

JOHN WILLIAM GRAHAM (1859-1932):
QUAKER APOSTLE OF PROGRESS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the thought of John William Graham in the context of changes that took place in the Society of Friends in Britain during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries. It considers the ways in which some of the challenges to religious faith in general and to Quakerism in particular arising at that time were reflected in the sensibility of one highly intelligent Quaker who gave largely of his time and energy to grappling with the problems and grasping at the opportunities for renewed vision which opened out.

As a young man Graham found his faith threatened by new ideas about the natural world and the place of humankind within it, about the status and authority of the Bible, about the real existence of a spiritual world. With other Quakers of his generation he sought to renew what they saw as the essence of the teachings of George Fox and other early Friends. This meant promotion of a faith free alike of dogma and of ritual, and relying on the 'free ministry' of immediate inspiration, a faith open to new scientific thinking, and new approaches to the Bible. Graham found among early Friends assurance that true Quakerism, and therefore true Christianity, was a religion of experience; that any teaching which did not accord with experience could be discarded. Experience meant primarily what the individual found within, but it included the empirical findings of science. Graham accepted the Darwinian theory of natural selection, understanding that it 'acts only by death'. That meant that he was led into a practical dualism: for religious purposes God had to be found within the better impulses of the human heart, not in the processes of nature with their often cruel effects. Eventually, he believed, the two faces of God would be reconciled, but meanwhile it was necessary to live with duality. Along with the older kind of natural theology, much of the thought-world of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament, was now outgrown. The idea of progress could be invoked for assurance that what was acceptable in a previous age was now giving way to something better.

Graham came to think that the evangelicalism of some Quakers of the previous generation who had been his mentors had distorted the original

Quaker message. With other younger Quakers, he reacted particularly against the doctrine of salvation by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, finding it incredible and ethically unacceptable. In consequence he undertook a lifelong battle against such doctrines and against other forces which he saw as inimical to true Quakerism. These forces included tendencies seen particularly among American Quakers to dilute the time-honoured Quaker institution of the meeting for worship based on silence from which spontaneous inspired utterance might arise, through establishing a paid pastorate and set forms of worship.

Graham found a 'scientific' justification for the old type of Quaker worship in the teachings of the Society for Psychical Research, and especially in those of Frederic Myers. Myers' idea of the subliminal consciousness explained for Graham how the individual might receive intimations from a spirit world, denied to the conscious, waking self. This was the ground for 'prophetic ministry', and also for the consecrated life. Thus he developed a theology centred on the Inward Light, or Inward Voice, identified with a God active within the human personality, inspiring the individual to work for a better world. That meant unremitting pursuit of social justice and of peace, in which more 'advanced' nations would help and guide those at a lower stage, as Graham thought the British were called to do in India. Progress towards the better world was assured, but it would be achieved through the strenuous efforts of human beings, especially Quakers.

DEDICATION: TO WOODBROOKE

Rowntree and Cadbury planted here a school
For Quakers conscious of the need to think
As well as apprehend, to forge a link
Between high spiritual fervour and the cool
Dawn light, revealing many a sharp-edged tool
Ready for use by those that will not blink.
Woodbrooke is changed, but still we do not sink
Into the easy comfort of the fool:
Among these flowery groves a breeze yet stirs
To wake and warn us; powerful ministers
Urge us to seek Truth where she may be found,
Not in obeisance to a slippery past
Nor yet in shiny toys not made to last,
But in strong plants, growing in well-tilled ground.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. Books by Graham

<i>Conscription and Conscience</i> (1922)	CC
<i>Divinity in Man</i> (1927)	DM
<i>Evolution and Empire</i> (1912)	EE
<i>Faith of a Quaker</i> (1920)	FQ
<i>Harvest of Ruskin</i> (1920)	HR
<i>Quaker Ministry</i> (1925)	QM
<i>William Penn</i> (1916)	WP

2. Other

<i>British Friend</i>	BF
Council for International Service	CIS
Dictionary of Quaker Biography	DQB
Friends' Foreign Missions Association	FFMA
<i>Friend</i>	<i>Friend</i>
Friends' Ambulance Unit	FAU
<i>Friends Intelligencer</i>	FI
<i>Friends Quarterly Examiner</i>	FQE
John William Graham Papers	JWGP
<i>Journal of the Friends' Historical Society</i>	JFHS
London Yearly Meeting	LYM
Northern Friends Peace Board	NFPB
<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>	ODNB
<i>Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies</i>	OHQS
<i>Quaker Ministry</i> (1925)	QM
<i>Quaker Religious Thought</i>	QRT
<i>Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research</i>	PSPR

Society for Psychical Research	SPR
Yearly Meeting	YM

The Life of John William Graham: Chronological Table¹

1859	Born in Preston, July 29 th , the eldest of six children. The others were Herbert (born in 1861), Agnes (1863), Anna Mary (1864), Lilian (1869), Helena (1871).
1871-73	Attends Ackworth School. ²
1874-5	Attends Stramongate School in Kendal.
1875-6	Attends Flounders, a Quaker teacher training college.
1876-79	Teaches at Bootham School, the Quaker boys' school in York (meeting Edward Vipont Brown, then a senior boy).
1878	Passes from private study the London University Intermediate B.A. Examination, in the First Division.
1879	Moves to Stramongate School.
1880	Travels in Scotland. ³
1880 – 81	Attends University College, London, with tied scholarship from Flounders. Awarded BA, First Division. Wins prize for 'Junior English'.
1881- 84	Attends King's College, Cambridge, working for the Mathematics Tripos.
1883	Teaches at Bootham School in vacation.
1884	Revives Quaker Meeting at Jesus Lane, Cambridge.
1884	Suffers from ill-health. Granted an 'aegrotat' degree (MA in Mathematics). ⁴
1884	Gives tuition in mathematics at St. Stephen's, Cheltenham, for

¹ A sample only is included of Graham's numerous offices in the Religious Society of Friends, and also of his walking and climbing holidays in Britain and Europe.

² For Ackworth School (founded in 1779 by the Quaker doctor John Fothergill, 1712-1780) see Elfrida Vipont, *Ackworth School: from its Foundation in 1779 to the Introduction of Co-Education in 1946*, Ackworth: Williams Brown/Pritchard, 1991 (first published, 1959) and *Between the Cupolas: a "Light and Airy" Record*, by 'W' [i.e., Wilfrid Whitten]: London: Headley, 1905.

³ Letters in JWGP, Box 8.

⁴ Testimonial from mathematics tutor, R.R. Webb, JWGP, Box 6. An 'aegrotat', from the Latin signifying illness, is a degree granted to someone unfit to be examined for it but yet deemed to deserve it.

	candidates for Cambridge and for Government posts. ⁵
1884-6	Teaches at Oliver's Mount, Quaker School in Scarborough. Quarrels with Thomas Walton, the head. ⁶
1886	Comes to Dalton Hall, as resident tutor in mathematics
1888	Opposes adoption of the 'Richmond Declaration' by London Yearly Meeting.* ⁷
1890	Visit to Switzerland with sister Agnes and Margaret Brockbank. Graham and Margaret become engaged. ⁸
1891	Marries Margaret Brockbank, & ceases to reside at Dalton Hall. Honeymoon in Ireland. ⁹
1892	Birth of daughter, Olive, 27 April. ¹⁰ Graham visits the Lake District with Adult School men in the summer. ¹¹
1892	(November) Home Mission Conference. ¹²
1893	(Summer) Walking holiday in Switzerland and Italy. ¹³
1893	Birth of son, Richard Brockbank, 29 October.
1894	Publication of <i>Science and the Law of Kindness</i> .
1895	(Summer). Holiday in Norway with Margaret. ¹⁴
1895.	(Autumn). Manchester Conference. Graham speaks on 'Modern Thought'. ¹⁵
1896	Begins to work as Lecturer on Victoria University (Manchester) Extension Staff. ¹⁶
1896	First visit to America. ¹⁷
1897	(Summer). Climbing holiday in Switzerland & Austria. ¹⁸

⁵ Testimonial from Henry A. James, teacher at St. Stephen's, JWGP, Box 6.

⁶ Letter to parents, 14/2/1886 and 16/6/86, JWGP, Box 6; Graham, *Spokesman*, 4.46.

⁷ See 3.7., below.

⁸ Letter to Jonathan B. Hodgkin, 20/8.90, JWGP, Box 17.

⁹ Letters, July 1917, JWGP, Box 17.

¹⁰ Letter to parents, 27/4/1892, JWGP, Box 17.

¹¹ Letters to Margaret, July, 1892, JWGP, Box 17,

¹² See Chapter 6, below.

¹³ Letters to Margaret,

¹⁴ Letter to parents, July, 1895, JWGP, Box 6.

¹⁵ See 3.7., below.

¹⁶ 'List of times and places of study, of appointments held, and degrees taken', JWGP, Box 17.

¹⁷ See 3.8., below.

1897	Succeeds Theodore Neild as Principal of Dalton Hall.
1898	Birth of son, Godfrey Michael, 22 Feb.
1898	(April) Holiday in Italy. ¹⁹
1898-99	Winter holiday at Chamonix. Tobogganing
1899	Summer School at Birmingham. Graham speaks on Isaac Penington.
1900	Birth of daughter Rachel, 24 Oct.
1902	Second visit to North America.
1904	3rd visit to North America.
1905	Birth of daughter Agnes, 22 Feb.
1907	Publication of <i>The Destruction of Daylight</i> .
1910	Active in Liberal cause in General Election.
1912	Fourth visit to North America. Publication of <i>Evolution and Empire</i> .
1913	January. Helps to found Northern Friends' Peace Board, becoming its first Clerk.*
1914-18	Campaigns for peace. Acts as Prison Chaplain at Strangeways Prison, Manchester.
1915	Publication of <i>War from a Quaker Point of View</i> .
1916	Publication of <i>William Penn</i> .
1920	Publication of <i>The Faith of a Quaker</i> and <i>The Harvest of Ruskin</i> .
1922	Publication of <i>Conscription and Conscience</i> .
1924	Retires from Dalton Hall.
1924-5	Fellow & Lecturer at Woodbrooke. ²⁰
1925	Delivers the Swarthmore Lecture,* <i>The Quaker Ministry</i> , published in book form the same year.

¹⁸ Letter to Margaret, 4/7/1897, JWGP, Box 6.

¹⁹ Letter to Margaret, 8/4/1898, JWGP, Box 6.

²⁰ The Study Centre established in Selly Oak, Birmingham, in 1903, with a view to educating Quakers in their own traditions. See Robert Davis, *Woodbrooke, 1903-1953: a Brief History of a Quaker Experiment in Religious Education*, London: Bannisdale, 1953.

1925-6	Professor of the Principles and History of Quakerism at Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania. (Fifth visit to North America.)
1927	Publication of <i>The Divinity in Man</i> , comprising lectures given at Woodbrooke and at Swarthmore.
1927	(April) Visits Italy with daughter Agnes and a friend.
1927-28	(Winter) Lecture tour in India.
1928-32	Resident in Cambridge. Active in Jesus Lane Meeting. President of the Anti-Vivisection Association.
1929	Sixth visit to North America.
1930	Publication of <i>Britain and America</i> (fourth Merttens Lecture on War and Peace).
1930	Lecture tour in Holland and Germany.
1932	Dies in Cambridge, October 17 th . Posthumous publication of <i>Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers</i> , intended as his presidential address to the Friends Historical Society.

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INTRODUCTION

Overview of thesis

This thesis presents John William Graham (1859-1932) as a leading representative of the generation of Quakers who were responsible for the so-called 'Quaker Renaissance' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The key point of this movement was the Manchester Conference of 1895, particularly the session on 'Modern Thought' at which Graham was one of the speakers.¹ Graham himself spoke of the 'Renaissance of Quakerism in England' that had taken place since.² Graham was both of this group of Friends*³ (friends) and yet in some ways distinct from them. His correspondence, as preserved in the John William Graham Papers,⁴ reveals no close friendships with other leading British Quakers of the time. I am concerned to explore both similarities and differences.

'Quaker Renaissance' is the name commonly given to the process whereby British Quakers moved from the evangelicalism which had become dominant among them during the nineteenth century towards the progressivism which has characterised them ever since. Graham was a

¹ For the Manchester Conference see Roger C. Wilson, *Manchester, Manchester and Manchester Again: from 'Sound Doctrine' to 'A Free Ministry': the Theological Travails of London Yearly Meeting Throughout the Nineteenth Century*, London: Friends Historical Society, 1990, 33-35; Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: OUP, 2001, 148-156.

² Paper on 'Mysticism', in Supplement to the, *Friends' Intelligencer* 1912, 14-19, 19. In JWGP, Box 16. Graham's friend Edward Vipont Brown wrote a paper published in *FQE* under the title 'The Renaissance of Quakerism', giving honourable mention to Graham (*FQE*, 1951, 201-206).

³ Here and in what follows an asterisk (*) denotes a word that is defined in the Glossary.

⁴ See Introduction, 'Archives', below, and Bibliography.

leading figure in the movement to bring about change in the thinking of the Religious Society of Friends* (Quakers) in Britain, in line with the new science, especially Darwinian and other versions of evolution, and the new theology, arising from 'higher criticism' of the Bible.⁵ He is a particularly useful figure for exploring the history and meaning of the Quaker Renaissance, partly because of the wealth of available material in accessible publications and in the John William Graham Papers housed in the University Library in Manchester, and also because of his role in the development of the Religious Society of Friends. He remained throughout his life deeply attached to the Society and anxious that it should remain both true to its roots and in the forefront of religious thought in his time. He reacted vigorously to important historical events and significant intellectual currents of his day, and tried to take the Quakers with him. This means that in studying him it is possible to gain a clear understanding of the issues in a way different from, although supplementary to, insights received from more general studies. Graham was not an original thinker, but he engaged with current ideas in an individualistic and sometimes controversial spirit, thus throwing into relief their salient features. While Graham is of particular interest to students of Quakerism in

⁵ For a succinct if dated account of the 'higher criticism' of the Bible which originated in Germany although partly in response to the deism which arose in Britain in the early 18th century, see W. Neil, 'The Criticism and Theological Use of the Bible, 1700-1950', in S.L. Greenslade, *The Cambridge History of the Bible: the West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963, 238-289, especially 265-289. Neil emphasises the rapprochement which, in his view, the new approach made possible between scientists and churchmen.

the recent past, the catholicity of his interests means that his thought is also of more general interest.

The title 'Apostle of Progress' suits Graham because belief in progress played a particularly strong part in his mentality. Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, who was a friend of his in their undergraduate days at Cambridge in the 1880s, describes him as 'full of enthusiasm for Tennyson's *In Memoriam* and believing so ardently in progress that he would not have it doubted that art too must have progressed'.⁶ Both the love of Tennyson and the optimism long outlived Graham's undergraduate days. His friend Edward Vipont Brown, writing about the 'congressus parsonorum' which, much later, met in Graham's rooms when he was Principal of Dalton Hall in Manchester, says, 'One of the group was a broad church parson who was a terrible pessimist, whilst J.W.G. at that time was a blatant optimist and our delight was to get the two going for each other tooth and nail whilst we did the cheering'.⁷ Brown implies here that Graham's optimism came to be tempered, but my reading suggests that even the horrors of the Great War did not essentially damage it. Graham was far from exceptional in his belief in progress: its reality was an underlying, hardly questioned assumption for most thinking people in Europe and America at least during the earlier phases of

⁶ *The Autobiography of G. Lowes Dickinson and Other Unpublished Writings*, ed. Dennis Proctor, London: Duckworth, 1973, 63.

⁷ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever: Lancashire Quaker J.W. Graham 1859-1932 and the Course of Reforming Movements' (unpublished; ts., 1964). The typescript is in Friends' House Library, London. The pagination in the typescript begins afresh for each of the ten chapters: thus references are in the form, 1.1; 2.2, etc.

Graham's life.⁸ Yet the faith was so much a part of Graham's personality as well as of his cultural heritage that it can reasonably be taken as the connecting thread running through all his undertakings and concerns. For him progress was identified with evolution, as expounded by Spencer and others as well as by Darwin. Certainly Tennyson, as implied in Dickinson's comment just quoted, encouraged him in this faith. This remained Graham's belief, although by the time of his death in 1932 belief in progress among thinking people in Britain was waning.⁹

This thesis does not purport to be a complete account of Graham's life and work. The emphasis throughout is on his religious views rather than on his social, economic or political concerns, although it has been impossible to ignore these, since involvement with society was a crucial element in Graham's Christianity: 'Book 4' of his major work on Quakerism is devoted to 'the Outlook upon the World', with the first chapter headed 'Social Service'.¹⁰ The subject of war and peace, however, was so central a concern among British Quakers in general and so prominent in Graham's work that I have devoted considerable space to it, especially as it was intimately bound up with his thinking on evolution and progress. These in turn are closely related to questions of empire and Britain's obligations to subject races. A chapter is

⁸ See Chapter 1, below.

⁹ See especially Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, Princeton, NJ; London, Princeton University Press, 1968. Hynes is concerned particularly with fears current in Edwardian England about the fate of the Empire and degeneracy in the British people. For Hynes, see 1.3.3. See also Peter J. Bowler, *The Invention of Progress: the Victorians and the Past*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1989, and comment, 2.1, below.

¹⁰ John William Graham, *The Faith of a Quaker (FQ)*, Cambridge: University Press, 1920, 303-324 (the work is divided into four 'books', each subdivided into chapters).

therefore included about Graham's visit to India in 1927-28. Graham's views on India and the liberation movement led by Gandhi illustrate vividly the limits of his progressivism and also his sometimes strained relations with other members of the Religious Society of Friends. The thesis, however, gives no detailed consideration of his engagement with social issues in the Britain of his day, particularly as they are the main focus of the biography written by his son Michael.¹¹

Chapter 1 explains the motivation of the thesis, introduces John William Graham with a brief biographical sketch, and then describes the main sources for the research. Chapter 2, 'Evolution, Progress and the Quakers', sets out some of the difficulties of evolutionary theory for religious thought and how Quakers grappled with them; it also describes how the idea of progress in human society flourished in various fields of study, not only in biology, supporting belief in steady melioration in a way hardly justified by Darwin.¹² It considers how far Graham's optimism was typical of his generation of Quakers, and how far Quakers fell subject to a more general loss of faith in the inevitability of progress as the twentieth century advanced. The study of Graham's religion begins with Chapter 3, 'Hammer of the Evangelicals'. This sobriquet is bestowed on Graham by Thomas Kennedy:¹³ It has been adopted as indicating that what was distinctive in his faith developed from his combative reaction against the evangelicalism of his parents' generation. The

¹¹ See Introduction, 'Family Narratives', below.

¹² See 1.1., below.

¹³ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 150.

negation therefore precedes the positive elements of a progressive faith. This faith is described in the following three chapters, 'Psychical Research', 'Mysticism' and 'Ministry and Meetings'. In Graham's mind, psychical research¹⁴ provided the empirical evidence he needed for the existence of a spiritual world; it underlay his approach to the mysticism which, in common with the highly influential American Quaker Rufus Jones (1863-1948),¹⁵ he believed to be the essential distinguishing feature of Quakerism. Mysticism, in turn, was for him the foundation for the peculiar Quaker way of worship and ministry. Psychical research and mysticism combined to produce the theology which is the subject of Chapter 7, 'Graham's God': a theology which Graham believed to be essentially Quaker and also peculiarly fit for the circumstances of his day. Chapters 8 and 9, 'War and Evolution' and 'India and After', indicate ways in which belief in evolutionary progress underpinned his attitudes to the traditional Quaker concern with peace and to questions about empire and race.

The Life of John William Graham

My knowledge of Graham's life is derived mainly from the JWGP and from his son's unpublished memoir, but I have found further glimpses in recent or not-so-recent work on other Quakers. These include James Dudley's biography

¹⁴ Since the 1930s commonly called 'parapsychology'. See *The Oxford Companion to the Mind*, 2nd edn., edited by Richard L. Gregory, 2004, 691.

¹⁵ See 'Secondary Literature', below, and note.

of Edward Grubb,¹⁶ Geoffrey Carnall's book on Graham's son-in-law, Horace Alexander, interesting for the unflattering light it throws on Graham's Indian mission,¹⁷ and Matthew Stanley's book on the Cambridge astrophysicist Arthur Eddington,¹⁸ who studied at Dalton Hall under Graham before going to Cambridge. This book gives a glimpse of Graham as inspirational teacher.

Determining factors in Graham's life

Two threads run through Graham's life, one affecting Quakers in general, one applying particularly to Graham. The first is the increasing integration of Quakers into the wider society, with their full admission to Oxford and Cambridge¹⁹ and then their increasing engagement¹⁹ in the public affairs of the nation: nine Quaker MPs were elected as part of the landslide victory for the Liberal Party in the General Election of 1906.²⁰ Graham himself stood as a parliamentary candidate for the Liberal Party in 1932.²¹

¹⁶ James Dudley, *The Life of Edward Grubb, 1854-1939: a Spiritual Pilgrimage*, London: J. Clarke & Co., Ltd. [1946].

¹⁷ Geoffrey Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter: a Life of Horace Alexander*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010. See 8.1., below.

¹⁸ Matthew Stanley, *Practical Mystic: Religion, Science and A.S. Eddington*, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

¹⁹ The abolition of religious 'tests' in 1871, finally allowed men full equality at the ancient English universities regardless of religious affiliation. The tests had required men to subscribe to some doctrinal positions and practices of the Church of England. See Elizabeth Leedham-Green, *A Concise History of the University of Cambridge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 67-8, 174. University College, London, was established in 1828 'in direct response to the religious tests, which acted as a deterrent to Dissenters, Jews, and others who would not subscribe' (Geoffrey Cantor, *Quakers, Jews and Science: Religious Responses to Modernity and the Sciences in Britain, 1650-1900*, Oxford: Oxford: University Press, 2005, 75). Owens College in Manchester, founded in 1851, was until 1871 the only other place of higher education in England not subject to religious tests (G.A. Sutherland, *Dalton Hall: a Quaker Venture*, London: Bannisdale, 1963, 10).

²⁰ Eight according to the *Friend* of 2/2/1906, 64, but Brian Phillips names a ninth (Brian David Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism: British Quakerism and the Imperial Nation, 1890-1910', PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1989, 212). Alfred Webb was first elected in 1892. He contributed 'Notes on Parliament and Politics' to the *Friend* of 9 December, 1904, 809-814.

The second thread is Graham's ingrained self-confidence, bred in him from boyhood. Graham was renowned for his combativeness: according to his obituary in *The Friend* he became known in Manchester during the First World War as 'the most belligerent little pacifist in the city'.²² This quality in Graham made it hard for him to change his mind. With all his enthusiasm for 'modern' ideas, he was liable to hark back to the prejudices of his youth.

Early life and education

Graham was born in Preston in 1859, the eldest of six children born to Michael Graham (1825-1906), grocer and tea-dealer,²³ and Ann Harrison Howison Graham (1826-1902) of Kendal.²⁴ On his father's side he was descended from James Graham of Ullock, a Presbyterian from the Scottish Borders, who came to Cumberland as a young man, was 'convinced'* by the Quakers and married Mary Brown, a member of Carlisle Meeting.²⁵ His son William, John William's grandfather, married into the old Cumberland Quaker family of Satterthwaite.²⁶ John William, in his youth at least, believed the family tradition that James Graham of Ullock was the great grandson of James Graham, the first Marquis of Montrose, who fought for Charles I in the

For two Quaker MPs who had important parts to play in World War 1, T. E. Harvey and Arnold Rowntree, see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 329, Jo Vellacott, *Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1980.

²¹ Notebook entry, 25 January, 1931, JWGP, Box 15.

²² [H.G. Alexander], 'John William Graham [Obituary]', *Friend*, Oct. 28, 1932, 943-945, 943.

²³ See *Annual Monitor, or Obituary of the Members of the Society of Friends*, 1907.

²⁴ *Annual Monitor*, 1903.

²⁵ DQB.

²⁶ Graham, 'Spokesman', 2.4, 2.6. See also JWGP, Box 8, Folder 1: 'Ancestors and wills'.

Civil War.²⁷ Michael Graham was educated at Brookfield, a Quaker School near Wigton.²⁸ His mother, Ann Harrison (1826-1902),²⁹ also came from a family with old Quaker roots on her mother's side. She spent eight years at the Quaker school at Ackworth, near Pontefract,³⁰ between the ages of thirteen and twenty-one, as a pupil and then as a teacher. After losing her first husband, David Howison, she married 'her Friend, Michael Graham of Preston' in 1858.³¹ So, despite the romantic possibility of an ancestral connection with the Marquis of Montrose, Graham's family was solidly Quaker.

After beginning school at Preston,³² Graham attended Ackworth School from 1871 to 1873, and then went to Stramongate, the Quaker school in Kendal.³³ Graham preserved records of his time at Stramongate, including

²⁷ JWGP, Box 8, Folder 1, Correspondence, 1903-1905; ODNB, 'James Graham, First Marquess of Montrose' (accessed 25 February, 2011).

²⁸ Graham, 'Spokesman', 2.27. Information on Ann Harrison is taken from a 'Sketch' written by Mary Knight (née Awmack), a friend of Ann Harrison during her years at Ackworth School, as pupil and teacher (ts, JWGP, Box 5).

²⁹ See *Annual Monitor*, 1903.

³⁰ For Ackworth School see Elfrida Vipont, with an additional chapter by Betty Limb and Walter Fearnley, *Ackworth School: from its Foundation in 1779 to the Introduction of Co-Education in 1946*, Ackworth: Williams Brown/Pritchard, 1991 (first published, 1959).

³¹ Knight, 'Sketch'.

³² Graham, 'Spokesman', 3.14.

³³ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman', 3.14-3.31. Stramongate was founded in 1698. John Dalton the chemist taught there from 1781 to 1793, and Arthur Stanley Eddington's father was head teacher there until his death in 1884. The school receives brief mentions in John L. Stroud, 'The History of Quaker Education in England', M.A. dissertation, University of Leeds, 1944, 54, and in Henry Thompson, *A History of Ackworth School During its First Hundred Years: Preceded by a Brief Account of the Fortunes of the House whilst Occupied as a Foundling Hospital*, S. Harris and co, 1879, 25. The JWGP contain a typescript of a piece by Graham addressed to a 'Mr. Sessions' advocating 'reviving the ancient and honourable Friends' School in Kendal', especially because of the opportunities given by the location for beneficial outdoor exercise (JWGP, Box 1).

class-lists where he appears top over-all.³⁴ It is easy to accept the portrait given by Graham's son of his father at fifteen:

As the eldest child, he had the habit of decision and leadership. He had few doubts about himself: the English surpassed all other human beings; the Northerners were better than those of the South; the Quakers were the finest of them all, and he himself headed the lists in the Quaker schools.³⁵

He stayed at Stramongate only a year before going, aged fifteen, to the Flounders Institute in Ackworth village, a training college for men teachers for Quaker schools and families.³⁶ Graham went on from Flounders in 1877 to teach briefly at Bootham School in York,³⁷ where he became friendly with Edward Vipont Brown, then a senior boy at the school.³⁸ It was during these years that Graham developed an intimate knowledge and love of Tennyson whom, according to Michael Graham, he came to regard as 'almost Biblical in rank'.³⁹ Tennyson will have underlined his interest in evolutionary thinking.⁴⁰ In 1879 he left Bootham for a 'better appointment' at his old school in

³⁴ Norman Penney, later distinguished as editor of the first 'almost complete' edition of George Fox's *Journal*, published in 1911, came twelfth (school papers in JWGP, Box 11).

³⁵ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.19. The younger Graham gives details of school exercises drawn from the Graham papers.

³⁶ Founded in 1848 with an endowment from Benjamin Flounders. See Vipont, *Ackworth School*, 79-80; Brian Arundel and Harold Loukes, *The Flounders Institute and Trust*, F.E.C. Bulletin. No. 31, London: Friends Education Council, 1972; R. Shanks, 'The Flounders Institute: a Quaker Experiment in Teaching', *Educational Review*, 9, 1957, 221-227; W.A. Campbell Stewart, *Quakers and Education: as seen in their Schools in England*, London: Epworth Press, 1953, 100ff.

³⁷ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.2.

³⁸ E. Vipont Brown, 'Renaissance of Quakerism,' 203.

³⁹ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.21.

⁴⁰ See 2.4.1., below.

Kendal.⁴¹ While there he won a Quaker scholarship, tied to an undertaking to teach in Quaker schools, which enabled him to go to University College, London, in 1880. There, according to Michael Graham, he was granted a B.A., First Division after a year.⁴² But during his first term he conceived a wish to broaden his horizons by studying for the Mathematical Tripos⁴³ in Cambridge.⁴⁴ Despite difficulties with money,⁴⁵ he began a three-year course at King's College, Cambridge in the autumn of 1881. He was ill during his last year and could not sit his final exams, but was granted an MA by 'aegrotat'.⁴⁶

Graham's university experiences were vital for his development. He became one of three particular friends of Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson,⁴⁷ who was elected to the society of the 'Apostles' in 1884.⁴⁸ Later Dickinson became a senior figure at King's and a mentor both to Graham's son-in-law, Horace Alexander⁴⁹ and to E.M. Forster, who wrote a biography of him.⁵⁰

⁴¹ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.2.

⁴² Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.2.

⁴³ 'Tripos' is the name given to final examinations at Cambridge.

⁴⁴ Letter from Graham to his parents, 12/12/1880, JWGP, Box 5.

⁴⁵ Letter, 12 December 1880. See also Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.2., 4.3.

⁴⁶ Testimonial from mathematics tutor, R.R. Webb, who thought he should have got a First, JWGP, Box 6. See the *OED* definition of 'aegrotat': 'In a university or college: a certificate that a student is too ill to attend an examination, etc.'

⁴⁷ See *The Autobiography of G. Lowes Dickinson, and Other Unpublished Writing*, ed. Dennis Proctor, London: Duckworth, 1973, 63.

⁴⁸ For the Apostles see W.C. Lubenow, *The Cambridge Apostles, 1820-1914: Liberalism, Imagination, and Friendship in British Intellectual and Professional Life*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. Lubenow depicts the Apostles as possessing in intensified form the rarefied intellectualism and exaltation of male friendship (often homosexual) which Cambridge tended to foster.

⁴⁹ Margaret Graham, John William's wife, described Alexander as Dickinson's 'intimate pupil & friend', 'Notes on the Last Days of John William Graham', ts, 1932, 2, JWGP, Box 2. See also mentions in Geoffrey Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter: a Life of Horace Alexander*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010.

⁵⁰ E. M. Forster, *Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson*, London: E. Arnold & Co., 1934.

Dickinson gives a poetic account of the charmed atmosphere at King's that Graham must have enjoyed:

While the mists were thus drawing up before religion, poetry, politics, like curtains of gauze on the stage, I was gradually finding, for the first time, real friends ... We feasted on ideas, on speculations, on poetry, music, or what not? The best of our life was long talks in our own rooms, or, in summer, pacing the grounds of King's, still, as I think, one of the loveliest spots in the world, and open still all night to talk, as well as to more noisy enterprises.⁵¹

The exceptional quality of intellectual life at King's is confirmed by Alice Johnson in her obituary of Graham: at King's College 'he was one of a group of ardent young Liberals who, in the 'eighties, created an atmosphere at King's perhaps more stimulating than was to be found at the time in any other College'.⁵²

When Graham became Principal of Dalton Hall he wanted to recreate the ambience of free discussion he had enjoyed at King's. Indeed, he considered that Dalton Hall 'is Cambridge on a small scale plus Quakerism'.⁵³ One of the things Graham's young charges had to do was 'to learn how they stand towards religion'.⁵⁴ This had been a pre-occupation of Graham's during

⁵¹ Dickinson, *Autobiography*, 63. For the peculiar way in which King's, more than other Cambridge colleges, combined high respect for learning with a broad, poetic and humanistic culture see Lubenow, *Apostles*, 110-11.

⁵² Obituary of Graham by Alice Johnson in *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, November, 1932, 324-326, 324, JWGP, Box 2. For more on Johnson see Chapter 3.2., note, below.

⁵³ Paper dated 10 October, 1928, JWGP, Box 19. See also obituary by G.A. Sutherland, 'J.W. Graham', *Daltonian*, 109, 1932, 8-11.

⁵⁴ Paper with title 'Self-government at Dalton Hall', 10 October, 1920, 1. This seems to be a rejoinder to a demand from the students for more 'democracy'. Graham argues that students have enough to do without the burden of self-government, JWGP, Box 19.

those tumultuous university years, when he underwent a crisis of faith.⁵⁵ Curiously, it was during this time of inner conflict that Graham conceived and put into effect the project of reviving the dormant Quaker meeting at Jesus Lane, Cambridge.⁵⁶ In his son's view it was this project that saved his faith.⁵⁷

Quakerism, Graham found, was a form of Christianity that could accommodate new thinking. In his student years the Religious Society of Friends in Britain was already becoming something very different from the enclosed, inward-looking body that it had been earlier in the century. A letter from Graham to J.E. Clark, his old teacher at Bootham School, written during his days at London University, shows his awareness of the conflict in the Society between old and new. The letter describes the Yearly Meeting* of 1881.⁵⁸ Graham expresses gratitude to older Friends who were tolerant towards 'us young fellows who are being compelled to dig up our beliefs and see what they grow from', but found some of them complaining of members who denied the doctrine of atonement.⁵⁹ One older Friend, Samuel Alexander, lamented that young people were acquiring a taste for plays and music at Quaker schools. Where were modern Quakers to find 'that guarded education' which his generation had received? Richard Brockbank, who was to become Graham's father-in-law, echoed Alexander's grief, relating that his fourteen-year-old daughter was reading of 'such proceedings' (as plays and

⁵⁵ See 2.3., below.

⁵⁶ See 2.4., below.

⁵⁷ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.34-5.

⁵⁸ The letter, of 19 May 1881, is in JWGP, Box 8. For Clark see Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.22.

⁵⁹ A constant locus of friction between old and new. See 2.5., below.

music) in her school magazine.⁶⁰ Graham himself told his parents that he had been to see Tennyson's play, 'The Cup', and declared his intention to go again occasionally to see 'some first-rate play'.⁶¹ Many years later Graham spoke to his Quaker Meeting in Manchester 'on the chaotic multitudinous experiences of London & Cambridge, as experience of the Divine Spirit, struggling against passion, pride and ignorance'.⁶² While he was at King's Graham did not think that there should be a 'Quaker hall' at Cambridge, because he did not feel that young men should be sheltered from such experiences.⁶³ As Principal of Dalton Hall, however, he took the view that a Quaker authority was needed.⁶⁴ If his Quaker students were 'to learn how they stand towards religion' it was better to do this in a place where some Quaker influence remained. The Cambridge years also provided Graham with a further, most significant, experience, in introducing him to Frederic W.H. Myers and other members of the Society for Psychical Research. This major influence is also dealt with below.⁶⁵

In 1883, before Graham's final year at Cambridge, an incident occurred illustrative of his character and of the trouble it could lead him into. During that summer he went back to teach at Bootham School, and there roused the

⁶⁰ Letter, 19 May, 1881. See report of Yearly Meeting, 1881, *Friend*, 3 June, 1881, 138-167.

⁶¹ Letter, 9 January, 1881, JWGP, Box 5. The play is described by Robert B. Martin as a 'somewhat earnest affirmation of the power of marital love' in his *Tennyson: the Unquiet Heart*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1980, 525.

⁶² Notebook (1923) in JWGP, Box 15, entry of 4 November, 1923.

⁶³ Notes for a paper on 'University Life' given at an 'essay meeting' at King's. 'Whatever danger there may be connected with speculation harm aggravated and benefits spoiled by a Hall [i.e., one set up for Quaker students], if it had any effect at all', JWGP, Box 8.

⁶⁴ Paper on 'Self-government', 2.

⁶⁵ See Chapter 3, below.

anger of some of the senior boys, who accused him snobbishly of treating them 'on a system of the Junior classes at Ackworth, namely, one of bullying and tyranny'.⁶⁶ Graham's reply to the resentful boys of 1884 is conciliatory yet firm. The incident anticipates some of the trouble he was to have at Dalton Hall with refractory students.⁶⁷ Arthur Rowntree,⁶⁸ who had been at Bootham while Graham was teaching there at an earlier time, when he was only seventeen, told Michael Graham that although the boys 'recognised that he was very clever', 'we resented his being younger than two or three of the boys, and felt that he ought not to interfere with the upper boys'.⁶⁹

After leaving Cambridge in 1884 Graham went as a teacher to Oliver's Mount, a Quaker school in Scarborough,⁷⁰ where he stayed until 1886. His teaching notes show his intention to make his boys think of such current concerns as 'Our policy on India', 'The Future of our Colonies'; 'The Manchester School'; 'Socialism'; 'Disestablishment'; 'Women's Rights'.⁷¹ While there he fell out with the head, Thomas Walton, and provoked criticism

⁶⁶ Letter from Bootham boys dated 9 June, 1884. This and the other letters belonging to this exchange are in JWGP, Box 5.

⁶⁷ See Foreword to G.A. Sutherland, *Dalton Hall*, by W. Mansfield Cooper, Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University, which makes reference to 'student difficulties'. See also Introduction, *Dalton Hall Years*, below.

⁶⁸ Later head of Bootham School. See *The Rowntrees of Riseborough*, by C. Brightwen Rowntree (1873-1955) and updated by his niece E. Margaret Sessions (1912-1994), York: Sessions Book Trust, 1996, A7. Arthur Rowntree came to know Graham when they were both teachers at Oliver's Mount School in Scarborough. See JWGP, Box 2 for his condolence letter to Margaret Graham after Graham's death.

⁶⁹Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.10.

⁷⁰ For Oliver's Mount School under Graham's head, Thomas Walton, see *The Reminiscences of George Rowntree 1855 - 1940*, Chapter 4, 'Schooldays' (<http://www.guise.me.uk/rowntree/george/reminiscences/chapter04.htm>, accessed 10 December, 2015).

⁷¹ Teaching notes in JWGP, Box 6.

from William Scannell Lean,⁷² the Principal of Flounders College, over some 'very indiscreet address' given at Scarborough meeting, attended by pupils at the school. Lean quotes a comment that 'it was enough to empty Mr. Walton's school to have one so injudicious in connection with it'.⁷³ Michael Graham thought the address might have included criticism of upper-class, rich Quakers, like the Hodgkins, whom Graham visited in Darlington.⁷⁴ Graham was slow to learn tact or discretion.

Dalton Hall Years, 1886-1924

In 1886 Graham left Scarborough to take up an appointment as resident tutor in mathematics at Dalton Hall.⁷⁵ Dalton Hall had been founded in 1876 by the Religious Society of Friends, under the immediate care of Mount Street Friends' Meeting in Manchester, to accommodate students from a Quaker background attending Owens College, the forerunner to the University of Manchester.⁷⁶ Graham's appointment was originally for one year only; in the event he was to stay at Dalton Hall until his retirement in 1924. In 1897 he became Principal, despite what Michael Graham calls 'humiliating delay and uncertainty' over the appointment'. These the younger Graham attributes to

⁷² See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 114. According to Michael Graham Lean was one of 'a succession of kind yet effective men, whom he was bound to respect', 'Spokesman', 4.9.

⁷³ Letter, 16 June, 1886, JWGP, Box 6.

⁷⁴ 'Spokesman', 4.46. See letter, 13 May, 1885, JWGP, Box 6.

⁷⁵ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.8.

⁷⁶ See Edward Fiddes, *Chapters in the History of Owens College*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1937; Sutherland, *Dalton Hall*, <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/history-heritage/history/victoria/>, accessed 15 March, 2014.

theological differences with Friends.⁷⁷ According to G.A. Sutherland, after his heart attack of 1919 Graham rose from his bed to fight the threatened closure of the hall.⁷⁸ 'He almost was the hall', according to one commentator.⁷⁹ Yet he made several attempts to find employment elsewhere during the 1890s, before his appointment as Principal.⁸⁰ His application in 1894 for a position at the new Quaker School at Leighton Park, which Graham had promoted⁸¹ was rejected, as he told his wife, 'for reasons we understand'.⁸² Since this was a time when Graham was in conflict with some members of the Yearly Meeting* over the question of correspondence with the branch of American Quakers known as Hicksites, considered heterodox among many older Quakers in Graham's day,⁸³ the rejection may have been due in part to Graham's vehemence in defending these Friends.⁸⁴ Indeed, Graham mentions his 'Hicksite clients' in the letter telling of his rejection, with the comment, 'A good deal of shocked orthodoxy found expression'.⁸⁵

Graham had disciplinary problems at Dalton Hall. He was 'an unbeatable man as the students occasionally realised',⁸⁶ and he needed to be. In 1909-10 a number of Egyptian students, admitted at a time when the

⁷⁷ Graham, 'Spokesman', 7.8.

⁷⁸ G.A. Sutherland, 'J.W. Graham' (obituary), in *The Daltonian*, December, 1932, 8-11. 10.

⁷⁹ *Dalton Hall: a Jubilee Retrospective, 1876-1926*, JWGP, Box 7.

⁸⁰ See JWGP, Box 17: folder headed 'Applications and Testimonials on behalf of John William Graham, M.A.'

⁸¹ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.8.

⁸² Letter 28 May, 1894, JWGP, Box 17. Cf. Graham, 'Spokesman', 5.21.

⁸³ Graham, 'Spokesman', 5.21. 'Correspondence' in this context means the exchange of 'epistles' between yearly meetings.* London Yearly Meeting* had not corresponded with the Hicksites since the 'Great Separation' of 1828-29.

⁸⁴ See Chapter 2.8., below.

⁸⁵ Letter 28 May, 1894, JWGP, Box 17.

⁸⁶ *Dalton Hall: a Jubilee Retrospective, 1876-1926*, JWGP, Box 7, 1.

hall was in financial difficulties and having trouble filling its places, fought among themselves, even, allegedly, firing shots.⁸⁷ There was some tension over the incident between Graham and the Committee recently appointed by Mount Street Meeting to oversee the hall's running, because Graham had admitted the Egyptians without consulting anyone. In Graham's view, 'Rather too much fuss has been made of the Egyptian incident'.⁸⁸ On another occasion two dozen dinner plates and a coal box were thrown down the stairs.⁸⁹ The average age of the students, he recalls, was twenty years and four months. 'When I was that age!'⁹⁰ he exclaimed. By contrast, another diary entry shows him taking pains to prevent a student's being expelled.⁹¹ He was in the habit of reading to his students in the evenings, poetry, or a topical work like G.L. Dickinson's *After the War*.⁹² And he took a lively interest in the 'End Room meetings', first established by his predecessor, Theodore Neild, as a venue for Bible reading, with hymns, which, after falling into disuse, was revived in 1891 as a discussion group run by students,⁹³ where 'all serious subjects, religious political, social, literary, and economic are freely tackled'.⁹⁴ Graham would occasionally address meetings on topics such as the 'Subliminal Self & Tennyson's genius'.⁹⁵

⁸⁷ Sutherland, *Dalton Hall*, 53-4.

⁸⁸ Diary entry, 26 January, 1910, JWGP, Box 15.

⁸⁹ Diary entry, 19 March, 1910, JWGP, Box 15.

⁹⁰ Diary entry, 10 March, 1910, JWGP, Box 15.

⁹¹ Diary entry, 17 March, 1910, JWGP, Box 15.

⁹² Diary entry, 6 June, 1915, JWGP, Box 15.

⁹³ See the *Daltonian*, Vol. 1, 1900-01, No. 1, 4.

⁹⁴ *Daltonian*, Vol. 1, 1900-01, No. 2,

⁹⁵ Diary entry, 2 November 1913, JWGP, Box 15.

Throughout Graham's time at Dalton Hall he was an active member of Mount Street Meeting, and frequently gave vocal ministry.^{*96} He also devoted much time to the University Settlement in the slum area of Ancoats, where there was an art gallery and museum, along with series of lectures to which Graham contributed,⁹⁷ founded by the 'pocket Apollo', Charles Rowley, in 1876, with Ruskin's co-operation.⁹⁸ In 1910 Graham spent many hours organising the picture collection.⁹⁹ He considered that the collections at Ancoats were 'a means of bringing what is beautiful in Nature, and great in the history of our race, before the minds of those whose lives are confined in unwholesome streets and dreary rows of cottages'.¹⁰⁰ As well as lecturing on paintings,¹⁰¹ he ran, or proposed to run, a Bible study class 'for Men who, with all kinds of views on religious and social matters, are yet anxious to take not Authority as truth, but Truth as their authority,¹⁰² and are wishful to help others and to be themselves helped to live a life of goodwill to men'.¹⁰³ He found time too to work as an extension lecturer in history at the Victoria College

⁹⁶ See 5.10., below.

⁹⁷ See Graham's notice, 'The University Settlement, Manchester', in *BF*, August, 1904, 233. Graham was treasurer of the institution at this time.

⁹⁸ Graham, 'Spokesman', 8.20. Charles Rowley (1839-1933) was a Manchester philanthropist and art patron. The lecture series based at Ancoats, 'quickly established itself as a significant site for the airing of progressive views' (*ODNB*, accessed 24 Sept 2015).

⁹⁹ Diary entries, 1, 3, 21 March, 1910, JWGP, Box 15.

¹⁰⁰ 'University Settlement', 233.

¹⁰¹ Letter, 19 April, 1927, JWGP, 14.

¹⁰² The phrase was used by Lucretia Mott, and taken as its motto by the *Free Religious Index*, organ of the Progressive Hicksite Free Religious Association, founded in Boston in 1867.

¹⁰³ Advertisement, January, 1895, JWGP, Box 6.

(successor to Owens College and predecessor of the University of Manchester).¹⁰⁴

Graham was in Manchester throughout the First World War. He threw himself vigorously into the cause of the conscientious objectors, while striving to keep the hall solvent. His letters to the *Manchester Guardian*, written on Dalton Hall-headed paper, caused further friction with members of the Mount Street Committee.¹⁰⁵ He brought together pacifist students from other colleges with those at Dalton Hall, and formed a branch of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.¹⁰⁶ After the War he continued his active membership of Mount Street Meeting, airing in ministry* the ideas he used in his 1927 book, *The Divinity in Man*,¹⁰⁷ speaking on smoke abatement,¹⁰⁸ chairing meetings of the Northern Friends' Peace Board.¹⁰⁹

Marriage and Family

According to Michael Graham, Graham's attempts to find another position were prompted by his wife Margaret's ill-health and unhappiness at Dalton

¹⁰⁴ See Graham, 'Spokesman', 6.9. For the Victoria College see <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/history-heritage/history/victoria/>, accessed 10 October, 2013.

¹⁰⁵ See Sutherland, *Dalton Hall*, 57-59.

¹⁰⁶ Diary entry, 25 November, 1915, JWGP, Box 15. The Fellowship of Reconciliation is an international pacifist society, founded in late 1914 by the Quaker medical missionary Henry Hodgkin (see Paul Laity, *The British Peace Movement*, Oxford: Clarendon, 2001, 229). See also <http://forusa.org/about/history>.

¹⁰⁷ Graham, John W., *The Divinity in Man*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1927 (*DM*). See 'Diary of Ministry', Vol. 2, 10 June, 1923, JWGP, Box 15.

¹⁰⁸ 'Diary of Ministry', Vol. 2, 08 July, 1923, JWGP, Box 15.

¹⁰⁹ 'Diary of Ministry', Vol. 2, 20 July, 1923, JWGP, Box 15. Graham was the first Clerk of the Northern Friends' Peace Board, founded in 1913 (see 7.6., below).

Hall.¹¹⁰ Margaret was the eldest daughter of Richard Bowman Brockbank, a Cumberland Quaker whose home at ‘the Nook’ often provided a retreat for Margaret when her husband was away.¹¹¹ Margaret’s mother, née Jane Rittson Choat, was senior mistress at Wigton Friends’ School,¹¹² on the ‘girls’ side’ of the school Brockbank had attended as a little boy aged seven to nine.¹¹³ Brockbank was a stalwart defender of the ‘ancient way’ of Quakerism against the innovations of nineteenth-century evangelicals.¹¹⁴ Margaret represented her father as welcoming the form of Quakerism arising in his latter days, as seeing that ‘the world was riper than ever for a religion free from form and ceremony’.¹¹⁵

John William and Margaret were married on July 5th, 1891. That meant Graham’s moving out of Dalton Hall to set up house with Margaret.¹¹⁶ Margaret was already ailing before the marriage,¹¹⁷ and thereafter it seems she was rarely wholly well. Michael Graham describes her as spending much

¹¹⁰ Graham, ‘Spokesman’, 5.17.

¹¹¹ For instance, in 1893, when Graham was on holiday in the Alps. Margaret sent many letters from the Nook (JWGP, Box 17).

¹¹² Rachel Graham Sturge, *The Shining Way*, illustrated by Janet G. Sturge, from photographs, Gloucester: Fellowship Press, 1969, 41. See also *Annual Monitor* for 1913, under ‘Richard Bowman Brockbank’.

¹¹³ Obituary in *Friend*, 101. See also Margaret Brockbank Graham, *Richard Bowman Brockbank: a Memoir*, [Manchester: Thiel & Tangye, printers.] Printed for Private Circulation: 1912, 10).

¹¹⁴ See Edward H. Milligan, ‘The Ancient Way’: the Conservative Tradition in Nineteenth Century British Quakerism’, *JFHS*, 57, 1994, 74-97. Milligan mentions Brockbank as opposing John Grant Sargent’s ‘Fritchley’ separation, of 1869, although he sympathised with Sargent’s conservatism, ‘Ancient Way’, 87.

¹¹⁵ Graham, *Richard Bowman Brockbank*, 47.

¹¹⁶ See letter from Margaret to her new mother-in-law, 5 July, 1891, JWGP, Box 17. Earlier letters describe the processes of buying and furnishing the house.

¹¹⁷ Letters 23 March, 1891, 31 March, 1891, JWGP, Box 17.

of her time lying in bed typing stories and plays.¹¹⁸ He says that nothing she wrote found acceptance with publishers or producers; but she did not only write and have printed the memoir referred to above, but she also had a play called *Which?*¹¹⁹ published under the pseudonym 'Henry Bowskill'. It is an eloquent plea for the conscientious objectors of the Great War. She found it troublesome having to cope with students, some of whom they had lodging with them to help with expenses,¹²⁰ although Michael Graham says that when there was illness she was transformed into a ministering angel.¹²¹ Rachel Graham was envious of the happy family life of her friend Elfrida Vipont Brown.¹²² Michael Graham asked in his book whether his parents' marriage ought to be considered a 'mistake' or even a 'failure', concluding that it was not, although he finds his father guilty of some lack of sympathy.¹²³

Campaigning for a Liberal Quakerism

Since Graham's contribution to the forging of a new, liberal Quakerism is a major theme in what follows, I confine myself here to naming the major events in his campaign. These are 1) his part in the struggle to prevent the Religious Society of Friends in Britain from adopting the 'Richmond Declaration' in 1888, which Friends of Graham's turn of mind saw as tantamount to a creed,

¹¹⁸ Graham, 'Spokesman', 5.18.

¹¹⁹ *Which? A Play in Eight Scenes* (Plays for a People's Theatre, No. 6), London: C. W. Daniel Company, 1924.

¹²⁰ Letters 3 November, 1890, 26 February, 1891, 31 March, 1891, JWGP, Box 17.

¹²¹ Graham, 'Spokesman', 5.17.

¹²² Sturge, *Shining Way*, 70.

¹²³ Graham, 'Spokesman', 5.13, 5.14.

challenging the authority of the Inward Light;¹²⁴ 2) his campaign against the Home Mission Committee and its perceived threat to the silent meeting, punctuated by spontaneous vocal ministry*, 'as led', a practice seen by Graham as essential to authentic Quakerism; this struggle came to a head at the Home Mission Conference of 1892;¹²⁵ 3) his contribution to the Manchester Conference of 1895.¹²⁶ The Conference arose out of the controversy about home mission,¹²⁷ and became an opportunity for liberal Friends, including Graham, to voice their sense of the direction in which the Society should be heading. Graham's visits to America were motivated largely by his sense that American Quakerism should be saved from un-Quakerly ways, and be amenable to modern thinking.

Travels: America and India

Graham was often away from home on Quaker business (chairing committees, attending meetings)¹²⁸ or travelling overseas. He often went on walking or climbing holidays, whether in the Lake District¹²⁹ or overseas, generally to the Alps.¹³⁰ In 1895 he and Margaret went on holiday to Norway

¹²⁴ See 2.7.1, below.

¹²⁵ See 5.3., below

¹²⁶ See 2.7.2., below.

¹²⁷ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 143-8.

¹²⁸ Graham's Quaker offices are too numerous to list. Edward H. Milligan has kindly sent me a list (private communication, 21/9/2011), and other sources record his membership of the Home Mission Committee (1898-1921), the Yearly Meeting Peace Committee (1911-1932) and many others.

¹²⁹ See, for instance, letters to Margaret, December, 1891, letters, July and August, 1892, December, 1893 – January, 1894 (all in JWGP, Box 17).

¹³⁰ See his 'Up the Matterhorn', *FQE*, Vol. 24 (1890), 531-544 and 'Up the Zinal Rothhorn', *FQE*, Vol. 26 (1892), 596-602. Also letters, July, 1893, JWGP, Box 17; July, 1897, JWGP, Box 6.

together,¹³¹ but usually he went alone or with male companions. His more prolonged travels had religious and educational motives. (Graham scarcely distinguished between the two.)¹³² No less than six times, between 1896 and 1929, he visited America, originally with the declared intention of bringing reconciliation to the separated branches there but also, it is clear, to promote what he thought was genuine Quakerism among meetings where it had been, or was in danger of being, lost.¹³³ Graham became very popular among Hicksite Friends, and his penultimate American visit, in 1925-26, was to the Hicksite Swarthmore College, as Professor of the Principles and History of Quakerism. His popularity is attested by the song composed in his honour by the students there at that time.¹³⁴ There was a final visit in 1929.¹³⁵

Graham visited India only once, in 1927-28, but his reactions to what he found, or thought he found there, are so significant for understanding his mentality that a whole chapter is devoted to this undertaking.¹³⁶ Then, in the summer of 1930, he spent 54 days in Holland and Germany, lecturing to students.¹³⁷ Margaret did not accompany him on any of these excursions.

¹³¹ Family letters of 1895, mostly from John William, occasionally from Margaret (see JWGP, Box 6).

¹³² See Graham's address, 'Education and Religion' in *Westonian*, Westtown, PA, 1926, Commem Address'. There is a copy in JWGP, Box 20. See also his presidential address under the same name to the Ackworth Old Scholars Association in 1902, *Education and Religion: an Address* by John William Graham, M.A., London: Headley, [1902].

¹³³ See 5.1., 5.5., below.

¹³⁴ 'Our Quaker Prof.' (Tune: Marching Through Georgia), JWGP, Box 13.

¹³⁵ Papers headed '40 days in USA', JWGP, Box 11.

¹³⁶ Chapter 8.

¹³⁷ 'Diary of Ministry, 1930 - ', JWGP, Box 15. See also reports in the *Friend*, 27 June, 1930, 600; 4 July, 1930, 615; 11 July, 1930, 648; 12 September, 1930, 818-9.

There was even talk later that year of his going to South Africa on Quaker business, but somebody objected and the idea was shelved.¹³⁸

Retirement and Death

Graham retired from his position at Dalton Hall in 1924 and immediately took up a six-months' appointment as Fellow and Lecturer at Woodbrooke College.¹³⁹ In 1928 he and Margaret went to live in Cambridge. Here Graham renewed his friendship with Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson,¹⁴⁰ and became known for the eloquence of his ministry at Jesus Lane Meeting.¹⁴¹

On the evening of Monday, October 17th, 1932, he went to a meeting at a Baptist church to speak on 'Seven Men of Preston and the Politics of Temperance'. On his way home he collapsed in the street while waiting for a bus, and was pronounced dead on arrival at Addenbrooke's Hospital.¹⁴²

Personality

¹³⁸ Diary entries 2 October, 1930, 3 October, 1930: 'F.S.C. [i.e., Friends' Service Committee] passed my name to S. Africa', but at MfS [i.e., Meeting for Sufferings*] 'Chrissie Mennell objected to my going ... Subject postponed' (JWGP, Box 15).

¹³⁹ See 4.1., 8.1, below. Woodbrooke was founded in 1903 at Selly Oak, Birmingham, as part of a scheme led by J.W. Rowntree and other liberal Friends to promote education in Quaker history and principles and related matters. See *OHQS*, 80-81; Robert Davis, ed., *Woodbrooke, 1903-1953: A Brief History of a Quaker Experiment in Religious Education*, London: Bannisdale, 1953.

¹⁴⁰ Dickinson died a month before Graham. His obituary appears in the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, November, 1932, 322-324, in the same number as Alice Johnson's obituary of Graham (JWGP, Box 2). For Graham's relations with Dickinson see also Margaret Graham's 'Notes on the Last Days of John William Graham', ts, in JWGP, Box 2, 2.

¹⁴¹ See 'Testimony of Cambridge, Huntingdon & Lynne MM' in London Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, 1933, *Reports and Documents*, 196-198.

¹⁴² Details from 'Last Days', 8-9.

Graham may to some extent have changed his opinions in the course of his life, but his personality changed very little. When he was studying at Cambridge, his friends pooled their views of him in a 'character by symposium'.¹⁴³ A fellow-Quaker, Frank Morley,¹⁴⁴ wrote: 'Beaconsfield appears to have told a young politician who asked him how to get on - "Bustle about." So that J.W.G. is on the right track ... It seems to me that he must beware of cocksureness'.¹⁴⁵

All through his life Graham continued to 'bustle', even after the attack of angina pectoris of 1919.¹⁴⁶ His membership of committees, his lectures and addresses, his travels, his intense engagement with the affairs of the Society of Friends, his hands-on approach to his duties at Dalton Hall, his practical involvement in political and social matters, would seem to be enough to fill at least three ordinary lives. Add to that wide reading in both classical and current literature, including delving deep into the complete works of Ruskin, which he owned,¹⁴⁷ and a constant stream of writing, in books and periodicals. No doubt he needed a degree of 'cocksureness' to be able to accomplish what he did; but his self-confidence and readiness to voice his opinions often caused him to fall out with other people, although his underlying good humour and charitableness would make him regret this. A

¹⁴³ 'Character by Symposium', May 1883, in JWGP, Box 5.

¹⁴⁴ See L.P. Wilkinson, *A Century of King's, 1873-1973*, Cambridge: King's College, 1980, 31.

¹⁴⁵ 'Character by Symposium', 5.

¹⁴⁶ Sutherland, 'J.W. Graham', 10. See also Graham, 'Spokesman', 8.44.

¹⁴⁷ Graham, 'Spokesman', 8.26, ff.

memorial tribute from Dorothy Henkel, a German Quaker whom Graham met on a visit to a 'Friends' Centre' in Germany in 1930, well conveys the mixture of qualities in him:

A hard hitter, aggressive, difficult, he could be all these things; and none knew it better than he, and at times a wistful humility would break through, sometimes in a passing word, sometimes in vocal prayer'. In his letters she found 'pathos and flashes of humour, and a sensitive and passionate pity. The burden of the world's sufferings lay heavy on John William Graham.¹⁴⁸

Sir Michael Sadler,¹⁴⁹ who knew Graham at Dalton Hall,¹⁵⁰ may be allowed the last word:

His was a noble, brave and entirely honourable life. I never knew any man so faithful to his convictions - so determined to defend them, or more chivalrous. He will not be forgotten, and to those who had the privilege of looking back to Dalton Hall his words and voice and bearing will be vivid till our death.¹⁵¹

Sources: Archives

The most important source for this thesis is the collection of John William Graham Papers held in the University of Manchester Library. It comprises 21 boxes of letters, drafts and off-prints of articles, teaching notes, reviews, obituary notices and much more. Graham had a compulsion to record everything. He wrote copious letters about his experiences, especially during

¹⁴⁸ Dorothy Henkel, 'John William Graham: an Appreciation', JWGP, Box 5. For Graham's kindness see also 'Testimony of Cambridge', 196.

¹⁴⁹ Educational reformer and art patron; professor of education at Manchester, 1903-1911 (*Concise DNB*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

¹⁵⁰ He spent some terms residing at Dalton Hall during his time at Manchester (*Dalton Hall: a Jubilee Retrospective*, 1876-1926, 1). Margaret Graham records that the friendship was renewed after Graham came to live in Cambridge ('Last Days, 1).

¹⁵¹ Among extracts from condolence letters in JWGP, Box 2.

his travels abroad, and wrote them up for the Quaker periodicals.¹⁵² From time to time he kept diaries, including records of his spoken ministry* in meetings.* Several writers have used these papers, notably Thomas Kennedy in his *British Quakerism*, but they left plenty more to be exploited.

Sources: Family Narratives

I am much indebted to the unpublished biography of Graham written by his son Michael,¹⁵³ for light on Graham's personality, his marriage, his literary preferences, and the causes which he championed. The younger Graham lists Graham's 'causes' as follows: 'Social respect', 'Ruskin's ethics', 'Simple Christianity', 'Slums and new towns', 'War futile', 'Clean air' and 'anti-vivisection'.¹⁵⁴ I have also profited from Graham's daughter Rachel's vivid if unflattering account of growing up in the Graham household.¹⁵⁵ Michael Graham's son Robert told me that Michael found Rachel's account at variance with his recollections.¹⁵⁶

Sources: Writings by Graham

¹⁵² See for instance the large bundle of letters from his visit to India in 1927-8, in JWGP, Box 14. It is instructive to compare these with accounts adapted by him for the British Quaker periodicals. The same goes for his American journeys.

¹⁵³ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever: Lancashire Quaker J.W. Graham 1859-1932 and the Course of Reforming Movements', 1964 (typescript, in Friends' House, London).

¹⁵⁴ Graham, 'Spokesman', 7.7. Michel Graham lists the dates at which Graham first began to take an interest in each cause, the dates at which he began to campaign for them and his age at the time when he took them up.

¹⁵⁵ Rachel Graham Sturge, *The Shining Way*, illustrated by Janet G. Sturge, from photographs, Gloucester: Fellowship Press, 1969.

¹⁵⁶ Private communication.

Many of Graham's publications have to do specifically with his idiosyncratic Quaker theology, as contained mainly in *The Faith of a Quaker* (1920) (FQ)¹⁵⁷ and *The Divinity in Man* (1927) (DM),¹⁵⁸ although much of it is anticipated in his periodical essays. His Swarthmore lecture*, *The Quaker Ministry* (1925) (QM),¹⁵⁹ gives his own particular account of the 'free ministry', its rationale and practice. Much of his writing is concerned with war and peace, including the 1915 book, *War from a Quaker Point of View*,¹⁶⁰ substantially repeated in *The Faith of a Quaker*.¹⁶¹ This is also the main subject of *Evolution and Empire* (1912),¹⁶² which deals with the subject from a secular view-point and spells out Graham's long-held beliefs about the connection between war and evolution. There are also two-full-length biographies, one of a Quaker, *William Penn* (1916),¹⁶³ and one, *The Harvest of Ruskin* (1920),¹⁶⁴ of a non-Quaker, whom, however, Graham was determined to prove was 'really' a Quaker at heart.¹⁶⁵ He drew on Ruskin in *The Destruction of Daylight* (1907), which is largely to do with technical means for dealing with the smoke nuisance, but calls Ruskin in witness to the changes in the atmosphere

¹⁵⁷ John W. Graham, *The Faith of a Quaker*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920 (FQ).

¹⁵⁸ John W. Graham, *The Divinity in Man*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1927 (DM). The substance of this book was given in a series of lectures at Woodbrooke. See William E. Wilson, 'Post-war Conditions', in Davis, *Woodbrooke*, 66.

¹⁵⁹ Graham, John W., *The Quaker Ministry* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1925), London: Swarthmore Press, 1925 (QM).

¹⁶⁰ John W. Graham, *War from a Quaker Point of View*, London: Headley, [n.d., i.e., 1915].

¹⁶¹ FQ, Book 4, Chapter 2.

¹⁶² John William Graham, *Evolution & Empire*, London: Headley, 1912 (EE).

¹⁶³ John W. Graham, *William Penn: Founder of Pennsylvania*, London: Headley, [1916] (WP).

¹⁶⁴ John W. Graham, *The Harvest of Ruskin*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1920 (HR).

¹⁶⁵ See Conclusion, Conclusion, below.

brought about in the course of the Industrial Revolution.¹⁶⁶ In 1930 Graham gave the fourth Merttens¹⁶⁷ lecture, published as *Britain & America*, dealing largely with economic relations, including the issue of debts incurred by Britain to America during the War.¹⁶⁸ The book goes to show the breadth of Graham's interests, as well as underlining his lifelong advocacy of free trade, but it has been ignored in what follows as it would have opened up whole new areas outside the main themes. Finally, a booklet published posthumously makes additional explicit links between Graham's understanding of Quakerism and his long-standing enthusiasm for psychical research. This is 'Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers', intended as his presidential address to the Friends' Historical Society.¹⁶⁹ It relates several stories of uncanny clairvoyance, precognition or telepathy which belong to Quaker folklore,¹⁷⁰ and links these with some supposed instances of extra-sensory perception recorded and scrutinized by members of the Society for Psychical Research.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶ John W. Graham, *The Destruction of Daylight: a Study in the Smoke Problem*, George Allen, 1907. He quotes John Ruskin, *The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884), in *Daylight*, 30ff.

¹⁶⁷ John W. Graham, *Britain & America* (The Merttens Lecture 1930), London: L. & Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press [1930]. The lecture was endowed by Quaker businessman Frederick Merttens, Horace Alexander's friend and patron, who was instrumental in establishing Alexander's lectureship in international relations at Woodbrooke (see Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter*, 56).

