."⁸⁷ Many evangelicals, ever wary of being associated with ranterism, would have felt uneasy about Gurney's claims to be directly guided by the Spirit. They would have been all the more alarmed at his claim that Christ by his Spirit also served as an immediate teacher of his people. Gurney declared that Christ was an "inward teacher"⁸⁸ and that the immediate teaching by the Spirit was essential for the Christian, because without it the doctrines unfolded in the scriptures could not be comprehended.⁸⁹

While Gurney stressed the inward work of the Spirit as guide and teacher, he placed as great an emphasis on the immediate revelation of the Spirit as sanctifier. Gurney argued that the Spirit participated in the process of redemption in two ways: by bringing the individual into a relationship with God and by gradually sanctifying the believer. He argued that reconciliation with the Father, through the Son, was received by the immediate visitation of the Spirit⁹⁰ and it was only by this influence that the believer could be "baptised" into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost,⁹¹ a process which Gurney argued was essential for the Christian.⁹² Alongside the Spirit's work

in bringing the believer into a relationship with the Godhead, Gurney stressed the importance of immediate revelation in gradually preparing the believer for the condition of heaven. Sanctification was a central theme in Gurney's theology and he believed that holiness was inseparable from salvation, claiming that "...no man can be saved while he continues in his carnal state-in his original, fallen, condition"⁹³ and "We had need purify ourselves completely and throw off everything that approaches to sin, or we can never exist in that eternal resting place, where all is perfectly pure and so perfectly peaceful".⁹⁴ He therefore argued that the believer's entire nature needed to be changed, suggesting that sanctification required a complete change of heart⁹⁵ and that the believer was prepared for the heavenly state by gradual, yet complete, purification.⁹⁶ This change of character was achieved through the sanctifying power of the Spirit. He described sanctification as the purifying work of the Spirit⁹⁷ and argued that the Spirit provided the quickening principle by which the believer could both be born again and gradually restored to the image of the Creator.⁹⁸ Gurney's doctrine of sanctification and his claim that only those who were purified could enter heaven, naturally raised the question of what happened to those who had died before reaching this state. Gurney dealt with this question by arguing that in certain cases the condition of the penitent could be miraculously transformed. He therefore claimed that "in the eleventh hour cases-such as the thief on the cross and the Earl of Rochester", there had been an inward change by which their affections had been turned to God and by this they were prepared for the enjoyment of heaven.⁹⁹ It is, however, clear that Gurney regarded cases such as these as

exceptional. Except in cases such as these Gurney's doctrine of redemption, like that of traditionalist Friends, required submission to the work of the Spirit. He argued that the guidance of the immediate revelation would place restrictions on the believer's activities.¹⁰⁰ He further claimed that the believer had to obey the restrictions which the Spirit placed on his life and suggested that the state of holiness could be achieved by full submission to this influence and guidance of the Spirit.¹⁰¹ Gurney's theology did, however, recognise the costs which obedience to the immediate revelation might involve and acknowledged that the sanctifying work of the Spirit would involve suffering. For example, he suggested that the teaching of the immediate revelation of the Spirit would lead "...into many mortifying little sacrifices directly opposed to the Spirit of the world"¹⁰² and that all Christians must expect seasons of lowness, whether from outward or inward causes.¹⁰³ Like the initial reconciliation to the Godhead, Gurney described this suffering as a "baptism". For example, in 1828 he noted that the Society of Friends had received many "discouragements and baptisms".¹⁰⁴ This emphasis on spiritual baptism, as will be shown, led to a depreciation of the value of physical baptism.

While some evangelicals would have sympathised with Gurney's doctrine of sanctification, they would have opposed his interrelated denial of the doctrine of original sin and his advocacy of perfectionism.

While, as has already been shown, some of the first generation of Quaker evangelicals rejected the doctrine of original sin, it is not immediately apparent if Gurney also eschewed this doctrine: even one

of his supporters noted that this was not an issue on which he had concentrated.¹⁰⁵ Although one of his Quietist critics accused him of supporting the doctrine of original sin,¹⁰⁶ his published works seem to indicate that Gurney did not accept this doctrine. While he argued on one occasion that the image of God was lost in humanity at the fall,¹⁰⁷ elsewhere he suggested that there were still traces of the original excellence in humanity and people were not exclusively sinful.¹⁰⁸ Moreover he privately declared that he objected to the doctrine that Adam's guilt was imputed to every human being.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, as Gurney stressed that corruption was progressive,¹¹⁰ he must have assumed that humanity did not begin in absolute corruption. Another doctrine held by the first generation of Quaker evangelicals, which would again have been anathema to the members of the interdenominational evangelical movement was perfectionism. Once more it is difficult to discern whether Gurney adhered to this doctrine. The same Quietist who had questioned Gurney's stance on original sin, accused him, like other "so called evangelical writers" of not supporting the doctrine of freedom from sin.¹¹¹ However, while Gurney never publicly declared his support for the doctrine of perfection, references to this doctrine in his published works indicate that he was at least sympathetic towards it. He claimed in one of his works that Christians were given a standard of perfection to follow in Christ.¹¹² More significantly, Gurney openly referred to this doctrine in his private correspondence; in one letter (published after his death) he declared that, while he had no liking for the statements of the doctrine of perfection sometimes heard from persons who were very far from this state themselves, he did believe that

"...it is our duty unflinchingly to uphold the practical standard - even the standard of true perfection, which is presented to us in Scripture...".¹¹³ Importantly Gurney linked perfectionism to the immediate revelation of the Spirit, arguing that the inward guide set up the standard to "be perfect, as the Father was perfect".¹¹⁴ Gurney's acceptance of perfectionism would have alarmed his evangelical friends. As Elliott-Binns notes, the Calvinists, and indeed many of the Methodists, rejected the doctrine of perfectionism¹¹⁵ and, as Gurney himself noted, Chalmers declared that it was unscriptural to believe that a man could become perfect in this life.¹¹⁶

Gurney's theology with its emphasis on sanctification and its implicit, although rarely stated, acceptance of perfectionism shared more in common with Wesleyan Arminianism than Calvinism. The links between Gurney's theology and that of the Methodists were recognised by both Gurney and his critics. In 1833 Gurney stated that "The doctrine of "universal and saving light", I apprehend to be identical with that which the Wesleyans call the doctrine of "universal grace"."¹¹⁷ Writing to William and Priscilla Leatham in 1843, Gurney noted that the beliefs of the Methodists coincided with those of Friends on the doctrine of universality of divine grace. He further claimed that Quakers had more in common with Methodists than they did with other denominations. Given that his theology was closer to Arminianism than Calvinism, Gurney, like other Quaker evangelicals, on occasions criticised Calvinist beliefs, especially the doctrine of predestination. In the same letter in which he had noted the

similarities between Methodists and Friends, he argued that the practical effect of the doctrine of predestination was "not wholesome" and led to a limiting of the diffusion of Christian charity.¹¹⁸ Gurney's opposition to Calvinism and his apparent Arminianism would have caused friction with his evangelical friends, since most of them were Calvinists, albeit moderate Calvinists, who believed that, while Christ had died for all men, not everyone received the grace which would allow him to partake in the benefit of this atonement.¹¹⁹ Even this moderate Calvinism would not have been sufficient for Gurney who placed considerable weight on his belief that all humanity received sufficient grace to enable them to receive salvation. Although Gurney clearly recognised that his doctrine on this issue separated him from many other evangelicals, he argued that his belief that the offer of salvation was open to all humanity was gaining ground among his contemporaries. In 1834 Gurney stated that, far from being unique to Friends, tens of thousands were accepting Quakerism's doctrine of the universality of spiritual light.¹²⁰ He was also relieved to note that those of his evangelical friends who were pre-destinarians, were not excessively attached to this doctrine. He argued that

"I am inclined to think, that some of the greatest luminaries in the evangelical world in the present day, are essentially anti-predestinarian. Or, if they hold the doctrine, they hold it in great moderation..."¹²¹

and claimed that his friend Chalmers was a "very moderate Calvinist".¹²² Although Gurney would have placed great store on his belief that evangelicals in general were gradually renouncing Calvinism, it is clear that Gurney's perceived association with

Arminianism could have been a source of conflict. Indeed some of his critics among members of the evangelical movement criticised him as a supporter of Arminianism; The Congregational Magazine claimed that Gurney embraced the Arminian scheme and argued that both Friends and Arminians should admit the inefficiency of the inward light¹²³ and The Christian Observer compared the criticisms they made of Gurney's beliefs with those they made of Wesleyans and Whitefieldites.¹²⁴ While there are clear similarities between Gurney's theology and that of the Wesleyan Methodists, it would be a mistake to argue that the former simply absorbed doctrines from the latter. There is no evidence to show that Gurney was directly influenced by Methodism. Instead he was drawing upon traditional Quaker doctrines which concurred with Methodist beliefs. Whether there were any substantial connections between early Methodists and Quakers which might have influenced Methodist doctrine, is a question which is beyond the scope of this study.

While the Arminian aspects of Gurney's emphasis on the work of the Spirit would have alarmed some non-Quaker evangelicals, the most obvious manner in which his doctrines came into conflict with those held by other evangelicals was in his understanding of the relationship between the Spirit and the sacraments. Gurney argued that the two great sacraments of the church, baptism and communion, were entirely internal and spiritual. As has already been mentioned, Gurney referred to both the entering into a living relationship with the Godhead and process of sanctification as a "baptism". He further argued that the passages in the New Testament which referred to the

baptism of the Spirit referred exclusively to an inward work, whereby the believer was baptised in a spiritual sense into the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit.¹²⁵ Gurney claimed that this spiritual baptism provided regeneration, renewal, and entry into the Church universal;¹²⁶ something which other denominations would have associated, at least in part, with physical baptism. Similarly, Gurney believed that communion was entirely spiritual. He argued that the believer was spiritually fed by God¹²⁷ and had communion with the Father.¹²⁸ While other evangelicals would have accepted that there was a spiritual and internal element within these sacraments; they would not have accepted that the external sacraments had been entirely abrogated by an internal spiritual reality. By contrast Gurney argued that the ceremonies of baptism and communion had their origin in pre-Christian Jewish customs and merely prefigured elements in the Christian dispensation.¹²⁹ These, like the other figurative ceremonies of the Mosaic law, were in Gurney's opinion abolished with the commencement of the Christian dispensation.¹³⁰

Gurney's espousal of his doctrine of the Spirit inevitably brought him into conflict with members of the wider evangelical movement. It is true that other members of the interdenominational evangelical movement would have had some sympathy with Gurney's doctrine of the Spirit, especially its emphasis on gradual sanctification. Among Gurney's non-Quaker associates, Charles Simeon was particularly sympathetic towards the doctrine of sanctification espoused by the Quaker minister. Like Gurney, Simeon argued that the process of

sanctification was progressive.¹³¹ Simeon's doctrine of the Spirit was also very similar to Gurney's. He argued that the Spirit led the believer into the Godhead¹³² and the nature of the believer had to be created anew through co-operative work of the Son and the Spirit.¹³³ Given the similarities between their theologies, it must be wondered how far Simeon's doctrine of the Spirit was influenced by his association with Gurney. Furthermore, Simeon's emphasis on the Spirit undoubtedly encouraged Gurney's belief that there was a growing appreciation of the work of the Spirit among the Anglicans. In 1831, while visiting Simeon in Cambridge, Gurney argued that the work of the Spirit, which had at one time been thought of too little in the city, was now being dwelt on with increasing clearness and weight in the University Church.¹³⁴ This would undoubtedly have reinforced Gurney's belief that Quakerism's doctrines were steadily gaining ground in the wider church.

Although evangelicals in general would have some sympathy for his doctrine of the Spirit, Gurney's theology, which stressed the work of the immediate revelation, excluded the outward sacraments, and claimed that the Society of Friends as uniquely regenerate, was naturally to lead him into conflict with members of the wider evangelical movement. As a result Gurney's major exposition of Friends' beliefs was met with almost universal hostility from non-Quaker evangelicals. This opposition led Gurney to omit exclusively Quaker doctrines from his later works, where he dealt with more inclusive topics which would be accepted by the wider evangelical movement. Ironically the work which brought him into conflict with non-Friends was not intended for an audience outside the Society of Friends.

In 1822 Gurney wrote that he was endeavouring to put down on paper his thoughts and reflections on the Society of Friends' distinctive features, for the benefit of their young people and new converts. He hoped that the finished product would be "more easy and familiar than Barclay and deeper than H. Tuke".¹³⁵ Although Gurney clearly intended this work, Observations on the Religious Peculiarities of the Society of Friends, (1824), for a Quaker audience, non Quaker evangelicals felt obliged to comment on its contents. Both the Congregational Magazine and Anglican Christian Observer carried reviews of the work. In addition the Anglican Rev. George Bliss and the Baptist Seacombe Ellison wrote replies to Observations. All these works were extremely critical of Observations and an analysis of their reasons for opposition to Gurney's work shows the degree to which Gurney's beliefs, and by inference those of evangelical Quakers in general, differed from those of other evangelicals.

The writers of these criticisms rejected Gurney's belief that individuals received guidance from the immediate revelation of the Spirit. The Congregational Magazine rejected the doctrine of a light in all men as unscriptural¹³⁶ and Ellison argued that Gurney's inward monitor was an unsteady, uncertain, and unsafe instructor and was nothing more than the imagination of the brain.¹³⁷ As well as criticising Gurney's doctrine that the individual was guided by the Spirit, his critics rejected Gurney's suggestion that the Spirit had guided Friends to adopt their unique practices. For example, Bliss noted his regrets that Friends had left the known dictates of the Spirit contained in scriptures, to follow what might be the working of their own natural spirit.¹³⁸ Furthermore Gurney's evangelical critics naturally attacked Gurney's beliefs with regard to the

sacraments. Ellison disagreed with Gurney's assertion that the references in the scriptures to baptism referred exclusively to a spiritual phenomenon¹³⁹ and claimed that the gospel institution of communion required actual eating and drinking.¹⁴⁰ Ellison also argued that, while Christ had commanded his followers to feed off him spiritually, He also wished them to manifest their faith symbolically in partaking of bread and wine.¹⁴¹ Bliss argued that communion was obligatory for all believers.¹⁴² While it was perhaps inevitable that non-Quaker evangelicals would criticise Gurney's doctrines of the Spirit and the sacraments, the critical reviews of Observations also called upon Friends to abandon their unique doctrines. Ironically, considering Gurney's own beliefs, some of these critics also accused Gurney of promulgating sectarianism through this book and thereby hindering co-operation between Christians: The Christian Observer argued that the peculiarities of Friends did not admit ground for broad Christian union and warned that Christianity would not be extended by the multiplication of distinctions.¹⁴³ More importantly some of these writers, like the Beaconites, called upon Quakers to reconsider their doctrines and abandon those which could not be justified by reference to the scriptures. In their review of Observations, The Congregational Magazine called upon all Christians to divest themselves of the peculiarities of denomination and instead build a system of religion from the scriptures alone, which would lead to something utterly unlike Quakerism.¹⁴⁴ Bliss also called on Gurney and Friends in general to reconsider their view of the sacraments¹⁴⁵ and The Christian Observer also asked Friends to reconsider their view of the Spirit, suggesting that the were not bound by the decisions of their forefathers.¹⁴⁶

In view of these criticisms of Observations from an evangelical audience, Gurney's later publications, except those published during the last few years of his life, avoided sectarian issues and instead stressed those elements of his theology which could be accepted by all members of the evangelical movement. For example, in his first major work after Observations, Gurney declared that "Throughout the present volume, I have endeavoured to avoid the discussion of any of those points in religion, which can with any reason be regarded as peculiar or sectarian".¹⁴⁷ Elsewhere he pointed out that, while the Society of Friends had abandoned the use of the external sacraments, he would not "...attempt to persuade any brother or sister, who may be truly edified through the medium of these ordinances, to follow this example".¹⁴⁸ Even when republishing Observations, Gurney hoped to make it more acceptable to his non-Quaker critics. He changed the title from Observations on the Peculiarities of the Society of Friends to the less provocative Observations on the Distinguishing Views and Practices of the Society of Friends, claiming that "...nothing can be further from me than any desire to throw into the shade those fundamental doctrines, in which all such believers agree".¹⁴⁹ Gurney's willingness to suspend his sectarian beliefs for the sake of ecumenical harmony is a reflection of his ecclesiology and his belief that sectarianism damaged co-operation among members of the universal church. As importantly this also suggests a decline in Friends' sense of having a unique mission to fulfil and the breakdown of their exclusiveness.

The criticisms made of Observations, while significant, should not be allowed to overshadow the admiration which members of the evangelical movement felt for Gurney as a writer. Even the reviews of his work, which

condemned his espousal of exclusively Quaker doctrines, praised the author. The Christian Observer review of Observations described Gurney as an author of superior talents with whom they were pained to disagree¹⁵⁰ and the Congregational Magazine congratulated Quakerism on having found such an advocate and added that, although the book had "...strengthened rather than diminished our antipathies to the system of Quakerism, it has, at least, conciliated our sincere respect for the man."¹⁵¹ Moreover, reviews of Gurney's other works in the other denominational magazines also show that he was highly regarded among evangelicals. The Baptist Magazine stated that his Essays was excellent, well written, and elaborate, and "...the product of a spiritual and devout mind..."¹⁵² and the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine thought Gurney an able apologist of Revelation and a learned and orthodox advocate of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity.¹⁵³ The admiration in which the evangelical community held Gurney is further shown by the denominational magazines' regard for him as a theologian of the first order. For example, The Christian Observer believed that Gurney was of a status "...amongst solid, able, and learned theologians..." and that his work

"...will place him with Pearson, Sherlock, Jones, Horsley, Pye Smith, - amongst the most eminent supporters of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, against the artful and dishonest representations of mistaken and unsound divines."¹⁵⁴

The esteem in which members of other denominations held Gurney's works is also shown by Simeon's recommendation of them to the Cambridge students¹⁵⁵ and by the Bishop of London's use of one of Gurney's works as a study for candidates to Holy Orders.¹⁵⁶

Gurney was so highly regarded as an author among the evangelicals because he encapsulated much of the spirit of the evangelical movement in the early nineteenth century, including its emphasis on reason and study. The Baptist Magazine praised his Essays, noting that "for our readers who can consult the learned notes, containing Hebrew, Greek, and Latin quotations, there is a feast provided of extensive information and critical research."¹⁵⁷ The Congregational Magazine believed of Gurney that "Humbly as he speaks of his attainment in biblical criticism, it must be evident to all who are competent to judge the merits of the work, that they are of the first order".¹⁵⁸ More importantly, Gurney's works also appealed to members of the evangelical movement as, after Observations, he was willing to avoid sectarian issues and instead concentrated on topics which were considered to be of value to the whole Christian community. The Christian Observer argued that his Essays showed a catholic spirit.¹⁵⁹ It added that if Gurney had written in defence of the principles of the Society of Friends, this would have been of narrow benefit and stated that it was better to work for the benefit of the universal church than to try to correct others' beliefs.¹⁶⁰ Even his friend Charles Simeon praised Gurney when he concentrated on uncontentious subjects. Although Simeon wrote to him in 1829 informing him that there was extreme dissatisfaction in Cambridge with Gurney's "diffusion of controversial topics" and that many had declared that they would not attend another of Gurney's meetings,¹⁶¹ Simeon noted that when Gurney preached at the city "...exclusively on points of universal importance.." he was well received.¹⁶² More importantly the members of the interdenominational evangelical movement were interested in Gurney's work because they believed that it indicated that the Society of Friends was abandoning its sectarian peculiarities to

join the Protestant mainstream. The Christian Observer claimed of Essays that "...no more cheering symptom could be afforded of a disposition to merge the narrow peculiarities of a sect in the nobler and more comprehensive distinctions of Christians..." They added that they regarded this work as "...the commencement, we trust - of the return... to those sounder views of Divine revelation and spiritual influence which we consider essential to sobriety and truth..."¹⁶³

Given this belief among the members of the interdenominational evangelical movement that the Society of Friends was abandoning its distinctive beliefs and practices, an audience outside Quakerism was naturally to take a keen interest in events within the Society of Friends during the Beaconite Controversy. The anonymous editor of an 1836 collection of sermons and prayers by Gurney and Fry, wrote that the Society of Friends was currently being agitated by differences of opinion on doctrinal subjects.¹⁶⁴ More importantly non Quaker evangelicals supported the Beaconites' proposals that the Society of Friends should rid itself of its distinctive beliefs and doctrines. In 1835 The Christian Observer carried a long article on the Beaconite controversy, arguing that the conflict would end in much good. The Christian Observer also argued that the Christian world owed a debt to Crewdson for his pointing out to his brethren their error and suggested that the "reformers" would succeed beyond their expectations in promoting more scriptural interpretations of doctrines among their brethren. They also identified Gurney with this process of change among Friends, arguing that his writings and personal exertions entitled him "to the character of an apostle among his people".¹⁶⁵ Notwithstanding this praise, Gurney considered that he had to

defend the orthodoxy of the Society of Friends and wrote to The Christian Observer with a reply to the article on the Beaconite controversy. In this he argued that the Society of Friends was entirely orthodox in its beliefs on the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and atonement, and cited the disownment of Thomas Foster as evidence of this.¹⁶⁶ Gurney's desire to defend the Society of Friends from negative publicity caused by the Beaconite Controversy among the wider community, was shared by other Quaker evangelicals. In 1836 Richardson wrote to the editor of the Manchester Chronicle to correct the exaggerations made in the reporting of the Controversy.¹⁶⁷ Later in the same year, a broadsheet, signed by Friends including Richardson and William Forster, was published to correct inaccurate accounts of the controversy in recent newspaper articles.¹⁶⁸ This concern to defend the reputation of the Society of Friends from accusations of heterodoxy, once again may be an indication that the exclusiveness of Friends was breaking down, as it seems unlikely that a sectarian body would be overly concerned about its reputation among members of the wider community.

Another manner in which Gurney eschewed Friends' traditional exclusiveness was through his active participation in interdenominational missionary and evangelistic Societies. Gurney's participation in these organisations was once again typical of the wider movement, as ecumenism was one of the chief characteristics of evangelicalism. Martin argues that, in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first three decades of the nineteenth century, Anglicans and dissenters participated together for the first time in an interdenominational movement.¹⁶⁹ Similarly a concern for mission was at the very heart of the evangelical movement. As David Owen

notes, there was a flowering of missionary effort due to the evangelical revival, which found its expression in the foundation of the Church Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society.¹⁷⁰ Like other evangelicals, Gurney's supporters within the Society of Friends supported missionary work. For example, William Allen was involved in a project during the first decade of the century to have Africans trained in England and returned to Africa to work as missionaries.¹⁷¹ It should, however, be noted that this interest in missionary work was not shared by the Society as a whole; Gurney recorded in 1831 that there was considerable excitement at the London Yearly Meeting of Elders and Overseers, partly over the question of missions. He noted that this matter was well discussed and was deferred to be considered again the following year, a tactic which was frequently used by the administration of the Society of Friends when it wished to avoid decisions on matters which it wanted to ignore.¹⁷²

Although Gurney's main involvement in this evangelical missionary movement was through the British and Foreign Bible Society, he also supported a variety of other missionary projects. As early as 1814 he noted that he was preparing for a missionary meeting, which would not appear to have been the pending Auxiliary Bible Society meeting.¹⁷³ More importantly Gurney had some connections with all the major evangelical missionary societies, even the Church Missionary Society (CMS), which was an Anglican organisation.¹⁷⁴ In 1816 Gurney convinced Wilberforce to come to the anniversary meeting of the Norwich CMS¹⁷⁵ and in 1823 Gurney recorded that, without abandoning his Quakerism, he had himself addressed a CMS meeting.¹⁷⁶ Gurney also supported the work of the more ecumenical London

Missionary Society,¹⁷⁷ providing hospitality for some of the Society's missionaries in 1836.¹⁷⁸ As well as his involvement in these foreign mission organisations Gurney assisted the work of the other great evangelistic societies of the period, including the Religious Tract Society (RTS).¹⁷⁹ In 1833 Gurney noted that he had attended a "capital" meeting of this society¹⁸⁰ and later, in 1841, he entered into an agreement with the RTS to publish a cheap edition of his Portable Evidences of Christianity.¹⁸¹ Gurney also participated in another major missionary concern of the evangelicals; that of converting the Jews. During this period there was an increased interest in Jewish evangelisation.¹⁸² This interest in Jewish evangelisation was shared by the Quaker evangelicals; Stephen Grellet held a meeting at Devonshire Friends Meeting House for Jews¹⁸³ and visited a Jewish Children's home.¹⁸⁴ Another Friend who preached among the Jewish population was Hannah Chapman Backhouse, who expressed a desire that the Jewish nation might believe and be saved.¹⁸⁵ Gurney himself assisted Hannah Chapman Backhouse in one of her meetings at Devonshire House Friends Meeting House for Jews.¹⁸⁶ Gurney's involvement in Jewish evangelisation is important because it indicates that he placed more emphasis on interdenominational co-operation than did some of his evangelical contemporaries. Due to the evangelicals' desire to make Jewish converts, the London Society for the Promoting of Christianity Among the Jews was founded in 1809. This organisation was initially supported by members of all denominations, including Quakers. However, the Dissenters' involvement in this society declined and it eventually became an Anglican organisation.¹⁸⁷ Gurney, however, continued to support the Society even after other Dissenters had left. Although Swift suggests that Gurney continued to support the Society due to his friendship with

Simeon, who was deeply committed to this organisation,¹⁸⁸ it can also be argued that Gurney's support for this organisation represented a commitment to interdenominational co-operation which was progressively to be out of step with trends in the evangelical movement. It should, however, be noted that even his support for interdenominational evangelistic activities was not uncritical. Gurney's ecclesiology clearly affected his participation in these evangelistic societies, as he was critical of those which stressed what he would regard as sectarian peculiarities. For example, he expressed considerable reservations about the baptising of individuals who were converted by Jewish and missionary societies, as he believed that this practice had a tendency to fix the mind on outward rather than inward matters.¹⁸⁹ Moreover he did not participate in evangelistic organisations where he believed that this might compromise his Quaker beliefs. In 1841 he believed that he could not subscribe to the Norwich City Mission due to the Quaker testimonies of the freedom and spirituality of the gospel¹⁹⁰ (what exactly Gurney found objectionable about this organisation is unclear). Even after his own son had taken the chair of the Mission, Gurney did not believe that involvement in the mission was entirely proper for a committed member of the Society of Friends.¹⁹¹

Gurney's ecclesiology and its implications for his participation in interdenominational co-operation are most clearly expressed through his involvement in the interdenominational organisation which claimed his especial devotion: the British and Foreign Bible Society. Martin argues that this was the largest and most ambitious of the movement's organisations.¹⁹² As J B Braithwaite stated, the Bible Society was one of

Gurney's major preoccupations.¹⁹³ In addition to the role he played in the Norwich branch, Gurney was also involved in the wider work of the Society; this included assisting in the foundation of branches in Paris¹⁹⁴ and Wells.¹⁹⁵ In another example of his devotion to this organisation, Gurney recorded in 1824 that one Bible Society meeting was worth travelling 100 miles to attend.¹⁹⁶ Other Quaker evangelicals also made a major contribution to the Bible Society. The Congregational Magazine stated that

"It is well known, that when the formation of the Bible Society was proposed, the Friends were among the first to lend their assistance; and ever since, both in the Parent Committee, and in many of those Auxiliary and Branch Societies, they have materially contributed, by their enlightened, prudent, and well-timed advice, to the prosperity of the institution."¹⁹⁷

This Quaker involvement even cut across the division among Quaker evangelicals between Beaconites and Gurneyites; Luke Howard was one of the trustees of the Society.¹⁹⁸ In addition to Howard, the membership of the Bible Society committee also included Gurneyites, such as Samuel Gurney.¹⁹⁹ Other Quaker evangelicals who assisted the work of the Bible Society included Richard Phillips (who attended the inaugural meeting of the Norwich auxiliary)²⁰⁰ and Richardson, who was manager²⁰⁰ of the Newcastle Bible Society depot for nearly fifty years.²⁰¹

There were several reasons behind the wholehearted patronage which evangelical Friends in general, and Gurney in particular, gave to the Bible Society. The principal reason why the organisation attracted Quakers, and indeed members of all denominations, was that it allowed them to participate in a cause which was central to the evangelical movement, without having to surrender any of their sectarian peculiarities or adopt

any distinctive creeds or form of worship. The fundamental aim of the Society was to circulate the scriptures without note or comment,²⁰² something which every evangelical could approve. As significantly, the organisation went to great lengths to avoid any sectarianism that might alienate potential members; its meetings were held in secular buildings and all overtly religious activities which might upset denominational sensibilities, such as vocal prayers and sermons, were excluded from its meetings. This Society was, therefore able to attract those evangelicals who refused to join the more denominationally-biased London Missionary Society and Religious Tract Society.²⁰³ Quaker evangelicals would also have supported the Bible Society because they believed that it filled a vital need in supplying Bibles to counteract the influence of Catholicism and heterodoxy on the Continent. An interest in the spiritual state of Europe was a common preoccupation among Quakers during this period. George Dillwyn and William Savery's journeys to Europe in the last years of the eighteenth century²⁰⁴ and the discovery after the French Revolution of a small group in Marseilles who held the same beliefs as Quakers had renewed Friends' interest in the Continent.²⁰⁵ Gurney himself showed some interest in other Friends' work in Europe. For example, he attended Stephen Grellet's private meeting about his journey in France at the 1814 London Yearly Meeting.²⁰⁶ Gurney himself saw the religious state of the Continent in the most dramatic terms and divided its population into three groups:

"There is a powerful, insidious, and learned class, endeavouring, with all their might and main, to destroy the foundation of Christianity...There is another class, much larger and more powerful, but distinguished by ignorance rather than learning, who take the opposite extreme, and have added, are adding, and will add, all sorts of gilded rubbish to divine Truth; and it is impossible for any person; who has not seen it, to have a correct idea of the gross and

desperate, yet childish superstition, which is now prevailing in many parts of the continent of Europe...I would advert now to the third proportion of Europe, which has passed under my observation. There is a little part - a small, but increasing proportion, from the highest classes down to the lowest, from some of the Royal families down to the peasantry - who are at this time showing themselves on the side of simple Christian Truth, the truth as contained in the Bible, without diminution or addition..."

This last group, he believed were growing stronger in proportion to the increased circulation of the Bible in Europe. Given this, Gurney believed that nothing was more important than support for the British and Foreign Bible Society.²⁰⁷ Gurney would also have been encouraged to participate in the Bible Society by the support this organisation received from his closest associates within the evangelical movement, including Simeon who supported the foundation of the Cambridge Auxiliary,²⁰⁸ which was established in the same year as the Norwich Auxiliary.²⁰⁹

Ironically some of the very features which drew Gurney and other Quaker evangelicals to the Bible Society, its inclusivism and its determination to circulate the scriptures on the Continent, also led to conflict within the organisation. The inclusive principles of the British and Foreign Bible Society were increasingly to be challenged by members of the evangelical community who stressed exclusivity. During this conflict Gurney wrote in defence of the existing principles of the Bible Society and through this clearly espoused elements of his ecclesiology. One cause of controversy within the Bible Society was the inclusion of Apocrypha in the Bibles circulated on the Continent. Continental Catholics and Protestants expected that the Bibles they received should contain Apocrypha and the early members of the Bible Society believed that their inclusion was a small price to pay for the distribution of the scriptures.²¹⁰ This policy,

however, came under attack during the 1820s. The opposition to Apocrypha being included in the Society's Bibles came mainly from the Scottish establishment and an extremist fringe which consisted of the supporters of James Haldane, Edward Irving, and Andrew Thompson. The conflict between the leadership of the Bible Society and its critics can be seen as the pragmatic, inclusive interdenominational spirit of the early nineteenth century evangelical movement coming into conflict with a more doctrinally rigid evangelicalism. Indeed, the leadership of the Bible Society, which represented inclusiveness, took a conciliatory course during this controversy and attempted to compromise with the opposition by suggesting, first, that the printing of the Apocrypha be financed by the Continental Societies alone and, secondly, that the Apocrypha could only be appended to Bibles and not circulated as an integral part of the Scriptures. By contrast their opponents, who represented the changing mood within evangelicalism, would not brook any compromise of principle. They did not give any ground and demanded that all Apocryphal Bibles, Continental Societies, and directors of the Bible Society who supported the inclusion of the Apocrypha, be removed. The leadership of the Bible Society refused these demands and as a result the Glasgow and Edinburgh branches of the organisation resigned.²¹¹ Although Gurney did not take an active role in the Apocrypha debate, his reactions to the controversy are of interest as they clearly show that he supported the leadership of the Bible Society in this controversy. He recorded that "The apocrypha question.. assumed at one period a most alarming aspect, and threatened to shake the institution to its foundation"²¹² and also claimed that the source of this attack on the Bible Society was the "enemy".²¹³ His attitude to the Apocrypha question clearly reflects the pragmatism of the early nineteenth century

evangelical movement, as he willingly supported the circulation of the Apocrypha even though he opposed them in principle. He rejected the inclusion of the Apocrypha with the Scriptures, arguing that the former contained "...a variety of strange notions and customs, wholly beyond the scope and limits of Scripture...".²¹⁴ Notwithstanding this, he claimed that he was not uneasy about contributing to a Bible Society which would circulate them as an addition to the scriptures, provided it was appreciated that they were not divine and only intended for general instruction and edification.²¹⁵

Although the Bible Society weathered the Apocrypha controversy, it later faced an even more worrying attack on its inclusive policies and pragmatism when its conditions of membership were called into question. There were increasing demands that only those who were theologically sound should participate in evangelical activity and, as a result, attempts were made to exclude Catholics and Socinians from the Bible Society. Fears about Unitarian influences in the organisation led to local Societies passing motions in 1830/1, which urged that the Society should dissociate itself from those who denied the divinity of Christ.²¹⁶ To facilitate the exclusion of both Catholics and Socinians from the organisation, it was argued that the Society should introduce membership tests which would exclude all those who were not both Protestant and Trinitarian. The party calling for membership tests initially consisted of Anglicans plus the same group of extremists who had precipitated the Apocrypha debate. In addition to the call for a membership test, the party demanded that meetings should be started with prayer, in the belief that this would repel Unitarians. The leadership of the Society rejected both of these

proposals. In 1831 the matter of a test was put to a vote, which the leadership of the Bible Society won. As a result, in 1832 the pro-test party broke away to form their own organisation, the Trinitarian Bible Society.²¹⁷

Gurney played an active role in this controversy. He realised the potential dangers of the conflict, as he claimed that the controversy was "...calculated to confuse and afflict the minds of many persons - especially the young - who have hitherto delighted in assisting our cause..."²¹⁸

Gurney's anxiety over the controversy can also be shown by his adding a note, "Oh that the institution may be preserved", when he recorded reading a report on the Bible Society in 1831.²¹⁹ Undoubtedly, one reason for Gurney's anxiety over the introduction of tests was a fear that they might lead to the exclusion of Friends. One supporter of the leadership of Bible Society, the Rev John King, noted that the tests would

"...exclude a great number of truly pious persons, such as members of the Society of Friends, and many excellent Dissenters of various Denominations, whose consciences will not allow them to submit to any human test"²²⁰

and the Bible Society Secretary, Joseph Hughes, suggested that the inclusion of worship in the Society's meetings would create difficulties for Friends.²²¹ Because the proposed changes might exclude him from the Bible Society, Gurney, along with other supporters of the leadership of the Bible Society, wrote in its defence. The arguments espoused in works defending the leadership and policies of the Bible Society clearly reflected the inclusive attitude of the early nineteenth century evangelical movement. In particular, Gurney's defence of the Bible Society

reflected his belief that an emphasis on sectarian distinctions would damage the work of the universal church. He argued that tests would divide the Society and that the principle of the scriptures and the scriptures only would be lost, and exchanged for a human interpretation of the scriptures. Those involved in the Society, he argued, would then "... retire within their respective more limited fields of thought and action; and the goodliest fabric which has ever been raised in Christendom, will, in all probability, crumble to dust".²²² Other supporters of the Bible Society took a similar view. For example, Hughes argued that the tests were hazardous to unity.²²³ Gurney's defence of the Bible Society also reflects a central element in his ecclesiology: that it was possible to cooperate with members of other denominations while not entering into religious fellowship with them. Gurney acknowledged that it would be wrong to maintain fellowship with those who denied Christ. For example, if a Socinian was found in the Society of Friends he should, as Foster was, be disowned. If believers allowed fellowship with him this would be sanctioning his errors and thereby taking on the guilt for his errors. By contrast, a voluntary organisation which promoted religious objects, like the Bible Society

"...although religious as to its objects, is not so as to its constitution, and which no more partakes of the nature of a church, than any partnership whatsoever formed amongst men, for civil or benevolent purposes"

and the believer would therefore not take on the sin or error of the people associated with it.²²⁴ Gurney did, however, argue that this introduction of doctrinal conditions of membership would transform a voluntary society into a religious fellowship. He argued that the tests

that were imposed on the Trinitarian Bible Society must "...lead to the inevitable inference, that the union to which it introduces, is nothing less than a Christian brotherhood - a direct religious fellowship".²²⁵

Furthermore he believed that once a single test had been introduced, others would have to follow and would eventually undermine the whole organisation. He pointed out that the test would only exclude those who were not Protestant and denied the Trinity, but would allow entry to those who denied the scriptures and Gurney therefore believed that the Trinitarian Bible Society would have to establish more tests and

"...if then the members of the Trinitarian Bible Society follow up their own principles, every man amongst them must construct a test of his own - every man must raise up a hedge between himself and his neighbour - until the whole union is dissolved".²²⁶

Other defenders of the leadership of the Bible Society shared Gurney's ecclesiology. For example, King stated that the meetings of the British and Foreign Bible Society were not religious meetings "...in a proper and extensive, and, I may also add, usual sense of the word..."²²⁷ and that through tests, the Trinitarian Bible Society would "...invade the proper province of a Christian Church...".²²⁸ Hughes also argued that the Bible Society was not a religious society and its members were not part of a religious fellowship: if they were the organisation would fall.²²⁹

Gurney and the other defenders of the leadership of the Bible Society combined these theological justifications of the present constitution of the Society, with a pragmatic rebuttal of some of the pro-test party's accusations. Gurney admitted that the committee of the Bible Society had made some mistakes, but claimed that these had occurred before most of

the present membership had come to office and had been caused by foreign agents.²³⁰ Gurney also argued that only a very few Socinians had joined the Bible Society and their numbers were getting less and less.²³¹ The argument that there were few Unitarians in the Bible Society was also taken up by at least one other supporter of the Society's leadership.²³² Gurney also defended the few Socinians who had joined the Society, believing they were loyal members who had been generous and diligent and saying that, in any case, the scriptures which a Socinian member of the Bible Society distributed were "...the best of antidotes against all that is false and dangerous in his own opinions".²³³ Other defenders of the Bible Society expressed similar beliefs. King believed that the Socinian who joined the Society was "...fighting for us, against himself..."²³⁴ and Lord Teignmouth also stated that he hoped that all Catholics and Socinians would join the Society, as they would find the truth there to overcome their error.²³⁵ Gurney's defence of the Socinians' continued membership of the Bible Society is of interest as it once again reflects his pragmatism. As has been shown in the Foster case, Gurney vehemently opposed Unitarianism. Similarly, another supporter of the Socinians' retaining their membership of the Bible Society, Hughes, claimed that he had combated Unitarianism for around 40 years.²³⁶ This willingness to allow association even with groups he opposed, if this would promote the work of the universal church, once again reflects Gurney's inclusive approach to co-operation with members of other denominations.

As well as opposing the tests, Gurney naturally argued against the introduction of vocal prayers or other acts of public worship into the Society. Gurney opposed the introduction of prayers due to his opposition

to sectarian distinctions, which he feared would lead to divisions within the Bible Society. He pointed out that there would be disputes between members of different denominations over the nature of the prayers to be used, with, for example, Anglicans opposing extemporaneous public prayers. Instead of vocal prayers, Gurney suggested, individuals attending the Bible Society meetings had recourse to the one form of prayer which was acceptable to all. He suggested that the meetings gave opportunity for Christian sentiment through non-vocal, heart-felt prayers and recommended that all those attending the Bible Society meetings should devote themselves to earnest private prayer instead of vocal prayer.²³⁷ This advocacy of a form of worship which was acceptable to all evangelicals is another example of Gurney's inclusive ecclesiology.

The Bible Society survived the challenge from the pro-test party and, as Martin argues, even after this conflict the organisation was still strong.²³⁸ This controversy over the membership tests within the Bible Society was, however, only one example of the changes within the evangelical community and the wider church which forced Gurney to re-examine his commitment to ecumenism and which led him to abandon his willingness to avoid sectarian issues in his published works.

One major cause of change within evangelicalism which would have had an especial impact on Gurney was the death of the old leadership. Newsome argues that between the 1830s and 1840s the great figures in the movement's leadership were passing away.²³⁹ The death of this leadership was especially significant to Gurney as many of them were his allies and

friends. Gurney outlived Wilberforce, Simeon, and Fowell Buxton by fourteen, eleven, and two years respectively and he felt the loss of these figures as much as anyone else. Indeed when referring to the death of Thomas Fowell Buxton and Elizabeth Fry, he noted "...what a chasm their departure has produced - surely we shall never see their like again".²⁴⁰ With the death of some of his closest associates outside the Society of Friends, Gurney must have felt increasingly isolated. His sense of isolation was heightened as the old leadership of the evangelical movement was replaced by new leaders advocating a more strident, exclusive, and extreme form of evangelicalism. The party which challenged the inclusive policies and pragmatism of the Bible Society was increasingly coming to the forefront of the movement. Hilton argues that there was a growing split between "moderate evangelicals", who were typified by the Clapham Sect, and "extreme evangelicals" who included pentecostal, pre-millennial, adventist and revivalist elements.²⁴¹ It is clear that Gurney opposed this new style of evangelicalism, as he found himself at odds with both its leaders and its doctrines. Gurney commented unfavourably on several of the leaders of the extreme evangelicals. He may have been referring to Robert Haldane, when, during a conversation with Dr Chalmers, he described

"...an amiable and pious man about my own age, once well known and loved by some members of our own family. Unhappily he has now fallen into a religious system the very opposite to Chalmers' - a system of the most rigid exclusiveness".²⁴²

Gurney claimed that the religious course taken by Edward Irving would help the cause of the enemies of religion.²⁴³ Gurney also rejected Irving's Christology. In 1833 he noted preaching and developing "...the person & character of Christ...against the strongholds of Unitarianism & Irvingism".²⁴⁴ Gurney's animosity for the leaders of the extreme

evangelicals was reciprocated. This is shown in Robert Haldane's reply to Gurney's defence of the Bible Society, in which Haldane was extremely vitriolic about Gurney, arguing that his support of co-operation with Socinians showed "a very relaxed standard of moral principle".²⁴⁵ Haldane also accused Gurney of distorting the truth in his defence of the Bible Society.²⁴⁶

In addition to this personal animosity with some of the leaders of the extreme evangelicals, Gurney opposed several distinctive elements of their theology. One of these was their belief in the existence of charismatic gifts in the contemporary church. It might be imagined that Gurney would have had some sympathy with the extremists on this point, given that some commentators associated the Quaker doctrine of immediate revelation and the extremists' use of charismatic gifts. In 1832 the editor of a collection of sermons by members of the Society of Friends, noted the remarkable similarities between the arguments brought forward to defend the principles of the Society of Friends and the proceedings of Edward Irving and his followers.²⁴⁷ During the Beaconite controversy, Crewdson claimed that the doctrine that the Spirit would be given to the church in each generation caused mischief among Friends and others, particularly Irvingites.²⁴⁸ Indeed Gurney accepted that charismatic gifts were possible and had existed in the early church, where, in addition to the gifts received in the modern church, other gifts which required a higher degree of spiritual influence, such as tongues and miracles, existed.²⁴⁹ As a result the "miraculous endowments of the Holy Ghost and the gift of direct inspiration poured forth on the apostles and numerous other individuals" in the early church.²⁵⁰ He did not, however, accept that these gifts existed

in the contemporary church:

"The Church of Christ, firmly established in the world, as a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid, and placed in possession of the whole Scripture, does not appear, as far as we can judge, to need the continuance of miraculous powers or of apostolic inspiration..."

He argued that, while the modern church still received gifts of the Spirit, "They are identical in nature with the gifts of the apostles, though different in degree".²⁵¹ Gurney also agreed with others during a gathering of moderate evangelicals that the claims of appearances of miraculous gifts among the Irvingites could not be substantiated.²⁵²

Gurney also opposed another feature of the extreme evangelicals' beliefs: their emphasis on pre-millennialism. It is true that Gurney had expressed some interest in the subject of millennialism. In 1821 he wrote to Jonathan Hutchinson, noting that he had just read an exposition of Revelation which argued that the "delightful prospect of a future state of the world" would commence in 1866. While Gurney felt there was something animating in the notion, he distrusted these figures.²⁵³ He did, however, believe that there was too much emphasis on the subject of millennialism. In 1831 he noted his regret at the agitation which had recently arisen in the religious world over the doctrine of millennialism, which he argued had a tendency to divert the Christian from that which was practical and saving.²⁵⁴ Gurney's antagonism to millennialist speculation increased: he recorded, presumably with relief, during his mission to the New World that one of America's leading theologians Professor Stuart of Andover was "...not riding the hobby of unfulfilled prophecy..."²⁵⁵

If one issue more than any other was to separate Gurney from the extreme evangelicals, it was their stricter ecclesiology; which differed radically from the inclusiveness of the moderate evangelicals. The rise of the extreme evangelicals coincided with growing emphasis on denominationalism, with, Martin argues, a growing interest in denominational peculiarities and a reaction against the earlier submerging of heritage for the sake of unity.²⁵⁶ Gurney himself noted this increasing emphasis on denominationalism with regret. In 1832 he recorded his gloom and depression at the jealousy prevailing between different religious groups²⁵⁷ and referred to the bitterness of spirit between the professed followers of Jesus.²⁵⁸ Due to this stricter ecclesiology, evangelicalism was regrouping itself in a narrower and more sectarian form, which was symbolised in the Evangelical Alliance. The conditions of membership of this organisation excluded several of the groups who had supported earlier more inclusive evangelical societies, such as the Bible Society. These excluded groups included Quakers.²⁵⁹ Needless to say Gurney opposed this increased exclusiveness and the narrower terms of membership of organisations associated with the extreme evangelicals. As with his criticisms of the Trinitarian Bible Society, he claimed that exclusivist terms of membership would inevitably turn a voluntary society into a religious fellowship. In a letter which J B Braithwaite suggests may have been a response to a request for Gurney to participate in the Evangelical Alliance, Gurney declared "...I am not yet a convert to the idea of attempting a Church union among Christians of different denominations."²⁶⁰ Just how radically Gurney's open acceptance of co-operation with members of other denominations differed from the narrow ecclesiology of the extreme evangelicals, can be seen in Haldane's reply to Gurney's defence of

the Bible Society. Haldane rejected the distinction Gurney made between a religious society and an organisation to promote religious objects²⁶¹ and argued that the errors of Socinians should not be sanctioned by co-operating with them.²⁶² The complete antithesis that existed between Gurney and Haldane on this issue clearly represents the radical difference between Gurney's broad interdenominationalism and the ecclesiology of the extreme evangelicals. Given this, the rise of the latter group would therefore limit Gurney's involvement in the interdenominational evangelical movement and force him to question his support for inclusivism.

Gurney's support for inclusivity and interdenominational co-operation was to be called into question by another feature which distinguished the rise of the extreme evangelicals; an increasing antagonism to Roman Catholicism, which centred on opposition to the Maynooth grant. This anti-Catholicism stood in stark contrast to Gurney's attitude to many individual Catholics. As has already been noted, while he utterly opposed Catholicism, he believed that individual Catholics formed part of the church universal and he recognised the value and piety of many members of that church. For example, he believed one "...may find much to admire, and much to sympathise with, in the experience and sayings of a Fenelon, a Guion, a Thomas a Kempis" and also expressed admiration for the Jansenists.²⁶³ He wrote of one Catholic priest, Father Matthew the temperance advocate, that he was a "...good, simple upright man, and although a Popish Priest, I consider him to be actuated by a desire to promote the welfare of his country".²⁶⁴ In 1831 Gurney recorded visiting a Catholic chapel, which appeared to be making many converts. He declared that "I do believe there is much amongst this people of an honest seriousness & pursuit of eternal

things...", although "...they appear to me to lose sight of the distinction between things contrary to reason & things beyond reason".²⁶⁵ He was also impressed with what he saw of the Catholic church in Lower Canada.²⁶⁶ As another example of his inclusivity, he also eschewed much of the anti-Catholicism of some of his evangelical peers. In 1829 he noted that some of his family had gone to a Reformation Society meeting, "...but I do not conceive it to be my place therein to meddle".²⁶⁷ Gurney's refusal to participate in earlier examples of anti-Catholic organisations and his admiration for individual Catholics, did not prevent Gurney from accepting the chairmanship of a meeting of Protestants Without Distinction, to oppose the Maynooth grant, which was attended by about 3,000 people.²⁶⁸ However, his defence of his participation in this meeting suggests that he was motivated, not by anti-Catholicism, but by a desire to preserve the religious liberty of all Christians. He argued that

"Cordially as I approve of the civil & religious liberty & of the Roman Catholics being full partakers of them with others, I consider that the proposed measure goes far beyond this line, & in rendering it compulsory on Protestants to support an Ecclesiastical system of which they disapprove, directly interferes with their rights of conscience & thus clamps & impairs that fabric of freedom which it professes to promote".

Indeed even in supporting the Anti-Maynooth grant protests, Gurney emphasised inclusivity; during the meeting of Protestants Without Distinction Gurney avoided emphasis on denominational peculiarities and instead stressed a common ground on which all members of the interdenominational evangelical movement could unite. He therefore criticised the Maynooth grant on the broad "Protestant" ground that non-Catholics should not be compulsorily required to support the Roman Catholic church rather than the narrower basis of Dissenters' opposition to

any religious establishment or the Quakers' opposition to all ministerial training.²⁶⁹

While the emergence of this extremist wing within evangelicalism and its distinctive doctrines alarmed Gurney, other events, within the Anglican church, caused him greater distress and provided the occasion for Gurney to write again in defence of distinctively Quaker doctrines. At the same time as justifying his participation in the protests against the Maynooth grant, Gurney referred to those "...who do not at present call themselves Roman Catholics".²⁷⁰ This was, of course, a reference to the Oxford Movement, which Gurney vehemently opposed. The growth of the Oxford Movement alarmed Quaker evangelicals, who believed that the Anglican church had previously gradually been moving away from Catholicism. For example, in 1832 Jonathan Dymond had argued that the Church of England was more reformed than it had ever been before.²⁷¹ However, following the rise of the Oxford Movement, in 1841 Samuel Tuke noted that he had heard and read things which he would have repelled with indignation ten years before and even believed that there was a danger of persecution from the Church of England.²⁷² Gurney was also horrified by the rise of the Oxford movement, which he believed had gained great influence within the Church of England. In 1840 he noted the "retrograde movements" of a large proportion of the clergy in England and America towards Catholicism.²⁷³ In 1845 Gurney noted that

"In the late convocation at Oxford one third of the members of the University - at least - seems to have ranged itself on the side of that declared Papist (as to sentiment & doctrine) Ward of Balliol & this seems to have been the popular side among the young men - this marks very awful as I think, the increasing strength & volume of the stream which is bearing England back again into the vortex of popery - Archdeacon Wilberforce is said to have shown himself

on the wrong side & he is much about the Queen & her husband".²⁷⁴ It should, however, be noted that, despite his opposition to the Oxford movement, Gurney did approve of some of its members. While in Dominica Gurney declared that a high churchman he met, who was inclined to the Oxford movement, was "decidedly pious, pleasing, and useful".²⁷⁵ Gurney also noted meeting Samuel Wilberforce, who he believed was a "...very pleasing person...".²⁷⁶ Gurney's admiration for individual members of the Oxford movement, while opposing the movement as a whole, once again shows how Gurney's inclusiveness allowed him to find merits among members of all denominational groups.

Despite his approval of individual members of the Oxford movement, Gurney believed that it was his duty to oppose the rise of the high church party within Anglicanism. For example, in 1842 Gurney claimed to have "calmly but pretty thoroughly demolished" Puseyite views during an itinerant tour.²⁷⁷ He also attacked the Oxford movement in print and his last major theological work The Papal and Hierarchical System Compared with the Religion of the New Testament, later republished with the more provocative title Puseyism Traced to its Root, in a View of the Papal and Hierarchical System, as Compared with the Religion of the New Testament, reflects his reaction to both the Oxford movement and wider changes in national religious life. While Swift describes this as a frontal attack on the Oxford movement and Catholicism in general,²⁷⁸ this book served a wider purpose and marks a return for Gurney from only discussing inclusive topics on which all evangelicals could unite to the more sectarian ground covered in Observations, an exposition of the merits of Quakerism as compared to other denominations. Now, however, the tone was more

negative, concentrating not on the merits of Quakerism but on the defects of other churches. The premise of this book was that the "Papal and hierarchical system" was not confined to the Church of Rome and would be in all systems where men had religious authority over other men. In the introduction to this work, Gurney admitted that in dealing with this subject "...I shall probably have to disclaim many things which are far from being exclusively Romish". Furthermore, he advised his audience, when considering the faults of Rome that "...we ought all to look to ourselves, lest any thing of the same leaven should be found lurking within our own borders."²⁷⁹ In this work, therefore, Gurney not only attacked the practices of the Catholic church, but also criticised Protestant churches where they had fallen into the same or similar errors. For example, he rejected the Roman Catholic doctrine of the separate priesthood, claiming there was no such office in the gospel except in the priesthood of Christ. He noted, however, that some elements of this Romish system of ministry were maintained by the Protestants and argued that all the other churches' practice of setting apart a particular class of man to serve as minister was only a variation on the Catholic system of priesthood.²⁸⁰ On the communion, after dismissing the Catholic doctrine as being contrary to reason, he rejected the Protestant understanding of communion claiming that there was no evidence of any particular grace being attached to the sacrament and it could instead be a diversion from the truth.²⁸¹ He also criticised members of other denominations for concentrating on either justification or sanctification to the exclusion of the other. Gurney argued that the Romish system had taught that it was possible to escape sin by works and there was a danger of the soul resting in these delusions instead of coming fully and unreservedly to Christ. However, he

also believed that some Protestant Churches had fallen into an equal error by depending on faith alone:

"...faith cannot be the means of our acceptance of God, unless it be of such a nature as to produce obedience in the believer. For it remains to be an unquestionable truth, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord".²⁸²

Given his criticisms in The Papal and Hierarchical System of other churches, Gurney might be expected to have held up the Society of Friends as an example of the reformed church. In fact Gurney only alludes to Quakerism in his work. This work noted that Friends suffered disproportionately under Charles II,²⁸³ but this is the only mention Gurney makes of Friends in The Papal and Hierarchical System. He does, however, describe the primitive church in a manner which implies Quakerism was its only successor. For example, he claimed that in the "primitive church" "...all the vocal offerings...were...prompted... by the moving of the Holy Spirit, it follows that when no such divine motion was felt, the congregation must have remained in silence".²⁸⁴ Gurney's emphasis on the immediate revelation of the Spirit is also affirmed in this book as he believed that the interpretation of the scriptures was dependent on the illumination and teaching of God's Holy Spirit and this guidance was granted "...not on the hierarchy or clergy alone, but on the church universal - on the whole people of God".²⁸⁵ The Papal and Hierarchical System also reiterated a central theme of Quaker doctrine when Gurney stated that "...all types and shadows, in the worship and service of God, are by a general law abolished, having received their fulfilment in the glorious realities of the gospel.."²⁸⁶

While The Papal and Hierarchical System clearly marks a rejection of Gurney's earlier inclusivity, it should not be allowed to overshadow the significance of his earlier co-operation with non-Quakers. Although Gurney's involvement in ecumenism was severely curtailed during his last years, it is clear that the influence of evangelicalism was breaking down the exclusiveness of the Society of Friends and Gurney and the other Quaker evangelicals were able to enjoy a degree of cordiality and co-operation with members of other denominations which would have been unthinkable in earlier generations. Just how radically this differed from the previous experience of Friends can be seen in the hostility with which more traditionalist Friends greeted the evangelicals' participation in interdenominational bodies, particularly the British and Foreign Bible Society. Edward Grubb noted that the 1813 London Yearly Meeting epistle warned Friends who were involved in the Bible Society not to overlook the inward revelation.²⁸⁷ As importantly the Quietists expressed alarm at Friends' involvement with "hireling clergy" and members of other denominations through the Bible Society; Wilbur described it as "a very insidious tendency to a compromise of truth".²⁸⁸ These responses to the evangelical Friends' involvement in the Bible Society show how Gurney's active participation in the evangelical movement and his interest in ecumenism represent a dramatic change in the Society. Co-operation with members of other denominations is clearly a characteristic of denominational rather than sectarian organisations. The increasing participation of Friends, preeminently Gurney, in the concerns of an interdenominational movement therefore clearly mark a move from sectarianism towards denominationalism during this period.

While participation in the Bible Society caused great anxiety to traditionalist Friends, they were also alarmed by the evangelical Quakers' involvement in other philanthropic projects. The links with other denominations which had led to the evangelical Friends' participation in evangelistic organisations such as the Bible Society, also opened the door for unprecedented co-operation with other denominations in the fields of education and philanthropy. As a result of these opportunities for co-operation with non-Quakers, Gurney, like other Quaker evangelicals, was to play a major role both as an educator and as a philanthropist.

8. GURNEY AND EDUCATION

Outside his exclusively religious concerns, one of Gurney's most enduring areas of activity was his involvement in educational reform. Gurney devoted much of his time to education, as he believed that it would play a vital role, both in reforming the Society of Friends and in promoting the spread of evangelical religion beyond its boundaries. In this he typified the Quaker evangelicals, who promoted the reform of Friends' schools and made major contributions to educational work outside Quakerism. Similarly a concern with education was a significant preoccupation of the evangelical movement as a whole. Gurney's participation in educational reform was based on his distinctive education theories, which were influenced by ideas from three sources. First, and most obviously, he adopted many of the doctrines which underpinned the evangelicals' attitude to education. The second influence on Gurney's involvement in education was his own schooling under John Rogers. Traditional Quaker theology also shaped his educational work. The combination of these influences allowed Gurney to make an unique contribution to Quaker education and also to play a significant role in education in a wider sphere.

Gurney's most important achievements as an educationalist were within the Society of Friends' own schools, where he encouraged the study of the Bible. Gurney's achievements in Friends' schools built upon work which had been undertaken both by the reformers of the eighteenth century and by other evangelical Friends. This concern with education reflected a wider preoccupation among Friends, as the education of the Society's young was a

constant theme at London Yearly Meeting.¹ One reason for this concern over education was a desire to retain and inculcate a separate Quaker identity. In his history of Friends' education, Campbell-Stewart argues that one of the main intentions of Quaker schooling was to preserve Quaker beliefs by nurturing the younger members of the Society in its distinctive beliefs and practices.² The Reformers of the eighteenth century were also encouraged to devote their energies to Friends' education by the limitations of contemporary Quaker schools. Notwithstanding the central importance of education to the Society, Friends' schools had declined during the eighteenth century³ and by the middle of the eighteenth century serious defects were apparent. Due to Quietist doctrines, there was little conviction of the need for good education and there was a widespread loss of interest in schools among Friends. Furthermore, death had removed the first generation of teachers, who had been university-educated, and as a result the standard of teaching declined with too few teachers being available and only a minority of those being skilled. Moreover many Quaker children were not educated in the Society's schools, which only accommodated about 630 pupils, less than the half the number of Friends' children. As a result many Friends were being educated outside the Society and therefore, without being inculcated in Quakerism's beliefs and practices, they were not retaining membership in later life. This was particularly true of the children of poor Friends who could not afford the fees of privately run schools, where many richer Friends were educated.⁴

Given their desire to reinforce Friends' sectarianism, the reformers of the eighteenth century perceived a need to revitalise Quaker education and their efforts in this field provided the basis for the evangelicals' work

in the nineteenth century. The first fruit of the renewed interest in Quaker schools was a report on Friends' education published in 1760. This suggested that Friends should establish a school near London providing a higher level of education than at contemporary grammar schools. There was, however, little sign of this report having much initial impact and it was left to individuals to implement its proposals. As a result, in 1779, it fell to the reformers John Fothergill, William Tuke and David Barclay to locate a suitable site at Ackworth for the school suggested in the report. It was also left to individual Friends to raise the £7,000 required to guarantee purchase of the land until the next Yearly Meeting when the Society of Friends could formally buy the site.⁵ This school, Ackworth, was intended for the children of poor Friends and was supported by London Yearly Meeting.⁶ As will be shown, evangelical Quakers, including Gurney, were to concentrate their efforts for reform on this school. The emergence of an evangelical party within the Society of Friends gave a renewed impetus to the reform of Quaker education. While the evangelical Friends devoted their energies to reform of Quaker education for a variety of reasons, the most important was a concern over the spiritual state of the Society's young, which members of this group frequently voiced. For example, George Richardson noted that he wished that young people would be willing to devote themselves to the service of the Lord⁷ and Elizabeth Fry hoped that Quaker youth might become sensible to the importance of dedication to God.⁸ These concerns about the spiritual state of the young were in part motivated by a belief that if religious principles were firmly established in individuals while they were still children, they were more likely to retain their faith as adults. George Richardson described childhood as the seedtime of life and said that improvements made then

would determine summer, autumn and winter.⁹ In particular the evangelical Quakers stressed religious education of children as a means to protect young Friends from infidelity in later life. For example, Jonathan Hutchinson, while writing to Gurney of his fears over the spread of Unitarianism, argued that the Society's youth should be made aware of and be alarmed at the danger of taking one false step in opinion or practice as there was no telling where this might lead; even into atheism.¹⁰ Hutchinson pointed to his own experience as proof of this need to prepare the young against infidelity. He explained that as a child his parents had taught him to read the scriptures and, occasionally, Friends' writings. This education, he believed, remained with him through a period of "dark apostasy" and served as a check on "vain speculation and dangerous experiment".¹¹ The evangelical Friends also valued education because they realised, like the reformers, that an education in the distinctive beliefs and practices of the Society was essential to preserve the separate identity of the Society of Friends. George Harrison argued that people were not born Episcopalians, Presbyterians or Quakers, but became these through their education. Education, he therefore argued, was of great importance to a religious society which placed a value on its distinguishing principles and such an organisation could not flourish or even maintain its ground, unless it paid attention to the vital business of educating its young.¹² While the evangelicals' involvement in the reform of the Society's schools was primarily motivated by their concern to promote the spiritual well being of young Friends and to inculcate Quaker beliefs in them, Campbell-Stewart suggests that there were also more practical objectives behind the increased concern for Quaker education at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He argues that social pressures

required changes in Friends' schools, as a higher standard of education was required for entry into many professions. Improvements in Friends' schools were also encouraged by the increasing number of opportunities for the employment of suitably trained Quakers in the firms of wealthy Friends.¹³

The evangelicals' efforts to reform Friends' education concentrated, as previously stated, on Ackworth, with many of them assisting the work of the school or visiting it on their evangelistic tours. For example, visits were paid to the school by David Sands in 1795¹⁴ and by Stephen Grellet in 1812.¹⁵ Samuel Gurney was also involved in the work of Ackworth serving as its treasurer for 40 years.¹⁶ Like other Quaker evangelicals Joseph John Gurney concentrated his efforts for the reform of Friends' education on Ackworth. His testimony states that he was always deeply concerned with the well-being of the school and he regularly attended the school's General Meeting.¹⁷ Indeed in 1820 he referred to his "annual pilgrimage" to the school.¹⁸ He also acted as an agent for Ackworth, nominating pupils from Norwich to attend the school as late as 1846.¹⁹ Gurney took a great interest in the school because, like the reformers of the eighteenth century, he believed that Ackworth had a vital role to play in the reform of the Society. However, the reforms which Gurney hoped to achieve through his involvement with the school differed significantly from those intended by its founders. While the reformers of the eighteenth century had planned to promote sectarianism and the distinctive identity of Friends through Ackworth, Gurney hoped to use it to promote an increased understanding of the scriptures among the rising generation of Friends. In 1813 Gurney began examining the children at Ackworth on the scriptures and found them "not a little ignorant" in their knowledge of the

Bible. As a result he dedicated himself to improving the study of the scriptures at Ackworth and began to visit the school himself to test the pupils.²⁰ Gurney's involvement rapidly achieved the results he had hoped for, as the study of the Bible soon became a significant element in the school's curriculum. He noted in 1817 that a few hours had been allowed in the curriculum for scriptural education.²¹ This instruction was carried out under a plan which Gurney had proposed to the school's General Meeting in 1816. Under this plan the pupils were tested on the books of the Bible (with the pupils being expected to be familiar with the order, principal contents, author, if known, and some of the most striking passages of each book); the history of the Bible (which required that the pupils be acquainted with the most interesting and important events of the Bible and how they showed the providence of God, the happiness of the righteous and the misery of the wicked); the types and prophecies of the Bible (under this topic the children were asked to point out the types and prophecies which related to Jesus Christ); and the doctrines of the Bible (with pupils being called upon to point out the passages which proved or elucidated the love, power, wisdom, justice, moral government and omnipresence of God; the corruption of man; the divine character of Jesus Christ; the redemption; the office and operations of the Holy Spirit; the difference between the old and new dispensations; the future state of misery or happiness; the final judgement and the fruits of the Spirit). Additionally Gurney's plan required that the pupils be able to give arguments from the scriptures to support Friends' distinctive doctrines and practices. As an incentive to study, he proposed that a certain number of boys and girls who performed well in this examination should be rewarded;²² possibly he intended the reward to be money, since when he introduced his system of scriptural

education in another school, he also left £5 for prizes.²³ The efforts of Gurney and the other Quaker evangelicals at the school were well rewarded and they soon established an interest in and understanding of the Bible among the school's children. Even in 1818 Gurney noted that the pupils' knowledge of the scriptures were very satisfactory and in 1819 declared that "...accounts from Ackworth are highly encouraging..."²⁴ Gurney maintained this interest in the study of the scriptures at Ackworth throughout his life and in 1846 he declared that religious instruction was going on well, after nearly thirty years of excellence.²⁵

While their preeminent concern was with Ackworth, the Quaker evangelicals did not limit their involvement in Friends' education to this school. Indeed they actually saw that there could be dangers if the Society concentrated all its efforts for educational reform solely there. In 1802 Harrison described Ackworth as the single example of Friends caring for the education of their young. He argued that as this school had engrossed the attention of Friends, London Yearly Meeting seemed to show no further interest in education. As a result other Friends' schools were being discouraged or even closing.²⁶ In view of Harrison's fears that too much attention was being paid to Ackworth, the evangelical Quakers became involved in a variety of other educational projects among their co-religionists. Even before he had visited Ackworth, Sands was involved in plans to found Friends' schools in Manchester and Liverpool.²⁷ In 1805 Josiah Forster founded a school at Southgate for Friends' children.²⁸ In 1824 William Allen and others founded a Friends' boarding school at Newington²⁹ and Samuel Tuke played a significant role in the re-establishment of the Mount School (for girls) in 1831 and the creation of

the Bootham school (for boys) in 1829.³⁰ Like other Quaker evangelicals, Gurney contributed to the promotion of Friends' education beyond Ackworth. Even in 1816 he noted that he was considering holding weekly scripture instruction for the children of his meeting.³¹ This interest in Quaker education beyond Ackworth continued throughout his life. For example, in 1818 he discussed proposals for "...an establishment for the superior education of young Friends..." with Frederick Smith;³² in 1831 he paid an "interesting and satisfactory" visit to Sidcot school;³³ and in 1834 he tested the children of the Croydon Monthly Meeting school on their knowledge of the scriptures, and was satisfied with the results.³⁴ The evangelical Friends' involvement in these schools drew on their achievements at Ackworth. As with Ackworth, they attempted to introduce a renewed emphasis on the study of the Bible into these schools. This work was as successful in other Quaker schools as it had been at Ackworth. Indeed a committee held at Ackworth in 1842 stated that the instruction in Holy Scripture was reported to be carried out regularly at all Friends' public schools.³⁵ In the same year Gurney himself noted that "...the same system of scriptural instruction, which I was enabled to institute about 25 years ago, continues to flourish, as is also the case at Sidcot, Croydon &c."³⁶

Alongside his work within British Quaker schools, Gurney played a significant role in promoting educational projects among Friends in the New World, where he encouraged the establishment of the West Lake Boarding School for Friends in Canada.³⁷ The parallels between Gurney's role in the establishment of this school and that of the eighteenth century reformers in supplying the funds required for the foundation of Ackworth, are

remarkable. Gurney provided £100 for this project on behalf of himself and Samuel Gurney, on condition that local Friends themselves raised an additional £250,³⁸ and he purchased a suitable site for the school for £1,000, which he would sell to Friends if they raised \$3,000.³⁹ Gurney also encouraged other educational projects among Orthodox Friends in the New World; he contributed £100 towards the Friends' boarding school in North Carolina.⁴⁰ As with his educational work among British Friends, his central concern was to promote the study of the scriptures and he therefore established the Ackworth system at the North Carolina school.⁴¹ Like his work at Ackworth and other British Quaker schools, Gurney's efforts to promote scriptural education among American Friends was not entirely innovative, but was instead built on precedents established by native Quakers and earlier British itinerant preachers. There was a renewed interest in the study of the scriptures among American Friends even before Gurney's mission. R M Jones argues that after the first separation Orthodox American Friends read the Bible with new fervour and, although there was still a widespread fear of study, Hannah Chapman Backhouse had started Bible classes among Friends.⁴² This increased concern for scriptural instruction among American Quakers is shown by the foundation of the Bible Society of Friends in America, which by 1840 could report that almost every Orthodox family owned a Bible.⁴³

While Gurney's and the other Quaker evangelicals' main concern was schooling within Quakerism, they also played a vital role in educational reform outside the Society. For example, Elizabeth Fry was involved in educational projects; as Gurney himself noted, the need for the education of the poor was always close to her heart.⁴⁴ This concern included the

establishment of a school catering for seventy poor children in 1798⁴⁵ and later, in 1817, a school at Newgate.⁴⁶ Although individual initiatives were undoubtedly important, evangelical Quakers were to make their most significant contribution to non-denominational education through their support for the Lancasterian system. William Allen in particular played a vital role in the promulgation of the educational system developed by his fellow Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, after the latter had run into financial difficulties.⁴⁷ Indeed Sherman argues that of all Allen's concerns, the Lancasterian schools were the most important. Allen was a member of the committee which took over Lancaster's work, which became the British and Foreign School Society.⁴⁸ Other evangelical Friends were also involved in the British and Foreign School Society. For example, Samuel Gurney served as the Society's treasurer⁴⁹ and Joseph Sturge proposed that a school for 150 to 200 children based on the Lancasterian system should be opened in Birmingham.⁵⁰ Like the other Quaker evangelicals, Gurney played a prominent role in supporting the Lancasterian schools. In 1845 he claimed that "...it would be difficult to find a more agreeable manifestation of the good offices of discipline, than in a well managed school on the Lancasterian system"⁵¹ and it was in connection with the Lancasterian schools that Gurney was to have his earliest and most extensive involvement with educational work outside the Society of Friends. This interest in the Lancasterian system of education even pre-dated his involvement in his other major interdenominational concern, the British and Foreign Bible Society, as he was involved in the administration of Norwich's Lancasterian School in 1811, a year before the establishment of the local Bible Society Auxiliary.⁵² Gurney devoted considerable attention to the Norwich school; for example, in 1813 he had the boys at the school

vaccinated⁵³ and asked his son to work diligently for the School.⁵⁴

Gurney was also interested in the wider work of the Lancasterian system.