¹⁶⁸ See *Britain & America*, Chapter 7, 'War Debts', 84-111.

¹⁶⁹ *Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers*, collected by John William Graham ... for a Presidential Address to the Friends Historical Society; introduction by F.E. Pollard, London: Friends Historical Society, 1933 (*JFHS*, 1933, Supplement 1).

¹⁷⁰ See for instance, Hannah Whitall Smith, *The Unselfishness of God: My Spiritual Autobiography*, Littlebrook, Princeton N.J., 1897, 63 ff.

¹⁷¹ See 3.3., below.

Graham was throughout his adult life a prolific contributor to periodicals, Quaker and otherwise,¹⁷² both British and American.¹⁷³ This thesis draws extensively on these essays, as well as on letters to the *Manchester Guardian* preserved among the JWGP. Graham also kept reviews of his books, sometimes with comments and underlinings.

Writings by other Quakers contemporary with Graham and with non-Quakers who wrote on scientific or religious matters will be referred to as occasion arises.

Secondary Literature: Quakers

There is no extended scholarly work focusing exclusively on Graham. Other scholars, as noted below, have included him as part of a larger picture of Quakers at the time or as a player in the lives of other Quakers. Even T.C. Kennedy, who has worked with the Graham Papers in the Manchester Archives and treats Graham as a significant figure in the Quaker story,¹⁷⁴ has little to say about his literary output. Only Martin Davie addresses his theology,¹⁷⁵ and he confines his attention to *The Faith of a Quaker*. My work undertakes to analyse Graham's religious thinking with reference to the whole body of his published work and some of his private notes as well. It treats

¹⁷² Including the *Hibbert Journal* (1902-1968).

¹⁷³ Graham wrote for the three main British Quaker journals, the *Friend*, the *British Friend*, and the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, and also the *Wayfarer*. The American ones for which he wrote are the 'Hicksite' *Friends Intelligencer* (preferred by Graham) and the 'Orthodox' *American Friend*.

¹⁷⁴ See especially Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 114-118, 126-132. Kennedy's index may be consulted for more references.

¹⁷⁵ Martin Davie, *British Quaker Theology since 1895*, Lewiston, NY; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen. 1997.

topics that were of concern to other liberalising Quakers, such as the relationship of Quakerism to evangelicalism on the one hand and to mysticism on the other. Graham stood out among his contemporaries for his constant emphasis on evolution and progress and especially for his reliance on psychical research, especially in his *Divinity in Man*, as was noted at the time.¹⁷⁶ No other modern scholar has commented on this aspect of Graham's thinking. It was closely related to his understanding of the mysticism essential to Quakerism, which, in turn, underpinned his views on the ideal of prophetic Quaker ministry.¹⁷⁷ These three ingredients of Graham's theology and religious practice are explored in Chapters 4-6, below. These, along with Chapter 7, 'Graham's God', constitute the heart of the thesis. The mysticism of Renaissance Quakers and its relation to the Quaker ministry has received little attention among modern scholars: my work addresses this neglect. Although I have approached these topics mainly through Graham's eyes, I have also shown, by reference to the writings of his peers, that the concerns were not his alone.

The most important scholarly work on the Quaker Renaissance is the afore-mentioned Thomas Kennedy's *British Quakerism: 1860-1920*. I address this work in some detail in my Conclusion, along with Brian Phillips' thesis,

¹⁷⁶ See reviews of *DM*, in JWGP, Box 13; e.g., *Manchester City News*, 19 March, 1927.

¹⁷⁷ See 5.1, 5.8., below.

'Friendly Patriotism',¹⁷⁸ and Martin Davie's book on Quaker theology since 1895, showing in what ways my findings supplement or differ from theirs.¹⁷⁹

Another essential source for this thesis is Geoffrey Cantor's *Quakers, Jews and Science*, especially Chapter 7, 'Quaker Responses to Evolution'.¹⁸⁰

This thesis extends Cantor's work in exploring ways in which Quakers of Graham's time grappled with implications of the new science, especially with the perceived threat of 'materialism'. In Graham's case especially, psychical research was a useful tool in combating this threat. Alice Southern's thesis¹⁸¹ is also of interest as showing the way in which the authors of the 'Rowntree History Series' brought the bias of their liberal Quaker perspective to bear on their treatment of Quaker history and used their work to influence the direction the Society of Friends should take.¹⁸² Southern's thesis demonstrates that other leading Quakers of the time shared Graham's belief in progress and optimism with respect to human nature. My thesis charts more extensively belief in progress among Friends, and what became of it in the years following World War 1.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ Brian David Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism: British Quakerism and the Imperial Nation, 1890-1910', PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1989.

¹⁷⁹ See Conclusion, 'Analysis of Key Texts', below.

¹⁸⁰ Cantor, *Quakers, Jews and Science*, 248-288. See also his essay, 'Quaker responses to Darwin', *Osiris*, 16, 2001, 321-42. Cantor comments here on a piece in *FQE* of 1880 by Hannah Maria Wigham, "Is man a fighting animal?" in support of his assertion that Quakers 'refused to believe that violence in nature legitimated conflict among humans, who, possessing higher powers, should be able to transcend brutality' ('Quaker responses', 342).

¹⁸¹ Alice Southern, 'The Rowntree History Series and the Growth of Liberal Quakerism', M. Phil thesis, Department of Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham, 2010.

¹⁸² 'Rowntree History Series', 1.

¹⁸³ See especially 1.5., below.

Since Graham spent so much time among American Quakers and was so much concerned with developments among them some literature on the subject has been consulted. The main source of information about it is Thomas Hamm's *The Transformation of American Quakerism*.¹⁸⁴ This is supplemented with some literature which gives a different angle on evangelicalism and the 'holiness' movement.¹⁸⁵ Graham, like other English Quakers, was deeply interested in the 'Great Separation' of 1828, which gave rise to the two branches of 'Hicksite' and 'Orthodox' Quakers, and in subsequent splits. This thesis explores the ongoing effect on British Friends of these splits through analysing views of Graham and other Quakers of his time on the American scene.¹⁸⁶

Secondary Literature: the Wider World

In order to place Graham in context in the world beyond Quakerism it has been necessary to consult literature dealing principally with four areas: i) evolution and progress; ii) science and religion; iii) approaches to the Bible and to traditional doctrine; and iv) war and peace. For both (i) and (ii) my main authority has been books by Peter J. Bowler.¹⁸⁷ I am particularly

¹⁸⁴ Thomas Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism: Orthodox Friends 1800-1907*, Indiana University Press, 1988.

¹⁸⁵ For example, Mark Minear, *Richmond 1887: a Quaker Drama Unfolds*, Richmond: Friends United Press, 1987; Carole Dale Spencer, *Holiness: the Soul of Quakerism: an Historical Analysis of the Theology of Holiness in the Quaker Tradition*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007.

¹⁸⁶ See especially 2.8., below.

¹⁸⁷ *The Eclipse of Darwinism: Anti-Darwinian Evolution Theories in the Decades around 1900*, Baltimore; London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983; *Evolution: the History of an Idea*, rev. edn., Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1989 (first published 1984); *The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Reinterpreting a Historical Myth*, Baltimore; London:

indebted to him for his demonstration that many versions of evolutionary theory were extant during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, besides the Darwinian. These included a revival of the pre-Darwinian Lamarckian idea of the transmission of inherited characteristics.¹⁸⁸ Instances include works like *Life and Habit* (1878)¹⁸⁹ and *Evolution Old and New* (1879)¹⁹⁰ by Samuel Butler (1835-1902), author of *Erewhon* (1872) and *The Way of all Flesh* (1903). Bowler's assertion that Butler's revival of Lamarckism had a lasting influence is verified in the case of John William Graham, who wrote from time to time of the power of inherited habit,¹⁹¹ and spoke in India on 'Lamarckian Evolution and war' and on 'Lamarck, war and evolution'.¹⁹²

Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988; *The Invention of Progress: the Victorians and the Past*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1989; *Reconciling Science and Religion: the Debate in Early Twentieth-Century Britain*, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

¹⁸⁸ Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829), author of *Philosophie Zoologique* (1809), was responsible for the view that habit could alter an animal's physical structure, and that changes so induced could be handed on to the animal's offspring. See, for instance, Bowler, *Evolution*, 86-95. Bowler points out that neo-Lamarckians of the late nineteenth century failed to realise that Lamarck did not anticipate Darwin's concept of evolution as a branching tree, developing from a single origin. Darwin accepted some features of Lamarckism as understood in his day, but T.H. Huxley ridiculed the concept in his review of *The Origin of Species* in the *Times*: 'Could all our herons and long-necked waders really be descended from short-necked birds who had persevered in the attempt to catch fish without wetting themselves? Surely any such poorly endowed creature would have "renounced fish dinners long before it had produced the least effect on leg or neck" ', Anthony Flew, *Darwinian Evolution*, Paladin: London, 1984, 21, quoting Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature*, of 1859.

¹⁸⁹ Samuel Butler, *Life and Habit* [1878], reprint, London: Wildwood House, 1910.

¹⁹⁰ Samuel Butler, *Evolution Old and New: or, the Theories of Buffon, Dr Erasmus Darwin, and Lamarck, as Compared with that of Mr Charles Darwin*, London: Hardwick and Bogue, 1879.

¹⁹¹ See *EE*, 110; *FQ*, 42.

¹⁹² See 8.5., below; also *Friend*, 2 March, 1928, 177; 23 March, 1928, 238. See also Letters, 14 January, 1928; 21 January, 1928, in JWGP, Box 18.

Although evolutionary theory could be used to promote an optimistic outlook on life it was so challenging to faith that some people spoke in terms of a 'war' between science and religion.¹⁹³ Graham's wife Margaret wrote of how, as a student, Graham was 'assailed ... by the doubts and questionings which the new light on Evolution engendered'.¹⁹⁴ The milieu in which Graham's doubts arose has been explored in a great many works, some of which are referenced in Chapter 1, 'Evolution, Progress and the Quakers'. In Graham's view Quakerism was a form of religion particularly adapted to the questioning mind.¹⁹⁵ The Quakers had their own perspective on science and religion. The eminent Quaker physicist Silvanus P. Thompson (1851-1916) devoted his Swarthmore lecture* of 1915¹⁹⁶ to expounding the sacred duty of unprejudiced pursuit of truth. After explaining the scientific method of testing theory by experiment, he dealt with the Inward Light* as a valid pathway to truth in its own domain.¹⁹⁷ Truth was one, though the approaches to it were various.

¹⁹³ For instance, Andrew White Dickson, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (1881); John W. Draper, *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* [1874], (8th edn.) N.Y.: Appleton, 1884. On Draper see Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Gifford Lectures for 1973-4), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973, 161-165. White and Draper assumed the stance of intrepid champions of reason battling with entrenched forces of backwardness and repression.

¹⁹⁴ Letter, 25 November, 1932, to Cambridge Friends in response to their condolences on Graham's death, JWGP, Box 8.

¹⁹⁵ See 3.3., below.

¹⁹⁶ Silvanus P. Thompson, *The Quest for Truth* (Swarthmore Lecture 1915), Bishopsgate: Headley, 1915. Thompson gave one of the addresses on 'Modern Thought' at the Manchester Conference, under the head 'Can a Scientific Man be a Sincere Friend?' (*Manchester Conference Proceedings*, 1896, 227-239).

¹⁹⁷ Thompson, *Quest*, 116.

Graham's particular way of reconciling science and religion was to apply the resources of psychical research, especially Frederick Myers' ideas about telepathy and the subliminal self, to his understanding of Quaker access to truth. This thesis draws on the literature of psychical research, especially for the sense that spiritualism and psychical research might give scientific proof of a spiritual reality. My main authority here has been Janet Oppenheim's *The Other World*,¹⁹⁸ supplemented by Alan Gauld's *The Founders of Psychical Research*.¹⁹⁹ But the research linking it with Graham's specifically Quaker spirituality is original.

In the field of biblical studies, the edition of *Essays and Reviews* edited by Victor Shea and William Whitla²⁰⁰ has a helpful introduction. Also useful is J.W. Rogerson's *The Bible and Criticism in Victorian Britain*.²⁰¹ Bebbington insists that evangelicals in general were not opposed to the new approach to the Bible even while continuing to regard the holy book as fundamental to their Christian faith. Some, however, continued to believe in its verbal infallibility.²⁰² My research shows how important for Quakers, including Graham was the new thinking about the Bible.

¹⁹⁸ Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850-1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

¹⁹⁹ Alan Gauld, *The Founders of Psychical Research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968.

²⁰⁰ *Essays and Reviews: the 1860 Text and its Reading*, edited by Victor Shea and William Whitla, Charlottesville: London: University Press of Virginia, 2000.

²⁰¹ J.W. Rogerson, *The Bible and Criticism in Victorian Britain: Profiles of F.D. Maurice and William Robertson Smith*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

²⁰² David W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: the Age of Spurgeon and Moody*, Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2005, 164. Bebbington mentions William Robertson Smith, an evangelical minister of the Free Church of Scotland, who was dismissed from his

As for questions about war and peace, Graham's lifelong association between war and evolution adds an interesting coda to Paul Crook's *Darwinism, War and History*,²⁰³ a detailed account of how Darwinian, or supposedly Darwinian, theory was used either to support or negate the necessity or utility of warfare in human affairs, throughout the nineteenth century and beyond. Among the many books on nineteenth-century efforts at peace-making, by Quakers and others,²⁰⁴ I have relied largely on Paul Laity's book, *The British Peace Movement*.²⁰⁵

Summary

The study of John William Graham's life and thought shows how Quakerism interacted with other influences to produce an intellectual both unique and entirely of his time. It serves to highlight what was still 'peculiar'* to Quakers and the ways in which they resembled their contemporaries, in the churches and in society. Graham's quarrels, his prejudices, his enthusiasms, are all of significance in the study of the contemporary scene. Quakers, then as now, were anxious about the state of their Society: about its small numbers, about the amount and quality of its ministry*, about authority in religion and how to keep the faith, about social evils and how to be active in creating a better way

post for accepting some of the findings of the German biblical critics. See also Rogerson, *Bible and Criticism*, 9.

²⁰³ Paul Crook, *Darwinism, War, and History: the Debate over the Biology of War from the 'Origin of Species' to the First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

²⁰⁴ Including several books by Martin Ceadel and Keith Robbins, *The Abolition of War: the 'Peace Movement' in Britain, 1914-1919*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1976.

²⁰⁵ Paul Laity, *The British Peace Movement, 1880-1914*, Oxford: Clarendon, 2001.

of life for everyone, about empire and war and peace. On all of these and more Graham had something – usually a great deal – to say.

In all his social, political and theological concerns, Graham believed he was engaged in the cause of progress, which was the cause of God. There are few signs of doubt whether progress will indeed continue indefinitely. The odd conditional clause, however, suggests that faith in progress was an act of will as much as of conviction. In his early essay, 'The distant Prospects of the Peace Party' Graham raises the spectre of the possibility that 'war will exist as long as the human race'. If so, he says, 'there will be no finality about human history, it will lead to nothing, will finish off in a jagged end'; or, as Tennyson put it, 'All would be "As if some lesser god had made the world, but had not power to shape it to his will".²⁰⁶ Graham does not allow this nightmare scenario to detain him long, although there are hints of it in passages like the one in the *Faith of a Quaker*, where he posits a God who is 'to all appearances, far from all-powerful'.²⁰⁷ This may be only an appearance, but human beings have to help God. Again, in exhorting Friends to a 'new crusade' against war in 1913 Graham allows for the possibility that progress may not be inevitable: 'We have discovered that the track of evolution has reached a point at which it must sweep away war *if* it is to remain an upward

²⁰⁶ 'The Distant Prospects of the Peace Party' (1), *FQE*, 1884, 82-96, 82,3. The quotation is from 'The Passing of Arthur', in *Idylls of the King* (slightly misquoted).

²⁰⁷ *FQ*, 40. See 7.5., below.

track'.²⁰⁸ He takes, and bids his readers and hearers take, a kind of Pascal's wager²⁰⁹ that there is teleology, that progress is real; though it remains the case that humankind must strive mightily to make it real.

The theme of 'progress' thus serves to give a constant clue to Graham's thinking: Quakerism was for him a light for the times, showing the way towards a better future. The next chapter explores how belief in progress affected Graham's intellectual milieu, among Quakers and in the wider world.

²⁰⁸ 'Our Call to a New Crusade', 'An address given at the Peace Conference at York, arranged by the five Northern Quarterly Meetings, Jan. 27th, 1913', *FQE*, 1913, 233-242, 234 (my emphasis).

²⁰⁹ See Ted Honderich, ed., *Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 647.

1. Evolution and Progress

CHAPTER 1. EVOLUTION, PROGRESS AND THE QUAKERS

1.1. Introduction

This chapter considers the response of Quakers in the late Victorian era and into the twentieth century to various versions of ideas of evolution and progress: ideas that dominated much of the thought of the age, in the spheres of historiography, anthropology, sociology, as well as in the sciences, especially biology.¹ It sketches some assumptions about evolution and progress current in John William Graham's life-time, and shows how they fell out of favour during the years of his maturity and beyond. Except for some general indications, Graham's views will be left for later chapters. The idea of progress, as reality and as goal, I argue, dominated of all his thinking, whether on the essence and future of Quakerism, on the Bible and its use in religious thought and practice, on Britain and her relations with other countries, on questions of war and peace, and in his social activism. By the beginning of the twentieth century, faith in the inevitability of moral, social and religious progress was coming under severe strain – a strain which only intensified as the new century went on: it is my contention that Graham nevertheless retained his faith in progress without much alteration until his death in 1932. His defence of a late Victorian outlook, in this as in other respects, could lead

¹ See Peter J. Bowler, *The Invention of Progress: the Victorians and the Past*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1989; Robert Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress*, New York: Basic Books, 1980. Bowler deals mainly with the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nisbet traces the idea much further back in time, while maintaining that its 'zenith' was 1750-1900, when it became the context for all other thinking. See also J.W. Burrow, *Evolution and Society: a Study in Victorian Social Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966.

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to conflict with Friends in the twentieth century just as his embrace of 'modern' thinking led earlier to his belligerent opposition to evangelicalism. Unlike some other Quakers, he did not address the question of progress in itself: the fact of progress was a given, underlying all his thinking. For him it was emphatically true, to use the words of Robert Nisbet, that progress was 'the context of all other ideas'.²

This chapter, as a preliminary to substantiating this argument through analysing Graham's work, sketches, in so far as they are relevant, the main lines of thought of such influential figures as Herbert Spencer and the anthropologist Edward Tylor as well as Darwin himself and some of his opponents. It moves on to major challenges to Christian faith presented by theories of biological evolution, not only the apparent cruelty of nature and the difficulty of seeing it as the work of a loving God, but also the question of the reality of mind or spirit in a world in which science could be seen as reducing everything to materiality. It deals with specific Quaker responses (including Graham's) to these challenges. It then looks at the subject of progress in writings by four Quaker contemporaries of Graham's (one older, three younger): Thomas Hodgkin (1831-1913), William C. Braithwaite (1862-1922), T. Edmund. Harvey (1875-1955) and Howard Brinton (1884-1973), and in conclusion indicates differences between them and Graham on this subject.

² Nisbet, *History*, 171.

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1.2. Evolution and Progress in Nineteenth-century England

Progress cannot be identified with evolution, though many of Graham's contemporaries made little or no distinction between them. They were encouraged in this by the Harvard philosopher, William James,³ who in his influential *Varieties of Religious Experience* expressed the view that 'the idea of a universal evolution lends itself to a doctrine of general meliorism and progress which fits the religious needs of the healthy-minded so well that it seems almost as if it might have been created for their use'.⁴ John William Graham was nothing if not healthy-minded. 'Evolution' as a concept existed long before the time of Darwin.⁵ Even in the biological sphere, Darwinism was only one among many theories of evolution, and the idea extended into many other fields.⁶ Already in 1857, two years before the appearance of *The Origin of Species*, Herbert Spencer had formulated his 'law of all progress':

Whether it be in the development of the Earth, in life upon its surface, in the development of society, of government, of manufactures, of commerce, or language, literature, science, art, this same evolution of the simple into the complex, through successive differentiations, holds throughout.⁷

³ William James, 1842-1910. Author of *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) and *Pragmatism* (1908). James was the son of a Swedenborgian, and had an enduring interest in the mystical aspects of religion (article by T.L.S. Sprigge, in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy (OCP)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁴ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Gifford Lectures, 1901-2), London: Fontana, 1960, 104. Elizabeth Isichei, quoting Catherine Albright, in her *Victorian Quakers*, Oxford University Press: 1970, writes of the *Varieties*, as a 'treasure-house for "Friends"' (p. 39).

⁵ For pre-Darwinian theories see Peter J. Bowler, *Evolution: the History of an Idea* [1984], rev. edn., Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1989.

⁶ See Stephen K. Sanderson, *Social Evolution: a Critical History*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1990.

⁷ Herbert Spencer, 'Progress: Its Law and Cause' (1857), in *Essays, Scientific, Political, and Speculative*, vol. 1. London: Williams and Norgate, 1891. Quoted in Alberto Mingardi, *Herbert Spencer*, New York: Continuum, 2011, 30.

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And this applied even on the cosmic level.⁸ One writer has expressed the view that it would make more sense to call Darwin's evolutionary theory 'biological Spencerism' than to call Spencer's ideas 'social Darwinism'.⁹ Natural selection itself does not give support to a belief in progress, although Darwin sometimes tried to present it as though it did, declaring, 'As natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress toward perfection'.¹⁰ According to Bowler, Darwin's presenting his theory in this way prevented either his general readers or most of his fellow scientists from grasping the full implications of his work until it was supplemented by the findings of Gregor Mendel in the twentieth century,¹¹ even though the astronomer John Herschel immediately saw the randomness implicit in natural selection, calling it 'the law of higgledy-piggledy'.¹² According to Bowler,

Mendelism did what Darwin could not do: it undermined the plausibility of the analogy between evolution and growth. Shattered by this and other transformations of Western thought in the early twentieth century, the faith in progress that had sustained Victorian evolutionism began to disintegrate.¹³

⁸ Mingardi, *Herbert Spencer*, 31.

⁹ Marvin Harris, in *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: a History of Theories of Culture*, London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1968. Quoted by Sanderson, *Social Evolution*, 28.

¹⁰ Quoted by Nisbet, *Idea of Progress*, 175.

¹¹ According to Bowler, Darwin 'made sure that the *Origin of Species* could be interpreted as a contribution to progressionism' (*Invention of Progress*, 12). See also *Invention of Progress*, 153.

¹² Quoted by Adrian Desmond and James Moore's *Darwin*, London: Michael Joseph, 1991, 485.

¹³ Peter J. Bowler, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Reinterpreting a Historical Myth*, Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988, 6.

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1.2.1. Herbert Spencer and Social Evolution

It was Spencer (1820-1903) who coined the phrase 'survival of the fittest',¹⁴ although Darwin was pleased to take it up.¹⁵ Spencer used the idea to create an essentially optimistic picture of social evolution.¹⁶ Like Darwin Spencer was influenced by the work of Thomas Malthus, but whereas Darwin's reading of Malthus prompted the essentially non-teleological theory of the evolution of species through natural selection,¹⁷ Spencer saw the excess of population over the increase in food supply that was Malthus's theme as a driving force in human progress:

The excess of fertility has itself rendered the process of civilisation inevitable. From the beginning, pressure of population has been the proximate cause of progress. It produced the original diffusion of the race. It compelled men to abandon predatory habits and take to agriculture. It led to the clearing of the earth's surface. It compelled men into the social state; made social organisation inevitable; and has developed the social sentiments. It has stimulated to progressive improvements in production, and to increased skill and intelligence.¹⁸

It is unsurprising that Graham leant heavily on Spencer in formulating his view of human evolution, especially as expressed in *Evolution and Empire*

¹⁴ Mark Francis, *Herbert Spencer and the Invention of Modern Life*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007, 3. Francis comments that it was Darwin rather than Spencer who made use of the phrase, although it was Spencer who suggested it to him.

¹⁵ Sanderson, *Social Evolution*, 28.

¹⁶ For Darwin and teleology see Bowler, *Evolution*, 49, 221. Jonathan Turner, however, emphasises ways in which Spencer's version of evolution includes regressive elements; the evolution of the 'militant' phase of society entailed loss of freedom, as Graham also saw (Jonathan H. Turner, *Herbert Spencer: a Renewed Appreciation*, Beverley Hills; London: Sage, 1985, 131ff. Cf. *EE*, 36-61).

¹⁷ The *ODNB* article on T. Robert Malthus by J. M. Pullen (accessed 20 August, 2013) says that Darwin acknowledged his debt to Malthus. See also John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 354.

¹⁸ Mingardi, *Herbert Spencer*, 26, quoting an 'early essay' of 1852.

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(1912),¹⁹ although he ignored the harsher aspects of Malthus's doctrine. For Graham too progress was dependent on strenuous exertion in the struggle for a better world. Graham was concerned, as were John Ruskin and William James, that the cessation of war might make human beings lose the martial virtues of courage and fortitude. He argued that such virtues were still necessary in peace-time,²⁰ and pointed out that William Penn had made provision for the prevention of 'effeminacy' in his peaceable kingdom of Pennsylvania, 'by recommending a disciplined education, with "low [*i.e.*, hard] living and due labour".²¹ Michael Graham begins his biography of his father by asserting that for Graham 'there may be laws of progress', but progress is not inevitable: it needs backers, though some of these may be 'invisible'.²² Forces antagonistic to progress must be combated, both in the external and the internal world.

Graham was sufficiently Quaker to oppose 'outward fightings with carnal weapons',²³ and Spencer's writings gave him reason to believe that such opposition was in keeping with the laws of progress. Spencer taught Graham that these laws ensure a necessary transition from a 'militant' society,

¹⁹ See 8.7., below.

²⁰ See 8.2., below.

²¹ John W. Graham, *William Penn: Founder of Pennsylvania*, London: Headley, [1916], 203.

²² Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever: Lancashire Quaker J.W. Graham 1859-1932 and the Course of Reforming Movements' (unpublished; ts, 1964), 1.1. In a paper on Browning's poem 'A Death in the Desert', Graham comments approvingly on the poet's 'cheering insistence on the value and the necessity for [~~religious~~] mental contests and doubts for without them the soul must become lethargic and atrophied. Life is a discipline, not an opportunity; the world not a feeding ground, but a School' ('A Death in the Desert', 'written for the Scarbro' Browning Society 1886', ms., JWGP, Box 8).

²³ 'Declaration to Charles II', 1660. Reprinted in *Quaker Faith and Practice*, [London]: Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), 1995, 24.04.

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characterised by a rigid hierarchical structure and enforced obedience to those in power, and an 'industrial' society, partially exemplified by the Great Britain of the day.²⁴ Such a society would become possible as human beings developed altruistic feelings, the power of sympathy described in Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Thus the 'struggle for survival', the spirit of self-help, would be tempered by co-operation and mutual care.²⁵ This was the social evolution which Graham saw as taking place in his day.²⁶

1.2.2. The Anthropologists

Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), who began life as a Quaker, although he resigned from the Society in 1864,²⁷ was a pioneer in the field of anthropology.²⁸ His *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom* purported to set out stages whereby human societies progressed from 'savagery', through 'barbarism' to 'civilisation'.²⁹ This was progress, certainly, although Tylor had misgivings as to the extent of moral superiority evinced by the technically more advanced civilisations:

Whether in high ranges or in low of human life, it may be seen that the advance of culture seldom results at once in unmixed good . . . the

²⁴ John William Graham, *Evolution and Empire*, London: Headley, 1912, Chapter 6, especially 75.

²⁵ Mingardi, *Herbert Spencer*, 71.

²⁶ See 8.2., below.

²⁷ Geoffrey Cantor, *Quakers, Jews and Science: Religious Responses to Modernity and the Sciences in Britain, 1650-1900*, Oxford: University Press, 2005. 264.

²⁸ My main source of information about Tylor are Peter J. Bowler in *The Invention of Progress*, and Sanderson, *Social Evolution*.

²⁹ See Sanderson, *Social Evolution*, 16. Tylor pioneered the use of the word 'culture' in this sense. See David P. Barash, *The Hare and the Tortoise: Culture, Biology, and Human Nature*, New York: Viking, 1986, 25.

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white invader or colonist, though representing on the whole a higher moral standard than the savage he improves or destroys, often represents his standard very ill, and at best can hardly claim to substitute a life stronger, purer and nobler at every point that that which he destroys.³⁰

He thought it possible, moreover, that cultures might revert to earlier types instead of advancing.³¹ The American anthropologist, Lewis Henry Morgan, actually praised the 'democracy and equality' of small, ancient communities, contending that societies become less democratic as they become more highly organised and closer to 'civilisation'.³² For neither of these writers was evolution straightforwardly progressive.³³

1.3. Evolution and Religion

Spencer, Tylor and Morgan all wrote from a secularist viewpoint, although Tylor studied the evolution of religion along with his analysis of the stages of 'culture' more generally. But for many thinkers and writers who were persuaded by one or other of the theories of evolution, especially Darwinism, the paramount concern was the question whether or not the new science was compatible with Christianity. It depended largely on the existing viewpoint of

³⁰ From *Primitive Culture*, quoted by Sanderson, *Social Evolution*, 33. Cf. 8.3., below.

³¹ Sanderson, *Social Evolution*, 16.

³² Sanderson, *Social Evolution*, 13, 33.

³³ Other Victorian contributions to anthropology include John Lubbock, *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man: Mental and Social Condition of Savages*, London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1870, and *Pre-Historic Times, as Illustrated by Ancient Remains, and the Manners and Customs of Modern Savages*, London: Williams and Norgate, 1872; John Ferguson McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History: Primitive Marriage*, [s.l.]: Macmillan, 1886; Henry Maine, *Ancient Law* [1861]; 3rd edn., [s.l.]: John Murray, 1866. For Maine in a Quaker context, see section 1.5.2., below. Graham quotes Lubbock's *Origin of Civilisation* on the blood-thirstiness of Australian aborigines in his early essay, 'Distant Prospects of the Peace Party', *FQE*, 1884, 82-96; 161-17, 161.

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the person concerned. Darwin himself, though he was certainly a ‘free-thinker’ long before *The Origin of Species* was published,³⁴ was, according to Adrian Desmond and James Moore in their book *Darwin*, ‘delighted’ when the American biologist Asa Gray published *Natural Selection Not Inconsistent with Natural Theology*.³⁵ The atheist Harriet Martineau, on the other hand, saw immediately how Darwin’s book might be grist to her free-thinking mill, writing to the secularist George Holyoake, ‘What a book it is! Overthrowing (if true) revealed Religion on the one hand, & Natural (as far as Final Causes and Design are concerned) on the other’.³⁶ Darwin himself asked in late life if ordinary people were ‘ripe’ for free thought. ‘Here spoke the comfortable squire, seeking not to disturb the social equilibrium’.³⁷ Because Darwin deliberately presented his theory in such a way as to disguise the extent to which it denied teleology or design in the evolution of life on earth many Christian apologists were able to incorporate what they believed to be Darwinian science into a theistic view of creation.

³⁴ See, for instance, article on Darwin in *ODNB*, by Adrian Desmond, James Moore and Jane Browne, accessed 19 May, 2015.

³⁵ Adrian Desmond and James Moore, *Darwin*, London: Michael Joseph, 1991, 502.

³⁶ Desmond and Moore, *Darwin*, 486. For Holyoake see Susan Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, London: Heinemann, 1977.

³⁷ Desmond and Moore, *Darwin*, 657. See also James Moore, ‘Theodicy and Society: the Crisis of the Intelligentsia’, in *Victorian Faith in Crisis: Essays on Continuity and Change in Nineteenth-Century Religious Belief*, ed. Richard J. Helmstadter and Bernard Lightman, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990, 153-186.

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1.3.1. Optimists and Pessimists: Drummond, Huxley, Fiske

Theodicies based on Christian interpretations of evolutionary theory abounded.³⁸ We may take as representative of Christian apologists Henry Drummond (1851–1897), author of *The Ascent of Man*, if only because Graham was sufficiently impressed by his arguments to use them when speaking at the annual conference of the ‘Other Branch’ held in Toronto in 1904.³⁹ Drummond argued that natural selection was as much directed by ‘Struggle for the Life of Others’ (by which he meant the reproductive and nurturing instincts) as by the ‘Struggle for Life’. From these lowliest instincts is developed the human virtue of altruism.⁴⁰ All this is designed by God so that eventually, as altruism evolves, along with wisdom to direct it, humankind will increasingly control evolution, and ‘sovereignty’ will pass to man.⁴¹ As this happens humankind becomes ever more aware of the divinity implicit in the process and progress is assured.⁴²

Drummond’s book is in part directed against a recent pessimistic interpretation of Darwinism, T.H. Huxley’s essay, ‘Evolution and Ethics’ of

³⁸ Some of these are listed by Moore in ‘Theodicy and Society’, p.181, note 10. See also Peter J. Bowler, *Reconciling Science and Religion: the Debate in Early Twentieth-Century Britain*, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

³⁹ JWGP, Box 1. There is a brief report of the Conference in *BF*, September, 1904, 262-263. Graham said his part in the Conference was his ‘most public sphere of service’ in his visit to Canada and America in 1904 (‘Friends in Canada and New York’, *Friend*, 28 October, 1904, 716).

⁴⁰ Henry Drummond, *The Lowell Lectures on the Ascent of Man*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1894, 16-22. For Drummond and the puzzled reception given to *The Ascent of Man* see Brooke, *Science and Religion*, 22-3.

⁴¹ Drummond, *Ascent*, 47-51.

⁴² Drummond, *Ascent*, 69.

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1893.⁴³ The free-thinking Huxley (1825-1895) argued that the very qualities that made for survival were those that militate against social virtues: the 'ape and tiger' that Tennyson would 'let die'.⁴⁴ Huxley feared the Malthusian time-bomb of over-population which threatened to overwhelm humankind, but saw no remedy which would not call on those very anti-social traits in man which civilisation tries to extirpate. Eugenics is no solution, for, by a tragic irony, it would militate against those very qualities on which society depends: sympathy and care for the weak.⁴⁵

Graham felt the force of arguments such as Huxley's. In championing the cause of anti-vivisection he admits, 'We cannot fully explain why nature is so regardless of pain', while insisting that this is no excuse for us to disregard the sufferings of others, even when the sufferers are less than human, for 'God, who made nature, has set over against her the heart of man, which He also made - to the non-moral we supply the moral, and both are God's.'⁴⁶

Graham found some comfort in the work of the American John Fiske (1842–1901), whose *Destiny of Man*⁴⁷ Michael Graham believed to have encouraged Graham to denounce war and conquest as anti-evolutionary.⁴⁸

John Wilhelm Rowntree, in a letter to Graham, wrote of Fiske's 'insistence

⁴³ See T.H. Huxley, "*Evolution and Ethics*" [1893], with *New Essays on its Victorian and Sociobiological Context* [by] James Paradis, George C. Williams, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989.

⁴⁴ Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, 117.

⁴⁵ Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics*, 82.

⁴⁶ 'The Moral Question in Vivisection', by John W. Graham, M.A. Printed pamphlet, 'Issued by the Friends' Anti-Vivisection Association' [n.d.], JWGP, Box 2.

⁴⁷ John Fiske, *The Destiny of Man Viewed in the Light of his Origin*, London: Macmillan, 1884. (The title varies in different editions.)

⁴⁸ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman', 5.6.

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that the whole wealth of evolutionary evidence makes for rather than against the reality of spiritual things', and requested that Graham write a review of Fiske's new book, *Through Nature to God* for his periodical, *Present-Day Papers*. Graham responded with a review of three of Fiske's books, rejoicing that Fiske 'has come out, full of faith and hope, to teach us an optimistic philosophy'.⁴⁹

1.3.2. Into the Twentieth Century

Huxley's essay may be seen as more typical than Drummond's book of the fin de siècle mood of the time in which both works appeared. This was the time (corresponding to Graham's middle years) when, according to Samuel Hynes, the generally optimistic temper of the Victorian era was changing, giving way to one more sombre and prone to anxiety.⁵⁰ It was the era in which some middle-class thinkers and activists, Quakers such as Seebohm Rowntree⁵¹ among them, turned their attention to the side of society depicted in 'General' William Booth's *In Darkest England* (1890).⁵² The writer C.F.G. Masterman, reading his society through 'Darwinian' lenses, was appalled by what he saw. 'Down there in the abyss, south of Waterloo and east of Liverpool Street, a

⁴⁹ 'John Fiske's Little Books', *Present-Day Papers*, Vol. 2, Dec. 1899, 25-28. The review deals with Fiske's *Idea of God* and *Through Nature to God* as well as *Man's Destiny*. Fiske, Graham explains, also wrote a 'larger work', *The Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*, 1874.

⁵⁰ See Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, Princeton, NJ; London: Princeton University Press, 1968, especially Chapter 1.

⁵¹ Seebohm Rowntree (1871–1954) was the author of the pioneering study of poverty in York, published in 1901 as *Poverty: a Study of Town Life*. See ODNB article by Brian Harrison, accessed 20/9/2013.

⁵² William Booth (1829-1912), the founder of the Salvation Army. According to David Bebbington, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* was ghost-written by the reforming journalist, W.T. Stead (1849-1912) (David W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: the Age of Spurgeon and Moody*, Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2005, 233).

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new and frightening race was evolving'. For Masterman, in Hynes' interpretation, 'the human characteristics of highest survival value in a city slum might be, from society's point of view, the most undesirable ones'.⁵³ Such fears were given fictional expression by H.G. Wells in *The Time Machine*,⁵⁴ his nightmare vision of a world where evolution has produced two species, the upper-world Eloi, who have degenerated, through a life of ease, into helpless weaklings, and the under-world Morlocks, who maintain the Eloi in their idleness only that they may feed on them. Wells' vision accords with Graham's sense that struggle is necessary for worthwhile human life.

Bowler sees the late nineteenth century as a time when a 'conservative' or cyclic view of history, one of successive stages rising, falling and giving way to new ones, came to dominate thought in place of the 'Whig' or liberal version of history in which individual and corporate effort leads in a linear progress towards freedom and general well-being.⁵⁵ This cyclic view could lend itself to an optimistic vision of Britain at the head of a 'new kind of empire based on freedom and toleration'.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the thought that the British Empire was just as likely to suffer decline and fall as the empires which had preceded it was an important ingredient in the anxiety that coloured much

⁵³ Hynes, *Edwardian*, 62.

⁵⁴ H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine: an Invention*, London: Heinemann, 1895.

⁵⁵ Bowler, *Invention of Progress*, 191. See 1.4., below, for W.C. Braithwaite and the fear that a cyclic view of history, as propounded by Henry Maine, might engender.

⁵⁶ Bowler, *Invention of Progress*, 57, referring to J.A. Cramb's book, *The Origin and Destiny of Imperial Britain*, 1900.

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of the mood of the Edwardian period.⁵⁷ Some leading Edwardians feared that Britons were becoming soft and weak. The early defeats in the South African War fuelled these fears, in spite of the final victory.⁵⁸ There was evidence of physical decline, especially among the urban poor.⁵⁹ Such fears led to the formation of organisations like the Boys' Brigade and, later, the Boy Scouts expressly designed to counter 'the deterioration of our race' and create a phalanx of fighting men to preserve the British Empire.⁶⁰ There was a rash of 'invasion novels', fantasies centring on an invasion of Britain usually by Germans,⁶¹ although in the best-known of these, H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* (1898) the invaders are Martians. Wells came down to earth with his *War in the Air* of 1908.⁶²

The new militarism which was a feature of Edwardian England forced the Quakers to think again about their historic 'peace testimony'.⁶³ *The British Friend* of 1893 rejoiced in the dissemination of a leaflet by Ellen Robinson, 'specially addressed to working people, and exposing the danger and evil designs of Boys' Brigades and other such attempts to inveigle the

⁵⁷ Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, 18: 'At a time when the British Empire was more widespread and more imperial than it would ever be again, Englishmen worried about its decline and fall'.

⁵⁸ See Rudyard Kipling's poem, 'The Islanders' (first published in *The Times*, 4 January, 1902). Kipling ascribed the initial defeats suffered by the British in the South African War to a decline in martial spirit. Samuel Hynes draws attention to this poem, Hynes, *Edwardian*, 38.

⁵⁹ Hynes, *Edwardian*, 22. Hynes cites a report in the *Contemporary Review* of Jan. 1902, maintaining that 60% of Englishmen were physically unfit for military service.

⁶⁰ Hynes, *Edwardian*, 25-6. For details on the Boys' Brigade, founded in 1883 but enjoying renewed vigour in the early 20th century, and on other militaristic youth movements see Thomas C. Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience: a History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1918*, Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1981, 22ff.

⁶¹ Hynes, *Edwardian*, 34-43.

⁶² Hynes, *Edwardian*, 43. See also Randall Stevenson, *Literature and the Great War, 1914-1918*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 28ff.

⁶³ See Chapter 7, below, especially 7.6., on Graham's confrontation with Colonel Maude.

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rising generation into the net of Militarism'.⁶⁴ Graham's daughter Rachel, as a young girl, was assuredly not alone in envying the children allowed to join: 'Drums! horns! trumpets! a magnificent major in white gloves twiddling a rod! ... How boring to be a Friend!'⁶⁵ Graham entered with gusto into the debate as to whether Darwinism could be used in arguing for or against warfare, from a long letter in *The Friend* of 1882 onwards.⁶⁶ For him the whole subject of evolution and progress was intimately bound up with that of peace and war, as is demonstrated in Chapter 7, below.

Graham was aware that strict Darwinism was not necessarily on the side of progress. Natural selection, at least with respect to human beings in twentieth-century Britain, would not automatically bring the desired results:

Natural Selection works only by death and infertility, to form a new species. Starvation and bachelorhood are not closely connected now with business inefficiency, nor with a lapse into a lower or worse paid industrial stratum. It is conspicuously the successful who refuse to multiply. Also philanthropy and the Poor law are against free Natural Selection. We become better qualified for business, for the most part, not by the survival of the fittest, but by voluntary effort, training, tradition and inherited habit (if nowadays Weismann allows this to count).⁶⁷

'Inherited habit' as a factor in evolution is a Lamarckian idea, as revived by Samuel Butler.⁶⁸ Butler provided an antidote to the depressing aspects of the

⁶⁴ *BF*, Jan., 1893, 2.

⁶⁵ Rachel Graham Sturge, *The Shining Way*, illustrated by Janet G. Sturge, from photographs, Gloucester: Fellowship Press, 1969, 50.

⁶⁶ 'Our Position about War', *Friend*, 1 December, 1882, 303-4. Cf. 7.8., below.

⁶⁷ *EE*, 110. For Weismann see 6.7., below. Weismann's theory of the 'germ-plasm', which passed through the generations unchanged and accounted for inherited characteristics, called in question the Lamarckian theory, but Graham tried to have his science both ways. See *FQ*, 42.

⁶⁸ See especially his *Life and Habit*, London: Trübner, 1878.

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theory of natural selection. In 1925 we find Graham reading and taking notes on an essay on 'Inheritance of Acquired Characters'.⁶⁹ Referring to Shaw's Lamarckian fantasy, 'Back to Methuselah'⁷⁰ Graham notes: 'We know that purpose and effort, besides conscious cooperation, sympathy and altruistic acts, have been potent during the human era, that man has cooperated in his own creation and development'. Now he seizes on evidence that the effect of deliberate effort extends, as Butler postulated, even to pre-conscious life. Butler held that apparent design features, like the marvellous camouflage effects seen in some insects, result neither from a Designer Creator nor from chance mutations but from 'sense of need, faith, intelligence and memory'.⁷¹ This does away with the need, as Wallace saw it, for the infusion of something 'from outside' to make possible the spiritual development of human beings.⁷² Graham adds, 'It is far more in concord with the continuity of nature, and with a Power which sees the end from the beginning, if that is our belief'.⁷³ The whole animal world, not only the human part of it, makes progress through its own effort in co-operation with the Divinity within.⁷⁴

Graham was so convinced of the validity and significance of Lamarckism that during his Indian mission of 1927-28 two of his lectures were

⁶⁹ J.A. Dellefren [?], 'Inheritance of Acquired Characters', *Physiological Review*, April, 1925. Notes in JWGP Box 17.

⁷⁰ George Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah: a Metabiological Pentateuch*, London: Constable, 1921.

⁷¹ *Life and Habit*, 272.

⁷² See 1.4.2., below.

⁷³ Notes on Dellefren, JWGP Box 17.

⁷⁴ See 6.5., below.

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on 'Lamarckian Evolution and war' and 'Lamarck, war and evolution'.⁷⁵

Lamarckism was bracing: you could better yourself and your descendants too by 'voluntary effort', whereas reliance on natural selection merely encouraged large families. Lamarckism was highly appropriate for Graham's Indian audiences, whom Graham wished to encourage to become self-reliant, hard-working and fit for democracy.⁷⁶ Here is 'scientific justification' for a Quaker version of the Protestant ethic.

1.4. Quakers and Evolution: Problems for Faith

1.4.1. The Threat of Materialism

This section considers a specific threat to a religious outlook raised by evolution: the fear that science, especially Darwinism, might disprove the existence of anything immaterial, might reduce thought itself to atoms and molecules; or, as the German scientist Karl Vogt (1817-1895) put it with deliberate crudity: 'Thought comes from the brain like urine from the kidneys'.⁷⁷ After outlining the nature of this fear I consider some Quaker reactions to it. Scientists like John Tyndall, author of the 'Belfast Address' of 1874,⁷⁸ and the mathematician and cosmologist W.K. Clifford⁷⁹ were among

⁷⁵ See 8.5., below.

⁷⁶ See 8.8., below.

⁷⁷ Quoted by Owen Chadwick, *Secularization*, 165.

⁷⁸ John Tyndall (1820-1893), 'Address Delivered before the British Association Assembled at Belfast, with Additions', London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1874; in *Nineteenth Century Science*, edited and introduced by A.S. Weber, Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1999. See Stephen S. Kim, *John Tyndall's Transcendental Materialism and the Conflict between Religion and Science in Victorian England*, Lewiston; Lampeter: Mellen University Press, 1996. For immediate Quaker responses to the Belfast Address see editorial comments in *Friend*, 1 September, 1874, 284-5 and Alfred Bennett's response, 1 October,

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such 'materialist' bogeys. John William Graham preserved a copy of Clifford's contribution to 'A Modern Symposium' in the periodical the *Nineteenth Century* of 1877, on 'The Influence upon Morality of a Decline in Religious Belief'.⁸⁰ Clifford here, while warning against the bondage of 'sacerdotal Christianity', argues that conscience is of purely human origin, the result of 'accumulated instinct'.⁸¹ This may be compared to what Graham says of conscience in his book on the history of conscientious objection during World War 1. Here he writes of conscience as resulting both from 'visitations of divine grace, whether to ourselves or to our predecessors', and of their and our own inner 'discipline' and 'strife'.⁸² When he came to write *The Divinity in Man* Graham quoted Clifford having been a threat to belief in a spiritual reality in the 1880s.⁸³ Conscience, for Graham, is divine as well as human.

Evolution, because it was generally understood in a teleological sense,⁸⁴ could endorse a belief in progress. As early as 1844, Robert

1874, 313 (Bennett denies that Tyndall excluded the possibility of a Creator). See also, Cantor, *Quakers, Jews*, 261-2.

⁷⁹ William Kingdon Clifford (1845–1879). 'One of the tenets of Clifford's alternative to the usual religious views was his version of a psychological atomism that asserted that 'Reason, intelligence, and volition are properties of a complex which is made up of elements, themselves not rational, not intelligent, not conscious' (*ODNB*, accessed 31 May, 2015). On Clifford see also W.C. Lubenow, *The Cambridge Apostles, 1820-1914: Liberalism, Imagination, and Friendship in British Intellectual and Professional Life*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

⁸⁰ W.K. Clifford, 'The Influence upon Morality of a Decline in Religious Belief', in 'A Modern Symposium' *Nineteenth Century*, April, 1877: No. 7 in notebook with articles pasted in, dated Dalton Hall, 1888, JWGP, Box 3.

⁸¹ *Nineteenth Century*, April, 1877, 356.

⁸² John W. Graham, *Conscription and Conscience: a History*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1921 (CC), 43.

⁸³ *DM*, 94.

⁸⁴ See 1.2, above.

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Chambers, in his *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*,⁸⁵ presented a theory of transmutation of species in such a way as to cater to the demand for a meaningful and optimistic account of creation: 'He provided what many clamoured for in an age of progress and aspiration, the reassurance of an upwardly mobile nature'.⁸⁶ Robert Young also cites Chambers in evidence when he says, 'What evolution took away from man's spiritual hopes by separating science and theology and making God remote from nature's laws, it gave back in the doctrine of material and social and spiritual progress'.⁸⁷

As Young also suggests, however, Chambers' thesis was justifiably seen as a threat to religion in more ways than one.⁸⁸ For Chambers not only presented a nature running by its own often cruel laws without divine intervention: his theory also 'threatened the status of mind and will and the hope for a moral meaning to life outside of life itself'.⁸⁹ For Christians the fear was not so much that the new science might disprove the existence of a Creator God: new kinds of natural theology, like that of Henry Drummond,⁹⁰ might be devised to fit with evolution. It was more that science might be seen

⁸⁵ Robert Chambers, *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, London (reprint, with an introduction by Sir Gavin de Beer, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1969). Chambers' work, which was published anonymously for fear of a hostile reception, set out a theory of transmutation of one form of life into another, as did Darwin's, but without providing the mechanism of natural selection. See Peter J. Bowler, *Evolution: the History of an Idea*, 3rd edn., Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1989 [first published 1984], 134-140; Moore, 'Theodicy', 156.

⁸⁶ Desmond and Moore, *Darwin*, 320. See also Moore, 'Theodicy', 156.

⁸⁷ Robert M. Young, 'The Impact of Darwinism on Conventional Thought', in *The Victorian Crisis of Faith*, ed. Anthony Symondson, London: SPCK, 1970, 13-35, 27.

⁸⁸ Tennyson's ultimately optimistic interpretation of evolution may have been taken from Chambers (see Moore, 'Theodicy', 156); but Chambers also underlined the spectre of nature as 'red in tooth and claw' by writing of the extinction of species.

⁸⁹ Young, 'Impact of Darwinism', 21.

⁹⁰ See 1.3.1., above.

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to exclude any non-material reality at all: thought itself might be a mere product of the physical brain.⁹¹ Hence momentous issues hung on the science of the brain: the possibility of survival after death, the question of free will as against determinism, the existence of a spiritual world, and hence of God. According to Young, 'The extraordinary interest in evolution [in the 1860s] ... arose from the union which the theory implied between man's spiritual nature and his body, particularly the nervous system'.⁹²

A contributing factor in the construction of a 'materialist' view of nature arose from the 'science' of phrenology, or the art of divining character from the shape of the head or skull. This seemed to some to prove that physical accidents could determine mind and personality.⁹³ George Combe (1788-1858), populariser of phrenology in Britain,⁹⁴ himself retained his Christian faith, at least outwardly, but in his private correspondence he expressed scepticism as to whether the concept of 'spirit' had any meaning.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, phrenology was apparently accepted unquestioningly by Graham's Quaker parents: in 1865, when Graham was nearly six years old, they subjected him to a phrenological examination.⁹⁶ Despite Combe's

⁹¹ See quotation from Karl Vogt, above. See also Young, 'Impact of Darwinism', 17.

⁹² Young, 'Impact of Darwinism', 21.

⁹³ The 'science' was invented by Franz Gall (1757-1828) (see *The Oxford Companion to the Mind (OCM)*, 2nd edn., ed. Richard L. Gregory, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁹⁴ *ODNB*, accessed 16 July, 2015. See also Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: the Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1785-1865*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1988, 192.

⁹⁵ See Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850-1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 209.

⁹⁶ A paper giving the result of the examination, dated 1 June, 1865, is in JWGP, Box 8. It contains such plausible items as 'His temper is very hasty, when he feels it coming on be

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doubts, ordinary Christians, ordinary Quakers even, could by this time take phrenology in their stride as a useful guide to human mentality, without being troubled by its materialist implications.⁹⁷

Serious thinkers, however, found it necessary to consider how a place for the spirit, or the soul, or, for Quakers, the Inward Light, could be found in a science of humanity which could no longer accept any separation between the material body and the mind which animates it.⁹⁸ Darwinism exacerbated the problem. Darwin himself, according to D.C. Dennett, was regretfully led into a materialist view of the human mind when he concluded from the fact that mental characteristics were inherited that the mind must have a material basis.⁹⁹ Janet Oppenheim has a long chapter on attempts to combat suggestions that the mind is identical with the brain and that there is no such thing as 'spirit' or 'soul'.¹⁰⁰ Victorian thinkers had to contend with ideas such as those propounded by the physician and neurologist W.B. Carpenter (1813–1885), whose view was that mind and will are 'mere by-products of the cerebral machinery'.¹⁰¹ (This in spite of the fact that he retained a devout

advised his washing his face with cold water to send master Temper away'. See also Michael Graham, 'Spokesman', 3.6.

⁹⁷ Janet Oppenheim remarks that interest in phrenology existed among all ranks in Victorian society, including the Prince Consort (Oppenheim, *Other World*, 224).

⁹⁸ See *OCM*, under 'Descartes': 'Descartes maintains that there are two radically different kinds of substance: physical extended substance (*res extensa*) – i.e., that which has length, breadth, and depth, and can therefore be measured and divided – and thinking substance (*res cogitans*), which is unextended and indivisible'.

⁹⁹ *OCM*, under 'Darwin'.

¹⁰⁰ Oppenheim, *Other World*, Chapter 6: 'Concepts of Mind', 205-266.

¹⁰¹ Alan Gauld, *The Founders of Psychical Research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968, 58.

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Unitarian faith.)¹⁰² By contrast, mesmerists, phrenologists and spiritualists continued to purvey the idea that mind had an existence independent of the body.¹⁰³

Quakers responded to such challenges as did other religious people of the time. One resource was the belief in 'vitalism', or the idea that life itself, or the 'vital force', has a real existence not to be accounted for in strictly physical terms.¹⁰⁴ The belief could be used to combat the determinism which seemed to inhere in a materialist view of nature. Here a useful source was Henri Bergson, author of *L'Évolution Créatrice*,¹⁰⁵ an important reference point for Edward Grubb in his quest to come to terms with modern science.¹⁰⁶ Bergson popularised the notion of an *élan vital*, which propelled all living things in their development.¹⁰⁷ The idea of vitalism still had currency among Quakers well into the twentieth century. A paper of 1932 by A.J. Clark on 'The Controversy between Determinism and Vitalism in Biology'¹⁰⁸ drew an analogy between support for vitalism in biology and early Quakers' opposition

¹⁰² ODNB, accessed 22 April, 2015.

¹⁰³ Oppenheim, *Other World*, 224.

¹⁰⁴ See *Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, ed. Ted Honderich, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995 (OCP), under 'Vitalism'. Hilton, in *The Age of Atonement*, writes of the nineteenth-century controversy between the vitalists and those who argued that life was simply 'a function of organized matter', *Age of Atonement*, 15.

¹⁰⁵ Henri Bergson, *L'Évolution Créatrice* (1907); English translation, *Creative Evolution*, London: Macmillan, 1911.

¹⁰⁶ See Edward Grubb, *Historic and Inward Christ: a Study in Quaker Thought* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1914), Bishopsgate: Headley, 1914, 75.

¹⁰⁷ The theory, according to Alan Lacey in the OCP, under 'Bergson'. 'probably owed its popularity partly to his attempt, backed by scientific as well as philosophical arguments, to develop a non-Darwinian evolutionism that made room for religion'. On Bergson, see also Bowler, *Reconciling*, especially Chapter 11.

¹⁰⁸ A.J. Clark, 'The Controversy between Determinism and Vitalism in Biology', *FQE*, 1932, 27-46.

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to Calvinist predestination.¹⁰⁹ Vitalism provided a reason to believe that mind and thought had a real existence and could make things happen. It also gave a reason to believe in survival after death. Grubb, in his 1931 essay on Graham's theology,¹¹⁰ grants that vitalism may be 'rather out of fashion now', but questions 'whether belief in survival does not necessitate something of the sort'.¹¹¹ As for John William Graham, one of the last things he wrote embodies a message given in Jesus Lane Meeting on the day of his death, in which he speaks of the ongoing 'struggle in scientific thought between Mechanists and Vitalists', and especially of the fear that scientists may one day create life.¹¹² That would refute any belief that life was a spiritual entity.

When dealing with the question of 'materialism', Graham always maintained a tone of certainty in favour of the unseen; but the fact that the subject recurs as it does betrays a certain nervousness. A notebook of 1886 contains lecture notes that suggest the way he was thinking: 'The Unseen Reality we crave for. [Are we akin to it?]'¹¹³ 'Consciousness from Physics of Brain ... To base Mind on Matter is to base a Certainty upon an Uncertainty',¹¹⁴ and again: 'Our Mind must be Noumenal. It must inhere in the Absolute – in Supreme Being ... Matter is a product of Mind.'¹¹⁵ In *The Divinity*

¹⁰⁹ Clark, 'Controversy', 28.

¹¹⁰ Edward Grubb, 'The Foundations of Quakerism: a Modern View', *FQE*, 1931, 141-151.

¹¹¹ Grubb, 'Foundations', 145.

¹¹² John William Graham, 'The Divine and the Eternal', *Friend*, 4 November, 1932, 956-957.

¹¹³ JWGP, Box 17. [Graham's hooks.]

¹¹⁴ Notebook of 1886, JWGP, Box 17.

¹¹⁵ Notebook of 1886, JWGP, Box 17. See *OCP*, under 'Phenomena and Noumena'. Phenomena are things apprehensible by the senses, noumena are 'things that are thought', especially Platonic Ideas and Forms. Thomas Hodgkin uses the distinction in his early essay,

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in Man, he claimed the support of no less an authority than Plato for ‘the existence of a spiritual world over against materialism’.¹¹⁶ By this time he felt able to assert that nervousness on this score could be consigned to the past:

No one can now, if well informed on current science, have behind his consciousness a nervous fear that all the statements he hears about God and the Soul from religious people are invalid and fanciful, the illusions of some queer material combinations in the grey matter of the brain.¹¹⁷

For the Apostle of Progress ‘materialism’, this most fearsome of dragons spawned by the science of the age, was slain. For some Quakers, however, evolution posed other questions. I now turn to these.

1.4.2. The Problem of Sin¹¹⁸

The close connection between the theology of the Inward Light, newly revived in the Quaker Renaissance,¹¹⁹ and the idea of moral progress is demonstrated in the title of Thomas Hodgkin’s Swarthmore lecture* of 1911: ‘Human Progress and the Inward Light’.¹²⁰ The same subject is touched on by Edward Grubb in *Authority and the Light Within* (1908). Here he explains that the Inward Light, or ‘that of God’ within, enables the conscience, which, unlike the Light, is the product of historical circumstances, to recognise a higher morality when it appears, as with the teachings of Jesus as compared

‘Concerning Grove’s Inaugural Address to the British Association’, *FQE*, 1867, 33-59, 50, where he says the terms are more precise than the English ‘spiritual’ and ‘material’.

¹¹⁶ *DM*, 140.

¹¹⁷ *DM*, 43.

¹¹⁸ See also Hodgkin’s view, 1.5.1, below.

¹¹⁹ Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: OUP, 2001, 280.

¹²⁰ Thomas Hodgkin, *Human Progress and the Inward Light* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1911), London: Headley, 1911.

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with those of the Old Testament.¹²¹ Hodgkin argues in orthodox Quaker fashion that the Light is available even without the knowledge of Christ,¹²² and it is through this Light that the 'age-long ascent of the human race has been accomplished', even though Christians enjoy a privileged understanding of the will and purposes of God through Jesus Christ.¹²³ Graham believed that for everybody 'the Indwelling God is the source of ethics and the centre of religion'. Human beings are not merely products of 'blind, non-moral nature', although that has furnished the 'raw materials' out of which we have been made.¹²⁴ Thus it is that humanity 'has been steadily growing in unselfish sympathy', 'under a beneficent spiritual influence'.¹²⁵

Thus Quakers were able to make use of the idea of the Inward Light to devise an optimistic interpretation of evolutionary doctrine. This would seem to confirm Owen Chadwick's view that the science did not necessarily pose a difficulty for nineteenth-century Christians. Chadwick says, 'the Fall was the easiest of all doctrines to restate': it was simply a matter of inverting the traditional doctrine, and invoking the ideology of progress. 'Christianity represented man as perfect by nature and fallen from his high estate, evolution now showed him vile and savage and rising up "towards perfection

¹²¹ Edward Grubb, *Authority and the Light Within*, London: James Clarke, 1908, 109.

¹²² Early Friends took literally the teaching of John's Gospel that the Light which is Christ 'lighteth every man that cometh into the world' (John, 1:9: see *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls, revised edn., Philadelphia: Religious Society of Friends, 1997, 16). They engaged in controversy with contemporaries who denied that pagans might possess the Light. See for instance, *The Works of James Nayler* (1618-1660), ed. Licia Kuenning, Glenside, PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2003, Vol. I, 331.

¹²³ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 34ff.

¹²⁴ *DM*, 68. See 6.6., below.

¹²⁵ 'War and Evolution', 307.

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or quasi-perfection".¹²⁶ The Inward Light gave added assurance to such belief by suggesting the agency through which the 'ascent' could take place.

Yet the question of evolution in relation to Christianity did not necessarily seem so simple to Quakers of Graham's time. Once again, Edward Grubb is a useful witness. In a chapter on 'Evolution and Redemption' in his *Christianity as Truth*, he writes of the need for an accommodation between the science of evolution and the Christian idea of sin. For Graham sin, though real and serious, was not difficult to understand: it was essentially the residue of instincts from humankind's animal past. After writing in *The Divinity in Man* of some of the more disturbing elements of the natural world he continues:

There is within us, in some suppressed form, a background of lowly, simple instincts, dealing with food and drink, reproduction, heat and cold, health and survival, which need discipline, and whose permitted manifestation in greed, passion and lawless power we recognize as sin.¹²⁷

Earlier in the same book he has stated unequivocally, 'We are not born in sin – the race never fell'; if we sin it is a 'wilful' regression to 'the lower instead of the higher, a step back on the path'.¹²⁸ Graham assumes that the conquest of sin can be achieved by conscious and deliberate striving, by which human beings can grow into their true nature, as intended by God. 'The nature within us which is good, St. George fighting the dragon, is our true nature, to which

¹²⁶ Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind* (the Gifford Lectures in the University of Edinburgh for 1973-4), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973, 186.

¹²⁷ *DM*, 78.

¹²⁸ *DM*, 61.

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we grow more harmonious, more obedient'.¹²⁹ If we fail to struggle, if we allow bad habits to grow on us, we can fall under the power of sin,¹³⁰ but there is, in Graham's theology, no need for divine intervention to set us right, for we are already united with God through his indwelling presence, which is indistinguishable from our own better nature. St Paul could be quoted in support of this view: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you'.¹³¹ 'The at-one-ment of God and Man is according to nature, is the goal of the saints; and sin is mere friction, mere dirt, mere defacement'.¹³² Thus in Graham there are two natures, the lower, which we inherit from our animal past, and the higher, the goal to which we are destined, by virtue of our union with God and Christ.

There was nothing magical about the Atonement.¹³³ In the speech at the Manchester Conference Graham speaks of Christ's sacrifice in terms of its moral power: 'His teaching about self-consecration would have been futile, had it not been carried out by Himself to the bitterest of bitter ends, and so gained power to draw all men to Him'.¹³⁴ He stresses the Pauline doctrine that we should be crucified with Christ, deprecating Bunyan's account in *Pilgrim's Progress* of how Christian finds himself freed from the 'burden' of sin

¹²⁹ *DM*, 61.

¹³⁰ See paper of 9/2/1890, 'Consequences of Sin', JWGP, Box 17.

¹³¹ *DM*, 62. See Philippians 2: 12-13.

¹³² *DM*, 250.

¹³³ See 2.9., below.

¹³⁴ The Society of Friends, *Report of the Proceedings of the Conference of Members of the Society of Friends, held, by Direction of the Yearly Meeting, in Manchester - from Eleventh to Fifteenth of Eleventh Month, 1895*, London: Headley, 1896, 244.

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when he looks on the Cross:¹³⁵ 'We no longer think of sin as a burden on the back which we need the sight of the cross to magically lose – we regard sin rather as a law in our members from which we are to be redeemed by being crucified with Christ to the lusts which war against the soul'.¹³⁶

Grubb, by contrast, finds a significance in Bunyan's story in accord with a 'modern' interpretation of atonement that takes evolution into account. In the chapter on 'Evolution and Redemption' in his *Christianity as Truth*,¹³⁷ he stresses 'the blackness of sin', the 'Divine holiness that is hurt by it' and the 'forgiving love' that is its only remedy.¹³⁸ As in Graham's account, the power of the cross is the appeal it makes to the heart, but whereas for Graham sin is 'mere dirt', for Grubb it is bondage to self, 'the heaviest burden a man can bear'.¹³⁹ It may also be the case that Grubb, writing towards the end of the 1920s, was more sensitive than Graham to a shift in the national psyche away from implicit faith in progress towards a greater sense of human helplessness. According to Bowler, by the 1930s, 'Modernism was discredited, and the more traditional interpretations once again seemed plausible: humanity was indeed deeply flawed and needed a divine source of salvation, just as Christianity had always maintained'.¹⁴⁰ Thus for Grubb it is not that human beings are emerging from a bestial past with some soil as it were, sticking to their fur:

¹³⁵ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* [1678], ed. Roger Sharrock, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981, 69-70.