His obituary in The British Friend stated that

"He was... a warm admirer and a liberal supporter of the British school system; not only on account of its religious and unsectarian basis, but also on account of its efficient mode of communicating instruction".

It was also recorded that one of his last actions was to attend the annual examinations of the British and Foreign School Society in Palace Street.⁵⁵

While the British and Foreign School Society was their primary educational concern outside the Society of Friends, evangelical Quakers did not limit their involvement in education outside the Society of Friends to the Lancasterian system and indeed funded a variety of other projects. Again William Allen took a leading role in this and it was claimed that he made use of every opportunity to promote education, both at home and abroad.⁵⁶

His educational endeavours included collecting materials for A Manual of the British Education System in 1815,⁵⁷ visiting schools while travelling in Russia,⁵⁸ and giving advice on education while in Constantinople.⁵⁹

Other evangelical Friends involved in wider educational projects included Sturge, who founded a Sunday School in Birmingham in 1845;⁶⁰ Richardson, who supported the work of schools in Newcastle to teach the children of the poor to read the Bible;⁶¹ and William Forster, who suggested the establishment of a Sunday School for Sheffield apprentices.⁶² Similarly Gurney's interest in non-Quaker education extended beyond his concern for the Lancasterian system. For example, Gurney's testimony records that from 1827 onwards he spent three years visiting the Sunday schools of

England.⁶³ Other educational projects he contributed to included the African Schools for Redeemed Blacks⁶⁴ and the female orphan school in Antigua.⁶⁵ Gurney also supported teachers of other denominations; for example, in 1831 he held a meeting for 180 Wesleyan Sunday School teachers at Earlham.⁶⁶ Alongside his practical participation in interdenominational education work, Gurney also published his theories on education for an audience outside the Society of Friends. He produced two works on education: Guide to the Instruction of Young Persons in the Holy Scriptures,(1827), which reiterated the scheme of Bible study which he had established at Ackworth, albeit without the section relating to the distinctive doctrines and practices of the Society of Friends, and Thoughts on Habit and Discipline,(1844), which laid out his theories on education.

Given that Gurney both played a prominent role in educational reform within the Society and eschewed traditional Friends' exclusiveness to cooperate in educational projects with non-Quakers, it is important to understand the theories underpinning his work. Gurney's educational theories, like all his philanthropic activities, were shaped by two ideals of progress: a belief in the spiritual and moral progress of the individual, which he drew from traditional Quaker theology, and a belief in universal progress which he drew from the wider evangelical movement. Working in unison, these two forces shaped his participation in a variety of philanthropic endeavours. In his educational work his emphasis on individual sanctification is the more readily apparent of these two influences. As has already been discussed,⁶⁷ Gurney's theology stressed the need for sanctification and for the individual's character to be gradually prepared for the state of heaven. This emphasis on

sanctification and the need for gradual change of character also permeated his educational theories, as one of its main thrusts was to create benign and pious characteristics, which he believed were essential to salvation, through the individual acting on the guidance of the Spirit and thereby becoming accustomed to following its precepts. He believed that all elements in the individual's character were profoundly effected by habit. In his Thoughts on Habit and Discipline he explained that both mental and physical characteristics or abilities could be established through the influence of habit:

"It has often been remarked that the frequent repetition of an action, not only renders it easy, but engenders in the mind a proneness to perform it... It is unquestionably the effect of custom to render exertions of mind or body, which are in the first instance painful as well as difficult, not only easy but pleasant; and no sooner is this pleasure felt, than an inclination is produced in the mind to obtain it - we become more attracted to the pursuit".⁶⁸

More importantly, Gurney argued that humanity's spiritual as well as material life was effected by habit:

"..the law of habit applies to our moral dispositions and conduct, just as certainly as it does to the common movements of the body, and to the exertions of intellectual power on them all it works in the same mysterious manner, and with an equal and uniform efficiency. It is an awful thought that our responsible and moral nature, like every other part of man, is subject to this mistress of our powers, either for good or evil".⁶⁹

Gurney therefore believed that it was necessary to form good religious habits, (which he listed as retiring into solitude, diligence in public worship, and careful perusal of the scriptures with an open mind and under the influence of the Spirit), and the habits of the soul (which were fear of God, watchfulness, passiveness, trusting in God, acting on the Spirit's injunction, and love of God).⁷⁰ This emphasis on inculcating religious

habits in children was shared by other Quaker evangelicals; Harrison suggested that humans were creatures of habit and habits in this life would stamp the character of the future state of existence, warning that if the child approached adulthood without being influenced by principles of religion and morality even the finest sermons would have no effect on him.⁷¹ The traditional Quaker emphasis on the need to surrender to the impressions of the Spirit, which was so intertwined with Friends' theology of sanctification, also permeated Gurney's educational theories. Gurney believed that the cultivation of piety required active obedience to the impressions of the moral sense. He argued that

"The highest affection of which mankind are capable, is love of God...Yet even this affection will be sure to grow cool, if it be not cultivated. Our capacity of being impressed by the ever-recurring proofs of God's benevolence towards us, will lessen as they are reiterated; and, except this tendency to decay be counteracted by the working of a living principle within us, we shall soon become liable to that awful rebuke - "Nevertheless I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first love".⁷²

As well as establishing benign characteristics, Gurney feared that the power of habit, if abused, could undermine the morality of the individual. He believed that

"...it was through the faculty of habit, that sin, small in its beginning, and most insinuating in its progress, obtained its perfect mastery over the mind of the transgressor. The passive impression of virtue gradually declined; the active principle of vice was settled in the constitution. The several bad habits which the individual had formed, all attained to their maturity by an imperceptible growth; and although, perhaps, distinct in their nature, they wrought with a combined force in promoting and completing his ruin."⁷³

In particular he wished to warn the young "...against the insinuating nature and progressive influence of unbelief; and to beseech them, as they value their immortal souls, to guard with jealous care against its first

arising".⁷⁴ The emphasis in Gurney's educational theories on the cultivation of good habits through obedience to the moral sense has parallels with Friends' doctrine of sanctification and the role played therein by the immediate revelation of the Spirit. This indicates that Gurney's emphasis on individual progress was inspired by traditional Quaker beliefs.

Alongside his emphasis on individual spiritual and moral progress, Gurney's theories on education were shaped by an emphasis on universalistic progress which he drew from contemporary evangelical culture. As David Bebbington notes, the evangelical movement of the early nineteenth century advocated post millennialism and a belief that the world was progressing towards a utopian existence.⁷⁵ Like his contemporaries Gurney emphasised the possibilities for progress in the world. Under the control of the law of God and the influence of the Spirit, Gurney argued, people might advance through self denial and piety. This advance would not only occur in individuals and each succeeding generation might morally and intellectually outshine their predecessors.⁷⁶ As one example of his belief in progress, Gurney whole heartedly accepted the technological breakthroughs of his generation. In an address to the Mechanics' Institute of Manchester in 1832, Gurney stated

"...I may venture to express my conviction, that, practised as you are in the effective application of a well arranged machinery, and aware of the multitude of persons which it is the means of employing, you can be little disposed to join in the idle cry which is sometimes heard against the use of it. Machinery is one means of immensely increasing the powers of man for useful purposes; and that it is our duty in the sight of God and our fellow creatures, to make the most of our capacities for such purposes, no sound moralist can deny."⁷⁷

Furthermore he poured scorn on Elias Hicks' belief that the Erie canal should not have been constructed (Hicks had claimed that God would have created a river if He had intended a waterway to be there).⁷⁸ Gurney's emphasis on universal progress would have clearly influenced his views on the value of education: if the succeeding generation were expected to surpass the achievements of the current generation, their correct education must be of immeasurable importance.

As well as being informed by these two doctrines of progress, Gurney's educational theories were influenced by his own education under John Rogers. Two features of Rogers' educational theory shaped Gurney's own educational endeavours: first, a need for critical and detailed study and, second, a need to engage the pupil's mind in the subject concerned and to gear teaching to the pupil's ability. The best expression of Rogers' teaching methods can be found in a letter he wrote to Catherine Gurney (who was effectively Joseph John's guardian) before Joseph John was sent to Oxford. Rogers stated that his system of teaching took account of the previous schooling of his charges and

"...it must necessarily vary according to their talents, and the progress which they may have previously made. Where elementary knowledge is to be acquired either classical, or scientific, the memory must be extended; but this labour is diminished by explanations, and by referring to principles. If a greater advance has been made the attention of the pupil in reading any language is directed to the words: he is informed of their original meaning, and of what changes it has undergone, whether they are of native or foreign growth, of their inflections, whether regular or irregular, and in what respect; to the connection of ideas in his own mind, and is shown how words by the difference of their termination, and by their situations, are made to express this connexion; the apparent irregularities are also considered and explained; to the style of which the beauties and defects are pointed out: to the conduct of the whole work; he is made acquainted with the whole work; he is made acquainted with the rules of composition and is required to apply them, (due attention being paid to the nature of the subject)

to the piece under consideration. Every allusion to science, mythology, religion, history, is carefully attended to, and explained. Exercises in each language are, of course, written every day and themes in English every week...The same plan of explanation is pursued in arithmetic, mathematics, astronomy &c."⁷⁹

In addition to providing the central doctrines of progression and sanctification, traditional Quaker doctrines and evangelicalism, along with his own experiences with Rogers, shaped Gurney's practical educational work. The influences from evangelicalism are the most easy to identify, principally the evangelical movement's insistence that education was primarily a means to promote religion. Sangster argued that the early evangelicals believed that religion was central to all education⁸⁰ and considered that education was positively harmful if it was centred on the world rather than God.⁸¹ Similarly Gurney warned that unless education inculcated religious beliefs, it would merely make men more powerful and therefore more dangerous.⁸² Similarly the evangelicals' emphasis on seriousness permeated their teaching systems and in turn Gurney's writings on education. Sangster argued that the evangelicals almost always opposed levity in their children and judged their pupils' spiritual progress by their seriousness.⁸³ Like adult members of the movement, children under the care of evangelicals found that many activities were prohibited.⁸⁴ Gurney was also concerned to impress a serious disposition on children and was alarmed that wit and humour could mar the child's character. He argued that, while wit and humour were a habitual gift in some people (giving the example of Wilberforce) and should not be destroyed in children,

"...these peculiar powers generally require to be checked, rather than fostered. No sooner do they run into excess than they become injurious. When wit is pointed into satire, and humour lowered into ridicule, they will no longer be tolerated by the teacher or parent

who aims at nothing so earnestly in his pupils, as the improvement of the heart".⁸⁵

Like other evangelicals Gurney placed specific prohibitions on children's activities including music training, claiming that it was "...far from being devoid of danger....in a moral and spiritual point of view,..." and did not "...appear to promote the welfare of mankind even in the present life".⁸⁶ He also opposed children attending the theatre, which he believed was utterly unfit for the edification of the young person's mind.⁸⁷

Another element in evangelical theology which the evangelicals incorporated into their educational schemes was a preoccupation with reading, especially of the scriptures. Sangster argues that, as evangelicals believed that it was necessary to read the Bible to be saved, literacy was the first aim of their educational work.⁸⁸ Literacy did, however, bring problems with it and anxieties over what the child should read, as the evangelicals, in general, did not consider that most contemporary secular literature was suitable reading material for their charges.⁸⁹ Similarly, Gurney shunned most contemporary literature: he declared that

"As our children advance in life, they may be tempted to indulge themselves in the perusal of novels, those lengthened and highly wrought fictions which fill our circulating libraries, and which for so many years past have been poured like a deluge on the British public. From such temptation we ought most carefully to guard them; for, independently of the direct evil which many of these works contain, there is nothing more likely to unfit a young person for the duties and even the pleasures of common life, than the habit of living, by means of novel reading, in the highly painted scenes of an ideal world."⁹⁰

Other Quaker evangelicals were also concerned by the spiritual dangers of contemporary literature. For example, Samuel Tuke opposed lending

libraries, believing that they had a "mischievous tendency", and he therefore provided the poor of York with alternative wholesome reading material.⁹¹ As well as condemning inappropriate reading material, Gurney suggested literature which was suitable for the youthful mind and suggested that the best and most harmless way to cultivate the imagination of the child was to acquaint them with "eminent and unexceptionable poets" such as Milton, Young, Montgomery and especially Cowper. He also suggested that the most sublime and beautiful poetry was to be found in the Bible.⁹²

This stress on reading was part of the wider evangelical emphasis on the importance of the intellect. Gurney himself placed considerable emphasis on the promotion of the intellect through education, although he claimed that the importance of cultivating the mind should not be over-emphasised. As Hare suggests, Gurney was convinced that true religion and, therefore, true Quakerism, could not flourish in the soil of ignorance.⁹³

Furthermore, in true evangelical fashion, Gurney believed that the intellect was a stewardship from God and therefore should be used wisely. He argued that it was the duty of the Christian to make use of every opportunity to cultivate the mind, with any exercise of intellectual faculties increasing the capacity to serve God.⁹⁴ By contrast, he argued that those who kept themselves in a state of ignorance were scarcely better than beasts of burden.⁹⁵ Gurney did, however, also argue that the development of a moral character was more important to happiness on Earth than the intellect and therefore argued that teachers should maintain the following order of priority in teaching their charges: conscience, intellect, and body.⁹⁶

Another element in his educational theories which Gurney drew from the evangelical movement was an emphasis on the family environment as the means to cultivate a religious disposition in children. Bradley argued that evangelicalism was above all the religion of the family⁹⁷ and that the evangelicals used the home as a medium of teaching, with every opportunity being taken to convert children.⁹⁸ Gurney also stressed the importance of the family environment in cultivating a serious religious disposition. He believed that instruction in the scriptures was the duty of parents as well as teachers and argued that

"There can indeed be no doubt, that nearness of natural connexion ought ever to be accompanied, among Christians, by a corresponding intimacy in matters of religion. Husband and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, should be helpers of each other's faith and joy; and should account it a privilege of no trifling value, to frequent the throne of grace in each other's company."

He added

"Nor ought we to neglect to extend a religious care over our servants. Our whole household should be united, at least once in the day, in spirit, to that gracious Being, from whom we derive all our blessings, both temporal and spiritual..It is on occasions of this description, that Christians discover the advantage of sympathy in religion. Together they mourn over transgressions, together they rejoice in the goodness of the Lord: as with the heart of one man, they pray for his grace and protection, and praise him for all his benefits. Thus are they individually strengthened in their Christian course, while they maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."⁹⁹

Like Gurney, other Quaker evangelicals concentrated on the role of the family in providing religious education. For example, Allen asked heads of families to consider how their example might influence those under their care¹⁰⁰ and Frederick Smith accused many parents of neglecting the religious education and instruction of their children.¹⁰¹ One example in

this use of the home as a forum for evangelical teaching was systematic visiting by evangelical ministers: nearly all evangelicals emphasised the importance of ministers visiting their homes, while visits from non-evangelicals were often discouraged.¹⁰² Gurney clearly adopted this practice; as has been shown Earlham became a meeting place for evangelicals, both Quaker and non-Quaker, especially during the annual meetings of the Bible Society.

While Gurney was to adopt some of the same basic doctrines as other evangelical educators, he was also influenced by ideas from other sources, which tended to modify the excesses of some of his contemporaries. One important example of this was Gurney's emphasis on the need for pupils to comprehend their lessons, which was probably inherited from Rogers. This was not the norm among evangelical teachers: Sangster argues that remarkably few of them faced the problem of whether their pupils understood their teaching and he suggested that many of their charges were treated exactly as they would have been had they been adults.¹⁰³ By contrast, Gurney argued that education should be geared to the pupil:

"Vain, for the most part, must be the teacher's effort to convert our children into men and women, and to impart to them that measure and scope of knowledge which belongs to maturity; but when not vain, such an effort is far from being harmless. Just in proportion as we partially succeed in it, are we in danger of marring the mental constitution of the child, and of forcing a blossom which will soon prove itself barren. It is never to be forgotten, that our grand object in cultivating the intellects of children, is to fix in them those habits of investigation and study, which lie at the root of learning - habits of which they may afterwards avail themselves in ranging through many a field of literature and science".¹⁰⁴

The example of Rogers' plan of education may also account for Gurney's rejection of rote learning in favour of the child studying the subject for

themselves, suggesting that when the scriptures were studied teachers should aim

"...not only to accustom their children or pupils to the reading and hearing of the best of all books, but to train them in the KNOWLEDGE of it. In order to this end, their own faculties must be excited to action: they must be taught to search the scriptures for themselves".¹⁰⁵

Another characteristic which Gurney adopted from Rogers' scheme of education was his emphasis on the complete understanding of a subject and his distaste for a broad but shallow syllabus. Gurney believed that the pupil ought to be familiar from childhood in "...being a whole man to one thing at a time".¹⁰⁶ He therefore opposed "diffusive" systems of education, believing that

"...a little knowledge of an exact and perfect character is more valuable, for practical purposes, than much superficial learning. We mostly find that success in the world, and particularly in the walks of literature, depends upon a deep and accurate acquaintance with some particular object of pursuit and inquiry...".¹⁰⁷

Moreover he warned that diffusive education might be spiritually dangerous. He warned that if a pupil's education was broad rather than deep this would lead to habits of inaccuracy, which

"...once formed, will infect his mode of conversing, undermine his attention to truth, and weaken him in his moral duties; nay, it will follow him to the place of public worship, and mar the early fruits of religion and piety".¹⁰⁸

While Gurney drew upon the wider evangelical movement and Rogers as sources of inspiration for his educational theories, Gurney's work on education was also shaped by the distinctive features of Quaker theology. Indeed the influence of Quaker doctrine played a

significant role in Gurney's educational theories as it enabled him to avoid many of the defects of contemporary evangelical education. For example, his rejection of the doctrine of original sin gave his educational activities a more benign character than those of some other evangelicals, who, in theory at least, emphasised the total depravity of their charges' nature and left them in no doubt about their fallen condition.¹⁰⁹ Gurney's emphasis on the work of the Spirit also marked him out from other evangelical educators. Sangster argues that the evangelical teachers paid scant attention to the Spirit in their teaching.¹¹⁰ Conversely Gurney believed that religious education should inculcate a fervent dependence on the Holy Spirit.¹¹¹ Similarly, in the same way in which he had stressed the role of the Spirit in the worship of God, Gurney also emphasised the need for a divine influence in teaching and argued that if they they were entirely dependent on the Lord, educators "...may safely expect his blessing".¹¹²

Although traditional Quaker theology influenced Gurney's work for educational reform, one element in his educational theories clearly separated him from traditional Friends: his emphasis on the classics. He stated that the pupil should be taught Latin and Greek as they facilitated acquaintance with other religions and "...the habits of study which he has obtained in the pursuit, will have given him a mastery over learning, which he will afterwards find it easy to apply to any of its departments".¹¹³ Given Friends' traditional mistrust of the classics, Gurney's interest in them came from sources outside the Society of Friends, most obviously from his education under Rogers.

More importantly, Gurney's interest in the classics, as has been shown, was typical of the evangelical movement.¹¹⁴ As significantly, Gurney's emphasis on the role of the classics in education was part of a wider cultural phenomenon; in the early nineteenth century three quarters to four fifths of time at public schools would be spent on Greek and Latin and the study of the classics was also a prominent element in the curriculum of endowed grammar schools.¹¹⁵

This emphasis in Gurney's educational theories on the classics indicates how radically some elements in his educational theories contrasted with traditional Quaker beliefs. Other elements in his educational work and theory, including his biblicism, co-operation with members of other denominations, and the development of the intellect were equally incompatible with Friends' traditional beliefs. The gulf that existed between these educational reforms and traditional Quaker beliefs is clearly represented by the reactions of contemporary Quietists to the work of Gurney and other evangelical Friends in Quaker schools. For example, Sarah Grubb was anxious that young people's brains were being filled with "...all the learning their brain can possibly be exercised in, and all the polish that would render them fit companions for the great people of the world..."¹¹⁶ The most consistent Quietist critic of the evangelicals' educational reforms was John Barclay, who in particular condemned Gurney for his proposals for the reform of Friends' schools. In 1818 Gurney confidentially reported to his wife that he and John Barclay had come into conflict over the plan for scriptural education at Ackworth.¹¹⁷ In the next year Gurney noted that Barclay had

circulated letters in London, attacking the plan.¹¹⁸ Barclay also published criticisms of the evangelicals' educational reforms. In 1844 Barclay wrote that, while he lamented young Friends' lack of understanding of the tenets of Quakerism, he also rejected the evangelicals' attempts to "patch up a remedy" by adopting set religious teachings like other denominations and by cramming children's minds with literal knowledge. This, he feared, led to the mind being filled with ideas rather than being emptied, which the Quietists regarded as an essential pre-requisite to worship. Furthermore he feared that the religious education advocated by the evangelicals, would create only a nominal and literal faith and this would lead to apostasy.¹¹⁹ Similarly traditionalist Friends in America opposed Gurney's educational reforms. In 1837, after working in a Friends' day school in Indiana, Gurney noted that the "coasts were not quite clear" for systematic scriptural instruction.¹²⁰ He also recorded that scriptural instruction was developing slowly in Ohio although he had hoped "to put some wheels in motion".¹²¹

Traditionalist Friends opposed Gurney's work to reform Friends' schools, as they believed, quite correctly, that he was introducing new ideas into the Quaker system of education. That some Friends were influenced by ideas from outside the Society, and that these ideas could be so successfully implanted into Quaker schools, again indicates the breakdown of Friends' exclusiveness during this period. As well as introducing new ideas into the Society, the evangelicals' increased interest in education had other long term implications for Quakerism. Greater interest in education naturally led to the

formation of administrative organisations to express these concerns, such as the Friends' Educational Society which was founded in 1836 to provide a forum for the discussion of ideas on education.¹²² These new organisations, like those formed to support itinerancy, were perhaps more typical of denominationalism than sectarian organisations and once again demonstrate the changes which were occurring in the Society of Friends during this period. Given this and the antagonism from traditionalists towards the evangelicals' educational reforms, it is clear that the revival of Quaker education during the first half of the nineteenth century and the evangelicals' active participation in interdenominational educational work marks an important element in Friends' transition from sect to denomination.

Another indication of this disintegration of sectarianism is Gurney's participation in the other great philanthropic ventures of his age, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

9. GURNEY AND PHILANTHROPY

As well as participating in evangelistic and educational organisations, Gurney played an active role in the other great philanthropic causes of his day. This philanthropic work was profoundly influenced by both his Quaker and evangelical theology. The two ideals of progress, individual and moral progress which he drew from Quaker theology and universal progress which he drew contemporary evangelicalism, which had shaped his participation in educational reform¹ were to influence his contribution to other philanthropic endeavours. Indeed these two ideals of progress were at the centre of Gurney's commitment to philanthropy, as the primary aims of his philanthropic work were to promote both individual moral and spiritual reform and progress in society as a whole and to remove anything which might hinder either of these objectives. Similarly the measures which Gurney adopted in pursuit of these aims drew upon ideas from both traditional Quakerism and contemporary evangelicalism. His participation in philanthropy therefore shows how these two systems of belief could complement each other and work in unison.

Although Gurney's philanthropic work was shaped by beliefs from both evangelicalism and Quakerism, the influence of the former is more immediately apparent. Many aspects of Gurney's commitment to charity were clearly drawn from contemporary evangelical culture. Gurney's devotion to charitable work in itself was typical of the evangelical movement as a whole: David Owen goes as far as to suggest that the word "philanthropic" became almost synonymous with the word "evangelical" and that the

evangelicals re-forged the link between philanthropy and religion which had previously worn thin.² Given that the evangelicals played such a prominent role in charitable work during this period, it was perhaps inevitable that some of the characteristics of contemporary evangelicalism would be assumed by philanthropic organisations. For example, a major feature of charitable work during the early nineteenth century, like the wider evangelical movement, was its ecumenism; Swift argues that the great philanthropic ventures brought Christians of all denominations into unprecedented co-operation and mutual understanding³ and Howse suggests that the Clapham Sect would have failed in their philanthropic campaigns without the support of the Dissenters.⁴ Although evangelicals from all denominations participated in this philanthropic work, a predominant role was played by the two groups who were closest to Gurney: wealthy Quakers and Anglicans. In her study of the evangelical movement's contribution to philanthropy, Kathleen Heasman claimed that the Clapham Sect and some leading Quakers were the driving force behind the philanthropic movement during the first decade of the nineteenth century.⁵ Among the latter group, the Gurneys were among the most active of these philanthropists. Hare argued that no set of brothers and sisters played a more conspicuous role in the philanthropic life of England during the first half of the nineteenth century than the Gurneys of Earlham.⁶ Alongside Joseph John Gurney's and Elizabeth Fry's contributions to philanthropy, Samuel Gurney gave nearly £20,000 to charity,⁷ was on the committee of eleven voluntary organisations, and associated with the work of a number of others.⁸

Another characteristic of the evangelical movement which shaped its members' involvement in philanthropy was its individualism. Evangelical

charity was highly individualistic, as the evangelicals' predilection for individualism was reinforced by a belief in contemporary society that private charity was the principal means of dealing with social problems.⁹ Given this emphasis on individual activity, evangelical charity involved more than just giving money;¹⁰ instead evangelicals took a personal interest in the recipients of their charitable gifts.¹¹ Similarly, Gurney, even before his conversion to evangelicalism and plain Quakerism, had come to the conclusion that more was required from him than simply giving money to charities: in 1808 he wrote that

"...I deeply feel...that it is not almsgiving - only, which can give the palm of charity. I know the necessity of a humble and charitable disposition towards all my fellow creatures both great and little, rich and poor".¹²

Given their individualistic approach to philanthropy, it is natural that the evangelicals should find the forum for their social work, not in any established church organisation, but in the charitable association of like-minded evangelicals; the voluntary society, which the evangelicals established as the characteristic vehicle for philanthropic activity in Victorian Britain.¹³ These voluntary societies gave a direction and cohesive purpose to evangelicals' philanthropic endeavours which might otherwise have been lacking. The same individuals might serve on the committees of twenty or thirty societies, even if they had been established for very different purposes, and this led to a consistent line of policy being taken among these charities.¹³ Given the links between these individual societies it can be asked if their objectives were also linked and if apparently disparate activity by evangelicals in pursuit of seemingly unconnected philanthropic causes were in fact all part of a

wider programme for the reform of society. This question can clearly be asked of Gurney's work for philanthropy, as his endeavours, even in completely separate fields, were often underpinned by the same basic assumptions.

As well as absorbing evangelicalism's ecumenism and individualism, evangelicals' philanthropic endeavours were profoundly influenced by the movement's theology. In his recent study of the impact of evangelicalism on social and economic thought, Hilton argues that the policies which were emerging between 1815 and 1830, and which were to characterise the Victorian Pax Britannica and traditionally assumed to be the product of laissez-faire individualism, were in fact modelled on "evangelical" economics.¹⁵ The proponents of the school of thought which Hilton describes as evangelical economics argued that God had instituted a permanent moral law on Earth, with its own system of rewards and punishments, which would incite and guide individuals to righteousness.¹⁶ Gurney clearly absorbed the tenets of evangelical economics and a belief in a predictable system of moral law in the world, with its own system of temporal and eternal punishments and rewards, formed a crucial element in Gurney's doctrine of individual progress. He argued that

"...our Heavenly Father places us under discipline. By furnishing us with incitements to cultivate all our powers; by the force of instruction and example; by crosses and disappointments on the one hand, and encouragement and success on the other; by punishing us for our imprudence and rewarding us for our self denial, he affords us an ample scope for subduing every useless or dangerous habit and for establishing such as will qualify us for our temporal state".

Gurney also claimed that these temporal trials would determine the

condition of the afterlife:

"religion teaches us that, in the world to come, we shall be rewarded or punished according to our conduct here; and also, that the present life is the sole opportunity allowed to us, of preparation for eternal bliss. Now, and now only, is the time in which we can be converted to God, divested of every evil tendency, confirmed in purity, submission, and charity, and prepared for breathing the element of heaven."¹⁷

The evangelicals' belief in an intrinsic moral law had important consequences for their participation in philanthropy. For example, it reinforced their belief in the ethos of self-help and laissez-faire, as they argued that these policies would give free scope for the operation of God's just and providential order in the world.¹⁸

Furthermore the evangelicals argued that government should intervene as little as was possible, as they claimed that individuals could only find their way to salvation and prosperity through 'self-help'.¹⁹

This emphasis on self help profoundly influenced Gurney's endeavours and, as will be shown,²⁰ shaped his philanthropic work in several fields, including his attitude to poverty. The tenets of evangelical economics also profoundly effected its adherents' understanding of events in the world around them. Although the evangelicals believed that humanity would receive both punishments and rewards through this intrinsic moral law in creation, they clearly placed more emphasis on punishments and they claimed that national disaster was often caused by national sin. As Rosman argues, the evangelicals saw God's judicial and redemptive activity in natural disasters²¹ and Hilton argues that they believed that if a nation failed to accord to the religious and moral standards acceptable to God it would suffer His wrath.²² Gurney also claimed to see God's hand behind catastrophes in

contemporary society. Just as he emphasised the importance of suffering in sanctifying individuals, Gurney believed that divine punishment might lead the nation from iniquity. Although Gurney did not espouse this belief in his published works, perhaps due to his inclusiveness and his desire to avoid subjects which might cause division among evangelicals, from about 1830 onwards his journal is punctuated with references to divine punishment for national sin. In that year he recorded that

"The continuance of this very wintry weather is affecting as it relates to the poor. Indeed the chastening hand seems rather remarkably put further on this nation, & who can wonder when we consider the vast multitudes who are living in sin & in open rebellion against the Most High?".²⁴

In 1846 he declared that the world wide failure of the potato crop was "...a very mysterious and humbling dispensation".²⁴ Gurney's perception of a divine influence behind this famine accords with contemporary English thought, as this disaster was generally regarded as a punishment on Ireland for its Catholicism and for the Maynooth grant.²⁵ Gurney's belief in divine judgement is, however, most powerfully expressed in his reaction to the cholera outbreak of 1831-2. In 1831 Gurney referred to the severe outbreak of the disease in Sunderland and declared that "...the scourge is sent in perfect wisdom & righteousness, I trust also in mercy, to call a wandering, sinful, nation, home to God".²⁶ When the epidemic reached London, Gurney believed that

"...the scourge at present, appears to be held over that mighty metropolis with a sparing & gentle hand. May it be the means of humbling many, & may tender loving kindness, be still extended to this guilty nation!".²⁷

Interestingly Gurney's attitude to this epidemic, which was obviously drawn from contemporary evangelical culture, shows how the beliefs of Quakerism and evangelicalism could lead to the same understanding of contemporary issues; like Gurney the leading British Quietist Sarah Grubb described the outbreak of cholera as a divine rod over the land.²⁸ Similarly, as has been shown,²⁹ the first generation of Quaker evangelicals regarded epidemics as the chief instrument whereby God's wrath was poured out on the ungodly. As significantly Gurney's belief that national sins would be punished may have served as a spur to his philanthropic work, as he may have feared that further punishment from God through disasters could only be avoided if evils were removed from society.

While Gurney's approach to philanthropy had much in common with that of non-Quaker evangelicals, there were elements in his understanding of charitable work which separated him from his contemporaries outside the Society of Friends and gave a slightly different slant to his endeavours in this field. One example of this was his distinctive understanding of the value of good works. Evangelicals in general, while believing that charity was a sure sign of conversion, rejected any doctrine of salvation by works.³⁰ By contrast Gurney, like the other evangelical Quakers, placed a greater emphasis on good works. In 1809 Gurney wrote that he could not agree with evangelicals in "...their favourite doctrine of the inefficiency of good works". Instead he claimed that an individual could, theoretically, be saved by his works. He argued that if individuals had done "...all that Christ commanded..." they could be saved through this. He admitted, however, that it was impossible for any individual to achieve works of this absolute standard of perfection and was therefore necessary that "...the

atonement of Christ supplies our deficiency in works".³¹ While Gurney may have modified his beliefs on this subject after his own adoption of evangelicalism, his theology placed more stress on the value of good works than was the case with most contemporary evangelicals. Gurney clearly believed that participation in philanthropy would encourage the sanctification of the individual and claimed that acts of benevolence would help to "...adapt us to the atmosphere of heaven".³² Similarly Gurney's Quaker theology, which emphasised the authority of the Spirit, gave another distinctive slant to his philanthropic work and allowed him to avoid some of the difficulties which other more biblically orientated evangelicals encountered. One problem which evangelicals in general faced in some of their humanitarian causes, particularly their opposition to capital punishment, was that the Mosaic law which was enshrined in the Old Testament seemed to justify the evils which they were seeking to remove. By contrast Gurney, with his emphasis on the distinction between the Old and New Covenant could eschew the Mosaic code. Indeed he claimed that the whole Jewish civil polity was destroyed with the fall of Jerusalem.³³ Furthermore Gurney contrasted the requirements of the Mosaic law with a Christian imperative to the well being of all people. For example, he argued

"True indeed it is, that under the mosaic dispensation, the word neighbour was generally accepted in a restricted senses. The Israelite was to love his brother, or his neighbour of the same favoured race, or the proselyte from the Gentiles, who should become, by conversion, a member of the same religious polity; but the heathen man was to him an abomination...But all Christians agree, that under the gospel interpretation of the word neighbour, is included every individual of every nation - the whole family of man".³⁴

This belief was to profoundly affect his participation in several

philanthropic fields, particularly his opposition to capital punishment and war.

Given that both members of the evangelical movement and elements of his own theology stressed the importance of acts of benevolence, Gurney devoted tremendous energies to philanthropic work. Although Gurney participated in a wide spectrum of philanthropic projects, he was to make his most significant contributions in support of the reform of the penal system, the reform of treatment of the mentally ill, the campaign against slavery, the relief of the poor, the advocacy of temperance, and the promotion of peace. Throughout all these areas of concern Gurney was simultaneously influenced by beliefs from traditional Quakerism and contemporary evangelicalism. In particular the two ideals of individual moral and spiritual progress and universal progress influenced his work in support of all of these causes, although in some of these fields of activity the influence of one of these ideals was clearly more significant than the other.

PENAL REFORM

One of Gurney's most important areas of philanthropic concern was his support for penal reform. Gurney's devotion to penal reform is in part attributable to the prominent role which his closest associates had played in this cause; for example, Thomas Fowell Buxton made the reform of prisons one of his major crusades.³⁵ Gurney's fellow evangelical Quakers also devoted themselves to prison reform. Although Isichei notes that Friends' reputation as prison reformers was largely created by Elizabeth

Fry,³⁶ her work was in fact only part of a much wider evangelical Quaker involvement in this cause. In fact, Seebohm argues that Fry was encouraged to take up her prison visiting work by Stephen Grellet and William Forster.³⁷ Similarly Hare argues, Samuel and Joseph John Gurney supported their sister Elizabeth Fry's prison missions.³⁸ Alongside assisting Elizabeth Fry, Joseph John Gurney made his own contributions to prison reform and he published three works on this subject. His first publication, Notes on a Visit Made to Some of the Prisons in Scotland and the North of England, in Company With Elizabeth Fry, (1819), catalogued the merits and failings of the prisons, asylums, and houses of correction which he had visited over the space of two months and also offered suggestions on prison reform in general. This work provides an example of how Gurney's philanthropic causes were frequently aided by his itinerant preaching. In the introduction to Notes on a Visit Gurney explained that

"The principal object of our journey was connected with the concerns of our own religious society, that of Friends; but we also made a point of inspecting the prisons in several large towns, through which we passed. In the course of this engagement, we observed a variety of particulars, which interested and affected us; and I think it right to communicate to the public the information which we collected, in the hope that it may afford some fresh stimulus, to the zeal already prevalent for improving our system of prison discipline".³⁹

Whilst in the long run Notes on a Visit had a great effect on the construction and management of prisons,⁴⁰ its immediate effect was to bring public criticism down upon Gurney's head. Gurney recorded in his journal that he was criticised by magistrates in an Edinburgh paper and declared that "I am a little sore at this publicity and feel quite an inclination to withdraw into my shell".⁴¹ However, further criticism, from Yorkshire magistrates, provoked a reply⁴² and in his A

Letter to the Magistrates of the Three Ridings of York in Reply to the Report of the Visiting Magistrates of York Castle(1819), Gurney denied that his earlier criticisms of conditions at York castle had been unfounded or exaggerated.⁴³ Gurney's third work on prison reform, Report Addressed to the Marquess Wellesley, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by Elizabeth Fry and Joseph John Gurney, Respecting Their Late Visit to That Country,(1827), which dealt with a whole gamut of social problems in Ireland including the condition of its prisons, was also the product of information which he had gathered on an itinerant tour among Friends.⁴⁴ In these works Gurney shows that he was often horrified by the conditions which he encountered in some of the prisons he visited during his itinerant tours. As a result he was capable of the most scathing criticisms of some elements of the existing penal system. For example, he condemned the inhabitants of the county of Haddington, due to the lack of a jail to reform offenders in so rich a county and claimed that this was a violation of "...the common principles of justice and humanity"⁴⁵ and argued that the defects of York castle were so extensive that the only effectual remedy would be a new building.⁴⁶ One reason for this chagrin at the poor state of many of the contemporary penal institutions was a belief that, if run properly, prisons could discourage crime by weaning offenders from criminality. He claimed that bad prisons encouraged crimes, while those run on the right principles reformed the prisoner and therefore reduced crime.⁴⁷ As proof of this he argued that 50% of the inmates who were incarcerated in the worst prisons later recommitted offences, those in the indifferent prisons 10-30%, and those in the best only 5%.⁴⁸

Gurney had clear beliefs about how prisons could be reformed so that they would discourage further criminality. At the centre of these was an emphasis on individual moral and spiritual progress and a belief that the individual prisoner's character could and should be reformed. This emphasis on the need to reform prisoners' characters was based on his understanding of the cause of crime. This was an issue which had been previously considered by other Quaker evangelicals, who claimed that crime was the result of a progressive deterioration of character in individuals. For example, Sands argued that indolence in little things would lead to criminal neglect and at length criminal indulgences.⁴⁹ Gurney also claimed that criminality was the result of progressive depravity which was caused by bad habit. While Gurney believed that the temptations of bad habit were a universal danger of humanity, he cited several circumstances in contemporary society which encouraged this growth of bad habit and thereby led to crime. On several occasions he attributed increasing levels of crime to the growing industrialisation,⁵⁰ arguing that the factory system encouraged crime as it "...gathers into close association of untaught and often disorderly persons..." which "...is uniformly found to be a fruitful source of misery and crime".⁵¹ Gurney also believed that unsound beliefs could lead to crime, claiming that John Stratford, a murderer whom Gurney interviewed in his death cell, had begun his descent into the depths of depravity through reading "infidel" books. Through reading these works Stratford had lost his faith and was therefore "...left without compass or rudder, whereby to steer his course aright through the ocean of life".⁵² Gurney evidently believed that the impact of these books on Stratford was not an isolated

incident, as he declared in his journal "What an infinity of blood have a Payne, & a Voltaire called down on their own heads".⁵³

Gurney believed, however, that the most dangerous source of these bad habits which led to crime was contact with those already established in criminal behaviour. He frequently noted that one of the defects of contemporary jails was that they allowed association between hardened criminals and between them and lesser offenders, or even with the innocent. He warned that if prisoners, who were already used to the habits of evil, were allowed to associate together in large companies without supervision or work they would inevitably become more depraved and more fitted to new crime⁵⁴ and declared of Doncaster jail that "...the prisoners of all descriptions, debtors and criminals, male and female, associate freely together. Who can wonder that crimes increase?".⁵⁵ He further feared that communication between the inmates at York prison and those outside would lead to the "contamination" of the inhabitants of the city.⁵⁶ As Gurney was concerned to prevent prisoners from becoming more depraved through the bad example of their fellow inmates, he stressed the need for prisoners to be separated. Since he was especially concerned that hardened criminals might corrupt those imprisoned for more minor offences, Gurney argued that prisoners should be classified so that there were divisions between male and female; boys and men; debtors, the untried, and felons; and that the uncorrupted and young prisoners should be separated from the hardened, desperate and practised villains.⁵⁷ Gurney also believed that individual prisoners should be separated to prevent the spread of bad habits between them. Solitary

cells, he argued, were indispensable and believed it was regrettable that there were many prisons in Ireland where prisoners slept two to a cell.⁵⁸ Gurney also intended to prevent bad habits being communicated between prisoners by insuring that they were closely supervised. He argued that

"If prisoners sleep singly during the night, and during the day are under the constant watch of judicious keepers, the opportunities which are so easily, so naturally devoted to indecent, profane, and boisterous conversation, to gambling, and to every other practicable disorder, may be quietly, yet effectively precluded".⁵⁹

This emphasis on organising, classifying, and separating the prisoners may in part be a result of Gurney's Quaker beliefs: in his study of the penal reform movement during this period, Michael Ignatieff suggests that, given their own system of collective self-discipline, Friends were drawn to imposing regimes of discipline on others.⁶⁰

Alongside his desire to prevent harmful association between criminals, Gurney advocated the removal of other practices which were common in prisons that were likely to further harden and degrade the criminal. As a result he approved of the abolition of whipping in Irish jails⁶¹ and advised the governor at Sing Sing jail in New York to discontinue the use of this punishment.⁶² He also believed that "...fettters have a strong tendency to create in the mind of criminals that feeling of their own degradation, which seldom fails to counteract the efforts made for their improvement".⁶³ This opposition to demeaning punishments is a clear example of the influence of the beliefs of the wider evangelical movement on Gurney's proposals for the reform of

prisons; Hilton argues that the evangelicals regarded most forms of physical punishment as too demeaning to be reformatory.⁶⁴ As well as removing practices from the system which encouraged the prisoners' depravity, Gurney wished to reform the criminals' character and to displace the bad habits with good habits. He therefore wanted to encourage habits of industry in prisoners: he claimed that

"...we are in possession of scarcely any means of preventing the inroads of evil into the human mind, more powerful or more sure, than constant, regular, and harmless occupation. Nor can there be any class of persons, for whom such occupation is more advantageous or more necessary than criminals in prison; for it may not only prevent the mischief of the present moment, but counteract the habits of idleness, to which they have formerly been accustomed; and it may also fix in them those contrary habits of industry and virtue, which will probably, in after life, prevent the repetition of their crime".⁶⁵

In addition to attempting to inculcate habits of industry, Gurney wished to establish religious habits in prisoners and was therefore extremely concerned by the lack of religious education in some prisons. For example, Gurney argued that the only thing that prevented Bridewell jail from becoming a school for reform was the absence of religious instruction⁶⁶ and that the lack of a place for religious worship at Perth jail was a disgrace in a Christian country.⁶⁷ In his report on Ireland, Gurney also argued that the prisoners' reform would be aided by education:

"To civilize and cultivate the minds of ignorant criminals - to raise, in any degree, the standard of their intellect or their taste, is a work which will not fail to produce beneficial results. Those who have been brought under a refining process of this description will not so readily, as before, yield themselves to the guidance of impetuous passion and brutal violence. They will become susceptible to high motives; they will be raised in the state of being".

Like his other educational endeavours, Gurney believed that prison schooling should be a means of promoting religion among the inmates. He therefore argued that the prisoners' education should have a tendency to their religious instruction as this alone would be effective in reforming their conduct.⁶⁸

While Gurney obviously believed that these institutional changes were important, his most radical proposals for the reform of prisoners relied entirely on moral persuasion and depended, like evangelical philanthropy in general, on voluntary activity. In his accounts of prisons he visited, Gurney frequently noted that the influence of benevolent prison staff could have a profound effect on the inmates. For example, he argued that in one of the county jails he had visited the jailer and his wife ruled the prison by the law of kindness and as a result the prisoners "...appear to us to be subdued and softened by the gentleness with which they were treated".⁶⁹ Given the effect of these examples of benevolence Gurney emphasised the need for care in the selection of prison officers. The officers appointed, Gurney argued, should be "...men of enlightened principles, and distinguished by a warm desire to promote the best interests of mankind..." so as to encourage the same habits in the prisoners.⁷⁰ Moreover he believed that members of the wider society could assist in the work of reforming prisoners by providing examples of benevolence. He argued that such an influence would have a profound effect on the prisoners:

"Let it be remembered, that these miserable beings have been very little used to kind and sedulous attentions;...that they have hitherto lived, in a great measure, beyond the sphere of Christian charity. When such persons shall be brought under the influence of that charity, when sympathy shall meet them in

their sorrows, when that kind care, to which they have been so little accustomed, shall be extended over them, when they shall be carefully instructed and regularly occupied the fruits will undoubtedly appear. The best feelings of our prisoners will soon be excited, a door of hope before them, and a stimulus wholly novel given to every virtuous resolution. Finally, we may believe, that the blessing of the Almighty will not be withdrawn; a change of heart in those who are thus placed under our care will be the occasional, a change of habit, the frequent result of our efforts".⁷¹

The channel through which this benevolence was to be expressed to prisoners was a type of voluntary society: the prison visiting committee. Gurney argued that much benefit would result from frequent visits to prisons by a "...committee of benevolent and independent people..."⁷² and that daily visits of a few devout individuals during the prisoners' "...dangerous hours of recreation...", might encourage the inmates to study the scriptures.⁷³ Gurney's belief in the reformatory powers of such visits by groups of benevolent individuals is made clear by his favourable reactions to examples of prison visiting committees being established. For example, he recorded that he was pleased that such a committee of ladies had been formed at Bridewell, to instruct, employ and watch over criminals while they were in prison and after they had left⁷⁴ and rejoiced when a similar committee had been set up in Liverpool.⁷⁵ As part of this desire to reform prisoners through example, Gurney himself frequently visited prisons during his ministerial tours. For example, in 1818 he visited Newgate⁷⁶ and during an itinerant tour in 1830 he held a short meeting on Luke's gospel with fifty prisoners at Lancaster castle.⁷⁷ It is, however, clear that he found this work demanding: in 1820 he recorded that a prison visit was both dreaded and blessed.⁷⁸ Gurney's emphasis on benevolent instruction is a clear example of the manner in which his proposals for the reform of prisons drew upon the work of his fellow Friends. As

Heasman argues, the belief that offenders should be regarded as individuals whose life needed to be changed and that they required sympathetic and friendly guidance to do this was first introduced by Quakers during the late eighteenth century.⁷⁹

Alongside his desire to reform prison discipline, Gurney also attempted to alter the penal code by the abolition of capital punishment. Gurney's visits to prisons brought him into contact with those who had been condemned to death. He found these visits particularly harrowing: in 1820 he recorded that "Yesterday I was much affected by discovering that two poor fellows are left for execution, which seems to involve me in labour and exercise both inward and outward. Somewhat to sickness of heart".⁸⁰ One reason why these visits caused him so much distress was his opposition to capital punishment and his belief that it was incompatible with Christian principles. In 1817, after visiting "two poor lads" who were sentenced to be executed for highway robbery, Gurney declared "How awful & affecting do I feel their doom to be; & how inconsistent with the tenor of Christian humanity".⁸¹ In 1822 he declared that this was a punishment which ought never be inflicted under the Christian dispensation,⁸² and in 1845 Gurney claimed that "Surely the punishment can in no case be right under the gospel!".⁸³ He even opposed the execution of a slave owner who killed a slave.⁸⁴ This opposition to capital punishment was typical of the evangelical movement as a whole during this period;⁸⁵ Gurney himself recorded a conversation between leading evangelicals on this subject and noted

that all present substantially agreed that the death sentence was opposed to all principles of religion.⁸⁶ Moreover some of Gurney's fellow evangelical Quakers had publicly opposed capital punishment. Many of them were involved in the foundation in 1808 of A Society for Diffusing Information on the Subject of Punishment by Death,⁸⁷ which was committed to reducing the number of executions.⁸⁸ Gurney himself attempted to reduce the number of executions in a variety of ways. His testimony records that he was successful on more than one occasion in obtaining the reprieve of a condemned criminal.⁸⁹ More importantly, in 1846 he addressed a meeting on the subject of petitioning Parliament for abolition of the death sentence, arguing that the abolition of the capital punishment was a subject of the greatest importance to the moral, social, and religious character of the nation,⁹⁰ and his speech was later published.⁹¹ In his attempts to obtain his fellow citizens' support for the repeal of the death sentence, Gurney criticised capital punishment on several grounds, including his belief that this practice was incompatible with the Christian religion. He rejected the apparent justification for capital punishment in the Mosaic laws and argued that these laws were only applicable to the Israelites and were therefore abolished, along with the rest of the civil and ceremonial law of the Jews, at the coming of Christ. In contrast to these Old Testament precedents, Gurney claimed that

"Under the gospel dispensation the life of man is sacred; and must not be taken away by the hands of his brother, under any pretext whatever, or by the hand of the magistrate for any crime which may be perpetrated".

Gurney combined this opposition to capital punishment in principle, with claims that the practical use of the death sentence was not reducing the number of offences and was even counter productive. He argued that this punishment and its irrevocability meant that the courts were unwilling to convict for murder, suggesting that in the last thirty years only one-fifth of cases had ended in conviction.⁹² More importantly Gurney opposed capital punishment due to his ideal of universal progress, as he clearly believed that the practice of capital punishment hampered the spiritual life and development of the community as a whole. He argued that

"Experience affords ample proofs that the frequent exhibition, to the public, of such painful and degrading scenes, is so far from inspiring a wholesome fear either of God or man, that it hardens the minds of the population, excited them to violence and revenge, teaches them to make light of the awful, yet momentary, change from time to eternity, and, in a very dangerous degree, lowers their estimate of the value of human life".⁹³

He argued that public executions in fact encouraged further crime, suggesting that at least one executed felon had begun his own slide to murder after witnessing public executions and that the crowds assembled for public executions provided opportunities for other kinds of crime.⁹⁴

Gurney's work for reform of prisons and the penal code were deeply influenced by his theology. His proposals for the reform of prisons concentrated on the need to alter the prisoners' character, through establishing benevolent habits and thereby displacing a predilection to sin. As has been shown in relation to Gurney's educational endeavours, this emphasis on individual moral reform was drawn from his doctrine of sanctification, which in turn was drawn from traditional Quaker beliefs.⁹⁵

By contrast, his work for prison reform was also in many ways typical of the evangelical movement as a whole: for example non-Quaker evangelicals shared Gurney's antipathy to physical punishment. Similarly his opposition to the death sentence could have been drawn from either Friends' opposition to the taking of life in general or the evangelicals' belief that capital punishment was morally wrong. Gurney's work for penal reform therefore shows how his philanthropy could combine elements of evangelical and Quaker theology.

REFORM OF THE TREATMENT OF THE MENTALLY ILL

Gurney's prison visits frequently brought him into contact with another group which he sought to assist: the mentally ill. Gurney's concern for the treatment of the mentally ill was typical of the evangelical movement as a whole during this period.⁹⁶ This evangelical concern for the mentally ill was pre eminently expressed by its Quaker devotees. Owen suggests that during this period there was one institution which employed relatively enlightened methods of treatment of the mentally ill: the Retreat at York, run by the Quaker Tukes.⁹⁷ Gurney took an active interest in the Tukes' work at York. He read Samuel Tuke's account of the Retreat⁹⁸ and they visited the Retreat together,⁹⁹ where Gurney held at least one religious service.¹⁰⁰ As another example of his interest in the work being done for the mentally ill by his fellow Friends, Gurney visited the Quaker asylum near Philadelphia, which he noted was "...conducted on the same wholesome principles as the York retreat".¹⁰¹

As with his beliefs on prison reform, Gurney's interest in the treatment of the mentally ill emphasised sanctification and the possibilities for individual progress and reform. Gurney clearly believed that most forms of mental illness could be cured or at least alleviated by the cultivation of the intellectual faculties of the sufferer. As an example of this he noted that at the Friends' asylum near Philadelphia "There is a society among the patients for the promotion of literary and intellectual improvement, which has a decided tendency both to arouse and rectify the latent and morbid faculties of the mind".¹⁰² Gurney's emphasis on cultivating the intellect of the insane was clearly influenced by contemporary theories on the treatment of the mentally ill. As Roy Porter suggests in his social history of madness, the reformers of the treatment of the mentally ill, such as the Tukes, drew upon Locke's understanding of the human mind. The reformers argued that the insane were not completely without reasoning power, but rather faulty association of ideas and feelings in the mind had led to erroneous conclusions about reality and proper behaviour. Therefore the reformers attempted to isolate their patients from bad influences and reprogramme their minds.¹⁰³

Alongside this emphasis on the cultivation of the intellect, Gurney proposed a variety of reforms in the treatment of the mentally ill which he believed would improve their condition. Gurney's proposals for the treatment of the mentally ill had much in common with his suggestions for reforming the characters of prison inmates. For example, he attempted to remove abuses in the current treatment of the mentally ill. He argued that, while the mentally ill needed to be kept in custody, they should not be needlessly restrained or punished as this would only aggravate their

disease. Conversely, he claimed "It is now universally admitted, that it is expedient, as well as right, to treat them with gentleness and kindness - that such a system promotes their cure and restoration to society".¹⁰⁴ Furthermore Gurney did not believe that the mentally ill should be kept in prisons or houses of correction, but in lunatic asylums, where their minds and time should be usefully employed. Gurney suggested that the mentally ill, like prison inmates, would benefit from visits from benevolent individuals. He therefore hoped that daily, or at least weekly, visits would be paid to lunatic asylums by some intelligent local person, possibly a clergyman.¹⁰⁵ Gurney himself took part in this work of visiting the mentally ill. J B Braithwaite noted that Gurney regularly visited the patients at the Bethel and the Norfolk and Norwich hospital. He further noted that the condition of at least one patient was improved, although not healed, by Gurney's visits.¹⁰⁶ Gurney also argued that the mentally ill, like prison inmates, should have access to congregational worship and where this was introduced there had been improvements in their condition.¹⁰⁷ At the heart of all these proposals for reform of the treatment of the insane was a desire to reform the character of the mentally ill person. As has been shown,¹⁰⁸ this emphasis on individual reform was drawn from traditional Quaker beliefs. This was, however, combined with an emphasis on the development of the patient's intellect, the faculty which evangelicals appreciated above all else and which traditional Friends distrusted. Therefore by reconciling these emphases on the reform of character and the importance of the intellect Gurney's work for the treatment of the mentally ill, like his participation in penal reform, combined elements from evangelical and Quaker theology.

SLAVERY

Alongside his work for penal reform and his associated work for the treatment of the mentally ill, Gurney's most significant area of philanthropic work was his campaigns against slavery. Gurney's involvement in this work can in part be attributed to the preeminent role which was played in these campaigns by his closest associates: evangelical Quakers and Anglicans. Indeed, Wilson argues, this campaign against slavery was an important cause of the growing association between Friends and evangelical Anglicans.¹⁰⁹ Among those Friends who opposed slavery and the slave trade, a prominent role was played by evangelicals. Even the first generation of evangelicals was vehemently opposed to slavery. For example, Sands refused to use goods produced by slaves.¹¹⁰ In 1792 George Harrison declared that the Bishops of England and Wales should raise the matter of the slave trade in Parliament and the country in general,¹¹¹ and George Richardson was recorded as having worked with Clarkson and Wilberforce in the Anti-Slavery Society.¹¹² Elizabeth Fry was another evangelical Friend who took action to help slaves; in 1805 Joseph John Gurney recorded that she had gone to free a slave boy from a ship which was about to leave the country. Gurney noted that he had not been allowed to accompany her on this mission, due to fears that he might distract her from her objective.¹¹³ While he was unable to participate in the campaign against slavery on this occasion, during his later life Gurney devoted himself to the anti-slavery cause. In 1814 Gurney attended an anti-slave trade meeting and later prepared a petition. Even in these early days he recorded that he was "drowned by slave trade business".¹¹⁴ In 1823 Gurney participated in a public meeting in Norwich to petition for

the gradual but complete abolition of slavery in the colonies.¹¹⁵ In the next year Thomas Clarkson addressed a meeting of about forty people in Norwich on the subject of slavery.¹¹⁶ This speech clearly had a profound effect on Gurney: he wrote that Clarkson's visit to Norwich had "...re-animating my zeal..." on the subject of colonial slavery.¹¹⁷ In the wake of Clarkson's work, Gurney made another speech, his best ever he believed, at an anti-slavery meeting.¹¹⁸ In 1824 Gurney was also to publish his first work on the subject of slavery.¹¹⁹ This work, however, broke little new ground, and largely reiterated ideas espoused in Clarkson's pamphlet, Thoughts on the Necessity of Improving the Condition of the Slaves in the British Colonies. Gurney's work is, however, of interest as it shows why he opposed slavery. It is clear that Gurney's opposition to slavery was rooted in his religious beliefs and his conviction that slavery and Christianity were incompatible:

"I say, that it is utterly at variance with the dictates of Christianity that one man should be regarded as the mere chattel of another; utterly at variance with those dictates, that we should compel our fellow-creatures to labour for us, and give them no wages for their labour; that we should inflict upon them the cruel punishment of the whip at our own discretion; that we should degrade, expose, and torture, even the female sex; that we should subject whole families to writs of venditioni exponas, by which the nearest ties of affection may be torn asunder; and, finally, that we should allow a system, under which persons, who like ourselves possess immortal souls, are regarded like beasts of burden that perish".¹²⁰

The major reasons, however, for Gurney's demands for abolition were the spiritual and moral dangers he perceived in slavery. He believed that a "...society in which one large portion of the population is the absolute property of another, must have a tendency to corrupt, degrade, and harden the heart".¹²¹ Gurney clearly believed that those individuals who owned

slaves were in grave spiritual danger and he even declared that they were objects for deep commiseration as their slavery was the worst of all.¹²² Gurney also mentions the spiritual plight of those involved in the slave trade elsewhere in his writings. He argued that the slave driver, while he might feel for the sufferings of the oppressed for a while, would become the most degraded of his species¹²³ and that the slave trader was surely an object of deepest compassion as he was a captive of Satan and no one but God could rescue him.¹²⁴ This concern over the moral and spiritual dangers of slave owners is another example of Gurney's emphasis on individual sanctification and his desire to remove anything which might impede the spiritual development of individuals. As importantly Gurney's anxieties over the spiritual state of the slave owners were typical of the evangelical anti-slavery campaigners. Hilton goes as far as to suggest that the evangelicals' concern for the abolition of slavery was primarily motivated by their desire to protect the souls of the slave owners.¹²⁵ In addition to condemning slavery due to its effects on individual spiritual progress, Gurney's 1824 pamphlet reiterated another commonly used argument by the abolitionists: that slave labour was less efficient than free labour,¹²⁶ with Gurney giving the example of Joshua Steele who had freed his slaves, made them tenants and thereby tripled the profits of his estate.¹²⁷

Although Gurney did not produce any further works on this subject before the abolition of slavery in the British colonies, he continued his work for the abolitionist cause without stint during the next few years. For example, in 1825 he was "...flooded by a rapid current of interests chiefly in the slavery concern...".¹²⁸ Gurney's interest in this philanthropic

concern, however, declined during the 1830s due to the partial success of the movement. As Temperley argues, after the abolition of slavery in the British colonies in 1833 there was a period of hiatus in the anti-slavery movement.¹²⁹ As a result of this there are very few references in Gurney's journal to anti-slavery work over the next few years.

Gurney's concern with the campaign against slavery was, however, revived in the 1840s due to his journey to America and the West Indies. This visit came at a crucial time for the abolitionist movement. With the abolition of slavery in the British colonies, members of the movement believed that they should start to work for emancipation by other nations.¹³⁰ As much of the slave trade was carried out under the American flag, the United States were of particular concern for the abolitionists.¹³¹ Gurney himself clearly identified American involvement in the slave trade during his tour of the West Indies and observed that nine-tenths of the ships used in the trade were built in America, flew the American flag for protection from British cruisers, and some of the finance for the trade came from America.¹³² This trade, he declared, was the most "odious wickedness that has ever afflicted or disgraced mankind".¹³³ It should not, however, be imagined that Gurney allowed anti-slavery work to supplant evangelistic preaching as his main interest during his American mission. Instead Gurney concentrated during the early part of his journey on preaching, to the exclusion of abolitionist work. In 1837 Gurney noted that, while some people had thought that he might have mentioned slavery at one of his public meetings in North Carolina, he believed that nothing was required of him except the full preaching of the gospel.¹³⁴ In 1839 Gurney noted that, although he had considered the issue of slavery during his leisure

hours, he believed that it was better to keep exclusively to his gospel mission while in America.¹³⁵ Even while travelling to the West Indies in late 1839, Gurney believed that his gospel mission was more important than his work for the abolitionist cause.¹³⁶ Gurney's major reason for avoiding discussion of slavery during the early part of his mission was his belief that it might restrict openings for his evangelistic preaching.¹³⁷ Gurney was justified in his fear that support for the anti-slave cause might hamper his evangelistic preaching, as he met some opposition during his tour due to his reputation as an abolitionist.¹³⁸ For example, he was nearly prevented from holding a meeting in the Hall of Representatives in Washington as it was feared he would mention slavery.¹³⁹ The most alarming example of opposition towards Gurney due to his reputation as an abolitionist occurred during his 1840 visit to Savannah:

"We made our arrangements for a public meeting, to be held at eight o'clock one evening, and were just about to insert our notice in the newspaper. But our purpose was, at that time, frustrated by the sudden diffusion of a report, that I had come thither from the West Indies, as an "anti-slavery spy". It produced no small excitement, and we were assured, that the meeting could not be held without endangering the peace of the town, and possibly our lives. We had been previously been warned by a missionary from Jamaica who came from these parts, that we could not visit Savannah with any degree of safety, and his prophecy seemed now likely to be verified. But all turned out well at last. The nature of our gospel mission was explained; the report gradually subsided; and two large public meetings were held in succession - the latter on the First day of the week, with nearly 2000 people. It was a solemn and satisfactory occasion; and the next morning we left the place, under feelings of sincere regard and affection towards many of the inhabitants. Certainly we are bound to acknowledge that they treated us with great civility and kindness".¹⁴⁰

Gurney's anxieties over holding these services under threat of possible violence are made clear by his relief at being able to complete his work at Savannah with "no bones broken, no pro-slavery mob".¹⁴¹ Gurney would

also have avoided active participation in the anti-slavery movement in America due to his antipathy to some of its members. The movement in America was divided between the "Gradualists" and the "Immediatists". The latter group included advocates of "libertarian" doctrines such as equal rights for women, passive non-resistance, immunity of children from punishment, and equalising of property.¹⁴² As Gurney believed that these doctrines would undermine civil, social, and domestic order,¹⁴³ it is perhaps understandable that he would not wish to associate with their advocates within the immediatist party. More importantly Gurney wished to concentrate on evangelistic preaching rather than abolitionist work, as he believed that Christianity in itself would undermine slavery, declaring that when the Christian religion was victorious it would put an end to slavery.¹⁴⁴ Indeed Gurney recorded that one of his public meetings, where slavery was not mentioned, was described by an "intelligent slave owner" as the best anti-slavery sermon he had heard.¹⁴⁵

While Gurney clearly subordinated his concern to abolish slavery to his evangelistic work during his tour of the New World, he was to make a major contribution to the anti-slavery movement during this tour by gathering first-hand information on the actual operation of the system. In 1837, Gurney noted that he hoped to collect evidence for Thomas Fowell Buxton's next parliamentary campaign¹⁴⁶ and in 1839 stated that he was obtaining information on the internal slave trade in the United States, as this seemed the best way in which to attack slavery.¹⁴⁷ Gurney even took advantage of an opportunity to examine a captured slave ship during his tour of the West Indies.¹⁴⁸ It should, however, be noted that Gurney found gathering this information difficult, as he was extremely distressed

by observing slavery at first hand. He noted that the sight of slaves during his journeys was affecting¹⁴⁹ and told Catherine Gurney that he could give no idea of the effect of travelling through land where half the inhabitants were slaves.¹⁵⁰ He also admitted while visiting Richmond, "It is not often that any place has cost me more exercise of mind - it is a hotbed of slavery...".¹⁵¹ Although Gurney found collecting information on American slavery demanding, his first-hand observation gave him insights into the system which were not available to most of his contemporaries in the abolitionist movement in Britain. As a result he could confidently attack the evils of the system of slavery in America. As with his earlier work on slavery, his main reasons for opposing the system in America were religious rather than humanitarian and his principal objection to the system was its undermining of morality. Now, however, he could provide a more graphic first-hand account of the moral effects of slavery. He argued that slavery was always accompanied by a prevalence of immorality and crimes of the worst nature were common in slave states.¹⁵² Gurney was also critical of the system as it denied the negroes a right to education, which the evangelicals believed was an essential pre-requisite to salvation. Gurney argued that the slaves were systematically excluded from education,¹⁵³ as the continued existence of slavery depended upon their being reduced as "...as far as possible, below the level of rational humanity".¹⁵⁴ He was also horrified that the system of slavery undermined another institution that the evangelicals regarded as essential: the family. Gurney noted that at slave auctions "...the dearest family ties are sent asunder without mercy; under the sanction of human law, but in utter defiance of the law of God".¹⁵⁵ As well as condemning the moral effects of slavery, Gurney also believed that the system had been economically

disastrous for America. For example, he noted in Savannah "...the impoverishing effect of slave labour was conspicuous on every side..."¹⁵⁶ and attributed the deterioration of land in Virginia to the effects of slave labour.¹⁵⁷ Conversely, Gurney noted, Chester County in Pennsylvania had prospered under free labour.¹⁵⁸ Alongside witnessing slavery at first hand during his tour of America, Gurney studied the effects of abolition during his journey in the West Indies. He was clearly impressed by the operation of emancipation and believed that it had overcome the two great evils he associated with slavery: immorality and economic inefficiency. Gurney pointed to signs of moral improvement in the colonies since abolition: noting, for example, that crime in St. Christopher's had declined, while education and religious instruction were rapidly advancing.¹⁵⁹ Gurney also argued that economic advances had been made since emancipation, arguing that "...slavery and waste are twin sisters, whereas freedom is married to economy".¹⁶⁰ As examples of this Gurney noted that Antigua had the appearance of increasing wealth and prosperity¹⁶¹ and in Jamaica a larger proportion of the population was engaged in labour than under slavery, with each individual working harder,¹⁶² and that the value of property was rising rapidly.¹⁶³ Gurney naturally compared the operation of emancipation in the colonies with that of slavery in America, finding the former both morally and economically superior.¹⁶⁴ These first hand observations on the systems of slavery and emancipation allowed Gurney to make a valuable contribution to the abolitionist movement. During the later part of his mission in America, Gurney seems to have freed himself from his fears that advocacy of the anti-slavery cause would hinder his evangelistic work and was determined to disseminate his findings on the progress of emancipation in the West Indies to the widest audience

possible. He therefore related the principal events of his West Indian tour to the President, Secretaries of different departments, and leading members of Congress¹⁶⁵ and spoke with several of the "leading men" in America on the subject of West Indian freedom.¹⁶⁶

As well as gathering information on slavery and communicating his findings on this subject to prominent citizens in the United States, Gurney used his time in the New World to galvanise his American co-religionists in their work for abolition. This is important as, despite the role that Friends had played in the British abolition movement, their American counterparts were remarkably reluctant to become advocates of the cause. The problem Gurney encountered was not that Friends in America had lapsed from their prohibitions against slave owning. Indeed he noted that American Quakers were the only body with "clean hands" in America on the question of slavery and hoped that the other denominations would follow their example.¹⁶⁷ Rather the problem lay with Friends' unwillingness to join anti-slavery societies. Gurney noted that the issue of whether Quakers should join anti-slavery societies was causing controversy within the Society of Friends in America. He believed, however, that it was best not to "meddle" in this issue. Indeed Gurney himself had reservations about Friends joining the anti-slavery societies due to the role which the advocates of the libertarian views which alarmed him so much played in these societies.¹⁶⁸ Membership of these societies could, he warned, lead to Friends adopting these extreme beliefs.¹⁶⁹ While Gurney appreciated why American Quakers might not wish to join the anti-slavery societies he did attempt to encourage Friends to act as a separate organisation to oppose slavery. In addresses to Philadelphia¹⁷⁰ and Baltimore¹⁷¹ Yearly

Meetings he explained why he opposed slavery and on his return to America from the West Indies he related his findings on the progress of abolition to a large group of Friends.¹⁷² Gurney also assisted those American Quakers who were already working for abolition. In 1839 he wrote home explaining that a committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was collecting information on American participation in the slave trade for an address to the government and requested that all the documents in Britain on this subject should be sent to them.¹⁷³

In addition to attempting to encourage support for emancipation among his co-religionists and the elite of American society, Gurney contributed to the anti-slavery cause by producing three works on the subjects of slavery and emancipation which drew directly on his experiences in the New World. The first took the form of an address to the pro-slavery Congressman Henry Clay and was initially published in Spring 1839.¹⁷⁴ Given his earlier fears that anti-slavery work might hinder his evangelistic work, Gurney was reluctant to publish this work: even after he had received the proof sheet of the pamphlet, Gurney was not sure if he would have it printed.¹⁷⁵ Even when he eventually decided that he could not leave America without this work being printed,¹⁷⁶ the pamphlet was published anonymously, for fear that it might have hampered Gurney's evangelistic work.¹⁷⁷ In this pamphlet Gurney attempted to show that the Christian religion and slavery were incompatible. He argued that slavery was opposed by Christianity because man could not hold property in his fellow man, as each man was given his freedom by God. Furthermore Gurney argued that as all men were brothers, the religion of Jesus could not co-exist with an institution where men were treated as property.¹⁷⁸ Like many of