¹³⁶ 'Mysticism', *Friends Intelligencer*, Supplement, Sept. 1912, 17, JWGP, Box 16.

¹³⁷ Edward Grubb, *Christianity as Truth*, London: Swarthmore Press, 1928, Chapter 5, 107-131,

¹³⁸ Grubb, *Christianity as Truth*, 130.

¹³⁹ Grubb, *Christianity as Truth*, 130.

¹⁴⁰ Bowler, *Reconciling*, 24.

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rather, '*Something has gone wrong* and needs setting right'.¹⁴¹ Somewhere along the path of evolution, when human beings acquired self-consciousness and hence the power of choice, they took a wrong turning. Redemption means that God in Christ intervenes to put human beings back on the upward track.

It was not just a matter of changing times, however. Thirty and more years before the publication of *Christianity as Truth*, a series of essays appeared in the *British Friend*, under the pseudonym, 'Spes', on the subject of 'Christ and Evolution'.¹⁴² It is possible that 'Spes' is Edward Grubb, who was about to become *de facto* editor of the *British Friend*,¹⁴³ for he takes a similar view of the relation between evolution and the Christian concept of sin and redemption, already maintaining a theological position at variance with the progressivism of Graham.¹⁴⁴ 'Spes' goes so far as to assert that 'the "modern thought" of the world is founded mainly on the idea of Evolution; the thought of Christianity on the idea of Sin'.¹⁴⁵ In some ways, the 'Spes' essays are more thorough-going than *Christianity as Truth* in probing the challenge to Christianity posed by evolutionary theory: there is more of a sense of wrestling with intractable material. 'Spes' sees that 'physical Evolution cannot

¹⁴¹ Grubb, *Christianity as Truth*, 107.

¹⁴² *BF*, January – September, 1895: 6-9; 32-34; 52-54; 84-86; 131-133; 206-208; 233-236.

¹⁴³ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 174.

¹⁴⁴ Edward H. Milligan believes that 'Spes' may well be Grubb: his 'name is one that would naturally occur to one in relation to a series of articles on "Christ and Evolution" (private communication).

¹⁴⁵ 'Christ and Evolution', 32. On the difficulties for the Christian view of sin posed by evolutionary theory see F.W.H. Myers, 'Charles Darwin and Agnosticism', in his *Science and a Future Life*, London: Macmillan, 1893, 51-75, 56-58.

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recognise free will' and therefore cannot recognise sin as 'the assertion of finite independence and self-will against the order of the universe'.¹⁴⁶ It was therefore necessary to assert that the evolution of the human being, a creature possessing a will, cannot be explained in purely physical terms: the 'violation of nature' which is sin 'is of course only possible to a being who is something more (or less) than natural'.¹⁴⁷ To this we may compare Graham's statement, quoting Alfred Russel Wallace as authority, that 'a superior intelligence has guided the development of man in a definite direction, and for a special purpose, just as man guides the development of many animal and vegetable forms'.¹⁴⁸ Graham differs from 'Spes' in propounding a view of human evolution that is entirely positive: 'When man reached self-consciousness he was no longer a blind agent, a victim to Nature's process of Selection, but could also aid her and himself by walking in safe paths, and be, in some sort, a co-worker with God'.¹⁴⁹ There is no need for an external Redeemer.

Graham and Grubb (and 'Spes') were united in putting the best of their intellectual energy into defending a version of Christianity against godless or materialistic theories of evolution. There was nothing simple or obvious about

¹⁴⁶ 'Christ and Evolution', 33. Cf. essay by A.J. Clark, cited in 1.4.1., above.,

¹⁴⁷ 'Christ and Evolution', 33.

¹⁴⁸ 'War and Evolution, a paper read at the Friends' Conference, Asbury Park, 1902', 307, JWGP, Box 7. The quotation is taken from Wallace, 'The Limits of Natural Selection as applied to man' in his *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection*, London: Macmillan, 1870, cited by Michael Ruse, *The Darwinian Revolution: Science Red in Tooth and Claw*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979, 246. See also Alister Hardy, *Darwin and the Spirit of Man*, London: Collins, 1984, 72-76. Hardy is committed to the view that human beings are spiritual creatures. But cf. 1.3.2., above.

¹⁴⁹ 'War and Evolution', 307.

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the defence, although Graham could sometimes make it seem as if there were. Grubb's endeavour to meet the challenge suggests a slight corrective to Bowler's generalisation about early twentieth-century attempts at constructing a synthesis between the scientific and the religious world-views, where he says that such a synthesis 'depended on a degree of theological liberalism that many orthodox Christians regarded as a complete betrayal'.¹⁵⁰ Grubb is an example of a Christian who combined a liberal view of the Bible and ecclesiastical authority¹⁵¹ with a firm attachment to the doctrine of atonement, however much he might seek to reinterpret it. His 'synthesis' of Christianity and evolutionary theory leaves what many would consider the doctrinal heart of Christianity unchanged: the reality and gravity of sin as rebellion against God and nature and hence the need for redemption, and the 'supernatural' intervention of God as redeemer in the person of Jesus Christ.¹⁵²

Renaissance Quakers as represented by Grubb and Graham faced up to the challenges posed by evolutionary theory by demonstrating that Quakerism was adaptable enough to embrace a modern scientific outlook. In my next section I revert to the subject of progress, not necessarily linked with biological evolution, as it figures in representative Quaker writings, and consider how the approaches of Quakers to the subject changed over time.

¹⁵⁰ Bowler, *Reconciling Science and Religion*, 4.

¹⁵¹ See Edward Grubb, *Authority and the Light Within*, London: James Clarke, 1908, *passim*.

¹⁵² It is actually 'Spes' who uses the word 'supernatural' (in his fourth essay, 'Christ and the supernatural'), but for Grubb too it is God in Christ who works redemption, doing for human beings what they could not do for themselves

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1.5. Quakers and Progress

1.5.1. Thomas Hodgkin (1831-1913)

Among Quakers of Graham's time who dealt explicitly with progress, its nature and conditions, was Thomas Hodgkin, lawyer and author of weighty books on history.¹⁵³ Hodgkin features in Geoffrey Cantor's *Quakers, Jews and Science* as being early among the Quakers to address questions raised by the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859. (Cantor argues that Quakers were slow to grapple with the challenges of the new evolutionary theory, partly because they were preoccupied with internal matters and partly because at the time they were still predominantly evangelical and uneasy at any challenge to biblical literalism.)¹⁵⁴ In the first number of the Quaker periodical *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*¹⁵⁵ (1867) there appeared an essay by Hodgkin on the question of human ancestry and whether the new science is compatible with Christian faith. Hodgkin uses the dialogue form, which allows him to avoid declaring his own position, though his bias in favour of the new science is evident. One of the interlocutors, Arthur, asserts that the Bible 'is really God's own story of creation, but told through an unscientific messenger to a half-barbarous people'.¹⁵⁶ This is close to Hodgkin's pronouncement in his Manchester Conference speech that 'the Hebrew Scriptures, infinitely

¹⁵³ Notably, *Italy and her Invaders*, 8 vols., 1880-99; *The History of England: from the Earliest Times to the Norman Conquest*, 1906.. For Hodgkin's life see Louise Creighton, *Life and Letters of Thomas Hodgkin*, London: Longmans, 1917.

¹⁵⁴ Cantor, *Quakers, Jews*, 249-50.

¹⁵⁵ Thomas Hodgkin, 'Concerning Grove's Inaugural Address to the British Association', *FQE*, 1, 1867, 33-59. See also Cantor, 'Quaker responses to Darwin', *Osiris*, 16, 2001, 321-42.

¹⁵⁶ Hodgkin, 'Grove's Inaugural Address', 47. Quoted by Cantor, *Quakers, Jews and Science*, 261.

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precious for the spiritual truths that they contain, are the work of men in a state of childish ignorance ... as to the real constitution and past history of the universe',¹⁵⁷ except that here he omits any reference to God's authorship. He emphatically accepts Darwin's account of the evolution of the human species, while just as emphatically insisting that the new view is perfectly consistent with Christian belief.¹⁵⁸ He laments that some scientists have become antagonistic even to 'Theism' and still more 'towards that great series of spiritual phenomena which makes up the Christian revelation'. Meanwhile 'defenders of revelation' have set their face against scientific advance: Thomas Huxley, in his 'young days', had found his researches blocked by signs saying, 'No road this way, trespassers beware'.¹⁵⁹ It was now time to do away with such impediments to scientific enquiry.

Sixteen years after his appearance at the Manchester Conference Hodgkin took up the theme of progress in his Swarthmore lecture* of 1911, *Human Progress and the Inward Light*.¹⁶⁰ By this time Hodgkin can assume that 'the great majority of educated men' believe 'the history of organic life . . .

¹⁵⁷ The Society of Friends, *Report of the Proceedings of the Conference of Members of the Society of Friends, held, by Direction of the Yearly Meeting, in Manchester -from Eleventh to Fifteenth of Eleventh Month, 1895*. London: Headley Brothers, 1896; Thomas Hodgkin, Chairman, 'The Attitude of the Society of Friends towards Modern Thought', 203-209, 208.

¹⁵⁸ Hodgkin, 'Modern Thought', 207.

¹⁵⁹ Hodgkin, quoting Huxley, 'Modern Thought', 208. For one of Graham's charges at Dalton Hall Huxley was the 'happy warrior', the 'champion of evolution, and may we not say of truth, against the forces of ignorance and superstition personified by Bishop Wilberforce ... Gladstone, General Booth'. Huxley is extolled for his 'love of truth, his devotion to its principles and the hope for its progress', *The Daltonian*, Vol. 1, 1900-01, No. 2, 55, 56.

¹⁶⁰ Thomas Hodgkin, *Human Progress and the Inward Light* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1911), London: Headley, 1911.

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to have been one of constant development and change'.¹⁶¹ On the question of sin and progress, Hodgkin takes a position intermediate between Graham and Grubb. Sin is in part to be equated with 'that old beast life' from which humankind emerged,¹⁶² which suggests that humankind will outgrow it.

Unlike Graham, however, Hodgkin thinks that sin can take a 'darker, subtler, more malignant' form than regression to brute instincts,¹⁶³ which means that God has work to do. The whole creation 'groans and travails' in St Paul's words,¹⁶⁴ as the creative energy of God works towards 'the new-making of myriads of human beings in the likeness of the All-Holy One'.¹⁶⁵ There is nothing automatic about this. Humankind is to be raised to the higher level that God has appointed for it by means of the Inward Light, known alike to Socrates, as his 'daemon', with its restraining power, and to Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims, who, despite the many corruptions in these religions, have some genuine glimpses of the divine.¹⁶⁶ The Light is a sure guide, but God leaves it to us to follow or neglect it.¹⁶⁷ And there was still a necessity for the more complete revelation in Christ, which also calls for the active response of human wills.¹⁶⁸

Hodgkin is less interested than Grubb or 'Spes' in sin and the need for a redeemer. It is indeed a gain that humankind is now more concerned with

¹⁶¹ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 10.

¹⁶² Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 13.

¹⁶³ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 16.

¹⁶⁴ Romans, 8:22.

¹⁶⁵ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 22.

¹⁶⁶ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 31, 36.

¹⁶⁷ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 43.

¹⁶⁸ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 37.

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the improvement of society than in morbid analysis of the state of its soul.¹⁶⁹ Progress is mainly a matter of knowledge: moral improvement comes from willed attention to what has been revealed. Hodgkin does not see a steady progress towards perfection in society. Gains include 'the theoretical abolition of slavery'; but because so much of white men's dealing with our 'dark-skinned brethren' has been selfish and predatory slavery is all too apt to creep back.¹⁷⁰ For Hodgkin it is axiomatic that white men are higher on the evolutionary scale than black, but they have proportionally greater obligations, which they discharge ill: 'Here are we, to whom the ten talents of intellect have been given, while the African and the Polynesian has had to be content with one'. But all too often representatives of civilisation have plundered, exterminated, debased the 'Kaffirs or the Maoris' with whom they have come in contact by introducing among them alcohol and other 'civilised' vices. 'All this is certainly contrary to the eternal purpose, and, for all this, "civilization", unless it mends its ways, will one day have to give an account'.¹⁷¹ God has endowed human beings with the 'Inward Light' to show them the way ahead, so that it is indeed God who brings about progress, but since He has given them free will, progress is contingent on their will and action.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 63, 64.

¹⁷⁰ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 66

¹⁷¹ Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 66.

¹⁷² Hodgkin, *Human Progress*, 42-3.

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1.5.2. William Charles Braithwaite (1862-1922)

This same sense that science was leading humankind into an enlightened future is to be found in an essay by W.C. Braithwaite, published in the year of the Manchester Conference under the title 'Some Present-Day Aims of the Society of Friends'.¹⁷³ Here Braithwaite exudes optimism, with respect both to the future of Quakers in England and to the wider society. Advances in science are holy revelations: 'Every fresh sight of truth is part of the revelation which the living Spirit of Christ is making to the world to-day'.¹⁷⁴ And the scientific spirit, applied to ancient texts and dogmas, is leading to a new and fuller understanding of religious truth: 'Revelation of truth advances; has an evolution, a growth; escapes from one imperfect expression of words into another more adequate one; ... expands as our capacity for it expands'.¹⁷⁵

And the growth is in morality, not only in knowledge: 'As Mr. Kidd¹⁷⁶ points out ... all classes of English society are becoming more and more intolerant of suffering and injustice'.¹⁷⁷ Kidd was a writer Quakers felt they should engage with: his vision of evolutionary human progress included the idea that religion, which he identified with an 'extra-rational force' prompting

¹⁷³ W.C. Braithwaite, 'Some Present-Day Aims of the Society of Friends', *FQE*, 1895, 321-341 ('Introductory address, given August 5th, 1916, at the Woodbrooke Summer School on "Progress in History"').

¹⁷⁴ Braithwaite, 'Present-Day Aims', 325.

¹⁷⁵ Braithwaite, 'Present-Day Aims', 327.

¹⁷⁶ Benjamin Kidd (1858-1916), author of *Social Evolution*, 1894, new edn. with a new preface, New York: Macmillan, 1895. Kidd is the subject of a book-length study by Paul Crook, *Benjamin Kidd: Portrait of a Social Darwinist*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. *Social Evolution* was approvingly reviewed in the *British Friend* by W.H.F. Alexander (*BF*, August, 1894, 246-8) and mentioned by Grubb in his review of Kidd's *Control of the Tropics*, New York: Macmillan, 1898 (*BF*, March 1899, 53-54) (not a review of *Social Evolution*, as Kennedy says it is).

¹⁷⁷ Braithwaite, 'Present-Day Aims', 334.

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human beings to altruistic behaviour, is a power favoured by natural selection.¹⁷⁸

Unlike Graham's, Braithwaite's optimism, was, by 1916, much tempered by the realities of the Great War. This appears in his essay of 1916, 'Controlling Factors of Progress'.¹⁷⁹ He begins with a nod to Darwin, by writing of 'natural selection', whereby 'the types of man survive that best suit and respond to their surroundings',¹⁸⁰ but quickly turns to the more uplifting thought 'that the inner world of life – the force that we call personality . . . is continually moulding and changing and mastering the outer world in which man finds himself'.¹⁸¹ Braithwaite does not consider the possibility that non-human creatures may also modify their world. Again, as with Hodgkin, it is a matter of the will.

Braithwaite's picture of world history in this essay is essentially secular, even though he writes of the contribution of the Jewish people, with their 'faith in God', to complement the Greeks' 'faith in human nature',¹⁸² the two faiths combining in Christianity. Western Europe is the heir to these trends, along with 'the organizing forces expressed through Rome'. There is no law-driven

¹⁷⁸ This is the point taken from the book by W.H.F. Alexander in his review of *Social Evolution* (p.247). See also Grubb's review of Kidd's *Control of the Tropics* (1899). Grubb objected to Kidd's identification of 'reason' with self-regard, claiming that 'True reason, in its widest sense, is the Universal Consciousness within us; it is God thinking His thoughts in man' (Grubb, *Authority*, 100). See also 'Spes', in 'Christ and Evolution', *BF*, January, 1895, 8.

¹⁷⁹ W.C. Braithwaite, 'Controlling Factors of Progress', *FQE*, Vol. 50 (1916), 435-448.

¹⁸⁰ 'Controlling Factors', 435.

¹⁸¹ 'Controlling Factors', 435.

¹⁸² 'Controlling Factors', 444.

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march of progress here. Quoting Henry Maine,¹⁸³ he points out that all past civilisations had reached a point of atrophy, of halted progress.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, there was no reason to assume that progress in a moral sense was taking place in England or in Europe. Current events would seem to give the lie to any such assumption: 'Europe is a slaughter-house because material progress has outstripped moral growth'.¹⁸⁵ Braithwaite finds a measure of hope for Britain in 'John Bull's' 'habit of vigilance where his freedom is concerned', seeing in this 'the best and perhaps the only guarantee for his further progress'. But this is far indeed from a belief in universal human progress under divine direction.

1.5.3. T. Edmund Harvey (1875-1955)

My next example of Quakers writing about progress, T. Edmund Harvey, distances himself even more emphatically than Braithwaite from the certainty of Spencer and his followers. His Swarthmore lecture* of 1921, *The Long Pilgrimage: Human Progress in the Light of the Christian Hope*,¹⁸⁶ begins with lamenting the condition of Europe at the time, devastated by war and by widespread extreme poverty and suffering from a despairing sense that its civilisation is on the point of collapse.¹⁸⁷ He tends towards a cyclical rather

¹⁸³ Sir Henry Maine (1822-1888), Author of *Ancient History* (1861). For Maine see Burrow, *Evolution and Society*, 137-178.

¹⁸⁴ 'Controlling Factors', 442.

¹⁸⁵ 'Controlling Factors', 436.

¹⁸⁶ T. Edmund Harvey, *The Long Pilgrimage: Human Progress in the Light of the Christian Hope* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1921), published for the Woodbrooke Extension Committee by Robert Davis, 1921.

¹⁸⁷ *Long Pilgrimage*, 9-12.

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than a progressive view of history, citing Dean Inge¹⁸⁸ on the way civilisations and empires come and go,¹⁸⁹ but this does not temper his sense of crisis, of 'decline and fall', not alleviated by a sense of new life to come. He anticipates more recent writers such as Bowler and Nisbet,¹⁹⁰ citing authorities who point out that belief in inevitable progress is of relatively recent origin, not taking full hold until the nineteenth century, when 'the doctrine of development and the theory of evolution brought a still greater extension to the conception of progress'.¹⁹¹ Harvey pays particular attention to Herbert Spencer, quoting him extensively on the inevitability of progress and drawing attention to his widespread and lasting influence. It was time now, in Harvey's view, to put to rest Spencer's ideas about 'the inevitable action of necessary laws' leading to a condition in which mankind must obtain ever growing knowledge, power and happiness'.¹⁹² Instead Harvey brings in a much older concept, that of the Kingdom of God, which is both a present reality and yet to come.¹⁹³ Progress, if it occurs, comes through accumulation of good effects over time: Harvey describes how an 'unseen and unrecorded influence' may 'raise us from our lower selves to a new level, and thus work towards the fuller realisation of the Kingdom'.¹⁹⁴ The visions of the Kingdom in Old and New Testaments give us

¹⁸⁸ For William Ralph ('Dean') Inge (1860–1954) see 4.2., below. Here Harvey cites Inge's Romanes Lecture of 1920, *The Idea of Progress* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920).

¹⁸⁹ *Long Pilgrimage*, 18,19.

¹⁹⁰ See 1.1., above.

¹⁹¹ *Long Pilgrimage*, 14,15. Harvey refers particularly to a book by John Bagnell Bury (1861–1927), *The Idea of Progress: an Inquiry into its Origin and Growth*, London: Macmillan, 1920.

¹⁹² *Long Pilgrimage*, 17.

¹⁹³ *Long Pilgrimage*, 29-31

¹⁹⁴ *Long Pilgrimage*, 42.

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the hope we need to continue to strive for a better world.¹⁹⁵ But, under God's guidance, progress must be achieved through the faithful service of individuals, working in communities towards a more general improvement.¹⁹⁶ There are no laws of progress.

1.5.4. Howard Brinton (1884-1973)

Another Quaker writer, the American Howard Brinton, in an essay published in *The Friend* only a few days after Graham's death in October 1932, wrote of 'Quakerism and Progress'¹⁹⁷ in even darker terms. He finds the optimism surrounding the current Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago 'somewhat absurd'. If there has been progress it has been merely 'progress in the making of machines. . . In no other field can Chicago claim significant advance'.¹⁹⁸ The failure to progress morally reaches far beyond Chicago. Science itself, endorsed so confidently by Hodgkin and Braithwaite as an instrument of progress, has now undermined the very confidence it at first inspired:

Science has long since broken through the outer and temporal defences of faith – sacred books, institutions, creeds and traditions. It has now pierced us to the core and psycho-analysed our inmost feelings.¹⁹⁹ There appears to be little left of conceit and self-sufficiency. What a strange contradiction! It is through science that we have proclaimed a god-like control over

¹⁹⁵ *Long Pilgrimage*, 29, 66.

¹⁹⁶ *Long Pilgrimage*, 52.

¹⁹⁷ Howard Brinton, 'Quakerism and Progress', *Friend*, 21 October, 1932, 895-897. Graham died 17 October.

¹⁹⁸ 'Quakerism and Progress', 895. Rabindranath Tagore, addressing London Yearly Meeting in 1930, also deplored a vainglorious self-satisfaction based on advanced 'machinery' (see 8.9., below).

¹⁹⁹ For the impact of psychology on religion see also C.G. Naish, 'Psychology and Progressive Religion'. *FQE*, 1919, 50-59.

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nature, and it is through the same science that we reduce ourselves to the very nature we seek to control. Man is to-day a pitiable figure. Driven back on himself because he has lost his material goods, he looks into his soul and finds it empty. No wonder it is an age of doubt and bewilderment.²⁰⁰

The Apostle of Progress was dead: Brinton conveys a sense that the belief in progress by which he was animated was dead too.

1.6. Conclusion

Evolutionary theory continued to trouble thoughtful Quakers, like other liberal Christians, well into the twentieth century. Whereas in the early part of the nineteenth century Christians generally welcomed science as an ally, revealing the work of God as beneficent Designer of a universe where order and fitness reigned,²⁰¹ the impact of evolutionary science threw into doubt the existence of an all-powerful, benevolent Creator, while John Tyndall, W.K. Clifford and others raised the question of the existence of any reality beyond the material. Even those who succeeded in clinging to belief in God and in Christ could be left wondering about such points as the nature of sin and the need for a divine Redeemer. Among Quakers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Edward Grubb, and 'Spes', if they are different, are exemplars of this type of questioning.

²⁰⁰ 'Quakerism and Progress', 896

²⁰¹ See Cantor, *Quakers, Jews*, 248, on the unavoidable change in attitudes to the relation of science to Christianity that took place around the middle of the nineteenth century. For more on such changes see D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, London: Unwin Hyman, 1989, 57, Desmond and Moore, *Darwin*, 77.

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Evolutionary theory could, however, be used to underpin a belief in progress, or 'general meliorism' as William James put it,²⁰² and most nineteenth-century thinkers, Christian or otherwise, subscribed to such a belief. It is clear, however, that even in the nineteenth century belief in progress was not unqualified. Darwin's theory, rightly understood, as by T.H. Huxley, offered no guarantee of progress, no sense of movement towards a blessed future. Tylor and Morgan doubted whether the advance of 'civilisation' necessarily meant an advance in morality. Spencer's early writings could indeed fuel optimism about the future of humankind, but by the end of the century his arguments had ceased to convince even their author.²⁰³

Although the Quakers' Manchester Conference of 1895 took place at the very time that Victorian confidence in progress was beginning to wane, Quakers such as Hodgkin and W.C. Braithwaite as well as Graham were buoyed by the sense that their Society was at last ready to adopt the insights of 'modern thought' and to take a leading part in developing a more 'real', less formal approach to religion,²⁰⁴ guided by the Inward Light.²⁰⁵ It was still possible for them to see science and the new approaches to the Bible as agents of progress towards a better future. But for some this sense was not sustainable. Hodgkin in 1911, Braithwaite in 1916, express a deepening

²⁰² James, *Varieties*, p.104. See 2.1., above.

²⁰³ Mingardi writes of Spencer's disillusion in old age, as he found 'the *Zeitgeist* ... turn during his own lifetime against what he considered to be the true endpoint of political evolution – namely a freer society' (Mingardi *Herbert Spencer*, 110).

²⁰⁴ See Braithwaite, 'Present-Day Aims', 335.

²⁰⁵ See J.W. Graham's speech to the Manchester Conference, *Proceedings*, 241.

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disillusionment. T.E. Harvey and Howard Brinton, who had not been present at the Conference, writing in 1925 and 1932 respectively, have lost any sense of progress as inevitable, although they can still appeal to Friends to draw moral inspiration from their traditions and thus bring in some improvements. Brinton saw hope in Quakerism's 'fusion of mystical insight and social activity out of which a divine-human society may emerge'.²⁰⁶

Thus there can be seen in these four instances of Quaker approaches to the question of progress an increasing scepticism about the inevitability of progress as envisaged by social scientists like Spencer and Kidd, anthropologists like Tylor, or the Whig historians considered by Bowler.²⁰⁷ Hodgkin and Harvey both see progress in religious terms: it is to come about through faithfulness to the Inward Light, or, in Harvey, through personal transformation and the influence of individuals working in community. Braithwaite, in the essay of 1895, addressed to Quakers, propounds a more secular view, but also ultimately appeals to personal qualities as the resource on which progress depends:

For progress is essentially movement towards a higher goal than humanity has yet reached. Civilization should be dynamic with mental and moral growth – the mind of man developing the resources of knowledge in an atmosphere of freedom, the soul of man continually discovering and practising fresh truth.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ 'Quakerism and Progress', 897.

²⁰⁷ See 1.3.2., above.

²⁰⁸ Braithwaite, 'Controlling Factors', 448.

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Brinton is far from John William Graham's hopefulness about the industrial age. Yet he actually gives some insight into the way Graham's progressivism worked in practice when he writes, 'Observation of the evolutionary process has led me to believe that we can go forward only by occasionally going backward'.²⁰⁹ In the chapters which follow I shall have cause to remark on how Graham often goes back in order to go forward, most significantly in seeking inspiration from the New Testament and from the annals of early Quakerism for his sense of where the world in general as well as the Quakers should be heading, but also in his loyalty to mentors of an earlier generation, Tennyson, Ruskin, Myers.²¹⁰ He retained a belief in progress formed in his younger days, when Spencer was still revered.²¹¹ His evolutionary hope continued to be nourished by his devout reading of 'In Memoriam' under the copper beech at Bootham School.²¹² In Graham's later years this was old-fashioned. Forward thinking in him was impeded by his habit of incorporating sections of earlier writings in later ones,²¹³ without much sense that times had changed. In an essay of 1932 he referred back to a book published in 1912, maintaining that his position had not changed, even though there is an apparent contradiction between his earlier and his later

²⁰⁹ 'Quakerism and Progress', 897.

²¹⁰ See H.G. Wood, 'John William Graham as a Religious thinker', *FQE*, 1933, 102-112, 104.

²¹¹ Spencer fell out of favour towards the end of the nineteenth century. See article by Jose Harris in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed 5 December, 2011.

²¹² Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever', 4.24.

²¹³ See for example 5.8., 7.1., below.

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views.²¹⁴ Paradoxically, Graham remained to the end of his days the 'Quaker Apostle of Progress' by virtue of clinging to a Victorian world-view.

The reason for this tendency in Graham may be connected with the fact that he developed his Quaker theology in reaction against evangelicalism. He seized on the tools that came ready to hand during the 1880s to construct a system of belief robust enough to stand as a viable alternative to evangelicalism, and then clung to these tools. The next chapter describes the religious scene, especially among Quakers, as Graham found it in the early 1880s and traces the ways in which he distanced himself from it.

²¹⁴ 'Gandhi in India', *FQE*, 1932, 280-287, 283.

2. Evangelicals

CHAPTER 2. HAMMER OF THE EVANGELICALS

2.1. Introduction

John William Graham needs to be seen in terms of his lifelong reaction against the evangelicalism which dominated the Quaker movement in Britain during his formative years. For Graham the Calvinism of Fox's day and the evangelicalism of his own were equivalent: both strait-jackets from which essential Quakerism had to break free. He and his peers were at one with George Fox in throwing off their bonds:

[Fox's] *Journal* does not tell us much of the exact nature of his spiritual and intellectual difficulties, but knowing how he went into the experience and how he came out, we shall not be far wrong in believing that he felt the whole edifice of Calvinistic belief crumbling within him. The claims of the literal Bible and the claims of the authoritative Church and its horrible Hereafter were being torn from his sensitive soul in a way, and with a suffering, which many of us do not need to have explained to us.¹

Graham was probably subjected to some evangelical training from his mother, who spent many years at the notoriously evangelical Ackworth School,² even though his uncle William was prominent among those who preferred the 'ancient way' of quietism*,³ and it is likely that his father Michael

¹ John W. Graham, *The Faith of a Quaker*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920 (FQ), 91.

² See Introduction, 'Early life and education' above,

³ See Edward H. Milligan, ' "The Ancient Way": the Conservative Tradition in Nineteenth Century British Quakerism', *JFHS*, 57 (1994), 74-97, 81. According to a biographer of Rufus Jones, William Graham was the 'elderly Quaker' who figures in an incident which has entered into Quaker legend. The story is that when Jones was visiting Graham's meeting in Birmingham in 1886 he began his ministry* with the words 'Since sitting in this meeting I have

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followed the same course, if in a less vocal way.⁴ In the 1870s, when Graham himself was at Ackworth, the evangelical influence was still strong.⁵ Then as a student at the University of London in 1880-1881⁶ and subsequently at Cambridge he came into contact with agnosticism, and was forced to rethink his religious assumptions. In the end he was able to stay within the Quaker fold by dint of rejecting, as alien invaders, many of the evangelical tendencies that had coloured the Quakerism of the nineteenth century.

This chapter relates Graham's crisis of faith⁷ to his persistent stance as 'Hammer of the Evangelicals'.⁸ It draws on works by David Bebbington and others to present a view of the nature of evangelicalism in Graham's time and how it had developed and diversified since the days of John Wesley and Thomas Chalmers. Bebbington defines evangelicalism in terms of four

been thinking...' After the meeting Graham told him 'Thou shouldst not have been thinking.' This illustrates, as Jones understood, the quietist requirement that utterance must come directly from the Divine Spirit within and not from any mental activity on the part of the utterer (Elizabeth Gray Vining, *Friend for Life: the Biography of Rufus Jones*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1958, 49).

⁴ As a young man Michael Graham wrote solemnly to William concerning his choice of bride: 'I can sincerely desire that thou mayest be kept from taking one step further without a sanction from within'. This indicates that he was well versed in the 'ancient way' of listening to inner prompting.

⁵ See Introduction, 'Determining factors in Graham's life', above. Michael Graham states that his father remembered his two years there as 'a favourite time'.

⁶ For London University see Introduction, 'Determining factors in Graham's life', above, and note.

⁷ See Introduction, 'Early life and education', above.

⁸ Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: OUP, 2001, 150.

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characteristic and persistent emphases: they are 'Bible, Cross, Conversion, Activism'.⁹ These are used as reference points in what follows.

In distancing themselves from evangelicals modernising Quakers dwelt most on the Cross, or rather, theories of atonement, and the Bible: the nature and extent of its authority. I consider how Graham and Quaker contemporaries interpreted the place of evangelicalism in Quaker history. I show how Graham's active campaigning against the acceptance of the Richmond Declaration, or 'creed', by London Yearly Meeting, and his visits to American Friends, especially that of 1896, were stages in a campaign to establish a form of Quakerism free from the 'errors' introduced notably by Joseph John Gurney (1788-1847). I show how Graham's enduring opposition to evangelicalism coloured his theology, as expressed particularly in *The Faith of a Quaker* (1920) and *The Divinity in Man* (1927). In all this I emphasise his position as 'Apostle of progress': evangelicalism was, for Graham, on many counts an obstacle to progress, a demon to be exorcised before either the Society of Friends or the wider society could move forward to its divinely appointed goal.

⁹ D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, London: Unwin Hyman, 1989, 2; D.W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: the Age of Spurgeon and Moody*, Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2005, 21.

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2.2. Evangelicalism through the Nineteenth Century

Graham's most succinct account of evangelicalism is given in his Swarthmore Lecture,* *The Quaker Ministry*. Here he says,

The Evangelicals held that mankind had fallen, in Adam & Eve, into a state of ruin, that each of us was born in sin, and had, unless rescued, no prospect, after a lamentable life on earth, but everlasting torment in the undying fires of Hell; that to the rescue God in his mercy came in Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, on whose atoning merits, won by his shed blood and legally credited to the believer, he could be sure of everlasting bliss in a Heaven, exactly described in the apocalypse of John. The Trinity was central to the system. All this was miraculously revealed in the Bible, written by the finger of God, entirely free from error and above moral criticism. All of it had to be believed as a condition of salvation; and after that the rest was easy, too easy indeed under the doctrine of imputed righteousness.¹⁰

This was an Aunt Sally erected by Graham to be knocked down rather than a sufficient or accurate account of evangelicalism. Graham indeed grants, in *The Faith of a Quaker*, that evangelicalism has moved away from the positions he attacks over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to the extent that the term has lost any precise meaning.¹¹ The cruel nature of the old belief system has been softened: a change that Graham attributes to 'the spirit of divine love, aided by the growth of literary and scientific knowledge'.¹² The change noted by Graham has been extensively documented by later historians, notably Boyd Hilton and David

¹⁰ John W. Graham, *The Quaker Ministry* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1925) London: Swarthmore Press, 1925 (QM), 54. There is a slightly more detailed exposition in FQ, 404-405, but the essential points of this 'terrible theology' (FQ, 404) are here.

¹¹ FQ, 405.

¹² FQ, 405.

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Bebbington,¹³ though without reference to divine love. According to Bebbington, in the course of the nineteenth century, 'the predominant idea of God changed from judge to Father; the atonement was subject to reinterpretation; the incarnation came into greater prominence; and hell lost much of its power.'¹⁴ Meanwhile some sectors of the Evangelical Movement experienced a new emotional fervour. Preachers such as the American, Dwight L. Moody, and his companion, the hymn-writer Ira D. Sankey, who accompanied him on his visits to Britain, as well as the English Baptist, Charles Haddon Spurgeon made a conscious and deliberate appeal to the emotions.¹⁵ The new emotionalism might bring about religious 'revivals', notably the Welsh Revival of 1904-5.¹⁶

Quakers' response to the Welsh Revival was generally positive – they were struck by the spontaneity of the revival meetings and their similarity, bar the singing, to Quaker meetings.¹⁷ One Quaker observer, W.G. Hall, also noted a difference between this revival and that of 1859, in keeping with the trend noted above: 'In that revival punishment of sin predominated in all the

¹³ Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: the Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1785-1865*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1988; Bebbington, *Evangelicalism, and Dominance*.

¹⁴ Bebbington, *Dominance*, 171.

¹⁵ Bebbington, *Dominance*, 37ff., 38.

¹⁶ See C. R. Williams, 'The Welsh Religious Revival, 1904-5', *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Sep., 1952), 242-259. See also Owain Gethin Evans, *"Benign Neglect": the Quakers and Wales c.1860-1918*, Wrexham: Bridge Books, 2014, Chapter 4: 'The Welsh Revival, 1904-1905'.

¹⁷ Charles Linney, 'The Revival in Wales', *Friend*, 16 December, 1904, 828. See also Edward J. Gitre, 'The 1904-05 Welsh Revival: Modernization, Technologies, and Techniques of the Self', *Church History*, Vol. 73, No. 4, December, 2004, 792-827, 818, for a description of meetings suggestive of the ideal, spirit-led Quaker meeting..

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utterances; this is a revival of the Gospel of love'.¹⁸ Graham was moved to write to the *Manchester Guardian* defending the right of the leader, Evan Roberts, to claim the authority of the Holy Spirit for what he was doing.¹⁹

Graham was sympathetic towards genuine fervour even where he could not approve the theology. Thus on a visit to Italy in 1884 he was moved by the sight of 'women throbbing with emotion at the confessional'.²⁰ When he met a group of devotees at Keswick in 1892 he 'felt at home at once, among 'so many people who had evidently been born to be definitely and emotionally devout'.²¹ The Keswick Convention was founded by Hannah Whitall Smith and her husband, Richard Pearsall Smith, American Quakers associated with the holiness movement.²² Helen Balkwill Harris, wife of Rendel Harris,²³ was an attender at Keswick conventions, as Graham noted in a mostly sympathetic review of her book, *The Greatest Need in the Society of Friends: the Baptism with the Holy Spirit*.²⁴ He notes that he is 'only capable ... of imperfectly sympathising' with Harris' enthusiasm for the Keswick

¹⁸ *Friend*, 13 January, 1904, 27.

¹⁹ Letter in JWGP, Box 4, p. 45, in Graham's numbering.

²⁰ Letter, 10/12/1884. JWGP, Box 8. Compare Graham's two-part essay, 'The Intellect in Religion', *BF*, September, 1894, 253-257, and November, 1894, 306-307, and 5.6., below.

²¹ Letter 29 July, 1892, JWGP, Box 17.

²² See Thomas Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism: Orthodox Friends 1800-1907*, Indiana University Press, 1988, 74ff.

²³ James Rendel Harris (1852-1941), biblical scholar and palaeographer, became the first Director of Studies at Woodbrooke, the newly established Quaker College, in 1903. He was one of the speakers, with Graham, on 'modern thought' to the Manchester Conference in 1895, where he advocated an open-minded approach to the Bible. Carole Dale Spencer claims him, liberal as he was, as a representative of the holiness tradition in Quakerism (Carole Dale Spencer, *Holiness: the Soul of Quakerism: an Historical Analysis of the Theology of Holiness in the Quaker Tradition*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007, 207-224).

²⁴ Helen, B. Harris, *The Greatest Need in the Society of Friends: the Baptism with the Holy Spirit*, Edw. Hicks, 1893.

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gatherings.²⁵ The Keswick movement was associated with the evangelical branches of American Quakerism, with their holiness preaching, but Carole Dale Spencer shows that it also had affinities with elements strongly present among early Friends, that indeed early Friends were like later evangelicals in preaching a 'religion of the heart'.²⁶ Both sets of Quakers sought perfection, and held that it was attainable in this life.²⁷ Whereas Thomas Hamm, historian of Orthodox Quakerism in America, holds that evangelicalism in general and the holiness movement in America in particular are alien imports into Quakerism, borrowed from the religious ethos of the time,²⁸ her view is that these nineteenth-century movements are continuous with foundational Quakerism.²⁹ Graham himself understood the call to perfection. At the Swarthmore Conference of 1896, the climactic point of his first visit to America, he recorded, 'I was under a sweet compulsion driving me towards sainthood', 'I am called to sainthood'. And he prayed: 'Sainthood & selflessness always, Lord, may that compulsion be near me'.³⁰

Religious emotion was fine, even necessary, but Graham distrusted external aids to religion, music, stained glass, outward sacraments, that, while stirring the emotions, might come between the sincere worshipper and the

²⁵ *BF*, February, 1893, 48-49.

²⁶ Spencer, *Holiness*, 23.

²⁷ Spencer, *Holiness*, 32-33, and *passim*. Compare Rosemary Moore, *The Light in their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain, 1646-1666*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, 86.

²⁸ See Hamm, *Transformation*, 74.

²⁹ Spencer, *Holiness*, 56.

³⁰ Diary entry for 23 August, 1896, JWGP, Box 5.

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object of devotion.³¹ What was unacceptable was factitious working on the emotions, as in the performance of the well-known non-conformist preacher disparaged by Graham in *The Quaker Ministry*: ‘The whole thing was a product of professionalism’, and therefore without genuine inspiration.³² Evangelicals and others, as he saw it, erred through contriving to produce emotion through sensual aids, such as music, and what he called ‘symbolism’,³³ the word he commonly used for visible sacraments and similar aids to worship. He was offended by the stained glass windows at Maryport, Cumberland, with their haloed saints, seeing them as unreal and even idolatrous.³⁴

2.3. Graham’s Crisis of Faith

Graham experienced serious doubt as to the truth of Christianity while at London University, according to some notes transcribed by Michael Graham:

Where then is Quakerism, in which I am nursed and what shall I teach in the schools for which I am intended by my scholarship? Many of my fellows in this Godless College are atheists and agnostics and seem perfectly happy, but I am a fourth-generation Friend and more, part of the spirit and flesh of my ancestors. . . . But I am a man of the nineteenth century and can

³¹ See 8.5., below.

³² *QM*, 22. In *The Divinity in Man*, Graham invokes Plotinus’ authority against revivalist practice, John W. Graham, *The Divinity in Man*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1927, 153. For Graham’s views on professional ministry see Chapter 5 below, especially 5.3.

³³ For Graham’s distrust of ‘symbolism’ see 8.5., below.

³⁴ Diary entry, 23 September, 1923, JWGP, Box 15; Michael Graham, ‘Spokesman Ever: Lancashire Quaker J.W. Graham 1859-1932 and the Course of Reforming Movements’ (ts, 1964), 5.25.

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not believe blindly. Then what am I to do: for proof there is none?'³⁵

Clearly at this point Graham was deterred from entering the ranks of unbelievers more by a sense of loyalty to his heritage and to the terms of his scholarship³⁶ than by religious conviction or devotion. Something of what went on at 'this Godless College' and the effect it had on innocent young Quakers can be gauged from a letter from Graham to his parents about a contemporary:

Harry Rawlings ... has lost his faith in Christianity, become an Agnostic, and is intending to resign his membership at Midsummer; & of course teach in Friends Schools no more ... I am sorry for all this; and he is by no means a solitary instance. Infact [sic] the young men in our Society who think much are passing through a very serious time of conflict in religious matters; also a good many fellows have talked to me who have many more painful doubts.³⁷

There can be no doubt that Graham was undergoing something of the same inner conflict as beset Harry Rawlings and others like him. Yet even at this stage he is prepared to think that Quakerism could provide a home for doubters: 'I think Quakerism [Graham's emphasis] rightly understood is the best thing for such fellows; I mean that other sects with so much dogmatism & creed formulating, only repel a broad & thoughtful man'.³⁸

³⁵ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever', 4.26. It was Thomas Arnold who called the new university 'that Godless institution in Gower Street' (Tony Crilly, A.J. Crilly, *Arthur Cayley: Mathematician Laureate of the Victorian Age*, JHU Press, 2006, 18.

³⁶ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.2.

³⁷ Letter from Graham to his parents, 27 February, 1881, JWGP, Box 5.

³⁸ Letter, 27 February, 1881, JWGP, Box 5.

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A letter from Graham to his mother written a few years later, when he was a teacher in Scarborough, gives a vivid sense of the spiritual upheaval he underwent in those earlier days. Ann Graham had expressed anxiety as to whether Graham was being quite serious enough about religion. He replied, apologising for any pain he may have caused, and adding:

You cannot know the painful difficulties I have had to go thro' to reach the faith in God & in obedience to Christ which I am thankful to say I have, it has been the most serious pursuit of my life for years, and I should feel that a really unnecessary trouble was added to the necessary ones if such a mistaken view should get hold of Mamma's mind, that I treat serious things flippantly. I do certainly treat flippantly some "evangelicals' " statements which seem to me to deserve it, when said evangelicals are not present to have their feelings hurt.³⁹

A letter to him from Lucy Linney, a friendly Quaker in Saffron Walden, addresses his state of mind in his Cambridge days. She tells him, 'I am constantly thinking of thee & pray very earnestly that our dear Father may keep thee thro' all this time of trial and perplexity & that thou mayest know the trial of thy faith to be much more precious than of gold which perisheth'.⁴⁰ T.C. Kennedy refers to this letter, and suggests that Graham's trial of faith may be related to the strongly evangelical tone of the recent Yearly Meeting.⁴¹ It is unlikely that her letter did much to assuage Graham's difficulties, since she sends with it a poem by John Newton, the reformed captain of a slave ship in the late eighteenth century, who came to stand for Graham as the

³⁹ Letter, 4 October, 1885, JWGP, Box 6.

⁴⁰ Letter, 8 June, 1883, JWGP, Box 8.

⁴¹ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 101.

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epitome of what was wrong with the evangelical movement.⁴² The poem, headed 'Psalm 131', is about meekness & submission – probably not the message Graham needed to hear at this point.

Graham gave no record of his sufferings under and escape from evangelicalism comparable to that of Worsdell,⁴³ but it is possible to find hints here and there. It may have been the doctrine of atonement that was the main sticking point, for we find him speaking of his escape from it in an address of 1904.⁴⁴ Here he gives an account of successive elaborations of the doctrine among Quakers, stressing that these took place long after the original experience of redemption by the first disciples.⁴⁵ He continues: 'I have not cunningly thought of this as an argument to bring before you this afternoon. This is a piece of my own history. This was the thought that, after long and perplexing doubt, led me from my wanderings back to Christ'. It was, he says, a matter of trusting his own experience and 'instinct',⁴⁶ rather than the notions of others.

2.4. Cambridge Meeting

When Graham told his parents of his wish to become a student at Cambridge he told them that he had heard of a Quaker meeting in the town, 'held by

⁴² Michael Graham mentions him as one of Graham's pet hates: 'John Newton pacing the deck above his cargo of slaves, never feeling, he related, nearer to Jesus Christ than then.' See *QM*, 54. On Newton see also Leslie Stephen, *English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century*, [1876], 2 vols., 3rd edn., New York: Peter Smith, 1949, vol. 2, 430.

⁴³ See 2.5., below.

⁴⁴ 'What is Christianity? An Address Delivered at the Central Hall, Manchester, on Sunday, 1 May, 1904'. Copy in JWGP, Box 1.

⁴⁵ 'What is Christianity?' 6.

⁴⁶ 'What is Christianity?' 13.

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Helen (née) Balkwill and her husband; and there are about a doz. Friend students'.⁴⁷ This turned out to be false: there was a Friends' Meeting in Jesus Lane, but no meetings for worship were held in it. In his third year, moved by the desolation of the old meeting room, now hired to miscellaneous users, Graham resolved to restore it to its right use. Graham told the story in the *British Friend*, over ten years later.⁴⁸ The tone of the essay is light, but it is clear that the undertaking itself was a serious matter. After Graham's death his wife wrote:

However much the ear was tuned to listen, the foot obedient to seek the path, it was no light matter to a young man, assailed as he then was by the doubts and questionings which the new light on Evolution engendered, to ask others to meet in Jesus Lane.⁴⁹

In the *British Friend* Graham acknowledges the help he received from J.B. Braithwaite, later a formidable antagonist,⁵⁰ in getting authorisation from the appropriate Quaker committees,⁵¹ and in giving his countenance to Graham and his friends. He also mentions the assistance offered by William Hobson, who served with the Home Mission Committee. Graham pointedly refers to it here as the 'late' Home Mission Committee: Graham was to take part in a tussle with the Committee mainly over the appointment of paid

⁴⁷ Letter, 12 December, 1880, JWGP, Box 5. Helen Balkwill married Rendel Harris (1852-1941) in 1880. See Alessandro Falcetta, 'James Rendel Harris: a Life on the Quest' *Quaker Studies*, 2004, 8/2, 208-225. Falcetta says that Harris attended the meeting in Jesus Lane while a student, and then a teacher, at Clare College in the 1870s (p.209), but David Butler says that the Meeting was discontinued between c1795 and 1884 (David M. Butler, *The Meeting Houses of Britain*, London, 2 vols., 1999, vol. 1. 34).

⁴⁸ J.W. Graham, 'Reminiscences of the Beginning of Cambridge Meeting', *BF*, February-March, 1895, 31-32, 59-60.

⁴⁹ Letter from Margaret Graham to Cambridge Friends, 25 November, 193, JWGP, Box 8.

⁵⁰ See 2.5., 2.6., 2.7., below.

⁵¹ Graham, 'Reminiscences', 59.

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workers in the home mission field in 1893, which resulted in the Committee's being reconstituted on a different basis.⁵² Kennedy refers to Hobson's role in the revival of Cambridge meeting an example of HMC activity in reviving defunct meetings.⁵³ Hobson was thus not a natural ally for a young man trying to work out a liberal faith for himself, any more than Braithwaite. Graham allows no note of antagonism to sour the *British Friend* account; but he does relate how he declined an offer of assistance from the Home Mission Committee, fearing 'that the strong theological bias of our Friends would destroy our tender little plant of an effort'.⁵⁴ Graham may have deprecated the lack of 'stability of conviction' held by him and his friends,⁵⁵ but he had a clear idea of the ground on which the meeting should be based, as shown by a letter written at the time:

During the whole business [of setting up the meeting] I have made no secret of the fact that we Friends along with a vast number of serious fellows are extremely vague of creed. And I have felt it to be a sacred and imperative duty [Graham's emphasis] to do all I can to let the Mtg House at C. be a place where the vital, personal aspect of religion may be taught and felt unencumbered by a theology that is often dreadfully man-made.⁵⁶

⁵² See Chapter 5, below, for Graham's campaigns against payment for ministry.

⁵³ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 124.

⁵⁴ Graham, 'Reminiscences', 59.

⁵⁵ Graham, 'Reminiscences', 32.

⁵⁶ Letter, 4 April, 1884 (unknown recipient), JWGP, Box 5.

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2.5. Generational Conflict

Joseph Bevan Braithwaite ('JBB'), who belonged to a long-established Quaker family in Kendal, near to the Grahams' ancestral home,⁵⁷ was a family friend, as is clear from the way Graham refers to him. In 1885 he told his parents how the 'dear old man' had come to him with his worries about the new book by Edward Worsdell, *The Gospel of Divine Help*.⁵⁸ 'can't make out, poor man, why people find anything wrong with what seem to him good gospel.'⁵⁹ Rather incongruously, the younger man sought to reassure the older, extremely 'weighty'* Friend. He was not entirely disinterested, for he told his parents that he expected JBB to back him in his projects, and to be a 'valuable friend'.⁶⁰ In the event this was not to be.⁶¹

The book which caused Braithwaite such distress was one of the indicators of the change coming over the Society of Friends in the latter part of the nineteenth century. When he came to deliver his Swarthmore Lecture* in 1925 Graham presented the change as a return to the Quakerism of George Fox:

We can only be thankful that in the strain of the times so many of our younger men and women held on to religion all through the revolution that was passing over theological studies in all

⁵⁷ See *J. Bevan Braithwaite: a Friend of the Nineteenth Century*, by his children mostly by Anna Braithwaite Thomas), London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1909.

⁵⁸ Edward Worsdell, *The Gospel of Divine Help*, [1886] 2nd ed., with prefatory note by J.G. Whittier, London: Samuel Harris, 1888.

⁵⁹ Letter, 27 September, 1886, JWGP, Box 6.

⁶⁰ Letter, 27 September, 1886, JWGP, Box 6.

⁶¹ Graham's sense of JBB's benignity did not last: by 1893 he was writing to Margaret: 'I am truly glad that discredited broker J.B.B. did not attend to give his sanction to anything connected with our Lucy' (letter, 4 August, 1893, JWGP, Box 17. This refers to the marriage of Margaret's sister, but Graham was equally disparaging of JBB's attempts at 'brokerage' in the matter of the Richmond Declaration). See 3.7., below.

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Churches. The real reason for this stability of faith was that they found with a shock of joy that they were on the same foundation as George Fox and his Friends. Their faith crystallized in a moment as the mystical gospel of the seventeenth century in the words and environment of the nineteenth. About the beams of the Light Within, the waves of materialism and pessimism and a narrow naturalism might rage on the rocks and suggest dark things, but the lighthouse stood.⁶²

Graham recognised that 'all the churches' had undergone theological upheavals during those late years of the nineteenth century, and yet he continued to think, as he had done in 1881, that 'Quakerism, rightly understood' was a faith able to withstand the intellectual challenges of the time, the 'dark things' suggested by the new sciences.⁶³ But such a Quakerism was not of the evangelical variety. Bible literalism and the doctrine of salvation by imputed righteousness or 'substitution' could no longer appeal to the educated young. Both these aspects of evangelicalism (at least in some of its manifestations) were attacked in *A Reasonable Faith*,⁶⁴ a small book which appeared anonymously, as the work of 'Three Friends', in 1884, but whose authors revealed themselves during the course of the following year's Yearly Meeting: they were Francis Frith, William Pollard and William Turner.⁶⁵ The 'Three Friends' insisted that the Bible is '*obviously*

⁶² *QM*, 71.

⁶³ See 1.4.1., above.

⁶⁴ *A Reasonable Faith: Short Religious Essays for the Times*, by Three "Friends" [William Pollard, Francis Frith, William E. Turner], [1884] London: Macmillan, 1885.

⁶⁵ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 103.

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the record of a progressive Revelation. It began with the dim dawn of human intelligence & spiritual insight, & gradually advances to the full light of day.⁶⁶

As for imputed righteousness, the authors are scathing: 'an unchanged nature "reckoned" righteous "for Christ's sake."... Free forgiveness is one thing; the reckoning a man to be what he is not is quite another'.⁶⁷

In this they were in accord with early Friends. James Nayler accused the Calvinists of his day of preaching that human beings might be saved while they 'yet live in their sins and filthiness', whereas Christ's work is to bring 'righteousness, sanctification, justification, and redemption'.⁶⁸ This was, as we have seen, the message of the 'holiness' school of evangelicals, though there were differences on such details as whether the gift was bestowed all at once or whether there was a possibility of growth or gradualness,⁶⁹ but this the Three Friends either did not know or chose to ignore. For them atonement meant 'at-one-ment' or reconciliation,⁷⁰ not expiation; and when the Apostle Paul writes that we have been bought with a price his meaning is 'simply this: that since our Lord has done & suffered so much on our account, we are bound to consider ourselves, from motives of love & gratitude, *His*, to command, to use, in a word, to possess'.⁷¹ These positions were to be common themes in the work of John William Graham. Graham, moreover,

⁶⁶ *Reasonable Faith*, 19 (emphasis in original).

⁶⁷ *Reasonable Faith*, 12.

⁶⁸ *The Works of James Nayler (1618-1660)*, ed. Licia Kuenning, Glenside, PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2003, Vol. I, 371, 372.

⁶⁹ See Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 165.

⁷⁰ *Reasonable Faith*, 52.

⁷¹ *Reasonable Faith*, 60.

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was closer than perhaps he realised to the evangelicals on the subject of sanctification. In his Manchester Conference speech he declared: 'Sanctification, complete surrender to the will of God, stands out in undimmed outline, as the plain message of Christ and the scientifically reasonable thing to do'.⁷² Surrender of the will, identified with sanctification, was the appropriate procedure for modern man as well as being the message of early Friends.⁷³ The difference was that for Graham this was a voluntary act, whereas there was something quasi-magical about sanctification for evangelicals of the holiness movement, as propagated by David Updegraff, John Henry Douglas, Douglas Clark and others.⁷⁴ Edwin Bronner finds that 'the doctrine of "instant conversion and sanctification" seemed bizarre and unacceptable' to British Friends'.⁷⁵ It remains the case that holiness and sanctification were important elements in the Quakerism of Graham and his generation of Quakers.

The degree to which the older generation of Friends were troubled by developments in the 1880s can be gauged from pencilled notes in the copy of

⁷² *Proceedings*, 244.

⁷³ See J.W. Graham, 'Paul on theology and religion', *BF*, January, 1895, 3-5.

⁷⁴ See the description of his own instant sanctification by the influential Presbyterian revivalist, Charles Finney: 'The Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me' (http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200601/200601_118_Finney.cfm, accessed 1 February, 2016). Mark Minear, in his *Richmond 1887: a Quaker Drama Unfolds*, Richmond: Friends United Press, 1987, comments that for followers of Updegraff belief in the experience of instantaneous sanctification 'was an effort to be loyal to George Fox's doctrine of perfection' (Minear, *Richmond*, 44).

⁷⁵ Edwin B. Bronner, *"The Other Branch": London Yearly Meeting and the Hicksites, 1827-1912*, London: Friends Historical Society, 1975, 42.

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A Reasonable Faith held in the Bevan-Naish collection at Woodbrooke

Library:

If this be true and my dear friends are right so far, then there are 2 sorts of saved sinners - one whose sins have been trifling & the above account of salvation is enough for them; and others whose sins are so heavy - so deep that they need the Lords personal expiation for them - for each sin of theirs. And I Arthur John Naish am one of the latter!⁷⁶

Naish needed the full-blooded evangelical account of the atonement. The transformation that the Society was undergoing would leave him and others in a state of bereavement.⁷⁷

Worsdell's book also seeks to promote a 'reasonable faith', rejecting substitution theory⁷⁸ or the idea of atonement as propitiation⁷⁹ of an offended God, but his book is memorable for the account of the psychological effect of that other arm of evangelical doctrine, the danger of Hell-fire:

Even at school he had an overwhelming apprehension that an existence of endless misery awaited him, unless he learned to love God; and as he naturally could not love the God whom he believed to have prepared such a destiny for him, the result was that after four years of continuous conscientious attempt to do the right, without any sense of the love of his Heavenly Father, he fell into religious despair and into carelessness of conduct.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Pencil note in Naish's copy of *A Reasonable Faith* in Bevan Naish Collection at Woodbrooke, p.76. Arthur John Naish (1816-1889) was a Birmingham manufacturer and philanthropist. According to *The Annual Monitor* of 1890, 'his early manhood was not exempt from sin'.

⁷⁷ Cf. Pink Dandelion, 'Those who leave and those who feel left', *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, Vol. 17, no. 2, 2002, 213-228.

⁷⁸ Worsdell, *Gospel*, 110, 116.

⁷⁹ Worsdell quotes Westcott as arguing that the word translated as 'propitiation' in the New Testament does not mean that God is reconciled or appeased. Likewise Graham was to write an essay arguing that 'propitiation' ought to be rendered as 'mercy' (*BF*, August, 1895, 205-6).

⁸⁰ Worsdell, *Gospel*, 74. For the fears from which Worsdell escaped see Geoffrey Rowell, *Hell and the Victorians*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1974.

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By the time Worsdell wrote *The Gospel of Divine Help* he had taught himself to believe that the concept of God that had been presented to him in his youth was not only repellent but also untrue. Christ shows us, by exemplifying lovable qualities in himself, that God possesses these same qualities, as we know and love them in other human beings: he shows us 'that truth, justice, and compassion, are not in God things different in kind from what they are in ourselves'.⁸¹ Or, in the words of the beloved American Quaker poet J.G. Whittier, 'I cannot think that good in Him, Which evil is in me'.⁸²

Other liberal Friends expressed abhorrence of the emphasis on blood as means of atonement. Silvanus P. Thompson, scientist and fellow-speaker with Graham at the Manchester Conference, is an example.⁸³ 'A.B.', in the article which invokes Whittier, writes of children who have been taught that Abel's sacrifice was more acceptable than Cain's *because he shed blood!* In conclusion, the writer asks, 'Is there any truthful or fair meaning of such words as Propitiation and Expiation that does not, in some degree, involve the idea of an Angry God, Who needs to be won over by some gift, or pacified by some offering? We need a more 'truthful' language if we are not to drive 'earnest minds into Agnosticism and Doubt'.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Worsdell, *Gospel*, 15.

⁸² 'A.B.' on 'The Late Yearly Meeting', *BF*, July, 1893, 193. Graham preserved a poem by Whittier, 'The Minister's Daughter', in which a minister of religion is taught the same lesson by his innocent little daughter, JWGP, Box 21.

⁸³ *BF*, 1893, 150A.

⁸⁴ *BF*, 1893, 193.

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As for Graham, his God is so united with his human creation that the idea of his demanding appeasement for sin simply did not make sense. We have to fight with the lower nature we have inherited from the beasts, but we have a 'Divine Indweller' to help us in the battle:

We are dual, it appears; the outward, conscious personality, above the threshold, supraliminal, is subject to temptations of various kinds; and needs reinforcement from an immensely powerful ally who can be called up, the power of the Indwelling God, from below, subliminal.⁸⁵

No outward sacrifice can be called for, nor could it be effective.

2.6. Evangelical Quakers as seen by Edward Grubb and John William Graham: the Bible

Even so fair-minded and reasonable a Quaker as Edward Grubb took a negative view of the nineteenth-century evangelical movement among Quakers. In 1896 he wrote a paper on the Yearly Meeting of 1836, a meeting in which evangelicals came head to head with conservatives on the vital question of the authority of the Bible as opposed to that of the Light Within.⁸⁶ The meeting took place in the midst of the 'Beacon' controversy that arose with the publication in January 1835 of Isaac Crewdson's *Beacon to the Society of Friends*.⁸⁷ This book attacked Robert Barclay⁸⁸ for elevating the authority of the Inward Light above that of Scripture, and blamed him for

⁸⁵ *DM*, 260. For more on the subliminal self see 3.6., below.

⁸⁶ Edward Grubb, 'Past and Present: the Yearly Meeting of 1836', *FQE*, 1896, 99-120. On this Yearly Meeting see also Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 28-29.

⁸⁷ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 26.

⁸⁸ Author of *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, Quaker Heritage; Farmington, ME. [n.d.] [based on text produced in Aberdeen, 1678]. On Barclay (1648-90) see William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (2nd edn., prepared by Henry J. Cadbury), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961, 385-394.

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continuing 'error' among Friends, especially among the Hicksites in America.⁸⁹ It focussed on the issue of scriptural authority. Eventually it led to one of the few schisms among British Friends, a small group of 'Beaconites' took leave of the Society and set up their own meetings, which quickly became indistinguishable from Protestant chapels.⁹⁰ Grubb's sympathies are clear: he grants that the new, evangelical, party among Friends had the zeal necessary to a religious movement.⁹¹ Yet 'the deeper truth, in spite of all their narrowness and formalism, lay with the older party.'⁹² Unfortunately the 'older party' were not sufficiently sure of their ground. In a later essay Grubb blames them for confusing the authority of the Inward Light with that of 'practices handed down by tradition'.⁹³ The meeting of 1836, as Grubb relates in another essay, 'debated a request from Westmorland Quarterly Meeting for a final declaration as to the place and authority of the Bible as "the rule of faith and guidance"'.⁹⁴ Among those upholding the authority of scripture was Joseph John Gurney (1788-1847).⁹⁵ He was recorded as saying that 'if ever we countenanced the idea that impressions on our own minds could be superior to scripture, we should cease to be a Christian body'.⁹⁶ How to distinguish 'impressions on our own minds' from genuine promptings of the

⁸⁹ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 26. For the Hicksites and Graham's relations with them see 2.8., below.

⁹⁰ See Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1970, 45ff.

⁹¹ Grubb, 'Past and Present', 114.

⁹² Grubb, 'Past and Present', 120.

⁹³ Edward Grubb, 'The Evangelical Movement and its Impact on the Society of Friends' (Presidential Address to the Friends' Historical Society, 1923), *FQE*, 1924, 1-33, 31.

⁹⁴ Edward Grubb, 'The Work and Influence of Joseph John Gurney', *FQE*, 1912, 292-309.

⁹⁵ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 28-9.

⁹⁶ Grubb, 'Joseph John Gurney', 298.

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Spirit is a question that has perplexed Quakers from the very earliest days.⁹⁷ Gurney was attempting to mediate between the two sides, which resulted, according to Grubb, in his being attacked on all sides.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, the paragraph which Gurney wrote for the Yearly Meeting Epistle,* which was later included in the Book of Discipline⁹⁹ had, in Grubb's view, momentous consequences: 'In the opinion of many of us [it] changed the basis of the Society from an inward to an outward authority'.¹⁰⁰

Graham also attributed to Gurney 'a very great influence in the Evangelical direction for a long generation'.¹⁰¹ He is not bitter about this: in fact he praises the evangelicals, and Gurney in particular, for refamiliarising Friends with the Bible, which had been too much neglected, and Gurney receives particular praise for making sure that children at Ackworth School were given Bibles.¹⁰² He might war against Bible literalism, but Bible

⁹⁷ See for instance, the 'hat controversy' of the 1660s, involving John Perrot and the question whether a man might be moved by the Spirit to pray publicly without removing his hat. See Moore, *Light in their Consciences*, 192-203. John William Graham stated, 'No complete and harmonious philosophy of Divine Guidance and its limits exists among all who bear the name of Friends with general agreement' (*FQ*, 32), which rather understates the case. Is the idea to be taken to mean, as William Lecky, author of *The History of European Morals* (1869), suggested, 'the deification of a strong internal persuasion'? (Quoted by J.W. Rowntree in his paper, 'Religious Thought in the Society of Friends', *FQE*, 1905, 109-122, 117.)

⁹⁸ Grubb, 'Joseph John Gurney', 299.

⁹⁹ *Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends in Great Britain and Australia*, Vol. 1, 'Doctrine and Practice, approved and adopted by the Yearly Meeting of 1883', London: Headley, 1906, 13-14. It says, for instance, 'Whatsoever any man says or does which is contrary to the Scriptures, though under profession of the immediate guidance of the Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delusion'.

¹⁰⁰ Grubb, 'Joseph John Gurney', 299.

¹⁰¹ *FQ*, 412.

¹⁰² *FQ*, 412.