Gurney's works, this pamphlet was widely read in America. A copy was given to each senator and member of Congress¹⁷⁹ and J B Braithwaite suggests it was even read extensively by slave owners.¹⁸⁰ American abolitionists clearly welcomed this work. One of them described it as "excellent and timely",¹⁸¹ and it was also suggested that it should be printed in newspapers, as this would be cheaper and would reach a larger audience, especially in the Southern states.¹⁸²

Alongside this polemical pamphlet, Gurney produced a more oblique defence of abolition entitled A Winter in the West Indies. This was a narrative of his tour in the Islands and intended to show that emancipation was working well and had not, as was widely believed, led to a significant decline in the prosperity of the colonies. He argued that the decrease in the production of sugar was less than was commonly believed and was in part the result of the use of larger hogsheads and of increased internal consumption.¹⁸³ This was important as it addressed a major problem for the abolitionist movement. The anti-slavery movement had believed passionately that the abolition of slavery would not lead to an increase in the price of West Indian sugar. Indeed in 1824 Clarkson stated that slavery increased the price of sugar and threatened that unless there was a change in the system, sugar would be brought from other sources and Parliament would be petitioned to remove the additional duty on sugar produced elsewhere.¹⁸⁴ Demands were eventually to come for a change in the sugar duty, but not for the reasons which Clarkson had envisaged. After the final abolition of slavery in 1838 sugar production in Jamaica declined,¹⁸⁵ while the slave economies of Cuba, Brazil, and, Puerto Rico were producing cheaper and more plentiful sugar. This slave-produced

sugar was kept out of the British market due to a prohibitively high duty being placed on sugar produced outside the British colonies. From 1839, however, there were demands from free trade advocates that this tax on slave sugar should be reduced to the same level as the duty paid on colonial sugar.¹⁸⁶ Gurney's account of his journey in the West Indies was therefore intended, at least in part, to show the strength of the economies of the British colonies and thereby prevent a change in the sugar duties. Members of the abolitionist movement clearly valued this work for this reason and believed that Gurney's account of the economic success of emancipation would prevent a change in the sugar duties.¹⁸⁷ Moreover abolitionists were thankful for A Winter in the West Indies, not only because it contained such a favourable report of emancipation, but because its author's reputation for honesty placed the authenticity of his findings beyond doubt.¹⁸⁸

While Gurney unquestionably believed that emancipation could be economically successful in the colonies, he feared that the activities of the former slave owners might prevent this. Indeed in his A Winter in the West Indies Gurney attributed the the lacklustre economic performance of the West Indies since emancipation to the planters' attempts to subvert the transition from enforced labour to freedom.¹⁸⁹ He also dealt with the role which the former slave owners could play in the emancipated West Indies in the third of his works on slavery and abolition in the New World: Reconciliation, Respectfully Recommended to all Parties in the Colony of Jamaica, A Letter Addressed to the Planters, (1840). In this work Gurney made it clear that he believed that the economic success of the colonies, particularly Jamaica, was vital for the future of the abolitionist

movement. He argued that the eyes of the slave owning countries were on the British West Indies and Jamaica in particular. It was therefore vital to the cause of freedom in the slave-owning nations that Jamaica should prosper, as purely moral or religious arguments would not convince these nations to abolish slavery and they needed to be shown that their wealth would increase if slavery was abolished.¹⁹⁰ Other abolitionists had previously expressed similar sentiments: Buxton had suggested that America would be encouraged to free her slaves if the West Indies could be made into a showpiece of what could be achieved if slavery were abolished.¹⁹¹ Given his belief that the future of the abolitionist movement was largely dependent on the economic success of the West Indies, in Reconciliation Gurney reiterated his argument that emancipation had not been economically disastrous. He argued that slave labour was not cheaper and Cuba and Puerto Rico could only produce cheaper sugar because of the better quality of their soil, the inexpensive nature of their buildings, and because their businessmen were willing to settle for lower levels of profit than British proprietors. Despite these advantages which Cuba and Puerto Rico enjoyed, Gurney argued that Jamaica would be able to cope even in this unequal struggle¹⁹² and it would not be long before coffee and sugar production returned to their former levels with cotton, vegetables, and livestock also being produced.¹⁹³ He warned, however, that if cheaper slave-produced sugar was introduced into Britain before Jamaica's economy reached its full potential this would be disastrous. Jamaica would lose its market and therefore its wealth. Moreover, the new market for slave-produced sugar would also provide fresh impetus for the slave trade and slavery.¹⁹⁴

Reconciliation is also of interest as it once again displays Gurney's pragmatism, since he argued that the abolitionists should join forces with his former enemies, the planters, to oppose a change in the sugar duties. Gurney made a quite remarkable "about face" in his attitudes to planters from that of his earlier anti-slavery publication. In 1824 he had stopped just short of accusing the planters of rebellion against Britain in their efforts to prevent abolition.¹⁹⁵ By contrast, in 1840 Gurney called on the planters and the abolitionists to lay aside their previous differences and unite to petition Parliament.¹⁹⁶ One reason for Gurney's willingness to co-operate with the planters was a growing realisation within the abolitionist movement of the role the ex-slave owners would have in the emancipated West Indies. Temperley argues that by 1841 the abolitionists were beginning to realise the extent to which the prosperity of the freed slaves was dependent upon the prosperity of the employers.¹⁹⁷ Gurney himself noted that the freed labourers' prosperity was dependent on the continued commercial success of the planters.¹⁹⁸ One manner in which Gurney feared that the planters could affect the future prosperity of the colonies was by hindering their economic growth through attempting to retain the inefficient practices of enforced labour. Gurney therefore attempted to discourage the planters from their attempts to undermine the Emancipation Act. He warned the former slave owners that all attempts by the planters to compel labour were opposed by the Act of Emancipation and by justice. Gurney therefore criticised both the laws passed in Jamaica which limited the rights of the freedmen and those planters who required that the freedmen provided unpaid labour in return for the tenure of their property, claiming that these actions were nothing short of slavery.¹⁹⁹ Notwithstanding Gurney's efforts to prevent a change in the sugar duties

by providing evidence that emancipation was economically successful, by attempting to elicit the support of the planters to petition Parliament, and by attempting to curb the former slave owners' efforts to subvert emancipation, the sugar duty campaign failed. In 1846 it was decided that a uniform rate of duty on sugar should be imposed from 1851.²⁰⁰ This clearly horrified Gurney and he wrote that this decision "...will widen the opening of the floodgates of inequity, and cause an awfully increased flowing forth of the blood of Africa".²⁰¹

In addition to his own journey in the New World and the sugar duty campaign, Gurney's interest in abolitionism was revived during the 1840s by Thomas Fowell Buxton's proposals for future direction of the movement. In the late 1830s Buxton reviewed the progress of the abolitionist movement to date. Attention was turning back to the problem of the slave trade rather than slavery, as it was clear that the existing policy of the Royal Navy blockading the traffic from Africa was not succeeding. As a result of this review of the movement's progress, in 1838 Buxton published The Slave Trade and The Remedy. These suggested that the anti-slavery movement should proceed by encouraging the Africans to increase their legitimate commerce as this would drive out the slave trade. The African Civilisation Society was set up to promote this cause. Although the Society's committee included Samuel Gurney and William Allen,²⁰² involvement in this organisation would have raised a moral dilemma for Friends, as Buxton's project required the participation of armed Royal Navy vessels, both in maintaining the blockade and in establishing a community in the upper Niger to serve as a model for future African development. Indeed Sturge refused to become involved in this venture on the grounds

that Quakers should not endorse the use of armed force and was bitterly critical of the Gurneys for their involvement in this organisation.²⁰³ Gurney himself clearly had some misgivings about the use of military force to curtail the slave trade. Indeed in 1845, Gurney recorded that the English and French had united in blockading the Western Coast of Africa and, while he wished this enterprise well, he stated that "...I cannot myself take part in the system of armed cruisers".²⁰⁴ Despite these doubts over the use of armed force, Gurney participated in Buxton's new campaign. In 1840 he recorded that

"I have been much engaged in..weighing the claims of the new African Society - reading TFB's book &c. my mind has been quite enough occupied with the subject & the question about the said society in connection with our Christian testimony against bearing arms, has brought me into deep and serious consideration before God; with a single eye, I hope, to his will, in the matter - on a full view of the case - I think the way is clear for my joining and supporting the Society...".²⁰⁵

Following this decision Gurney, initially at least, took an active role in this organisation. In 1840 he organised a county meeting for the African Civilisation Society.²⁰⁶ Although this meeting, which Gurney believed had "...the best materials for a good meeting I ever saw in Norfolk...", was disrupted by Chartists, an Auxiliary of the African Civilisation Society was established in the county. As another example of his support for the African Civilisation Society Gurney recorded that he gave a large sum of his own money to Buxton for this cause.²⁰⁷ Gurney's interest in this organisation, however, soon waned and he does not seem to have played an active role in the Society after 1840. Indeed his loss of interest in this Society was made clear in 1842, by his reactions to the failure of the Niger expedition which marked the end of the African Civilisation Society.

Gurney wrote that

"The death of the Niger Expedition very affecting and overcoming to TFB. I can hardly say why, but I do not feel disturbed by the event, mournful as it is - Rather am I disposed to say: "It is the Lord - let Him do what seemeth him good".²⁰⁸

Although both the sugar duty campaign and the African Civilisation Society ended in disaster for the abolitionists, Gurney was to achieve some limited success for the cause during his evangelistic tours of the Continent. Gurney understood the necessity of promoting abolitionism on the Continent, having witnessed slavery's operation at first hand in the Continental powers' colonies during his voyage in the West Indies. For example, Gurney recorded his disgust when he observed the slave trade in Cuba.²⁰⁹ Gurney therefore attempted to encourage support in Europe for abolition, particularly among the Continent's upper classes and Royal families. Gurney seems to have been most successful in this Continental anti-slavery work in Denmark. He was acutely aware of Denmark's role in the colonial slave trade and noted that the Danish government did not prevent slave ships from refitting at St. Thomas.²¹⁰ As a result he held meetings about his West India journey with 150 of the "elite of Copenhagen" and with 150 "respectable persons" during his visit to Denmark in 1841 and had his A Winter in the West Indies translated into Danish.²¹¹ Gurney also wrote a long letter to the King of Denmark on the subject of colonial slavery, arguing that the slaves in the Colonies should be freed as the system was both economically and morally damaging.²¹² Gurney's arguments seem to have reached a receptive audience: one of his biographers claimed that this intervention convinced the King of

Denmark to discontinue the practice of obtaining slave soldiers from Western Africa.²¹³ Gurney also promoted the abolitionist cause during his other missions in Europe; for example, in 1844 he held an anti-slavery meeting in Bordeaux.²¹⁴

Gurney's participation in the anti-slavery cause, while achieving at best limited successes, does show how the two ideals of progress could simultaneously shape his participation in philanthropic work. He opposed slavery because it hampered individual progress, by undermining morality, and universal progress by hampering economic growth. As significantly Gurney's involvement in anti-slavery work, as will be shown later,²¹⁵ was an important factor in shaping his attitude towards participation in politics.

POVERTY

The relief of poverty was another of Gurney's major philanthropic concerns. Once again Gurney's involvement in this field of philanthropy can in part be attributed to the interest which his closest associates took in this subject. The abolition of poverty was a major concern for the Anglican evangelicals.²¹⁶ Similarly many of the evangelical Quakers also took a significant interest in the condition of the poor. On one level many of these evangelical Friends were especially anxious to reach the poor during their itinerancy. For example, William Forster and Stephen Grellet united to visit the poor of London.²¹⁷ During their missions among the poor, the

evangelical Friends they would provide the destitute with both spiritual and practical help. Alongside these evangelistic visits among the poor, evangelical Quakers attempted to assist them through voluntary societies. The most prominent proponent of this work to establish voluntary societies to aid the poor was William Allen. For example, in 1802 Allen founded a soup kitchen for the poor, which was used by over a thousand people every week,²¹⁸ and in 1816 established a savings bank for them.²¹⁹ Other Quaker evangelicals who participated in voluntary organisations for relieving the poor included William Forster, who administered a society for the relief of distress, as well as being involved in soup, coals, and bedding associations²²⁰ and George Richardson, who in 1827 published a broadsheet calling for his fellow citizens of Newcastle to unite in the establishment of a sick poor society.²²¹ Some indication of the motives for these evangelical Friends' concern over the state of the poor can be found in the works of George Harrison. Harrison warned that great numbers of the poor were left in ignorance and idleness and were therefore prey to every evil impression, which inflamed their lusts and increased the depravity of their hearts.²²² This emphasis on the immorality associated with poverty suggests that the Quaker evangelicals' concern in relieving the poor was primarily due to perceived spiritual dangers, rather than any desire to deal with the inherent injustices in society.

Like other Quaker evangelicals, Gurney took an active interest in relieving poverty. Even as early as 1809 Gurney was spending between two and four hours per week on committees to provide the poor with

coals, bread, soup, and education.²²³ Gurney took an especial interest in relieving the poor during periods of acute economic distress in Norwich. For example, in 1826 he recorded his strenuous efforts in assisting those who were left without work, noting that £3,300 had been raised in five days.²²⁴ This sum was soon raised to nearly £4,000 and was used to provide bread at a reduced price for the poor.²²⁵ In 1830 he procured a public subscription for the poor²²⁶ and established a district society in Norwich for visiting and relieving the poor.²²⁷ The relief of the Norwich poor remained a concern for Gurney during the rest of his life. Indeed his last public duty was to attend a meeting of the Norwich Poor committee.²²⁸ Gurney also took an interest in the plight of the poor outside his immediate neighbourhood: for example, he gave £500 to the relief of Ireland after the failure of the potato crop in 1846.²²⁹

Gurney's work for the benefit of the poor was clearly influenced by contemporary evangelical thought. As with evangelical philanthropy in general, Gurney's response to the needs of the poor was individualistic and stressed personal responsibility. For example, in his Report Addressed to the Marquess Wellesley Gurney argued that voluntary societies for the benefit of the poor should be set up in each part of every town. Through these societies the middle and upper classes should become personally involved in visiting and caring for the poor and "...by every means in their power, to infuse the spirit, and to confirm the habits, of order, cleanliness and industry".²³⁰ As well as stressing the importance of individual initiatives in meeting needs of the poor, Gurney emphasised the need to promote the ethos of

self-help and to avoid a "dependency culture". He argued that "...in all our measures intended for the benefit of the Poor, the great principle of independence ought ever to be kept in view....".²³¹ Therefore, while Gurney called on the government to institute some public provision in Ireland to prevent starvation, he warned that it should avoid "...encouraging a state of idle and vicious dependence".²³² This emphasis on self help can be seen most clearly in Gurney's attitude to the Poor Law. In 1834, Gurney argued that the distress of the Norwich and Norfolk labouring poor was caused by the beer houses, the want of good Christian education, and, primarily, the Poor Law system. To solve these problems he argued for abolition of the beer houses; an effective system of Christian education; the provision of spacious cottages for the poor to prevent immorality and poverty (as has been noted,²³³ Gurney believed that if the poor were crowded together, this would encourage crime); and the provision of small allotments.²³⁴ Most significantly, however, Gurney suggested that the Poor Law system be abolished on "Dr Chalmers' plan".²³⁵ Gurney's reference to Dr Chalmers is a reflection of the latter's profound influence on evangelicals' attitudes to the relief of the poor. Chalmers believed that the aim of philanthropy should be to restore the self respect and independence of the poor.²³⁶ By contrast, he believed, poor relief discouraged industry, personal responsibility, and moral restraint.²³⁷ He therefore rejected the Poor Law system and carried out experiments at parish level with institutionalised relief being replaced with voluntary charity under strict clerical control.²³⁸ Gurney clearly supported Chalmers' system, as they discussed the abolition of the existing system of poor

relief on one of the occasions when they met and Gurney afterwards stated that they held the same opinion of this subject. It should, however, be noted that Gurney was concerned that

"...even the gradual extinction of this incubus in England might, for some time to come, be productive of a great quantity of individual suffering. But it is not always a hard matter to recover our ground, when we have once fallen into dangerous practical errors?".²³⁹

Gurney also made his antipathy to the Poor Law system clear by opposing its introduction into Ireland, arguing that even in England this system had almost been too much to bear²⁴⁰ and described the establishment of the Poor Law in America as the "...planting of pauperism in the land of independence".²⁴¹

Gurney and the wider evangelical opposition to the Poor Law was in part the result of a belief that the rapidly rising numbers of the poor were outstripping available resources. Given these fears the evangelicals wished to inculcate moral restraint among the poor to control the perceived population explosion.²⁴² Gurney himself commented on the rapid increase in the population of Ireland and believed that this had grave consequences. He argued that the poor in Ireland

"Sensible that they can sink no lower in the scale of wretchedness, and anxious to secure to themselves the few natural enjoyments of which society has not deprived them, they are uniformly found to give themselves up to early and improvident marriages - and the lands on which the whole scene is acted, are presently overrun by a starving and angry population".²⁴³

Gurney proposed methods to deal with this surplus population and suggested that three to four hundred thousands of Ireland's most

destitute inhabitants should be sent to America, as this would benefit them and relieve the resources of Ireland.²⁴⁴ Similarly in 1845, he attributed the distress of the Norwich labouring poor to the labour market being over stocked. While he believed that the remedy to this problem was to improve the condition of the market by introducing fresh manufacturing and commerce, he stated "...I would also work at the other end, by sending young men away...".²⁴⁵ This advocacy of emigration was in part be the result of his meeting emigrants from Norwich during his American mission, whose condition was, he believed, a thousand times better than it would have been if they had stayed in England and Gurney claimed that "...happy would it be if a multitude of our Norwich weavers could make a similar change".²⁴⁶ Gurney's perception of poverty and his emphasis on individualism in dealing with this problem were clearly drawn from contemporary evangelical culture. It should also, however, be noted that the evangelicals' approach to the relief of poverty, with its emphasis on inculcating habits of self help and moral restraint in the poor, was comparable with Gurney's stress on the reform of character and sanctification which he drew from traditional Quaker beliefs. His work for the relief of the poor therefore provides another example of the manner in which Quaker and evangelical beliefs could complement each other and work in unison.

TEETOTALISM

Another major philanthropic cause of this period was the advocacy of temperance. Gurney devoted himself to this cause during the later

years of his life. His support for temperance can in part be attributed to his belief that alcohol was a cause of many social ills; his claim that drink was in part responsible for the plight of the Norfolk poor has already been mentioned.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, he believed that the use of alcohol was responsible for 25% of cases of insanity and over 50% of imprisonments.²⁴⁸ Gurney's interest in this subject can also in part be attributed to the prominent role which his fellow Friends played in the temperance cause. Isichei argues that, while the Quakers' involvement in temperance reform is less widely recognised than their anti-slavery or peace work, it was probably more important²⁴⁹ and Lilian Lewis Shiman argues that there were few local or national temperance organisations in which at least one Quaker did not play a prominent part.²⁵⁰ Despite the prominent role of other Friends in the temperance movement and his belief that many social ills could be attributed to alcohol, Gurney only became an active supporter of temperance work during the latter years of his life. His support for this cause during the later years of his life can in part be attributed to his own conversion to teetotalism. Gurney became a teetotaler only after a protracted period of inner conflict. While in 1837 he recorded a victory over the use of fermented liquors,²⁵¹ it would appear, as Isichei suggests, that Gurney lapsed from teetotalism several times.²⁵² Even in 1839 Gurney recorded that he took a little bottled beer when he could find it and carried a flask of wine.²⁵³ His decision to finally become a committed teetotaler was undoubtedly influenced by his diagnosis in 1842 as a diabetic, which required that he limit himself to a very strict diet including abstinence from wine and beer.²⁵⁴ A few months later he was to note an improvement in his

health due to this change in diet and his "...continued ease in total abstinence..."²⁵⁵

Although Gurney became a teetotaler primarily for personal reasons, he whole heartedly threw himself into publicly advocating the cause of total abstinence. For example, in 1843 Gurney noted he chaired "...the Great Teetotal meeting, held on the arrival of Father Mathew"²⁵⁶ Moreover Gurney was eager that those closest to him should benefit from teetotalism. In one speech, which was published in the form of a tract, Gurney recounted how he had discontinued the supply of beer to his staff:

"I keep a large house in the county of Norfolk, having a great many inmates, and feeling a great desire to promote their spiritual welfare, I adopted those means which I hoped would lead them to consideration and to seriousness. I found however that all my efforts were frustrated by an enemy in my own house. We were very famous for the excellence of our home brewed beer, and this was hospitably supplied not only to the servants of the establishment, but also to the labourers employed on the estate. Although I cannot say that this was extravagantly used, I believed it was the source of very considerable mischief...I...called together the members of my establishment, and told them that I felt it to be my duty to discontinue the supply of beer to which they had been accustomed, but ordered a coffee tap to be opened in the hall, and a plentiful supply of hot coffee, bread and butter to be kept for all who choose to partake"²⁵⁷

It should, however, be noted that Gurney's concern to spread teetotalism among his workforce may not have been for entirely philanthropic reasons and it would appear that there had previously been problems with alcoholism among the Earham staff. For example, in 1836 Gurney recorded having to part with the "poor coachman" due to his intoxication.²⁵⁸

As a middle class teetotaler Gurney is atypical of the temperance movement of the 1840s. When the temperance movement had first emerged its members had defended moderate consumption of drink and opposed drunkenness rather than drinking in itself. As a result the temperance advocates would consume beer and wine but not spirits. The early reformers were also mostly middle class and tended to limit their activities to their own class, as their meetings were of such a nature that only those who were 'respectable' would attend.²⁵⁹ In 1832, however, the first teetotal temperance society was founded by Joseph Livesey²⁶⁰ and teetotalism was to dominate the temperance movement for the rest of this period. This emphasis on teetotalism radically changed the temperance movement: Shiman argues that teetotalism required a complete change of life style, which many moderate drinkers found impossible to accept.²⁶¹ The class structure of the movement was also changing. Although Gurney claimed that increasing numbers of educated and thinking people were joining the cause of teetotalism,²⁶² in reality the middle class reformers were leaving and being replaced by members of the working class.²⁶³ Gurney would have found himself ill at ease with some of the advocates of teetotalism. For example Livesey supported radical causes including protests against the enclosure acts, starvation wages, and the Poor Law of 1834,²⁶⁴ which were not causes to which Gurney would necessarily have subscribed. Despite its working-class associations, Gurney freely promoted the teetotal cause. He stated that abstinence from alcohol "...becomes easy and even pleasant by habit, and it leaves both mind and body in a cool and favourable condition for all the functions and duties of life".²⁶⁵ Gurney also advocated the pledge,

believing temperance was feeble and powerless without it, and called on all his fellow countrymen to become pledged teetotallers.²⁶⁶ It should, however, also be noted that, notwithstanding the prominent role which members of the working-class played in the cause of advocating teetotalism, Gurney's temperance work seems to have been aimed at the middle classes; in almost all his journal accounts of the teetotalism meetings which he either spoke at or chaired, Gurney noted the "respectability" of the people attending.²⁶⁷

Gurney's opposition to alcohol drew from both the doctrines of the wider teetotal movement and his own theology of sanctification. Many of Gurney's arguments in support of teetotalism are clearly drawn from Livesey's Lecture on Malt Liquor, a work which was to be reprinted many times by the teetotalism movement.²⁶⁸ For example, both Gurney and Livesey describe alcohol within the home as an "enemy"²⁶⁹ and claimed that alcohol was a cause of crime and poverty,²⁷⁰ although this was not a major issue for Livesey. Both authors also stressed the effects of alcohol on individuals' health. Livesey argued that, contrary to popular opinion, beer had very little nutritional value.²⁷¹ Gurney claimed that post mortems showed that drinking left the stomach ulcerated, while his own health had improved dramatically since he had become an abstainer.²⁷² Significantly both authors described the damaging effects of alcohol on the body's metabolism in a similar way. Livesey argued that alcohol acted as a stimulant causing the body's functions to work too quickly and thereby losing nature's equilibrium.²⁷³ Gurney also argued that alcohol acted as a stimulant, which would speed up the wheels of natural life for a time,

but after a while these would move more slowly than had originally been the case. By contrast, he argued, those who abstained from alcohol would find that the wheels of life would move more regularly.²⁷⁴ Where Gurney's work does differ from Livesey's is in stressing the religious value of teetotalism. Gurney regarded alcohol as another potential danger to the individual's moral progress and claimed that alcohol blunted the moral feelings and blinded the mind to the great truths of religion.²⁷⁵ By contrast, Gurney argued, teetotalism could assist the individual's progress to salvation. While he did not believe that alcohol consumption was in itself unlawful in the eyes of God or that temperance in itself would lead to salvation, he believed that it was easier to preach the gospel to abstainers, as their minds were less excited and therefore more able to perceive the distinction between truth and error. Therefore if teetotalism did not actually bring someone into the temple of God, Gurney argued, it certainly brought them to "...the porch of the Temple".²⁷⁶ Gurney's teetotalism therefore combined his concerns for individual and universal progress; individual progress by removing a hindrance to religious and moral development, and universal progress by removing a source of many contemporary social ills. Gurney's advocacy of teetotalism therefore once again shows how beliefs drawn from traditional Quakerism and contemporary evangelicalism could operate in unison.

PEACE

While Gurney's belief in universal progress permeated all his philanthropic endeavours, it is most clearly expressed in a cause which naturally attracted the attention of Gurney and other Quaker evangelicals, the promotion of peace. During Gurney's lifetime Friends were recognised for their work in anti-war campaigns by their contemporaries. The editor of a collection of Friends' sermons argued that although Friends were small in number, their influence on the moral feelings of other bodies of Christians on this subject had resulted in numerous peace societies being founded in Britain and America.²⁷⁷ It is clear that many of the evangelical Friends were anxious to promote Quakerism's testimony to peace among members of the wider community. For example, William Forster argued that a great body of practical Christians should boldly protest against any recurrence of war and warn against its more distant approaches.²⁷⁸ Sturge established a Peace Association Auxiliary²⁷⁹ and Junia Price was reported to have distributed tracts on the subject of peace.²⁸⁰ Many of these Friends were also members of the voluntary organisation which was established to support this cause, the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace.

It might be assumed that, given Friends' traditional pacifism, the inspiration for this work to promote peace came primarily from within the Society of Friends. In reality the Society of Friends as a whole took little interest in this subject. In the period following the Peace of Utrecht there had been few threats to peace, and the Society

of Friends had scant opportunity to protest against war.²⁸¹ Even the Napoleonic wars do not appear to have stirred Friends as a body to action and only ten Quakers were in prison in 1814 for adhering to their testimony against participation in or contributing resources towards war.²⁸² Rather than coming from within the Society of Friends, the inspiration for the Quaker evangelicals' campaigns against war were drawn from the wider evangelical movement. These Friends found allies among the members of other denominations to assist them in promoting this cause. While it is true that Friends played a prominent role in the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace, which Binfield describes as Friends' institutionalised response to war,²⁸³ membership of this Society was by no means limited to Quakers. Its rules stated that it did not address any particular religious community and instead wished to secure the sympathy and co-operation of every Christian denomination.²⁸⁴ As another example of this organisation's ecumenism, one of the Peace Society's supporters, Rev. David Bogue, called for all enlightened Christians to do whatever they could to promote its principles.²⁸⁵ Moreover supporters of the Society attempted to establish links between this organisation and the other great evangelical philanthropic concerns. The Society's first pamphlet suggested that the work of the Peace Society would assist the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and the missionary societies²⁸⁶ and the cause of the Peace Society was also compared to the great evangelical campaigns for the abolition of the slave trade and of human sacrifice among the Hindus,²⁸⁷ and penal reform.²⁸⁸ These pleas for the wider evangelical

movement to take an interest in this organisation were not without effect, as in 1825 the annual meeting of the Peace Society was attended by the secretaries of the London Missionary Society and Baptist Missionary Society.²⁸⁹ More importantly, as will be shown, the doctrines espoused by the Peace Society were clearly influenced by evangelical theology.

Gurney himself was to take an active role in the Peace Society. He proposed or seconded motions at the annual meetings in 1829²⁹⁰ and 1831.²⁹¹ In 1831 he was also to take the chair at the Society's annual meeting, but had to resign this post due to ill health.²⁹² Gurney's active participation in the organisation reflected a deep-seated dread of war. This anxiety over the prospect of war is also reflected in his journal references to the subject. The first reference to war in his journal came in 1814, when he noted

"Externally, we have been much favoured privately and publicly... the cessation of warfare & the wonderful events in France. Surely every feeling mind ought to bow with thankfulness on the occasion".²⁹³

The next reference in his journal to the dangers of war was in 1823, when he recorded that

"Public affairs very awful & threatening. The rumours of many wars prevalent, & great danger lest this country should become engaged in the conflict".²⁹⁴

Given his anxiety over the dangers of war, Gurney wrote two pamphlets on the subject. In 1833 he published An Essay on War and its Lawfulness under the Christian Dispensation. In 1840, against the

backdrop of increasingly dangerous international events, Gurney noted that he had had his peace essay An Address to Ministers of the Gospel, on the Subject of War and Peace; Written at the Request of the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace printed.²⁹⁵ In addition to these pamphlets, due to his desire to promote peace, Gurney attempted to encourage harmonious relationships between Britain and America through his account of his 1837-40 mission A Journey in North America, (1841). In the introduction to this work, Gurney explained that

"Certainly I am bound, by strong ties of Christian love and gratitude, to promote the cordial good-will and affection which ought to subsist between the people of Great Britain, and the citizens of the United States".

He therefore hoped that A Journey in North America would counteract some of the biased reports of other British travellers in America.²⁹⁶ Indeed A Journey in North America was clearly welcomed in some quarters in Britain on this account: Thomas Brightwell wrote to Gurney declaring that it was likely to promote understanding with the Americans.²⁹⁷ As another example of this desire to discourage conflict between Britain and America, Gurney took a keen interest in the Oregon question and held a private conversation with Lord Aberdeen on the subject.²⁹⁸

Gurney and the other supporters of the Peace Society's opposition to war drew upon their religious beliefs. For example, one element in Gurney's beliefs which shaped his attitude to war was his rejection of the apparent justification for waging war which was given in the Old

Testament. Gurney acknowledged that under the Old Testament disposition war had for a period been permitted, or even ordained;²⁹⁹ but these wars "...were undertaken in pursuance of the express command of the Almighty Governor of mankind; and they were directed to the accomplishment of certain revealed designs of his especial providence...". By contrast he argued that strict adherence to the laws of Christ required total abstinence from warfare and claimed that the early church had adopted this practice.³⁰⁰ Gurney's beliefs on this subject were shared by other supporters of the Peace Society. While the first tract produced by the Society recognised that the Israelites had been permitted to make war, this was allowed as God had the right to make use of the savage customs of the day to promote His purposes.³⁰¹ Similarly Bogue suggested that the state of the Israelites was unique, with no parallel in history³⁰² and the divine commands to war were applied only to the Israelites.³⁰³ Like Gurney, other supporters of the Peace Society contrasted the example of wars in the Old Testament with the doctrines of the New Testament and the rules of the Society stated that all war was opposed in the New Testament.³⁰⁴ Similarly, like Gurney, other members of the Peace Society argued that members of the early church had not participated in war.³⁰⁵ Another element in Gurney's theology which profoundly influenced his opposition to war was his doctrine of sanctification and his fears of moral corruption. Like other supporters of the Peace Society he claimed that war corrupted the individual. Indeed the authors of the Society claimed that war was immoral and sinful in itself. The Society's first tract described war as one of the most horrid customs of the savages³⁰⁶ and Clarkson, writing on behalf of

the Peace Society, described war as a moral evil.³⁰⁷ Similarly Gurney described war as "...a moral evil of the very deepest dye..."³⁰⁸ and "...the greatest of human abominations..."³⁰⁹ The Peace Society writers argued that war, in addition to being immoral in itself, encouraged other kinds of immorality. The first Peace Society tract argued that during war every type of vice increased and that this damage would not be completely repaired even after the fighting had stopped.³¹⁰ Gurney shared this belief, arguing that war was accompanied by the "...destruction of moral and pious feeling..."³¹¹ Given this belief that war corrupted those who participated in it, the authors of the Peace Society tracts expressed anxieties about the moral state of those who were prematurely killed in war. The Society's publications stated that those killed in war were sent to judgement unprepared and filled with sinful feelings³¹² and that war sent vicious men beyond the means of reformation and hope of repentance.³¹³ The spiritual dangers to those killed in war were also a major concern for Gurney. He argued that when people were killed in war they might be sent unprepared into the next world:

"What countless multitudes of persons, full of angry and violent passions - persons whom we cannot reasonably believe to have been prepared for death - have been suddenly consigned to judgement and eternity, by the "red right hand" of war!"³¹⁴

This preoccupation with the spiritual state of those killed in war must clearly have been drawn from the beliefs of the wider evangelical movement and provides one indication of the manner in which Gurney's pacifism was influenced by beliefs from beyond the Society of Friends.

While Gurney and the other supporters of the Peace Society placed considerable emphasis on the spiritual danger which individuals faced due to the participation in war, the pre-eminent motivation for their campaigns to promote peace was their belief in universal progress towards a utopian state. The supporters of the Peace Society associated the cessation of war with progress. This can be seen in the manner in which they linked the rapid progress in contemporary society with the increasing prevalence of peace. For example, one of the Society's publications argued that religion was more appreciated than before, freedom more widely enjoyed, science scattering her gifts, international intercourse easier, commerce unfettered, and the rich nations were helping the poor nations. At the same time, it was suggested, peace was increasing throughout the world with national differences being settled without war.³¹⁵ The supporters of the Peace Society stressed the advantages which peace brought with it and how these might encourage humanity to desist from war. An anonymous clergyman, writing on behalf of the Peace Society, argued that as humanity had recently experienced a long period without war it should have learnt to appreciate the value and the benefits of peace.³¹⁶ Gurney shared this belief and commenced his Address to Ministers by noting

"The long period of peace with which this and other countries have been blessed, and the rapid improvement which has taken place during this period, in the wealth, comforts, and intellectual conditions of the nations of Europe, have, I doubt not, engendered, in many minds, the strong hope that this most tremendous evil was about to disappear from the face of the earth. It has often been said that war has ceased to be "in fashion" and there can be no doubt that statesmen, as well as thinking people in general, are more than ever aware of the folly of it".³¹⁷

Moreover the supporters of the Peace Society claimed that a complete cessation of war was possible and argued that waiting for God to end war at the millennium was comparable to the sinner pursuing immorality while waiting for God to convert him.³¹⁸ Gurney's writings on peace and war also reflect this belief in a new age of peace. In his Address to Ministers he argued that

"The whole Christian public, at home and abroad, will be gradually embued with "peace principles". The mind of the Christian public will act with ever increasing moral force on the mind of each respective government; and finally, the nations of the earth, succumbing to the spectre of the Prince of Peace, will repose together under the banner of love. The word of prophecy is express and unquestionable. "NATION SHALL NOT LIFT UP SWORD AGAINST NATION, NEITHER SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE".³¹⁹

Gurney's emphasis on the progress which might be achieved through peace and his belief that war could be completely abolished were part of a profound change in attitudes to peace and war among Quaker evangelicals. In his history of the Quaker Peace Testimony, Peter Brock argues that one of their number, Jonathan Dymond, had provided a systematic exposition of Quaker pacifist principles which had previously been lacking. In his exposition of Quaker pacifist principles, as well as arguing that participation in warfare was incompatible with Christianity, Dymond claimed that absence from war was also a common sense policy, which would lead both to practical success in the world and to the reign of peace on Earth. This Brock contrasts with the pacifism of some early Quakers which had argued that pacifism would lead not to success but rather to martyrdom.³²⁰

This departure from the traditional Quaker beliefs on pacifism is an indication of the degree to which the evangelical Friends' participation in philanthropy contrasted with the practice of other members of the Society. As Isichei suggests, the only Friends who were committed to charitable work were evangelicals.³²¹ Many of these evangelical Friends were to find little support for their philanthropic work among the bulk of the Society. Taylor argues that although William Tuke turned his attention to the treatment of the insane in 1791, it was a long time before the Society of Friends in general supported his plans.³²² Similarly when Thomas Hodgkins attempted to establish a psychiatric hospital for Friends near London in 1838, this project failed.³²³ The evangelical Friends' philanthropy often faced outright hostility from their co-religionists. For example, Gurney was criticised during one Friends' business meeting for attending a temperance meeting.³²⁴ The Quietists in particular had deep-seated reservations about participation in philanthropy and even claimed that it was spiritually dangerous. For example, Sarah Grubb cautioned against

"...engaging in too many benevolent plans or pursuits: it may be overdone, and rather weaken than strengthen the best life in individuals, and I think I have seen the gift of the holy anointing turned from its own channel, by great devotedness to these things, to the disqualification of some for advancing the cause of truth in the way designed by infinite and unerring wisdom".³²⁵

One reason for this hostility towards the evangelicals' participation in philanthropy was that it brought them into closer association with members of other denominations. Friends' work for philanthropy, particularly in the fields of prison reform and the abolition of

slavery, inevitably led to them working alongside non-Quakers. Moreover the degree to which the evangelical Friends' philanthropic activities were influenced by the beliefs of the wider evangelical movement provides another example of how new ideas were permeating the Society of Friends during this period. These factors could only have served to further undermine Quakerism's exclusiveness and thereby encourage the transition from sect to denomination.

Traditionalist Friends may also have opposed the evangelicals' involvement in philanthropy as it led to an increased interest in politics, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

10. GURNEY AND POLITICS

Of all Gurney's public activities outside the Society of Friends, the one that was perhaps to cause most controversy among his co-religionists was his involvement in politics. In his later life Gurney took an active interest in politics to support his philanthropic causes. This stood in stark contrast to Friends' traditional attitude to politics, which had regarded participation in them with antipathy and as a source of spiritual danger. Gurney himself had deep seated reservations about involvement in politics which were only gradually worn down. This changing attitude was indicative of a wider change within the Society of Friends, with some evangelical Quakers reassessing their opposition to involvement in politics. As importantly Gurney's participation in politics was profoundly influenced by his religious beliefs. In particular on several occasions he became involved in political issues to promote one or both of his ideals of progress. Moreover, many of his preconceptions of contemporary political issues were shaped by the beliefs of the wider evangelical movement. Gurney's participation in politics is therefore of interest as in many ways it is indicative of the attitude both of evangelical Friends and the wider evangelical movement towards politics.

Throughout his life Gurney's attitude to politics was gradually changing and he moved from complete antipathy to participation in politics to a belief that involvement in politics was an acceptable

field of endeavour for the Christian. There were several reasons for Gurney's initial opposition to involvement in politics. Most importantly Gurney inherited a deep seated hostility to participation in politics from earlier generations of Friends, because during the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century all involvement in politics was proscribed to Friends.¹ The evangelical Friends, at least initially, shared this hostility to politics with their co-religionists. For example, William Allen recorded in 1796 that he felt oppressed by discussion of politics² and even as late as 1823 he stated that he had never belonged to a political party.³ Another reason for Gurney's opposition to involvement in politics was the frequent anxiety which he experienced when considering contemporary public affairs. For example, in 1822 he recorded that "The future as it relates to business and public affairs somewhat gloomy and lowering"⁴ and in the next year he noted his real suffering at the "...awful & very threatening state of public affairs...".⁵ Furthermore Gurney dissociated himself from politics during his early life as he did not believe that participation in them was worthy of the Christian. Gurney wrote of the Bishop of Norwich that some he was "more interested in politics than exactly becomes a minister of the Gospel and a Bishop".⁶ Gurney also associated politics, especially during elections, with immorality and corruption. In his autobiography Gurney explained

"I had for many years abstained from an active share in local politics, which in their minor details were at Norwich particularly corrupt and disgusting...When we look on the one hand to the party spirit, the heart burning, the eager passions, above all the dissipation and corruption which attend to these political strifes, and on the other hand the meekness, quietness, impartiality, and purity, which ought to mark the

character of the Christians, we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that the less we have to do with such affairs, the better".⁷

Gurney also claimed that an interest in politics might distract the believer's attention from more important matters. In 1818, after the election, he recorded that "during the past week the spirit of Electioneering has subsided in my mind & given way to some degree of regularity and industry".⁸ In 1831 he noted

"I have felt a lively interest in the Parliamentary Reform question, & wrote a long letter on the subject to Lord Calthorpe, but have been this morning called home to my centre, & reminded that much of these matters, is not my business".⁹

Other Friends, for example Elizabeth Fry,¹⁰ expressed similar fears that they might be distracted from other matters by an interest in elections. Alongside this concern about the effects of politics on his own spiritual state, Gurney was alarmed by the public disorder which accompanied elections. In 1826 Gurney stated that his sense of the iniquity of man and the terrors of eternity that awaited the ungodly "...was much strengthened by what I witnessed yesterday, among the lower orders, at our county elections"¹¹ and during the 1832 elections Gurney described "...the strife of party, the victories of the hot Tory partisans on one side and the brawlings of Radicals on the other, the absence of religious & even decently moral restraint...".¹²

Although Gurney clearly had deep reservations about participation in politics, several factors were to encourage him to take a more benign attitude to involvement in political affairs. The most important of

these was a growing realisation among evangelical Friends that involvement in politics was necessary to support some of their philanthropic aims, especially the abolition of slavery. The very nature of the problem of slavery inevitably drew abolitionists into politics, as the power to abolish slavery lay in the British Parliament and therefore it was in this institution that the abolitionists had to win their case.¹³ Many of these evangelical Quakers therefore took an unprecedented interest in Parliamentary debates on slavery and became involved in politics to promote the abolitionist cause. For example, even Allen attended the debate on Wilberforce's 1791 slavery motion¹⁴ and in 1831 Joseph Sturge attempted to obtain pledges from prospective MPs that if elected they would support abolition and he then publicised the results of his enquiries to guide voters.¹⁵ Gurney shared this belief that Parliamentary action was the means by which slavery was to be abolished and that it was entirely proper to become involved in politics in support of this cause. In 1824 he argued that, given the political strength of the planters, it was "...perfectly constitutional..." to send petitions to Parliament supporting abolition.¹⁶ Similarly, in Reconciliation, Respectfully Recommended Gurney suggested that the abolitionists and planters should combine to petition Parliament against the proposed change in sugar duties.¹⁷ In addition to these petitions on slavery, Gurney organised petitions on other issues which were of concern to the evangelical movement, including several on the subject of capital punishment. In 1818 Wilberforce presented a Quaker petition, which had been organised by Gurney, to Parliament requesting that capital punishment should be

imposed for only the most serious crimes¹⁸ and in 1830 Gurney was involved in producing a petition against punishment by death for forgery.¹⁹ As another example of his use of petitions, in 1813 Gurney hoped that Friends would sign a petition²⁰ to support the Clapham Sect's attempts to open up India to missionary work.²¹ Gurney's involvement in Parliamentary work to support philanthropic objectives was by no means limited to petitions. In 1819 he was called to give evidence to the Parliamentary Committee on gaols²² and in 1833 Gurney asked that Parliament provide remedial measures for the suffering caused by the recession among the poor in Norwich.²³

This involvement in politics to support philanthropic causes inevitably brought evangelical Friends into closer co-operation with individual politicians. Many of these individual politicians provided evangelical Friends with examples of benevolence and piety and thereby showed that participation in politics was not incompatible with Christianity. Indeed during this period there were increasing numbers of politicians whom the Quaker evangelicals could admire and find common ground with. Although in the early nineteenth century evangelical Anglicans had a very low opinion of politicians,²⁴ this attitude was changing: Hilton argues that between 1807 and 1811 there was a considerable increase in the number of evangelical MPs.²⁵ Many of Gurney's Quaker associates supported the work of these evangelical MPs. For example, Taylor argues that Samuel Tuke, along with other Friends, broke with the anti-politics rule to support Wilberforce's election.²⁶ Wilberforce's successor as the leader of the anti-slavery movement had an even greater impact on Friends' attitudes to politics.

Swift argues that when Thomas Fowell Buxton, who had close contacts with Friends, replaced Wilberforce as the leader of the anti-slavery movement, this forced Quakers to reconsider their attitude to politics.²⁷ There certainly was a keen interest in Buxton's work in Parliament among evangelical Friends. For example, William Forster described the "...responsibility and importance of the engagement..." while writing to Buxton about the latter's entry into Parliament.²⁸ Of these evangelical Friends, the one most clearly drawn closer to politics by Buxton's example was his brother in law, Joseph John Gurney. Gurney was convinced that Buxton's work in Parliament was a Christian calling. In his short biography of Buxton, Gurney argued that, the former

"...while he never failed to give an adequate attention to the local interest of the borough which he represented, his main attention, as a public man, was always directed to the temporal and moral improvement of mankind, and especially the relief of the oppressed and afflicted".²⁹

Gurney also helped Buxton in his Parliamentary work: in 1836 they attended Parliament together³⁰ and Gurney helped to prepare the text of Buxton's speech during the Irish Church debate for publication.³¹ In addition to this close involvement with Buxton, Gurney was also to come into contact with other leading politicians, both evangelical and non-evangelical. Through meeting them Gurney realised that politicians could be honest and respectable men. For example, he recorded meeting Lord Calthorpe³² and Lord Suffield³³ and believed the death of the latter was a sad loss to the negroes in the colonies.³⁴ Gurney also met Lord Aberdeen and W E Gladstone during 1846 to discuss philanthropic causes close to his heart and recorded that the latter

"...is evidently a man of principle as well as talent, & very pleasing".³⁵ Nearer to home, in 1819 Gurney expressed his admiration for the defeated Tory candidate in the recent Norwich election.³⁶ Gurney also recorded favourable impressions of other leading politicians. In 1844 Gurney stated "I cannot but think well of Sir R Peel's ministry...",³⁷ claiming that the latter had done great things for the amelioration of the criminal code.³⁸ This growing association with leading politicians encouraged Gurney in particular and evangelical Friends in general to revise their attitude to participation in politics. This growing appreciation among evangelical Friends of participation in politics coincided with new possibilities for Dissenters to play a role in politics which were opened up by electoral reform. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828 enfranchised many Dissenters³⁹ and the 1832 Reform Act enfranchised or widened the electorate in the towns where the Dissenters were concentrated.⁴⁰ While there were still very few Dissenting MPs in Parliament even in 1832,⁴¹ the Municipal Reform Act of 1835 gave Dissenters greater electoral strength.⁴² This widening of the franchise is important as it allowed Friends, who had previously been able to pursue their philanthropic aims in Parliament through proxies among the evangelical Anglicans, to seriously consider a Parliamentary career for themselves.

Given these factors Gurney increasingly participated in politics. It should, however, be noted that Gurney's primary reason for involvement in politics was to promote his philanthropic causes or to remove causes of immorality and he never regarded participation in politics

as an end in itself. Moreover, he never completely lost his belief that involvement in politics could be spiritually dangerous and distract the believer from their higher calling. Notwithstanding this, Gurney's growing willingness to participate in politics is clearly shown by the increasingly prominent role which he played in Norwich politics. This involvement in Norwich politics was not, however, without conflict and his fellow Friends frequently questioned the role which he played in local political issues. Gurney first became involved in Norwich politics during the 1818 election when he publicly supported candidates. He recorded that

"I have been home nearly a fortnight - & that time has been engrossed more than has been pleasant by the Election. It was my endeavour not to yield myself up to its interests - but some public measures in support of [William] Smith + Rich[ar]d [Gurney, his cousin] seemed unavoidable. Being called upon I made one speech to the Electors...& endeavoured to raise their minds to something a little higher than mere politics..."

Later, however, Gurney questioned the propriety of his involvement in this electioneering

"...on the retrospect of this time, I do not observe much that I have done, which I ought not to have done - Yet I am rather shocked at finding myself enrolled with a party - & this I must not allow - & I have certainly felt much more foolish occupation of mind, than has been profitable. In short, the whole effect has been lowering to the best things...."⁴³

Gurney was not the only Friend to question this participation in electioneering. Even this involvement in politics to support a cause which was of great concern to Quakers alarmed more traditionalist Friends. Ann Alexander wrote to Gurney, expressing her surprise that a Quaker should participate in electioneering, the spirit of which,

she believed, was the complete antithesis of Christ's lifestyle.⁴⁴ Despite this criticism and his own fears that involvement in politics was spiritually dangerous, in 1819 Gurney supported a public declaration against electoral abuses, including the bribery of electors with drink and money⁴⁵ and during the same year he participated in a meeting to protest over the dispersion of a meeting in Manchester.⁴⁶ Involvement in the latter cause may have caused further controversy among Gurney's co-religionists, as he felt that he had to defend his participation in this meeting to Elizabeth Fry. He claimed that this meeting was clear of all party politics, was a respectable and not a "mob" meeting, and that the sole object of the meeting was to call for an inquiry. More significantly he claimed that he had used this meeting to point out the irreligious principles of Hunt and others,⁴⁷ suggesting that he regarded this meeting more as a means to attack heterodoxy than to address political injustices. Gurney also participated in the 1820 election to a limited extent. After this election he recorded that

"I have been careful not to participate either in the management or the spirit of the Election which is just over; and have been on the whole quiet in mind and with the exception of a very limited private canvass, non apparent, I felt willing to do as much as this for Richard, for whom I wish to show all cousinly affection. I was at H. Bidwell's yesterday, when the members were chaired. It would perhaps have been better not to have been there..."⁴⁸

Participation at this meeting may again have caused controversy among Friends; it is perhaps no coincidence that Thomas Shillitoe addressed London Yearly Meeting a few months later on Friends' interference in public meetings for the discussion of political subjects.⁴⁹ Gurney's

involvement in Norwich politics reached its climax during the 1832 election when he considered standing as a Member of Parliament. Gurney had attended the county elections during this year and supported one of the candidates, Edward Howard, by speaking against slavery.⁵⁰ This role in the elections received wide publicity; Gurney noted in his journal that his speech on slavery was widely distributed.⁵¹ More importantly Gurney argued that due to this work he had developed

"...a notion that I was myself called into Parliamentary service - even to bear testimony of Christ, and His holy law of love, in the House of Commons. So strongly was my mind impressed with the subject, and so much did the impression assume to myself the aspect of a well founded religious concern that in the prospect of an opening that was likely to occur in a place with which I was connected I communicated with a friend of mine, a gentleman of independent principles and of the highest character, who fully agreed to unite with me as a candidate".

Gurney's proposal that he should stand for Parliament was to cause controversy among his fellow evangelical Quakers. It is true that Quakers had previously made forays, albeit unsuccessful forays, into Parliamentary politics.⁵² A Quaker minister standing for Parliament was, however, unprecedented. Indeed Gurney held a meeting with some of the leading evangelical Friends to decide if it was proper for a minister of the gospel to stand as a Member of Parliament. Although none of these Friends discouraged his desire to stand for Parliament and left the decision to him, after much mental anguish Gurney himself decided not to pursue this course of action, preferring instead to concentrate on his work as an itinerant minister.⁵³ This decision was not, however, taken lightly: in his journal Gurney noted "...the intense conflict which I have so long gone thro' on the subject..." of

whether he should stand as an MP.⁵⁴ Moreover, despite his eventual refusal to become a candidate, Gurney argued that his entrance as an MP would not necessarily have interfered with his "higher calling" as a minister of the gospel,⁵⁵ something which suggests a growing belief that participation in politics was not incompatible with Quakerism. As significantly Gurney's deliberations over becoming an MP reflect a changing attitude among contemporary Friends to involvement in politics, as several other evangelical Quakers considered entering Parliament during this period. Samuel Tuke was asked to stand as the MP for York, but refused.⁵⁶ After refusing to stand as a candidate in 1835, Joseph Sturge sought election on three occasions, albeit unsuccessfully.⁵⁷ The first Friend to enter Parliament was Joseph Pease in 1833, only a year after Gurney's deliberations over standing for election.⁵⁸ As well as considering a career in Parliament for himself, during 1832 Gurney participated in a campaign against electoral corruption in Norwich. Gurney's account of the 1832 Parliamentary election emphasises the corruption which was prevalent at Norwich. When two candidates were returned "...chiefly by dint of sheer bribery...", a petition was presented to Parliament to protest against the return of these MPs and Gurney "...imagined it to be my place, to subscribe to the object; and wrote a letter in the Norwich newspaper in order to state the ground of my doing...".⁵⁹ Gurney's main motivation in participating in this campaign was probably not a desire to reform the electoral system. Rather his main concern may have been to remove the gross immorality which he associated with electoral corruption. Indeed it is clear that Gurney still had doubts about the propriety of involvement in politics even to assist in a

cause like this which would remove a source of immorality: in retrospect he expressed doubts about whether he should have taken part in this campaign.

"The measure was misconstrued by a large part of the community into an act of political partisanship - and I evidently lost ground by it, in my true calling, that of promoting simple Christianity among all classes. A more watchful endeavour to follow the only true guide...the immediate teaching of the Holy Spirit would, as I now believe, have preserved me from this inexpedient course".⁶⁰

As another example of a lingering antipathy to politics, he did not play any role in the 1837 election.⁶¹ Notwithstanding this, it is clear that Gurney had rejected his earlier blanket condemnation of participation in politics. Although he was never to seriously reconsider a career in politics for himself after 1832, in 1846 he noted his belief that several of the younger generation of Friends "...would find a sphere of usefulness in Parliament, where truly Christian men are much wanted".⁶² This acceptance of Friends entering Parliament, alongside his own forays into politics, clearly indicates that Friends' antipathy to politics was breaking down during this period. This willingness to participate in politics is another example of the breakdown of Friends' exclusiveness.

In addition to providing an example of how Friends' antipathy to politics was breaking down during this period, Gurney's views on contemporary political issues are of interest as they reflect many of the beliefs of the wider evangelical movement. One example of this was his conservatism and hostility to radicalism. Like other evangelicals,⁶³ Gurney associated radical politics with heterodoxy.

In his autobiography he mentions that some visitors to Earlham, who (were it not for the grace of God) would have carried the family off in infidel speculation, "...united decided democracy in politics with very low sentiments, on the subject of religion...".⁶⁴ Given this opposition to radicalism, Gurney, like other evangelicals, supported the existing order in society.⁶⁵ He argued that it was the duty of the Christian not to rebel⁶⁶ and that the restraints of municipal or national laws should be maintained "...so far as their provisions consist with the law of God".⁶⁷ As examples of his support for the existing order, in 1820 Gurney recorded that he was praying on behalf of the King and Royal family and on behalf of the nation⁶⁸ and noted that the Cato Street Conspiracy had been "providentially detected".⁶⁹ Gurney's conservatism is also made clear by his reactions to the American system of universal manhood suffrage. In 1838 he wrote to England, noting that the more respectable classes were "somewhat sick" of the universal male franchise.⁷⁰ Some of his comments on American democracy were extremely scathing. Democracy run wild, Gurney declared, was a great evil, from which he hoped England would be saved.⁷¹ He also suggested that nothing in the world was more tyrannical than "lawless" democracy and anyone who wanted their "Whiggism a little moderated" should visit America.⁷² One specific reason for Gurney's abhorrence of the American democracy was his belief that it encouraged the exploitation of disadvantaged groups. He believed that democracy encouraged the system of slavery, and described the American government as being under the influence of a "lawless, selfish, slave holding population".⁷³ Furthermore Gurney opposed universal suffrage in America as he believed that it

encouraged mob violence.⁷⁴ Gurney's comments on the political system in America once again stressed his belief that sound government was inseparable from religious orthodoxy and he claimed that America could only be preserved from "lawless democracy" and extremism by the gospel's influence.⁷⁵ Gurney also made his conservatism clear during his American tour by his opposition to the belief that women had equal rights and duties. Indeed during his American tour Gurney even declared that he was opposed to women speaking in public, except under the immediate revelation of the Spirit.⁷⁶

Gurney's conservative view of society was also reflected in his anxieties over working class discontent and his fears that this might turn to violence. In 1822 he noted "The Agricultural distress which is so increasingly prevalent, is fraught with serious dangers, and in some parts of the Kingdom, the public mind seems peculiarly disturbed".⁷⁷ When this agricultural distress did slip over into violence, during the Swing Riots, Gurney was naturally horrified. In 1830 he noted that Norfolk

"...like others, has indeed been in an awful condition. Many fires on Farmers' premises - & much of village insurrection. At one time it appeared likely to spread to Norwich. Altogether we have all had much to suffer in mind - & to bring us closely home, to a feeling of the uncertainty of our temporal comforts".⁷⁸

Nearly a year later Gurney was to report

"A fire at our neighbour Postle's farm; the frequently repeated acts of this description, & the apparently unsettled & ungodly state of the population are affecting, & may justly be called alarming".⁷⁹

Gurney feared working class discontent, not only because it could turn to violence, but also because he associated it with heterodoxy. In 1829 he noted that destitution among the manufacturing poor had a strong tendency to unsettle their religious and moral condition and there had been some fearful accounts of infidelity.⁸⁰ Gurney hoped to counter this working class discontent which he feared so much with philanthropy; it is perhaps no coincidence that in the same journal entry in which Gurney mentions the Swing Riots in 1830, he also mentions that he was interested in founding a district society in Norwich for visiting and relieving the poor. A belief that Gurney regarded philanthropic work among the poor as a panacea to blunt working-class heterodoxy and radicalism is strengthened by his short essay Triumph of Christianity over Infidelity. In this he describes a (presumably fictional) manufacturing village in the North of England, the population of which had held the "revolutionary and infidel" principles which, Gurney stated, were "notorious" among the lower classes. In 1832 the unnamed lord who owned the village visited and met its inhabitants in their cottages. While trying to show them the danger and folly of their notions, the lord also showed kindness to them. In particular the lord gave £5 to assist a man who had been deeply influenced by radicalism and deism. As a result of this benevolence the heretic was converted to Christianity (and presumably also renounced his radical politics) and ordered the burning of his "heretical books".⁸¹ Gurney's opposition to working class radicalism and his attempts to subdue this movement through philanthropy may perhaps account for the hostility which he encountered during the disruption of the county meeting of the African Civilisation Society

in 1840, when he and the Bishop were the principal targets of the Chartists' violent opposition and abuse.⁸²

As a result of their conservatism, the evangelicals opposed any legislation which would alter the existing social order or increase the role of government. Elliott-Binns argues that, while some evangelicals were becoming aware of the need of improvement in social conditions, others believed that attempts to interfere with social conditions endangered national stability and ignored divine ordinances.⁸³ Thus Gurney suggested only minor social reforms and he clearly opposed increased state intervention as a means of overcoming social ills, except in cases of blatant moral evils such as slavery and capital punishment. Indeed the only area in which Gurney approved of the state playing a major role in alleviating social problems was in aiding the population of Ireland. In his Report Addressed to the Marquess Wellesley, Gurney argued that the government's energies should be directed to the great object of relieving and improving the inhabitants of Ireland by maintaining various public institutions, providing a well organised police force, improving the penal and justice system, creating new roads and public works, lessening the level of taxation, and modifying the tithe system.⁸⁴ Even this exception from the strict rule of government non-intervention is, however, typical of evangelical views during this period. Hilton suggests that Chalmers advocated government involvement in Ireland as that nation was not sufficiently developed for free trade to be effective and as such it was an isolated case in which the state should help.⁸⁵ While the evangelicals generally opposed state

intervention, they believed that the government had a role to play in upholding moral standards. Hilton argues that the evangelicals believed that laissez-faire could only work if it was backed up by moral persuasion.⁸⁶ Similarly Gurney believed that the government had a responsibility to intervene to uphold the moral standards of the nation. He therefore disagreed with the editor of a Non-Conformist newspaper who had argued that the civil government should never interfere with the morals of the community. Gurney believed this was an "...unwarrantable & dangerous doctrine..." which could not be permitted. He argued that while the government should not interfere to support a particular denomination, it should work to maintain the good order of society as this was essential to both the subjects and the state. As a result the state was bound to protect and promote public morality and put down such nuisances as disorderly public houses and traffic in vice. He concluded that private immorality should not be allowed to impinge on the welfare and good order of the community.⁸⁷ Gurney's emphasis on the necessity for government to maintain the community's moral standards once again shows his concern to remove any hindrance to the moral development of the individual or society as a whole and therefore indicates how his religious beliefs could affect his attitude to politics.

Another contemporary political issue which Gurney considered was disestablishment of the state church. Gurney's interest in this subject was typical of contemporary Quaker and wider Dissenter thought. During Gurney's life time Dissenters were becoming more militant and demanding equal civil rights with Anglicans. Although

before 1832 the Dissenters' opposition to the religious establishment was directed against specific grievances, such as having to pay church rates, rather than against the establishment in principle,⁸⁸ due to religious developments within the Church of England moderate Dissenters increasingly adopted voluntarism or "free trade in religion" and argued that the Church should be supported only by the free will offerings of its members.⁸⁹ This demand for voluntarism took institutional form in 1844 with the foundation of the Anti-State Church Society, renamed the Liberation Society in 1853. Quakers were involved in this organisation, notably Joseph Sturge.⁹⁰ Sturge's role in this Society reflects Quakerism's enduring opposition to the establishment of the church, as the evangelical Quakers had been asking searching questions about the relationship between Church and State even before calls for the disestablishment of the Church of England had assumed an institutionalised force. For example, in 1827 Harrison stated that subjects of all religions should enjoy the same civil rights.⁹¹ Five years later Dymond argued that the American religious settlement was superior to the system in force in European states. State churches, he claimed, ran the danger of mixing Christianity with irreligion and led to the introduction of numerous corruptions and abuses; while voluntarism created cordiality between the minister and the congregation and made non-residence an impossibility.⁹² The evangelical Friends combined these criticisms of the practical effects of maintaining an established church with theological objections to the principle of a state church. Dymond believed the origin of the established Church was in the Church of Rome.⁹³

Gurney's own grave doubts about the established Church were also made apparent when he discussed this matter with Chalmers, with the former claiming that "...I told Dr Chalmers that this was the only subject that I know of in which I did not "sympathize with him"." Like other Quaker evangelicals Gurney had both practical and theological objections to the established church. He argued that God should be trusted to create the institution of His own choosing to maintain and diffuse His own cause.⁹⁴ Furthermore Gurney opposed the practice of establishing a state church as he believed that this institution was ineffective; when Chalmers compared the established church to pipes to convey water, Gurney riposted by arguing that this machinery had a tendency to impede the flow of water, which would be more effective if left to follow its own course.⁹⁵ As a result of his opposition to the establishment of a state church, Gurney expressed doubts about the established Church of Scotland. In his 1818 journal he argued that the payment of wages to clergy of the Church of Scotland was a sinecure and "It does not appear that the general character of the Scottish clergy, is one of the greater zeal than that of the English clergy".⁹⁶ Conversely, in 1845, he declared that he was impressed by the Scottish Free Church system which he described as "...an unanswerable evidence of the power of the voluntary principle when ably worked".⁹⁷ Gurney's tour of America also reinforced his respect for voluntaryism. At one point in his tour he declared that "...the system of perfect equality among the different sects, is here working well, - to the comfort and advantage of all parties".⁹⁸ He also observed that a larger proportion of the population attended places of worship in America than was the case in Britain.⁹⁹ Gurney's support

for disestablishment of the state church was, however, tempered by his own close association with members of the Church of England. Despite his clear doubts about the propriety of an established church, Gurney never publicly acted upon these beliefs. He does not seem to have become involved in the Anti-State Church Society and on one occasion declared his opposition to "...the fall of any of our religious institutions by the rude hand of anarchy and infidelity".¹⁰⁰ Gurney died before the voluntarist movement began to make a significant impact. Whether Gurney would have joined this movement if he had lived longer is open to question. It is, however, safe to assume that given his emphasis on ecumenism and his close association with Anglicans he would not have participated in the voluntarist movement without much deliberation and soul searching.

Gurney's interest in contemporary political issues and the role which he played in politics clearly indicate that some Friends were gradually moving away from the Society's traditional antipathy to involvement in politics. This revision of attitudes towards politics among some Quakers sharply contrasts with the beliefs of the Quietists, who maintained Friends' traditional opposition to participation in politics. For example, in 1820 Thomas Shillitoe had advised Friends to avoid political publications and newspapers.¹⁰¹ By contrast the growing interest of evangelical Friends in politics indicates a growing willingness to take an active role in the affairs of the wider community, something which was more typical of a denominational than a sectarian organisation. As importantly participation in politics brought evangelical Friends into closer

association with non-Quakers and thereby further reduced the Society's exclusiveness. The growing involvement of Gurney and other Friends in politics is therefore indicative of and contributed to the breakdown of Friends' exclusiveness and the transition from sect to denomination.

As well as challenging Quakerisms' traditional attitude to politics, the evangelical Friends were also to substantially modify the Society's attitude to business and wealth, as will be shown in the next chapter.

11. GURNEY AND BUSINESS

Many of the individuals who contributed to the rise of evangelicalism within the Society of Friends were also successful businessmen. Indeed all the major evangelical Quaker leaders of Gurney's generation were entrepreneurs; both among the Gurneyites, for example Sturge and Tuke, and among the Beaconites, such as Crewdson. This connection between success in business and a concern for reform of the Society of Friends recurs throughout the history of Quakerism: Arthur Raistrick argues that many of the great ministers and devout spiritual leaders of the Society of Friends were also great industrialists,¹ even during the eighteenth century, when many of the reformers were also wealthy businessmen.² The relationship between the Society of Friends and its businessmen is, however, far from simple. While certain traits within the church life of the Society of Friends encouraged its members to achieve business success, other features of the Society's system of discipline and theology constrained Friends' involvement in commerce and as a result many of the most talented businessmen were eventually to leave the Society of Friends. Those Quaker businessmen who remained loyal to the Society of Friends, like Gurney, found themselves in a constant struggle to reconcile the requirements of their faith with the realities of commercial life. This conflict between faith and business life was made all the more difficult for Gurney and his contemporaries because, in addition to inheriting Quaker preconceptions about commerce, they were also influenced by the wider Nonconformist and evangelical attitudes to commerce. Like Friends, many members of both other Nonconformist bodies and the evangelical party within the Church of

England achieved success in business. Although E D Bebb argues that the economic importance of the Nonconformists declined considerably during the eighteenth century he also notes that many of the great entrepreneurs of the early industrial revolution were Methodists.³ Similarly many of Gurney's contemporaries among evangelical Anglicans were also successful businessmen, especially those who like him were bankers. Bradley argues that among those evangelical Anglicans who entered commerce, the most popular career was that of banker and those who entered this profession appeared to have been universally successful.⁴ Moreover many of the leaders of the evangelical movement were bankers, with the most obvious example being Henry Drummond. As importantly, evangelicalism was to bring a new perspective to commerce: "evangelical economics". Although Boyd Hilton limits his study of this school of thought to its impact on members of the established Churches,⁵ Gurney's attitude to commerce would clearly have been influenced by this doctrine given his close friendship with its chief propagator, Thomas Chalmers. As a partner in one of the leading banking concerns of the age, Joseph John Gurney was to reflect contemporary Friends' attitude to business. Through his responses to the family business and wider contemporary economic questions Gurney clearly demonstrates the manner in which the commercial activity of the evangelical Friends was influenced by their faith.