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ignorance was no answer. In his 1904 visit to America he attended a First-Day school run by 'Fast Friends'.¹⁰³ He relates in a letter:

There I learnt that Elijah derived his power as a prophet from his diligent reading of the Holy Scriptures: a statement quite unwarranted by anything in the narrative, rendered improbable by the fact that no part of the Bible as we have it was written till a time after Elijah's time, & that probably Elijah could not read! ... I forebore all criticism.¹⁰⁴

There is ample evidence in Graham's writings of his respect for the Bible as a guide as well as for the labours of the critics. He would customarily use biblical evidence, though sometimes with rather idiosyncratic interpretations, to justify his beliefs, as when he argues for the Quaker view of the sacraments,¹⁰⁵ the substance of which is repeated, along with a section on baptism, in *The Faith of a Quaker*.¹⁰⁶ Graham's method is to quote contemporary authorities, such as Robertson Smith or Brooke Foss Westcott, and supplement their scholarship with his own re-imagining of incidents recorded in the New Testament. Thus in his essay 'Christ and Swords'¹⁰⁷ he interprets the text in Luke where Jesus counsels his disciples to take swords on their journeys¹⁰⁸ in a way consistent with pacifism by invoking a human

¹⁰³ A Quaker writing in the *British Friend* of 1894, under the title, 'An English Friend in Iowa' says that Fast Friends are named 'from their advanced methods and support of a pastor', and comments that they have hymns and a collection (*BF*, April, 1894, 101).

¹⁰⁴ Letter, 6 August, 1904, JWGP, Box 1.

¹⁰⁵ Most Quakers do not use outward rites of baptism or holy communion. See David L. Johns, 'Quaker Sacramental Practice', in *OHQS*, 269. Graham's arguments are contained in J.W. Graham, *The Lord's Supper*, London: James Clarke, [1900], substantially repeated in *FQ*.

¹⁰⁶ *FQ*, Chapters 8 and 9, 254-286.

¹⁰⁷ John W. Graham, 'Christ and Swords', *FQE*, 1910, 113-118. See 7.7., below.

¹⁰⁸ Luke 22: 35-38. Graham mistakenly writes Luke 20.

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Jesus seized by a moment of despair. He defies the Revised Version's¹⁰⁹ emendation of the Authorised (King James) rendering of Verse 37: where the AV has 'the things concerning me have an end' the RV substitutes 'That which concerneth me hath fulfilment', thus, according to Graham, 'relegating what is confessed to be the meaning of the Greek to the margin'.¹¹⁰ Graham then proceeds to interpret the passage as meaning that Christ is succumbing to a moment of depression, saying, in effect, 'I am done'. When the disciples, in obedience to Jesus' words about swords, produce two, Jesus, as it were, shrugs his shoulders, saying, 'It is enough'.

Luckily the 1913 translation of the New Testament by James Moffatt¹¹¹ came to Graham's aid in time for his revision of the original essay for *The Faith of a Quaker*, for Moffatt agreed with him about the translation of 'telos', and for 'It is enough', he put 'Enough! Enough!', which catches the sense of weariness and depression that Graham ascribed to Jesus. When the need for action arises, Graham points out, Jesus is able to reassert the peaceful principles that he has preached all along. The conclusion is that 'Dr. Alford'¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ The Revised Version of the New Testament was published in 1881, that of the Old and New together in 1885. See *The Cambridge History of the Bible: the West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, edited by S.L. Greenslade, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963, 371-373.

¹¹⁰ 'Christ and Swords', 114. The 'New Revised Standard Version' of 2007 also takes the Greek 'telos' to mean 'fulfilment' without giving any alternative rendering.

¹¹¹ James Moffatt (1870-1944), Free Church of Scotland minister and biblical exegete. Published *The Historical New Testament* in 1901, followed by *The New Testament: a New Translation* (1913) (*Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz *et al*, Leiden: Brill, 2010 (RPP), Vol. 8).

¹¹² Henry Alford, (1810–1871), Dean of Canterbury and biblical scholar, *ODNB*, accessed 4/7/2014. Alford also figures in Lubenow's *Cambridge Apostles*, 367-368.

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is wrong to assert that ‘the passage forms a decisive testimony against the views of the Quakers and some other sects on this point’.¹¹³

This essay illustrates several aspects of Graham’s approach to the New Testament. One is that he has no inhibitions about ascribing human feelings, even weaknesses, to the Son of Man.¹¹⁴ Graham believed that God and Man are one. To ascribe full humanity to Jesus could not reduce his divinity:

There needs to be no compound of human and Divine, and there can be no antithesis; for they are of the same stuff – the human has a share of the Divine: and the larger and more perfect a man’s humanity, the larger and more perfect his share in divinity too.¹¹⁵

Further, by and large he accepts the accuracy of the Gospel narrative.¹¹⁶

Certainly he could find fault with the text where it suited him, as he does with the words taken as instituting the sacrament of ‘the Lord’s Supper’,¹¹⁷ but even here he considers the account in Mark’s gospel (without an awkward addition found in Luke) as ‘representing a trustworthy historical tradition’.¹¹⁸

While acknowledging its limitations, he accepted the Bible as a guide to faith.

But he appealed to the authority of Barclay in the *Apology* in support of his claim that the authority of the Scriptures is ‘subordinate to the Spirit, from

¹¹³ ‘Christ and Swords’, 116.

¹¹⁴ Graham wrote an essay on ‘The Mind of the Son of Man’, published in *The Interpreter*, April 1912. It is substantially reprinted in *FQ*, 54-67.

¹¹⁵ Graham may also have been influenced by the views of Albert Schweitzer, with which he was familiar (see *FQ*, 58). Schweitzer’s views are discussed in David Boulton, *Who on Earth was Jesus? The Modern Quest for the Jesus of History*, Winchester: O Books, 2008.

¹¹⁶ Unlike David Boulton in *Who on Earth was Jesus?*

¹¹⁷ John William Graham, *The Lord’s Supper: a Historical Study from the Standpoint of the Society of Friends*, London: James Clarke, [1900]. See also *FQ*, 255.

¹¹⁸ *FQ*, 257.

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which they have all their excellency and certainty'.¹¹⁹ As for Barclay's awkward statement, 'Whatsoever any do, pretending to the spirit, which is contrary to the Scripture, is to be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil',¹²⁰ that could be dealt with by means of a reference to modern scholarship, of which Barclay was necessarily ignorant, and by drawing attention to the multiplicity of voices in the Bible and to the 'progressive' nature of both the morality and the faith that it contains. In all this he was on common ground with other educated Quakers, such as Thomas Hodgkin. Graham did not attempt a detailed statement on the nature of authority, including that of the Bible, such as we find in Edward Grubb's 1908 book, *Authority and the Light Within*,¹²¹ but it is possible to deduce his attitude, reverent but questioning, from his actual use of biblical texts in arguing his positions. No doubt his interpretations rest too much on the assumption that the evangelist transcribed Jesus' actual words, even though in this essay he dismisses the 'irrelevant' prophetic utterance of verse 37 as probably a later interpolation.

2.7. Graham as Activist: Richmond Declaration and Manchester Conference

This chapter has so far hardly touched on the fourth of Bebbington's distinguishing features of evangelicalism, activism.¹²² Brian Phillips has noted that the modernising Quakers of Graham's generation retained the

¹¹⁹ *FQ*, 139, citing Barclay's 'Proposition 3'.

¹²⁰ Barclay's 'Proposition 3', quoted *FQ*, 139.

¹²¹ Edward Grubb, *Authority and the Light Within*, London: James Clarke, 1908.

¹²² See 2.1., above.

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'evangelical temperament' while rejecting the evangelical theology.¹²³ He relates this temperament to their enthusiasm for social action: 'A mission to save the soul of the individual sinner could quite easily be translated into a mission for international welfare, peace, and justice'.¹²⁴ Graham played his own vigorous part in the Quakers' mission to improve the world, but he was also an 'activist' within the Society itself as he campaigned for an up-to-date Quaker theology. His first major trial of strength came with his involvement in the campaign to resist the imposition of a 'creed' on British Quakers, in the form of the 'Richmond Declaration'.¹²⁵

The 'Declaration' came out of a conference held in Richmond, Indiana, in September, 1887,¹²⁶ to which Quakers from Britain and Ireland as well as America were invited, in an attempt to bring unity and definition to the world-wide Quaker movement. Its chief author was Joseph Bevan Braithwaite, as a delegate from London Yearly Meeting. It was accepted by those present at the Conference, but hardly succeeded in uniting Friends in America, let alone elsewhere. The Hicksites were not invited to the party,¹²⁷ and several groups of Friends would not accept the Declaration when it was published.¹²⁸ When Braithwaite proffered the Declaration to London Yearly Meeting for their

¹²³ Brian Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism: British Quakerism and the Imperial Nation, 1890-1910', PhD Thesis, Cambridge, 1989, 24. See Conclusion, 'Analysis of Key Texts', below.

¹²⁴ Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism', 24.

¹²⁵ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 111-118. Except where indicated, my description derives from his. A fuller account of the events leading up to the Conference, the personalities involved and their theology is given in Minear, *Richmond 1887*.

¹²⁶ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 112.

¹²⁷ See Minear, *Richmond 1887*, 101, for a list of the Yearly Meetings which sent representatives. They were all 'Orthodox'.

¹²⁸ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 113.

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acceptance in 1888,¹²⁹ Graham was prominent in the fight against it. In 1884 he had struggled to keep the fledgling Cambridge Meeting free from outmoded and unacceptable dogma: now he fought to save the soul of British Quakerism. 'The Society of Friends', he declared, 'existed as a protest against all creeds'.¹³⁰ The liberal American Quaker Rufus Jones called the Richmond Declaration 'a relic of the past', which made no attempt to address current issues.¹³¹ With Jones, the Apostle of Progress meant to keep the Quakers facing towards the future.

So now he came before the Society at large as a champion of progressive forces. A letter to his sister Agnes recounts how he spoke against the 'creed' to a crowd of 1100 people of both sexes.¹³² 'Spoke myself for about 10 mins; and E. Grubb the same, and felt intensely relieved & much backed up by feeling the sympathy of all the younger people in the galleries round. My voice seemed to fill the room easily; more so indeed than most people's'.¹³³ He goes on to give a long list of other Quakers who spoke against accepting the Declaration, rejoicing in the fact that these included evangelical Friends like J.B. Hodgkin.¹³⁴ In his description of the elation he felt it is hard to distinguish between personal triumph and delight that British Quakerism has been saved from the alien imposition of a 'creed'.

¹²⁹ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 113.

¹³⁰ *Friend*, 9 June, 1888, 162.

¹³¹ Bronner, "*The Other Branch*", 37.

¹³² See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 117.

¹³³ Letter of 31 May, 1888, in JWGP, Box 7.

¹³⁴ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 114.

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The fact that many evangelical Friends united with the liberal wing in resisting the imposition of a 'creed' shows that the evangelicals were not always on the side of dogma and against freedom. Quakers such as Jonathan Hodgkin, while they might distrust the 'unsound' views of those who sought to incorporate modern thought into their Quakerism, might be just as attached as the young rebels to patterns of worship established in the seventeenth century, if for different reasons. Nevertheless, the Yearly Meeting's resistance to the attempt to bring a doctrinal test of orthodoxy into the Society must be understood as a victory for those, like Graham, who wished to see Quakerism remain a 'mystical' faith, finding its inspiration within and not in outward forms of words.

Graham's status as a campaigner for progressive Quakerism was further enhanced by his performance at the Manchester Conference of 1895. The Conference followed on from the controversy about the Home Mission Committee, in which Graham was also conspicuously active. I defer treatment of this to Chapter 5, below. At Manchester Graham spoke alongside the distinguished older Friends, Thomas Hodgkin, Silvanus P. Thompson and Rendel Harris, on 'The Attitudes of the Society of Friends towards Modern Thought'.¹³⁵ The fifth speaker, and the only one from the

¹³⁵ *Report of the Proceedings of the Conference of Members of the Society of Friends, held, by Direction of the Yearly Meeting, in Manchester from Eleventh to Fifteenth of Eleventh Month, 1895*, London: Headley Brothers, 1896, 240-46. For the Manchester Conference see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 143-156; Roger C. Wilson, *Manchester, Manchester and Manchester Again: from 'Sound Doctrine' to 'A Free Ministry': the Theological Travail of London Yearly Meeting throughout the Nineteenth Century*, London: Friends Historical Society, 1990, 33-35.

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evangelical camp, was J.B. Braithwaite, whose talk urged caution rather than opposing new thinking outright. The others all took a forthright stand in favour of modernity in science and in approaches to the Bible, and Graham's address was no more radical than theirs. He spoke of the limitations of language and the need to avoid being trapped by words,¹³⁶ of divine Providence acting by constant laws, not occasional interventions.¹³⁷ He set forth his belief that 'there can have been no conflict between the Humanity and the Divinity of our Lord',¹³⁸ and spoke of atonement and of the Bible in terms to which he remained constant throughout his life. Most significantly, he declared his conviction that the Quakers were in the forefront of a great religious movement, as old doctrinal certainties have come under attack, and are found to be of scant importance: 'Men have got down to the bed rock of faith, so that the religious world has come round to the Indwelling Voice as its central conception, and so essential Quakerism holds the future in the hollow of its hand'.¹³⁹ All of these points would be reiterated in the years to come. Graham's doctrinal position was already essentially fixed

2.8. Fighting Evangelicalism in America

In 1896, flush with his success at the Manchester Conference, Graham took his zeal for progress to the United States, in what was to be the first of a

¹³⁶ *Proceedings*, 240.

¹³⁷ *Proceedings*, 241.

¹³⁸ *Proceedings*, 243.

¹³⁹ *Proceedings*, 241.

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sequence of visits.¹⁴⁰ Graham was distressed at the separations afflicting the Quaker movement in America, and particularly by the isolation of the 'Other Branch', commonly known as the 'Hicksites', who had been cold-shouldered by London Yearly Meeting ever since they split from 'Orthodox' Friends in Philadelphia in 1827.¹⁴¹ In Graham's day many of the older British Quakers still thought them fundamentally 'unsound'.¹⁴² Graham believed it was time the two sides to the conflict were brought together, and that the breach between London Yearly Meeting and the Hicksites was healed.¹⁴³ He went to America as a would-be reconciler.

The visit needs to be understood in the context of the debate that arose in the early 1890s over corresponding with American meetings, as described in Chapter 5.¹⁴⁴ More immediately, it arose out of a correspondence during

¹⁴⁰ See Introduction, 'Travels: America and India', above,

¹⁴¹ See 5.5., below. For the 'Great Separation' of 1827-8 see H. Larry Ingle, *Quakers in Conflict: the Hicksite Reformation*, Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986. For other aspects of American Quakerism, see David E. Holden, *Friends Divided: Conflict and Division in the Society of Friends*, Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 1988; J. William Frost, 'Years of Crisis and Separation: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1790-1860', in John M. Moore, ed., *Friends in the Delaware Valley: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1681-1981*, Haverford, PA: Friends Historical Association, 1981, 57-102; Philip S. Benjamin, *The Philadelphia Quakers in the Industrial Age, 1865-1920*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985.

¹⁴² These included Graham's father-in-law, Richard Brockbank (see Introduction, 'Marriage and Family', above. Michael Graham relates that Brockbank was opposed to Graham's associating with the Hicksites (Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever', 7.8.). Friends of similar persuasion made sure that the YM refused Graham a certificate for his visit to America in 1904 (see 5.6., below).

¹⁴³ The *Testimony of Cambridge, Huntingdon and Lynn Monthly Meeting*, concerning John William Graham, produced following his death, mentions his 'striving to bring together bodies of Friends sundered too long by the theological disputes of the last century'.

¹⁴⁴ See 5.5., below. An article by 'G', 'London Yearly Meeting and the American Situation', in the *Friends' Intelligencer* of 26 April, 1894, suggested that many Friends at the YM might express themselves as follows on the subject: 'As for the 'Hicksite' Friends, the *proposal from Lancashire to include them takes our breath away. Some Friends have tried to reassure us, but others have told us such dreadful things, that we are very much confused about them, and we can only leave them outside for the present*' ('G' is almost certainly Graham). See JWGP, Box 4, 7. (Graham's numbering).

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1893¹⁴⁵ with one of the leading representatives of the 'Hicksite' branch of American Quakerism, Howard Jenkins.¹⁴⁶ Jenkins was editor of the *Friends Intelligencer*, the organ of the Hicksites, a paper to which Graham contributed frequently over the coming years. Jenkins offered to help towards expenses:¹⁴⁷ this was probably needed to make the visit possible. Graham, alluding to his editorial work on the *British Friend* wrote to Jenkins, 'Some of our subscribers fear that I am a Hicksite, and it is not for me to deny it'. From a safe distance he could believe that the Hicksites were at one with him and the British progressives, especially with respect to the Evangelicals. In response to a communication from Jenkins, Graham writes of 'a welcome revelation of a great company of unknown but like-minded Friends', equally 'devastated by Evangelicalism'.¹⁴⁸ It was at the instance of Howard Jenkins' son Charles that Graham went to Swarthmore, the Quaker college near Philadelphia, in 1925-6, as 'Howard Jenkins Professor of the Principles and History of Quakerism'.¹⁴⁹

I focus on the visit of 1896 as the most fully documented of his six visits to North America (counting his six months at Swarthmore College). Apart from the private notes and letters there is a series of seven papers, under the

¹⁴⁵ See Graham, 'Spokesman', 6.6.ff.

¹⁴⁶ Graham reviewed at least one book by Jenkins (*BF*, January, 1896, 7), and wrote an obituary (*BF*, November, 1902, 288).

¹⁴⁷ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever', 6.11.

¹⁴⁸ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever', 6.9.

¹⁴⁹ See letter, 15 December, 1924, from Charles Jenkins, and ensuing correspondence, in papers relating to Graham's 1925 visit to Swarthmore College, held at Swarthmore College Library ('Swarthmore Collection').

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heading, 'American Papers' in the *British Friend*.¹⁵⁰ Graham did not find the Hicksites to be uniformly the great company of like-minded hammers of evangelicals that he apparently hoped for. For one thing, he heard, 'from certain Hicksite ministers' 'the characteristic "Evangelical" doctrines in a more extreme form than has ever been my lot in England', including 'a fierce sermon on the uselessness and pride of righteousness without conversion, based on such glaring Biblical misinterpretation as I hoped we had got past'. The people he had been warned against as a 'slightly Sadducean body, with rather destructive Rationalism here and there among them' can on occasion be heard denouncing 'in thunder' 'that hated intellect'.¹⁵¹ 'All this is tolerated, patiently borne with, in the "Hicksite" fold, though it is not sympathized with'.¹⁵² Tolerance of diversity in doctrine was more important than agreement on theology.

Ignorance, especially ignorance of the Bible, comes under fire in Graham's account of American Quakers as seen among the Hicksites as well as among the other branches: 'The Hicksites know but little of the Bible ... This is a great source of weakness to them. Only a few of them have found out that the Bible is not an "Evangelical" book'.¹⁵³ But at least, unlike the 'Fast Friends',¹⁵⁴ they were capable of learning, or so Graham thought: 'I preach

¹⁵⁰ *BF*, October, 1896 to April, 1897.

¹⁵¹ *BF*, Nov. 1896, 287, 288. The necessity for conversion, as noted above, was one of the hall-marks of Evangelical doctrine, but distrust of the intellect was more often associated with the quietists. See *QM*, 41ff., for a gently critical view of the quietists in this respect.

¹⁵² *BF*, Nov. 1896, 288.

¹⁵³ Letter quoted by Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever', 6.22.

¹⁵⁴ See 2.6., above.

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about it in private conversation at every turn; and they seem impressed with the idea to know it better'.¹⁵⁵

Among evangelicals Graham had to contend with rampant millenarianism, which he believed sprang from a literal reading of apocalyptic texts in the Bible.¹⁵⁶ He linked it too with the pastoral system, that is, the appointment of paid ministers, a practice which he considered incompatible with Quakerism.¹⁵⁷ Two millenarians whom he met in New York had their Bible instruction from J. Walter Malone, successor to the evangelical David Updegraff (1830-1894) whom in 1927 Graham was still denouncing as 'the great destroyer of ancient Quakerism'.¹⁵⁸ The women could not understand Graham's use of the word 'minister': to them it had to mean someone in charge of a meeting.¹⁵⁹ The pastor-ridden western meetings, that is, west of Ohio, were torn by controversy between the 'Ante-Millenarians', 'who believe that the Day of Judgment will come as a catastrophe, to be followed by the Millennium for saints only', and the 'Post-Millenarians', 'who believe that the gradual progress of the world in goodness will lead us gently into the Millennium, as evil fades, and that after that comes the Judgment'. The

¹⁵⁵ Letter quoted by Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever', 6.22.

¹⁵⁶ *BF*, February, 1897, 33. On millenarianism see Elizabeth Isichei, 'Millenarianism', in *Oxford Companion to Christian Thought (OCCCT)*, 435-436; Bebbington, *Dominance*, 130ff., 179ff.

¹⁵⁷ See 5.2., 5.5., below.

¹⁵⁸ Letter, 12 October, 1927, in Graham's letters from India, JWGP, Box 14.

¹⁵⁹ *BF*, February, 1897, 33.

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optimistic Graham clearly had an affinity with the latter, but he is scornfully dismissive of the debate as dogma arising from ignorance.¹⁶⁰

There were other disturbing signs of the abandonment of spontaneous free worship. In Rhode Island, in the place which Rufus Jones called 'the nursery of Quakerism',¹⁶¹ Graham was struck by an unwonted sense of doom. In an ancient meeting house, where George Fox had been, he found 'the most decadent hymn books [he] ever encountered. They lay about in bizarre contrast with the old benches; and they and the harmonium represent, not Quakerism, but a new plant which has grown out of the decay of Quakerism'.¹⁶² Mercifully, experiences like this were balanced by the Hicksite Swarthmore Conference, which Graham attended at the end of his 1896 visit. He thought the Conference was as 'epoch-making' as the Manchester Conference, and was thoroughly in tune with the main speakers, who were quite different from the ignorant Hicksite Friends he had met earlier. The leading Hicksite, Robert Janney, read a paper on 'The Silent Meeting' 'full of loyalty to our central Quaker institution', while Elizabeth Powell Bond, whom Graham in his private diary called 'a saint & prophetess',¹⁶³ gave an address subsequently published in the *British Friend*, arguing against 'systems of theology' based on 'human conceptions of God' and calling for a 'spiritual

¹⁶⁰ *BF*, March, 1897, 58.

¹⁶¹ Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, London: Macmillan, 1911, reissued 1923, 21.

¹⁶² 'American Papers', 4, *BF*, January 1897, 6.

¹⁶³ Diary entry for 22 August, 1896, JWGP, Box 5.

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religion' that seeks 'union with God'.¹⁶⁴ Here was the mysticism which Graham believed central to true Quakerism.¹⁶⁵

Graham's favourable view of the Hicksites as against the evangelicals in America was not immediately adopted by all British Friends. Before his third visit to America in 1904 Graham procured a minute from his own Monthly and Quarterly Meetings recognising and endorsing his concern to undertake a further mission to American Friends.¹⁶⁶ In accordance with Quaker discipline, Meeting for Sufferings* was then asked for a minute* of support to endorse the concern* and grant a certificate to be presented to Friends in America. The minute was refused. The report in the *Friend* of the 'long and not altogether edifying discussion' on the issue recorded that, despite considerable support for Graham, the Clerks decided that the Meeting could not unite behind Graham's request, and so it was refused. Some Friends voiced a 'want of unity with J.W. Graham's ministry' as well as 'a feeling that we should not take this means of approaching the "separated" bodies in America, their divergences from our views being in some cases radical'.¹⁶⁷ Nothing much had changed in six years despite all Graham's efforts. Except that now there was a clear majority in favour of Graham's mission, at least according to several of the many letters of sympathy that he received, from

¹⁶⁴ *BF*, March 1897, 69.

¹⁶⁵ See Chapter 4, below.

¹⁶⁶ As recorded in the *Friend*, 24 June, 1904, 430.

¹⁶⁷ *The Friend*, 8 July, 1904, 455-6.

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distinguished Quakers like W.E. Turner and Edward Grubb among others.¹⁶⁸ Ellen Robinson was sure of it: 'Had we decided by vote I am convinced the minute would have been granted, but with such a minority of course the clerk could not decide otherwise'.¹⁶⁹ Another woman, Georgina King Lewis, was so distressed that she became visibly ill.¹⁷⁰ She wrote to Graham insisting that the issue was about direct inspiration; 'What right had any individual to deny you had received a call from God?'¹⁷¹ She also wrote to a friend comparing Graham's treatment with that meted out to Christ: 'Graham behaved beautifully and bore the attacks hurled at him as the Master himself, I believe, would have done'.¹⁷² With letters like these to back him and with financial support from his Monthly Meeting, Graham went to America again, this time beginning his travels in Canada, though he did find himself a little hampered by his lack of a 'certificate' from the Yearly Meeting*.¹⁷³

W.E. Turner wrote that Bevan Braithwaite himself (who was to die next year) was involved in the setback.¹⁷⁴ Lewis blamed Howard Nicholson, a strongly evangelical Quaker whom Graham suspected of having warned

¹⁶⁸ See also 'What Friends are Doing', *BF*, July, 904, 208, expressing 'regret' at the action of Meeting for Sufferings.

¹⁶⁹ Letter, 7 July, 1904, JWGP, Box 1. Quakers do not vote, but seek to reach unity in accordance with the will of God.

¹⁷⁰ Copy of 'Letter to C. Mennell from Georgina King Lewis on my refusal of a certificate to America' (in Graham's hand), JWGP, Box 21.

¹⁷¹ Letter, JWGP, Box 1.

¹⁷² Copy of letter, Box 21. Lewis also wrote a letter of protest to *BF*, under the heading 'Creeds and "Concerns"', without naming Graham (*BF*, July, 1904, 206).

¹⁷³ Typescript of 'Narrative of Service in America' in JWGP, Box 1. This is not identical with the text under the same name printed in the *British Friend*, in October 1904 (p.289).

¹⁷⁴ Letter, 1 July, 1904, JWGP, Box 1.

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Canadian Friends against him.¹⁷⁵ Graham had a grudging respect for Nicholson, 'the big, patient fighter with evil; with his simple habits; and all his dense ignorance'.¹⁷⁶ He must have been more moved by the opposition of Thomas Hodgkin's half-brother, Jonathan Backhouse Hodgkin (1843-1926), who had been a close friend and confidant: when Graham became engaged in 1890 he wrote to Hodgkin in surprisingly frank detail of his feelings on his approaching marriage.¹⁷⁷ After the decision of July 1904 Hodgkin had the grace to write to Graham apologising for opposing his concern,¹⁷⁸ but his opposition suggests how far the divisions among Friends were between generations. Of course there were exceptions. Graham must have been particularly pleased by a letter from his father, alluding to 'letters sent for perusal' which hold out 'the prospect of a time when more progressive views will prevail'.¹⁷⁹

Graham was still liable to stir controversy in 1925, when he went as visiting professor to Swarthmore College. An alumnus, William H. Ridgeway, wrote to Frank Aydelotte, Principal of the College, having seen a newspaper report that Graham has dismissed the Gospel of Matthew as 'valueless'.¹⁸⁰ Ridgeway demanded that Graham be 'dropped'. Aydelotte replied

¹⁷⁵ 'Narrative of service in America 1904', 7 August, 1904. See also Michael Graham, 'Spokesman', 6.42. For Nicholson see also Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 141. He had a way of frightening children at Ackworth by asking if they were saved.

¹⁷⁶ Letter, 10 July, 1893, JWGP, Box 17.

¹⁷⁷ Letter, 20 August, 1890, JWGP, Box 17.

¹⁷⁸ Letter, 3 July, 1904, JWGP, Box 1.

¹⁷⁹ Letter, 4 July, 1904, JWGP, Box 1.

¹⁸⁰ Letter, 10 December, 1925, 'Swarthmore Collection'. The cutting from the newspaper, also preserved, reports only that the birth narrative in Matthew, including the account of the Virgin Birth, was dismissed as 'valueless'.

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immediately, defending Graham as ‘the strongest religious influence we have had around the college for a good many years’.¹⁸¹

2.9. Cross, Conversion, Bible, Activism

This section returns to Bebbington’s four points, characterising evangelicalism. It has been shown that Graham was an ‘activist’ in the sense that he strove to propagate his own view of the truth – an evangelist against evangelicalism, in fact. The Bible was also central to Graham’s Christianity: in campaigning against narrow, illiberal interpretations of it he was seeking to enhance its value rather than depreciate it. With respect to conversion it is necessary to see the subject in the context of Graham’s belief that human beings are naturally ‘saints’. This he believed to be George Fox’s view.¹⁸² ‘I do indeed claim’, he declares in *The Faith of a Quaker*, ‘that goodness is natural and sin is unnatural to us’.¹⁸³ Not for him the Calvinist view, which Graham was inclined to attribute to the evangelicals as a body, that humankind was incurably corrupt until miraculously ‘saved’ from sin and its consequences. Sin is indeed real, and it has the effect of hardening the heart, so that ‘when the hardened sinner of later life is converted by a revivalist or otherwise, he has already caked over his spirit with layers of the clay of the earth, and the bursting through has to be catastrophic, and a definite turning round and retracing of the past’. It is better, however, if conversion occurs

¹⁸¹ Letter, 11 December, 1925, ‘Swarthmore Collection’.

¹⁸² See his ‘The Quaker Movement’, *BF*, April, 1902, 92-94.

¹⁸³ *FQ*, 45.

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early in life, 'as a great access of aspiration and of happiness'.¹⁸⁴ In any case, it is a reversion to what we are by nature, not the replacement of the old Adam by a new creation. George Fox, he believed, was never anxious about his own salvation.¹⁸⁵ In *The Divinity in Man* Graham deals with the conversion experience in the context of 'inspiration': conversion, he says, 'is the waking up of the better, the hidden parts of the subliminal faculty to a dominance over the egoistic, the supraliminal'.¹⁸⁶ This makes it appear even less like the conversion experience of Evangelical theology than that described in *The Faith of a Quaker*. Nothing is said of the operations of Christ or the Holy Spirit in either case.

As for the Cross, we have seen that it plays little part in Graham's theology.¹⁸⁷ He did, however, use the word 'sacrifice' in his own, non-evangelical way. A member of Mount Street Meeting, one Mrs. Benson Woodhead, once interrupted Graham in the course of his ministry, accusing him of 'denying the Sacrifice'. Jonathan Hodgkin, too, according to Kennedy, noted that 'he could not, when speaking of his crucified and risen Saviour, minimise either the value of His sacrifice upon the Cross, or His power to come home to each individual as a present living Saviour to guide and govern His life'.¹⁸⁸ Kennedy makes clear that this is part of an attack on liberal Friends. It is thus perplexing to find Graham writing in a letter home from the

¹⁸⁴ *FQ*, 46.

¹⁸⁵ *FQ*, 92.

¹⁸⁶ *DM*, 124.

¹⁸⁷ See 1.4.2., above.

¹⁸⁸ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 136.

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United States in 1896 that he has led a Bible class on 'The Meaning of Sacrifice in the New Testament'. He adds, 'This was received as something so new, and was so acceptable to both kinds of Friends ('conservative' and 'pastoral'), that I have repeated it several times since. It actually seems to be a common ground for both on the thorny subject of the Atonement; and is a clear case of how more Biblical knowledge surely brings both sides into nearer sympathy'.¹⁸⁹ I have found no further record of this Bible class, but Graham always maintained that atonement is at-one-ment: 'God forgives us exactly as we forgive others'; there is no penalty, paid in blood.¹⁹⁰ The sacrifice came in Gethsemane, with Christ's total surrender to the 'unexpected' will of God.¹⁹¹ 'How happy for Him and for us that the sacrifice was willingly made, that he offered up Himself, and did not pray for whatever may be meant by twelve legions of angels'.¹⁹² It was a matter of example: Jesus gave himself up entirely to the will of God, foregoing the legions of angels, and thus showed his disciples that it was necessary to become a citizen of the inward Kingdom, through obedience and, yes, sacrifice, before one could enter an outward one.¹⁹³

Graham objected to the omnipresence of the Cross in Christian thought: 'Great as the significance of Calvary must always be, the cross and the crucifix are so perpetually present that the significance of our Lord's life

¹⁸⁹ Letter, 6 July, 1904, JWGP, Box 1.

¹⁹⁰ *DM*, 250.

¹⁹¹ *FQ*, 60, 61.

¹⁹² *FQ*, 62. For the twelve legions of angels see Matt. 26:55.

¹⁹³ *FQ*, 64.

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and teaching is comparatively forgotten'.¹⁹⁴ Fixation on Calvary might detract from the strenuous life of service to which, Graham believed, Christians are called.

2.10. Conclusion

It was not the evangelicalism of the Four Points that Graham rejected so much as an exaggerated view of some doctrinal positions characteristic of Calvinism rather than of nineteenth-century evangelicalism in general. We have seen that his faith included the pursuit of holiness and that he sympathised with genuine religious emotion. It was rigidity of doctrine, especially where it entailed a harsh or distant view of God and of Christ, that he opposed. The bitterness with which he sometimes attacked the evangelicals reflects the pain he experienced in breaking with the faith of his youth. The fact that many of his early mentors, such as J.B. Braithwaite and J.B. Hodgkin, could not sympathise with his difficulties only made the suffering more acute. Fortunately for him, he had the tools of a new form of Christianity to hand, in biblical criticism, in the assurance of progress and in the Quaker tradition, which, he now realised with a 'shock of joy' was capable of standing up in the face of modern challenges to faith in the way that the evangelicalism of his youth was powerless to do. Later in life he was able to assert that primitive Quakerism could provide an unassailable basis for faith in the sceptical twentieth century:

¹⁹⁴ *FQ*, 62.

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Of all the great voices of the seventeenth century few, except that of George Fox, have grown stronger when faced with evolution and with modern scientific conceptions. We Friends meet these with joy. No destructive criticism of externals can really destroy a faith whose home is within, and a God from whom we cannot escape till we escape from ourselves.¹⁹⁵

Thus Graham was inspired to campaign against the Baals which still held sway over much of his beloved Society, especially in America. He took up the evangelicals' tool of activism along with a sanitised form of the Bible which they had misused, and turned them against mechanical and cruel notions of atonement. He sought to win converts for his kind of Quakerism, where redemption and sanctification are purely natural processes, not emanating in some quasi-magical way from the suffering and death of Jesus. Believing as he did that human beings were naturally good, indeed 'part of' God, he thought that all they needed was to draw on their inner depths for the power to shake off the dirt of their bad habits and realise that oneness with God which was theirs simply by virtue of being human. He found grounds for that belief among a new set of non-Quaker mentors amid the religious turmoil of 1880s Cambridge.

¹⁹⁵ *FQ*, 98.

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CHAPTER 3. JOHN WILLIAM GRAHAM AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH: 'SCIENTIFIC' SUPPORT FOR A PROGRESSIVE FAITH

3.1. Introduction

Graham's university years saw him turn decisively against the evangelicalism of respected Quaker elders like J.B. Braithwaite and J.B. Hodgkin. Before he left Cambridge he had found a new set of mentors to look up to: the founding members of the Society for Psychical Research. Graham became acquainted with these men in 1883, and continued to read the Society's *Proceedings* for the next fifty years.¹ This chapter argues that an important factor in Graham's development of his idiosyncratic form of Quaker Christianity was his acquaintance with the Society's leading figures, along with an eclectic use of some of their ideas. These enabled him to keep pace with 'modern' and 'scientific' thinking, to be an 'apostle of progress', while rejecting the 'materialism' which he saw as an unwanted and unnecessary by-product of the scientific world view.² 'Implicitly', says Janet Oppenheim of Myers and other enthusiasts for psychical research, 'they sought to use science to disclose the inadequacies of a materialist world view and to suggest how

¹ FQ, 79.

² See 1.4.1., above. Materialism was one of the challenges Graham faced in India in 1927, when he met with 'Materialists of the Bradlaugh type' (letter, 30 October, 1927, JGWP, Box 14). (Charles Bradlaugh (1833–1891) was notorious for his atheist views, which he successfully propagated among working-class men. See Susan Budd, *Varieties of Unbelief*, London: Heinemann, 1977, 40, 41. One man Graham met in India 'wasn't sure about his own consciousness ... I found it was that wretched mechanistic psychology, which I am always down on, reducing everything to material cause & effect' (letter, 15 December, 1927, JGWP, Box 14).

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much of cosmic significance scientific materialism failed to explain'.³ Graham found that it was possible to use the findings of psychical research, and especially the ideas of Frederic Myers (1843 - 1901), to suggest a scientific basis for the claims made by Quakers from the earliest times of direct contact with the Divine. Graham's steadfast adherence to the 'science' of the psychical researchers up until the time of his death in 1932 is an instance of his unwillingness, or inability, to give up nineteenth-century modes of thought: his progressivism, in this area as in others, belonged to the Victorian age.⁴

3.2. The Society for Psychical Research

It was in 1882, just after Graham came to Cambridge, that the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) was established, with some of the leading minds of the University at its head. It was founded in order to investigate with ruthless thoroughness all claims made in the spiritualist circles so popular at the time for the agency of 'spirits', as experienced not only in such physical phenomena as unexplained noises, moving tables, automatic writing or 'materialisations' of dead or absent people (ghosts), but also in supposed evidence of mind-reading or precognition or messages from the dead. Members of the Society devoted untold hours of labour to investigating such claims, and were constantly disappointed at finding them fraudulent.⁵ It also investigated the effects of hypnotism, of trance, and other unusual mental

³ Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850-1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 152.

⁴ See 1.6., above.

⁵ For the attitudes of the psychical researchers on these matters see Oppenheim, *Other World*, 126, 203.

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states. Its publications included not only the *Journal* and the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research but also monographs such as *Phantasms of the Living*.⁶ Myers, who coined the word 'telepathy', was the most notable theorist of the group.⁷ In numerous essays in the Society's publications and in his two-volume, posthumous publication, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*,⁸ he set out his ideas of multiple personality, the nature of the soul, and, of deep importance for John William Graham, the 'subliminal self', or 'subliminal consciousness'.⁹

Although the Society was set up in London, its leaders were all Cambridge men or women.¹⁰ Henry Sidgwick, from 1883 Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy,¹¹ was only the most eminent in a circle of academic high-flyers, including the future Prime Minister Arthur Balfour and his brother Gerald, Edmund Gurney, and the Australian, Richard Hodgson,¹²

⁶ Edmund Gurney, Frank Podmore and F.W.H. Myers, *Phantasms of the Living*, 2 vols., London: Society for Psychical Research, 1886. The book is a collection of 'crisis appearances', that is, ghostly apparitions of people then living but in a situation of crisis, such as their own imminent death or that of someone near to them (Gauld, *Founders*, 160-162).

⁷ See Oppenheim, *Other World*, especially 255-263; Alan Gauld, *The Founders of Psychical Research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968, 275-299, for Myers' theoretical work.

⁸ F.W.H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, 2 vols., London: Longmans, 1903. An abridged version in 1 volume, edited by L.H. Myers, was published by Longmans in 1907.

⁹ See 3.6., 3.7., 3.10., below.

¹⁰ Henry Sidgwick's wife, née Eleanor ('Nora') Balfour, sister to the future Prime Minister and later Mistress of Newnham, and her sister Evelyn, who became Lady Rayleigh, were active in the society's affairs. Another woman member, who acted as Secretary of the Society, was the Newnham scholar, Alice Johnson, who was eventually to write Graham's obituary for the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, November. 1932, 324-326. (There is a copy in JWGP, Box 2.) Graham knew her well (see letter, 'Boxing Day', 1929, JWGP, Box 11). See Oppenheim, *Other World*, for all of these.

¹¹ See Sheldon Rothblatt, *The Revolution of the Dons*, London: Faber, 1968; Chapter 4: 'Prophet or Sceptic', 133-154.

¹² Oppenheim (*Other World*, 109-158) gives the best account of all these figures, although Alan Gauld, *Founders, passim*), focuses more exclusively on psychical research, and gives

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as well as Frederic Myers. Sidgwick, the two Balfours and another prominent psychological researcher, Walter Leaf, were all 'Apostles'.¹³ Graham remained faithful to the memory of these people to the end of his life. In *The Divinity in Man* (published in 1927) he gave an account of the founding of the Society, which, according to him, came at an opportune moment 'to meet the materialism of Häckel and Clifford, and to give a renewal of youth to the Faith'.¹⁴ He relates how William (later Sir William) Barrett, professor of physics at the Royal College of Science, Dublin,¹⁵ conceived the idea, and Myers and Edmund Gurney persuaded Sidgwick to become President.¹⁶ In *The Divinity in Man* he writes of these men as if reliving the quasi-adoration he must have felt for them as a young man. Sidgwick

was then looked up to in Cambridge as a guide and leader by the younger graduates of the nobler sort. He was, as everyone knows, a great economist and philosopher, with as cool a head as ever topped an academic robe ... He had lost his Fellowship for refusing to subscribe to the Thirty-nine articles. He bore a great white name for honesty and courage. His wit, his philanthropy and his laborious criticism, along with that of his

engaging personal details. Graham mentions Hodgson as well as Myers as members of the Society whom he knew particularly well (JWGP, Box 2).

¹³ See Introduction, 'Early life and education', above, and note.

¹⁴ DM, 94. For Clifford see 1.2.1., above, 3.4., below. Stephen Kim cites Colin Chant and John Fauvel, *Darwin to Einstein: Historical Studies on Science and Belief* (London: Open University Press, 1980) on Ernst Haeckel as proponent of the 'religion of materialism' (Stephen S. Kim, *John Tyndall's Transcendental Materialism and the Conflict between Religion and Science in Victorian England*, Lewiston; Lampeter: Mellen University Press, 1996, 81).

¹⁵ Barrett was the author of *On the Threshold of the Unseen* (1917). This is one of the volumes mentioned in the Catalogue of the 'John William Graham Collection of Literature of Psychic Science' held at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, where it is described as 'an examination of the phenomena of psychical experience by a distinguished professor of experimental physics'.

¹⁶ DM, 95-97.

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almost equally distinguished sister ... were brought to the service of the quest.¹⁷

As for Myers, as late as 1927 (many years after Myers' death in 1901 and after Freud had come to prominence)¹⁸ Graham makes what must then have seemed preposterous claims: Myers' posthumously published book, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*,¹⁹ says Graham, is 'likely to fill, I believe, a place analogous to that of the *Origin of Species* in human thought, and written, unlike most scientific works, with a literary charm, which gives it a place among *belles lettres* apart from its scientific value'.²⁰ This accolade may take a place alongside the opinion of Professor Théodore Flournoy, recorded by Oppenheim, that Myers's theories, if validated, would make Myers' name immortal.²¹

3.3. Graham and the SPR

Myers was the member of the group whom Graham knew best. They shared a love for the Lake District, with which both were familiar from boyhood²² and

¹⁷ Graham, *The Divinity in Man*, 96. It is possible that rather than Sidgwick's sister Graham meant his wife, Eleanor M. Sidgwick, President of Newnham College (ODNB, accessed 3 December, 2015).

¹⁸ For Freud's relations with the SPR see 3.6., below, note.

¹⁹ *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, London: Longmans, 1903. References are to the abridged edition, edited and abridged by S.B. and L.H.M), London: Longmans, 1920.

²⁰ Graham, *Divinity*, 97.

²¹ Oppenheim, *Other World*, 255: 'et joint à ceux de Copernice, et de Darwin, il y complétera la triade des genies ayant le plus profondément révolutionné la pensée scientifique dans l'ordre cosmologique, biologique, psychologique' (from Flournoy's review of *Human Personality*, in *PSPR*, June, 1903).

²² Myers was born and reared at Keswick (ODNB, accessed 2 August, 2015). Graham's family on both sides came from Cumberland, and references abound to visits there

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for Wordsworth and Ruskin.²³ Graham appends to his *Harvest of Ruskin*, Myers' 'beautiful tribute' to Ruskin, written on the occasion of Ruskin's death, for the *Journal of Psychological Research* for March 1900.²⁴ When in 1893 Graham was seeking a change of employment from his position as tutor at Dalton Hall he asked Myers, who had a day job as a schools inspector,²⁵ for a testimonial. Myers obliged: 'From a ten years' knowledge of you, which has involved intercourse on various matters of difficulty and delicacy, I think you are very well qualified to fill such a post'.²⁶ There may be a clue as to what these 'matters of difficulty and delicacy' were in a letter from Graham to his parents of 1884, where he speaks of meeting Edmund Gurney. 'Myers seems to have talked him [sic] a good deal about me – in connection with getting them Stories'.²⁷ It is likely that had been collecting stories from Quaker records of uncanny powers of clairvoyance, precognition or telepathy among Quakers, of the kind he later retold in his 'Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers'.²⁸ The 'difficulty and delicacy' surrounding the venture may be

throughout his life, including to family and the meeting at Colthouse, abound in his work (e.g., diary entries, 26 March, 1910, 13 April, 1913, JWGP, Box 15).

²³ Graham took Wordsworth as something like a mentor on the due response to natural beauty. See letter 26 August, 1880, JWGP, Box 8. For Myers and Wordsworth see John Beer, *Providence and Love: Studies in Wordsworth, Channing, Myers, George Eliot, and Ruskin*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1998, Chapter 4, 116-188, 173.

²⁴ John W. Graham, *The Harvest of Ruskin*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1920, 259-265. Here Myers relates: 'I met him first in my own earliest home, beneath the spurs of Skiddaw, - its long slopes "bronzed with deepest radiance", as the boy Wordsworth had seen them long since in even such an evening's glow' (*HR*, 260). Graham too had a meeting with Ruskin to record, a visit to Brantwood, Ruskin's home in the Lake District, in 1884 (*HR*, 74-75). See Conclusion, 'Conclusion', below.

²⁵ *ODNB*, accessed 7 May, 2012.

²⁶ Letter, 23 February, 1893, JWGP, Box 6.

²⁷ Letter, 8 December, 1894, JWGP, Box 8.

²⁸ See Introduction, 'Writings by Graham', above.

3. Psychical Research

gauged from the way Sidgwick spoke of 'this obscure and treacherous region, girt about with foes watching eagerly for some bad blunder'.²⁹ Sidgwick is referring to the prevalence of fraud in spiritualist circles and the scepticism, sometimes amounting to active hostility, of much of the educated world to beliefs about a spirit world.³⁰

The kind of story that Graham might have told Gurney, culled from his stock of Quaker lore, is that of one Sarah Taylor, who had a dream that she had been sent to the bedside of a renegade, where: 'She sat down and "so spoke that the witness for truth in him was reached" ... Then 'The whole dream came true in every detail, even to the final triumph. Did she leave her body? That is a crude way to put it', but 'A Heavenly Guide seems demanded by the facts'. Graham was impressed by the story of Elizabeth Newport (1796-1872), an American Hicksite Quaker who travelled widely in the ministry and was famed for her gifts of precognition as well as her ability to see into the minds of those she spoke to without any prior knowledge. One such person was moved to exclaim, 'She has told me all the things that ever I did!'³¹ Graham commented: She 'was perhaps one of the last of a type of

²⁹ See Gauld, *Founders*, 161.

³⁰ See Browning's 1864 poem, 'Mr. Sludge the Medium', supposedly relating the exposure of the celebrated medium D.D. Home. See Gauld, *Founders*, 71. Gauld claims that there does not 'seem to be any reliable first-hand account of [Home's] being detected in fraud'.

³¹ *Memoir of Elizabeth Newport*, compiled by Ann A. Townsend, 2nd ed., Philadelphia: Friends' Book Association, 1878, 43. Cf. John, 4:28. George Fox called attention to this clairvoyant capacity in Christ: see Lewis Benson, 'George Fox's Teaching about Christ', *Quaker Religious Thought (QRT)*, 16, nos. 1-2, Winter, 1974-1975, 20-42, quoting Fox.

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Quaker minister from whose remarkable gifts we may try to learn something of the unseen world around us'.³²

Graham admits that his research, based as it is on written records of a past age, do not meet the rigorous standards of verification demanded by the SPR, but, he says, 'I choose to believe them, being already convinced of the existence of the type to which they belong, & of the care & honesty of the narrators, with whom meticulous caution in assertion was a kind of passion'.³³ Thus he ingenuously admits the part played by his own predispositions, while still asserting that his findings are supported by 'science'. His thinking is essentially circular, despite his calling in aid the known truthfulness of the narrators: he believes the stories primarily because they illustrate his preconceived belief, because he finds an irresistible consonance between the teaching of Myers on subliminal consciousness and the Quaker understanding of 'prophetic ministry', of the kind exercised by Elizabeth Newport.³⁴

3.4. Faith and Psychical Research

Sidgwick, Myers and Gurney were all offspring of clergy,³⁵ each had an earnest and naturally devout disposition,³⁶ and each lost the faith in which he

³² Undated typescript in JWGP, Box 2 (in folder headed 'Correspondence 1931/2'). See also 5.3., below.

³³ 'Psychical Experiences', 5.

³⁴ For more on the subliminal mind and Graham's adaptation of the concept for his Quaker purposes, see 5.8., below.

³⁵ See *ODNB*, accessed 12 February, 2013; 17 October, 2013; 7 May, 2012; Gauld, *Founders*, 64.

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had been reared. Gauld writes of how grievous a loss this might be, countering stories told by Geoffrey Rowell in his *Hell and the Victorians* about the systematic and conscientious attempts of some Victorians to use the fear of Hell to terrify little children into docility.³⁷

Most of these doubters came from homes that were religious but not oppressively so ... and several were greatly distressed by the doubts which assailed them. It must indeed have been no trivial affliction to find that the faith which had from childhood guided one's actions and sheltered one from the cold fear of death was in danger of crumbling utterly away.³⁸

Sidgwick 'ardently desired' to become a clergyman when he entered Trinity College in 1855,³⁹ but when the time came for him to do so honesty compelled him to give up the idea and his college fellowship into the bargain.⁴⁰ Thereafter, according to J.M. Keynes, writing in 1906, 'he never did anything but wonder whether Christianity was true and prove that it wasn't and hope that it was'.⁴¹ Myers was taught an evangelical faith by his mother from the age of two, which his ardent and susceptible nature eagerly absorbed.⁴² Doubts came, but as a young graduate he was easily reconverted to a

³⁶ As both Gauld in *Founders* and Oppenheim in *The Other World* make abundantly clear. See also John J. Cerullo, *The Secularization of the Soul: Psychological Research in Modern Britain*, Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1982, 40-41.

³⁷ See Geoffrey Rowell, *Hell and the Victorians*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1974, especially p. 172.

³⁸ Gauld, *Founders*, 64.

³⁹ Gauld, *Founders*, 47.

⁴⁰ See Gauld, *Founders*, 51ff, for an account of the intellectual struggles undergone by Sidgwick to overcome his doubts.

⁴¹ Oppenheim, *Other World*, 111.

⁴² Gauld, *Founders*, 38.

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burning Christian faith by the then young and beautiful Josephine Butler.⁴³ It did not last. Subsequently, along with Sidgwick and the rest, he turned aside from religious orthodoxy. They needed to believe in a reality beyond the material world. Religion as they had learnt it was incredible, but the godless world that science seemed to reveal was unacceptable.⁴⁴

J.P. Williams points out that 1874, the year when the 'Sidgwick Group'⁴⁵ began its researches, was the year of 'three particularly aggressive statements of materialism': T.H. Huxley's 'On the Hypothesis that Animals are Automata, and its History', John Tyndall's 'Belfast address', and W.K. Clifford's 'Body and Mind'.⁴⁶ Gauld maintains that men and women born in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, as were Sidgwick and Myers,⁴⁷ were particularly vulnerable to the assaults of doubt and disbelief.⁴⁸ He comments that it was the first time in two hundred years that a chasm was seen to be opening between science and religious faith.⁴⁹ David Bebbington confirms that during the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth century

⁴³ Gauld, *Founders*, 95. Butler is best known for campaigning against the 'Contagious Diseases Act', intended to protect soldiers from venereal disease by intrusive and demeaning investigation of the sexual health of the women they associated with (see *ODNB*, accessed 3 December, 2015).

⁴⁴ See Oppenheim. *Other World*, 152.

⁴⁵ The phrase is Gauld's, used in the title of *Founders*, Chapter 4.

⁴⁶ J.P. Williams, 'Psychical Research and Psychiatry in Late Victorian Britain: Trance as Ecstasy or Trance as Insanity', in *The Anatomy of Madness: Essays in the History of Psychology*, ed. W.F. Bynum, Roy Porter and Michael Shepherd, London: Tavistock, 1985, Vol. 1, 'People and Ideas', pp.233-253, p.236, and note. For more on the materialism and its threat to faith see 1.4.1., above.

⁴⁷ Sidgwick was born in 1838, Myers in 1843. Gurney was a little younger – he was born in 1856.

⁴⁸ Gauld, *Founders*, 44ff.

⁴⁹ Gauld, *Founders*, 45.

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evangelicals saw no clash between science and religion.⁵⁰ 'Natural theology' sat alongside the Bible as evidence of God's providence.⁵¹ Bebbington also states that most evangelicals took Darwinian evolution in their stride.⁵² For the intellectuals of the psychical research movement it was not the popular conception of 'Darwinism' as arguing human descent from ape-like progenitors that caused the breakdown in their faith: it was rather fears about the material basis, and hence mortality, of the human mind.⁵³

Myers prefaced a description of his own experiments in hypnosis with the declaration, 'My own conviction is that we possess – and can nearly prove it – some kind of soul, or spirit, or transcendental self, which even in this life occasionally manifests powers beyond the powers of our physical organism, and which very probably survives the grave'.⁵⁴ Yet his experiments suggest that 'certain strong, almost universal prepossessions, which make for my own creed, are in fact unfounded'. His experiments call in question the existence of a unitary 'self' bound together by a coherent sequence of memories. Instead they seem to show that 'our sense of free-will is shifting and illusory, and memory multiplex and discontinuous, and character a function of these two variables, and directly modifiable by purely physiological means'.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, London: Unwin Hyman, 1989, 57.

⁵¹ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 59.

⁵² Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 208.

⁵³ See 1.4.1., above.

⁵⁴ See Myers' 'Human Personality in the Light of Hypnotic Suggestion', *Society for Psychical Research, Proceedings*, Vol. 4, 1887, 1-24, especially 5 – 7.

⁵⁵ Myers, 'Human Personality', 19.

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Science had not yet proved what he wanted to believe, what religious faith affirmed. Hence the necessity for qualifiers like 'nearly' and 'probably' in his preliminary statement. Still, patient observational science might yet prove that humankind had a more than earthly destiny:

It is, as I hold, to experimental psychology, to an analysis whose growing power we can as yet hardly realize, that we must look for a slow but incontrovertible decision as to whether man be but the transitory crown of earth's fauna, between ice-age and ice-age, between fire and sea; or whether it may truly be said that his evolution is not a terrestrial evolution alone, not bounded by polar solitudes, nor measured by the sun's march through Heaven, but making for a vaster future, by inheritance from a remoter past.⁵⁶

Thus Myers, like Tennyson, made a bid to enlist evolution on the side of hope.

Myers, like Tennyson, had 'loved and lost'.⁵⁷ He had had a passionate if unconsummated love affair with his cousin's wife, Annie Marshall, who, in despair at her husband's madness and the impossibility of leaving him for Myers, drowned herself in Ullswater on 29th August, 1879.⁵⁸ Thereafter Myers was eager to receive messages from her spirit, and on two occasions thought he might have done so, though he was never, apparently, heartily convinced.⁵⁹ Of the affair itself, John Beer writes that 'it was a bold mediating stroke, an attempt to show how human beings might rise above the demeaning implications of living in a purely Darwinian universe by cultivating

⁵⁶ Myers, 'Human Personality', 20.

⁵⁷ 'In Memoriam', lyric 27.

⁵⁸ Gauld's article on Myers in *ODNB* (accessed 7 May, 2012), There are other accounts of this moving story in Gauld, *Founders*, 117-24 and John Beer's *Providence and Love*, Chapter 4, pp.116-188.

⁵⁹ Gauld, *Founders*, 130-133; Beer, *Providence*, 136. 180.

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their affection while maintaining a strenuous devotion to principle'.⁶⁰ Morality remained, despite the crumbling of the supernatural world that had seemed to sustain it. Myers' sense that this was so was confirmed in an encounter with George Eliot, when she, 'taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet-calls of men, – the words *God*, *Immortality*, *Duty* – pronounced, with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the *first*, how unbelievable the *second*, and yet how peremptory and absolute the *third*'.⁶¹

3.5. Graham, Psychological Research, and Quaker Christianity

Graham, however, looked for more than a bare sense of duty. He turned to psychological research, and especially to Myers' concept of the subliminal mind, to help him construct a position that was both intellectually sound in the light of new progressive thinking and also a just interpretation of fundamental Quaker insights. Although his main theological works, *The Faith of a Quaker* and *The Divinity in Man* did not appear until 1920 and 1927 respectively they reflect the teaching of his early heroes, especially Myers, rather than any more recent ideas about psychology.

Although Myers admitted that his experiments in hypnosis had so far produced disappointing results he went on to assert his belief, for which he could not yet account, 'that this method of experimental psychology, when carried further, will conduct us not to negative but to positive results of the

⁶⁰ Beer, *Providence*, 183.

⁶¹ Myers, 'George Eliot', in *Century Magazine*, 23, November. 1881, 62-3. Quoted by Beer, *Providence*, 135.

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most hopeful kind'. This can happen only 'when the phenomena of abnormal states are so scrutinised as to discover whether any of them are in fact *supernormal*, transcending the powers of man as hitherto known to us, and pointing to a higher stage of evolution'. He went on to say, 'For my part, I believe that many questions which the religious world deems to be already closed in one sense and the materialistic world in the other, are really only just beginning to come within the purview of science'.⁶²

Graham did not allow himself to be dismayed by the doubts and uncertainties which Myers admitted. For him psychical research was a means of preserving faith in spiritual reality while keeping up with the march of progress. It was a viable alternative to evangelicalism or to any uncritical acceptance of articles of faith. Thanks to it, faith could now be supported by science and materialism defeated by reason.

3.6. Graham and the Subliminal Self

Through the years Graham dwelt on Myers' concept of the subliminal self, working out how it could be used to support and develop his specifically Quaker theology. Increased mastery of the resources of the subliminal self would, moreover, convey power which humankind might use to advance towards the better future which he so confidently expected. A review by Graham of Mary Carta Sturge's *The Truth and Error of Christian Science* articulates this hope, while criticising both the Christian scientist and the Roman Catholic approach to faith healing: 'What we all want to know is, who

⁶² Myers, *Human Personality*, 20.

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works the subliminal mind, and how can it be brought into action?... We may hope that one of the secrets yet to be revealed to us is how to use this great store-house of power'.⁶³ The power of healing, was not, however, Graham's chief concern. Rather, he sought to build on the labours of the psychological researchers to make insights from the spiritual world more readily available, to increase the range of spiritual resources for the Quaker ministry and the Quaker life. His readings in Quaker literature, especially in the quietist* or pre-Evangelical era, convinced him that the Quaker practice of waiting for divine 'leadings' was in itself a way of obtaining entry to the subliminal realm: Myers' teachings clarified and confirmed the practice, and could therefore give the modern Quaker confidence in the reality of the experiences.⁶⁴ 'I, for one', Graham declared, in *The Faith of a Quaker*, 'feel sure that we are surrounded by, and are living in, a world of spirit, just as truly as in a world of matter'.⁶⁵ The researches of Myers and his colleagues gave him the 'scientific' assurance that he was right. Graham's confidence was backed up by members of the psychological research fraternity. A Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, in a review of Graham's 'Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers' remarks as follows: 'I believe that among members of the Society [of Friends] to-day there is a clearer understanding that these spirit monitions are of the same kind as the happenings recorded in the name of psychic facts, and that this

⁶³ *BF*, March 1903, 61.

⁶⁴ There are references to these powers scattered through his work. For instance, in his Swarthmore Lecture*, Graham stresses that 'psychical' gifts came to those who 'had reached God through the training and exercise of the subliminal self' (John W. Graham, *The Quaker Ministry* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1925) (*QM*), London: Swarthmore Press, 1925, 50).

⁶⁵ John William Graham, *The Faith of a Quaker* (*FQ*), Cambridge: University Press, 1920, 82.

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knowledge will bring new strength and trust in their unique heritage, for the gifts have sometimes been in danger of sterilization through lack of right understanding in face of modern tendencies'.⁶⁶

Myers' 'subliminal self'⁶⁷ is different from Freud's 'Unconscious',⁶⁸ as appears in Graham's own writings. In *The Divinity in Man* Graham refers with approval to the Irish poet and journalist George Russell, who adopted the nom-de-plume 'A.E.':⁶⁹

His book is an *Apologia* for the validity of visionary sights, for the living reality of the experiences of the soul, a testimony against the theory of their material or merely fleshly origin, against the psycho-analytical theory of complexes and baffled desires.⁷⁰

Thus the psycho-analysts became associated with the 'materialist' enemy.

3.7. Myers and the Self

Myers would not necessarily have agreed with A.E. Alan Gauld explains the difference between him and the psycho-analysts on rather more technical

⁶⁶ In *Light: a Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research*, April 6, 1934 (in JWGP, Box 2).

⁶⁷ A condensed version of Myers' theory of the subliminal self, first expounded in a series of contributions to the *Journal* and the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, is to be found in his *Human Personality*.

⁶⁸ For relations between the SPR, Myers and Freud see Cerullo, *Secularization*, 101; Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, Princeton, NJ; London, Princeton University Press, 1968, 148; Alan Gauld, *The Founders of Psychical Research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968, 338.

⁶⁹ George William Russell (1867-1935), artist, theosophist, friend of Yeats and Irish nationalist. As an adolescent he began to experience supernatural visions (*ODNB*, accessed 3 November, 2015).

⁷⁰ John W. Graham, *The Divinity in Man*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1927 (*DM*), 128. The book is *A Candle of Vision*, London: Macmillan 1918, which Graham praises as demonstrating the connection between body and spirit, 'in line with what Science . . . has come to demand'.

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philosophical grounds.⁷¹ Myers' subliminal self was not in fact a single entity, but a multiplicity: 'No Self', he wrote, 'of which we can here have cognisance is in reality more than a fragment of a larger Self, – revealed in a fashion at once shifting and limited through an organism not so framed as to afford it full manifestation'.⁷² The 'shifting and limited' glimpses of this 'multiplex' larger personality are provided by the 'psychical phenomena', the supposed telepathic or telæsthetic⁷³ powers of 'mediums'. Myers attributed to evolution by natural selection the fact that these glimpses are so elusive: humankind became adapted to life on earth by 'natural selection so operating as to keep ready to hand those perceptions which are most needed for the conduct of life'.⁷⁴ William James, in his deeply appreciative tribute on the occasion of Myers' death, clarifies the point. After praising Myers' 'unusually daring grasp of the principle of evolution', he adds:

Myers . . . makes the suggestion that the whole system of consciousness studied by the classical psychology is only an extract from a larger total, being a part told off, as it were, to do service in the adjustments of our physical organism to the world of nature . . . The normal consciousness is thus only a portion of our nature, adapted primarily to "terrene" conditions'.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Gauld, *Founders*, 278-281.

⁷² *Human Personality*, 15,

⁷³ Myers defines telæsthesia as 'any direct sensation or perception of objects or conditions independently of the recognised channels of sense and also under such circumstances that no known mind external to the percipient's can be suggested as the source of the knowledge thus gained' (*Human Personality*, 6, note).

⁷⁴ *Human Personality*, 24.

⁷⁵ From *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. 17, May, 1901; in *William James on Psychical Research*, compiled and edited by Gardner Murphy and Robert O. Ballou, with an introduction and concluding remarks by Gardner Murphy, London: Chatto and Windus, 1961, 221, 222, 229. For James' close relations with the SPR and friendship with Myers see *James on Psychical Research*, 14, 211.

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The everyday consciousness which we use to go about our daily business Myers called the 'supraliminal', to denote its position 'above the threshold' of our normal, waking thoughts and sensations.⁷⁶ Graham picked up Myers' point in *The Divinity in Man*:

We hope to bring evidence of profound faculty, in ordinary life potential only, but from which the faculties of life are only selections, chosen to fit the needs of the earth, but which reaches a fuller realization after the liberation from the body wrought at death.⁷⁷

Moreover, the subliminal self manifests itself not only in the mysterious phenomena of automatic writing, moving tables and other manifestation of the medium's art but also in the lives of everyone, especially in dreams:

We found that the sleeping spirit was susceptible of relations unfettered by spatial bonds; of telæsthenic perception of distant scenes; of telepathic communication with distant persons, or even with spirits of whom we can predicate neither distance nor nearness, since they are leased from the prison of the flesh.⁷⁸

Myers maintains that the subliminal self, or selves, are not superior to the supraliminal, only that the subliminal has a greater range, extending from the confusion of madness to the 'inspiration of genius', depending on the degree of co-ordination in the percipient's vision.⁷⁹ The poet William Blake is cited as alternating between high and low points on the scale: in his work 'we see the subliminal self flashing for moments into unity, then smouldering once

⁷⁶ *Human Personality*, 14, 15.

⁷⁷ *DM*, 105.

⁷⁸ *Human Personality*, 97. Cf. Graham, *DM*, 109.

⁷⁹ Myers, *Human Personality*, 46-50.

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again in a lurid and scattered glow'.⁸⁰ Key words here are 'unity' and 'scattered'. Humankind can make progress towards fulfilling its inherent potential through improved access to the subliminal consciousness and a greater power to unify its scattered elements. Myers suggests that this is, or should be, the path of human evolution: 'Civilisation adds to the complexity of man's faculties; education helps him to their concentration. It is in the direction of a still wider range, a still firmer hold, that his evolution must now lie'.⁸¹ Furthermore, the end to which human evolution is directed is something far loftier than that which natural selection of itself can bring forth:

No one really attempts to explain [humankind] except on the tacit supposition that Nature somehow tended to evolve intelligence – somehow needed to evolve joy; was not satisfied with such an earth-over-runner as the rabbit, or such an invincible conqueror as the influenza microbe.⁸²

Moreover, we might actually, in the course of evolution, progress beyond the limitations of the supraliminal consciousness:

This web of habits and appetites, of lusts and fears, is not, perhaps, the ultimate manifestation of what in truth we are. It is the cloak which our rude forefathers have woven themselves against the cosmic storm; but we are already learning to shift and fashion it as our gentler weather needs; and if perchance it slip from us in the sunshine then something more ancient and more glorious is for a moment guessed within.⁸³

⁸⁰ Myers, *Human Personality*, 48.

⁸¹ Myers, *Human Personality*, 50.

⁸² Myers, *Human Personality*, 61. Cf. Introduction, Chapter Summary, above, and 1.3., above, for the wishful thought that evolution is teleological.

⁸³ Myers, in *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 20 (November 1886), 666. Quoted in Cerullo, *Secularization*, 91.

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There can be no doubt that John William Graham responded at least as much to the enthusiasm of such a passage as to the repetitive details of attendance at séances or experiments in hypnosis.

3.8. Science and Quaker Mysticism

Graham believed that the ideas of Myers could provide a 'scientific' foundation for a mystical religion, where each individual could hope for access to the divine, without the mediation of priests or church structures and rituals. He proposes in *The Divinity in Man* (1927) to make 'a scientific inquiry into the mind of man, in order to make it indubitable from external testimony that what the mystic asserts as intuitive has a basis of demonstrated reality'.⁸⁴ He began this programme much earlier in his career. In 1904, addressing the 'Hicksite' conference in Toronto,⁸⁵ he alluded to Myers' notion of the composite personality⁸⁶ and without drawing breath suggested an analogy with the nature of God.⁸⁷ The passage, including the reference to psychical research, is largely repeated in the first chapter of *The Faith of a Quaker*, but with the idea of a composite God replaced with the notion that the whole of creation forms a composite whole, with God at the centre. God 'is to be found everywhere, but not discoverable, separable or enucleated anywhere, yet in Him all things consist. This has been called the immanence and

⁸⁴ *DM*, 43.

⁸⁵ See 1.3.2., above, and note. Graham said his part in the Conference was his 'most public sphere of service' in his visit to Canada and America in 1904 ('Friends in Canada and New York', *Friend*, 28 October, 1904, 716).

⁸⁶ See 3.7, above.

⁸⁷ 'The Friend and his Message', 'Address of John William Graham, of Manchester, England, at the opening session of Friends' General Conference at Toronto, Eighth month 12th, 1904', 8, JWGP, Box 1.

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transcendence of God'.⁸⁸ Thus psychical research might be used in combination with traditional theology, the one source supplementing and illuminating the other, but neither treated as ultimately authoritative.

Myers' concept of 'genius', Graham found, was particularly useful in explaining Quaker mysticism. Myers maintained that the subliminal self provides the source from which exceptional people can draw extraordinary inspiration:

The distinctive characteristic of genius is the large infusion of the subliminal in its mental output; and one characteristic of the subliminal in my view is that it is in closer relation than the supraliminal to the spiritual world, and is thus nearer to primitive reality than is the specialised consensus of faculties which natural selection has lifted above the threshold for the purposes of working-day existence.⁸⁹

Socrates' Daemon, Joan of Arc's voices, are for these purposes equated with the inspiration of genius:

I believe that the monitions of the Dæmon of Socrates – the subliminal self of a man of transcendent genius – have in all probability been described to us with literal truth: and did in fact convey to that great philosopher precisely the kind of telæsthetic or precognitive information which forms the sensitive's privilege today. We have thus in Socrates the ideal unification of human powers.⁹⁰

In commenting on Myers' ideas Graham brings together the Daemon of Socrates with the Inward Light of George Fox: Myers' 'intuitions of genius' are 'allied' to 'the Daemon of Socrates, the Visions of Francis, and the Inner Voice

⁸⁸ *FQ*, 7.

⁸⁹ Myers, *Human Personality*, 61.

⁹⁰ Myers, *Human Personality*, 65.

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which spoke to and through George Fox and the early Friends'.⁹¹ For Graham it was clear that the gift worked through the Subliminal Consciousness. At the 1904 Conference in Toronto he was reported as saying,

The psychological tendency of the day laid hold only of the raw material of religion. Besides the elemental instincts, he believed, there was a special organ of religion which might be called the soul or the subliminal self, or the higher Ego, which was a secret of the Lord not analyzed by modern psychology.⁹²

The 'modern psychology' that Graham finds wanting is surely not that of Myers. Even if we accept, with Cerullo,⁹³ that Myers' concept of the 'soul' was a 'secular' one, there was enough spirituality in it to make it entirely compatible with a religious view of life: 'I assume in man', Myers said, 'a soul which can draw strength and grace from a spiritual Universe, and conversely I assume in the Universe a Spirit accessible and responsive to the soul in man'.⁹⁴ Graham was clear that the psychical researchers were serving the cause of religion: 'At heart they were religious seekers, hoping to bring conversion, salvation, prayer and immortality into the larger realm for which Science already vouches'.⁹⁵

⁹¹ *FQ*, 243. See also *FQ*, 75. See 1.5.1., above, for Thomas Hodgkin's similar comparison. Socrates and his Daemon, Joan and her voices, were obviously part of the stock-in-trade of Quakers and other writers on mystical themes.

⁹² From the *Toronto World*. Cutting in JWGP, Box 1 [n.d.].

⁹³ Cerullo argues that psychical research offered a sense of 'soul' to those whose religion had deserted them. See his *Secularization*, 152.

⁹⁴ Myers, *Human Personality*, 67.

⁹⁵ *DM*, 97.

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It was not an egalitarian concept. In the idea of 'genius' we have something equivalent to the Quaker sense, still alive in Graham's day, that some people are more divinely endowed than others. In intention these were the 'recorded ministers', 'recorded', that is, as having shown themselves to be more able than others to speak prophetically, to receive and to be able to express intimations from God.⁹⁶ But whether such endowments were ordinary or extraordinary the subliminal self was active in spoken ministry and in Quaker meetings more generally.

Graham's theory and practice of spoken ministry are treated more fully in Chapter 6, 'Ministry and Meetings'. For the purposes of this chapter it is sufficient to point out that, for him, the idea of the subliminal soul is an essential presupposition to this theory and practice. In August 1902 Graham read a paper with the title 'An Analysis of Ministry' at the General Conference of Friends of the 'other' or 'Hicksite' branch of American Friends, at Asbury Park, New Jersey. It was important enough, in his view, to be repeated almost word for word in *The Faith of a Quaker*. Graham explained:

The thesis of this paper and the belief which caused it to be written is that Ministry, as understood by the Society of Friends, is not a function of the outward will or conscious purpose, nor represents only the thought of the ordinary superficial brain of everyday use; but comes from a deeper stratum of our being, has its origin in and derives its piercing and convincing power

⁹⁶ The distinction was abolished in Britain in 1924 (Sylvia Stevens, 'Travelling Ministry', in *OHQS*, 304). See also E. Vipont Brown, 'The Renaissance of Quakerism', *FQE*, 1951, 201-206, 205, 206; also Graham, *QM*, 74.

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from a level of personality deeper than the streams of current consciousness.⁹⁷

In the early address Graham goes on to insist on the *scientific* basis of his belief, by way of reference to Myers and psychological research. By the time of *The Faith of a Quaker* it no longer seemed appropriate explicitly to invoke science to explain the Quaker ministry. This can be seen in a minute change made in a repetition of a passage from the earlier paper where he emphasises like any quietist* that ministry must be free from the normal workings of the self in order to allow scope for the workings of the Holy Spirit.

Here is the older version:

If preaching is an affair of the unaided self-purpose, worked out by the conscious intellect then our Quaker form of worship is calculated to give scope for the worst possible kind, the most haphazard in quality, the most untutored, the most self-appointed and egoistic. We can only regard a Friends' meeting as a *scientifically conceived* adaptation of means to ends, if the impulse to speak comes from the unconscious part of ourselves, so that it cannot be arranged for and paid for beforehand; and our part is to gather our souls together in the silence and wait, leaving the Holy Spirit, moving here and there, to do the rest. Our meetings are much more than a convenient plan by which the ministry of several may be substituted for the ministry of one; they are a well-considered provision for the silence of the outward, inasmuch as that is a condition for the inward to find a voice.⁹⁸ (My italics.)

In *The Faith of a Quaker* the phrase 'scientifically conceived' is replaced by the pallid 'well conceived'. The younger Graham needed to claim the support

⁹⁷ 'An Analysis of Ministry', paper read by Graham at the Hicksite General Conference at Asbury Park, New Jersey, August, 1902 (published in *FQE*, 1904, 209-223). See *FQ*, 242.

⁹⁸ 'Analysis of Ministry'. Compare *FQ*, 244.

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of 'science' for his refurbished faith; as an older man he was more concerned to preach a doctrine of ministry that Friends and others might make use of.

Graham continued to believe, however, that the unconscious or subliminal self is the 'organ of religion' whereby our unity with God is realised: it is the vehicle of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, it is 'experimental psychology', along with rejection of the doctrine of the Fall, that has enabled Quakers and others to recognise 'the deeper unities' under the dualism between the divine and the natural of earlier Christian and Quaker thought: 'We may now recognise that the ministry is a divine product because it is a human product, and that it is a human product because it is a divine product'.⁹⁹ The subliminal soul is altogether human, but through it we have kinship with the divine.

It was not only in ministry but in the whole of the meeting that the subliminal self played a part. For Graham this human endowment was essentially sociable, shared. In the chapter on 'The Subliminal Man' in *The Divinity in Man*, Graham suggests that our individual supraliminal consciousnesses are like islands, separated by sea, yet interconnected, parts of one land-mass, at the subliminal level.¹⁰⁰ Telepathy is communication by way of this hidden submarine mass.¹⁰¹ In a Quaker meeting this essential oneness underlying all our diversity is particularly demonstrable: 'In modern days too, a unity of thought, a sequence of kindred expression, makes a

⁹⁹ *FQ*, 33.

¹⁰⁰ *DM*, 103-4. See also *FQ*, 80, where the same image is used.

¹⁰¹ *DM*, 104.

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meeting one, many a time'.¹⁰² In Graham's thought the explanation lies in our common share in the Indwelling God, known through the subliminal self. The rationale of vocal prayer, prayer ostensibly directed to God but also intended for the benefit of other worshippers, is also explained in this way. We address our prayers to the God within our hearers: 'The prayer is not directed in two discordant directions, but in a single direction, to the Indwelling God'.¹⁰³

3.9. The Subliminal Self and Christology

Not only does the concept of the subliminal soul explain 'such [mystical] experiences as those of Tennyson, of Swedenborg, and of George Fox', 'it has not been difficult to see its wonderful possibilities in connection with the nature of Our Lord; inasmuch as we have, we believe, found the gateway into the light of the eternal'.¹⁰⁴ For it was not the outward characteristics of the Carpenter of Nazareth that Paul and the early Quakers had chiefly in mind when they spoke of the Christ within. 'They were thinking of what we have called His subliminal personality'.¹⁰⁵ It is clear enough what Graham means if we keep in mind what he has said all along about the subliminal mind and its access to a spiritual world normally hidden from our waking life, the source of the inspiration of the genius, the extra-normal intuitions of the Quaker seer, and also of the Inner Voice which finds utterance in genuine ministry. Christ,

¹⁰² This is the phenomenon of the 'gathered meeting', eloquently described in Thomas Kelly's 'The Gathered Meeting', in his *The Eternal Promise*, Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 1977 (reprint of Harper & Rowe edn., 1966), 86-104. Kelly writes of this experience as 'group mysticism' (86).

¹⁰³ *QM*, 26.

¹⁰⁴ *FQ*, 75.

¹⁰⁵ *FQ*, 77.

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by this reasoning, is the supreme genius, who, through his subliminal consciousness enjoyed direct and constant communication with the spiritual world, with God, so that all his utterances were 'prophetic', in the sense of coming direct from God.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, the biblical scholar William Sanday¹⁰⁷ might be brought in aid with his support of the

conception we have been seeking, of an essential unity after all between the Divine and the Human, so that one whose outward supraliminal life was wholly the product of heredity and terrestrial evolution might yet have a subliminal or hidden man not so different from our own as to destroy His fellowship with us, but yet pure and right and divine without known defect.¹⁰⁸

Christ is one with the Father through this 'hidden man', and we in our degree also share the divine nature by the same means. Thus the early Quakers' insistence on the reality of Christ's presence within them¹⁰⁹ could now, in Graham's thinking, be verified by means of psychological science.

Just as Graham cuts the Gordian Knot of Christology by means of the subliminal soul, so he finds the mysteries of Christ's resurrection and our own posthumous survival easy to solve. It was helpful that Myers, Gurney,

¹⁰⁶ This did not prevent Christ from being humanly fallible, as Graham argues in his essay 'Christ and Swords' (see 2.6. above).

¹⁰⁷ Author of *Christologies Ancient and Modern*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910, and *Christology and Personality*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911, See *ONDB*, accessed 28 November, 2013. Martin Davie notes Graham's dependence on *Christologies Ancient and Modern* (Martin Davie, *British Quaker Theology since 1895*, Lewiston, NY; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen. 1997, 121).

¹⁰⁸ *FQ*, 76.

¹⁰⁹ See, for instance, James Nayler: 'I own no other Christ but that which suffered at Jerusalem, and by him I am saved from my sins; but had I not known him in me, my redeemer and hope of glory, I had not known him at Jerusalem' (*The Works of James Nayler* (1618-1660), ed. Licia Kuenning, Glenside, PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2003, Vol. I, 371). For this aspect of early Quaker theology see Richard Bailey, *New Light on George Fox and Early Quakerism*, San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992.

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Sidgwick and Hodgson had all apparently communicated from the dead: their messages were received by one Mrs. Verrall, 'a lady of the utmost veracity and keenest intellect, a patient scientific observer, and formerly a classical lecturer at Newnham'.¹¹⁰ Graham wrote about these communications in an article in *The Nation*, taking them as evidence that 'the lost leaders ... are engaged in a missionary effort from "the other shore", in continuation of their work here, to prove by such evidence as compels belief that the spirit of man survives death'.¹¹¹ Graham believes the communications to be what they seem to be, that is, actual visitations of the deceased, on what he calls the 'spiritistic hypothesis',¹¹² but holds that the alternative 'subliminal' theory of what happened is 'not the less valuable for our purposes'.¹¹³ What this 'subliminal hypothesis' is somewhat obscure – it involves a number of unconscious impersonations and the involuntary use of the handwriting and style of the deceased; but the phenomena served to convince Graham that 'on either the subliminal or the spiritistic hypothesis'... we are faced with a larger personality than we know'.¹¹⁴ This 'larger personality' may be part of a 'common reservoir of consciousness with which we are all in touch'.¹¹⁵ 'To a mind accustomed to these ideas', Graham asserts, 'there is no difficulty in

¹¹⁰ *FQ*, 80.

¹¹¹ Article in *The Nation*, 1908 (exact date not given); in Graham's collection of cuttings, 'Articles and Letters to the Press by J.W. Graham', Vol. 1, 1887-1911, 116 (JWGP, Box 4).

¹¹² But compare Myers' treatment of 'ghosts' in his chapter on 'Phantasms of the Dead' in *Human Personality*, 187-238: 'We have no warrant for the assumption that the phantom seen, even though it be somehow *caused* by a deceased person, *is* that deceased person, in any ordinary sense of the word', *Human Personality*, 188.

¹¹³ *FQ*, 80.

¹¹⁴ Cf. 4.6., below, on 'veridical hallucination'.

¹¹⁵ *FQ*, 80.

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accepting both the pre-existence and the present life of one so remarkable on earth as Jesus of Nazareth'. Another eminent Anglican divine, Bishop Foss Westcott, is brought in to support the argument with his view that the Resurrection is to be understood as the 'raising of a spiritual, not a fleshly, body', and all is plain. Christ was always one with God through his subliminal self, the source of his miraculous powers and supernormal gifts of knowledge and prophecy, and now we may communicate with his surviving, spiritual Self through the 'common reservoir of consciousness'.¹¹⁶

3.10. Reception of Graham's Ideas

A number of the criticisms of *The Faith of a Quaker* and of *The Divinity in Man* which appeared in the press when the books were published¹¹⁷ note Graham's reliance on psychical research. J. Passmore Elkinton in the *American Friend* says

Chapter IV [of *The Faith of a Quaker*] on "The Living Christ" seems to solve very satisfactorily the difficult conception of Christ's divinity and humanity. The fact that the author is abreast of psychical research appeals to those of us who expect science to support spiritual truth.

He also remarks, rather surprisingly, that 'this chapter, also, confirms the author's orthodoxy'.¹¹⁸ The *Holborn Review* for January, 1921, on the other hand, notes that Graham 'lays stress on psychical research, in this speaking

¹¹⁶ *FQ*, 81.

¹¹⁷ Usefully collected in the form of cuttings in JWGP, Boxes 13 (*DM*) and 19 (*FQ*).

¹¹⁸ *American Friend*, 14 April, 1921, 501, JWGP, Box 19.

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for himself, not for the Society'.¹¹⁹ The *Manchester City News* found *The Divinity in Man* 'very interesting indeed', and endorsed what Graham said about the subliminal realm as the source of man's spiritual insight.¹²⁰

Other contemporary comments on Graham's ideas may be found in 6.3., below. The above extracts show that even as late as 1927 Myers and his friends could still be treated with respect, and not only by Graham.¹²¹

3.11. Conclusion

In Janet Oppenheim's opinion Myers and his friends were far too deeply interested in certain desired outcomes of their research to go about their work in a properly scientific spirit. She quotes from Myers' presidential address to the SPR in 1900:

To prove the preamble of all religions; to be able to say to theologian or to philosopher: "Thus and thus we demonstrate that a spiritual world exists - a world of independent and abiding realities, not a mere 'epiphenomenon' or transitory effect of the material world ... This would indeed, in my view, be the weightiest service which any research could render in the deep disquiet of our time".

And she adds, 'It was not the voice of detached scientific enquiry that spoke through these men'.¹²² John William Graham failed to draw any such conclusion. He had been dazzled in his youth by the Sidgwick circle, and

¹¹⁹ *Holborn Review*, Jan 1921, JWGP, Box 19.

¹²⁰ *Manchester City News*, 19 March, 1927, JWGP, Box 13.

¹²¹ Compare the Amazon blurb for Edward F. Kelly's *Irreducible Mind: Toward a Psychology for the 21st Century*, Lanham, Md.; Plymouth: Jason Aronson, 2006 (<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Irreducible-Mind-Toward-Psychology-Century/dp/1442202068/>, accessed 1 February, 2016). (See Conclusion, Originality of Thesis.)

¹²² Oppenheim, *Other World*, 158.

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their teaching accorded too well with what he needed to believe for him ever to desert it. It is reasonable to speculate that their influence had much to do with his ability to reject 'materialism' and thus to remain within the Quaker fold, while devoting much of the rest of his life to attempts to shape Quakerism according to his understanding of what it should be. Michael Graham associates his revival of the defunct Quaker meeting in Cambridge with his re-commitment to Quaker Christianity:¹²³ psychical research may be what set him on this path. In it he found assurance that there was indeed a world of the spirit as real and far more extensive than the ordinary world of matter, and that there was a scientific warrant for much that the New Testament asserted, notably our survival of bodily death. More particularly, psychical research could explain and justify much of the faith and practice of the Quakers, especially in relation to the ministry. For Graham all this meant that Quakers could go forward into the future confident in the validity of what the first Friends had taught. Myers' optimistic understanding of evolution as designed to produce a more complete humanity¹²⁴ was entirely consonant with Graham's evolutionary optimism. Psychical research, then, provided a necessary part of the scaffolding on which rested not only Graham's intellectual outlook but also the unfailing optimism which characterized his whole approach to life. Moreover, it gave him a rationale for the meaning and value of Quaker mysticism, the subject of the next chapter.

¹²³ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.34-5.

¹²⁴ See 3.7., above.

CHAPTER 4. MYSTICISM IN THE THEOLOGY OF JOHN WILLIAM GRAHAM

4.1. Introduction

Communication with the unseen world was for Graham a function of the subliminal soul. He believed that Myers and his friends had uncovered the scientific basis for the mystic's vision, not only at the most exalted levels but also in the common experience of Quaker worship. Mysticism thus understood became a major focus of his intellectual energy during his later years.

After his retirement in 1924 from his position as Principal of Dalton Hall, he did not rest: that autumn he took up a position for a year as fellow and lecturer at Woodbrooke,¹ and the following year he went to Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, as Professor of the Principles and History of Quakerism.² In both places he gave a series of lectures on 'mysticism'. These lectures were published in 1927 as *The Divinity in Man*.³ For Graham, as for Rufus Jones,⁴ 'mysticism' did not mean a life of contemplation as opposed to action:⁵ on the contrary, it gave

¹ See 'Woodbrooke Log' (unpublished, available at Woodbrooke), Autumn Term, 1924, p.6; Obituary in *The Friend*, Oct. 28, 1932, 943.

² Obituary in *The Friend*, Oct. 28, 1932, 943. See 2.8., above.

³ John W. Graham, *The Divinity in Man*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1927 (*DM*). See Preface, 10.

⁴ See Introduction, 'Overview of thesis', above, for Renaissance Quakers' interest in mysticism, especially in the work of Rufus Jones.

⁵ See, for instance, William Ralph Inge's Bampton Lectures, *Christian Mysticism, Considered in Eight Lectures Delivered Before the University of Oxford*, London: Methuen, 1899, Lecture 5 (167-245), 'Practical and Devotional Mysticism'. Inge cites John of Ruysbroek's view that the active life, of practical obedience to Christ, is necessary to all, while some may rise beyond it to the 'internal, elevated, or affective life', and a very few beyond that still to the 'contemplative life' (169-170). The hierarchical ordering of types of devotional life is foreign to the Quaker spirit. Rufus Jones managed to find a statement in Meister Eckhart to the effect that Martha in the Gospel (the type of the active life, as opposed to Mary, the representative of the contemplative life – see Luke 10:38-42) is at a higher spiritual stage: 'Mary is still at school. Martha has learned her lesson. It is better to

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access to a source of energy through which to transform the world: '[The early Quakers in America] thought that they had found a way to the direct discovery of the Will of God and they could thereby put the Kingdom of God into actual operation here in the world'.⁶ Similarly for Graham, mysticism meant inspiration for doing: 'The true mysticism is ... active, finds its natural outcome in practical philanthropy and detailed well-doing'.⁷ Active mysticism was at the core of Graham's vision of Quakerism as a modern, reasonable but not rationalist,⁸ progressive form of Christianity, capable of pointing the way for the churches and for society towards the eventual coming of the Kingdom of God. His vision had much in common with those of progressive Friends like Jones or Grubb, but he believed that he had a particular contribution to make through placing particular emphasis on the unity of God and man; 'We shall try to show that essentially, ontologically, man and God are one. Therefore this is to be called a mystical book'.⁹

This chapter argues that Graham's emphasis on 'mysticism' was part of his strategy for maintaining the impetus of the 1895 Manchester Conference and encouraging British Quakers to remain loyal to the principle of the free ministry.¹⁰ As Graham had learned during the controversy of the 1890s over the Home Mission

feed the hungry than to see such visions as Paul saw' (Rufus M. Jones, *A Dynamic Faith* (3rd edn.), London: Headley, 1906 (Preface to 1st edn. dated 1900), 57). The Bampton Lectures were established in 1781 to combat deism and other heterodoxies (see Nigel M. de S. Cameron, *Biblical Higher Criticism and the Defense of Infallibilism in 19th Century Britain*, Lewiston, Queenstown: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987, 19).

⁶ Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, London: Macmillan, 1923, xvii.

⁷ *DM*, 31.

⁸ See 4.6., below. .

⁹ *DM*, 17.

¹⁰ See 5.7., below, and Chapter 5, *passim*.

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Committee,¹¹ Friends were all too liable to fall into the ways of most American so-called Quakers: to adopt a paid pastorate and fixed order of service, with hymns and other extraneous aids to devotion, and with the consequent loss or enfeeblement of the free ministry and of independence in matters of belief that for Graham were indispensable elements of the Quaker heritage. The relationship was a reciprocal one: if mysticism could support true Quakerism, Quakerism, as faithfully practised, was the natural seed-bed for mysticism, understood as attentiveness to the inward voice of God: 'The Meeting House is used for concentrated meditation, where the inward voice can speak unhindered, and to ears undeafened by any outward sound or distracted by outward sight'.¹² 'Mysticism' meant for Graham the pure heart of religion, the strenuous cultivation of attention to an inward divine voice or light; an attention which must be practised without the sensuous distractions or prepared words used in church services. Through Quaker worship the God who dwells within, the God of the mystics, could be found.

Graham did not think that mysticism was confined to Quakerism, or to Christianity. The Inward Light is universal, and could manifest itself in a pre-Christian like Socrates or a Hindu like Rabindranath Tagore as well as in George Fox or Isaac Penington. Graham chooses as his main historical representative of

¹¹ See report on the 1892 Home Mission Conference in *Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 743-755; Editorial, *FQE*, 1893, 1-8; Eliza Pickard, 'Thoughts in Connection with the Home Mission conference', *BF*, January, 1893, 8-10. For historical views, see Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: OUP, 2001, 122ff. The controversy is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5, below.

¹² *DM*, 206.

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mysticism not Eckhart or Tauler¹³ from the Christian Middle Ages, but Plotinus,¹⁴ who, although living in the Christian era and friendly with Christian scholars like Origen,¹⁵ never became a Christian. Graham wanted to claim a universal validity for mysticism. Still, Graham clearly considered that mysticism had a special, symbiotic relationship with Quakerism. I demonstrate this by considering the meanings Graham attached to the term 'mysticism' and the contexts in which he used it, including the relationship between 'mysticism' and psychological research. I draw on writings by other Quakers as well as by some outside the Quaker tradition, modern and contemporary with Graham. Focusing mainly on *The Divinity in Man*, I show that in presenting Quakerism as a mystical faith Graham remained an 'apostle of progress'.

4.2. Mysticism in Graham's Milieu

At the time that Graham was planning his courses mysticism was a favourite subject both among Quakers and in the Christian community more widely. Whereas R.A. Vaughan's *Hours with the Mystics*, published in 1856,¹⁶ used the term 'mysticism' pejoratively, the many writings on the subject that appeared around the first three decades of the twentieth century treated the subject with reverence, as a means to truth that could withstand the scepticism that beset the age. William Ralph ('Dean')

¹³ Eckhart von Hochheim, 'Meister Eckhart' (1260-1328); Johannes Tauler (1300-1361). Both of these are dealt with at length in Inge's *Christian Mysticism*.

¹⁴ Plotinus (204/5 – 270 C.E.), originator of 'neo-Platonism'. Plotinus was the subject of W.R. Inge's Gifford Lectures of 1918-1919. (See *Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, edited by Ted Honderich, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1905.) For Graham on Plotinus see 4.4., below.

¹⁵ See *DM*, 141.

¹⁶ Robert Alfred Vaughan, *Hours with the Mystics: A Contribution to the History of Religious Opinion*, London: John Parker & Son, 1856.

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Inge's authoritative Christian Mysticism of 1899 traced mysticism back to the Bible, especially St John's Gospel and the letters of St Paul. He continued to write eloquently on mysticism well into the new century, producing *Personal Idealism and Mysticism* in 1906 and *The Religious Philosophy of Plotinus and Some Modern Philosophies of Religion* in 1918. Graham acknowledges his debt to this book, which he calls 'epoch-making'. Inge's time as a student at King's College Cambridge overlapped with Graham's, and Graham must have been aware of Inge's extraordinary brilliance and his many prizes. According to Matthew Grimley's entry on Inge in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Inge's motivation in turning to a 'mystical' form of religion was the wish to construct a defence of faith that could stand up to threats posed by modern thinking – just as progressive Quakers, including Graham, attempted to do at the Manchester Conference and beyond. By the time he came to write *The Divinity in Man*, however, Graham was not principally concerned with the challenge to faith of science and biblical criticism; he was intent rather on celebrating the riches of a faith based on inward experience rather than external authority. That for him was 'mysticism' as well as essential Quakerism.

From America came the immensely influential *Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James, the Gifford Lectures, for 1901-2,¹⁷ which Catherine Albright, in *Present-Day Papers*, described as a 'treasure-house for Friends'.¹⁸

¹⁷ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Gifford Lectures, 1901-2), London: Fontana, 1960.

¹⁸ Quoted by Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970, 39. Albright mentioned James' characterisation of the 'subconscious self' as a 'point of

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Quakers like Graham were delighted to find that religious experience, which they took to be the basis of Quaker faith, could undergo the test of scientific scrutiny without losing its validity, and they saw James as supporting some cherished Quaker positions. Caroline Stephen, who, after an Evangelical Anglican upbringing, found a spiritual home with the Quakers in mature life,¹⁹ invoked his name in support of the Quaker faith, which, she said, is 'the outcome of religious experience' rather than 'a body of doctrine entrusted to the Church or to be learnt from Scripture'.²⁰ Graham himself cited James's authority for his favourite thesis that religious ceremonial could stand in the way of 'communion with the Infinite'.²¹

Then Rudolf Otto's *The Idea of the Holy*²² was influential in its attempt to reclaim the 'non-rational' element in religion, persuading readers that true religion was a matter of inward feeling or illumination rather than of outward doctrine and observance. Edward Grubb cites Otto's reference to 'the Quakers with their "inward light"'.²³ and Graham mentions Otto several times in *The Divinity in Man*,²⁴

unity between religion and physical science'. See *Present-Day Papers*, 5 (1902), 289-292, 291, 292). Cf. 1.2., above.

¹⁹ See Caroline Emelia Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & co., Ltd, 1890, 11-13. For Stephen See Robert Tod, *Caroline Emelia Stephen, Quaker Mystic, 1834-1909*, Birmingham: the author, 1978; Alister Raby, *Virginia Woolf's Wise and Witty Quaker Aunt*, London: Cecil Woolf, 2002.

²⁰ Caroline Emelia Stephen, *Light Arising: Thoughts on the Central Radiance*, Cambridge: Heffer, 1908, 16. Caroline Stephen was the sister of Leslie Stephen, Victorian man of letters and agnostic. See title essay of his *An Agnostic's Apology: and Other Essays*, for an attack on progressive Christianity. London: Watts & Co., 1904.

²¹ 'Address of John William Graham, of Manchester, England, at the opening session of Friends' General Conference at Toronto, Eighth month 12th, 1904', in JWGP, Box 1.

²² Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: an Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*, translated by John W. Harvey; 2nd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950. Otto's book appeared in German in 1917 as *Das Heilige*; Harvey's translation came out in 1923.

²³ Edward Grubb, 'The Inward Light', *FQE*, 1932, 105-116, 114. Grubb's reference is to Otto's note about Luther's concept of 'Faith' as a 'unique cognitive faculty for the

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devoting three pages of his chapter on 'Monism' to his book.²⁵ Graham liked Otto's thesis 'that at the heart of all religion and all religions there is an experience unique, and not to be accounted for by evolution from other experiences'.²⁶ He was also able to claim Otto's support for bare, austere Quakerism as the nurturing ground of true mysticism by quoting Otto's statement on 'silence in worship':

It is the most spiritual form of Divine Service which has ever been practised, and contains an element which no form of worship ought to be without, but which is unduly neglected in our Protestant devotional life. We must learn it once again from the Quakers, and thereby restore to our Divine service a spirit of consecration the loss of which has cost us dearly.²⁷

Graham exposed himself to criticism in citing Otto's authority. H.G. Wood, in his valedictory essay on 'John William Graham as a Religious Thinker', notes that Graham claims Otto's 'support for the unity of man and God' without seeming to notice that Otto's stress falls on the 'otherness' of God.²⁸ Plausible as this criticism is, there is some validity in Graham's claim: Graham took from Otto the idea that there is a religious sense, a 'faculty of perception of God', 'implanted' in humankind from its most primitive origins,²⁹ and it is from this that he claims 'from Dr. Otto's book his support also for the unity of man and God – for the communion of the One

apprehension of divine truth' (*The Idea of the Holy*, 138, note). Cf. Robert Barclay's 'Organ or Instrument of God' and John William Graham's own 'special organ of religion' – see 4.5., below.

²⁴ *DM*, 47, 58, 88, 205.

²⁵ *DM*, 88-91.

²⁶ *DM*, 88.

²⁷ *DM*, 205, quoting from *The Idea of the Holy*, 211. Otto acknowledges a debt to Violet Hodgkin's Swarthmore Lecture (L. Violet Hodgkin, *Silent Worship: the Way of Wonder* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1919), London: Headley Bros., 1919).

²⁸ H.G. Wood, 'John William Graham as a Religious Thinker', *FQE*, 1933, 102-112, 109.

²⁹ *DM*, 90.

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Spirit',³⁰ as understood in advanced religions. God may, according to Otto, be perceived by the dumbfounded worshipper as utterly and terrifyingly Other; yet he is also the quintessentially 'fascinans', the object of that intense longing which can find no satisfaction but in him: 'The mystics called it the basis or ground of the soul'.³¹ This would seem to infer a profound kinship between the soul and God. Graham does, however, differ importantly from Otto in rejecting the idea of the wrath of God. For Graham this is a primitive notion which has to be outgrown. 'Man has built up his spiritual home out of the wild', and 'Religion is given to us that we may make it better'.³² The 'wrath' of God belongs to the bad old days of evangelicalism or Calvinism. In the chapter on 'Evangelicalism' in *FQ*, after expounding the 'terrible theology' he ascribes to the Evangelicals, he goes on to say: 'Quakerism represented a revolt, root and branch, from the Evangelical theology above described, as it was held by the Puritans of the Commonwealth'.³³

The 'Woodbrooke Log' for 1924³⁴ records that Evelyn Underhill, author of the classic text, *Mysticism* of 1911,³⁵ spoke at an 'Inter-collegiate meeting' of the Selly Oak Colleges.³⁶ Graham was at Woodbrooke at the time, and might have gone to

³⁰ *DM*, 90.

³¹ *Idea of the Holy*, 56.

³² *DM*, 90.

³³ See *FQ*, 105, 404-5, 406. Cf. Edward Worsdell, 2.5. above.

³⁴ 'Woodbrooke Log', 9, Autumn Term 1924, Tuesday, Nov. 25th. Underhill reviewed *DM* for *The Spectator*, 26/3/1927 (cutting in JWGP, Box 13).

³⁵ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: a Study of the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* [1911]. Republished in Signet Classics, New York: New American Library, 1974.

³⁶ Woodbrooke was the first of several colleges with religious foundations at Selly Oak, Birmingham. The colleges were federated in 1922 (see pamphlet by David E.H. Mole, *The Selly Oak Tradition*, [Westhill College, Birmingham, 1984], 6).

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hear her. He refers three times to her works in the *Divinity in Man*.³⁷ Underhill wrote in terms which Graham could have echoed:

The mystics find the basis of their method not in logic but in life: in the existence of a discoverable 'real', a spark of true being, within the seeking subject ... In theological language, their theory of knowledge is that the spirit of man, itself essentially divine, is capable of immediate communication with God, the One reality.³⁸

Graham's Quakerism taught him that 'immediate communication with God' was the common experience of authentic worship, by virtue of the inward presence of God known in the subliminal soul.³⁹

Quakers made their own contributions to the flood of books on mysticism. Caroline Stephen's *Quaker Strongholds*, as early as 1891, brought seventeenth-century European mystics, like Jeanne Guyon⁴⁰ to the notice of Friends. Then in 1909 Rufus Jones's massive *Studies in Mystical Religion* appeared, followed by *New Studies in Mystical Religion* in 1927.⁴¹ Graham probably did not have time to read the latter before producing *The Divinity in Man* in 1927; but Rufus Jones had already familiarised his contemporaries with the idea that 'Quakerism as a type of Christianity, is deeply *mystical* and also deeply *prophetical*'.⁴²

³⁷ *DM*, 129, 198, 204.

³⁸ *Mysticism: a Study of the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* [1911], New York: Signet, 1955, 23.

³⁹ See 3.6., above.

⁴⁰ Jeanne Marie Bouvier de la Motte Guyon (1648-1717). See Caroline Emelia Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, 3rd edn., London: Edward Hicks, 1891, 29, 37, etc.

⁴¹ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, London: Macmillan, 1909; *New Studies in Mystical Religion: the Ely Lectures Delivered at Union Theological Seminary*, New York, 1927, London: Macmillan, 1927.

⁴² 'Introduction' by Rufus M. Jones, to William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, London: Macmillan, 1923, xxxiv. The first edition of Braithwaite's book was

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4.3. Mysticism and Ministry: John Cornell

Graham's ideas on the Quaker ministry are dealt with in detail in Chapter 5. It is appropriate, however, to illustrate here the close connection for Quakers in general between ministry and mystical insight by reference to another witness. This witness also confirms Jones' insight that Quakerism is both mystical and prophetic: mystical intimation leads to prophetic utterance. The *Friends' Intelligencer*, the Hicksite⁴³ periodical to which Graham sometimes contributed,⁴⁴ published in 1903 an essay by John J. Cornell (1825-1909).⁴⁵ Cornell attended the 1896 Swarthmore Conference which made such an impression on Graham,⁴⁶ and also appeared at Asbury Park in 1902, another conference attended by Graham.⁴⁷ He was a respected figure among the Hicksite community. He is mentioned in a report in the *Friends Intelligencer*,⁴⁸ on a discussion at LYM, 1904, of the 'American Situation'. The report is signed 'G', almost certainly meaning Graham. Howard Nicholson wished to read something by Cornell to 'show the heresy of the "Hicksites"', but this was ruled out of order. Cornell had no college education,⁴⁹ which perhaps meant that he held the doctrine of immediate inspiration in a purer form than was possible

published in 1912, and Jones's introduction is dated 1911. This introduction is the most accessible version of his thesis about mysticism and the Quakers.

⁴³ For Graham's relations with the Hicksites and the *Friends' Intelligencer* see 2.8., above.

⁴⁴ See for instance Vol. 17 (1900), 84-85, 192-193, 771-772. The article on Ruskin (84-85), which is part of a series of four, beginning in January, 1898, contains a line-drawn portrait of Graham.

⁴⁵ 'My Experience in the Ministry', by John J. Cornell, *FI*, 3 January, 1903, 1-4.

⁴⁶ *Proceedings of the Friends' Union for Philanthropic Labor at the Ninth Conference held at Swarthmore, Penna* (24th – 26th Aug, 1896), in Record Group 4, 025: Friends General Conference: Series 4, in Swarthmore College Library.

⁴⁷ See JWGP, Box 1.

⁴⁸ 'London Yearly Meeting on the American Situation', *FI*, 23 June, 1894. (A copy is preserved in JWGP, Box 4). See also account in 6.5., below.

⁴⁹ John J. Cornell, *Autobiography of John J. Cornell: containing an Account of his Religious Experiences and Travels in the Ministry*, Baltimore: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1906, 24.

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to an intellectual like Graham,⁵⁰ although his memorial tribute praises his 'logical expositions', and states that he preached 'a reasonable faith, suitable to the times'.⁵¹ It seems that his ministry was not like the old-fashioned, Bible-based ministry that Graham remembered from his youth and encountered again in Canada in 1904.⁵² Cornell received guidance and encouragement from Elizabeth Newport, whom we have met as a type for Graham of Quaker minister possessed of extraordinary psychic gifts.⁵³

Cornell's *Autobiography* appeared in 1906.⁵⁴ It is full of anecdotes and statements affirming Cornell's sense of direct communication with God. The essence of his mystical experience is, however, contained in the essay in the *Friends' Intelligencer*. It relates how as a young man he suffered from religious doubts and left his meeting, and then underwent a classic experience of a call to service, while at the plough, like James Nayler.⁵⁵ God spoke to him directly, telling him that he would be called to the ministry. Before the actual call took place Cornell found himself unable to read the Bible: the words turned to Greek before his eyes. This he learned to take as fitting him for the ministry by teaching him that he was to rely only on God's 'immediate guidance and instruction'. In his ministry he would receive intimations that he must address some particular

⁵⁰ Cornell says that he kept up with reading in his spare time, and found it useful in supplying him with illustrations and expressions, but not with the substance (*Autobiography*, 24).

⁵¹ 'Tributes to the Memory of John J. Cornell', Delivered at his Funeral', Baltimore: Lord Baltimore Press, 1909, 3.

⁵² See 5.11., below.

⁵³ See 3.3., above.

⁵⁴ *Autobiography of John J. Cornell: containing an Account of his Religious Experiences and Travels in the Ministry*, Baltimore: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1906.

⁵⁵ See W.C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* [1912], York: Sessions, 1981, 62, quoting Nayler's own account of his call.

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spiritual condition among his hearers, and would find out only afterwards why he had felt impelled to speak as he did. This is mysticism as call to action: 'the Heavenly Father made use of me as an instrument to aid my fellows'.⁵⁶

4.4. What is Mysticism?

An unkind reviewer of *The Divinity in Man* opined that Graham was 'very far from being a mystic, a little further away than the average Quaker', a view which Graham found 'incomprehensible'.⁵⁷ It is true, however, that he never claimed for himself extraordinary communications like those granted to George Fox or John Cornell.

He sets out his stall near the beginning of *The Divinity in Man* as follows:

This book is not concerned with the remarkable experiences of the conspicuous mystics of history. It is an exposition of more ordinary matters. If it is a gospel, it is a gospel for the spiritual commonalty ... It is not wise for any writer to go beyond his personal experience; and mine has been ordinary, not out of the beaten path. Therefore I cannot write of the summits I have only read of with any advantage to my readers.⁵⁸

His definitions of mysticism tend to confirm the sense that for him mysticism is not far from the world of every day. At Toronto in 1904 he defined it as 'an inwardness of vision and capacity for seeing things that are unseen; an independence of convention, of ceremonial, and of systematized doctrine'.⁵⁹ It is noteworthy that Graham moves directly from the inward vision of the mystic to his 'independence': Quakers who, like too many, alas, in the New World, put themselves under the

⁵⁶ 'My Experience in the Ministry', 3.

⁵⁷ From Graham's answer, in *Observer*, 26 June, 1927, to a review which appeared on June 12th (JWGP, Box 13).

⁵⁸ *DM*, 20.

⁵⁹ Cutting from the Toronto paper, *The World* [n.d.], JWGP, Box 1.

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direction of hired pastors and arranged services, were no longer mystic, or Quaker.

In *The Divinity in Man* he again stresses the mystic's freedom from 'outward' things:

Mysticism is due to a consciousness of the presence of God, an experience beyond rationalized explanation. When this union with transcendent Reality is strongly felt or expected or striven for, and intellectual theory, ritual observance, everything scholastic or institutional, and all authoritarian claims are relegated to a subordinated or indifferent position, we have Mysticism.⁶⁰

This is far enough from standard definitions such as that of Margaret Smith:

Mysticism, going beyond religion, aspires to intimate union with the Divine, to a penetration of the Divine within the soul and to a disappearance of the individuality, with all its modes of acting, thinking and feeling, in the Divine substance. The mystic seeks to pass out of all that is merely phenomenal, out of all lower forms of reality, to become Being itself.⁶¹

Far from calling the subject out of the phenomenal world, the mystic's insights, for Graham, were calls to altruistic action within that 'lower' world. From 'mystical revelation' comes the 'great intuitive position' that 'we find the service of God wholly in the service of man . . . We are offered human service and human love as being truly Divine service and Divine love'.⁶²

Graham does try to grapple with a more recondite understanding of the nature of mysticism in his chapter on Plotinus, in *The Divinity in Man*. Paraphrasing Plotinus, he says, 'the happiness of the individual Soul is in being in harmony with

⁶⁰ *DM*, 18.

⁶¹ Margaret Smith, *An Introduction to Mysticism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1977. An excerpt, from which this quotation is taken, is included in Richard Woods, ed., *Understanding Mysticism*, London: Athlone Press, 1980, 19-25, under the title 'The Nature and Meaning of Mysticism', 20.

⁶² *DM*, 100.

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the World Soul'.⁶³ The 'World Soul' in Plotinus, however, is only the lowest constituent of a three-fold spiritual reality, consisting of 'Soul', 'Spirit' and beyond that 'the Absolute', although these are 'not separable, nor with a clear boundary line'.⁶⁴ Graham finds that 'the World Soul, in which all Souls find their home, is very like the Indwelling God we know of'.⁶⁵ So he is happy to echo Edward Carpenter in his *Art of Creation*⁶⁶ in writing of 'the oneness of the [individual] Soul with the World Soul. This perfect unison is the quest of all our days, in Christianity and Platonism alike'.⁶⁷ Or, quoting Dean Inge's rendering of Plotinus:

It is as the greater self that we come to know God, not as a separate anthropomorphic Being over against ourselves. Our struggle to reach him is at the same time a struggle for liberation. We lose our soul in order to find it again in God. There is no barrier between the human and Divine natures.⁶⁸

So far Graham could follow Plotinus. He who considered that God and humankind are as unified as a tree and its leaves, as cells and the body they compose,⁶⁹ could readily accept that 'there is no barrier between the human and the Divine natures'. Yet it is to be noted that Graham writes of 'unison', echoing Plotinus's 'harmony', rather than of 'union'. In some sense he did not need to write of 'aspiring to intimate union with the Divine' because in his philosophy God and humankind are united from the beginning. H.G. Wood found fault with Graham for

⁶³ *DM*, 150.

⁶⁴ *DM*, 151.

⁶⁵ *DM*, 150. Cf. 3.9., above, on the shared subliminal consciousness of participants in a Quaker meeting.

⁶⁶ Edward Carpenter, *The Art of Creation: Essays on the Self and its Powers*, London: G. Allen, 1904 (4th edition, 1919). Graham cites the *Art of Creation* in *FQ*, 46, saying that in it he 'has been delighted to find many of the ideas in this book [i.e., *FQ*] similarly expressed'.

⁶⁷ *DM*, 150.

⁶⁸ *DM*, 153. This quotation is from Inge's translation of Plotinus' *Enneads*, but for the most part Graham used the currently on-going translation of Stephen McKenna (*DM*, 166, note).

⁶⁹ *FQ*, 5, 7.

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failing to distinguish adequately 'between unity or continuity of nature in God and man, and a mystical union between God and man'.⁷⁰ Very possibly Graham simply did not understand what 'mystical union' meant: when he comes to write of the last stage in Plotinus's spiritual ascent, fusion with 'the Absolute – the ultimate One'⁷¹ he confesses that he cannot follow:

The only way to be one with the Absolute is, in fact, the mystical trance, as described by them all ... It means a cessation from all perception, from all thought, an abandonment of ordinary existence. Plotinus calls it 'a flight of the alone to the Alone', but indeed it cannot be put into words. It is, as Paul called it, a perception of ineffable things.⁷²

When Graham says 'them all' he no doubt means those figures whose pains and ecstasies are related in works like Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism*. He admits that he speaks 'at second hand'.⁷³ When he calls Quakerism a mystical movement he is not referring to states of mind such as this. A Quaker contemporary of his, William Littleboy, did indeed express the fear that insistence on the 'mystical' character of Quakerism might exclude the honest devout Quaker to whom mystical raptures were not vouchsafed.⁷⁴ Graham was able to avoid Littleboy's anxiety by a sufficiently broad and unexacting conception of mysticism, and could have reassured others on this score.

⁷⁰ Wood, 'John William Graham', 107. Wood said: 'he stresses metaphysical unity where you might have expected the emphasis to fall on mystical union' (109).

⁷¹ *DM*, 154.

⁷² *DM*, 155.

⁷³ *DM*, 155.

⁷⁴ William Littleboy, 'The Appeal of Quakerism to the non-Quaker', pamphlet first published in 1916, reprinted in 'Quaker Classics', London: Home Service Committee, 1964. See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 188.

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4.5. Mysticism and the Quakers: 'Inward' and 'Outward'

According to Rufus Jones, 'The term mystical is properly used for any type of religion which insists upon an inward immediate revelation of God within the sphere of personal experience',⁷⁵ and Caroline Stephen characterised mystics as 'people . . . with a vivid consciousness of the inwardness of the light of truth'.⁷⁶ Here we have the dichotomy between 'inward' and 'outward' that Maurice Creasey identified as central to Quaker thinking from its beginnings.⁷⁷ For Creasey, however, a distinction that had originally been innocent and helpful had quickly become vitiated; the original teaching of the earliest Friends, notably Fox and Nayler, he argues, was distorted by the second-generation Quakers, Robert Barclay and William Penn, in their attempts to present a Quaker theology consonant with the philosophical and theological thinking of their age.⁷⁸ For Fox and Nayler the distinction was between a formal acceptance of Christianity as revealed truth and a transformative, spiritual relationship with Christ.⁷⁹ For Barclay it became a contrast between the 'natural' (outward) and the 'supernatural' (inward).⁸⁰ Creasey (writing in 1962) believed that Quakers were still saddled with 'preconceptions which belong, not to the genuine and original genius of Quakerism but to the requirements of an antiquated philosophy'.⁸¹

⁷⁵ 'Beginnings of Quakerism', xxxiv.

⁷⁶ Caroline Emelia Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, 3rd edn., London: Edward Hicks, 1891, 35.

⁷⁷ Maurice A. Creasey, ' "Inward" and "Outward" ': a Study in Early Quaker Language', London: Friends Historical Society, 1962 (*Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, supplement, 30). For Creasey see also 6.1., below.

⁷⁸ Creasey, ' "Inward" and "Outward" ', 5.

⁷⁹ Creasey, ' "Inward" and "Outward" ', 5.

⁸⁰ Creasey, ' "Inward" and "Outward" ', 15, 16.

⁸¹ Creasey, ' "Inward" and "Outward" ', 23, 24.

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Quakers of Graham's time likewise deplored the 'dualism' they found in Barclay, the rigid separation, as Edward Grubb saw it, between natural and supernatural, and saw it as something that modern insights had made obsolete. In seventeenth-century religious thought,

God and man were wholly out of organic relation with one another. Since they had nothing in common, the Light must be one of two mutually exclusive things – human or divine. Either it was wholly supernatural and non-human, or else a mere 'light of nature' by which man could save himself without Divine intervention. The Quakers recoiled in horror from the latter view, and found themselves shut up in the former, with all its consequences.⁸²

Thus the Light was seen as something 'wholly alien', outside (fallen) human nature.⁸³ Grubb does not, however, as does Creasey, see this as a departure from original Quakerism. He tells us that 'George Fox records an experience in which the thought came to him "that all things come by Nature"; and this, he clearly implies, was equivalent to the suggestion that "there is no God" '.⁸⁴ Rufus Jones believed that Barclayan dualism must be refuted as a matter of urgency. 'If', he remarked to John Wilhelm Rowntree, 'Barclay's idea of the "seed" is correct Quakerism has no message for modern thinkers. It rests in the last resort on something supernatural in the same way as the Bible does for the old time Evangelical teacher'.⁸⁵ For Graham, however, the issue, thanks to progress in psychology, was of little moment. Writing of Barclay's 'Proposition IV' in *The Faith of a Quaker* he remarks:

⁸² Edward Grubb, *Authority and the Light Within*, London: James Clarke, 1908, 83.

⁸³ Grubb, *Authority*, 81.

⁸⁴ Grubb, *Authority*, 81.

⁸⁵ Letter from Jones to Rowntree, 26 Dec., 1904, quoted by Alice Southern, 'The Rowntree History Series and the Growth of Liberal Quakerism', M.Phil. thesis, Birmingham, 2010, 73.

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This proposition contains a contrast between the divine light and a natural light, belief in which he calls a Socinian and Pelagian error.⁸⁶ So far as he means that the light of the rational intellect is a different thing from divine intuition he is quite right, and in most of his references it seems plain that this is what is in his mind. The study of psychology has, it is to be hoped, made progress since his day, and we are now able to realise more clearly, or at least to emphasize more strongly, the unity of the whole spiritual and intellectual being of man, and that it does not do to depreciate one part of him in order to glorify another.⁸⁷

For him it was perfectly possible to discard Barclay's mistakes, while retaining his genuine insights.

For Graham and his peers there was nothing in the progress of psychology or in any other study to invalidate 'the possibility and necessity of inward immediate revelation',⁸⁸ though it might not come with the unmistakable vividness of the intimations granted to John Cornell. Jones, in the definition cited above, claims that Quakerism is a 'type of religion which insists upon an inward immediate revelation of God'. The mechanism, however, was not the same as in Barclay: if there is no dichotomy between (fallen) nature and the supernatural grace through which we are to be saved, there is no need for Barclay's supernatural 'Organ or Instrument of God, by which he worketh in us, and stirreth up in us these Ideas of Divine Things'.⁸⁹ In Graham's philosophy too, which rejected the doctrine of the

⁸⁶ Socinians, named after the 16th-century Italian, Sozzini, rejected the Trinitarian formula with the claim that Christ was God (*OCCT*, under 'Unitarianism'). Pelagius (active 4th century C.E.) taught that the possibility of sinlessness was an essential part of human nature, and opposed the theory of original sin transmitted from Adam to all posterity (*RPP*).

⁸⁷ *FQ*, 144.

⁸⁸ Creasey, referring to Barclay, ' "Inward" and "Outward" ', 14.

⁸⁹ Creasey, ' "Inward" and "Outward" ', 16.

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Fall,⁹⁰ divine and human are so fused that there is no need to assume anything like Barclay's 'separate and distinct' organ, whereby revelation was received.⁹¹

It is odd, therefore, that Graham's devoted adherence to the notions generated by psychical research brought him to a position not far removed from Barclay's. For him the 'subliminal faculty' performed something of the same function as Barclay's special 'organ': It was a way to receive intimations from some realm beyond the reach of the normal, everyday mind, as when Tennyson or Coleridge apparently 'received' a poem rather than composing it,⁹² and it had a special function in the religious sphere. We have seen that Graham described the 'soul' or 'subliminal self' as a 'special *organ of religion*'⁹³ (my italics). With the division between the supraliminal and the subliminal we return to dualism.

4.6. Intuition and Intellect

There was perhaps something in Graham's mind that predisposed him to dualistic thinking. We see this not only in his conclusions about the nature of God,⁹⁴ but also in his treatment of the place of the intellect in religion. In the 1890s, near the beginning of his career, some leading Friends were beginning to campaign for more and better training of Friends for the ministry.⁹⁵ Graham was at one with them in

⁹⁰ 'We are not born in sin - the race never fell' (*DM*, 61).

⁹¹ See Creasey, ' "Inward" and "Outward" ', 22.

⁹² *DM*, 119. Cf. 3.7., above, on 'genius'.

⁹³ See 3.8., above.

⁹⁴ See 6.5., below.

⁹⁵ John Wilhelm Rowntree was a leader among Quakers in calling for more use and cultivation of the intellect. The periodical *Present Day Papers* was founded by him in 1898 as a means to supply this need (see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 143). In the January issue of 1899, he 'criticised the evangelical establishment for failing "the vigorous & cultivated", because it did not "command the intellect" ' (Stephen Allott, *John Wilhelm Rowntree, 1868-1905*, York: Sessions, 1994). See also Edward Worsdell, 'Preparation

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this. In 1894 and '95 he wrote a three-part essay for the *British Friend* on the role of the intellect in religion, in reply to a protest against 'plans to suit the demands of what is called a higher intellectual training'.⁹⁶ The rest of this and the following essay are devoted to explaining that the intellect has an essential if subordinate part to play in religion. 'The Intellect cannot create devoutness, but it can aid, raise, purify, correct, discipline, the emotional life of the spirit'.⁹⁷ It is the 'door-keeper' to the religious life, 'testing every thought which claims to enter, every aspiration and every act which claims to leave'.⁹⁸ If religious people fall into the errors of spiritual pride or fanaticism, it is because the intellect has not been exercised enough: 'The wrong comes in with the unquestioning narrow conviction ... [The intellect] has enquired too little and asserted too much'.⁹⁹

On the other hand, mistaken belief need not be a bar to genuine religious experience. Graham illustrates this point by positing a 'poor devout Irishwoman' who believes in 'the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence'. Such a woman, though deluded, 'rises from her knees purified'.

Through an erroneous intellectual belief, due to accepting tradition and shunning enquiry, the Irish woman has touched the spiritual fact that Jesus does now enter by His spirit into devout hearts ... Through the door of utter intellectual error she has experienced a spiritual reality.¹⁰⁰

and the Ministry' ('summary of an address delivered at the recent Quarterly Meeting at York'), *BF*, March 1897, 64. (See 5.9., below.)

⁹⁶ 'The Intellect in Religion', *BF*, September, 1894, 255-257 (255), and November, 1894, 306-307 and 'Paul on Theology and Religion', *BF*, January, 1895, 3-5.

⁹⁷ 'Intellect in Religion', 256.

⁹⁸ 'Intellect in Religion', 256.

⁹⁹ 'Intellect in Religion', 257. This essay provoked a response from a Quaker who asserted that reason must always be subordinated to the command of the Inward Christ ('Reason no Sentinel to a Christian'). Graham retorted that the objection was 'based on an unnecessary and imaginary difference where none exists' (*BF*, October, 1894, 299, 300).

¹⁰⁰ 'Intellect in Religion', 306. Cf. 2.2., above.

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This seems to call into doubt the proposition that religious experience is a sure guide to truth.¹⁰¹ Yet such experience is veridical in quite another way than proved fact. The intellect is indeed needed to test revelation: 'Our outer man,' he says in *The Divinity in Man*, 'equipped with the intellectual virtues of candour and caution and a balanced judgment, must test all revelations and hold fast only that which is good'.¹⁰² Yet revelation, if not acceptable as scientific evidence, may yet convey truth at a deeper level: 'Because a Catholic visionary sees the figure of the Virgin, it is not evidence for the Virgin's presence. But it is evidence for a certain spiritual impact which is so dramatized'.¹⁰³ This is consonant with the idea of 'veridical hallucination' posited by the psychical researchers.¹⁰⁴

The parallels seen here between the essay, 'The Intellect in Religion' and *The Divinity in Man* suggest that Graham's thinking did not change fundamentally in the thirty or more years that came between. In both there is a balance between intellect and intuition, between reason and that which is beyond reason. The main difference is that in the later work Graham's emphasis is on what Otto called the 'non-rational'. He was concerned to show that it was possible to be perfectly sane and balanced, to be abreast of modern thought and capable of clear and critical

¹⁰¹ Compare Underhill as quoted in 4.2., above.

¹⁰² *DM*, 126.

¹⁰³ *DM*, 127.

¹⁰⁴ Grubb, in discussing in what sense the Resurrection might be 'true', refers to the phenomenon of 'veridical hallucinations' investigated by Edmund Gurney, Frank Podmore and F.W.H. Myers, in their *Phantasms of the Living*, 2 vols. (London: Society for Psychical Research, 1886). (Edward Grubb, *Christianity as Life (The Nature of Christianity*, vol. 1), London: Swarthmore Press, 1927, 66). So Christ might have 'appeared' to his disciples, without an actual physical resurrection, in order to assure them in the only way possible of the truth that he was still living. Cf. 3.9., above, for Graham's speculations as to how Myers and Sidgwick might have communicated from beyond death.

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thinking, and yet to appreciate that the deeper insights of which we are capable come from a source beyond reason, by means of our 'subliminal faculty'. This is the seat of the Inward Light. Quakers need to be true to their founders in nurturing this faculty, the mystical element in their worship and in their lives, if they are to carry out their appointed service in the world.

4.7. Conclusion

The belief that God communicates directly with humankind was essential to Graham's thinking, not least because, as we have seen, it validated the Quaker approach to worship and to received doctrine. Psychical research provided a kind of mechanism by which to explain how this could be, just as Barclay's notion of the 'Organ or Instrument of God' had done for him. Psychical research, Graham believed, proved that telepathy (as in John Cornell's intuitive sense of the spiritual conditions he must address) and other such phenomena occurred regularly, but more importantly it showed that Quaker silence was a better way to establish harmony with the Divine than prepared preaching or the revivalist methods of evangelists like D.M. Moody.¹⁰⁵ Graham distrusted such emotive appeals as much as he distrusted 'outward' aids to religion like stained glass or hymn-singing.¹⁰⁶ H.G. Wood commented on Graham's extreme preference for 'austerity' with respect to religious worship:¹⁰⁷ the Inward Light, for Graham, requires silent attentiveness and freedom from distraction. It is in these conditions that the minister's

¹⁰⁵ Graham notes approvingly of Plotinus that he rejected 'revivalistic methods', along with 'symbolism'. He was 'like any Friend' (*DM*, 153).

¹⁰⁶ For hymn-singing see *FQ*, 180. For stained glass windows and other 'symbolic' supposed aids to devotion see *DM*, 184.

¹⁰⁷ Wood, 'John William Graham', 111.

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'anointing',¹⁰⁸ is most likely to occur; the mystic's 'immediate revelation' then finds its outlet in inspired words. There is no need for the 'extreme doctrine' of the quietist* period which held that the word of God had to come through the speaker unsullied by intellect or any other 'creaturely' function;¹⁰⁹ but ministers need to know 'that the Word is given them, & is not of their own intellectual creation'.¹¹⁰

Grace Jantzen, in her 1995 book, *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism*,¹¹¹ argues that modern writers on mysticism usually assume that mysticism consists in altered states of consciousness of the kind described by William James: 'private, subjective, intense psychological states'.¹¹² She reiterates the four marks that James considered characteristic of the mystical experience: they are 'ineffability, noetic quality, transiency & passivity'.¹¹³ These are not, she says, the characteristics noted by the well-known mystics of the Church themselves. Although Graham did not find fault with James, his idea of mysticism is not much like the picture given in Jantzen's critique. Mystical experience for Graham may begin by being private and subjective, but if it does not eventuate in public utterance or public action it is because the recipient is unfaithful to his trust. Far from being ineffable, it is a communication intended to be shared. Experience and prophecy are bound intimately together.

¹⁰⁸ See 5.7., below.

¹⁰⁹ See John W. Graham, *The Quaker Ministry* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1925), London: Swarthmore Press, 1925, 44 (QM). Graham says the quietist 'would not act except under the Inward Voice which is heard in the Quietness of the empty soul, in the temporary suspension of the active Personality'.

¹¹⁰ QM, 72.

¹¹¹ Grace M. Jantzen, *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

¹¹² Jantzen, *Christian Mysticism*, 4.

¹¹³ Jantzen, *Christian Mysticism*, 7.

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Evolution and natural progress, Graham believed, meant that human beings were increasingly able to understand what God required of them, to put in practice what was needed to realise the reign of justice and peace that was the goal of creation.¹¹⁴ Antiquated doctrines and rituals could only stand in the way. The Quakers, with their assurance of direct communication with God and the means they had in place to enable it: the silent meeting, the free ministry, were clearly God's chosen instrument to bring humankind closer to this consummation, so long as they remained true to their calling as a mystical movement and thus allowed God to speak and to act through them. So he calls his fellow Quakers, especially the younger ones, to their 'knight-like service'¹¹⁵ in combating deadening ritual and sacerdotalism in religion, in relieving the poverty and ignorance of the masses, and in building peace. 'These', he says, 'are the arts of the mystic to-day. No induced ecstasies, no long hours of silent waiting with the mind a blank, but a practical enthusiasm for God in Man, showing up in a hundred familiar ways'.¹¹⁶ Examples from earlier days include Penn, John Woolman and Joseph Sturge, 'and George Cadbury and Joseph Rowntree, under the definite stimulus of religion, have introduced a new kind of service into the twentieth century'.¹¹⁷ Mysticism supports Quaker worship, Quaker worship brings mystic intuition, leading to prophetic utterance and the guided service of humanity, which is the service of God.

¹¹⁴ As seen especially in his writings on peace and war. For instance, in 'Our Call to a New Crusade', an address given at a peace conference of Quakers in York on 27 January, 1913, he said: 'The forces that make for peace are fast coming into their own with quite other illumination than ours [i.e., that of the Quakers]' (*FQE*, 47, 1913, 233-242). See 7.6., below.

¹¹⁵ *DM*, 266.

¹¹⁶ *DM*, 268.

¹¹⁷ *DM*, 268.

5. Ministry and Meetings

CHAPTER 5. MINISTRY AND MEETINGS

5.1. Introduction

The ministry was at the heart of Graham's thinking about the Quaker ideal; everything depended on getting it right. Its theory and practice was the focal point of his researches in psychical research and in mysticism: together they provided a way of understanding how the Quaker minister related to the divine and drew inspiration for prophetic speech. It was, however, in the turbulence of Quaker debate that his particular concerns took shape about the present and future of the Quaker ministry, and therefore of the Quaker movement. These concerns are the main subject of this chapter.

Graham upheld with his usual passion a severely traditional approach to the question of the right holding of Quaker meetings, while insisting that this approach was essential for a progressive Quakerism. As often in Graham's thought, the way forward was the way back.¹ In particular, the 'prophetic', impromptu, ministry of the early Friends should be revived and continued, all tendencies towards establishing a paid pastorate, such as had already largely taken hold among American Quakers, being resisted. The only acceptable

¹ Cf. 1.6., above.