The relationship between commerce and faith among Quakers is of importance as many Friends achieved great commercial success. This, in part can be attributed to their religious beliefs. As Isichei shows, disproportionately large numbers of Friends were involved in business,⁶ a judgement compounded by Kirby who states that the Society of Friends was

over represented in the ranks of Britain's most successful businessmen.⁷ Indeed Gurney himself was to note Friends' success in business during his ministerial tours. For example, during his 1829 ministerial tour to Warwickshire, Gurney observed that Friends in that part of the country were generally doing well in business⁸ and in 1837 he noted that Quakers in Ireland were very successful in commerce.⁹ This commercial achievement among Friends was in part the result of elements within the church life and discipline of the Society of Friends. It is true that there was a natural bias towards commerce among members of the first generation of Friends, as a disproportionately large percentage of them were drawn from the craftsman and professional classes.¹⁰ Furthermore many of the early Friends were also highly educated and, as the normal channels of intellectual achievement were closed to them, they devoted their educational and intellectual resources to the tasks of their daily work.¹¹ Despite this, Friends might not have made such a significant contribution to commerce were it not for trends within the Society of Friends, which reinforced this bias towards a business career. Both the major historians of the Quaker involvement in industry, Arthur Raistrick and Paul H Emden, argue that the life style required of members of the Society of Friends encouraged traits which were essential to the successful businessman. The Quaker commitment to simplicity and frugality, Raistrick argued, produced a character which was ideally suited to the development of technical industry, where the proprietor might initially have to experience prolonged periods of experiment with very little financial return. Similarly the Quaker opposition to "worldly amusement" would encourage Friends to occupy all their time with serious activities such as business.¹² The system of education which Friends developed further encouraged Quaker success in

business; with its emphasis on practical subjects, it produced a pool of labour which, unlike the general workforce, was literate and had developed habits of thought and study, giving the Quaker entrepreneur a great advantage over his rivals.¹³ The care taken in the apprenticing of members and the Church's discipline over commercial activity also contributed to Friends' success in commerce. Great care was taken in selecting the right trades and the right masters for apprentices, which produced numbers of well trained Friends who later entered business on their own account.¹⁴ Moreover, due to the Society of Friends' emphasis on corporate responsibility for solvency and commercial integrity, which will be discussed later, the Quaker businessman's ventures were carefully thought out as they had to survive the scrutiny of his co-religionists.¹⁵

Although these factors were undoubtedly important in establishing Friends' business success, perhaps the single most important factor which led to Friends' commercial achievement was the close links which existed between Quaker families. As Quakers had to marry their co-religionists, Friends' businesses were joined together through a network of closely interrelated families.¹⁶ Due to these alliances of Quaker families in business, family and commercial interests became identical¹⁷ and through these interrelated Friends' businesses the Quaker entrepreneur could call upon a chain of credit to support his business.¹⁸ Even beyond these familial ties, Friends could count upon their co-religionists to support their commercial endeavours. This is shown by the example of the evangelical Friends, as many of them worked together or advised each other on their choices of career. Allen began his career as a clerk to J G Bevan.¹⁹ Allen later guided Thomas Hodgkin towards an initial career in chemistry²⁰ and

employed him as a private secretary.²¹ Joseph John Gurney himself persuaded Thomas Hodgkin to leave chemistry in favour of a career in medicine and also persuaded his brother John to enter law.²² Thomas Hodgkin was later to become physician to the Tuke family.²³ Another example of these business links between evangelical Friends can be found in a letter from Gurney to John Hodgkin written in 1819, where the former pressured the latter to take on a boy who had expressed a wish to be placed with a Friend as an apprentice in his business.²⁴

Quaker success in business was also the result of a wider Nonconformist ethos which shaped their participation in commerce. Perhaps the most significant contribution of Protestantism to the growth of a commercial ethic was its acceptance that engagement in business could be a religious calling, a means of honouring God.²⁵ Friends shared this ideology that business was not merely a means of making money, but also a religious calling.²⁶ Quakerism and Nonconformity in general also encouraged commercial acumen by their insistence that economic activity was a stewardship and therefore ultimately accountable before God. The doctrine of personal responsibility towards God for the right use of possessions required the right use of time as well as money and thereby encouraged the businessman to avoid idleness and to use time that was not occupied in current business ventures, to search for new ways to improve business methods. Care in the choice of occupation was also considered to be a serious religious duty, as the right use of talents could glorify God²⁷ and business was regarded as a serious enterprise which could only be undertaken by those who had a vocation for it.²⁸ This emphasis placed on personal responsibility naturally encouraged the virtues of thrift,

industry, prudence, foresight, and energy, all of which were essential to business success.²⁹

Many of these factors which contributed to Friends' success in business are apparent in the rise of the Gurneys' bank, as the development of the family business is typical of Friends' involvement in commerce, although few of their co-religionists were to achieve quite such remarkable success in commerce as the Gurneys. The Gurney family initially entered commerce in the Norfolk woollen industry and five generations of Gurneys were involved in the spinning and weaving trades.³⁰ The family achieved great success in this profession. For example, The Norfolk Chronicle obituary to Joseph John Gurney, notes his father's contribution to the prosperity of Norwich through importing yarn from Cork.³¹ This involvement in the wool trade also laid the foundations for the family's later commercial success. Some of the Friends involved in the wool trade started loaning money to customers and producers and as a result drifted into banking.³² The Gurneys followed this trend and turned to banking to support existing industries and to employ their capital in a more effective manner than by investment in the declining West Country woollen industry.³³ By 1775 the banking elements of their business had become more important than their commercial activities in the woollen trade and John and Henry Gurney therefore established a regular bank in Norwich.³⁴ During the later eighteenth century, Gurney's bank was to become an important economic force in Norfolk. The business rapidly expanded and absorbed other local banks, usually those which had been established by other Friends.³⁵ The wealth and importance of the bank to the surrounding community, even at this early date, is obvious. During the eighteenth century the bank was a

centre of stability in Norwich during times of economic depression, keeping smaller concerns solvent and providing relief for the unemployed³⁶ and Hennell suggests that Joseph John Gurney's father was in fact the richest man in Norwich.³⁷ By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Gurneys were one of the major banking families in the country.³⁸

The partners in the Gurneys' bank were to build upon this success, with the power and wealth of the firm increasing throughout Joseph John Gurney's lifetime. While there were several reasons for this continued success, its principal cause was the commercial ability of Joseph John's brother Samuel. Samuel made a vital contribution to the bank's continued success and his highly successful career as a banker provides an example of the way in which the Quaker emphasis on careful selection of apprenticeships could develop competent businessmen. While Joseph John received an education at Oxford typical of an Anglican gentleman, Samuel, at the age of fourteen, was placed in an apprenticeship with the banker and tea trader Joseph Fry, which was followed by an apprenticeship with a member of the Clothworkers company. Through these apprenticeships Samuel gained an excellent business training and an interest in commerce, which he regarded as the source of his later commercial success.³⁹ Following this training, Samuel achieved great success in his chosen field of work; by his death his personal estate was valued at £800,000 and he administered ten times that sum.⁴⁰ His expertise in finance was also widely recognised by his contemporaries, and even Gladstone while he was head of the Treasury was to ask for Samuel's advice.⁴¹ Samuel's ability as a banker is significant as other partners in the bank, including Joseph John, did not share this undivided enthusiasm for business. Without

Samuel's keen attention the success of the bank might not have continued; in addition to his commercial acumen, he provided a vital link between the Norwich bank and the financial community in London. Although Samuel was a partner in the Norwich bank for forty years, his chief commercial interest was the bill-brokers' company of Overend, Gurney & Co in the City of London.⁴² Swift argues that this connection through Samuel to the London discounting house was vital to the success of the Gurneys' banking business.⁴³ County bank's needed the support of London discounting houses, as the latter could supply much needed funds for the regions to forestall bankruptcies during commercial depressions.⁴⁴ For example, as early as 1795 the Norwich bank had to call on London for £75,000 to offset the drain on funds caused by commercial distress.⁴⁵ With Samuel's entry into the bill broking business in 1807 the links between the Norwich bank and London were firmly established.⁴⁶ Under the supervision of the Gurneys, the bill broking company of Gurney, Overend & Co was to become the most important discounting house in the country. Furthermore Samuel encouraged private bankers to place their funds on deposit with the company and this policy was so successful that the company became known as the "bankers' bank".⁴⁷ As well as being able to call on funds from London, Gurney's bank was also able to deploy its investments throughout the country and in Ireland, due to the links between Quaker family businesses.⁴⁸ Given the Quaker reputation for success in business, these investments were likely to bear fruit. Among the commercial ventures which they contributed to, the Gurneys worked alongside other Quaker businessmen in the establishment of Middlesbrough.⁴⁹ These advantages assured the the bank's continued success. In 1808 the banks liabilities had been valued at about £1,000,000.⁵⁰ By 1825 the bank had over £3,000,000 at hand.⁵¹ In 1830

the firm had 21 branches and was one of the most important banks in East Anglia.⁵² Although the London discounting house failed in 1866, the Norwich bank continued to prosper until 1896, when it amalgamated with other Quaker banks to form the modern Barclays Bank.⁵³ This tremendous and continuing business success was the immediate context in which Joseph John Gurney developed his ideas on business and their relation to his religious beliefs. It is clear that as a partner in the family banking concern, Gurney was involved in one of the most important commercial ventures of the period and as such his attitudes to business are extremely significant.

Given the success of the firm, it is ironic that Gurney most obviously reflects contemporary evangelical Quaker attitudes to business by his feeling of unease at involvement in commerce and his growing antagonism towards participation in banking. This was the result of contemporary Nonconformist and evangelical attitudes to involvement in business. Notwithstanding the acceptance and encouragement which the businessman received from Nonconformist denominations, the position in Church circles of those involved in commercial activity was ambiguous. R H Campbell argued that the Christian community failed to assure the businessman of his value, stressing instead restrictions on his activity. Campbell further suggests that there was an innate bias in the Churches against commercial activities as opposed to certain professional occupations, which were seen as superior fields for Christian witness. This negative attitude to the Christian businessman fostered two responses. First, it led to a tendency to regard religious and commercial life as two separate spheres. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the Christian businessman's commercial

achievements were marginalised. As a result both the businessman and others concentrated on his activities which were not immediately connected with his profession.⁵⁴ This was certainly the case among Friends during Gurney's period. Despite the considerable business success of some of the evangelical Quakers, the testimonies, biographies, and collections of letters of these Friends pay scant attention to their commercial activities. One example of this is the biography of George Richardson, where his actual profession is clearly indicated only in a obituary from a non-Quaker source, which is included as an appendix.⁵⁵ Similarly Samuel Gurney's biographer deliberately omitted the details of his commercial career, stressing instead his philanthropic activities.⁵⁶ This disregard of the evangelical Quakers' professions was more than a mere biographers' foible. The evangelical Quakers themselves seem to have held their commercial activities in comparatively low esteem. For example, in 1820 William Allen was to list his business activity as only one of his duties alongside his various philanthropic concerns⁵⁷ and Stephen Grellet seems to have engaged in business only to meet the costs of itinerant preaching tours.⁵⁸ As a result of this marginalisation of their business activities, evangelical Quakers rarely mentioned business and the few references they made to commercial activity were generally negative. For example, Richardson criticised Quaker employers who refused to allow their servants and dependants to attend meetings for worship on week days⁵⁹ and Jonathan Hutchinson wrote to Joseph John Gurney warning that fasts should include abstinence from business as well as from food.⁶⁰ This negative attitude to business in part resulted from a belief that involvement in business was morally dangerous and biographical accounts of Friends involved in business therefore expressed relief when they emerged morally unscathed

from their commercial ventures. For example, Samuel Gurney's biography noted that despite his deep interest in banking, little of the taint of business adhered to him.⁶¹ Similarly the testimony of Joseph John noted that, although being brought to close association with business at an early age, "...his mind still appears to have been religiously disposed...".⁶²

These negative attitudes to business, which reflect the limited value given to commerce by the Churches, were to be reinforced by the contemporary Nonconformist attitude which seems to have regarded the businessman as a potential sinner in need of discipline rather than as an individual in need of pastoral care. Nonconformists, especially Quakers, required extremely high ethical standards from their businessmen. As a result most Friends withdrew from trades connected with clothing or furniture due to the Society's emphasis on simplicity and avoided any form of commerce connected with warfare or slavery.⁶³ Although Raistrick argues that these restrictions on commercial activity forced Friends to find a new and unexploited market for domestic goods, which was free of ethical dilemmas,⁶⁴ many individual Friends were to find their business activities severely restricted by the high ethical standards demanded of them. For example, William Alexander refused to become a partner in a banking concern which had made loans to the government that might be used for military purposes,⁶⁵ and William Tuke found it was impossible to succeed in the tea trade, due to Friends' testimony against dishonest dealing.⁶⁶ The influence of evangelical economics also encouraged this negative attitude to commerce, as the advocates of this school were to take a more negative view of participation in business than the promoters of the Nonconformist business ethos. Indeed the advocates of evangelical

economics expressed great anxiety at the potential spiritual dangers of economic growth⁶⁷ and claimed that business success and profits were morally and spiritually dangerous.⁶⁸

Marginalisation of the achievements of Friends involved in commerce, combined with the ambiguous attitude towards those involved in commerce and the very high standards of commercial ethics required of businessmen, resulted in one of the most significant features of Quaker business activity during this period: the growing alienation and ultimate separation of many of its leading entrepreneurs from the Society of Friends. By the beginning of the nineteenth century successful Quaker businessmen were starting to leave the Society of Friends in significant numbers. Raistrick argues that many of the Friends involved in commerce were either to retain only nominal membership of the Society of Friends or leave altogether to join the Church of England.⁶⁹ In addition to this general drift into Anglicanism, some Quaker businessmen were to join other Nonconformist bodies, which they believed more clearly expressed their beliefs than Victorian Quakerism.⁷⁰

Gurney, unlike some contemporary Quaker businessmen, did not abandon his membership of the Society of Friends. He did, in fact, become increasingly dissatisfied with his role as a businessman and eventually attempted to separate himself from the family firm. This alienation from business was a gradual process, as Gurney had initially been eager to become involved in the family company. Even while he was still at Oxford, Gurney showed great interest in commerce and declared that his mind was set upon cutting a figure in business.⁷¹ Moreover, after returning home from Oxford,

Gurney threw himself wholeheartedly into the family business and rapidly gained status within the company. In his journal for 1807 he noted how he had increased in importance within the family banking concern and in 1810 he stated that he was "...no longer a nonentity in business...".⁷² One reason for this satisfaction with his work at the bank during his early life was his ability to reconcile his commercial and religious lives and to satisfy himself that banking was a "calling". In 1815 Gurney wrote to his uncle Joseph explaining that his work with the bank was his vocation, if he had one.⁷³ In 1821 Gurney once again asserted his satisfaction with his career as a banker:

"I suppose my leading outward object in life may be said to be the Bank - It sometimes startles me to find my leading object of such a nature, and now and then I doubt whether it is quite consistent with my religious pursuits and duties - I remember however that it was the allotment of providence: That I was introduced into the business in obedience to my father in early life and that my religious pursuits have found me in this situation, and that hitherto the two things have not proved incompatible".⁷⁴

Even in 1826 Gurney believed that he was in the right place.⁷⁵ As well as being able to reconcile his faith, at least initially, with his career as a banker, Gurney was able to use his business knowledge and the prestige which association with the family bank brought to further his philanthropic and evangelistic concerns. In 1842 he wrote to Elizabeth Fry explaining how he intended the hall for sailors in Cromer to be funded and his proposals for financing the enterprise show some ingenuity.⁷⁶ He also assisted in the financial management of the Norwich Friends' Meeting House.⁷⁷ As importantly, during his itinerant preaching tours Gurney was to take advantage of the prestige that his involvement in banking gave him to visit leading financiers

and he was received by the President and Directors of the Bank of the United States⁷⁸ and the Dutch Minister of Finance.⁷⁹

Gurney's satisfaction with his career as a banker was not to continue, as he was increasingly to find that his work with the family company deprived him of opportunities to pursue his other interests and in particular his itinerant ministry, which was becoming the central concern of his life. This became apparent as early as 1815 when he wrote to Elizabeth Fry, apologising that he could not assist her in her itinerant mission as the business at the bank required his daily attention.⁸⁰ As Swift notes, in 1825 Gurney had to discontinue his ministerial tour and return to Norwich to deal with work caused by the financial crisis.⁸¹ Similarly in 1830, Gurney noted that he could not participate in an itinerant tour, due to the pressures of business.⁸² Gurney also found that his business commitments interfered with other of his interests, including his studies and writing. In 1809 he noted that he had to give most of his time to the work of the bank rather than his studies and "This has been a material disadvantage".⁸³ In 1815 he claimed that his writing of a work on the Lord's deity was disrupted by his work for the bank⁸⁴ and during the next year he wrote to Elizabeth Fry explaining that his work at the bank interfered with his literary pursuits, which were increasingly important to him.⁸⁵ Another interest which was to divert Gurney's attention from the family business was his growing involvement in philanthropy. This can be seen in Gurney's journal where he increasingly tended to list his work at the bank as one concern alongside all his other philanthropic and literary interests. While Gurney stated in 1811 that banking was

his chief interest,⁸⁶ in 1814 he listed his work at the bank as only one concern, alongside his involvement in educational charities and the Bible Society.⁸⁷ In 1824 he listed his work in the business alongside his literary concerns and attending meetings.⁸⁸ Similarly in 1825, he was to list banking alongside his concerns such as having his book printed and the anti-slavery cause.⁸⁹ Gurney is therefore typical of Quaker evangelicals in that he increasingly wished to emphasise his philanthropic activities at the expense of his commercial career. It is even possible that his interests in itinerancy, literature, and philanthropy might have led Gurney to completely abandon his career in banking to devote more time to them. Indeed this course was taken by his uncle Hudson Gurney, who resigned his partnership with Gurney's bank due to his dislike of banking, and concentrated instead on his literary and philanthropic activities.⁹⁰

As well as being distracted from his work at the bank by his itinerancy and his other pursuits, Gurney adopted the evangelicals' anxieties about the spiritual dangers of commerce and banking. Indeed immediately after his conversion to plain Quakerism and evangelicalism, Gurney became alarmed that his participation in business encouraged a love of money. In 1814 he wrote that he was aware of "A money getting spirit arising from Bank Settlements"⁹¹ and in the next year feared that "...the true spirit of Mammon was much my master...".⁹² While writing to Jonathan Hutchinson in 1830, Gurney stated that, while he was still glad to be a banker, he was glad that Hutchinson lived near to their "house of money changing" and could

remind Gurney that there were better things than gold or silver.⁹³ Due to these fears about the spiritual dangers of banking, Gurney increasingly marginalised and isolated his commercial occupations from the rest of his life. As a result in 1815 he noted that he wished for "...a more complete abstractness from business, at all times, when I am not actually engaged in it".⁹⁴ Gurney's separation of his business and spiritual lives is also reflected in his printed writings. In his Terms of Union, (1832) he suggested that the life of a Christian was like a pyramid, with the highest level being the time spent in private devotion to God. By contrast, the lowest level of this pyramid was the common business of the day.⁹⁵ Although Gurney clearly did not deliberately mean to denigrate commercial work through this analogy (his purpose was to show that association with Unitarians was acceptable in some areas of life and not others), he does imply that he believed that business was the element of his life which was furthest from worship of God. Elsewhere, in his Chalmeriana; or Colloquies with Dr. Chalmers, (1853), Gurney also seems to suggest a possible clash between faith and commerce, as he felt that he had to remark that Chalmers' economic studies did not prevent him from being a most effective religious pastor.⁹⁶ Gurney combined these religious anxieties over his career in banking with a simple dislike of the profession. Although he had wholeheartedly entered into the bank's work, his interest in it soon waned. As early as 1808 he recorded "I am too subject at the Bank to a state of mental inactivity, produced perhaps from the dullness of the occupation, which prevents my enquiring into all things which I don't understand"⁹⁷ and in 1818 he noted "Bank troublesome this week".⁹⁸ Furthermore, in 1823 Gurney

recorded "During the last week I have passed through a measure of real suffering, partly thro' the cares of business, as connected with the awful & very threatening state of public affairs...".⁹⁹

Given this dislike of his work in the bank, which rested both on the prevailing evangelical attitude to commerce and Gurney's own preference for other fields of service, he was gradually to separate himself from banking and even wished to leave the business completely. In 1824 Joseph John suggested that Samuel might sever his connection with the London discounting house. Although this would lead to a somewhat reduced income, Joseph John claimed that this would not unduly affect Samuel and that he might be able to make as useful a contribution to the Society of Friends and philanthropic causes while living outside London as he could as a resident of that city. Joseph John added that he was considering quitting the business,¹⁰⁰ something which would be easier if Samuel Gurney was available to participate in the management of the Norwich bank. Gurney's desire to separate himself from the bank became stronger in later years. In 1830 he recorded his wish to leave the bank.¹⁰¹ Moreover, in 1843 he wrote to Samuel, asking that future business arrangements could be made to leave him entirely free from the cares of the world.¹⁰² This letter would appear to have had no effect, as Joseph John Gurney continued to work in the business. Swift argues that Gurney continued to feel uneasy with his role as a banker for the rest of his life.¹⁰³ It should, however, also be noted that Gurney seems to have ultimately reconciled himself to his career as a banker and during the last years of his life the impressions he records of banking are in general quite

positive. Even during his American mission he took an interest in developments at the bank.¹⁰⁴ During 1841 he noted that banking was "agreeable"¹⁰⁵ and in 1846 he recorded "The bank vigorously attended to...".¹⁰⁶ Gurney's attitude to his work as a banker, at first zealously throwing himself into it, then wishing to dissociate himself from it, and finally accepting it, clearly indicates the conflict which he and his fellow evangelical Friends experienced over their role in commerce and the ambiguous position in which Quakerism placed its businessmen.

In addition to typifying the moral dilemmas which the Quaker businessman faced, Gurney's involvement in finance is also of interest as his attitude to the work of the family business and commerce in general are extremely informative about evangelical Friends' response to contemporary economic issues. One of the most interesting examples of this was his approval of the manner in which Gurney's bank abandoned some of the traditional Quaker restraints on business activity and adopted practices, with the full consent of Joseph John Gurney, which an earlier generation of Quakers and Nonconformists would have found reprehensible. This change in policy is made all the more apparent, as one of the older and more traditional partners, Hudson Gurney, adamantly and vocally opposed these innovations. One particular area of innovation which was to bring the Gurney's bank into conflict with the traditional Nonconformist business ethos was their involvement in bill broking. Wesley had condemned this trade, arguing that any who entered it were bound to be ruined.¹⁰⁷ Bill broking was indeed extremely risky, as the failure of even one client

might place the bill broker in serious difficulty.¹⁰⁸ As a result Hudson Gurney opposed the strong links between the Norwich bank and London bill brokers.¹⁰⁹ Conversely, Bidwell argues, Joseph John Gurney appeared to have no objection to the family's involvement in the discounting of bills.¹¹⁰ This involvement in bill broking was indicative of a deeper change within the bank and an increasing emphasis on high risk commercial ventures and speculation. Earlier generations of Friends had been discouraged from involvement in high risk business activities as these were considered to endanger the tranquillity of the mind and risked injury to creditors.¹¹¹ This opposition to speculation was part of a wider Nonconformist ethos. For example, while John Wesley recognised that business had to accumulate capital to continue to operate, he opposed speculation.¹¹² Gurney himself expressed some reservations over speculative and over-risky commercial enterprises and condemned such ventures when he encountered them during his American tour. He noted that the "course of speculation and gambling" on the cotton market in 1836/7 had led to considerable commercial depression in New York. Gurney concluded from this that

"... the Americans, and especially the eager citizens of New York, are prone, in the pursuit of gain, to "go ahead" at far too swift a pace; and thus they are liable to the most appalling disappointments; but give a little time, infuse a little patience, instil a little more of the sober and prudential qualities - and there is no doubt that the energy of their native character, together with the inexhaustible resources of their country, will bring them into a state of prosperity..."¹¹³

Gurney was also alarmed by the speculation on land values, which he believed was prevalent in America. He noted that there had been

"extravagant speculations" on land in Buffalo and "...many have been ruined by these speculations...".¹¹⁴ Similarly he argued that the speculation on land at Long Island had led to enormous prices and, although the bubble had burst, the land still had an unnatural, "super English" value.¹¹⁵

Despite his own reservations and the Quaker and Nonconformist antipathy to speculation, Gurney's bank seems to have increasingly moved into higher risk investments. Even in 1820 Joseph John wrote to Joseph Gurney, noting that, while the profit accrued from the interest account was satisfactory, he hoped that in future the same profit could be made with a lesser element of risk,¹¹⁶ suggesting that even at this date the bank was involved in some high risk ventures. One example of this increasing emphasis on high risk practices was the bank's increasing emphasis on longer term (and therefore riskier) loans in the deployment of their funds. This policy stood in sharp contrast to the bank's previous practice. Even in 1818 Samuel Gurney told a Parliamentary committee that the bank placed few of its funds in mortgages or loans, as these were impossible to call upon in an emergency, and in the next year Hudson Gurney declared that Gurney's bank opposed giving out its money in long-term mortgages. But this policy was not to last. By 1825 10% of the bank's funds were being used as loans and in 1836 one of the partners declared that, while they disliked lending money as mortgages, they nevertheless did make use of this form of investment. Although Pressnell argues that the earlier opposition to lending was the result of strict banking policy during the post-war period,¹¹⁷ it is also possible that this early

aversion to lending was a product of traditional Quaker antipathy to risky business ventures. Joseph John Gurney seems to have had no doubts about the increasingly speculative business practices of the bank. When a railway company the bank supported ran into debt, he suggested that the best way for the company to save itself (and to repay the Gurneys) was to create a new share issue, a percentage of which the Gurneys would buy.¹¹⁸ Such a policy, with the potential danger of misleading other investors as to the security of the firm and condoning the railway company's over-reaching of its resources, would have been condemned by previous generations of Friends. This change in business practice shows how some of Quakerism's traditional business ethics were coming into question, something which is indicative of wider changes within the Society of Friends.

While the Gurneys eschewed traditional Quaker opposition to speculation, their commercial activity was still deeply influenced by their religious beliefs. This is most clearly expressed by Samuel Gurney's reaction when he discovered that one of the bank clerks had committed a forgery, an offence punishable by death. Due to the evangelical Friends' opposition to capital punishment, he did not prosecute the offender. Instead Samuel Gurney allowed the clerk to escape to the continent, although he risked facing criminal proceedings himself as a result.¹¹⁹ Joseph John entirely approved of his brother's actions and condemned the "absurd prosecution" threatened against Samuel.¹²⁰ In another example of criminal misconduct by their staff against the firm, Joseph John Gurney noted in his 1818 journal that a robbery of a large and very unpleasant

nature had been committed at the bank.¹²¹ While writing to Jonathan Hutchinson on this matter, he noted that the clerk who had defrauded them had also "confused" the bank's records with many false entries. Despite this, Gurney's account of the crime seems as concerned with the condition of the thief, who seemed likely to be transported, as with the damage done to the bank.¹²² His anxiety over the plight of the clerk is an indication that humanitarian concerns were more important to him than commercial considerations.

Gurney's involvement in the work of the bank is also of interest as he clearly expresses the manner in which contemporary evangelicals assigned spiritual significance to economic events, particularly commercial failures. His response to this facet of economic life is of especial interest as the Gurney's bank was rightly famous for its role in saving many businessmen from financial ruin during the 1825/6 crash, when Gurney's bank lent large amounts to other banks¹²³ and the Norwich bank issued £1 notes to reduce the damage done by the run on £5 notes.¹²⁴ Indeed Samuel Gurney's biographer claims that his sound judgement during this crisis saved many from ruin and helped to ensure the safety of a large proportion of the banking and commercial world.¹²⁵ Joseph John Gurney himself was heavily involved in the bank's response to the crash and in 1826 he spent much time in London due to the crisis.¹²⁶ Significantly Gurney had been preoccupied with the dangers of commercial failure for several years before the actual crash. As early as 1822 he noted in his journal that the future as it related to business appeared "...somewhat gloomy and lowering..." and that there was a "...general depreciation in the value of

property".¹²⁷ Gurney was also to be kept in touch with developments in the economy by members of his family in other parts of the country. Even before October 1825 Elizabeth Fry had written to him describing the collapse of the banks in Devon, an event which weighed heavily with Joseph John.¹²⁸ In November 1825, he received a letter from Samuel, reporting the great distress in the City due to the shortage of money.¹²⁹ Gurney's involvement in the crash may have contributed to his dislike of business as he found this financial crisis a source of great anxiety. In February 1826 that he referred to the "almost overwhelming solitudes of business"¹³⁰ and in July 1826 he noted the "...general stagnant & almost calamitous state of business...".¹³¹ Gurney's anxiety over commercial failure was in part the result of the evangelicals' emphasis on the perceived spiritual implications of business disasters. As has been noted, the evangelicals believed that suffering, even national disasters, served to bring individuals to God. The evangelicals therefore regarded failure in business as a divine intervention in the affairs of the world, although there was a clear divergence of opinion among them as to the actual spiritual significance of commercial crashes. The moderate evangelicals regarded commercial crises as reminders to successful businessmen of God's government and to show them that their wealth was not secure.¹³² By contrast, the extreme evangelicals regarded the crash of 1825 as God's wrath upon a wicked nation.¹³³ Gurney's observations on this crisis combined these two strands of evangelical thought: first, that commercial disaster was an ultimately benevolent discipline designed to lead the sinner back to God and, second, that it was sent as a punishment for national sins. In January 1826 he wrote from London to

Jonathan Hutchinson, arguing that he had never seen anything like that crisis. Through it, he argued, many people were being duly disciplined and he said it was the judgement of God on people who had made themselves idols of gold and silver.¹³⁴

Gurney's attitude to business failure was obviously interconnected with his views on the question of bankruptcy and insolvency. Traditionally Friends had regarded bankruptcy as an extremely serious offence. Isichei suggests Friends were disowned for bankruptcy as such individuals would cast a shadow on the Society's reputation for honesty and integrity. Moreover Friends traditionally regarded bankruptcy as a form of dishonesty.¹³⁵ By contrast, the proponents of evangelical economics placed less emphasis on the innate sinfulness of bankruptcy, perhaps because they stressed that insolvency was a discipline from God, prompting the businessman's mind to rise above commerce.¹³⁶ Similarly they believed that through the businessman being broken he could be brought to a state of grace.¹³⁷ On a more practical level, this comparatively benign attitude to insolvency led to one member of the Clapham Sect assisting in the establishment of the Society for the Relief of Persons Imprisoned for Small Debts.¹³⁸ Evangelical Friends were also to be influenced by this more benign attitude to the debtor, as can be seen in Samuel Tuke's establishment of the Friends Provident Society, which acted as a commercial safety net, after he had witnessed the business failure of many Yorkshire Quakers.¹³⁹ Gurney, like earlier Quakers, seems to have been much more anxious about potential bankruptcy than most contemporary evangelicals, and in several cases laboured to prevent bankruptcy.

For example, in 1815 Gurney wrote to an unnamed Friend who had allowed his expenditure to outstrip his income and had therefore incurred a small debt. Gurney rebuked him and warned him to reduce his expenditure while he could, before the debt grew, suggesting that a little pain in the present would save a great deal of pain later.¹⁴⁰ As well as advice, Gurney was to offer practical assistance to potential bankrupts. As a result in 1820 he united with other Friends, including Hudson Gurney, in raising a private subscription to help a Friend's family that had run into financial difficulties.¹⁴¹

Gurney's attitude to bankruptcy was, however, to be most significantly tested by the business failure of his brother in law and its resulting impact on Elizabeth Fry. The Fry business had never been sound. Even in 1819 Gurney noted that the business had been pursued beyond expectation. When William Fry had gone bankrupt in 1812, the Gurneys had intervened to help.¹⁴² As with other potential bankrupts, Gurney was to advise his sister against over-expenditure. For example, in 1818 he advised her to have her children educated by a Friend, partly on the grounds that this would be cheaper than an education with a non-Quaker.¹⁴³ Gurney's warnings were to no avail. The Fry business suffered in the 1825-6 financial crisis and eventually failed in 1828.¹⁴⁴ Gurney's reaction was that of sad resignation, believing that the collapse of this business was "...the sad issue of nearly twenty years care and trouble".¹⁴⁵ Although this failure was perhaps inevitable, the Gurney family intervened to help the Frys' business and and in 1829 Joseph John was summoned to London to assist Samuel in the settlement of the Frys' affairs and "other trying concerns".¹⁴⁶

Joseph John Gurney, working in unison with Samuel and his other brother Daniel, finally reached a settlement of the Frys' affairs. Although, as Joseph John noted, the Frys had made serious errors of judgement in their business and some of their investments were of dubious value, the Gurneys were to write off the Frys' debts. The Gurneys also allowed the Frys' business to continue, although all the profits were to be used to repay the Gurneys for the money used to meet the company's debts, until such time as the entire sum was repaid. The settlement also placed personal restrictions on the Fry family, as they were to be paid by fixed monthly allowances. Furthermore the Gurneys dictated the terms on which the Frys would continue their firm's operations, with William Fry being banned from taking any role in the management of the company.¹⁴⁷ While this settlement may seem rather harsh, it should be remembered that, given the Frys' previous business failures, the Gurneys were taking a considerable risk with their capital in supporting the Frys' business. The Frys' bankruptcy was to remain as a major concern for Joseph John Gurney. Even as late as 1831 he placed "The examination & final settlement of the Fry affairs, in relation to the Tea Trade &c." first in the list of his "temporal concerns".¹⁴⁸ More importantly Gurney's reaction to the Frys' plight shows how his attitude to bankruptcy combined elements of Quaker and evangelical beliefs. Significantly Gurney upheld the traditional Quaker discipline even against his in-laws. Disownments naturally followed from the collapse of the Frys' business and Gurney fully accepted that this punishment should be inflicted. He stated that Joseph Fry's disownment was a "painful piece of justice", although he believed that it would eventually be

overturned for good.¹⁴⁹ Alongside this he claimed, like other evangelicals, that bankruptcy could have a spiritual value. Gurney described the bankruptcy was a "dispensation" and argued that through it William Fry would be freed from concerns of the world and instead be allowed to draw near to his saviour.¹⁵⁰ He also claimed that the firm's collapse would "...be productive of good consequences, and substantially lead to the relief and religious advantage of my dear sister's family".¹⁵¹

Gurney's religious beliefs were also to influence his views on economic issues which were not immediately connected with the family business, principally the question of free trade. Gurney clearly supported free trade and had read Wealth of Nations in 1821.¹⁵² Given Gurney's belief in free trade he participated in the campaign against the Corn Law, although not without some initial deliberations. He noted in his journal for 1844 that his mind was excited over whether he should subscribe to the League and believed that

"The principles of free trade are certainly good Christian principles - & if they are promoted, on Christian grounds, & in a right manner, it seems to be a branch of politics in which it may be not only lawful, but right, to take a reasonable share".¹⁵³

Gurney therefore keenly followed and supported the work of the Anti-Corn Law League. In 1845 Gurney wrote to Peel requesting a suspension of all duties on essential foods.¹⁵⁴ When the Corn Law was repealed in 1846, Gurney declared that this would be a blessing on the nation and that all honour should be given to Richard Cobden and his friends in the Anti-Corn Law League.¹⁵⁵

As with so many of his concerns, Gurney's support for free trade was linked with his theology. Gurney makes this clear in a letter he wrote to John Bright, explaining why he opposed the Corn Laws. One reason for Gurney's opposition to the Corn Laws was his belief that they were fundamentally unjust. He criticised the corn laws as they protected one part of the community at the expense of others, and accused the aristocracy of using this law to keep the price of corn above its true and natural level. Any financial arrangement which raised the commodity produced by one class to the injury of another was, Gurney argued, inconsistent with natural equity and therefore with the religion of perfect justice. This letter also, however, makes it clear that Gurney's primary reason for supporting free trade was his belief that it would encourage progress and help to usher in the post millennialistic utopia discussed earlier in this study.¹⁵⁶ Indeed he regarded the removal of barriers to trade as a vital precondition to this new age of peace and prosperity. Gurney argued that an enlightened view of the Christian doctrine of the brotherhood of man would lead to an absolute freedom of trade between the nations. He believed this would, under the blessings of divine providence, undermine all occasions for war. Importantly Gurney did not consign this age of prosperity to some remote future time, but instead believed it was possible in the immediate future. As a result he declared that Britain should set an example in adopting free trade, as the blessing of the Lord would rest upon such a policy, and after a little while the nation would receive the benefits of this course of action. Despite this Gurney was not uncritical in his support of free trade and reiterated his opposition to the change in the sugar duties.