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form of meeting was the traditional one based on silent waiting, broken only by words felt to be inspired by the Holy Spirit.²

The practice of Quakers, he believed, was that of the early Church,³ as well as of the First Friends. He also believed, with contemporaries in the modernising movement, that seventeenth-century, Calvinistic attitudes to human nature, as held by early Friends, with their rigorous division between fallen human nature and the divine Light which could over-ride it, had now been superseded: the intelligence should not be suppressed.⁴ Graham, however, maintained that the suppression of intellect was not all bad, on the grounds that 'it is much easier to preach by brains alone than by inspiration alone'.⁵ He believed that ministry should be 'prophetic', in the sense that it should deliver a message received directly from God in the heart of the speaker. It is 'for the preservation of [this prophetic ministry] that the Society of Friends now chiefly exists as a separate Church'.⁶ This is another instance of Renaissance Quakers' recovery of some of the characteristics of early Friends. Lewis Benson has more recently drawn attention to early Friends' emphasis on Christ as prophet and on the prophetic character of their

² See Graham, *FQ*, Chapter 7, 241-253. The chapter begins 'All Friends' Meetings, properly so-called, are held on a basis of silence, out of which ministry or vocal prayer may, or may not, arise: as the pressure of a "message" is felt by one or another present.'

³ *FQ*, 189: 'The earliest Christian form of worship was, in manner and form, a Friends' meeting of the early enthusiastic type' (see 1 Cor., xiv); *QM*, 30: 'Ministry in the first Christian Churches was on the lines of a Friends' Meeting'.

⁴ See 4.5., above.

⁵ *QM*, 46.

⁶ *FQ*, 195.

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teaching, though without recognising that Graham and his contemporaries were there before him.⁷

This chapter draws on essays by Graham published in the Quaker periodicals of the 1890s. *The Faith of a Quaker* (1920)⁸, however, contains his most comprehensive statement on meetings and ministry, and this chapter draws largely on that and on his more succinct statement in his Swarthmore Lecture* of 1925, *The Quaker Ministry*.⁹ It refers also to letters and notes written in the 1890s relating to his tussle with the Home Mission Committee (HMC) and the fear that a paid ministry might be more generally instituted, following the practice of paying men or women for their services in supporting 'missions' in Britain. The fear was given added point by the spectacle of what was happening in America, with the widespread adoption of pastors and 'programmed' meetings.

Concern about the sustainability of the free ministry¹⁰ and the 'unprogrammed'¹¹ meeting was especially acute about the time of the Home

⁷ Lewis Benson, 'George Fox's Teaching about Christ', *Quaker Religious Thought*, 16, nos. 1-2, Winter, 1974-1975, 20-42. Cf. 3.3., above. See also Douglas Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word: the Life and Message of George Fox (1624-1691)*, Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 1986, Preface, ix.

⁸ John William Graham, *The Faith of a Quaker*, Cambridge: University Press, 1920.

⁹ John W. Graham, *The Quaker Ministry* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1925), London: Swarthmore Press, 1925.

¹⁰ That is, unscheduled vocal offerings uttered by anyone who feels 'led' during otherwise silent meetings. See, for instance, David L. Johns, 'Worship and Sacraments', in *OHQS*, 260-273, 264-6. 'Free' also means free of charge: see 5.4., below.

¹¹ A term chiefly used among American Friends to denote meetings of the type normal in Britain, based on silence and with free ministry. See J. William Frost, 'Modernist and Liberal Quakers, 1887-2010', in *OHQS*, 78-92.

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Mission Conference of 1892¹² and beyond. About the same time there was a good deal of agitation about the question of correspondence with American Quakers. Many British Quakers, including Graham, were asking if it made sense for London Yearly Meeting to exchange epistles*¹³ with meetings in America whose practices and understanding of ministry differed profoundly from that of British Quakers, while having no such relationship with some who had similar ideas and practices.¹⁴ I trace Graham's involvement in these discussions, which have a close bearing on his sense of a special mission to American Friends.¹⁵

Then come questions concerning the quality of worship and especially of ministry among Friends. This was bound up with anxiety about falling numbers, pointed by the evidence that the dilution of the Quaker way of worship by pastors and programming brought results in numerical terms. Section 5.2 considers Graham's approach to these anxieties. The following sections look more closely at the theology informing Graham's treatment of meetings and ministry, and the way he used the Bible and modern scholarship, Quaker and otherwise, as well as his understanding of psychological research to back up his position. A penultimate section considers how

¹² See 5.3., below.

¹³ See 5.5., below.

¹⁴ An anonymous article in the *British Friend* voices a special sympathy for those 'who have never differed from ourselves in doctrine, yet who are in no way recognized by London Yearly Meeting'. They share 'the same Christian truths on which the distinguishing characteristics of Quakerism are based: - the Inward Word and Teacher, - the universal Grace of God, - the revelation of the Father in the Son, - the Salvation of the World through our Lord Jesus Christ, - the spiritual nature of His Kingdom and reign, - and of His offices as Shepherd and Bishop of Souls' ('Separated Friends in America', *BF*, April, 1894, 89).

¹⁵ See Chapter 2, above, especially 2.8.

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Quakers like John Wilhelm Rowntree and Edward Grubb responded to these challenges, in order to test the extent to which Graham's view of the ministry was typical. There is also a short section on Graham's own practice in vocal ministry and how it was received.

5.2. The Concern about Numbers¹⁶

The determination of Graham and others that British Quakers should resist the allure of the pastorate and those other departures from time-honoured Quaker ways to which American Quakers were so prone was maintained in the face of their tiny numbers, as compared with the population at large and with attendance at other churches. The question had to be asked whether a religious movement constituted as they were could endure.¹⁷ According to John William Graham the numerical strength of the Society of Friends in Britain reached an all-time low in 1865, at 13,773 members.¹⁸ Numbers had risen slightly since then,¹⁹ but British Friends were eager to make suggestions as to how numbers could be increased, while others were afraid that any

¹⁶ See Fager, *Remaking Friends*, Ch. 21, III, (pp. 164-167) for similar arguments for diluting Q'sm among Hicksite Friends in early decades of 20th century.

¹⁷ A review of Graham's Swarthmore Lecture of 1925 makes the assumption that success can be measured in numbers: 'The weak point of the Quaker position in this respect [that is, in their defence of their manner of worship and ministry] is that it has been anything but a success in practice. The sparse number of Friends throughout the world tells its own tale', *Cape Times*, 2 July, 1925, JWGP, Box 20.

¹⁸ *QM*, 62. Elizabeth Isichei, in *Victorian Quakers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970, 111-117, gives an analysis of the fluctuations in numbers during the nineteenth century.

¹⁹ The number of members in London Yearly Meeting at the end of 1891 was 16,102, according to the 'Summary of Tabular Statements' in *Extracts from the Minutes and Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of Friends Held in London, 1892*, London: Office of the Society of Friends, [1892], 7. By the end of 1895 it had crept up to 16,476.

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measures taken would destroy essential features of Quakerism.²⁰ An unsigned article on the work of the Home Mission Committee in the *British Friend* of 1894 assumed a defiant stand:

We count it better for England that the Society of Friends, pure from decay, even if attenuated in numbers, should still maintain its spontaneous ministry and its undifferentiated character as a Priesthood of believers, with all its other fundamental characteristics, rather than that it should merge among the other Nonconformist churches, as one of their type. Even, if it were needful, let Quakerism become a name and a history, that so its memory may stimulate God's servants similarly drawn in the future.²¹

This article is unsigned, but it could well be by Graham.²² He was on the Editorial Board of the *British Friend* at the time, though without his name appearing, and regularly wrote unsigned leaders as well as numerous signed articles for the periodical during the 1890s and beyond.²³ Graham accepted almost with pride that the authentic Quaker ways would not attract multitudes.

“The million” will not have our quiet meetings, destitute of the element of entertainment; nor our organisation, in which service is asked rather than pastoral visits offered; nor our central idea, which is not outward enough to be easily absorbed ... I know of no exception to the rule that the purest forms of religious faith have always been held by the relatively few; and that the most

²⁰ See Samuel Price on the advantages of the pastoral system in the American west, 'Notes of a visit to Friends in the United States', *FQE*, 1892, 527, 8. On the other side, see three articles on 'The "Friends" Church" in the Western States', the first of which appeared in *BF*, January, 1894, 7-8, claiming that the use of paid pastors and programmed meetings does not lead to an increase in numbers.

²¹ "I Would Rather Not Have My name Down", *BF*, June, 1894, 167-168.

²² Cf. Graham's article, 'Friends in Canada and New York', *Friend*, 28 October, 1904, 715-716, 716, arguing that he would prefer to see the Society die out than be 'changed to Methodism'. Here he expresses confidence that the Society will not die out.

²³ See Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever: Lancashire Quaker J.W. Graham 1859-1932 and the Course of Reforming Movements' (ts, 1964), 6.6. Michael Graham quotes a letter of 1893 to Howard Jenkins, editor of the 'Hicksite' journal the *Friends' Intelligencer*, where Graham says he writes leading articles for *BF* every month. See also letters to Margaret Graham, 2 January, 1894, 25 December, 1894. In this last letter Graham says he has decided not to let his name appear as co-editor.

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popular forms have often been permeated by superstition, worked by terrorism, and made attractive by appeals to the senses'.²⁴

Quakerism, Graham maintained, could never have the mass appeal of Methodism.²⁵ He disagreed with Quakers like Mary Snowden Braithwaite, who complained at the Home Mission Conference of 1892 that 'in many places the Wesleyans had now come in and built where we might have done so twenty years ago'.²⁶ He had a more formidable opponent in the veteran Quaker reformer, John Stephenson Rowntree, author of the highly influential prize essay of 1859, published as *Quakerism Past and Present*.²⁷ Back then too Rowntree was concerned about falling numbers.²⁸ Now he stood with those who would consider giving up some time-honoured customs rather than see the Society fall into terminal decline. Graham did not like the famous prize essay: in *The Quaker Ministry* he noted that Rowntree had 'argued that the seeds of weakness in the Society were to be found in "the original views of its founders"'. It was an attack on the mystical Quakerism of the past'.²⁹ Now, in an address of 1893, Rowntree likened the current dispute about

²⁴ 'Our Small Numbers', *BF*, May, 1896, 101-102, 102. See also Graham, 'Whom to Attract?' *BF*, October, 1900, 262-263, reprinted in the *Friends' Intelligencer*, October, 1900, 771-772.

²⁵ 'Our Small Numbers', 102.

²⁶ As reported in *Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 747. Cf. *FQ*, 164, where Graham makes an onslaught on John Wesley, 'with his terrible preaching of Hell, his cheap salvation, (cheap in theory at least), by escape through the merits of another, his stimulating hymns, and his verbal Biblical interpretation'.

²⁷ John Stephenson Rowntree, *Quakerism, Past and Present: Being an Inquiry into the Causes of its Decline in Great Britain and Ireland*, London: Smith, Elder, 1859. Rowntree gave the figure of 14,530 in 1850, a decline from 19,800 in 1800 (*Quakerism, Past and Present*, 88). For the prize and Rowntree's essay see John Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: a Short History of the Quakers*, London: Quaker Home Service, 1984, 191; Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 112.

²⁸ Rowntree, *Quakerism*, 88.

²⁹ *QM*, 65.

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payment for ministry to disagreements among the first Friends on questions such as whether it was permissible to arrange to hold meetings at set times, rather than allow the Spirit of God to decide. Rowntree remarks that most of these controversies are now forgotten, but that 'the sustentation and relative Place of the Ministry are still unsettled', although agreement has been reached on the payment of foreign missionaries.³⁰ He implies that exactly the same arguments for 'sustentation' (pay) apply at home as abroad. Graham by contrast argued consistently that home mission and foreign mission are quite different, and what applies to the one does not apply to the other.³¹

Meanwhile, in an essay of 1896, Rowntree made a sly reference to the fact that the session on 'Modern Thought' at the Manchester Conference, at which Darwinism figured, was not followed by discussion. He commented, 'Had a session been so occupied, it might have been pointed out that the Darwinian doctrine of "the survival of the fittest" makes itself felt even in ecclesiastical affairs; and that both doctrines and organizations are judged by it'.³² In other words, the Society of Friends was headed for extinction through a failure to adapt to its environment.

³⁰ See Rowntree's 'Micah's Mother', *BF*, Feb., 1893, 45-46.

³¹ 'The Teaching of Scripture on the Payment of the Ministry', *BF*, July, 1892, 153-155, and correspondence, *BF*, September, 1892, 218-220. See also, *FQ*, 231.

³² John S. Rowntree, 'The Problem before the Friends' Conference at Manchester, with some Suggestions for its Solution', *FQE*, 1896, 91-109,104. As Rowntree implies, there was initial opposition to engaging in foreign missionary work precisely on the grounds that this might dilute the testimony against payment for ministry (see Elizabeth A. O'Donnell, 'Quakers and Education', in *OHQS*, 405-419, 417).

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It was not that Graham thought numbers unimportant. He lamented that the amiable New York Friends were in decline, reporting, 'they have not yet grasped the nettle, and turned their unsympathetic environment into a fruitful field by some aggressive missionary effort, which would do for them what Adult Schools have done for us'.³³ As to the need for 'aggressive missionary effort' Graham was in accord with the evangelicals, but he did not like their methods, as practised through the Home Mission Committee, in the adult school movement, or elsewhere. The next section deals with Graham's second trial of strength, following the rejection of the Richmond 'creed', in his contest with the evangelicals for the soul of British Quakerism.³⁴

5.3. The Home Mission Committee

This phase of the contest came to a head in the Home Mission Conference of November 1892.³⁵ The first Home Mission Committee was established in 1882 as a way of developing the work of the Adult Schools and of providing help for small and struggling meetings.³⁶ The Adult School movement was begun by Joseph Sturge in 1845, with the aim of providing instruction in basic

³³ 'Friends in Canada and New York', *Friend.*, 28/1/04, 716.

³⁴ See Introduction, 'Campaigning for a Liberal Quakerism', above; 2.7., above.

³⁵ See report in *Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 744-755.

³⁶ Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, Oxford University Press, 1970, 99. Isichei's account is confirmed by a footnote in *FQ*, 240. J. B. Braithwaite Jr. listed three aims of the Committee, as follows: '1. The development and extension of Adult School and Mission work on Friends' lines. 2. The helping of our small and decayed meetings. 3. The responsibility connected with our closed Meeting houses' ('The Home Mission Committee', *BF*, April, 1892, 93-94, 94). See also Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 122.

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literacy and the Bible.³⁷ Graham regarded adult schools as among the great Quaker achievements,³⁸ and wanted to promote them in America.³⁹

For Graham, adult schools had to be liberalising and humanising institutions.⁴⁰ Not everyone saw them in this way, however. Where the HMC was concerned, their evangelising activity was not necessarily carried out in a way approved by liberalising Friends.⁴¹ Few adult school scholars joined the Society of Friends:⁴² instead they had evening mission meetings with hymn-singing and sermons on the model of nonconformist church services.⁴³ If adult school scholars did join, they might constitute a problem.⁴⁴ In 1871 Joseph Gundry Alexander blamed the 'radical unsoundness' of the Society of Friends, 'the want of life and freshness' in much of its ministry and the failure of many

³⁷ Elizabeth Stuckey Welling, 'Mission', in *OHQS*, 310. Graham writes of Sturge and the adult schools in *FQ*, 316, 318.

³⁸ In 'The Friend and his Message', Graham's address to Toronto Friends in 1904, adult schools were listed, along with 'fighting drink' and 'humanizing jails' as outstanding examples of Quaker work (JWGP, Box 1). See also *FQ*, 318.

³⁹ See Graham's diary of his time in America in 1896, 28 June, 30 June, 7 July, etc. (JWGP, Box 5).

⁴⁰ T.E. Harvey, in his Swarthmore Lecture of 1921, spoke of adult schools as agents of progress (T. Edmund Harvey, *The Long Pilgrimage: Human Progress in the Light of the Christian Hope* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1921), Harrogate: published for the Woodbrooke Extension Committee by Robert Davis, 1921, 54). Peggy Heeks suggests that adult schools stimulated a questioning attitude to the Bible (*Woodbrooke Journal*, Spring 2005, No. 16, 21). This would certainly have been part of Graham's intention. See Graham's advertisement for his adult class in Manchester, in JWGP, Box 6, quoted in Introduction, 'Dalton Hall Years', above.

⁴¹ For the adult school movement see Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: OUP, 2001, 121-2; Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, Chapter 9 (258-279); E. Grubb, 'The Present Position of Quakerism', (Pamphlet), London: Headley, 1901, 13-14.

⁴² See 'Some Notes on the Widening of Quaker Fellowship', unsigned article in *FQE*, 1905, 427-458.

⁴³ See Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 276.

⁴⁴ J.B. Braithwaite Jr. wrote of 'the problem of how to adapt itself [i.e., the Society of Friends] to the vigorous growth which has taken place with our Adult Schools and other forms of Mission work' ('The Home Mission Committee', *BF*, April, 1892, 93-94, p.94). See also Grubb, 'Present Position of Quakerism', 13-14.

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members to adhere to its principles, for its lack of appeal to such people,⁴⁵ but others, writing later, implied a doubt whether the kind of person taught in the adult schools was suited to 'ideal Quakerism'. A Quaker calling himself 'Senex' wrote a series of articles for the *British Friend*, on 'An Ideal of Quakerism': the article for March, 1893, while praising the work of the adult schools, suggested that where recruits were made, they had 'a natural tendency to look for the superficially attractive and sensational features of religious observance', whereas '*the only plea for the continued existence of the Society, on its distinctive historical basis, is the rigid exclusion of these sensational elements from its teaching and polity*'.⁴⁶ Such people will 'need a somewhat lengthened term of "apprenticeship", in order to impart to them the deeper and more spiritual characteristics of their new profession'.⁴⁷ Graham believed that there were people out there who would be naturally attracted to true Quakerism, did they but know about it, but these were not the people who went to the mission meetings, which were too busy, too un-Quaker: 'We have quite ignored our inborn Quaker'.⁴⁸

The second aim of the HMC, to provide assistance to small and struggling meetings, was also fraught with problems for the liberalisers. The tendency was to appoint a young man specifically for this purpose on a more-

⁴⁵ Quoted in Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 121.

⁴⁶ 'An Ideal of Quakerism', Chapter 11, *BF*, March, 1893, 60-62, 61 (italics in the original).

⁴⁷ 'Ideal of Quakerism', 11, 612.

⁴⁸ 'Whom to Attract?', 262. 'Senex' replied approvingly to this article in *BF*, January, 1901, 21. See also *FQ*, 239-40: here Graham, looking back from 1914, (when, according to Graham's Preface, the book, published in 1920, was already in the printers' hands) admits ruefully, in a note, that although the danger constituted by these meetings has passed a few such mission meetings still exist.

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or-less permanent basis, and to pay him for his labours.⁴⁹ According to Elizabeth Isichei, the ministers appointed were not only young and enthusiastic, but 'all were extreme evangelicals'.⁵⁰ They were liable to assume a position not unlike that of a 'pastor' in an American 'Friends' Church'.⁵¹ For liberalising Quakers, this was a rot that must be stopped. Graham hated the way the men appointed by the HMC related to the working men who came to the meetings – whether the established morning meetings for worship or the evening meetings more particularly directed to the needs of these potential recruits. At the Home Mission Conference he suggested

that the system under which the workers were labouring gave a mechanical and professional tone to their ministry, and that it tended to accentuate their extreme views. At times they even assumed such authority as to request the congregation to lift their hands or give some other token that they considered themselves saved.⁵²

This was, he strongly implied, not the Quaker way, and it was self-defeating: 'We were losing the influence which we possessed with the working men through their belief that there was no professional taint in our work amongst

⁴⁹ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 123.

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970, 100.

⁵¹ See Gregory P. Hinshaw, 'Five Years Meeting and Friends United Meeting, 1887-2010'. in *OHQS*, 93-107, 93, 95, on how the term 'Friends' Church' came to replace 'Religious Society of Friends' among Midwestern Gurneyite Quakers. See also Thomas Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism: Orthodox Friends 1800-1907*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988, 124-130, on the introduction of paid pastors among American Quakers.

⁵² *The Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 747.

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them'.⁵³ The system run by the HMC was not only threatening the foundations of Quakerism but also failing to produce recruits for the Society.

5.4. The Question of Payment

There was a controversy as to how the young men who laboured to win souls for Christ should be maintained. It did not seem right to some that only those wealthy enough to afford the time needed for the work should be able to do it. At the Yearly Meeting of 1892, George Gillett (1837-1893) pleaded that there should be no 'property qualification' for the ministry.⁵⁴ Some Friends, including Graham, took up this phrase,⁵⁵ which resonated at a time when the franchise had recently been much extended, although some 'property qualification' remained.⁵⁶ Graham stated baldly:

It is not legitimate to speak in this connection of a property qualification for the ministry, telling as the phrase undoubtedly is. We all know that for the ministry proper, no such limitation has ever existed. The question is, whether we ought to provide that *kind* of cure of souls which occupies a man seven days of the week.⁵⁷

⁵³ *The Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 747. Cf. Graham, 'The Teaching of Scripture on the Payment of the Ministry', *BF*, July, 1892, 153-155, 155, where Graham records a moment of embarrassment when an adult scholar, 'in the innocence of his heart', compliments a paid Home Mission worker on his working without pay. 'The paid worker did not put my man right'.

⁵⁴ *Friend*, 27 May, 1892, 354. See Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 100.

⁵⁵ J.B. Braithwaite Jr. had practical proposals to make for avoiding such an outcome: see *FQE*, 1892, 435; also J.B. Braithwaite, Jr., 'The Home Mission Committee' *BF*, April, 1893, 95.

⁵⁶ In the 'Representation of the People Act' of 1884, commonly known as the 'Third Reform Act'. See Sean Lang, *Parliamentary Reform 1785-1928*, London: Routledge, 1999, 111 ff..

⁵⁷ J.W. Graham, 'The Maintenance of Ministers', *BF*, April, 1893, 93-94. See also, Graham, 'An Organised Ministry', *FQE*, 1892, 437-443, 442. Compare Francis Frith, 'The Home Mission Question', *BF*, May, 1893, 117-118. Frith opined that it was positively unhealthy to devote all one's time to the work of ministry.

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It is striking that those who were most emphatic in their pleading for a free ministry, open to all, belonged overwhelmingly to the ranks of well-educated, generally well-to-do Quakers, of long-established Quaker families. They insisted that payment transgressed indispensable Quaker principles. In Thomas Hodgkin's view, 'There may be many arguments of expediency in favour of such an innovation, but it is not Quakerism, any more than a church without Bishops would be Episcopalian, or a church excommunicating the Pope would be Roman Catholic'.⁵⁸ J.B. Braithwaite Jr. was another determined opponent of the practice of appointing pastors, although his point was not so much to do with payment as with violating the principle of 'the Headship of Christ in His Church'.⁵⁹

5.5. American Friends

The activities of the Home Mission Committee were seen among English Quakers of the 1890s against a background of developments in American Quakerism. Or, to quote Thomas Hodgkin's words referring to the Yearly Meeting* of 1892, at which the decision was made to hold a Home Mission conference that autumn:⁶⁰

The proceedings of the Home Mission Committee were certainly subjected to somewhat more searching criticism than would otherwise have been the case, on account of the aberrations of some of our American friends. Behind the modest figure of the

⁵⁸ Hodgkin, 'Some Notes on the Yearly Meeting of 1892', *FQE*, 1892, 424-431, 428. This essay appeared in the same number as Graham's 'An Organised Ministry', which warned of the deadening effect of 'organisation' on the inspirational character of ministry.

⁵⁹ Letter from J.B.B. Jr to the Editor of *BF*, April, 1892, 93.

⁶⁰ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 129.

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English Home missionary loomed, in the sight of many, the unwelcome vision of the Ohio “Pastor”; and behind him again, a chain of hierarchs, each more arrogantly claiming lordship over God’s heritage, till at length we are invited to prostrate ourselves in the presence of Leo XIII.⁶¹

The ‘aberrations of our American friends’ raised vexed questions about the twelve different epistles, a number likely to increase, sent each year from London Yearly Meeting to the various separated bodies.⁶² It was felt that ‘correspondence’ with a meeting implied a degree of unanimity with it,⁶³ but even where they were perceived as erring there was agreement that London Yearly Meeting* (LYM) had something of a parental responsibility for its transatlantic offspring.⁶⁴ Nobody, however, spoke in favour of including Graham’s ‘clients’ the Hicksites.⁶⁵ Charles Brady thought they should send a single epistle to everyone, ‘of course excluding the large body of Friends known as Hicksites’.⁶⁶ The Meeting decided to continue the current practice.⁶⁷

Graham’s name does not appear in the report of the 1892 Yearly Meeting, but he figured prominently in the renewed debate on the subject in 1894. Here he pleaded for a solution to the correspondence problem proffered by his Lancashire and Cheshire Quarterly Meeting*: that LYM

⁶¹ Hodgkin, ‘Some Notes on the Yearly Meeting of 1892’, 427.

⁶² ‘Our Correspondence with American Yearly Meetings’ (Editorial), *Friend*, 3 June, 1892, 365-366, 365.

⁶³ *Friend*, 3 June, 1892, 365.

⁶⁴ James Wood said its position as progenitor gave it ‘a right to give advice’ to Friends who had made ‘errors of judgment’, *Friend*, 3 June, 1892, 366.

⁶⁵ Graham calls them his ‘clients’ in a letter to his wife, 28/5/1894, JWGP, Box 17.

⁶⁶ *Friend*, 3 June, 1892, 366.

⁶⁷ *Friend*, 3 June, 1892, 371.

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should engage in correspondence with all in America who considered themselves Quakers.⁶⁸ He spoke of the Hicksites as 'Friends whose outward ways were like our own, whose ministry was exercised under the same inspiration ... a ministry spontaneous and arising out of a basis of silence'.⁶⁹ An older English Quaker, William Tallack (1831-1908)⁷⁰ lent his considerable weight to the Hicksite cause. Graham told his wife that Tallack had delivered 'a brilliant defence of the Hicksites', 'with a straightforward attack upon J.B. Braithwaite Sen^r, until he was 'stopped by the Clerk'.⁷¹ Nevertheless, the proposal to send the Yearly Meeting Epistle to the Hicksites was rejected.⁷² The problem was not finally resolved until 1923, when London Yearly Meeting agreed to send one epistle to all bodies who called themselves Friends.⁷³

With respect to the pastor-led meetings, an anonymous article in the *British Friend* on 'The "Friends' Church" in the Western States' lamented the loss of 'peculiarities'* in Friends' Churches, and their closeness to 'Free Methodists, Salvation Army or Holiness Bands' (to which some members have been lost).⁷⁴ The author cited the distinguished Baltimore Friend

⁶⁸ See report of Graham's speech in *BF*, June, 1894, 182. Cf. 2.8., note, above,

⁶⁹ *BF*, June 1894, 182.

⁷⁰ Kennedy notes Tallack's dislike of evangelical preaching (*British Quakerism*, 128).

⁷¹ Letter, 28 May, 1894, JWGP, Box 17. Tallack's speech is reported in *Friend*, 1 June, 1894, 359.

⁷² *Friend*, 8 June, 1894, 374. It was decided at this meeting that only one epistle should be sent, to everyone except 'those who had separated themselves from them'. Thus Philadelphia Friends, who had previously been excluded, were now brought in. For more on the correspondence question see Edwin B. Bronner, ' "The Other Branch": London Yearly Meeting and the Hicksites, 1827-1912', 52ff.

⁷³ See Bronner, 'Other Branch', 59.

⁷⁴ 'The "Friends' Church" in the Western States, from a correspondent, 3, *BF*, Feb., 1894, 41-43, 42.

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Richard Thomas' sense that the Society of Friends as a whole had lost its essential, God-given identity:

The Society of Friends, instead of being, as it should have been, the herald of progress, of spiritual liberty and manhood, a wondrous witness to the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in every believer,⁷⁵ a witness to the true dignity of man in Christ Jesus, the staunch upholder of unpopular right and truth, unswerving from the line of duty, and testifying to the sufficiency of the Divine protection for the children of God, is in danger of becoming a sort of second-class evangelical sect, afraid to maintain as much as one peculiarity to distinguish it from others.⁷⁶

We see here that Thomas, like Graham, was of the view that Quakerism needed to retain such 'peculiar'* features as the free ministry in order to remain *progressive*: the struggle was not about the preservation of 'heritage', but about a sacred calling to lead humankind into a new age.

5.6. The Home Mission Conference

It was with such things in mind that an array of determined Friends took part in the Home Mission Conference of 1892. The Conference was held in response to anxieties expressed in the May Yearly Meeting, in order to debate

⁷⁵ A dispute about this concept arose in the discussion about American meetings. Graham, in the speech to the Yearly Meeting of 1894, referred to the 'disfranchisement' of San José Meeting by Iowa, its parent body, for failing to answer satisfactorily the 'query*': 'We ask *in particular* do you believe that the Holy Spirit dwells only in the righteous'. Graham's response was the declaration: 'Now this thought of the Universality of the Light of Christ is the very root idea of Quakerism'. J.B. Hodgkin scented heresy: 'The Yearly Meeting had declared in one of its Epistles that God's Spirit does plead with every man and seeks to lead him to the saviour; but that the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart was for those who believed in Jesus Christ and accepted Him as their Saviour' (*BF*, June 1894, 182). Cf. Rosemary Mingins, *Focus and Perspective on the Beacon Controversy: Some Quaker Responses to the Evangelical Revival in Early Nineteenth Century England*, Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004, 62, for Joseph John Gurney's distinction between Inward Light & Spirit: the 'Light', or 'reproving conscience', is universal, but the 'work of' the Spirit comes through faith in Christ.

⁷⁶ 'Western Meetings, 42.

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the role of the HMC and whether it was carrying out its functions in the proper spirit of Quakerism.⁷⁷ Thomas Hodgkin, according to Graham, made a 'Glorious Speech. On the Methodism of reviving country meetings. & its effect on the Society. Produced great effect'.⁷⁸ W.S Lean, too, an older Friend who had criticised Graham's conduct as a young teacher in Scarborough,⁷⁹ 'said we must put an end to sending people to revive Meetgs'⁸⁰ and 'criticised the new Missionaries as Only just admitted to the Socy'.⁸¹ Graham's father Michael was there too, and made 'a good practical speech, not too long & to the point'.⁸² On the other hand, Arthur Sessions, speaking of his meeting in Cardiff, 'said the members wd be "all abroad" if Pastor was withdrawn'. Graham understood this as a 'confession'.⁸³ Was the implication that meetings too weak to survive without pastors should be allowed to die?

On the whole Graham was well satisfied with this session of the conference: 'The outburst of true Quakerism particularly from the younger men was most remarkable & far exceeded our anticipation'.⁸⁴ He recorded

⁷⁷ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 129-30.

⁷⁸ Pencil notes by Graham, in JWGP, 17. Hodgkin complained that the meetings 'revived' by HMC workers had ceased to be Quaker: 'One such Meeting . . . was a good Methodist meeting, with a sort of Methodist service in which he had taken part, and should do again without feeling that he was doing wrong. But still it was not Quakerism' (*Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 749).

⁷⁹ See Introduction, 'Early Years and Education', above.

⁸⁰ On Friends sent to revive meetings see 2.4., above.

⁸¹ JWGP, 17. See *Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 751.

⁸² JWGP, 17. See also report in the *Friend* of Michael Graham's response to the Clerk's interim summing up (*Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 752).

⁸³ JWGP, 17; *Friend*, 11 November, 1892, 746. Sessions protested that the HMC workers were not 'leaders in the sense used by J.B. Braithwaite, jun.'.

⁸⁴ JWGP, 17.

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names and numbers of those for and against the HMC: some older Evangelical Friends like J.B. Hodgkin⁸⁵ and Richard Littleboy were in favour of its continuance, but there was a clear majority, including his father, against. In conclusion, he wrote in a letter to his wife:

The upshot of the Conference was that the old HMC is to be discontinued, and a new body formed by Representatives from the Quarterly Meetings. – This we had to fight for, against the Clerk, who behaved most unfairly; and succeeded in preventing the majority of the Conference from getting a minute made, directly declaring against the continuance of a Resident pastorate.⁸⁶

Graham was so incensed by the ‘unfairness’ of the Clerk, Joseph Storrs Fry (1826-1913), that several months later he wrote him a letter of complaint, a rough draft of which is preserved in the J.W. Graham Papers, from which I quote: ‘I honestly cannot conceive how a Clerk whose aim was to interpret the wish of the Meeting, could fly in the face of such an overpowering ~~consensus~~ {expression} of opinion’. He continues with a comment relating to the Quaker business method:*

The last hour of the Conference was a lamentable scene, such as I hope we may never again take part in. A Quaker assembly is not adapted for a conflict with its Clerk. And destructive to Quakerism as I believe a Pastorate to be, I think it is not more destructive of our historic tone than it would be if we had to abandon our trustful plan of deciding matters by speeches and a Clerk.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ For Graham’s relations with Jonathan Hodgkin see 2.8., above.

⁸⁶ JWGP, 17 (pencil notes, undated).

⁸⁷ JWGP, 17. (Braces ({ }) have been used to denote expressions substituted for those crossed through.) See also Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 130. Kennedy mentions a copy of the letter in JWGP, Box 3, which I have not found. He says there is no reply from Fry. The copy in Box 17 is a rough draft, and there is a reply. It is somewhat perfunctory: Fry denies partisanship, but declines to deal with ‘particular points’, pointing out that the final decision will

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It will be remembered that Graham again found himself a sufferer by the Quaker business method* in 1904, when he was denied a certificate for his mission to American Friends by a minority in the Yearly Meeting.⁸⁸ Now his concluding comment poignantly suggests the pain younger Friends could feel in rebelling against their elders: he writes of his 'hope of restoring my old feeling of respect for thee, which I have had all my life ... I do not want to break my idols'. Nevertheless, the felt urgency of the need to break the false gods fashioned in the evangelical phase was such that personal considerations had to take a subordinate place.

5.7. Addressing the Need: Early Essays by Graham on the Ministry

This section deals with a number of essays written by Graham at the time of the twin controversies about the HMC and about correspondence with American Friends. These controversies stimulated him to undertake his succession of visits to Friends in the United States and Canada,⁸⁹ and also to conceive ideas that he would continue to develop and propound through the rest of his life. Even though the HMC was reconstituted along the lines suggested in the Conference of 1892,⁹⁰ the controversy raised questions

be made at YM. For the report of the discussion of the Home Mission Committee at YM, 1893 see *Friend*, 2 June, 1893, 355-360. For Fry's opposition to the views of the young progressives at this time see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 135.

⁸⁸ See 2.8., above.

⁸⁹ See 2.8., above.

⁹⁰ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 130. For the minute establishing the newly constituted HMC, see LYM report, *Friend*, 2 June, 1893, 355-6. The minute stipulated 'that any Friends who may work with the committee shall seek the sympathy and counsel of the Friends amongst whom they labour, as if they were ordinary members of the meeting, so that they may be kept in their right place, and preserved from the danger of constituting a separate class'.

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about the nature and practice of ministry that liberalisers continued to feel impelled to address.⁹¹ Graham was stimulated to write a sequence of essays on the subject, later repeated in *The Faith of a Quaker* and *The Quaker Ministry*. They were originally written to address an immediate and pressing need.

Graham made free use of modern scholarship in his campaign. Among the products of such scholarship was Edwin Hatch's *Organization of the Early Christian Churches* of 1880.⁹² Graham made extensive use of this work in an essay of 1892, 'Clergy and Laity in the Primitive Church'.⁹³ Hatch's book, says Graham in *The Faith of a Quaker*, caused a 'great sensation' when it first appeared. He comments there that when, as an undergraduate at Cambridge, he suggested it to the Dean of his college as material for a study group the Dean rejected the suggestion on the grounds that Hatch 'reckons that Bishops were originally only treasurers'.⁹⁴ In writing of the early Church in *The Faith of a Quaker* Graham relied mainly on a more recent authority, Thomas M. Lindsay's *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*,⁹⁵ but the argument is essentially the same. It must have been exciting for Graham as an undergraduate to come across Hatch's work, and to find a distinguished Anglican theologian, Doctor of Divinity at Edinburgh University

⁹¹ See 5.9, below.

⁹² Edwin Hatch, *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches* (Bampton Lecture, 1880), London: Rivingtons, 1881.

⁹³ 'Clergy and Laity in the Primitive Church', *BF*, March, 1892, 54-56.

⁹⁴ *FQ*, 208.

⁹⁵ Thomas M. Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries: the Eighteenth Series of the Cunningham Lectures*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1902.

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and so forth,⁹⁶ seeming to justify the Quaker premise that Quakerism was 'primitive Christianity revived'.⁹⁷ Following Hatch, Graham infers from the account of the Church in Corinth gleaned from Paul's first Letter to the Corinthians that the early church had no clergy: 'every function now considered peculiarly clerical was equally discharged by unofficial members of the Church',⁹⁸ and that there was 'liberty of prophesying'.⁹⁹ For Graham this meant the free ministry: the 'prophetic ministry'.¹⁰⁰ But alas, the early Church had succumbed to the deadening influence of organisation.¹⁰¹ 'People were born into the Christian Church, as we have been born into the Society of Friends; ... the type of the average member was lowered, and they wanted a parson'.¹⁰² They adopted the strait-jacket of a priestly hierarchy by a gradual process with very little opposition. The question was whether the Society of Friends could avoid falling into the same trap.

In *The Faith of a Quaker* Graham gives a sympathetic account of various heresies which interrupted the march towards autocracy in the Church;¹⁰³ in the early essay he mentions only the Montanists of the second and third centuries as people who 'reasserted the place of spiritual gifts as contrasted with official rule', and who 'maintained that the revelation of Christ through the

⁹⁶ *ODNB*, accessed 9 June, 2014.

⁹⁷ Thomas Hodgkin uses the phrase in 'The Message of Quakerism to the Twentieth Century', *BF*, April, 1892, 75-77, quoting 'one of the early champions of the sect' (p.75).

⁹⁸ 'Clergy and Laity', 54.

⁹⁹ 'Clergy and Laity', 54.

¹⁰⁰ See 5.1., above.

¹⁰¹ See Graham, 'An Organised Ministry', *FQE*, 1892, 437-443.

¹⁰² 'Clergy and Laity', 55.

¹⁰³ See *FQ*, Book 3, Chapter 5, 210-226, 'The Decay of Prophecy'.

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Spirit was not a temporary phenomenon of Apostolic days, but a constant fact of Christian life'.¹⁰⁴ Hence Graham was able to claim that 'the Society of Friends was but an echo in the 17th century of the Montanists in the 3rd'.¹⁰⁵ The parallel is extended somewhat fancifully in *The Faith of a Quaker*, where he writes:

And so in the country districts in the mountainous region of Phrygia, far from the great cities, among old-fashioned people, there arose a movement headed by a presbyter named Montanus. Mountains are the homes of prophets. The valleys of Cumberland and Westmorland were the Phrygia of Quakerism, and we may note that oddly enough the capital city of that province is named Philadelphia.¹⁰⁶

Thus Graham, lover of mountains, celebrator of William Penn, identifies with these ancient heretics.¹⁰⁷ And now the Society of Friends was in danger of losing its essential character because, like the Israelites of old, they demanded to have a king (in the shape of a pastor), like the other nations,¹⁰⁸ rather than accept the demands of the free ministry.

Over their heads hung the threat that they might die out, like the Montanists. The Apostle of Progress was, however, hopeful that this would

¹⁰⁴ 'Clergy and Laity', 55.

¹⁰⁵ 'Clergy and Laity', 55.

¹⁰⁶ *FQ*, 223.

¹⁰⁷ Graham concedes that the Phrygian Montanists were guilty of aberrations such as belief in the imminent end of the world and that their utterances were literally oracular (*FQ*, 223).

¹⁰⁸ See 1 Samuel, 8: 4-22. We may trace an allusion to this text in Hodgkin's essay in the next issue of *BF*, 'The Message of Quakerism to the Twentieth Century', *BF*, April, 1892, 75-77, which concludes: 'It is important that we should carefully guard that good thing which has been committed to us, and not, in a weak and faint-hearted desire to be like the nations around us, shrink from acknowledging the guidance of our unseen King, and make for ourselves human leaders, whose tendency will be to lead us back into the bondage from which Christ set our fathers free' .

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not happen. Times had changed, and the free ministry was the way of the future. Whereas in the third century 'autocracy was in the air', with 'the intense sentiment of Order and Rule' which characterised the Roman Empire, now, in the twentieth, 'we have on our side the constant pressure of the democratic spirit in every modern organization', so that 'the Time-spirit is all against a new order of clergy'.¹⁰⁹ 'Let us but clearly recognise that the payment of ministers is historically a retrograde step, and I have still faith that the Society of Friends will try to keep its head above water some time longer yet'.¹¹⁰ The calling of the Society of Friends was to be on the side of the future.

A month after this essay appeared came one on 'The Paid Pastor at Work'.¹¹¹ Here Graham takes up a favourite theme, the need for the elimination of self in preaching. With no very clear evidence or logic to support the argument, Graham consistently asserts that considerations of vanity or crowd-pleasing are more likely to intrude where the preacher is paid. In *The Faith of a Quaker* he does concede that vanity may be present even in the traditional Quaker ministry: 'Every Quaker preacher, every public speaker, is more or less subject to the temptation of vanity, if he succeeds much. But', he goes on, 'those who make their living out of their personal attraction or superiority, and who do nothing else, are in the worst danger, though they can

¹⁰⁹ 'Clergy and Laity', 55.

¹¹⁰ 'Clergy and Laity', 55.

¹¹¹ John William Graham, 'The Paid Pastor at Work', *BF*, April, 1892, 94-96.

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be saved, as by fire, the fire of sincerity and inspiration'.¹¹² In the early essay on the paid pastor the argument is somewhat obscured by Graham's focus towards the end on the substance of a particular thirty-five-minute 'sermon' delivered at a Quarterly Meeting* by 'one of the most trusted and prominent of the [Home Mission] Committee's staff' (not in his paid capacity, of course).¹¹³ Firstly, the speaker denounced university education and the intellectual life in general.¹¹⁴ Secondly, he was guilty of 'unjust confusing of "broad" views with wealth and arrogance' (here Graham confirms the sense that aspects of social class entered the debate about the HMC).¹¹⁵ Thirdly, he attacked 'old-fashioned Friends'. It is not clear who is meant here, but it may be those depicted in Edward H. Milligan's essay, 'The Ancient Way', successors of those who, in the early nineteenth century, resisted the inroads of evangelicalism, retaining their preference for the Quietist* tradition.¹¹⁶ They tended to side with progressives, such as David Duncan,¹¹⁷ whom they saw as less threatening to the 'ancient way' than the evangelicals.¹¹⁸ Joseph Armfield, a 'venerable conservative Friend'¹¹⁹ whose name is sometimes coupled with William Graham's,¹²⁰ said at the contentious Yearly Meeting of 1893 'that adherence to the ancient doctrines of Friends was necessary to

¹¹² *FQ*, 238.

¹¹³ 'The Paid Pastor at Work', 95.

¹¹⁴ For Graham's views on the 'intellect in religion' see 4.6., above.

¹¹⁵ See 5.4., above.

¹¹⁶ Edward H. Milligan, 'The Ancient Way': the Conservative Tradition in Nineteenth Century British Quakerism', *JFHS*, 57, 1994, 74-97. See 2.1., above.

¹¹⁷ Milligan, 'Ancient Way', 89-90. For Duncan and his role as pioneer of Quaker liberalism in the 1870s see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 50-82.

¹¹⁸ Milligan, 'Ancient Way', 89ff. See also Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 25.

¹¹⁹ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 134.

¹²⁰ See Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 9.

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meet the present day'.¹²¹ Thus Graham in the same essay defends 'broad' (that is liberal) thinking and old-fashioned Quakerism, harking back to a time before evangelicalism overtook the Friends.

In the same year Graham turned to another theme that he was to develop in later years: the dangers of organisation.¹²² H.G. Wood noted that 'he was so distrustful of organisation in connection with religion, that perhaps he did less than justice to the genius of Fox as an organiser. But this meant he always championed freedom of thought'.¹²³ While this is true, Graham is concerned in this essay and always, not so much with freedom of thought as with openness to the promptings of the divinity within, a readiness to receive the 'anointing'.¹²⁴ In a talk given at a parish church in 1902 he explains: 'The Spirit bloweth where it listeth still. So that we stand as a testimony to the dangers of over-organisation. We are not organised even into clergy and laity'.¹²⁵ It was openness to the breath of the Spirit for which Graham was fighting in his battle with the HMC in the 1890s. Payment for ministry entailed control.¹²⁶

So Graham could quote Ruskin to support his belief that the authenticity of the Quaker ministry depended on its prophetic quality. And organisation, though inevitable as a new movement developed, was always

¹²¹ Quoted by Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 135.

¹²² 'An Organised Ministry', *FQE*, 1892, 437-443.

¹²³ H.G. Wood, 'John William Graham as a Religious Thinker', *FQE*, 1933, 102-112.

¹²⁴ *QM*, 73. Cf. 5.8., below.

¹²⁵ 'The Quaker Movement', *BF*, April, 1902, 92-94, 93.

¹²⁶ 'Organised Ministry', 441, 2.

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liable to put out the fire which ignited the movement. This had happened in the early Church and it was a constant danger for Quakers:

There is a constant wish among good people of a practical genius to aid by some systematic organising all useful activities; and as a consequence, every faculty which depends for its success upon inspiration, upon originality, upon genius, shrivels up and dies, even if maintaining a name that it liveth, under the restraint of that benevolent system.¹²⁷

Quakerism, Graham believed, was ‘an adventure in organised mysticism’,¹²⁸ mysticism being the inspirational element, in religion as in poetry and the arts.¹²⁹ For most of its history, he believed, the experiment had been successful. He showed little interest in the tendencies to anarchism among early Friends noted by J.S. Rowntree.¹³⁰ The necessity of protecting the prophetic spirit from over-organisation remained imperative

5.8. The Psychology of the Free Ministry

Quaker worship in Graham’s view required effort. That was why it was not suitable for the ‘million’. Worship with no outward aids called for ‘athletics of the soul’.¹³¹ In his speech to Toronto Quakers in 1904 he alluded to Henry Drummond’s *Ascent of Man*¹³² as justifying the use of the word ‘parasitism’ in this connection:

¹²⁷ *FQ*, 233.

¹²⁸ Preface to *FQ*, vii.

¹²⁹ See *DM*, 113-127, Chapter 7, ‘Inspiration’.

¹³⁰ See 5.2., above.

¹³¹ *QM*, 242.

¹³² Henry Drummond, *The Lowell Lectures on the Ascent of Man*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1894.

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We think [silent worship] is a more bracing experience for the soul than to rely on the stimulus of music, to follow forms of words, to listen to appointed sermons, to learn our beliefs from creeds. These things are tonics or stimulants, useful for invalids, and perhaps, in our weaker moments, for any of us, but to the healthy man injurious. They make their appeal to the spirit through the gate of the flesh; and though man is both flesh and spirit, religion is after all an activity of the spirit; and we dread what Henry Drummond ... taught us to call "parasitism" in the life of the spirit, making up for our own want of spiritual force by the beauty of a musical service or the eloquent earnestness of a minister.¹³³

Thus Graham differed from Helen Balkwill Harris in her advocacy of singing in Quaker meetings, 'to bring in a sensuous and aesthetic attraction to stimulate and express the Spiritual life. . . Has not the Society decided by its persistent practice to train its members in the exercise of a Spiritual asceticism – to do without many forms of external attractiveness, that its calibre might be stern and strong?'¹³⁴ It was 'parasitic' to depend on stimulants outside oneself; it was the easy way, and it made for degeneration in evolution and for sin in human beings, as Edward Grubb also taught.¹³⁵ This was the 'ultra-Puritan' element which H.G. Wood noted in his account of Graham's religious thought.¹³⁶

Asceticism was not to be practised simply for the sake of spiritual fitness. The silent wrestling which ideally occupied Quakers in their meetings was the surest way of encountering God where alone He was to be found, in

¹³³ Address to Toronto Friends, JWGP 1.

¹³⁴ Review of Helen B. Harris' book, *The Greatest Need in the Society of Friends: the Baptism with the Holy Spirit*, BF, February, 1893, 48-49. See 2.2., above.

¹³⁵ Edward Grubb, *The Religion of Experience: an Examination of some of the Difficulties of Christian Faith*, London: Headley, [1918], 158.

¹³⁶ Wood, 'John William Graham', 111.

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'the depths'¹³⁷ of the inward self, or, in the conceptual system that Graham learned from Frederic Myers, the 'subliminal self'.¹³⁸ As we have seen, this concept was an essential factor in Graham's theoretical understanding of the prophetic ministry.¹³⁹

Not that Graham was unmindful of practical aspects. In writing of the ministry in later years, he supplements his account of the psychology of ministry with some counsel, based largely on his own experience, on how the individual may prepare for and deliver ministry. For it is not entirely a matter of waiting for inspiration. Those who would minister should prepare themselves

by cultivating every vocal and intellectual gift, by training and storing the mind through books; by the study of religion in its manifold outpourings. Particularly should we study the Bible in an intelligent way ... As priests ourselves, we ought to aim at being as well educated as the clergy.¹⁴⁰ We should not prepare sermons, but we should prepare ourselves to be ready to preach when bidden to do so.¹⁴¹

It was an almost impossibly lofty requirement, and rather far from the original Quaker disparagement of human learning as part of the equipment of ministers.¹⁴² Study should moreover go along with purity of life, with space for

¹³⁷ See *QM*, 11.

¹³⁸ See 3.6., above.

¹³⁹ See 3.8., above.

¹⁴⁰ Graham is referring to the doctrine of the 'priesthood of all believers', carried to its logical conclusion by the Quakers. See Pink Dandelion and Stephen W. Angell, Introduction to the *OHQS*, 1.

¹⁴¹ *FQ*, 250.

¹⁴² See *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls, revised ed., Philadelphia: Religious Society of Friends, 1997, 7, for Fox's realisation that 'being bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ'.

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God.¹⁴³ Quakers should prepare themselves in all the ways he suggested and then the 'call' to minister would surely come.¹⁴⁴

Even more difficult of attainment was the complete subjugation of self, or ego, that Graham insisted was necessary for authentic ministry. Graham treads a tight-rope between the Quietist insistence that ministry should be free of any 'outward dependence'¹⁴⁵ and the culture to which, as an educated man, he belonged, with its positive view of current learning. That learning had somehow to be worn without any vanity or even the intention to speak well: 'The minister must never try to make a fine sermon, or think that he has made one, or that he will not speak unless he can speak well'.¹⁴⁶ Personal success is poison, if enjoyed at all. He uses an anecdote (evidently well-known) to illustrate the danger: ' "Thou preached a fine sermon today", said the kind Friend in the old story, thinking to please. "Yes, the devil told me so before I got out of the gallery", replied the wise minister'.¹⁴⁷ Equally the minister must not make any claim to infallibility on the grounds that his (her) preaching is in response to inner prompting: 'The Inner Man [sic] is in touch with God, but he is not possessed of all His counsel'.¹⁴⁸ And Graham goes on to state, surprisingly in view of all that he has said about the subliminal self and its

¹⁴³ *FQ*, 253.

¹⁴⁴ *FQ*, 252.

¹⁴⁵ See 4.3., above.

¹⁴⁶ *FQ*, 250.

¹⁴⁷ *FQ*, 249. Incidentally, this is evidence that still in the early 20th century Quakers were accustomed to preach 'sermons' of some length, as opposed to ministry lasting the two or three minutes at most normal in British Quaker meetings today. Graham cautioned against excessive length, but he meant not more than fifteen or twenty minutes (*FQ*, 249).

¹⁴⁸ *FQ*, 250.

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receptivity to divine communications,¹⁴⁹ 'I believe that he [the 'Inner Man'] is more prone to error than the outward man who has learned from the rules of experience'.¹⁵⁰ Graham's task, not entirely mastered, was to hold in balance the Quaker ideal, derived from George Fox, who took it from the Bible, of a prophetic ministry received directly from God independently of human instrumentality, and a modern intellectual approach to faith, utilising the full armoury of scientific knowledge and critical tools.

5.9. Other Quaker Views

Graham may have given more sustained thought to the theory and practice of Quaker ministry than any of his contemporaries. It was a major pre-occupation for most of his life. He brought other pre-occupations, such as psychical research and mysticism, into this thinking on the subject, and he used it as subject-matter for his Swarthmore Lecture* as well as for many pages of his *Faith of a Quaker*. He was, however, far from alone among liberalising Quakers in his conviction of the central importance of ministry for the life of the Quaker movement.¹⁵¹ In order to give an idea of how typical he was in his thinking on the ministry, I now turn to some writing on the subject by three other Quakers representative of the liberalising trend: John Wilhelm Rowntree, Edward Grubb and Alfred Neave Brayshaw.

¹⁴⁹ See 3.6., above.

¹⁵⁰ *FQ*, 250.

¹⁵¹ Among these we may include Caroline Stephen (1834-1909), who devoted a chapter of her *Quaker Strongholds* to defending the free ministry and abstention from outward sacraments (Caroline Emelia Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, 3rd ed., London: Edward Hicks, 1891, 84-105).

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5.9.1. John Wilhelm Rowntree (1868-1905)

Rowntree, the 'Happy Warrior', the 'Rider on the White Horse'¹⁵² who came to wake the Quakers from their lethargy, was deeply concerned about the ministry. In an essay, 'The Problem of a Free Ministry', written for the periodical he founded, *Present-Day Papers*,¹⁵³ he addressed the 'short-comings' of the ministry as currently practised,¹⁵⁴ and made suggestions as to how it could be improved.

He begins by addressing two fundamental questions: 1) 'Is the free ministry a vital element in our conception of public worship?' 2) 'Is the Quaker conception of public worship of essential and permanent value?' Predictably, he answers both questions in the affirmative, and in doing so he briefly encapsulates many of the positions that Graham spent so much time and effort in elaborating. 'The freedom of the ministry prevalent in the early days of the Christian Church is still the ideal'. This is the way of progress: 'Friends believe that the restriction of the ministry is at best but a stage to be outgrown, and that it is their office to seek the reinstatement of the higher ideal'.¹⁵⁵ He

¹⁵² Obituary notice in the *Friend*, 17/3/1905, 163-165 (signed 'G.N.'). For Rowntree's glamorous personality and impressive achievements see also Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 139-141, as well as Stephen Allott, *John Wilhelm Rowntree, 1868-1905*, York: Sessions, 1994.

¹⁵³ J.W. Rowntree, 'The Problem of a Free Ministry', first published 1899. Reprinted in John W. Rowntree, *Essays and Addresses*, ed. Joshua Rowntree, London: Headley, 1906, 111-134.

¹⁵⁴ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 111.

¹⁵⁵ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 112.

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sees the danger of 'parasitism' and 'worship by proxy, which a prearranged service of necessity invites'.¹⁵⁶

Having accepted these points he addresses the practical question: how to make actual the ideal of the free ministry in the conditions of the present age: 'Are we in a position to present this ideal, not as a beautiful theory, but as a living fact?' He is in no doubt that the ministry as practised is defective. He analyses some of the causes with a clarity which shows up a certain lack of realism in Graham's handling of the matter. Quakers, he said, must admit the advantages those clergymen have who are set aside for the work of ministry: access to scholarship, careful training, freedom from other work.¹⁵⁷ He grants, as Graham does not, the improvement that has recently taken place in the ministry of church and chapel.¹⁵⁸ If Quakers are indeed to be a 'priesthood of all believers' they must recognise the extent of the challenge posed by the ideal. Self-sacrifice is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a successful ministry.¹⁵⁹ Rowntree acknowledges that 'the Quaker minister often serves his meeting at considerable self-sacrifice, but his 'education, his religious training, and the arrangement of his time are rarely controlled by any sense of the

¹⁵⁶ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 112. It is probable that Rowntree read Graham's essays on the ministry, but even if he did not he will have been well acquainted with the questions and concerns that were being aired not only in official meetings and conferences but also, no doubt, in meetings for worship and in private conversations.

¹⁵⁷ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 118. Graham acknowledges these advantages in *FQ*, 229, even admitting that 'People being as they are, perhaps the separation of men for the pastoral work may be the best course for a public in England and America, so little self-reliant, so careless and selfish as it is ... All that we Friends say is that we know a better way'. (*FQ*, 228).

¹⁵⁸ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 121.

¹⁵⁹ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 118.

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special qualification which the ministry demands'.¹⁶⁰ He goes on to combat 'that dread of human arrangements'¹⁶¹ characteristic of Quakers, along with 'a negative view of what constitutes a call to the ministry'¹⁶² and 'the mistaken view which practically limits the Quaker ministry to the prophetic type'.¹⁶³ Rowntree thus goes further than Graham, who grants that thoughts which have arisen during the week may provide the subject for ministry in meeting, but expects that a 'fire' should be 'kindled' before utterance,¹⁶⁴ and is reluctant to admit the validity, except on special occasions, of ministry in meeting for worship of a more 'conversational' or 'didactic' kind.¹⁶⁵ Graham was inclined to deplore the more informal type of ministry that had begun to spread by the time of his Swarthmore Lecture* in 1925.¹⁶⁶

Rowntree goes on to lay out some practical suggestions for nurturing a better standard of ministry. He had already worked with George Cadbury to establish the Summer School movement out of which Woodbrooke would emerge.¹⁶⁷ In this essay he suggests three areas where Quakers might receive the religious education they so badly need. Firstly, Quaker schools should do more to teach their students the history and essential principles of their society; secondly, there should be more provision for the further

¹⁶⁰ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 120.

¹⁶¹ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 122, recalling a mention on p.114.

¹⁶² 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 122.

¹⁶³ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 123.

¹⁶⁴ *FQ*, 246.

¹⁶⁵ *FQ*, 251.

¹⁶⁶ See *QM*, 73-4.

¹⁶⁷ See Kennedy, *BQ*, 171-177.

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education of young Quakers once they leave school; and thirdly, all adult Quakers should have the opportunity for systematic learning:

A scheme of lectures on Quaker History ... should be worked out, not simply with a view of presenting biographical sketches, and interesting historical data, but in order to bring out ... 'the practical, spiritual, and non-sacerdotal aspects of Divine truth', in relation to individual and national life. The isolated addresses on Friends' principles, which are at present our only substitute for more systematic work in this field, are hardly satisfactory, and are certainly insufficient.¹⁶⁸

This was the uncompromising vision that led to the founding of the Woodbrooke College in 1903, through the active dedication of Rowntree himself along with others inspired by his vision and example, like George Cadbury, who made available the house in Birmingham where it still operates.¹⁶⁹ Woodbrooke developed a warm relationship with Hicksite Friends, and some of them went there to study on scholarships.¹⁷⁰

Compared with Graham, Rowntree is refreshingly definite and hard-headed. He uses words like 'haphazard', 'haziness' or 'vagueness' for attitudes which he considers unhelpful.¹⁷¹ Friends must learn to think more clearly, and they must establish practical means to support their cherished free ministry. Not for Rowntree ruminations on the subliminal soul.

¹⁶⁸ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 130.

¹⁶⁹ See Arnold S. Rowntree, *Woodbrooke: its History and Aims*, London: R. Davis, Woodbrooke Extension Committee, 1923; Robert Davis, *Woodbrooke, 1903-1953: a Brief History of a Quaker Experiment in Religious Education*, London: Bannisdale, 1953.

¹⁷⁰ In Record Group 4, 025: Friends General Conference: Series 4, Folder headed 'Friends General Conference. General Conf. of Young Friends Associations. Misc. 1906' [for 1901], in Swarthmore College Library.

¹⁷¹ 'Problem of a Free Ministry', 121, 123, 130.

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5.9.2. Edward Grubb (1854-1939)

Grubb wrote quite as passionately as Rowntree about the need for a better standard of ministry in his address to Young Friends at York, 'Meetings for Worship and the Duty of Younger Friends' of 1894;¹⁷² but, although there is some common ground, his analysis of the problem and his recommendations are not the same as either Rowntree's or Graham's. He too stresses the 'priesthood of all believers': 'we have no laymen among us'; each of us has 'the fullest right of access into the very presence of the Holiest Himself'.¹⁷³ But this extraordinary privilege brings with it extraordinary demands. Quoting Gladstone on non-ritualistic devotion, he describes 'this worship, this concentration and direction of all our faculties towards an unseen object, as the very hardest task to which the human soul is put'.¹⁷⁴ Because it is so difficult, and because of the emotion which it generates, a Quaker meeting where this concentration genuinely takes place 'will very rarely be held in continuous silence'.¹⁷⁵ The power and the energy which Grubb supposes to have characterised meetings in the days of George Fox will well up in speech and 'convince'* many, as of old. Alas! In a typical meeting nowadays 'the younger generation become fidgety, while the attention of the older is concentrated on the problem how to keep awake'.¹⁷⁶ Vocal ministry when it

¹⁷² See Edward Grubb, 'Meetings for Worship and the Duty of Younger Friends', *BF*, February, 1894, 31-33; March, 1894, 65-66. See also Grubb, 'On the Ministry in our Meetings', *FQE*, 1888, 366-9, where also Grubb deplores the poverty of ministry.

¹⁷³ 'Meetings for Worship', 31.

¹⁷⁴ 'Meetings for Worship', 32.

¹⁷⁵ 'Meetings for Worship', 32.

¹⁷⁶ 'Meetings for Worship', 33.

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comes 'is often so thin and poor that we would much rather have silence; – or in perhaps rarer cases – the unity of the congregation is broken and its fruitful life laid desolate by storms of theologic controversy'.¹⁷⁷

For Grubb as for Graham and Rowntree the remedy lay in better preparation; but for him this did not mean so much intellectual preparation as a deepening of spiritual life for all who attend meeting, not just those who speak.¹⁷⁸ This was more important than correct belief. If Friends do not 'hold with clear conviction the whole of the faith that is supposed to be "orthodox" ', some Friends may need just what they have to give.¹⁷⁹ All are exhorted to avoid the 'spirit of earthiness' so prevalent in today's world, and warned of the dangers of over-absorption in business or even in philanthropic work which means they 'come to meeting drained of physical and spiritual energy'.¹⁸⁰ Friends are deluded if they think that 'inspiration' will come regardless of any effort on their part. 'We come bustling into meeting with our minds full of other things, and then expect God to do for us what we have been too negligent to do for ourselves'.¹⁸¹ Some Friends at least should 'assign the meeting for worship the first place in their minds throughout the week',¹⁸² and these in particular must be sure to set aside some time each day for quiet contemplation.¹⁸³ Grubb even declares that 'if Quaker methods cannot supply

¹⁷⁷ 'Meetings for Worship', 33.

¹⁷⁸ 'Meetings for Worship', 66.

¹⁷⁹ 'Meetings for Worship', 66.

¹⁸⁰ 'Meetings for Worship', 65.

¹⁸¹ 'Meetings for Worship', 65.

¹⁸² 'Meetings for Worship', 66.

¹⁸³ 'Meetings for Worship', 66.

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the need, it would be better to abandon them and revert to a professional ministry with all its evils and dangers'.¹⁸⁴ For Grubb what matters is not the survival of the Society of Friends and its 'peculiarities'* so much as spiritual renewal, a new openness to the power of God such as the first Friends enjoyed.¹⁸⁵

5.9.3. Alfred Neave Brayshaw (1861-1940)

My third witness is more concerned in the paper I analyse with quantity than quality of ministry – not absolute quantity, that is, but with the proportion of Friends who will sometimes speak in meeting. Brayshaw's paper on 'Quaker Ministry'¹⁸⁶ was first delivered at a meeting of Elders and other Friends at Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting* in 1918, by which date the fear that British Friends would succumb to the temptations of a paid pastorate and organised services was no longer pressing. Brayshaw, however, inveighed quite as vehemently as Rowntree or Grubb against the perceived inadequacy of spontaneous ministry as practised in his time. For him it was not necessarily a matter of a low standard of spiritual life or intellectual culture among Friends but rather of two 'misconceptions': firstly, a conviction that silence was better than words (both were equally necessary in Brayshaw's view); secondly, a mistaken view of the nature of a 'call' to vocal ministry: the belief that 'a call drops into the mind as a stone drops into a pool, it *comes*, the pool having no

¹⁸⁴ 'Meetings for Worship', 66.

¹⁸⁵ See also E. Grubb, 'The Ministry and Bible Reading', *BF*, 1898, 255-256.

¹⁸⁶ A.N. Brayshaw, 'Quaker Ministry', in *A. Neave Brayshaw: Memoir and Selected Writings*, London: Woodbrooke Extension Committee of the Society of Friends, 1941, 82-94.

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power either to prevent or induce its coming'.¹⁸⁷ Brayshaw agrees with Graham, Grubb and Rowntree that the mind must be prepared for a call, but for him the preparation consists chiefly in being awake to the needs of the meeting and in being ready to respond to that need. He gives the example of an actual meeting at which he was present where 'powerful' ministry 'was followed by a communication which was helpful and that in its turn by one that was not':

To those who have understanding as to what a meeting may be, it was as clear as noonday that the helpful word of prayer was needed drawing us together that we may go forth as men and women who had met with God. No such word came and on a level lower than that on which it had begun the meeting broke up.¹⁸⁸

Such things would not happen, Brayshaw implies, if every Quaker were open to the possibility that he or she might sometimes be called to minister. A situation where a majority of Quakers think they will never be called is 'unnatural' and brings 'starvation of the soul'.¹⁸⁹ No amount of 'good works' can make up for the lack of verbal ministry.¹⁹⁰ The trouble is that ministry is left to the few, and in particular that younger Friends are discouraged from ministering and often, therefore, from attending meeting.¹⁹¹

Brayshaw says nothing of the 'prophetic' aspect of Quaker ministry: his emphasis is all on helpfulness, on what tends to build up the spiritual life of the

¹⁸⁷ 'Quaker Ministry', 83.

¹⁸⁸ 'Quaker Ministry', 86.

¹⁸⁹ 'Quaker Ministry', 87.

¹⁹⁰ 'Quaker Ministry', 92.

¹⁹¹ 'Quaker Ministry', 92, 93.

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meeting. The 'call' to minister, he implies, may come as much from a sense of what needed to be said to draw a meeting into spiritual unity as from some mysterious other world or from Graham's 'subliminal self'. He draws an analogy between a meeting and a family: just as there is a need in the latter for loving words to supplement deeds of kindness so it is in a meeting. Brayshaw's ideal for a meeting is a domesticated one; not lacking in a spiritual dimension, but lacking in Rudolf Otto's sense of a 'mysterium tremendum',¹⁹² or even Graham's sense of the need for 'anointing' to validate ministry.¹⁹³

What these three Quakers have in common with one another and with Graham is more important than their differences. All accept, implicitly or explicitly, with the opponents of the HMC and of the American 'pastoral system', that the free ministry is a vital constituent of true Quakerism. Not just any old free ministry. All have an acute sense that ministry must be grounded in Christian devotion, springing from and leading to a vitality that is too often lacking. Indeed Edward Grubb, in stressing the 'tremendous responsibility which our system of a free ministry involves', states that the very survival of the Society is dependent on its support for the ministry:

The very existence of the Society is, we believe, bound up with the question whether we are going to recognise our collective responsibilities for providing at least the human conditions and

¹⁹² Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: an Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*, translated by John W. Harvey; 2nd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950. Chapter 4, 'Mysterium Tremendum'.

¹⁹³ See *QM*, 72, where Graham pleads for a realisation among ministers 'that the Word is given them, & is not of their own intellectual creation; that Power is dependent on the anointing'.

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material on which the Divine Spirit may so work as to bring forth an enlightened, powerful, and effective ministry.¹⁹⁴

All insisted, with varying emphases, that some preparation must be made to make way for divine inspiration. A balance has to be struck between reliance on the divine 'afflatus' and human endeavour.

It was a common theme among Friends. Edward Worsdell gave it clear expression:

The great risk is lest the prophet give place to the scribe, lest the preacher lose immediate touch with God and man, lest the head overpower the heart, hearsay take the place of experience, and prepared addresses be delivered without a clear sense of duty at the time.

All this is true, but it is not the whole truth. The further truth is that *our need of a teaching ministry is greater than its perils.*¹⁹⁵

Worsdell agreed with Grubb that meetings were languishing, possibly facing extinction. He goes so far as to suggest that morning meetings of the traditional kind should incorporate some features of the evening mission meetings, with their Bible readings and prepared addresses, suggesting 'that addresses which bear the marks of premeditation, should if given under a feeling of duty, be as welcome in our morning meetings as more extempore utterances'.¹⁹⁶ A few years later Catharine Albright gave the other side of the argument:

Still to-day it is for us constantly to decide the same question. Are *our* apostles to be men, merely, who have been chosen by others, who hold the tradition of their fathers and maintain the

¹⁹⁴ Edward Grubb, 'The Ministry and Bible Reading', *BF*, Oct. 1898, 155-6, 256.

¹⁹⁵ Edward Worsdell, 'Preparation and the Ministry', *BF*, March, 1897, 62-4, 63 (Worsdell's emphasis).

¹⁹⁶ Worsdell, 'Preparation', 64.

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doctrines handed down to them, or are they to be men who are themselves “taught of God”, and who prove their spiritual claims by the practical power of their message?¹⁹⁷

This, however, was not to deny that the human agent, with its powers and limitations, was active in the ministry. Or, as Graham said: 'Prophetic ministry ... differs from speaking with tongues, or the addresses of inspirational mediums, by being fed & guided by the critical brain'.¹⁹⁸

5.10. Graham's Practice in the Ministry

If it were not for Graham's protestations that all thought of self, any hint of vanity, must be banished from the Quaker ministry it would be tempting to suppose that he was proud of the fluency and eloquence of his utterances. Graham's ministry was an aspect of his career to which his obituarists drew particular attention. Friends in Cambridge, where Graham spent his last years, praised him in terms that he would have particularly appreciated: 'His ministry has helped many seeking souls to a closer contact with the Divine Spirit within them'.¹⁹⁹ Interestingly, they comment on his ability to keep silent as well as to speak: 'His austerity in the use of words, while he was ever ready to use them at the Divine call, was a characteristic of his ministry'.²⁰⁰ His daughter Rachel (by no means uniformly uncritical) gives a vivid appreciation of his manner of ministry: 'My father rose and paused, then with quiet reasoning, with clear and well-placed illustrations he gave a sermon. It

¹⁹⁷ Maria Catharine Albright, 'The Legitimacy of Paul's Apostleship', *BF*, January, 1902, 6-7, 7.

¹⁹⁸ *QM*, 84.

¹⁹⁹ John William Graham: Testimony of Cambridge, Huntingdon and Lynn Monthly Meeting', in London Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, 1933, *Reports and Documents*, 196-198.

²⁰⁰ 'Testimony', 198.

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was short for those days and packed with matter to think about'.²⁰¹ She adds that when Graham thought his ministry was good enough he would write it up for *The Friend*, 'where it often appeared as a leader'.²⁰² If this begs the question of spontaneity, a hint of the same is found in the recollections of Anna Bidder, who as a child at the Cambridge Meeting noted that Graham could be relied on to rise at the same point in the meeting each week and speak for fifteen or twenty minutes.²⁰³ For some at least this regularity did not impair the effect of the ministry. William Cadbury, visiting the meeting on November 20th, 1932, shortly after Graham's death, was struck by 'the sense in the Meeting that J.W. Graham was still ministering with power'.²⁰⁴

The Cambridge 'Testimony' praises Graham's 'fearless courage in advocating what was unpopular'.²⁰⁵ It was probably this 'courage' which led to his failure to be 'recorded'* as a minister. Edward Vipont Brown, Graham's Manchester friend, tells how a revolt against the practice of 'recording' during the time when Theodore Neild was Principal of Dalton Hall²⁰⁶ was triggered by the omission of Graham's name from a list of Friends to be recorded.²⁰⁷ His ministry at Mount Street Meeting in Manchester could give offence.²⁰⁸ I have already mentioned the occasion in 1890 when his ministry was interrupted in

²⁰¹ Rachel Graham Sturge, *The Shining Way*, Gloucester: Fellowship Press, 1969, 49.

²⁰² *Shining Way*, 49.

²⁰³ Private communication.

²⁰⁴ Note in JWGP, Box 2.

²⁰⁵ 'Testimony', 198.

²⁰⁶ I.e., 1886-1897, when Graham was Tutor at the Hall.

²⁰⁷ E. Vipont Brown, 'The Renaissance of Quakerism', *FQE*, 1951, 201-206, 205. On the history and rationale of the practice of recording ministers see W.C. Braithwaite, 'The Recording of Ministers', *FQE*, 1921, 297-310.

²⁰⁸ See Graham, 'Spokesman', 5.22.

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mid-flow.²⁰⁹ Graham sat down after the interruption, but rose again to conclude the meeting with a plea 'for prevalence in spite of all of Christ's Spirit of Love'. Although the incident has 'bothered' him, he claims, 'I do not feel anything but stronger as a Minister',²¹⁰ thus exemplifying the 'courage' the Cambridge testimony ascribed to him. It is likely that during his lifetime his impact was made as much through his spoken ministry in meetings as through his writings and other activities.

Graham cared enough about his ministry to keep a diary recording it.²¹¹ We can see here how he used it to adumbrate ideas later developed in his books, such as the 'bridges' by which God and nature may be brought together in our thinking, later strikingly developed in *The Divinity in Man*.²¹² Other entries record his speaking about Dean Inge, or the Etna eruption, and the lamentable superstitious practices resorted to in order to stop the lava flow.²¹³

We can deduce that his ministry was wide-ranging and intellectually stimulating as well as occasionally provocative. Any of his current enthusiasms might find expression in it. It is hard to see evidence of its having come straight from God, or from the subliminal region. Indeed, a reason he gives for beginning his ministry diary again in 1923 after a lapse of six years is that he might forget what he has said and repeat himself in the

²⁰⁹ See 2.9., above.

²¹⁰ Letter from Graham to his parents, 23 October, 1890. JWGP, Box 17.

²¹¹ 'Diary of Ministry', Vol. 2, JWGP, Box 15. Graham notes that he has spoken forty times in three months.

²¹² Entries for June 10, July 15, 1923. JWGP, Box 15. See 6.6., below.

²¹³ Entries for April 9, June 21, 1923. JWGP, Box 15.

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same meeting. That would seem to imply some conscious input. Graham's ministry was clearly of a different genre from that of John Cornell. Cornell received the divine intimation that he would be called to the ministry when he was just nineteen,²¹⁴ but the actual call did not come for another eleven years. It came to him in a meeting for worship*, in a verbatim message of admonition to 'some condition' that he sensed was present: a message that he remembered in its entirety when he came to write of it in his autobiography of 1906.²¹⁵ The ministry of this elderly Hicksite, which Graham may very probably have heard,²¹⁶ was different from his.

5.11. Conclusion

What is most striking about the essays by Grubb, J.W. Rowntree and Neave Brayshaw analysed above is their view of the extreme urgency of problems besetting the free ministry in their time. For them the future, even the survival of the Society of Friends seemed to depend on improving its quality and on persuading more Quakers to take an active part in it. Graham too was far from complacent. In 1913 he wrote to his son, 'I am more and more anxious about the lack of ministry almost every where'.²¹⁷ About the quality of the ministry he took the positive line of detailed recommendations as to how it could be practised in a way that was both inspired, 'prophetic', and informed.

²¹⁴ John J. Cornell, 'My Experience in the Ministry', *Friends' Intelligencer*, 3 January, 1903, 1.

²¹⁵ Cornell, 'My Experience', 2; *Autobiography of John J. Cornell: Containing an Account of his Religious Experiences and Travels in the Ministry*, Baltimore: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1906, 39.

²¹⁶ Cornell was present at the 1896 Swarthmore Conference attended by Graham. See 4.3., above.

²¹⁷ Letter to Richard Graham, 3 March, 1913, JWGP, Box 16.

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He took pains to defend the practice as against that prevalent in the churches, to trace its origins, not only among the early Friends but also in the early Christian church and to give it a psychological, even 'scientific' justification. The evidence suggests that in his practice he relied a good deal on thought and study: the evidence of inspiration is not so clear, though we need not doubt his claim that he would not speak until his thought was 'transfigured'.²¹⁸

A link between progress and the free ministry is implied in Graham's insistence that ministers should take note of modern intellectual advances, especially in the study of the Bible, and in his satisfaction in a ministry that was not tied to the need for popularity in the way that the professional ministry was tied, and was therefore able to explore new thinking without fear or favour.²¹⁹ The link is also implied in his early concern to establish a scientific basis for the Quaker understanding of ministry, as shown above.²²⁰ He would certainly have agreed with Richard Thomas in connecting the free ministry with progress.²²¹ An unsigned article in the *British Friend* on 'The Ministry'²²² which may very well be by him suggests ways in which the Quaker ministry is progressive as evangelical preaching, with its over-riding aim of achieving

²¹⁸ *FQ*, 245.

²¹⁹ In *QM* he asks rhetorically, 'How can [a professional minister] avoid being sensitive to popularity, and perhaps failing, at critical times like 1914, to preach Christian truth which no one wants to hear?' (*QM*, 15). That meant that Quaker ministers were freer than the professionals to air ideas whose time had not yet come: thus Graham spoke at Mount Street Meeting on the ideas of Ernest F. Champness in his new book on *The Significance of Life*, 'on the discovery of Divine in experience – its relation to cold unmoralized Nature' ('Diary of Ministry vol. 2', 10 June, 1923, JWGP, Box 15).

²²⁰ 5.8., above.

²²¹ See 5.5., above.

²²² 'The Ministry', *BF*, May 1896, 102-104. The author uses terminology suggesting Graham's authorship: the branding of evangelical preaching as 'sensational', the biological imagery based on the biblical analogy of the seed, the description of God as 'the great Anointer'.

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conversions, is not. God is described as 'the Divine Evolver', and Quaker methods are preferred as being more in tune with God's methods and time-scale. Yes, preachers should seek conversions, but in God's time: 'His creative energy is ceaselessly bringing forth fuller and completer developments under the beneficial reign of unbroken law to the far-off perfection of His unseen purpose'.²²³ 'The service of ministry is an important part of the co-operative work of grace'.²²⁴ The minister works for progress under the direction of God.

Graham's ideas on the Quaker ministry were developed in tandem with his attempts to bring the Society of Friends up to date in relation to modern thought. He wanted to fashion a model of ministry adapted to the needs of the present and capable of sustaining the life of the Society of Friends into the future. The ministry typical of the quietists was not adequate, any more than that of the Moodys and Spurgeons of his day.²²⁵ Graham had a certain nostalgic fondness for an old-fashioned type of ministry as he encountered it among 'Conservative' Friends in Canada and the United States. Describing a funeral meeting in Canada at which Quakers of different branches were present, he comments on the ministry of the Conservative Eliza Varney:

The contrast between the light wordiness of the pastor bringing in the name of Jesus every other sentence, & the sonorous and weighty intonation of Eliza Varney was very marked and typical ... [She spoke] in the manner one remembers in one's youth; the well sounding texts of the Old Testament given forth in a

²²³ 'The Ministry', 103.

²²⁴ 'The Ministry', 103.

²²⁵ See 2.2., above.

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certain choric rhythm – without any special message or connection in subject most of the time. Still, in a way the spirit of earnestness & the intensity of the soul's action does one good, though not very plainly how [sic].²²⁶

Still, this style of ministry would not do for modern Quakers or those they sought to attract. The trained intellect had its essential if subordinate part to play.²²⁷ What really mattered, however, was that ministry should arise from 'that deeper region which is the place of the communion of souls, the gateway of prayer & the goal of meditation'.²²⁸ This insistence on Graham's part needs to be placed alongside the rather different emphases of his contemporaries, Grubb, Rowntree and Brayshaw. Each in his way played his part in ensuring the survival of the free ministry for at least a few generations to come.

²²⁶ 'Narrative of Service in America 1904', 9 August, p.1., JWGP, Box 1. See also *BF*, Oct, 1904, 289-291,

²²⁷ See 4.6., above.

²²⁸ *QM*, 11.

CHAPTER 6: GRAHAM'S GOD

6.1. Introduction

The subject of this chapter is Graham's theology: what did God mean for the Apostle of Progress? It focuses chiefly on *The Faith of a Quaker* (1920) and *The Divinity in Man* (1927), especially the opening chapters of each. It shows how his ideas about evolution and progress informed what he thought and taught about God and how we relate to him. Although his understanding of the nature of man was partly derived from Darwinism and rival theories of evolution extant in his time, it included additionally a conviction that the evolved human being was by nature akin to, indeed 'part of' God. I consider how radical his vision is and how far he departs from traditional theism in the direction of a kind of devout humanism. In answering this last question, I consider criticisms of his religious thought, especially those of Edward Grubb and H.G. Wood,¹ along with Graham's response to the former.²

The first section analyses Graham's claim to be presenting a religion of experience. Then comes the consideration of how far Graham could legitimately claim that he was presenting a Quaker faith, stemming from the views of the founding fathers. There follows comment on a comparison made by some contemporaries of Graham's between his concept of God and that of the iconoclast H.G. Wells. Both Grubb and Wood make this comparison,

¹ Edward Grubb, 'The Foundations of Quakerism: a Modern View', *FQE*, 1931, 141-151; H.G. Wood, 'John William Graham as a Religious Thinker', *FQE*, 67 (1933), 102-112. For Wood see Richenda Scott, *Herbert G. Wood: a Memoir of his Life and Thought*, London: Friends Home Service Committee, 1967.

² John W. Graham, 'Foundations of Quakerism. A Reply', *FQE*, 65, 231-236.

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although, as Grubb notes, Graham denies any influence, since *The Faith of a Quaker* was finished years before Wells' book appeared.³ The next section shows how Graham's understanding of evolution as progress⁴ both challenged and built up his faith. Three short sections deal with his use of some scientific theory of the time, his belief in a spirit world and his rejection of traditional doctrines of atonement.

A guiding thread is provided in Maurice Creasey's distinction between a 'Christological' (or theological) and an 'anthropological' approach to religion.⁵ Early Quakers based their understanding of the presence and activity of Christ in the human soul on their prior understanding of Christ as pre-existent Word of God:⁶ they began with Christ: 'In the beginning was the Word', and the Word was Christ. Fox and Graham both believed they were expounding a religion of experience, but different prior conceptions informed that experience.⁷ Graham, as a man of his time, began with a view of what it is to be human, and worked out from there to a view of what God is.

Grace Jantzen, writing of how recent concepts of 'mysticism' have departed from the belief and practice of noted mystics of the remoter past, like Julian of Norwich and St John of the Cross, sees an 'anthropological'

³ Preface to *FQ*, ix. Cf. Grubb's review of *DM* in *Friend*, 25 March, 1927, 252-3: 'It is not only iconoclasts who have been driven to distinguish between the God of our religious experience ... and the Veiled Being who guides the stars in their courses' (252). This review is rather kinder to Graham than the later essay.

⁴ See 1.2., above.

⁵ Maurice Creasey, 'The Quaker Interpretation of the Significance of Christ', *QRT*, 1, 1959, 1-10, 4.

⁶ Creasey, 'Significance of Christ', 7.

⁷ See comments on Rufus Jones, 4.5., above.

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approach to religion as stemming from eighteenth-century 'Enlightenment' thinking.⁸ She traces the development through Schleiermacher,⁹ who assumed that all religion was based on 'immediate consciousness of the Deity'.¹⁰ Graham's version of primary experience was more earthed than this: it is the common experience of evolved human life that forms the basis of his theology.

From this common experience arises the conviction that God and humanity are one, in the same way that a tree and its leaves form an organic unity, or as the cells make up a human body.¹¹ We are all, he insists, parts of God, and our understanding of what God is must begin here, with a God who acts within the human psyche as a spur and guide to right feeling and conduct, not a distant law-giver. He has no use for 'natural theology', in the sense of deducing and admiring the nature of God as revealed in his works.¹²

⁸ Grace M. Jantzen, 'Could There Be a Mystical Core of Religion?' *Religious Studies*, 26 (1990), 59-71.

⁹ Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834), taught that religion is 'neither thought nor action, but intuition and feeling', and is to be found through reflection on our own 'innermost depths' (*RPP*).

¹⁰ 'Mystical Core', 61.

¹¹ See *FQ*, 5ff.; *DM*, 48-51. Both images appear repeatedly in both the big books.

¹² As seen in the 'Bridgewater Treatises', eight volumes produced between 1833 and 1840, under the terms of the eighth Earl of Bridgewater's will, upon various aspects of the 'power, wisdom and goodness of God, as manifested in the creation' (*ODCC*). See Robert M. Young, 'The Impact of Darwinism on Conventional Thought', in *The Victorian Crisis of Faith*, ed. Anthony Symondson, London: SPCK, 1970, 13-35. Young says the Treatises are the end-point of traditional natural theology. For a differing view, see Jonathan R. Topham, 'Biology in the Service of Natural Theology: Paley, Darwin and the Bridgewater Treatises', in *Biology and Ideology from Descartes to Dawkins*, ed. Denis R. Alexander and Ronald L. Numbers, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2010, 88-113.

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He depicts the natural world in the same way as Darwin and Huxley,¹³ as governed by blind forces reckless of suffering or any other consequences. Yet he believed that 'Monism is almost a necessity of ultimate thought'.¹⁴ The 'easy' way of polytheism is not available to civilised Englishmen: it was not possible to accept a world where different deities fight it out as to which influence, beneficent or malign, shall prevail on earth. (Graham claims to have seen statues in India to the goddess of small-pox.)¹⁵ Graham confessed that he did not know how to reconcile belief in a single benevolent all-powerful God with the existence of pain and suffering, but he did delineate 'bridges' which might be used to cross the gap. These are discussed in 6.6 below.

6.2. A Religion of Experience

Renaissance Quakers liked to claim that the faith of the Early Friends was based on experience, not dogma. In the *Quaker Ministry* Graham quoted Rufus Jones as saying that Fox's movement was 'an attempt to produce a type of Christianity springing entirely out of the soul's experience, resting upon no authority external to the human spirit'.¹⁶ Like his peers, Graham sought to renew this ideal. Accordingly, in *The Divinity in Man* he conducts a thought experiment, likening the accumulations of doctrines, rituals and traditions that have accompanied the development of Christianity to ivy mantling a building:

¹³ T.H. Huxley, "Evolution and Ethics" [1893], with *New Essays on its Victorian and Sociobiological Context*, [by] James Paradis, George C. Williams, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989. See 1.3.1., above.

¹⁴ *DM*, 69.

¹⁵ 'Foundations of Quakerism: a Reply', 232.

¹⁶ *QM*, 56.

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if all, 'Church, Bible and Tradition' were stripped away, 'terrible as those strippings would be', the foundations of faith would remain.¹⁷ These foundations are not 'religious experiences', in the sense of visitations apparently from outside: they are more like instincts which Graham supposes to be common to all human beings. This helps to explain why Graham was not discouraged from asserting the 'mystical' nature of Quakerism by his own lack of 'extraordinary' spiritual visitations.¹⁸ The experiences figure in both the *Faith of a Quaker (FQ)* and the *Divinity in Man (DM)*: they are specified as 'Consecration, Love and Prayer'.

Consecration is explained in *DM* by way of asserting 'the complete failure of all attempts to live a self-centred life'. Everyone experiences the call to sacrifice personal advantage for the good of some larger whole. This for Graham is evidence that we are 'part of some great Soul of the Whole',¹⁹ which in *FQ* is explicitly identified with God.²⁰ We rise from self-dedication to family, church or nation to consecration to the great soul, or God himself.²¹ This highest consecration is exemplified by the single-mindedness of a man like Stephen Grellet,²² whose courage and ability to appeal to the hearts of their hearers arose from selfless dedication to the highest good. It is as

¹⁷ *DM*, 35.

¹⁸ See 4.4., above.

¹⁹ *DM*, 36.

²⁰ *FQ*, 4.

²¹ *FQ*, 4.

²² Stephen Grellet (Etienne de Grellet de Mabillet, 1773-1855, French Catholic Royalist who became a Quaker in America in 1796. He travelled widely in the ministry* and opposed Elias Hicks. See Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost, *The Quakers*, Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 1988.

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natural as self-denial for the sake of family: 'Something which gives us audacity, courage and charm must be according to our nature'.²³

Love, Graham explains, is love as described by St Paul in 1 Corinthians, 13, which he glosses as 'taking the loved one within the barriers of our own personality'.²⁴ For Graham it is an entirely human quality, not derived from religion, as he makes clear by quoting Matthew 25, where human beings are divided as sheep from goats according to their behaviour to one another; but since God is Love it is 'the ordained way of making the Whole'.²⁵ It seems odd that human behaviour is seen as 'making' the Whole, but the phrase is consonant with Graham's thought in other places.²⁶

Prayer has nothing in common with petitioning an external deity. It is no use asking for daily bread: Graham calls on St Jerome's authority to claim that the bread that figures in the 'Lord's Prayer' must be spiritual. Prayer is spiritual exercise, useful whether or not there is some personal being to respond. 'We lay our questions, puzzles, needs, before Whatever is there. Before God? Yes. Before some Inward Power? Yes. And if, as I believe, they are the same, or working together, we need not ask any more about it'. It was not necessary for Graham to identify the 'Inward Power' with the God of Christian tradition: what mattered was the universality, the naturalness, of the

²³ *DM*, 36.

²⁴ *FQ*, 4. This is further explained in *DM*, 39.

²⁵ *FQ*, 4.

²⁶ See 6.5., below.

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experience. It was an approach to God by way of the human, the 'anthropological' way.

6.3. Quaker Faith or Faith of a Quaker?

There is an ambiguity, intentional or not, in the title 'The Faith of a Quaker'. Does it mean 'the Quaker faith' or 'the faith of an individual who happens to be a Quaker'? Allen Thomas,²⁷ one of the most severe of Graham's critics, claimed 'he has set forth as an exposition of the Quaker faith that which the vast majority of the Friends in England as well as in America, would unhesitatingly disown, and thus he gives a wrong impression of the teachings of the body'.²⁸ By contrast another American Quaker, J. Passmore Elkinton, said Graham had done 'much to support those of us who believe that the Society has a greater mission as exponents of Spiritual Truth than as shepherds of the multitude'.²⁹ Alfred Barratt Brown, who had been a prominent activist with Graham in the No Conscription Fellowship in the War,³⁰ signalled his approval when he wrote that the book is 'a full and clear statement, not only of the author's own religious outlook but of the Quaker

²⁷ Allen C. Thomas, brother of Richard H. Thomas, the well-respected Baltimore Quaker, and author with him of *A History of the Society of Friends in America*, New York: Christian Literature Co., 1893-1897. There was no love lost between Graham and Allen Thomas. See Graham's diary of his visit to America, 28 June, 1896, JWGP, Box 5, for his judgment on Thomas's 'Old-fogeyish' Bible class in Providence, Rhode Island (JWGP, Box 5S). See also copy of article in *American Friend*, 1906, JWGP, Box 4, no. 6.

²⁸ In the *New York Evening Post*, JWGP, Box 19.

²⁹ *The Friend* (American), 14 April, 1921, 501.

³⁰ For Barratt Brown see several mentions in Graham's *Conscription and Conscience: a History 1916-1919*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1922, e.g., p.288. See also many references in Thomas C. Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience: a History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1918*, Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1981; Jo Vellacott, *Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1980.

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tradition and atmosphere in which he has developed it'.³¹ Graham did not believe he was speaking for all Quakers: sometimes he points out that he is giving his own views, as when he states a belief in 'guardian angels', 'some accessible ministries unseen'.³² Nevertheless, he believed he was building on foundations laid by Fox and the Early Quakers. Later, in his Swarthmore Lecture*, he wrote of how Friends of his generation, shaken by challenges to faith, remained true to their religion because they 'found with a shock of joy that they were on the same foundation as George Fox and his Friends'.³³ He was sure that early Friends were escaping from narrow church dogmatism into a new freedom,³⁴ and that therefore 'though they were unaware of it, the Early Friends were Modernists all the time, but Modernism was not their message nor their concern'.³⁵ That is, they would not hesitate to jettison points of doctrine if they found a conflict with their fundamental, experience-based convictions, but would otherwise accept what the churches taught.³⁶ It followed that modern Quakers could believe they were building on the foundations laid by the First Friends without believing everything that they believed, if a conflict with experience, or with experimentally-based science,

³¹ Review of *FQ*, *Friend*, 9 July, 1920, 419.

³² *FQ*, 83. See also *DM*, 251, where Graham claims that 'a hierarchy of spiritual helpers of men is almost a necessity of reasonable thought, at any rate highly probable'.

³³ John William Graham, *The Quaker Ministry (QM)* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1925), London: Swarthmore Press, 1925, 71.

³⁴ Cf. 2.1., above.

³⁵ 'George Fox', in *New Appreciations of George Fox: a Tercentenary Collection of Studies*, London: Swarthmore Press, 1925, 26-46, p.44. Cf. Edward Grubb, *What is Quakerism? An Exposition of the Leading Principles and Practices of the Society of Friends, as based on the Experience of 'The Inward Light'*, London: Headley, 1917, 44.

³⁶ See *FQ*, 407-8; *DM*, 225. Cf. discussion of Martin Davie's book, Conclusion, [Analysis of Key Texts.](#), below.

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existed for later generations. 'We live in a different Kosmos', he explained.³⁷ Yet he assumes that the core religious experience is the same: 'Under all diversities of thought and expression, the same truths, the same experience, the same Gospel remains'.³⁸ It remains because it is a universal gospel, based on universal human experience, but it is also a Quaker gospel because the Quakers had the grace to understand that experience was the necessary and sufficient foundation.

Graham surely did not appreciate the full extent of the differences between his time and that of Fox. If Jantzen is right, it is the difference between a God-centred and a man-centred world, between theology and anthropology. In Graham's view any change has been progressive: 'Our connotation of "God" and "Man" has grown',³⁹ and Quakerism would have to be enlarged accordingly. Graham sees no problem: a Quakerism brought up to date can still provide a spiritual home in the midst of a materialistic age. A few non-Quaker contemporaries, however, were beginning to think of religion as a purely human phenomenon. The growth of the human sciences of anthropology and sociology made way for such a view.⁴⁰ Benjamin Kidd might please Quakers by writing of the necessity of religion in society, but he

³⁷ *FQ*, ix (Preface).

³⁸ *FQ*, ix.

³⁹ *FQ*, ix.

⁴⁰ See above, 1.2.2., for nineteenth-century anthropologists.

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wrote of religion as a product of natural selection rather than as a path to truth.⁴¹

6.4. Religion as a Human Phenomenon: H.G. Wells

Religion as a human creation was sufficient for H.G. Wells, whose name was bracketed with Kidd's by a reviewer as an author appealing to the half-educated who like a little half-baked philosophy.⁴² Peter Bowler sees Wells as exemplifying a tendency of the age to see God as 'merely the personification of humankind's moral sense'.⁴³ Graham surely did not intend to go so far as this, but, as we have seen, more than one reader saw a likeness between Graham's God and Wells' Invisible King'. Under the pressure of the war years, Wells wrote of the need for a purely human religion in *God, the Invisible King* as well as in his war novel, *Mr. Britling Sees it Through*.⁴⁴ In the former Wells makes a vigorous attack on Christianity and the Church, and when Graham came to read the book he must have warmed to Wells' denunciation of outworn dogma, especially the Trinitarian formula,⁴⁵ and the evils of organised Christianity,⁴⁶ and must have agreed with his

⁴¹ See above, 1.5.2.

⁴² Quoted by Paul Crook, in his *Benjamin Kidd: Portrait of a Social Darwinist*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, 165.

⁴³ Peter J. Bowler, *Reconciling Science and Religion: the Debate in Early Twentieth-Century Britain*, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2001, 65.

⁴⁴ H.G. Wells, *Mr. Britling sees it Through*, London: Cassell, 1916.

⁴⁵ H.G. Wells, *God, the Invisible King*, London: Cassell, 1917, 33-37.

⁴⁶ *God, the Invisible King*, 193-196.

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statement: 'The church with its sacraments and sacerdotalism is the disease of Christianity.'⁴⁷

Wells at this time saw religion as necessary, but it had to be something quite other than what the churches had to offer. In *God, the Invisible King*, he differentiates himself from atheists, like the ex-priest Joseph McCabe, who is a 'masterless man', with nothing to fall back on but his own 'priggish' sense of righteousness.⁴⁸ Like his creation Mr. Britling, almost overwhelmed by grief at the loss of his son in battle, Wells has come to believe in a personal God of limited power, a God who struggles for love and justice, alongside the young men who are being killed.⁴⁹ The faith comes from desperation, like that of an alcoholic clinging to a 'higher power'. Both need and power are for society, not only the self. Wells' God demands total dedication to bringing about his kingdom on earth,⁵⁰ the same kind of self-dedication that Graham saw in Quaker saints like Stephen Grellet: 'God fights against death in every form, against the great death of the race, against the petty death of indolence, insufficiency, baseness, misconception, and perversion'.⁵¹ This is just the kind of call to heroism that Graham found congenial.

⁴⁷ *God, the Invisible King*, 192. Cf. FQ 409 on the debilitating effect of a setting aside a class of priests and 254-286 on reasons why Quakers do not use outward 'ordinances'.

⁴⁸ *God, the Invisible King*, 99. McCabe was the translator of Ernst Haeckel's *The Evolution of Man: a Popular Scientific Study* (1905) and the author of *The Existence of God* (1933). (See Bowler, *Reconciling*, 28, 113.)

⁴⁹ *Mr. Britling*, 398-399.

⁵⁰ Wells, *God, the Invisible King*, 124.

⁵¹ Wells, *God, the Invisible King*, 118.

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If Wells had known of Graham he would no doubt have condemned him, along with figures such as Charles Voysey,⁵² who 'have neither resisted the bacillus of criticism nor left the churches to which they are attached', who 'have qualified their creeds with modifying footnotes of essential repudiation', who 'have decided that plain statements are metaphors and have undercut, transposed, and inverted the most vital points of the vulgarly accepted beliefs'.⁵³ Wells' own religion had no place for Christ, and he condemned those adherents of 'a vaguer sort of Christianity' who put Christ in the place of his own 'invisible king'.⁵⁴ Graham does indeed sometimes fall between two stools in his attempts to find a radically simplified religion that he could yet claim to be Christian.

6.5. God and Nature

What Grubb rightly drew attention to in comparing Graham with Wells was the latter's distinction between the "Veiled Being"⁵⁵ guessed at behind the workings of the invisible universe, and the 'finite God'⁵⁶ who is 'the God of the heart'.⁵⁷ It is with the latter, with God as 'an immortal being arising out of man, and external to the individual man',⁵⁸ that Wells is exclusively concerned.

Graham too posited the 'God of the heart' as the deity with whom, for all

⁵² Charles Voysey (1828–1912) was a clergyman who lost a living for denying eternal punishment in Hell (*ODNB*, accessed 1 January, 2014). For Voysey's relations with Quakers see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 77.

⁵³ *God, the Invisible King*, 150.

⁵⁴ *God, the Invisible King*, 119.

⁵⁵ Preface to *God, the Invisible King*, xiii. See Grubb, 'Foundations of Quakerism', 146.

⁵⁶ See, for instance, *God, the Invisible King*, 203, where Wells expresses his pleasure at sharing the concept with William James.

⁵⁷ Preface to *God, the Invisible King*, xv.

⁵⁸ *God, the Invisible King*, *God, the Invisible King*, 101.

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practical purposes, we have to do, although, unlike Wells, he saw this God not as external but as 'indweller'. The difference is not very important. Graham expresses his solidarity with early Friends by placing his God 'within', but God is for both him and Wells a force identified with the human subject in the quest for right, although Wells' God is collective rather than individual. He is finite, limited in power, and quite distinct from the 'Veiled Being' behind nature.

Graham, as an exponent of Christianity, however simplified, cannot allow himself the same latitude as Wells. Nevertheless, he finds himself forced into a not dissimilar duality. He is unable to accept any of the available attempts to equate the God of Love with the author of 'a physical and biological universe which is morally unmeaning, where love and duty can serve no writs' and where life seems inseparable from cruelty:

where the worst cruelties are those inflicted by animals upon one another, by men on animals, and by men on men. Some insects lay their eggs in the bodies of living creatures, parasites torment their victims, terror rules through the animal world, all wild creatures die violent deaths, and men are the cruellest of all.⁵⁹

This is the world as produced by natural selection, and it baffles a religious interpretation. 'Religiously, this universe of careless pain is of no value to us, except to excite our horror and stimulate our resolution to try to dominate and regulate it. Religiously we remain hearty dualists', even though as

⁵⁹ *DM*, 78.

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philosophers we have a 'dim, inevitable doctrine of Monism.'⁶⁰ This religious dualism was one of the points which Grubb balked at:

We cannot finally and completely *trust ourselves* to anything less than the Supreme Reality which lies behind and conditions ourselves and the lesser realities that surround us. Here, I think, lies the weakness of any presentation of a finite God. The God of our inner life cannot be less than One whom we can finally and completely trust.⁶¹

Graham picked this up with some indignation. He claimed that Grubb had not faced up to the problem of evil and pain: we cannot 'trust' God to defend us from natural disasters, as the people of Napier who have suffered in the recent earthquake have learned to their cost.⁶² Grubb, he complained, had not come to terms with the evidence, which presents the monotheist with an inescapable contradiction. 'I do attempt a synthesis. I at least lay the facts in order, avoid at any rate the worst of the contradiction, and vindicate the credit of religion.'⁶³

Graham rejects a theodicy which justifies suffering resulting from natural events (floods, earthquakes, etc.) on the grounds that these are inevitable accidents attendant on the perfectly run system of the universe, 'the best of all possible worlds'.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ *DM*, 81. See p

⁶¹ Grubb, 'Foundations', 149.

⁶² Graham, 'Reply', 233.

⁶³ 'Reply', 232.

⁶⁴ Leibniz's famous formula, lampooned by Voltaire in *Candide*, with its Leibnizian philosopher, Pangloss, See Alexander Pope, 'An Essay on Man', *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt, London: Methuen, 1963, 515.

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It is doubtless ... a necessity of thought that there must be in the absolute One Infinite and Eternal, without progress or change, abiding in calm, where Space and Time have no meaning, in a changeless existence, where there can be nothing which can be called a process or a development, which is never acting here more than there, nor now more than then, where there can be neither right nor wrong, victory nor defeat.

But although God 'must be' like this, 'far other than this is the Divine Power that we really know'. God as we experience him among the changes and chances of our lives is 'to all appearances, far from all-powerful'.⁶⁵ Graham responds to the harsh reality of 'San Francisco earthquakes and fires and Titanic disasters, and European War above all'⁶⁶ by claiming that it is up to human beings to enact the love of God in doing what they can to prevent or alleviate such disasters. They are the acts of a blind nature, 'which has no justice, no knowledge of it nor care'. Justice is a human quality. It prevails only through human activity, striving to mend what is amiss in the world.⁶⁷

'The God whom we find in practice is evolutionary in method. This is the God whose servants, whose organs,⁶⁸ whose vehicles we are. In His name we serve in a cause which never has enough servants'.⁶⁹ Or, as the *Divinity in Man* states it: 'The God we have found is not omnipotent but evolutionary, progressive, growing in power and revelation of Himself'.⁷⁰ Human beings are called to be agents in bringing about evolutionary progress

⁶⁵ FQ, 40.

⁶⁶ FQ, 38.

⁶⁷ FQ, 38.

⁶⁸ Referring to his earlier use of the metaphor of the body (FQ, 6, 7).

⁶⁹ FQ, 39, 40.

⁷⁰ DM, 64.

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and divine revelation. Natural selection itself does not reveal the hand of God: it produces such horrors as insects which lay eggs in the living bodies of other creatures. Something different, however, may have happened with the emergence of humankind. Graham in his early years wanted to exempt human evolution from the full consequences of the Darwinian account, and called Alfred Russel Wallace to his aid with his belief that natural selection could not fully account for the emergence of humankind.⁷¹ He does not revert to this idea in the later books: somehow a way had to be found of discerning the divine in the natural without resort to a quasi-miraculous intervention.

The presence of God in evolution is to be known by the end, but the cruelty of the process cannot logically be justified on the grounds of where it is leading, any more than the sufferings caused by the Napier earthquake can be explained away in terms of an over-riding Providence:

“Natural selection” ... acts only by death; it provides the negative check of starvation and disease, and that only... Everyone of our humanitarian aspirations, everyone of our social enthusiasms, everything that we value as peculiarly human or as likest the divine, represents a revolt against the brute law under which organic life made its first slow steps in the upward march.⁷²

God, it seems, becomes fully active only with the appearance of humankind.

When ‘man’ became self-conscious ‘he became an open-eyed servant of the

⁷¹ See 1.4.1., above.

⁷² John William Graham, ‘War and the Survival of the Fittest’, *Friend*, 12 November, 1909, 762-764, 762, 763.

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Divine Creative Power'⁷³, 'making the Whole', as in the quotation from the beginning of *FQ* above.⁷⁴ It is as though God had been waiting in the wings for humankind to come along to 'make' him. Graham indeed has it that God becomes increasingly manifest as humankind becomes more capable of realising him: 'Emmanuel – God with us – grows as we grow'.⁷⁵ He could be accused of implying that God depends on human beings rather than the other way round.

Some readers saw such an implication in Graham's mode of expression, and were dismayed. Grubb noted that Graham wavered between the idea of God as 'Soul of the universe' and as particularly the soul of every human being. 'Why should he maintain with such emphasis that the human soul is the *only* Temple of God?'⁷⁶ He seized on Graham's botanical image of an alpine plant, breaking down the rock on which it grows. According to Graham, 'We are each like one of those creeping flowerets, *building up God*'.⁷⁷ For the cautious intelligence of Grubb, this would not do at all. Another image of the evolutionary process, where Graham has 'Matter, bursting into manifold Life, finally *secreting the Divine Mind*, and becoming the Temple of the Holy Spirit' was even worse. It 'implies that we are just as necessary to God as He is to us – that apart from His "creatures" God would

⁷³ 'War and the Survival of the Fittest', 764.

⁷⁴ See 6.2., above.

⁷⁵ *FQ*, 39.

⁷⁶ See *DM*, 80.

⁷⁷ Grubb, *Foundations*, 147, 8. The emphasis is Grubb's.

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not exist at all'.⁷⁸ 'W.L.S', the author of a review in *The Christian Leader* found this same image 'astonishing': 'If the Divine Mind is a secretion of the saint, of the All, or of anything else, it is hard to see the ground for its primacy. A secretion is usually subordinate to what secretes it'.⁷⁹ W.L.S. sees this as coming from careless over-reliance on 'unexamined metaphor', but Graham's theory of evolution does entail the thought that God depends on human beings for full expression, if not for existence. He found justification for this in a statement by the church father Origen:⁸⁰ 'As the mind is active through its ideas, and is nothing apart from them, so the Logos lives through rational natures, and, while itself distinct from them, has no existence apart from them'.⁸¹ Graham comments, 'Origen sought to explain the possibility and the actuality of the Incarnation on the basis of the essential identity of the human personality with the Divine'.⁸² Grubb objected to this, saying that the passage from Origen is 'surely incautiously expressed'.⁸³ In his reply to Grubb Graham explains that the Logos 'always means the Word of God, God not in essence but in action ... If there were no one to receive the message there would be none sent ... just as if there were no children there could be no Father God'.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Grubb, *Foundations*, 148. The emphasis is Grubb's.

⁷⁹ *Christian Leader*, 17 September, 1927, JWGP, Box 13.

⁸⁰ CE, 185-253. Described by Graham as 'a great Christian scholar and a mystical thinker to whom one never turns without bringing some sheaves away' (*DM*, 141). Wells, by contrast, denounces Origen as one 'caught hopelessly in the net of the texts' (*God, the Invisible King*, xii).

⁸¹ *FQ*, 23.

⁸² *FQ*, 23.

⁸³ Grubb, 'Foundations', 148.

⁸⁴ 'Reply', 235.

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Thus the Word, or manifestation of God, has to be embodied in 'rational natures'.

Graham, perhaps unwittingly, reveals here how close he is to Wells' concept of a God who emerges out of the human spirit. Graham is less than explicit about this implication, being, unlike Wells, unwilling to jettison orthodox Christianity altogether. Nevertheless, it can be seen as a logical extension of his human-centred theology – heretical in the eyes of the more cautious and conservatively minded Grubb but a triumphant expression of Graham's faith in the divine potential of the human species. In his answer to Grubb's criticism that he implies that God would not exist apart from his creatures he begs the question: 'The whole hypothesis of the extinction of men is so remote that I cannot follow it, and do not know what would happen in the Unseen. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living"'.⁸⁵ This is tantamount to an admission that the idea of God depends, for him, on the idea of existent humanity.

6.6. Bridging the Gap

Although Graham accepts that the inward, finite God who needs our help is more use for religious purposes than the 'Veiled Being', he is determined not to give up the struggle to make all one. It is necessary, however, to begin with the human, with the recognition that the 'Indwelling God is the source of

⁸⁵ 'Reply', 235.

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ethics and the centre of religion'.⁸⁶ It is easy to equate this with a thorough-going humanist approach. W.K. Clifford, the atheist mathematician, in an essay cut out and kept by Graham, wrote, 'the voice of conscience is the voice of our Father Man who is within us'.⁸⁷ Clifford has already figured in these pages as a 'materialist' bogey.⁸⁸ Like Wells, Clifford derived the moral sense from humanity as an evolved collective: it is 'the accumulated instinct of the race',⁸⁹ but it is still felt 'within'. Grubb notes that Graham 'guards himself against the idea of Comte⁹⁰ and his Positivist followers, that "God" is the name of an idealised Humanity and nothing more' by insisting that 'God is not just the total of mankind, as the tree is not a heap of leaves', but he does not think Graham's caveat quite successful.⁹¹ Graham would surely repudiate Clifford's substitution of 'our Father Man' for 'our Father God'; but the humanist might ask if there is any objective difference between Graham's 'Indwelling God' and Clifford's 'Father Man who is within us'.

For Graham, it is only after people have accepted that religion begins 'within' that they can go on to recognise the divine in creation.⁹² In his quest for such a recognition Graham constructs five 'bridges' across the gulf

⁸⁶ *DM*, 68.

⁸⁷ W.K. Clifford, 'The Influence upon Morality of a Decline in Religious Belief', in 'A Modern "Symposium"', *Nineteenth Century*, April, 1877, 356 (JWGP, Box 3).

⁸⁸ See 1.4.1., above.

⁸⁹ Clifford, 'Modern Symposium', 356.

⁹⁰ Isidore Auguste Marie Francois Comte (1798-1857). Author of 'positivism', the view that science and society were progressing towards a phase where thought would be based entirely on what could be measured and verified (article by Michael Ruse, in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁹¹ Grubb, 'Foundations', 143.

⁹² *DM*, 64.

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between the inward God and the God of nature. The bridges all have to do with evolutionary process, indeed with progress. They can help the willing observer to see that 'out of the non-moral Earth our Father in Heaven has been building His moral order'.⁹³ So firstly, nature provides the raw material out of which eventuates conscious life, the brain, the will. The second bridge is the perception that in the contest with nature are developed all human skills, culminating in Einstein. The third bridge consists in seeing nature as the arena where animals and especially human beings develop fortitude, co-operation, perseverance, in struggling to master intransigent material: hardship is the only school of virtue. The fourth is the perception of beauty in nature. This too has to do with progress, since only people at a sufficiently advanced state of culture are capable of it. Awareness of beauty is 'in us – there is no beauty inherent in natural objects',⁹⁴ and the awareness is the result of an evolved sensibility. The fifth is the 'great evolutionary pageant of life', extending in a Great Chain from the lowliest organism up to humankind.⁹⁵ The continuity itself forms a 'bridge' by which we can perceive divinity in nature. Here, however, Graham introduces a demurrer: it must not be forgotten that some of the lower forms of life, like the frogs and locusts in the Plagues of Egypt, 'are fulfilling some purpose alien to man', and therefore

⁹³ *DM*, 78.

⁹⁴ *DM*, 74.

⁹⁵ See A.O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1936. The idea of the Great Chain flourished in the eighteenth century. Again Pope gives a succinct account in 'Essay on Man', *Poems*, 512. There is something of the Great Chain in Graham's thinking. See *FQ*, 82-3, where he speculates on the likely 'long expansion from man to the Infinite', comprising angelic beings.

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cannot be counted 'among the operations of our Indwelling Father's love'.⁹⁶

Despite Graham's appreciation for the almost human qualities of dogs,⁹⁷ his is a blatantly human-centred view of God in nature.

6.7. The Uses of Science

Graham perceived science as an aid as much as a challenge in constructing his theology. It was not just the profusion of biological analogies: these were 'parables', as he explained to Grubb who complained that he over-used them.⁹⁸ He could also actually find arguments for his theology in some developments in scientific theory, such as the work of August Weismann, the German biologist who propounded the theory of germ-plasm in an attempt to provide a mechanism for genetic inheritance.⁹⁹ Weismann's theory, not yet informed by Mendel's discoveries¹⁰⁰ but anticipating their consequences, did away with Darwin's problematic 'pangenesis' idea, whereby inherited characteristics somehow come from every part of the parents' bodies, by way of 'gemmules' from the various cells of the body coming together and mixing with those of the other parent in their offspring.¹⁰¹ For Graham the germ-

⁹⁶ *DM*, 77.

⁹⁷ *DM*, 76.

⁹⁸ Grubb, 'Foundations', 143-4; 'Reply', 233-4.

⁹⁹ See Peter J. Bowler, *Reconciling Science and Religion: the Debate in Early Twentieth-Century Britain*, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2001, 281; Paul Crook, *Darwinism, War and History*, Cambridge, 1984, 71. Crook points out that Weismann's ideas could be exploited by theorists on both the left and the right of the political spectrum.

¹⁰⁰ For Mendel and the implications of his discoveries see Peter J. Bowler, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Reinterpreting a Historical Myth*, Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988, 6.

¹⁰¹ See Michael Ruse, *The Darwinian Revolution: Science Red in Tooth and Claw*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979, 232. Michael Ruse, *The Darwinian Revolution: Science Red in Tooth and Claw*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979, 232. Although Mendel's results were published in 1900 I have found no evidence that Graham knew of them.

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plasm has a theological significance: it is the divine spark of life inserted into nature at the dawn of biological evolution and continuing unchanged through all its phases. Thus it is 'a true *vehiculum Dei*', 'both spiritual and material', 'the nearest we can come to the secret place of the Most High':

Each generation is like a flower which is born and dies on a stock that is permanent, and the reality hidden behind every genealogical tree is a branching development of the one mysterious source of life. Moreover, the germ-plasm is a common human inheritance, linking us with our kin and ultimately with the whole of humanity.¹⁰²

Hence there is a 'physical justification for Altruism', since 'Mankind is one organism'.

How much deeper and how much simpler now does the saying of the Apostle become, that "God is Love." And we may ponder too, on the idea of "the Spirit that quickeneth (or giveth life)". "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life". The writers of these words knew nothing about germ-plasm, but they recorded an intuitive experience which, knowing what is now known, we can scientifically endorse and justify.¹⁰³

It was this kind of thing that Allen Thomas objected to as giving a 'spurious scientific gloss' to dubious arguments,¹⁰⁴ but the idea is clearly consonant with Graham's wish to demonstrate that God has been in some way involved in the evolutionary process despite all the difficulties of such a view. Graham defends his use of biological analogy in *The Divinity in Man* in terms which suggest the near relationship between all forms of life, whether spiritual or

¹⁰²FQ, 26.

¹⁰³ FQ, 27. Graham's note on this page acknowledges a debt to one G.F. Nicolai's *Biology of War*, 'a standard work on peace'. This is *The Biology of War*, by Dr. G. F. Nicolai ... tr. from the original German by Constance A. Grande and Julian Grande, London: Dent, 1919.

¹⁰⁴ In the *New York Evening Post*, JWGP, Box 19.

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embodied, and beyond that between all the 'levels' of creation, from the inanimate at the bottom to the spiritual at the top.¹⁰⁵ It is an expression of trust that the living God is behind the development of living things.

6.8. The Spirit World

Graham's reliance on Myers' ideas about the subliminal soul and its implications for the Quaker claim to 'prophetic ministry' has already been described.¹⁰⁶ The psychic sciences could, however, also be used in a different way to counter the purely humanist views of W.K. Clifford and his like.¹⁰⁷ Graham respected the psychical researchers as genuine practitioners of rigorous empirical scientific methods,¹⁰⁸ and this for him legitimated beliefs which seem far removed indeed from the grounded research of biologists and chemists. At the end of 1931 he gave an address at Friends' House,¹⁰⁹ covering much the same ground as the presidential address to the Friends' Historical Society that he did not live to deliver, published as *Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers*.¹¹⁰ His text is Philippians, 3:20, 'Our citizenship¹¹¹ is in Heaven'. Graham interprets this to mean that 'we belong to a world beyond Space and Time, to an Eternity not made of matter, nor

¹⁰⁵ *DM*, 47. Cf. note above, on the Great Chain.

¹⁰⁶ See 3.6., 3.10, 5.8., above.

¹⁰⁷ See 6.6., above,

¹⁰⁸ See 3.3., above.

¹⁰⁹ 'The Quest for God', Friends' House, 11 September, 1931, 1. Ms. In JWGP, Box 2.

¹¹⁰ *Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers*, collected by John William Graham ... for a Presidential Address to the Friends Historical Society; introduction by F.E. Pollard, London: Friends Historical Society, 1933, *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, 1933, Supplement 1. See 3.3., above.

¹¹¹ Graham takes the word 'Citizenship' from the Revised Version: The Authorised Version has 'conversation'. The Revised Standard Version gives 'commonwealth' as an alternative reading.

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subject to physical laws'.¹¹² His evidence is the faculties of 'Telepathy, Clairvoyance and Premonition' as exemplified in faithful Quaker ministers: these show that 'we are surrounded by a spiritual world and are in touch with spiritual beings'.¹¹³ Such intimations may still be vouchsafed to the 'obedient and listening soul'. Indeed it is 'our hope and our only chance as Friends'.¹¹⁴ Graham has a difficulty: some of the visions encountered by these 'listening and obedient' souls were of things in which Graham profoundly disbelieved, notably Hell. He found a way round the problem by saying that Hell was for these seers 'part of their ordinary mental furniture', which therefore found a way into their visions. That did not invalidate their praeternormal perceptions of concrete realities. Graham's belief in a spirit world entailed yet further flights of fancy. In *FQ* he asserted his belief in heavenly 'agents', whom he dares to call "guardian angels" (his quotation marks).¹¹⁵ They are organised on the same plan as the British Empire: God is the 'great white King', 'the Rajah behind the Raj'.¹¹⁶ It is rather an earthly view of Heaven.

All this does not essentially detract from the argument made in this chapter that Graham's approach to religion is 'anthropological'. The human heart, with its instincts of consecration, love and prayer, is the beginning of religious intuitions, and the locus of God's inspiriting power. It is the indwelling God with whom we have to do, the God with whom we are as

¹¹² 'Quest for God', 1.

¹¹³ 'Quest for God', 1. Cf., *FQ*, 82.

¹¹⁴ 'Quest for God', 8.

¹¹⁵ See 6.3., above.

¹¹⁶ *FQ*, 81.

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closely united as cells in a body, not a great white king across the ocean, even if the 'Eternal Will behind the veil'¹¹⁷ does employ invisible agents to do his bidding.

6.9. At-one-ment

The human heart is also the only place where atonement, reconciliation, can take place. We have seen how Graham repudiates the notion, attributed to the evangelicals, of some kind of outward transaction whereby a person is freed from sin and its consequences.¹¹⁸ In an address given in Manchester in 1904,¹¹⁹ Graham makes clear that for him atonement was a matter of inner tuning:

Now, surely, it was this very reconciliation of man with himself that the Gospel achieved for the early believers; that is the true experimental reconciliation with God, the true at-one-ment ... Anyhow, we know that we are the organ of God, that His voice within us is our guide, that we have touch with God. Every way of atonement must lead up to this as an end; for this covers the whole field. You cannot be more than reconciled and harmonized and unified with the Divine Will. We may know in ourselves the blessed experience of a single heart, of unity where discord was.

Atonement is thus a realisation of what we already are, 'the organ of God'.

Sin, we have seen, is for Graham 'mere dirt':¹²⁰ as unfinished creatures, not yet fully evolved, human beings are subject to inner disorder, but as beings

¹¹⁷ *FQ*, 82.

¹¹⁸ See Chapter 2, above, especially 2.9.

¹¹⁹ 'What is Christianity? An Address Delivered at the Central Hall, Manchester, on Sunday, 1st May, 1904'. Copy in JWGP, Box 1.

¹²⁰ 1.4.2., above.

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already 'ontologically' one with God¹²¹ and with Christ they can realise their true nature through partaking in the sacrifice that Christ has made.¹²² This is the 'consecration', the self-dedication to others, and ultimately to God, of which Graham speaks as one of the three fundamental experiences on which religious faith is based. It is exemplified in Christ's life and death: 'Our Lord said, in a strategic utterance ... that it was happier to give than to receive. Behind that stands His own practice, in death and life, and it is at the heart of Christian redemption'.¹²³ In giving ourselves as Christ gave himself lie inner harmony and fulfilment.

Graham summarises what he takes to have been the views of the early Friends on the subject, as opposed to those of the evangelicals, in *FQ*: 'Atonement with them always meant reconciliation. Partaking of the blood of Christ always meant a participation in the nature and character of Christ. Forgiveness was an inward restoration, not the payment of an outward debt'.¹²⁴ Human beings are by nature one with God; as Christians they can realise this ontological unity through 'participation in the nature and character of Christ'. This was not only 'the faith of a Quaker' or 'Quaker faith', but also true Christianity.

¹²¹ See Wood, 'J.W. Graham', 108.

¹²² See 2.9., above.

¹²³ *DM*, 37.

¹²⁴ *FQ*, 410.

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6.10. Conclusion

Graham's Quaker Christianity is in some ways more like a devout humanism than a religion focused on an independently existing God outside the human subject. Grubb found fault with him for placing so much emphasis on God as acting in and through human beings that he left room to doubt whether God would continue to exist if the human race died out. Graham seemed almost to accept this when he refused to contemplate so remote a contingency.

Although he denied indebtedness, he did not try to refute comparisons of his God with H.G. Wells' 'invisible king'. The God who is to be served and trusted is the God who acts within and through his human creation, the Indweller, the God who is love. There is an inescapable duality between this inward God and the Creator of a world full of pain and cruelty, although 'philosophically' the mind craves an ultimate monism. It is possible to approach a reconciliation between the 'God of the heart' and the 'Veiled Being' behind the natural world through contemplating the evolutionary process, but reconciliation remains partial. Arguments and analogies from science are helpful, but not clinching. Attempts to deduce a spirit world from uncanny experiences like those of dedicated Quaker souls of the past do little to soften the impression of a blind, uncaring nature relieved only by qualities of sympathy and courage nurtured within the human heart. Here God is to be found, united with the human creature and working to bring inner reconciliation and harmony, the true way of atonement, or rather, at-one-ment.

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As is indicated by the diversity of judgments among those who commented on Graham's theology, it is difficult to decide how far he is Quaker, how far Christian, how far idiosyncratic. To insist so strongly as he does on the unity of God and humankind brings a danger, if danger it is, of making God seem redundant. On the other hand, if God is, as Graham sees him, ever-present, in us, one with us, God is inescapable: a constant comfort, a constant spur. One anonymous reviewer of *The Divinity in Man* associated this insistence with Graham's condemnation of 'unreality' in mainline church services: an unreality that consists in thinking of God as an

external Being, placed over against man in space or imagined spiritual space, with a Personality which man touches only at a distance, or with some imagined spiritual interval, and with whom intercourse in prayer and worship may, under favourable conditions, by from time to time enjoyed'.¹²⁵

Another asked rhetorically, 'Where is the Christian group that has done more for beneficence or for the higher welfare of the world than the Quakers? Essentially their secret has been the oneness of God and man'.¹²⁶ Even if only a few readers agreed Graham's object was achieved: he was helping to make Quakerism the progressive force that it could be.

So much for the theory. Through his understanding of psychical research, mysticism and the principles informing the Quaker ideal of ministry Graham established to his own satisfaction the viability of the Quaker belief in

¹²⁵ *The Inquirer*, 27 May, 1927, JWGP, Box 13.

¹²⁶ *Expository Times*, May 1927, JWGP, Box 13.

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a God acting within human beings to establish his reign on earth. The next two chapters explore the ways in which Graham tried to work out how this faith could and should be applied in two linked public spheres in which he was particularly engaged: the spheres of war and of empire. How were Quakers to lead the way here?

CHAPTER 7. WAR AND EVOLUTION

7.1. Introduction

This chapter considers the difficulties and paradoxes that Graham faced as he explored the ways in which Quaker principles, especially the traditional 'Peace Testimony'* could be applied in the real world where conflict so often seemed unavoidable. Graham shows himself as 'Apostle of Progress' in this area more clearly, perhaps, than anywhere else. It was his settled conviction, even in the ghastly light of World War 1 and its aftermath, that humankind was heading towards a state where war would be no more and that Quakers were called to be in the vanguard of the forward march to a peaceful world. The topics dealt with in this chapter include the impact of Darwinism and contemporary interpretations of Darwin on Graham's thinking about war and peace, his views about the moral effects of war and of empire and his belief, whether on evolutionary or economic grounds, that the world was evolving towards permanent peace. Further, it looks at his use of the Bible in this context, his views about the traditional Quaker opposition to war and how it should be applied or modified in present conditions, the quandaries raised by the Great War and especially by conscription and whether any degree of compromise was permissible. Finally, it analyses the nature and extent of Graham's pacifism and the factors which qualified it.

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In all this Graham's progressivism itself led him into paradox and ambivalence. Yes, it was the divine purpose to bring about lasting peace on earth.¹ Yet the corollary of this was that there was a 'meantime'² during which something less than peace had to be endured. War, Graham believed, had been necessary and right in the past: it had built up that very spirit of co-operation which was now making it obsolete. In 'War and Evolution', the essay based on his address at the 1890 Peace Conference, Graham averred, 'A thing which is not absolutely right may in its time and place be relatively right'.³

This is the key principle elaborated in his 1912 book, *Evolution and Empire (EE)*.⁴ Polygamy is wrong now, but it was an improvement over having no marriage regulations; slavery is wrong now, but it is better to enslave your enemies than to eat them. It was indeed wrong to revert to a more 'primitive' stage in evolution: 'To practise habits of this obsolete type is sinful, because it is retrogressive; it is the undoing of the Divine creative doing'.⁵ But Graham left open the question how far humankind had advanced towards a state of universal peace. Certainly not all human beings were there yet. Even today the natives of Australia, according to Sir George

¹ See 7.5., below.

² For 'meantime' theology among early Friends see Pink Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 57. It is a recurring difficulty for millenarian groups.

³ 'War and Evolution, a paper read at the Friends' Conference, Asbury Park, 1902', 306-316, 307, JWGP, Box 7. This is the only version of this paper that I have found.

⁴ John William Graham, *Evolution & Empire*, London: Headley, 1912 (*EE*).

⁵ *EE*, 23. Again the same idea is set out in 'War and Evolution' (308): 'For men to practise [slavery or polygamy] now, would be to give way to what may truly be called "Original Sin", for sin is a going back to an original condition – an obedience to a "Law in the Members" '.

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Grey,⁶ consider that ‘the holiest duty of man is to avenge the death of his near relation’.⁷ And in *Evolution and Empire*, Graham wrote a positive paean to the glory of warfare in olden days:

In warfare the foundations of our strongest and best elements of character were laid. Virtue and valour were the same word ... The rude necessities of obedience in the field, and the survival of the more disciplined races gave our ancestors that first training from which all loyalty, allegiance and internal order have had their beneficent development.⁸

Nowadays evolved humanity is on the way to better things.⁹ Yet even in civilised Europe the question had still to be asked whether any particular war was right or wrong. The Italian Risorgimento, for example?¹⁰

The earliest published piece of writing by Graham is a long letter in *The Friend* of December 1882 called ‘Our Position about War’.¹¹ This was quickly followed by several essays on war and empire. He delivered a speech on ‘War and Evolution’ at the London Universal Peace Congress of 1890.¹² In the Preface to *Evolution and Empire (EE)*¹³ he says this talk contained the

⁶ Sir George Grey (1812–1898), explorer of Western Australia and Governor of South Australia, 1841-5 (*ODNB*, accessed 5 November, 2014). Graham also quotes John Lubbock’s *Origin of Civilisation* (1870). See 1.2.2., above, note.

⁷ ‘The Distant Prospects of the Peace Party, *FQE*, 1884, 82-96; 161-171, 161. Against this may be set Herbert Spencer’s contention, cited by Graham, that certain ‘primitive’ tribes are peaceable, and reap great benefits from this condition (*EE*, 73-4).

⁸ *EE*, 26.

⁹ See 7.5., below, for Graham’s view of the deleterious moral effects of war.

¹⁰ *FQ*, 348. See 7.7., below.

¹¹ *Friend*, 1 December, 1882, 303-304.

¹² See *The Friend*, 1 August, 1890, 218. The speech is mentioned by Paul Laity, *The British Peace Movement*, Oxford: Clarendon, 2001, 122, and by Brian Phillips, ‘Friendly Patriotism: British Quakerism and the Imperial Nation, 1890-1910’, PhD Thesis, Cambridge University, 1989, 193. The paper was by invitation: see letter, 10 June, 1990, JWGP, Box 17.

¹³ John William Graham, *Evolution & Empire*, London: Headley, 1912 (*EE*).

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'nucleus' of the book.¹⁴ Again, during his lecture tour of India in 1927-28, nearly at the end of his life, 'War and Evolution' was one of his three main subjects.¹⁵ The evolutionary perspective is also strongly present in a very long chapter of *The Faith of a Quaker* (1920) (*FQ*) devoted to war, containing the substance of a book published in 1915 as *War from a Quaker Point of View*.¹⁶

Graham became increasingly active in campaigning for peace through his adult life. Some of his activities are detailed below. This chapter is, however, concerned not with Graham as a peace-worker but rather with his thinking and writing on the politics and morality of war and the dilemmas it poses for the Christian conscience. Graham's pacifism was always somewhat equivocal. His son Michael apologised for 'the incompleteness of his Pacifism',¹⁷ and T.C. Kennedy shows him, in October 1914, vacillating over the question whether the government was justified in imposing some kind of national service (preferably offering an alternative to 'actual fighting') and needing the influence of his son Richard to keep him in the peace camp.¹⁸ This chapter shows in detail how Graham's evolutionary outlook entailed a non-absolutist interpretation of the Quaker testimony against war.

¹⁴ *EE*, 6.

¹⁵ See, for example, John W. Graham, 'Christianity in India', *Friend*, 30 March 1928, 255-257, 256.

¹⁶ John W. Graham, *War from a Quaker Point of View*, London: Headley, [1915]. See review of *FQ* by A. Barratt Brown, *Friend*, 9 July, 1920, 419.

¹⁷ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever: Lancashire Quaker J.W. Graham 1859-1932 and the Course of Reforming Movements' (ts, 1964, in Friends' House Library), 4.17. Michael Graham originally wrote 'non-pacifism', but crossed it out.

¹⁸ Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 326-7. See 7.9., below.

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His thinking was not static, but reflected changes in the currents of thought among Quakers and non-Quakers alike in relation to war and empire-building during his life-time, but the evolutionary, and hence relativistic, thread was constant.