He also warned the League's supporters to conduct their proceedings in a Christian spirit and not as political partisans; another clear example of his lingering opposition to participation in politics.¹⁵⁷

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Gurney's commercial life, and the one which was to bring him most obviously into conflict with traditional Quakers, was his attitude to the wealth he obtained from banking. The Quaker and more general Nonconformist ethos of frugality and plainness naturally led to some Friends' families becoming extremely wealthy, as profits from Nonconformist business, which could not be spent on luxuries, were instead re-invested.¹⁵⁸ This process found its most powerful expression among Friends. As Emden argues, Friends' families became wealthy due to slow, steady business, with capital being accumulated over several generations. For example, the tremendous wealth of Joseph John Gurney and the other partners of the bank was accumulated by six generations who made money steadily without expending large sums.¹⁵⁹ Even during the eighteenth century, some Friends were to become extremely wealthy; for example, Joseph Fothergill had an annual income of about £5,000.¹⁶⁰ During the nineteenth century there were growing numbers of wealthy Quakers, almost all of whom were members of the evangelical party within the Society of Friends. The Gurneys themselves were, of course, numbered among these wealthy Friends: it was noted in Samuel Gurney's obituary that he "partook largely of worldly prosperity".¹⁶¹

Given the Quaker testimonies of simplicity, some of the evangelical Friends were to find themselves spiritually troubled by their new

found wealth; Edward Pease was wracked by guilt at the financial success of his railway ventures. By contrast his son Joseph, who belonged to the same generation as Gurney, showed no such signs of guilt.¹⁶² Similarly, Gurney was able to reconcile himself to his prosperity. Gurney's journal entries frequently refer to his wealth: in 1820 he noted that he enjoyed "much outward prosperity".¹⁶³ During the next year he noted that his annual expenditure was £4,000 and he looked forward to putting aside £2,000 for his family.¹⁶⁴ Gurney was clearly prepared to use this wealth for his own comfort. For example, James Jenkins recorded that Gurney changed places with him on the mail coach after paying the difference for Jenkins' more expensive seat.¹⁶⁵ More importantly Gurney seems to have entirely rejected the Quaker ethos of frugality and simplicity. In 1820 he claimed that "My expenses are large, and I believe that they ought to be".¹⁶⁶ Gurney justified his high level of expenditure by arguing that "Spending money is better and less injurious to the Spirit, than saving it unduly". More importantly he argued "I am living according to the mode of life in which those whom I associated, are accustomed to live",¹⁶⁷ presumably referring to his close friendship with members of the Church of England. This attitude to wealth stands in sharp contrast to traditional Quaker views on this subject. From the middle of the eighteenth century, when wealthy Friends were starting to emerge, London Yearly Meeting issued warnings on this subject. By the end of the eighteenth century these warnings had become calls for more scrupulous care in the methods of acquiring and expending wealth.¹⁶⁸ Moreover the Quietists vehemently opposed the growing wealth of the evangelicals. Shillitoe (in what is clearly an attack on the

evangelicals) criticised Friends who retained the Quaker testimonies of simplicity in dress and language while not applying the same standards to the business, lifestyle, and homes and suggested that a desire to do well in business could be as great a sin in some as love of strong alcohol in others.¹⁶⁹ The commercial life of London, and its effects on Friends in its vicinity, seems to have come in for particular criticism due to the spiritual dangers associated with it. For example, Grubb pictured London as "..the place where many enrich themselves at the expense of much health, and what is worse, of virtue too, and are absorbed in the things that perish".¹⁷⁰

One reason for this antagonism to the increasing wealth of some Friends was a belief that Quakerism's traditional exclusiveness might be compromised by commercial success. Business success brought Friends into close association with wealthy non-Quakers, which accustomed them to a standard of life that was opposed by Quakerism's testimonies of plainness. These Quakers were also to marry into the established county families.¹⁷¹ The Quietists' fears that growing wealth would lead to greater assimilation with the wider community were entirely justified, as can be seen by Gurney's close friendship with Anglicans and his resulting willingness to abandon Quakerism's testimonies of frugality. Similarly Friends' businesses, as can be seen from the example of the Gurneys, were increasingly abandoning some of the prohibitions which were traditionally imposed on Quaker firms. This indicates that Friends' traditional beliefs were losing their influence in a significant areas of Quakers' lives. Simultaneously evangelical Friends, like Gurney, were looking to

evangelical economics for a theological basis for their business activity. The change in business practice of some Friends and the growing wealth which some of them were experiencing therefore once again indicate that the distinctive Quaker lifestyle was breaking down, another factor which was to contribute to the Society's move from sect to denomination.

CONCLUSION

Gurney's last public engagement, attending a meeting of the District Visiting Society, occurred on 21 December 1846.¹ He died, after a short illness, on 4 January 1847 and the public mourning in Norwich which accompanied his funeral reflected many aspects of his life's works. As The Norwich Chronicle reported, thousands watched his funeral procession, which was followed by about fifty carriages and 200 Sunday School teachers including members of all denominations.² His funeral was also marked by the tolling of the bells of various churches³ and his death was referred to in the sermons in many Anglican and Non Conformist churches,⁴ including Norwich Cathedral which was crowded on the Sunday following Gurney's death, in the expectation that the Bishop's sermon would refer to Gurney. After a few bars of a death march, which were sung by a solo chorister, the bishop preached on Isaiah XXIII, referring to Gurney and calling on the Anglican Church not to declare that there was no salvation beyond its pale. Gurney's work as a philanthropist was emphasised. The sermon was followed by a death march being played on the organ.⁵

These events connected with Gurney's funeral are indicative of the changes which occurred in the Society of Friends during his lifetime. Indeed one of his Quietist critics was to seize upon the praise Gurney had received from the bishop of Norwich as evidence that Gurney was one in spirit with the established church.⁶ That a Quaker would receive such praise from members of other denominations, or that he would have been so highly regarded as a philanthropist and educationalist, would have been

unthinkable at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Clarkson's 1806 dictum that British Friends differed more than many foreigners from their own countrymen, was no longer applicable by the time of Gurney's death. While the testimonies and plainness of speech and apparel remained (and were possibly strengthened) by 1847, due to the influence of evangelicalism, Quakers were a part of the mainstream of public and religious life, which contrasted radically with the situation at the beginning of the century. While during the last years of the eighteenth century, Catherine Phillips had considered that it was necessary to devote a whole pamphlet to reasons why Quakers could not join with Methodists in their West Indian and African missions,⁷ by the end of Gurney's life leading Quakers had become involved in all the major contemporary interdenominational philanthropic projects. Similarly the anti-intellectualism that characterised Quaker theology at the beginning of the century had been eschewed for a whole-hearted involvement in the Bible Society and educational charities. This period, therefore, marked a transition of the Society of Friends from sect to denomination. Indeed even in 1831 The Congregational Magazine had noted that at the beginning of the century, Friends were hardly known to the religious public. Since that time, however, they had become extensively involved with the work of the Bible Society and as a body had increased their emphasis on biblicism. As proof of this change the author pointed to the example of Joseph John Gurney.⁸

Gurney was clearly at the forefront of this change in the Society of Friends. It is true that his role can be overstated. The foundations for evangelicalism in the Society of Friends were laid down by an earlier

generation and many other evangelically-orientated Friends played a vital role in developments within Quakerism, through their work as writers, preachers, or as members of the committees of the evangelical dominated philanthropic societies. Despite this a central role must be assigned to Gurney for this change within the Society of Friends; he made a significant contribution in every area where change chafed against the traditional church life of the Society of Friends, including theology, ecumenism, education, involvement in philanthropy and politics, business ethics, and attitude to the intellect. The ire of the opponents of these changes was also to be directed mainly at Gurney. Gurney therefore played a crucial role in the Society of Friends during this period.

Given that Gurney played a crucial role in this transformation from sect to denomination, it must be asked whether he betrayed traditional Quaker beliefs in favour of evangelicalism. It is certainly true that Gurney was deeply influenced by evangelicalism and, therefore, stressed the doctrines associated with this movement. Many elements of the evangelical theology which Gurney expressed, particularly its biblicism, the doctrine of justification by faith, the emphasis on the use of the intellect, and participation in the wider world, were diametrically opposed to traditional Quaker beliefs. In view of this it would appear that Gurney's critics were correct to claim that he deserted Quakerism's distinctive beliefs. Gurney's exposition of these doctrines should, however, be balanced against his stress on the inward religious life and the work of the Spirit's immediate revelation. As has been shown,⁹ Gurney emphasised his belief in the authority of immediate revelation, even during his later life.¹⁰ As has also been shown, the experience of yielding to the immediate influence was

to play such a crucial role in Gurney's own conversion to strict Quakerism that it is difficult to imagine that he could have ever lost faith in its role.

What emerges then from Gurney's theology is a paradox. Gurney adopted much of evangelicalism's theology, including beliefs which would appear to contradict those of Friends; however he also retained the Quaker doctrines of the inward experience of immediate revelation. His emphasis on the central importance of the scriptures, witnessed by Gurney's devotion to the Bible Society and religious education, and the belief in the authority of immediate revelation, were ultimately irreconcilable and an insurmountable paradox therefore exists at the very core of his theology. Gurney's attempt to reconcile and moderate between these conflicting doctrines in his own life can, however, help to explain why Gurney constantly believed that he was a "centralist" during the theological controversies within the Society of Friends. More importantly this paradox helps to explain why Gurney has been neglected during the twentieth century. The ambiguity of Gurney's thought, his life, and his contribution to the Society of Friends mean that he has been found difficult to come to terms with. Moreover Gurney's simultaneous commitment to evangelicalism and traditional Quakerism does suggest that he compromised his belief in one or other of these schools of thought, as his critics have frequently claimed.

Conversely it should be noted that Gurney's attempt to hold two apparently irreconcilable ideas together was not unique in his period, as can be shown from the example of his friend Charles Simeon's struggle to reconcile Calvinism and Arminianism. As M A C Warren notes in his foreword to a collection of essays written to commemorate Simeon's bi-

centenary, Simeon attempted to reconcile apparently irreconcilable truths.¹¹ Importantly, as one of the essays in this collection argues, Simeon's reconciliation of these doctrines did not require that he find a "mean" between the two schools of thought, but rather that he "oscillated" between the ultimate truths enshrined in Calvinism and Arminianism.¹² This image is also useful in understanding Gurney's dual commitments to evangelicalism and Quakerism. It should also be noted that this simultaneous holding on to two apparently irreconcilable truths is perhaps easier to appreciate from the vantage point of the late twentieth century, than it was the late nineteenth century, when the attitudes of historians towards Gurney were shaped.

Gurney stood at the crossroads of two movements in church history. He was a loyal member of both and utterly committed to both. Although the tension between these schools of thought was frequently to cause tension in his life, and the lives of his co-religionists, they were also to allow him to make a unique contribution to both movements. Gurney synthesised the beliefs of Friends and the evangelical movement to create a new and revived form of Quakerism. This revived Quakerism was both a response to and a cause of the breakdown of sectarianism in the Society of Friends. As the predominant school of thought during the period of transition from sect to denomination, evangelical Quakerism, and Joseph John Gurney as its chief proponent, must be acknowledged as having made a vital contribution to the history of the Society of Friends. Similarly the brand of Quakerism which was advocated by Gurney made a significant contribution to the evangelical movement as a whole. Evangelical Quakerism opened up unprecedented opportunities for co-operation between Quakers and other

Christians. As a result Friends were able to make invaluable contributions to the philanthropic causes which were so important to the evangelical movement.

The simultaneous contribution to both the Society of Friends and the evangelical movement serves to underline Gurney's commitment to both groups. Gurney cannot be considered as either a Friend or an evangelical, he must be considered as both.

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

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- 53 Taylor, Samuel Tuke, p. 106.
- 54 Swift Joseph John Gurney, Banker, Reformer and Quaker, p. 59.
- 55 Gurney, Autobiography, p. 111.
- 56 Gurney, Journal, 17-6-1820.
- 57 Ibid, 14-5-1821.
- 58 Ibid, 17-6-1832.
- 59 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Elizabeth Fry, undated, Gurney Mss. 3/585A, LSF.
- 60 Penney, Op Cit., p. 122.
- 61 Ibid, p. 129.
- 62 Ibid, p. 169.
- 63 Wilson, Manchester, Manchester, and Manchester Again, p. 11.
- 64 The Whole Correspondence Between the Committee of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, and I. Crewdson: Including Some Observations on the Origin and Progress of the Existing Doctrinal Controversy in the Society of Friends, (London, 1836), p. 8.
- 65 Ibid, pp. 9-11.
- 66 Luke Howard, An Appeal to the Christian Public, Against a Sentence of Disownment Passed Upon a Member by the Society of Friends, For Absenting Himself from their Silent Meetings, and Submitting to the Ordnances of Christ, (1st edn., London, 1838), p.3.
- 67 Anna Braithwaite Thomas, 'The Beaconite Controversy', Bulletin of the Friends' Historical Society of Philadelphia, Vol. 3, (1912), p. 75.
- 68 Ibid, p. 80.
- 69 Anna Braithwaite Thomas, J Bevan Braithwaite: A Friend of the Nineteenth Century, (London, 1909), p. 57.
- 70 Isichei, Victorian Quakers, p. 45.
- 71 Howard, An Appeal to the Christian Public, p. 5.
- 72 Journal of John Wilbur, p. 398.
- 73 Howard, Appeal to the Christian Public, p. 47.
- 74 Timothy C F Stunt, Early Brethren and the Society of Friends, (Middlesex, 1970), p. 10
- 75 Anna Braithwaite Thomas, J Bevan Braithwaite, p. 60.
- 76 Anna Braithwaite Thomas, 'The Beaconite Controversy', p. 73. Indeed Roger C Wilson claims that the chief issue at stake during the Beaconite Controversy was the evangelicals' emphasis on vigorous doctrinal preaching which came into conflict with the Quietists' emphasis on silent worship. See, Wilson, Op Cit, pp. 3-4. This explanation of events is, however, open to question as many of the Quietists also emphasised energetic preaching, as is witnessed by Sarah Grubb's preaching for an hour and a half at the 1829 London Yearly Meeting. See, Penney, Op Cit., p. 207.
- 77 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 7-5-1832, Gurney Mss. 3/563, LSF
- 78 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Joseph Gurney 7-8-1825, Gurney Mss. 3/407, LSF.
- 79 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Mary Gurney, Gurney Mss. 8-4-1828, LSF.
- 80 Gurney, Autobiography, p. 262.
- 81 Gurney, Journal, 13-2-1843.
- 82 Mekeel, Op Cit, p. 68.
- 83 Jones, Op Cit., p. 492.
- 84 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 9-6-1830, Gurney Mss. 3/525, LSF.

- 85 Donald G Good, 'Elisha Bates and Social Reform', Quaker History, Vol. 58, (1969), p. 84.
- 86 Robert J. Leech, 'Elisha Bates and the Mt Pleasant Printing Press, 1817-1827', Bulletin of the Friends Historical Association, Philadelphia, Vol. 29, (1940), p. 27.
- 87 Donald G Good, 'Elisha Bates and Social Reform', p. 84.
- 88 Ibid, pp. 87-90.
- 89 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 3-1-1834, Gurney Mss. 3/582, LSF.
- 90 Gurney, Journal, 2-7-1834.
- 91 Donald G. Good, 'Elisha Bates and the Beaconite Controversy', Quaker History, Vol. 73, (1984), p. 34.
- 92 Wilbur Journal of the Life John Wilbur, p. 12-14.
- 93 Ibid, p. 170
- 94 Ibid, pp. 7-9.
- 95 Ibid, p. 124.
- 96 Grubb, Separations, Their Causes and Effects, p. 79.
- 97 Gurney, Journal, 10-12-1832.
- 98 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to George Crossfield, 30-3-1836, Port 20.50, LSF. Wilbur was probably using this turn of phrase to describe the process of sanctification which played such an important role in Quietist theology. It seems unlikely that he was deliberately denigrating the doctrine of the atonement.
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- 100 Hamm, Op Cit., p. 16.
- 101 William Bacon Evans, Jonathan Evans and His Time: Bi-Centenary Biography 1759-1839, (Boston, 1959), p. 68.
- 102 Hamm, Op Cit., p. 18.
- 103 Ingle, Op Cit., p. 161.
- 104 Ibid, pp. 32-37 and 30.
- 105 Evans, Jonathan Evans and His Time, pp. 52-53.
- 106 Ingle, Op Cit., p. 30.
- 107 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 30-10-1821, Gurney Mss. 3/357, LSF.
- 108 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 6-2-1823, Gurney Mss. 3/337, LSF.
- 109 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Joseph Gurney, 17-5-1824, Gurney Mss. 3/387, LSF.
- 110 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 24-11-1827, Gurney Mss. 3/462, LSF. 111 Gurney, Journal, 14-7-1828.
- 112 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Priscilla Hannah Gurney, 15-7-1828, Gurney Mss. 3/482, LSF.
- 113 Holden, Op Cit., p. 70.
- 114 The Whole Correspondence Between the Committee of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, and I. Crewdson, p. 12.
- 115 Isaac Crewdson, A Beacon to the Society of Friends, (1st edn., London, 1835), p. 5.
- 116 Gurney, Journal, 17-6-1832.
- 117 Henry Martin, Truth Vindicated: Being an Appeal to the Light of Christ Within, and to the Testimony of the Holy Scriptures; By Way of Answer to a Pamphlet Entitled "Extracts From Periodical Works on the Controversy amongst the Society of Friends, (1st edn., London, 1835), p.

- 118 Thomas Hancock, A Defence of the Doctrines of Immediate Revelation and Universal and Saving Light, In Reply to Some Remarks Contained in a Work, Entitled "A Beacon to the Society of Friends", (1st edn., Liverpool, 1835), p. 3.
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- 121 Joseph John Gurney, Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Isaac Crewdson 27-4-1835, No. 1, (Published Privately), Vol. 344, LSF.
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- 123 Gurney, Autobiography, pp. 217-218.
- 124 Gurney Letter to Isaac Crewdson 27-4-1833, No. 1, p. 2.
- 125 Crewdson, A Beacon, p. 13.
- 126 Ibid, p. 38.
- 127 Howard, An Appeal to the Christian Public, p. 4.
- 128 'The Beacon, Extracts From Letters by James Clark', The Journal of the Friends Historical Society, Vol. 16, (1919), pp. 129-130.
- 129 Wilson, Manchester, Manchester, and Manchester Again, p. ii.
- 130 Vaux, 'The Beacon Controversy', p. 354.
- 131 Taylor, Samuel Tuke, p. 125.
- 132 Vaux, 'The Beacon Controversy', p. 354.
- 133 Edward Ash, 'The Beaconite Controversy and the Yearly Meeting's Committee of 1835-7', The Friend, Vol. 9, (1870), p. 28.
- 134 Ibid, p. 210.
- 135 Gurney, Journal, 8-1-1836.
- 136 Isaac Crewdson A Defence of the Beacon; or a Supplement to the Reply to the Statement to the Yearly Meeting's Committee, with Further Particulars on the Controversy in the Society of Friends, (London, 1836), p. 71.
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- 138 Ash, 'The Beaconite Controversy and the Yearly Meeting's Committee' p. 208.
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- 140 Taylor, Samuel Tuke, pp.126-7.
- 141 Letter From Joseph John Gurney to Samuel and Elizabeth Gurney, 1-1-1836, Gurney Mss. 3/603, LSF.
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- 146 Martin, The Truth Vindicated, p. 218.
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- 165 Wilson, Manchester, Manchester and Manchester Again, p. 14.
- 166 'London Yearly Meeting, 1836', p. 85.
- 167 pp. 147-148 following.
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- 169 Good, 'Elisha Bates and the Beaconite Controversy', pp. 41-42.
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- 179 Howard, An Appeal to the Christian Public, p. 4.
- 180 Donald G Good, 'Elisha Bates and the Hicksite Controversy', Quaker History, Vol. 70, (1981), p. 114.
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- 182 Isaac Crewdson Water Baptism on Ordinance of Christ: An Address to the Society of Friends,(London, 1837), p. 11.
- 183 Ibid, pp. 4-8.
- 184 Ibid, p. 30.
- 185 Isaac Crewdson, Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Scriptural Arguments on Behalf of the Perpetual Obligation of These Ordinances,(Philadelphia, 1837), p. 65.
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 259 The Whole Correspondence Between the Committee of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, and I. Crewdson, p. 81.
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- 280 Letter From Joseph John Gurney to Isaac Crewdson, pp. 2-4.
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- 282 Joseph John Gurney, Sermons and Prayers, Delivered by Joseph John Gurney, in the Friends' Meeting House, Liverpool, 1832, (1st edn., Liverpool, 1832), pp. 2-3.
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- 286 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 6-3-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/649, LSF.
- 287 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 4-10-1829, Gurney Mss. 3/513, LSF.
- 288 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Hannah Backhouse, 9-2-1826, Gurney Mss. 3/428, LSF.
- 289 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to John Henry Gurney, 10-10-1842, Gurney Mss. 3/846, LSF.
- 290 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 29-8-1825, Gurney Mss. 3/411, LSF.
- 291 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 13-3-1828, Gurney Mss. 3/467, LSF. These random preaching tours differ from the techniques being adopted by contemporary dissenters. While dissenting itinerancy before 1815 had involved a high level of personal responsibility and initiative, during the 1820s and 30s it became increasingly institutionalised. See, Lovegrove, Op Cit., p. 56 and 142.
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- 298 Gurney, Essay on the Habitual Exercise of Love to God, p. 61.
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- 301 Gurney, Essay on the Habitual Exercise of Love of God, p. 12.
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- 304 Gurney, Hints on the Portable Evidence of Christianity, p. 23.
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- 309 Ibid, p. 328.
- 310 Gurney, Hints on the Portable Evidence of Christianity, p. 30.
- 311 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Isaac Crewdson, p. 29.
- 312 Gurney, Essays on the Evidence, Doctrines and Practical Operation of Christianity, p. 308.
- 313 Gurney, Friendly Letters to Dr Wardlaw, p. 29.
- 314 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Isaac Crewdson, no.II, p. 26-27.
- 315 Gurney, Brief Remarks on Impartiality in the Interpretation of the Scriptures, p. 15.
- 316 Gurney, Essays on the Evidence. Doctrines and Practical Operation of Christianity, p. 68.
- 317 Gurney, Friendly Letters to Dr Wardlaw, p. 35.
- 318 Letter Joseph John Gurney to Robert Benson, 8-5-1835, Gurney Mss. 3/590, LSF.
- 319 Gurney, Strictures on Certain Parts of An Anonymous Pamphlet, p. 11
- 320 Gurney, Friendly Letters to Dr Wardlaw, p. 4.
- 321 Ibid, p. 89.
- 322 Gurney, Scriptures on Certain Parts of an Anonymous Pamphlet, p. 24.
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- 324 Joseph John Gurney, Sermon and Prayers Delivered in the City Philadelphia by Joseph John Gurney, (Philadelphia, 1838), p. 66.
- 325 Gurney, Observations, (1842), p. 11.
- 326 The Whole Correspondence Between the Committee of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, and I. Crewdson, pp. 22-23.
- 327 Ibid, p. 24.
- 328 Ibid, p. 147.
- 329 Gurney, Essays on the Evidence, Doctrines and Practical Operation of Christianity, p. 145.
- 330 Gurney, Essay on the Habitual Exercise of Love to God, p. 76.
- 331 Ibid, p. 76.
- 332 The Whole Correspondence Between the Committee of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, and I. Crewdson, p. 71.
- 333 Gurney, Autobiography, p. 252.
- 334 Isichei, Victorian Quakers, p. 45.
- 335 Ibid, p. 44
- 336 Thomas J Bevan Braithwaite, pp. 87-88.
- 337 Kass, Op Cit., p. 317.
- 338 Thomas J Bevan Braithwaite, p. 65.
- 339 Isichei, Victorian Quakers, pp. 48-51. For an interesting insight into the Beacon Controversy see Stunt, Op Cit, who writes from the point of view of the Brethren who received the seceding Friends. It should however be added that his suggestion that tenets in Brethrenism which seem similar to Quakerism were the result of influence from these Friends is probably wrong given the manner in which the seceding Friends rejected Quaker doctrines.
- 340 Thomas, J Bevan Braithwaite, p. 65.
- 341 Gurney, Journal, 21-2-1836.
- 342 Letter From Joseph John Gurney to Elizabeth Fry, 7-12-1836, Gurney Mss. 3/612, LSF.
- 343 Letter Joseph John Gurney to Samuel Gurney and Elizabeth Fry, 18-9-1836, Gurney Mss. 3/608, LSF.
- 344 Gurney, Autobiography, 263.
- 345 Vaux, Op Cit., p. 354.
- 346 Turner, Op Cit., p. 301.

- 347 Journal of John Wilbur, p. 340.
 348 Gurney, Autobiography, p. 241.
 349 Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends, Held in London to The Quarterly and Monthly Meetings in Great Britain, Ireland, and Elsewhere; From 1681 to 1857, Inclusive, (London, 1858), Vol. II, pp. 270-274.
 350 Edward Grubb, 'The Evangelical Movement and its Impact on the Society of Friends', p. 356.

5. GURNEY'S MISSION TO AMERICA 1837 TO 1840.

- 1 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 27-7-1828, Gurney Mss. 3/483, LSF.
 2 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 24-6-1829, Gurney Mss. 3/391, LSF.
 3 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 11-12-1830, Gurney Mss. 3/353, LSF.
 4 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 26-6-1831, Gurney Mss., LSF.
 5 Joseph John Gurney, A Journey in North America, Described in Familiar Letters to Amelia Opie, (Norwich, 1841), p. 21.
 6 Joseph John Gurney, Chalmeriana; or Colloquies with Doctor Chalmers, Author of "Evidences of Christianity", and "Astronomical Sermons", (London, 1853), p. 51.
 7 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Joseph Gurney, 15-7-1824, Gurney Mss. 3/393, LSF.
 8 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Rachel Fowler, 16-9-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/626, LSF.
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 11 Fox, Extracts from the Memoirs of Hannah Chapman Backhouse, p. 84.
 12 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 23-1-1831, Gurney Mss. 3/543, LSF.
 13 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Catherine Gurney, 9-2-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/646, LSF.
 14 Gurney, Journal, 12-9-1837.
 15 Ibid, 2-2-1838.
 16 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 7-6-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/664, LSF.
 17 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 22-7-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/721, LSF.
 18 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Elizabeth Fry, 30-5-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/663, LSF.
 19 Gurney, Journal, 28-7-1839.
 20 Gurney, A Journey in North America, p. 254.
 21 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 17-5-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/660, LSF.
 22 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 18-2-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/700, LSF.
 23 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 11-3-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/703, LSF.
 24 Gurney, A Journey in North America, pp. 249-50.
 25 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 5-4-1838, Gurney Mss.

- 3/653, LSF.
26 Gurney, Journal, 4-5-1839.
27 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 20-9-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/627, LSF.
28 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 31-12-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/692, LSF.
29 Gurney, Journal, 7-5-1838 and 2-9-1838.
30 Ibid, 16-11-1838.
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36 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 16-1-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/694, LSF.
37 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 19-1-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/695, LSF.
38 Joseph John Gurney, Copy of Memorandum, C.6-6-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/714, LSF.
39 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 29-3-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/652, LSF.
40 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 29-3-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/652, LSF.
41 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jane Gurney, 20-11-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/688, LSF.
42 Gurney, Journal, 7-4-1838.
43 Ibid, 15-1-1839.
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46 Joseph John Gurney, A Letter to the Followers of Elias Hicks.
47 A Defence of the Religious Society of Friends, who Constitute the Yearly Meetings of Baltimore Against Certain Charges Circulated By Joseph John Gurney, (Baltimore, 1839).
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50 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jane Gurney, 11-11-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/635, LSF.
51 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 7-11-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/686, LSF.
52 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 2-10-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/629, LSF.
53 Gurney, Journal, 7-10-1837.
54 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 23-11-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/637, LSF.
55 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 6-3-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/649, LSF.
56 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 25-8-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/726, LSF.
57 Arthur Garratt Dorland, A History of the Society of Friends (Quakers)

- in Canada, (Toronto, 1927), pp. 17-18.
- 58 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 10-10-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/630, LSF.
- 59 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 25-8-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/726, LSF.
- 60 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 30-9-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/731, LSF.
- 61 Gurney, Journal, 3-9-1837.
- 62 Letter from Joseph John Gurney, 3-9-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/624, LSF. Gurney could have been referring here to Bates' An Examination of Certain Proceedings and Principles of the Society of Friends, which was published at the end of 1837 and bitterly attacked Quakerism. Bates had intended to include an appendix in this work containing letters written to him by Friends, but had to omit this due to a shortage of funds. See, Vaux, Op Cit., p. 363.
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- 64 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to His Children, 3-9-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/624, LSF.
- 65 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 20-9-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/624, LSF.
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- 67 Gurney, Journal, 12-9-1837.
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- 69 Hamm, Op Cit, p. 31.
- 70 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 11-9-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/728, LSF.
- 71 Gurney, Journal, 29-4-18329.
- 72 Joseph John Gurney, Letter to Friends of the Monthly Meeting of Adrian, Michigan, (New York, 1859), pp. 3-12.
- 73 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 13-7-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/720, LSF.
- 74 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 3-9-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/624, LSF.
- 75 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 5-5-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/657, LSF.
- 76 Gurney, Journal, 25-6-1838.
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- 78 Joseph John Gurney, 'Mr J J Gurney Upon the Divine Nature and the Doctrines of Friends. To the Editor of the Christian Observer', Christian Observer, Vol. 33, (1835), p. 669.
- 79 Wilbur, Journal of the Life of John Wilbur, pp. 176-178.
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- 84 Gurney, Journal, 4-2-1838.
- 85 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Catherine Gurney, 9-2-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/646, LSF.
- 86 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 20-9-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/627, LSF.
- 87 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Rachel Fowler, 24-8-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/676, LSF.
- 88 Hamm, Op Cit., p. 22.
- 89 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 27-10-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/685, LSF.
- 90 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Catherine Gurney, 12-2-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/699, LSF.
- 91 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 18-10-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/631, LSF.
- 92 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 10-6-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/665, LSF.
- 93 Gurney, Journal, 12-9-1837.
- 94 Ibid, 6-11-1837.
- 95 Barbour and Frost, Op Cit., p. 186.
- 96 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 10-10-1837, Gurney Mss. 3/630, LSF.
- 97 Gurney, Journal, 10-11-1837.
- 98 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 27-11-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/689, LSF.
- 99 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jane Gurney, 20-11-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/688, LSF.
- 100 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 2-2-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/645, LSF.
- 101 Gurney, Journal, 4-2-1838.
- 102 Gurney, Ibid, 4-2-1838.
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- 107 William Bacon Evans, Jonathan Evans and His Time: Bi-Centenary Biography 1759-1839, (Boston, 1959), p. 62.
- 108 Holden, Op Cit., p. 51.
- 109 Evans, Jonathan Evans and His Time, p. 144.
- 110 Ingle, Op Cit., p. 249.
- 111 Journal of the Life and Religious Services of William Evans, a Minister of the Gospel in the Society of Friends, (Philadelphia, 1870), p. 10.
- 112 Evans, Jonathan Evans and His Time, p. 91.
- 113 Ibid, p. 133.
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- 115 Gurney, Journal, 22-2-1838.
- 116 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Catherine Gurney, 12-2-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/699, LSF.
- 117 Grubb, Separations, Their Causes and Effects, p. 73.
- 118 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Jonathan Hutchinson, 21-1-1826, Gurney Mss. 3/425, LSF.
- 119 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 15-7-1837, Gurney

- Mss. 3/623, LSF.
 120 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 11-12-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/690, LSF.
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 122 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 7-6-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/664, LSF.
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 147 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 23-3-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/704, LSF.
 148 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 26-3-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/705, LSF.
 149 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 13-4-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/707, LSF.
 150 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 13-4-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/707, LSF.
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- 152 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 27-4-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/709, LSF.
- 153 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 16-5-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/711, LSF.
- 154 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 30-9-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/731, LSF.
- 155 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 9-11-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/735, LSF.
- 156 Gurney, Journal, 16-2-1840.
- 157 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 2-5-1840, Gurney Mss. 3/747, LSF.
- 158 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Catherine Gurney, 25-5-1840, Gurney Mss. 3/748, LSF.
- 159 Gurney, Journal, 19-6-1840.
- 160 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 11-6-1840, Gurney Mss. 3/749, LSF.
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- 163 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 21-6-1840, Gurney Mss. 3/750, LSF.

6. GURNEY'S ROLE IN LONDON YEARLY MEETING AFTER 1840

- 1 Hodgson, Op Cit., p. 136.
- 2 Hamm, Op Cit., p. 28.
- 3 Ibid, p. 32.
- 4 Bronner, Op Cit., p. 19.
- 5 Gurney, Journal, 31-1-1841.
- 6 Ibid, 7-6-46.
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- 9 Gurney, Journal, 25-4-1846.
- 10 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Anna Backhouse, 4-8-1846, Gurney Mss. 3/885, LSF.
- 11 Joseph John Gurney, A Declaration, by the Late J. J. G., of His Faith Respecting Several Points of Christian Doctrine, (Boston, 1847), pp. 5-22.
- 12 Ibid, p. 4.
- 13 Gurney, 'Declaration of Faith by the Late J J G', p. 94.
- 14 The Friend, Vol. 4, (1846), p. 9.
- 15 Ibid, p. 12.
- 16 The British Friend, Vol. 4, (1846), p. 20.
- 17 Ibid, p. 24.
- 18 Hodgson, Op Cit., p. 136.
- 19 Grubb, Separations, Their Causes and Their Effects, p. 66.
- 20 Ibid, p. 73.
- 21 Hamm, Op Cit., p. XIV.
- 22 Ibid, p. 20.
- 23 Ibid, pp. 22-23. This explanation of the second schism, which emphasises influences from contemporary American culture, is reinforced by Barbour and Frost's observation that American Presbyterians faced a similar conflict to the Gurneyite and Wilburite separation during the same period. See, Barbour and Frost, Op Cit., p. 188. The parallels between the effects of evangelicalism in the two denominations are

reinforced by Gurney's tacit approval of the Presbyterian "New School". See, Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 1-5-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/710, LSF. Moreover the rise of evangelicalism created greater tensions within American Quakerism than it did within London Yearly Meeting, as its development was socially divisive. As David E W Holden suggests, evangelicalism was to make converts among urban, wealthy, and well educated Friends; rural Friends retained traditional doctrines. See, Holden, Op Cit., p. 49. Therefore the theological divisions among American Friends reinforced existing social and economic divisions among them. See, Ibid, p. 59. By contrast, he argues, the theological differences among British Friends which caused the Beaconite controversy created a division within the social and economic elite of Friends, rather than separating wealthy Friends from their poorer brethren. See, Ibid, p. 72.

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26 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 15-2-1838, Gurney Mss. 3/647, LSF.

27 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 16-11-1839, Gurney Mss. 3/736, LSF.

28 Wilson, 'Friends in the Nineteenth Century', p. 354.

29 'The Evangelical Alliance', The British Friend, Vol. 4, (1846), p. 45.

30 'Introductory Address', The British Friend, Vol. 1, (1843), p. 1.

31 'A Testimony of Devonshire House Monthly Meeting concerning Mary Anne Bayes, A Minister, Deceased', Extracts from the Minutes and Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of Friends Held in London, (London, 1877), pp. xi-xiii.

32 Gurney, Journal, 11-3-1843.

33 Ibid, 15-9-1845.

34 Ibid, 7-1-1846.

35 Ibid, 7-6-1846.

36 Ibid, 26-6-1846.

37 pp. 192-193 and 388-390 following.

38 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to T F Buxton, undated, Gurney Mss. 3/910, LSF.

39 Gurney, Journal, 26-6-1846.

40 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Anna Backhouse, 15-3-1846, Gurney Mss. 3/876, LSF.

41 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Thomas Robson, 17-12-1840, Port. 30.40, LSF.

42 Gurney, Journal, 15-12-1845.

43 The Friend, Vol. 4, (1846), p. 9.

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48 Gurney, Journal, 6-12-1843.

49 Ibid, 25-12-1843.

50 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to William and Priscilla Leatham, 11-12-1843, Gurney Mss. 3/852, LSF.

- 51 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to William and Priscilla Leatham, 23-12-1843, Gurney Mss. 3/853, LSF.
- 52 'William Henry Leatham', Dictionary of National Biography, (London, 1892), Vol. 32, p. 329.
- 53 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to his Children, 21-6-1840, Gurney Mss. 3/750, LSF.
- 54 Gurney, Journal, 29-9-1845
- 55 Ibid, 6-7-1846.
- 56 Letter from Joseph John Gurney to Anna Backhouse, 11-9-1846, Gurney Mss. 3/889, LSF.
- 57 Wilson, Manchester, Manchester and Manchester Again, p. 223.
- 58 Hamm, Op Cit., p. 48.
- 59 Seebohm, Memoirs of William Forster, Vol. II, p. 191.
- 60 Ibid, Vol. II, p. 314.
- 61 Ibid, Vol. II, p. 365.
- 62 Hall, Op Cit., p. 165.
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- 80 Ibid, p. 257.
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- 82 Ibid, p. 115.
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- 87 Gurney, On the Scripture Doctrine of the Operation of the Holy Spirit

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