Graham's thinking about war was bound up with questions about imperialism and conquest, and this chapter therefore deals with imperialism in the abstract, including the treatment of aboriginal peoples, as well as with war. Chapter 9 explores this theme further, as Graham's thinking developed in the concrete situation that he met in his visit to India in 1927-28. Here again Graham is ambivalent. Among the founding fathers of Quakerism in seventeenth-century England, Graham chose William Penn as his particular hero, the subject of one of his earliest as well as one of his latest papers and of a full-length biography,¹⁹ and it is Penn's achievement in establishing the colony of Pennsylvania that attracts most of his attention. By the time he wrote *Evolution and Empire* (1912) Graham was convinced that Empire had more bad consequences than good, was 'a false step', doomed to be retracted, as he put it in *The Faith of a Quaker*.²⁰ The earlier book is indeed a thorough-going denunciation of the whole imperial project, a project which as a younger man he had supported.²¹ His change in attitude, however, did not diminish his admiration for William Penn as the ideal coloniser, and it allowed him to endorse a continued, if temporary, British rule in India, an endorsement

¹⁹ See 7.4., below.

²⁰ *FQ*, 388.

²¹ See 7.4., below.

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which he maintained with passion after his visit to India.²² In the 1912 book he grants that 'the shattered ruins of nations can rarely be restored, nor conquerors dispossessed without a new chaos of blood and waste'.²³

There was, then, ambivalence in Graham's denunciations both of empire and of war. Pacifism and Graham made uneasy bedfellows, and not only because of the man's well-attested temperamental belligerence.²⁴

7.2. Darwinism and War

This section is much indebted to Paul Crook's *Darwinism, War and History*.²⁵ Crook makes abundantly clear that Darwin could equally well be used to justify and to condemn warfare. Darwin himself was 'cautiously optimistic' about the implications of his theory for hopes of a peaceful world.²⁶ He believed that the moral sense among human beings, based on social instincts, would grow.²⁷ War, moreover, is inherently dysgenic, since it is the finest and strongest young men who tend to get killed in battle, leaving the weak or cowardly to propagate their kind.²⁸ This was a point eagerly reiterated by Graham. Remarking that 'We are beginning to apply the tests of

²² See Chapter 8 below, especially 8.8. and 8.9.

²³ *EE*, 185. See 8.7., below, for Graham's late statement on empire.

²⁴ Celebrated by G.A. Sutherland in his obituary of Graham in *The Daltonian*, 109, December, 1932, 8-11, 9.

²⁵ Paul Crook, *Darwinism, War and History: the Debate over the Biology of War from the Origin of Species to the First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

²⁶ Crook, *Darwinism*, 23.

²⁷ Crook, *Darwinism*, 23.

²⁸ Crook, *Darwinism*, 24, quoting Darwin's *Descent of Man*. Crook adds related points made by Darwin: that soldiers are 'often tempted into vice' (with deleterious effects on their health), and that they are 'prevented from marrying during the prime of life'.

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eugenics to every public issue',²⁹ he goes on to give documentary evidence for the claim that it is the physically and morally weak who survive war, with the result that 'the cowards and the weaklings who remain, determine the next generation'.³⁰ Such factors, he claims, may account for the decline of Greece and of France after the Napoleonic Wars.³¹ Graham was here in agreement with A.R. Wallace, who wrote in a letter to Darwin that wars do not pick the fit, for the 'strongest and bravest' die first.³²

Even if it is in some sense true that war 'selects the fittest' it is arguable whether it is the qualities of the best fighters that modern society most needs. Edward Grubb argued the contrary in his book, *The True Way of Life*.³³ This originated as a rebuttal of St Loe Strachey's pre-war newspaper campaign in favour of the National Service League³⁴ and of military conscription.³⁵ Grubb suggested that although war might make for the survival of 'fitter races and peoples', it was through the survival of animal nature, which humankind is outgrowing.³⁶

²⁹ *EE*, 111.

³⁰ *EE*, 112-3.

³¹ *EE*, 113-4. See also pp. 106-7.

³² Quoted in Adrian Desmond and James Moore, *Darwin*, London: Michael Joseph, 1991, 522.

³³ Edward Grubb, *The True Way of Life*, London (3rd edn., rewritten and much enlarged): Headley, 1915 (first edition published 1909).

³⁴ The National Service League was led by Lord Roberts (Frederick Sleight, first Earl Roberts (1832–1914), veteran of the Indian Mutiny, the Second Afghan War and the South African War of 1899-1901. See *Friend*, 'Earl Roberts on Compulsory Service', 13/01/1905, 26. See also Thomas C. Kennedy, *The Hound of Conscience: a History of the No-Conscription Fellowship, 1914-1918*, Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1981, 10, 13.

³⁵ Article on Strachey in *ODNB*, accessed 5 November, 2014.

³⁶ Grubb, *True Way*, 65. Grubb here quotes *EE* as an authority.

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Walter Bagehot³⁷ declared in his *Physics and Politics* of 1872: 'The characters which do win in war are the characters which we should wish to win in war', for 'the greater a tribe's disciplined coherence, the better its chances of triumphing in battle and carrying on its success'.³⁸ Bagehot also stressed the need for variability, which war & miscegenation produce. Bagehot clearly has in mind here a theory of group selection ('the tribe') rather than the selection of individuals. Here it is not necessarily the more obviously warlike characteristics, such as courage, strength or ferocity, which make for success in war, but rather 'disciplined coherence'. This is close to the 'co-operation' which those who wish to promote a more benign view of evolution emphasise over against the ruthlessness of the 'struggle for existence'.³⁹ Prominent among such evolutionists was the anarchist Prince Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin (1842-1921), author of *Mutual Aid* (1902), which took the habits of social insects as evidence for a view of nature contradicting the pessimistic interpretation of T.H. Huxley in his *Evolution and Ethics* of 1893.⁴⁰ Kropotkin is mentioned in Graham's *Faith of a Quaker*, where Graham is reporting on a statement produced in 1917 by the 'War and Social Order Committee' of London Yearly Meeting*, intended for discussion in Quaker

³⁷ Walter Bagehot (1826–1877), author of *Physics and Politics* (1872), in *Collected Works*, edited by Norman St John-Stevás, London: 'The Economist', 1974. See Crook, *Darwinism*, 33.

³⁸ Desmond and Moore, *Darwin*, 557. Graham gives Bagehot's *Physics and Politics* as a source in his 'War and Evolution', 307.

³⁹ See Crook, *Darwinism*, 106-102.

⁴⁰ See Crook, *Darwinism*, 106-7, 110. For Huxley see 1.3.1., above.

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meetings.⁴¹ The Committee advocated the reading of *Mutual Aid*, 'as it emphasises the natural law of mutual help among animals and human beings which has always existed side by side with the struggle for existence'.⁴²

Graham argued strenuously for the part played by co-operation in evolution, claiming that this factor was continually increasing in importance, especially among human beings. The protracted period of immaturity in human beings meant that families were needed for the nurture of the young, and these, by extension, nurtured the social virtues:

Here, among brothers and sisters, the individual learnt the beginnings of self-sacrifice, loyalty and service, – the dawn indeed of morality and public spirit ... Here is the momentous dawn of the faculty of sympathy, beginning as it needs must, in a narrow sphere, but capable of expanding. Far beyond the time of our earliest relics began that narrowing of the region of strife, that increase in the size of the striving unit, which has led in the civilised world to a chronic state of peace, broken by occasional war on a large scale.⁴³

From here, Graham thought, progress towards the abolition of war must be assured.

Graham showed no signs of doubt in his attacks on the pro-war Darwinism of the German militarist General Bernhardt, author of *Germany and the Next War* (1914),⁴⁴ and the American 'General' Homer Lea.⁴⁵ Graham is patronising towards the latter:

⁴¹ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 369-87.

⁴² *FQ*, 322.

⁴³ *EE*, 19. See also 1.2.1; 1.4.1., above.

⁴⁴ Friedrich Adam Julius von Bernhardt, *Germany and the Next War*, translated by Allen H. Powles, London: Edward Arnold, 1914. Laity says that in Britain the First World War was

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General Homer Lea has heard of Darwinism, but has learnt it imperfectly. He says, in his *Valour of Ignorance*, “National entities in their birth, activities and death are controlled by the same laws that govern all life, plant, animal, or national – the law of survival”. It would, I dare say, surprise the General to know that the struggle for existence as Darwin taught it has nothing to do with war, but is concerned with the ability to find food, to run away from enemies, and to have large families; and but little study of human evolution would have shown him that this brute law of survival has long ago been overridden in the case of man by co-operation, by effort, sympathy, and intellectual power – by all which makes life worthy and strong.⁴⁶

General Bernhardt is treated more seriously, if only because ‘he is on the German General Staff’. He is quoted as saying, ‘War gives a biologically just decision, since its decision rests on the very nature of things’.⁴⁷ By ‘biologically just’ Bernhardt seems to mean that war follows the same ‘laws’ as nature, by which ‘the fittest’ survive regardless of any humanly imagined moral order: ‘might is right’.⁴⁸ Graham contends that such a statement betrays misunderstanding of the nature of Darwinian biology, according to which notions of justice are irrelevant: ‘Biological law will destroy thousands of swallows in a summer drought, because it has previously destroyed their

‘presented as a crusade to eradicate the doctrines of Bernhardt and Treitschke, in H.G. Wells’ phrase, “the blood and iron superstition of Krupp, flag-waving Teutonic Kiplingism”’ (*British Peace Movement*, 226). Graham mentions Bernhardt’s book in his essay, ‘The Moral Sequelae of Conquest’, *FQE*, 1913, 391-403, which means that Graham must have heard about it before the translation appeared. See also Crook, *Darwinism*, 33, 83).

⁴⁵ Lea, Homer (1876-1912), Author of *The Valor of Ignorance* (1909). See Thomas C. Kennedy, ‘Homer Lea and the Peace Makers’, *Historian*; Aug 1, 1983; 45, 4; ProQuest pg. 473. Lea’s claim to be ‘Lieutenant General of the Chinese Reform Army’ is dubious.

⁴⁶ ‘The Moral Sequelae of Conquest’, *FQE*, 1913, 391-403, 401. See Homer Lea and the Peace Makers’ Kennedy, *The Historian*; Aug 1, 1983; 45, 4, 473-496. (Online at ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2002.)

⁴⁷ ‘Moral Sequelae’, 402.

⁴⁸ According to Crook, Bernhardt ‘rejected any higher law or power above the state, which was entitled to act according to the laws of self-interest and survival. Like organisms the state must dominate or degenerate’, *Darwinism*, 83.

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insect food. There is neither conscious justice nor injustice here'.⁴⁹ Those, like Bernhardt, who use Darwinian theory to justify war would have us revert to this 'brute law'.

Towards the end of the War Graham had to contend with an opponent more formidable than Lea or Bernhardt because closer to home. This was the distinguished American Quaker biblical scholar, George A. Barton.⁵⁰ In an essay appearing in *FQE* Barton uses the evolutionary argument in favour of war: 'In all his work in nature God empties the nest by hatching the eggs. One organism is developed to carry on a function before an old organism is cast off'. From here Barton takes a long leap into the situation among civilised nations in the twentieth century, but he does not, like Graham, see any sign that civilisation will bring a halt to war: 'From the evolutionary side there is no hope that men will be cemented into one brotherhood, that a United States of the world will be organized, that a general and permanent peace will prevail without the employment of force'. Shockingly, he continues: 'God sooner or later, takes every life that he gives', and we are not required to be 'more perfect than God!'⁵¹

⁴⁹ 'Moral Sequelae', 402. Compare 6.5., above.

⁵⁰ A note in *BF*, Feb., 1902 ('General Notes', p.26), describes him as 'professor of Biblical Language and Literature at Bryn Mawr College'. Bryn Mawr was a Quaker college in New England, founded in 1884 (see Philip S. Benjamin, *The Philadelphia Quakers in the Industrial Age, 1865-1920*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976, 41).

⁵¹ George A. Barton, 'The Official Quaker Testimony Against War Re-Examined', *FQE*, 52 (1918), 13-31, 18-19. (The essay is dated October 20th, 1917.)

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Both Edward Grubb and John William Graham wrote replies to this essay.⁵² Grubb counters Barton's argument from evolution by reference to T.H. Huxley's 'Evolution and Ethics':⁵³ 'To the late Prof. Huxley the "Cosmic Process" revealed in nature seemed the antithesis of the "Ethical Process" manifested in human life'.⁵⁴ Grubb does not entirely accept Huxley's view of nature, but he insists that the Christian's guide to ethics must be not the poorly understood natural processes but the example of Christ's life and sacrificial death.⁵⁵ As for Graham, his essay again foreshadows some of the thinking in *The Divinity in Man*, where he distinguishes between an amoral 'nature' and the God who empowers human beings to overcome the cruelty inherent in natural processes.⁵⁶ He writes of

the confusion in Dr. Barton's paper between "Nature", with its soulless cruelty, and the master-power over human action. They are treated as one, and called God ... [But] Against the cruelty of nature, I dare to say, God has set the heart of man; and the only God whom, for practical purposes, I know anything about, is the God of Love there revealed and active, the God of all mercies, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁷

Barton, moreover, has not realised that evolution, however it may have worked in the past, is now working towards the abolition of war: 'War is a back

⁵² Edward Grubb, 'A Rejoinder', *FQE*, 1918, 33-38; John W. Graham, 'Dr. Barton on War', *FQE*, 1918, 151-156.

⁵³ See 1.3.1., above.

⁵⁴ Grubb, 'A Rejoinder', 37.

⁵⁵ Grubb, 'A Rejoinder', 38.

⁵⁶ See 6.5., above.

⁵⁷ Graham, 'Dr. Barton', 153.

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number, very far back. "Evolution" desires nothing half so much as it "desires" its speedy abolition'.⁵⁸

7.3. Relative Pacifism

Some Quakers were more uncompromising than Graham in opposing war.

Joseph Rowntree, in an essay of 1907, took issue with Henry Marriage Wallis, who, in a two-part essay, 'A Twice Interrupted Colloquy', argued that absolute pacifism was untenable because a society could not subsist without the use of force.⁵⁹ Rowntree rejects the argument that, because there is no clear dividing line between a police force and an army, therefore an army and hence warfare, are acceptable. He also rejects the evolutionary argument, as voiced by William Sanday,⁶⁰ that the present age must be content with a 'dilute Christianity'; that a more perfect obedience of Christ's law must await a better day. If Fox and the early Friends had been content with a 'dilute' witness they could never have had the influence they have had. It was the part of present-day Friends to take the first Friends for examples of uncompromising adherence to principle and to oppose war and militarism with no ifs or buts. Progress itself demanded this:

⁵⁸ Graham, 'Dr. Barton, 154.

⁵⁹ Joseph Rowntree, 'The Principles of Peace', *FQE*, 1907, 457-475. This is an answer to H.M. Wallis' 'A Twice Interrupted Colloquy', *FQE*, 1906, 311-323, 537-556; and related correspondence, *FQE*, 1907, 163-172. For Wallis as a 'war Friend' and his place as such within LYM see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 391, 393. For Graham on Joseph Rowntree see JWGP, Box 4, No. 4, in book of cuttings compiled by Graham.

⁶⁰ William Sanday (1843-1920), theological scholar (*Concise DNB*). The book cited by Rowntree is *Outlines of the Life of Christ* (2nd edn., 1906). A criticism of *FQ* (by Cyril Hopher in *Theology*, September, 1921 (JWGP, Box 19), found fault with Graham's over-reliance on Sanday's *Christologies Ancient and Modern* (1910). (See also Martin Davie, *British Quaker Theology since 1895*, Lewiston, NY; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen. 1997, 121.)

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There have always been two voices, one calling men up to the seemingly impractical, the other bidding them follow the easy path of conventional morality – and looking back we can see that the first is (broadly speaking) the voice of God and the call to progress.⁶¹

There was much in this that Graham held in common with Rowntree.

Graham too believed that Quakers had a duty to live by a standard higher than that prevalent in their age so as to point the way to a better future.⁶² He even had a half-grudging respect for Tolstoy's rejection of all use of force. In a review in the *Manchester Guardian* in 1895 he warned against foregoing 'some of the world's too scanty stock of prophetic endowment' by dismissing the Tolstoyan dream.⁶³ What seems an impossible fantasy in one age may become the reality of another. Quakers are called to lead the way to such a better reality.⁶⁴ There is enough, however, in Wallis' papers to show why, later, in the controversy over Indian independence, Graham found himself in sympathy with him and his associates rather than with the Gandhi enthusiasts.⁶⁵ In 'A Twice Interrupted Colloquy' Wallis wrote of the blessings of the 'pax Britannica' in India, and pointed out that these 'blessings' were conferred and maintained by fighting men, not by Quakers. Graham came to agree that India needed British government, and knew that it must be maintained by force. He had already written of the need for force to maintain

⁶¹ 'Principles', 464.

⁶² See especially 'Whence comes Peace?', *BF*, February, 1896, 27-29; April, 1896, 77-80.

⁶³ Review of Tolstoy's *Four Gospels Harmonized and Translated*, in *Manchester Guardian*, 13/04/1895, JWGP, Box 4, 8. But see Graham's 'Limits to the Use of Force', *Friend*, 2/4/1915, 247-248, 247, and *FQ*, 367, for his opposition to Tolstoy's extremes.

⁶⁴ See 7.8., below.

⁶⁵ See 8.2., below.

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order and other forms of compromise with Christian and Quaker ideals.⁶⁶

Graham did not believe that refusal to fight was a moral imperative for every time and every place. Humankind, he believed, is growing beyond the need for war and conquest. This is the thesis of *Evolution and Empire*. Yet relativism is built into this progressivist view:

Evolutionists do not estimate the customs of one age by the standards of another. That is one of the gains of evolutionary thought. That which is utterly wrong to-day because it represents 'a law in the members', is seen to be right during the ages when it grew to be a law in the members.⁶⁷

In *The Faith of a Quaker* the need for relativism is explicitly stated:

If we examine our own current words and ideas we shall find that we all really acknowledge this variety of standard.⁶⁸ How otherwise is a Quaker schoolmaster to teach about the Battle of Marathon or the Battle of Marston Moor – to estimate Washington or Garibaldi?⁶⁹

Graham is drawing here on his own experience. Michael Graham wrote of his father as 'the man who obstinately admired Cromwell and taught the Civil Wars with his own wall charts of the battles'.⁷⁰

This does not excuse those of Graham's own time and nationality from opposing war. Human progress works through successive stages, each higher rung of the ladder repudiating the one below. An aspect of progress

⁶⁶ In 'Whence Comes Peace?'

⁶⁷ *EE*, 22. The reference is to Romans, 7:23.

⁶⁸ Graham is referring to some words of Origen urging Christians 'to strive by prayers to God on behalf of those who render military service righteously' even if they have scruples about fighting themselves (*FQ*, 347).

⁶⁹ *FQ*, 348.

⁷⁰ Graham 'Spokesman', 4.17. For Michael Graham pacifism sat ill with John William's nature.

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was political: evolution towards better government in larger units. War was necessary for the building of nations, for the increase of the 'unit of strife' within which peace was possible.⁷¹ By Graham's day, however, this process had gone far enough, indeed too far, with huge empires ruling agglomerations of nations: the ideal is one of self-governing nation states joined only in 'free federation'.⁷² The next section deals with moral questions to do with empire.

7.4. Empire, Right or Wrong?

Evolution and Empire focuses on wars of conquest, empire-building by means of force. Graham also deliberates more widely on the dangers and achievements of imperial governance, for governed and governors alike. The question of empire was timely when the European powers were juggling for control of the rest of the Globe.⁷³ Graham had shown a strong interest in a 'Greater Britain' from his undergraduate days. The phrase was used by J.R. Seeley,⁷⁴ whom Graham considered 'one of the few men of genius in Cambridge'.⁷⁵ As an undergraduate Graham heard Seeley pronounce the famous words, 'We have conquered half the world in a fit of absence of

⁷¹ *EE*, 20.

⁷² *EE*, 29. Cf. 'Distant Prospects', 90ff., where Graham summarises and comments on Seeley's vision of a federation of European states.

⁷³ See for example, Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World*, London: Allen Lane, 2003, 221-240.

⁷⁴ J.R. Seeley (1834-1895), author of *The Expansion of England* (1883). Seeley was professor of modern history at Cambridge during Graham's time as an undergraduate (*ODNB*, accessed 13/05/2013). Graham's early paper, 'The Distant Prospects of the Peace Party' has several pages on Seeley's address to the Peace Society in 1871 on 'The Prevention of War' ('Distant Prospects', 90-95).

⁷⁵ Quoted by Laity, *British Peace Movement*, 95.

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mind'.⁷⁶ In 1883 Graham read a paper to Oscar Browning's Political Society⁷⁷ at King's College, Cambridge, on 'Pennsylvania as a Political Experiment'.⁷⁸ The paper presents William Penn (1644-1718) as a model coloniser. Graham's admiration for Penn bore further fruit in 1916 in a full-length biography,⁷⁹ Penn is the subject of a chapter in *FQ*,⁸⁰ and at the very end of his life Graham reviewed Bonamy Dobrée's new life of Penn,⁸¹ finding it one-sided, as 'written from the statesman's end, from the world's point of view, not from the Quaker's!'⁸²

Graham later paid a good deal of attention to Penn's theological work, but in the papers of 1883, he focuses on Penn's activities in Pennsylvania, especially, in the first paper, on his treatment of the aboriginal Americans, or 'Indians'. The treatment of 'lower races' was a subject of intense interest for colonisers and those who watched them, including Quakers, in Graham's time.⁸³ Graham singled out for praise Penn's humanity and fair dealing with

⁷⁶ See *EE*, 117.

⁷⁷ For Oscar Browning ('O.B.', 1837-1933) see P.N. Furbank, *E.M. Forster: a Life*, N.Y.; London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977, 53; *ODNB*, accessed 10/11/2015.

⁷⁸ Published as 'Pennsylvania as a Political Experiment' in *FQE*, 1983, 141-152, and 169-181.

⁷⁹ John W. Graham, *William Penn: Founder of Pennsylvania (WP)*, London: Headley, [1916]

⁸⁰ *FQ*, 122-133.

⁸¹ John William Graham, 'Penn, the Man and the Saint', reviewing Bonamy Dobrée, *William Penn, Quaker and Pioneer*, London: Constable, 1932, in *Friend*, October 22, 1932, 901-903.

⁸² 'Penn, the Man and the Saint', 901.

⁸³ As shown in the series of papers by J.A. Hobson published in *The British Friend* under the title 'Imperialism and the Lower Races', *BF*, March, 1902, 52-55; April, 1902, 81-83; June, 1902, 129-132 (see below, this section). See also 1.2.2., above.

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these people and for the way he won their confidence by going unarmed among them with his followers.⁸⁴

In 1886 Graham was still championing the peaceable expansionism of Penn against the politics of John Bright who, in the nineteenth century, opposed any expansion of British territory. It was then that he took part in a debate at Westwood School in Scarborough while he was employed as a teacher at Westwood's brother school, Oliver's Mount.⁸⁵ Here he claimed that British imperialism needed to be supported both because it was 'Good for people we govern' and because it was a 'Necessity of life for ourselves', living in an over-populated island.⁸⁶ Penn was set against Bright as 'the not less prophetic figure ... whose ideas the centuries have carried out to an extent not dreamt of out of fairy land, and who remains to us yet, across two hundred years, the model of British colonisers'. Graham quoted with approval a recently published book called *A Knight's Faith*, which he may have been particularly inclined to admire because it had been collated by Ruskin⁸⁷ from the papers of Sir Herbert Edwardes of the Punjab.⁸⁸ It trumpeted: 'Where

⁸⁴ Penn and the Indians became a Quaker legend, partly by means of Edward Hicks' illustrations of Penn making treaties with the natives in several paintings in his 'Peaceable Kingdom' series.

⁸⁵ The 'Foreign Policy Debate' took place on 15 March 1886. Graham's notes are in JWGP, Box 6. Graham's opponent was William Stickney Rowntree (1848-1939) (see DQB). See Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.17. Michael Graham comments: 'In middle life he was to write very differently on this subject'.

⁸⁶ 'Foreign Policy Debate', 2.5.

⁸⁷ For Graham's devotion to Ruskin see Conclusion, 'Conclusion', below.

⁸⁸ See *A Knight's Faith: Passages in the life of Sir H. Edwardes* (extracted from his work "A year on the Punjab Frontier"); collated by John Ruskin, 1885 (in: Ruskin (J.) *Bibliotheca Pastorum*. Vol. IV. 1876, etc.) (British Library catalogue). Based on Herbert B. Edwardes, *A Year on the Punjab Frontier, in 1848-49*, London: R. Bentley, 1851. Sir Herbert Benjamin Edwardes (1819-1868) served with distinction on the Afghanistan frontier during the middle

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Britain goes, there goes order, there goes law, there goes peace. At no time have so many people lived in peace as now under the Pax Britannica'.⁸⁹ And so Graham perorated:

Let us then not fight against our destiny, but be proud and be glad that it is the function and duty of England to found young communities rich in the treasures of an old yet a living civilisation, and in the institutions of a self-reliant people; and to banish poverty stricken savagery and hopeless darkness from all the waste places of the world.⁹⁰

'Pax Britannica' was a phrase that Graham was still quoting in 1904. At the Hicksite Conference in Toronto that year⁹¹ he flattered his Canadian auditors by telling them that 'No word brought the heart to the throat or moisture to the eyes of Englishmen like a reference to their countrymen overseas, who helped to preserve that Britannic peace under which today dwelt one-fourth of the human race'.⁹²

Native peoples could be a problem to colonisers, but the laws of evolution decreed that they should make way for more highly developed races. Darwin himself had toyed with applying his theory to the development of human society, writing in his journal: 'The varieties of man seem to act on each other; in the same way as different species of animal – the stronger

years of the nineteenth century (*ODNB*, accessed 24 Aug 2015). Ruskin believed Edwardes to be the embodiment of the virtues of Wordsworth's 'happy warrior', and thus to have virtues impossible of attainment in civilian life (John W. Graham, *The Harvest of Ruskin (HR)*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1920, 212).

⁸⁹ Quoted by Graham, 'Foreign Policy Debate', 4. See Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914*, London: Macmillan, 1996, 9ff. on belief among Victorian Christians, especially Anglicans, in Britain's mission to rule and to civilise.

⁹⁰ 'Foreign Policy Debate', 5.

⁹¹ See *Friend*, 23 September, 1904, 626-627.

⁹² Cutting from the *Toronto World*, in JGWP, Box 1.

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always extirpating the weaker'.⁹³ Wallace too believed that some human groups would survive only at the expense of others. In a paper read to the Anthropological Society⁹⁴ in 1864 he said that 'the hardiest races with the greatest ingenuity and co-operation would prevail, while the struggle "leads to the inevitable extinction of all those low and mentally undeveloped populations with which the Europeans come into contact".⁹⁵ This was a doctrine convenient for colonisers, and even clergymen might make use of it: Desmond and Moore write of a preacher who, 'witnessing the last of the Tasmanians, saw it as a "universal law in the Divine government" that "savage tribes [should] disappear before the progress of civilised races"'.⁹⁶ Graham therefore had respectable antecedents for the chilling views he expressed in his 'War and Evolution' paper:

There can be no reasonable doubt that, say in America or Australia, the survival of the fittest means the survival of the European ... [To try to preserve aboriginal people would] be indeed a grievous mistake, and a non-fulfilment of our manifest destiny; the duty of banishing half-famished barbarism and hopeless darkness from all the waste places of the earth.⁹⁷

Ever the optimist, he insists (temperance campaigner and pacifist as he is) that 'the gin bottle and the rifle bullet' are unnecessary to accomplish this.

⁹³ Quoted by Adrian Desmond and James Moore, *Darwin's Sacred Cause: Race, Slavery and the Quest for Human Origins*, London: Penguin, 2009, 151.

⁹⁴ Founded in 1858 by some members of the Ethnological Society (including Quakers) who were dissatisfied with the parent body. See Geoffrey Cantor, *Quakers, Jews and Science: Religious Responses to Modernity and the Sciences in Britain, 1650-1900*, Oxford: University Press, 2005, 137-8; George W. Stocking, Jr., *Victorian Anthropology*, New York; London: Collier Macmillan, 1987, 248-254.

⁹⁵ Desmond and Moore, *Darwin*, 521. The authors note that Darwin indicated his agreement by marking this passage.

⁹⁶ Desmond and Moore, *Darwin's Sacred Cause*, 150.

⁹⁷ 'War and Evolution', 315.

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Instead he subscribes to the view that 'by one of those wonderful interdependences in Nature's polity', people like the native Americans will die out of their own accord in the face of European colonisers, as the 'Indians' to whom Penn was so kind have almost done.⁹⁸ This idea was not Graham's invention. Michael King, author of *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, relates that it was a common belief of the New Zealand settlers and indeed of the Maori themselves in the mid- to late nineteenth century that the Maori would die out.⁹⁹

Graham was present at a meeting of the Aborigines Protection Society¹⁰⁰ in 1898. Here he spoke of the misgivings often felt by cultured people, in view of the facts that extermination seems to be sanctioned in the Old Testament, and that science, in enforcing the law of the survival of the fittest, also teaches that it is useless and foolish to attempt to stem its tide.¹⁰¹ By this time he is more aware of the 'difficulties' surrounding treatment of tribal peoples, though not condemning the imperial enterprise. In *Evolution and Empire* (1912) he is able to declare unequivocally: 'To look to the conquest of dark races as though it were still the centre of interest on the development of man, is indeed a far cry from this, and long out of date. It has

⁹⁸ 'Pennsylvania', 152. ('Negroes', he has to accept, are an exception to this rule.)

⁹⁹ Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, North Shore, NZ; London: Penguin, 2003, 224.

¹⁰⁰ Founded in 1837 by the abolitionist Thomas Buxton (1786-1845) and the Quaker doctor Thomas Hodgkin (1798-1866), uncle of the Thomas Hodgkin (1831-1913), who supported the progressive wing among British Quakers. See Desmond and Moore, *Darwin's Sacred Cause*, 144; Cantor, *Quakers, Jews and Science*, 133-138.

¹⁰¹ *Friend*, 28 October, 1898, 694.

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no evolutionary value'.¹⁰² He no longer believes that colonies in the Tropics are needed to accommodate surplus population, as he had said they were at Scarborough in 1886:¹⁰³ numbers in European countries are stabilizing, and so far as emigration is needed 'our people emigrate to where they can live – Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States, – not to Uganda or Nigeria'.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, European people (especially the British) no longer have the ruthlessness of 'such philanthropists as Pizarro and Sir John Hawkins'.¹⁰⁵ For humankind is evolving in the direction of increasing co-operation and mutual kindness and sympathy rather than competition. Here Britain and America are in the lead as countries where duelling has been outlawed and antivivisection sentiment flourishes, whereas 'Italy is a horror for its treatment of animals'.¹⁰⁶ Graham resorts to sarcasm to mock alternative uses of evolutionary science to favour such examples of 'fitness' as Pizarro and Hawkins: 'We are greatly hampered by that degenerative symptom a creeping humanity; sensibility to pain, to murder, and an objection to condemning natives to lives of cruel misery is an obstacle standing greatly in the way of biological progress'. He comments: 'It is indeed easy to mock at the shallow stretching of a biological formula to cover with a glamour of

¹⁰² *EE*, 111.

¹⁰³ Foreign Policy debate, 5 (JWGP, Box 6).

¹⁰⁴ *EE*, 124.

¹⁰⁵ Respectively conqueror of Peru and pioneer of the slave trade. See, for instance, J.H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963, 171-174 (for Pizarro), 183-185 (for Hawkins).

¹⁰⁶ *EE*, 75.

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scientific orthodoxy a Gospel of cruelty and greed'.¹⁰⁷ In fact, as he knew, German thinkers such as Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896) had recently been propagating just such glorifications of power without compunction.¹⁰⁸ Graham mentions Treitschke and Nietzsche, 'that poetical madman and lost soul', in his lament over past hopes dashed by the outbreak of war in 1914, admitting that the admirable Germans have been fatally led astray by them and Bernhardi.¹⁰⁹

7.5. War and Empire, Vice and Virtue

A more acceptable understanding of power and its responsibilities was to be found in the writings of J.A. Hobson,¹¹⁰ a favourite of Graham's, the author of *Imperialism* (1902).¹¹¹ Graham was reading Hobson and writing on imperialism at the same time in January 1910, while preparing for the General Election.¹¹² Conveniently, Hobson provided a condensed version of his *Imperialism* thesis for *The British Friend*,¹¹³ suggesting that the liberal

¹⁰⁷ *EE*, 102, 103.

¹⁰⁸ Nietzsche used a version of Darwinism that rejected teleology, to back a ruthless vision in which 'the goal of humanity' lies not in the end 'but only in its highest specimens' (original emphasis). Quoted in Alistair Kee, *The Way of Transcendence: Christian Faith without Belief in God*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971, 118. For Edward Grubb's views of Nietzsche and Treitschke see his pacifist manifesto *The True Way of Life*, 45 (see 7.2., above). For Nietzsche as the grim alternative to Christ see Grubb, 'The Work and Influence of Joseph John Gurney', *FQE*, 1912, 292-309, 307.

¹⁰⁹ 'Friend and Citizen', *Friend*, 25 September, 1914, 701-3. For Graham on Treitschke's view of 'the State as power' see Graham, 'The State and the Individual', *Friend*, 9 April, 1915, 267-269, 267.

¹¹⁰ John Atkinson Hobson (1858–1940), social theorist and economist (*ODNB*, accessed 23 April 2015).

¹¹¹ J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism: a Study* [1902]; new introduction by Nathaniel Mehr, Nottingham: Spokesman Books, 2011.

¹¹² See diary entry for 5 January, 1910 (JWGP, Box 15).

¹¹³ John A. Hobson, 'Imperialism and the Lower Races', *BF*, March, April, June, 1902, 53-55, 81-83, 129-132.

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producers and readers of that periodical regarded Hobson as one of their own.¹¹⁴ Here Hobson lays bare pretences on the part of imperialist nations that their presence in tropical countries is for the benefit of the natives, showing how the overriding motive has been economic gain. Nevertheless, he cautiously endorses the imperial presence in tropical countries, and a degree of compulsion on the rulers' part, to counteract the 'indolence and torpor of character' of the natives. This was the attitude that Graham took with him to India.¹¹⁵ Before that visit, however, Graham asserted that empire was bad for rulers and ruled alike, particularly with respect to morality:

"A conquered race for generations" is a phrase we use for excusing lying or deceit in any people. Their life is either one of recurring failure in revolt or of dull, hopeless acquiescence. To the conquerors there comes pride and generally tyranny and self-indulgence ... The conquering nation is occupied more with domination than with internal progress. Its home standards of liberty are imperiled ... A state of friction is set up on both sides which is sheer waste, inflammation, and pain.¹¹⁶

The point is made at greater length in Graham's essay of 1913, 'The Moral Sequelae of Conquest', which again denounces war and conquest as enemies of progress: 'All the beautiful things of human life grow in freedom and peace. War and conquest are a frank recurrence to the methods of the beast, and produce the moral qualities of the beast of prey and its hunted

¹¹⁴ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 127-128, on how *BF* became the mouthpiece of liberal Friends. Kennedy refers to Hobson's articles in *British Quakerism*, 267-268, emphasizing the eagerness with which readers of the journal embraced Hobson's anti-imperialist views, expressed here and in *Imperialism*.

¹¹⁵ Hobson, 'Imperialism and the Lower Races', 54.

¹¹⁶ *EE*, 175.

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victim in those who suffer from it'.¹¹⁷ True, in this essay the most shocking examples are drawn from ancient history or from Russia and Turkey: compared with these, the British Empire is benign, 'the best and wisest Empire known to history', though the effects on 'the large Eurasian population', especially in India, are lamentable.¹¹⁸ In *Evolution and Empire* Graham points out that imperialism brings about a 'change of standard', resulting in delays in the abolition of slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba and exploitation of the Chinese in the opium wars and through importing Chinese cheap labour into South Africa.¹¹⁹

Empire made for bad morals, but it could be argued that war was necessary for the cultivation of certain virtues. William James famously taught that war is, for soldiers, 'a school of strenuous life and heroism' and 'the only school that as yet is universally available'. We need 'the moral equivalent of war'.¹²⁰ Graham was of a temperament to be stirred by tales of derring-do. Michael Graham says that as a boy in Preston, where relics of the Civil War battle of Ribbleton Moor were to be found, he was 'told by his parents that soldiers were not good people, because they were trained to kill, but he noticed that other people, especially the ladies, seemed to like the

¹¹⁷ 'Moral Sequelae', 393.

¹¹⁸ 'Moral Sequelae', 396.

¹¹⁹ *EE*, 78, 79.

¹²⁰ See William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Gifford Lectures, 1901-2), London: Fontana, 1960, 356. See also T. Edmund Harvey, *The Long Pilgrimage: Human Progress in the Light of the Christian Hope* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1921), published for the Woodbrooke Extension Committee by Robert Davis, 1921, 61, for the 'chivalry and unselfishness' evoked by war which the Christian church must find ways to inspire in times of peace.

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soldiers very much'.¹²¹ At school he learned Macaulay's poem, 'The Spanish Armada', by heart,¹²² and at UCL he won as a prize the same author's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, 'very appropriately', according to his son.¹²³ The warlike enthusiasms learned in such a school were not easily thrown off. Literature is mainly on the side of martial heroism, as Graham acknowledged in *FQ*: 'He who would deny that war can ever be a builder of good character has against him no mean array of testimony'. With the exception of *The Trojan Women*, the work of 'that terrible and unpopular truth-teller Euripides', the classic texts are virtually unanimous in their praise of warfare.

Graham believed that war was 'the greatest of sports':

a game played with the last and highest stakes. Beside the excitement of it hunting and Alpine climbing become child's play, and cricket an affair of the drawing room carpet. All that sport is generally allowed to do for character war does, or did, more. And, in addition, behind it lay at the back of the warrior's mind some loyalty believed to be worth dying for. Every soldier is pulled up to a certain point of self-control, toughness, courage, alertness, and general character, and those who start below that level will still find a moral tonic in war.¹²⁴

This was a view underlined by Graham's hero, John Ruskin, in Lecture 3 of *The Crown of Wild Olive*:¹²⁵ a text which Graham had to exercise some

¹²¹ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman', 3.6.

¹²² Graham, 'Spokesman', 3.14.

¹²³ Graham, 'Spokesman', 4.2. Graham must have been familiar with the *Lays* well before this, for a school-boy essay, dated 12 November, 1871, when Graham was at Ackworth, quotes from 'Horatius', probably the best-known poem of this collection ('The Sisters', in JWGP, Box 11).

¹²⁴ *FQ*, 382. T.C. Kennedy comments on the 'glamorous' & 'sporting' image of war to be found in some late Victorian literature (Kennedy, *Hound of Conscience*, 3).

¹²⁵ John Ruskin, 'Lecture 3: War (delivered at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, 1865)', in *The Crown of Wild Olive*, 11th edn., London: George Allen, 1898, 115-171

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ingenuity in interpreting so as to make it acceptable to pacifists.¹²⁶ In *The Harvest of Ruskin* Graham relays faithfully Ruskin's statements about the beneficial effects of war on a nation's art as well as its character, including war undertaken 'for play'.¹²⁷ Graham is able ultimately to claim that Ruskin 'is to be found among the Peace Advocates'¹²⁸ by explaining that his praise of war excludes 'modern war waged by multitudes of conscript or other soldiers, machine guns, and chemical explosives'.¹²⁹ The world where warfare might be regarded as 'the foundation of all the high virtues and faculties of men'¹³⁰ was past.

Even in its glory days war could make for morality only up to a point. The virtues it nurtures belong to a relatively low stage of evolution. It was necessary to set alongside 'that modest level of attainment' the undeniable viciousness to which warfare also gives rise:

In war we see every kind of violent villainy rampant – murder, robbery, the ruin of homes ... Sympathy, hard hit and exhausted, flees away, and no man can live unless he becomes hardened to suffering ... The chained devil within becomes, for a time, master again.¹³¹

Thus war is essentially regressive. Moreover, if a 'moral equivalent' is needed, there is plenty of scope for the exercise of the martial virtues in

¹²⁶ G.A. Sutherland felt constrained to apologise for Graham's defence of Ruskin's 'deplorable sentiments on war' in 'The Crown of Wild Olive', in his obituary of Graham in *The Daltonian*, December, 1932, 8-11, 10.

¹²⁷ *HV*, 203-221.

¹²⁸ *HV*, 219.

¹²⁹ *HV*, 220.

¹³⁰ *HV*, 204, quoting Ruskin.

¹³¹ *FQ*, 383. See also 'War as a Moral Tonic', *Friend*, 16 April, 1915, 283-4

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modern industrial society: 'So long as diseases are fatal and infectious, but must be nursed, so long as Society suffers from poverty, from drink and degrading vice, the need for Paladins, for knights errant and honourable women, presses daily upon us'.¹³² Even in his defence of peace Graham, that 'bonny fechter',¹³³ is drawn to use the martial imagery to which his nature and his early reading made him prone.

7.6. Countering Militarism

Graham was fully aware of the rise in warlike spirit in his country during the decades leading up the War. It was clearly evident in his home territory of Manchester, where in 1905 the university appointed one Colonel Maude¹³⁴ as lecturer in 'military subjects'.¹³⁵ Maude gave an address, reported in the *Manchester Guardian*, warning that Britain was in danger of not taking enough account of the Clausewitzian¹³⁶ principles of war. He listed five of these, including the statements: 'War is an act of violence as natural and legitimate as all other acts pertaining to commerce, industry, etc.'; 'It is an act which exalts the people who engage in it'; 'Every idea of philanthropy in war is a pernicious error'. Maude claimed that these principles were to be found in

¹³² Cf. 'C.R.S'. 'The Miner's Moral Equivalent', *Friend*, 22 May, 1925 – a review of *A Pitman's Notebook*, which maintains that the miner's life presents the required 'moral equivalent'.

¹³³ G.A. Sutherland, obituary of Graham in *The Daltonian*, 109, December, 1932, 8-11, 9.

¹³⁴ See 1.3.2., above, note. Frederic Natusch Maude (1854-1933), prolific writer on military subjects. See <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookupname?key=Maude%2C%20F.%20N.%20%28Frederic%20Natusch%29%2C%201854-1933>, accessed 2 February, 2016.

¹³⁵ See JWGP, Box 4, 26-34.

¹³⁶ The Prussian military thinker Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) was the author of *On War*, published in 1832. Maude revised the 1908 English translation of this work (Carl von Clausewitz; *On War*; translation by J.J. Graham; revised by F.N. Maude; introduction by Louise Willmot, Ware: Wordsworth, 1997 (British Library Catalogue).

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'the standard book of Germany', 'which had now become the text book for all Europe'.¹³⁷ An outraged John William Graham took it upon himself to confront Maude, in the name of peace. In a letter to the *Guardian*, he appealed to Christian morality: 'Where, I wonder, does the glory of the Crucifixion come in?', then quickly went on to invoke ideas of evolutionary progress:

Colonel Maude treats Napoleon and Bismarck as though they were epoch-makers in the general trend of things; the fact is that they were belated barbarians long out of date; they were highly-placed reversals to the savage type. We have got rid of the curse of Napoleon, and we shall outlive the curse of Bismarck.¹³⁸

There followed some spirited correspondence in the *Guardian*, much of it supportive of Graham. Then in November, 1905, a debate took place at the University between Colonel Maude and our hero on the proposition, 'Militarism blocks the way to national welfare'. The headline in the *Guardian* read 'Militarism and Progress'. The report of Graham's speech described him as passing briefly over the anti-Christian and humanitarian objections to war to focus on its obsolete character. Bizarrely, Graham claimed that the present day was simply unfit for war:

In the Middle Ages war was just as easily gone in far [sic], and perhaps more easily reached, than a general election to-day. But a war in England nowadays would mean that we were endeavouring to carry on gymnastic operations in a raincoat and a crinoline, and that we were not properly dressed for the purpose.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ F.N. Maude, 'National Defence', in *Manchester Guardian* [n.d.: 1905], JWGP, Box 4, 26.

¹³⁸ JWGP, Box 4, 26.

¹³⁹ *Manchester Guardian*, 11 November, 1905; JWGP, Box 4, 30.

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Maude took up the fact that Graham had spoken of Russia as the likely enemy, and said that Germany was the power to fear. This was because the Germans cultivated the military spirit and the virtues of self-sacrificing patriotism. Maude won the debate, with 59 against the motion to 43 in favour.

Graham returned to the fight in a hostile review in *The Friend of Maude's* book, *War and the World's Life*,¹⁴⁰ under the heading 'The Gospel of War'.¹⁴¹ He shows his confidence in the agreement of his friendly readership by simply quoting without attempt at refutation Maude's invocation of the deity in support of war:

We proceed to a higher authority than even the Germans. 'It is God's will that wars should arise, and by God's will also the soldier will do his utmost in that station of life to which it has pleased Him to call him. The responsibility he leaves to the Almighty; and if he is wrong, well, he can only be damned once, and there are no two eternities'. This is the biggest sporting chance I know of in literature.¹⁴²

Evolution is also invoked, in ways which became habitual with Graham, to excoriate Maude for assuming that 'struggle for existence' means 'conscious warfare'.¹⁴³ He reserves for the end 'Maude's central doctrine', that 'peace demoralises', using the same heavy-handed sarcasm that we find in *Evolution and Empire*, while insisting as always on the need for strenuous effort in humane causes: 'War [Maude] describes as a fever which cleanses the

¹⁴⁰ F.N. Maude, *War and the World's Life*, Smith, Elder, 1907.

¹⁴¹ *Friend*, 13 December, 1907, 822-824.

¹⁴² 'Gospel of War', 823.

¹⁴³ 'Gospel of War', 824.

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system from corrupt germs'. This could be so if 'peace meant idleness and self-indulgence', but in the modern industrial world

[Peace] leads to the organisation of society, to co-operation, and to common humanity between nations; it needs no moral assistance from bomb-shell and grape-shot, none of the winning tenderness of submarine mines, none of the *Dread-nought's* civilising evangel.¹⁴⁴

Graham continued to campaign against the military mentality up to the eve of war, remaining convinced that, whatever the perils of thinking such as Maude's, the time for peace had come. An essay written by him at about this time for the magazine *One & All* confidently asserted that 'the "stars in their course" always fight for peace in the long run', and that the present time is set fair for peace. This is

due to the operation of great industrial tendencies, of increasing mutual knowledge and sympathy, and of the decay and ruin which comes to military empires ... I think we may be at the beginning of an epoch when international life will be on a higher level than heretofore.¹⁴⁵

Next came not only *Evolution and Empire* but also two essays in *FQE*, in which Graham pleaded against the build-up of arms and war-ships, calling Quakers to resist the war-mongering of their leaders while insisting that Germany was not a threat.¹⁴⁶ Then in January 1913 he gave an address to a

¹⁴⁴ 'Gospel of War', 824. It was unfortunate for Graham that his adored Tennyson represents Peace as 'sitting under her olive ... cheating in business, adulterating food and oppressing the poor', as Graham acknowledges in *EE*, 81 (see Tennyson's poem, *Maud*, Part 1, Stanza 9).

¹⁴⁵ 'The Coming Age – Peace or War?' in *One & All*. No date, but it is filed with papers from the beginning of 1906 (JWGP, Box 4, 41).

¹⁴⁶ 'Building against Germany', *FQE*, 1909, 172-176; 'Towards an Understanding with Germany', *FQE*, 1912, 119-127.

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special conference on peace arranged by Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting*, held in York and attended by Friends from the Quarterly Meetings of Lancashire and Cheshire, Cumberland, Westmoreland and Durham. It called Friends to 'a new crusade'.¹⁴⁷ From the Meeting sprang the Northern Friends Peace Board (NFPB), of which Graham was the first Clerk.¹⁴⁸

The conference was prefaced by another address by Graham, 'Is War out of Date?', summarising arguments set out in *Evolution and Empire* and elsewhere that social evolution no longer proceeds by way of warfare and concluding, as *The Friend* reported: 'In opposing war we were not Utopian dreamers, not idle sentimentalists, or the foolish idealists of impossible ideals, but up-to-date people who were facing facts and speaking in modern language'.¹⁴⁹ It was important for Graham that Friends should join with 'other forces that make for peace' 'with quite other illumination than ours'.¹⁵⁰ The perception that war was obsolete, that it retarded the development and the well-being of nations, had, he said, become widespread in secular society.¹⁵¹ Graham set himself against the view, evidently current among some Friends,

¹⁴⁷ John W. Graham, 'Our Call to a New Crusade', 'An address given at the Peace Conference at York, arranged by the five Northern Quarterly Meetings, Jan. 27th, 1913'. Published in *FQE*, 47 (1913) 233-242. Graham records this address in his diary as a 'Paper on duty to extend Peace work to Evolution Methods' (29 January, 1913; JWGP, Box 15).

¹⁴⁸ See NFPB website: <http://www.nfpb.org.uk/news/2013-01-29/nfpb-marks-centenary> and 'The Five Northern Quarterly Meetings of England Joint Conference on Peace', Supplement to *The Friend*, 14 February, 1913. Graham continued active with the NFPB: his diaries record frequent occasions where he chairs or addresses their meetings, or speaks about them at other meetings of Friends (see JWGP, Box 15). On the Conference see Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism', 303, and Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 303. Both Phillips and Kennedy comment on the part played by Graham.

¹⁴⁹ *Friend*, 7 February, 1913, 86.

¹⁵⁰ 'Our Call', 232.

¹⁵¹ 'Our Call', 232, 3.

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that 'an argument based upon self-interest is sordid; one based on evolution is dubious'.¹⁵² Friends needed to ally themselves with others in a great movement on the side of evolution and against war, for the end-time was now rapidly approaching: 'Evolution glides with the car and the train, where once she rumbled with the bullock-cart'. And

We [the Quakers] are the people most ready to work such a movement, not yet perhaps intellectually equipped, but equipped with a moral fervour and a religious background possessed by no one else, and only needing to devote to this question the same intellectual study which we give to other questions, to be able to enter upon propaganda which are bound to meet with a great response.¹⁵³

Graham was pleased with his audience's response to his speech: 'The meeting went very thoroughly with me and we have got a committee to carry it out', he told his son Richard.¹⁵⁴

The work was urgent because of the mad build-up of arms which was being carried on in parallel to the movement for peace. Thomas Hodgkin, who chaired the conference, had noted that a strong movement in favour of military conscription¹⁵⁵ was taking place alongside the growing sense that the democracies of Europe would flourish better without great armies and large armament stocks.¹⁵⁶ It was necessary to seize the hour.

The Northern Friends' Peace Conference followed hard upon the publication of *Evolution and Empire* (1912), and Graham's address repeated

¹⁵² 'Our Call', 236.

¹⁵³ 'Our Call', 242.

¹⁵⁴ Letter, 3 February, 1913, JWGP, Box 16.

¹⁵⁵ As championed by Lord Roberts and his National Service League. See 7.2., above.

¹⁵⁶ Supplement to *Friend*, 14 February, 1913.

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many of the points made in the book. There Graham is concerned not so much with denouncing war and empire as about prophesying their end. Borrowing from Herbert Spencer, Graham argues that by a process of evolution a 'militant' stage in social evolution is followed by an industrial stage, such as has now been reached in Britain and America.¹⁵⁷ Industrial societies are characterised by peaceableness, co-operation and relative freedom for individuals.¹⁵⁸ Two chapters in *Evolution and Empire* connect militarism with despotism.¹⁵⁹ Unlike Spencer, whose views are entirely secular,¹⁶⁰ Graham discerns a divine plan steadily leading the human race into an era of perpetual peace:

There seems no doubt that the spirit of Divine Wisdom, which is always working in the world, and leading the race of man, in whom it dwells, and through whom it works, stage by stage to power and happiness – there is no doubt that this spirit, acting as the spirit of the age, is making strongly for arbitration instead of war.¹⁶¹

Even here, however, we see Graham attending as much to the detail of means as to lofty-sounding visions: if the lion is to lie down with the lamb, nations must first learn to submit to arbitration rather than go to war.¹⁶²

Graham could see that proponents of opposite views might also invoke the concept of divine impulsion: such opponents he represents as teaching

¹⁵⁷ Quoted *EE*, 39, 41. For Spencer see 1.2.1., above.

¹⁵⁸ *EE*, 75; 84,5

¹⁵⁹ Chapters 3 and 4, 36-61.

¹⁶⁰ According to the *ODNB*, Spencer 'from an early age rejected all possibility of belief in an immanent or personal God' (*ODNB*, accessed 23 August, 2015).

¹⁶¹ *EE*, 98.

¹⁶² 'Arbitration' was a watchword of the nineteenth-century peace movement. In 1883 the largely Quaker Peace Society changed the name of its organ from *Herald of Peace* to *Herald of Peace and International Arbitration* (Laity, *British Peace Movement*, 92).

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that '[Britain's] task for the twentieth century will be to face a conflict for empire with the Germans, and after that with the Russians, or possibly the Japanese or the Americans. In all this we or our conquerors will be the instruments of a Higher Power'.¹⁶³ Arguments from a secular philosophy, such as that of Spencer,¹⁶⁴ or based on economic prudence, such as those of Norman Angell,¹⁶⁵ might be less subject to expropriation. Angell was contemptuous of evolution-based arguments for war, such as that voiced as follows in *Blackwood's Magazine* in May 1909: 'We appear to have forgotten the fundamental truth – confirmed by all history – that the warlike races inherit the earth, and that Nature decrees the survival of the fittest in the never-ending struggle for existence'.¹⁶⁶ The bulk of Angell's book is given to arguing that war between Germany and other European powers will not take place because it is so manifestly against the economic interest of all parties. Prosperity depends on trade, which does not depend on the possession of overseas territories and would be destroyed by war. Therefore the expense of annexing far-flung lands and building up navies is sheer waste.¹⁶⁷ Modern conditions of interdependency among nations mean that old ideas about the

¹⁶³ *EE*, 102.

¹⁶⁴ See especially *EE*, 36, 39, where Graham quotes Spencer's *Political Institutions* (the fourth part of his *Principles of Ethics*, 1892). See Alberto Mingardi, *Herbert Spencer*, New York: Continuum, 2011, 56ff.

¹⁶⁵ See Norman Angell, *The Great Illusion: a Study of the Relation of Military Power in Nations to their Economic and Social Advantage*, 3rd edn., London: Heinemann, 1911. The book was first published in 1909, under the title *Europe's Optical Illusion*, expanded and reissued under the later title in 1910. For Angell's popularity among Quakers and his part in inspiring the establishment of the Northern Friends' Peace Board in 1913 see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 303.

¹⁶⁶ Quoted by Angell, *The Great Illusion*, 17.

¹⁶⁷ Angell, *The Great Illusion*, 27, 28, and *passim*.

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efficacy of war are out of date, retained only because we are trapped in a vocabulary that no longer fits the situation: 'Our terminology is a survival of conditions no longer existing, and our mental conceptions follow at the tail of our vocabulary'.¹⁶⁸

So impressed was Graham by Angell's arguments that he included a chapter devoted to them in *Evolution and Empire*, as he tells his readers in the Preface.¹⁶⁹ Graham became so well known as an advocate for Angell that when two prizes were offered by a certain Thomas Barningham for essays on Angell by university students Graham was asked to select the subject and help mark the entries.¹⁷⁰ As he told his audience in York, Quakers should be willing to join with secular forces in the great cause.¹⁷¹

7.7. Peace, War and the Bible

Graham was concerned, however, that the Christian argument for peace should be forcefully made, and that meant tackling some difficulties raised by the Bible. Evolution again came to Graham's aid in dealing with the question why the God of the Old Testament is represented so clearly as sanctioning war. Early in the nineteenth century the Nantucket-born Quaker Hannah Barnard (1754-1825) had been denied a certificate to 'travel in the ministry'* in England and disowned in America, in part because she voiced doubts as to

¹⁶⁸ Angell, *The Great Illusion*, 43.

¹⁶⁹ *EE*, 6 and Chapter 18, 193-203.

¹⁷⁰ Letter to Richard Graham, 3 February, 1913, JWGP, Box 16.

¹⁷¹ 'Our Call', 237.

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this bellicose representation of the deity.¹⁷² Similarly, Abraham Shackleton was disowned by London Yearly Meeting in 1801 for maintaining that God could not have sanctioned the wars of the Old Testament.¹⁷³ Now British Quakers escaped the dilemma by asserting that the Old Testament represented a primitive phase in the understanding of God. W.C. Braithwaite could declare in 1895 that 'some of the rudimentary phases of revelation, as, for instance, the Old Testament teaching on the subject of war, or polygamy, or slavery, may be quite devoid of direct authority amid the fuller light of to-day'.¹⁷⁴ Graham's approach was in line with his argument that war had been necessary in the past in order to build up certain human characteristics as well as nations, although it is now obsolescent. Thus he does not hesitate to praise the Maccabees for their struggle against Greek hegemony in the second century B.C.: this war 'will always remain one of the great chapters in the history of the world'.¹⁷⁵ Bible history, like history in general, was a lesson in relativism: 'The question ... as to whether any particular war has been right, such as the Italian Risorgimento,¹⁷⁶ the American Civil War, or the first Balkan

¹⁷² Hugh Barbour, J. William Frost, *The Quakers*, Richmond, Indiana, Friends United Press, 1988, 170.

¹⁷³ Laity, *British Peace Movement*, 216.

¹⁷⁴ W.C. Braithwaite, 'Some Present-day Aims of the Society of Friends', *FQE*, 29 (1895), 321-341, 328. See also anonymous editorial, 'The Old Testament as Seen from the New', *Friend*, 2 March, 1891, 49-51, 51.

¹⁷⁵ *FQ*, 54.

¹⁷⁶ The name of Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872), propagandist for the campaign for Italian independence or 'Risorgimento', was associated with the 'One more war' theory: it must be right for the Italian people to fight to throw off their oppressors before they could settle down in peace (Laity, *British Peace Movement*, 17).

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War, should always be taken in connection with the inquiry, for whom was it right?'¹⁷⁷

Christianity, however, was a religion of peace. On this Graham was clear. Though we should bring a liberal understanding to the 'Sermon on the Mount', not taking it as a list of commandments to be obeyed to the letter,¹⁷⁸ the general tendency of these and other sayings of Christ is clearly to condemn war and violence:¹⁷⁹

All these qualifying considerations cannot make our Lord's teaching mean the exact opposite of what it says. "Love your enemies" cannot by any possible exegesis come to mean "Hate your enemies". "Do good to them that hate you" cannot be translated into "Slay their men, starve their families, and bombard their towns". The whole meaning and spirit of the teaching is irreconcilably hostile to all war. We cannot imagine Jesus Christ working a machine gun and mowing down His brethren.¹⁸⁰

The early Christians were pacifist.¹⁸¹ The heretic Marcion¹⁸² even taught that the Jehovah of the Old Testament is different from and hostile to Christ's Heavenly Father.¹⁸³ In Graham's view, if non-Quaker Christian ministers do

¹⁷⁷ FQ, 348.

¹⁷⁸ FQ, 325-328.

¹⁷⁹ Here Graham was in agreement with Joseph Rowntree in his 'Principles of Peace' essay (p.458).

¹⁸⁰ FQ, 328. The final image no doubt owes something to the eloquent evocation of 'Christ in khaki' in Alfred Salter's anti-war speech reported in the *Labour Leader*, 24 September, 1914, and quoted in full by Graham in his *Conscription and Conscience: a History 1916-1919*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1922, 45-50. See also David Boulton *Objection Overruled* [1967], Hobsons Farm, Dent: Dales Historical Monographs, 2014. Cf. Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, Quaker Heritage; Farmington, ME. [n.d.] [based on text produced in Aberdeen, 1678], 468.

¹⁸¹ FQ, 338-351.

¹⁸² For Marcion (c. 85–c.160) see article by Gerhard May in *RPP*. Marcion believed in a 'just' 'demiurge' active before the time of Jesus and different from the loving Father of the New Testament.

¹⁸³ FQ, 218.

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not condemn war it is probably because they are paid by the establishment and cannot afford to do so.¹⁸⁴

There are, however, difficulties for the pacifist within the New Testament. There is the passage from Luke's Gospel about the 'Two Swords', the subject of Graham's essay 'Christ and Swords' discussed above.¹⁸⁵ The essay appeared in *FQE*, at a date midway between the two articles mentioned above which addressed the perils of the current mutual threatening between Britain and Germany. For Graham it was as important to be clear about the biblical basis for the testimony against war as about the practical politics. Then there is the 'Cleansing of the Temple episode', recorded in all four gospels, where Christ drives out the money-changers and those who sold animals for sacrifice.¹⁸⁶ The Johannine version has Jesus making a 'scourge' of cords (AV) with which to do this. How to square this with Quaker opposition to violence? Graham cuts the Gordian knot by assuming that 'the scourge was needed for the animals; then the men had to follow ... The whole story is one of moral suasion with nothing physical to back it. But it has figured largely in argument during the war'.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ John W. Graham, *The Quaker Ministry* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1925) London: Swarthmore Press, 1925 (*QM*), 15, 6.

¹⁸⁵ Luke 22: 35-38. See 2.6., above.

¹⁸⁶ Matt., 21: 12-13; Mk., 11: 15-17; Luke, 19: 45; John, 2:13-15.

¹⁸⁷ *FQ*, 331.

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7.8. Peace, War and the Quakers

'The views of the Quakers', condemned by the Anglican divine Henry Alford in his exposition of the 'Two Swords' passage,¹⁸⁸ were neither clear nor unanimous, as Graham knew very well. In his 1882 letter to the *Friend*, 'Our Position about War'¹⁸⁹ he cites with gusto Edward Burrough's¹⁹⁰ exhortation of 1659 to Cromwell's army to smite the papists,¹⁹¹ and it is a theme he returns to in later life, after he has come down more firmly into the anti-war camp.¹⁹² In this youthful piece he draws a distinction between the individual who refuses to fight because he thinks it wrong and 'the theoretical proposition that for any Christian Government to make war is an act of sin'.¹⁹³ In *FQ* he stresses the fact that Quakers were not, in the first decade of the movement, opposed to all war: in 1651 George Fox refused a commission in the Cromwellian Army on the grounds 'that he lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion for all wars',¹⁹⁴ but that did not stop him upbraiding the Protector for not being sufficiently aggressive against 'Hollanders', Spaniards and the Pope.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁸ See 2.6., above.

¹⁸⁹ John W. Graham, 'Our Position about War', *Friend*, 1 December, 1882, 303-304.

¹⁹⁰ Burrough was one of the earliest followers of George Fox. See *OHQS*, 26-27, and numerous mentions in Rosemary Moore, *The Light in their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain, 1646-1666*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.

¹⁹¹ 'Our Position about War', 303.

¹⁹² *FQ*, 354-355.

¹⁹³ 'Our Position about War', 303.

¹⁹⁴ Cited by Graham in *FQ*, 354. The original is in Fox's *Journal*, 65.

¹⁹⁵ *FQ*, 354, citing a 'Parchment-bound book' in Devonshire House, quoted by W.C. Braithwaite in *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (see W.C Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* 2nd edition revised by Henry Cadbury, York: Sessions, 1981 p.440). Braithwaite specifies simply a 'parchment-bound book in Portfolio 9'.

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For Fox, Graham believed, clarity on peace and war came during a ten-week period of mental suffering in Reading in 1659.¹⁹⁶ Graham thought 'that in that loneliness he was working out for us his solution of the puzzle caused by the rival loyalties to the nation and to God'.¹⁹⁷ The solution was formulated in an Epistle telling Friends that fighting is incompatible with the spirit of Christ.¹⁹⁸ Nevertheless, even after this Friends of the seventeenth century did not condemn all war or all use of force. Isaac Penington, who did not join the Friends until 1658,¹⁹⁹ but was, according to Graham, 'always a leading spokesman for the Society',²⁰⁰ believed that fighting was sometimes necessary: 'I speak not against any magistrates or peoples defending themselves against foreign invasion or making use of the sword to suppress the violent and evil-doers within their border, for this the present state of things may and doth require'.²⁰¹ Yet it was right for some who had progressed beyond the 'present state of things' to refrain from fighting, despite the accusation that they are profiting from other people's willingness to fight for them, for they are the earnest of a better time to come:

This blessed state which shall be brought forth in the general in God's season must begin in particulars, and they therein are not prejudicial to the world, but emblems of that blessed state which the God of Glory hath promised to set up in the world in the days of the gospel.²⁰²

¹⁹⁶ See Fox, *Journal*, 353-4; Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, 357.

¹⁹⁷ *FQ*, 355.

¹⁹⁸ *FQ*, 356.

¹⁹⁹ Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, 504.

²⁰⁰ *FQ*, 375.

²⁰¹ Quoted in *FQ*, 376.

²⁰² Quoted in *FQ*, 376.

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Penington's words gave just the warrant Graham needed for his own sense of what the Quakers' attitude to war should be. In the 1882 letter indeed his position is not entirely clear. He states on the one hand that 'the spirit of Christ and the spirit of War are directly antagonistic', making 'directly opposite claims upon the allegiance of men', but on the other he praises 'the spirit of self-sacrificing duty [that] has often called men to war'.²⁰³ Graham was writing at a time when the British Government, under Gladstone, was engaged in attacking Egypt in response to riots resulting in European deaths. Liberal public opinion was dismayed, for Gladstone had come to power pledged to reverse the expansionist policies of the previous régime, and the Quaker John Bright resigned from the government on the issue,²⁰⁴ as Graham notes. But Graham cannot bring himself to condemn Gladstone, whom he respects as 'a good type of what an enlightened and conscientious Englishman thinks on most things' who is yet able to invoke 'divine help' for the success of the Egyptian project. Graham concludes, 'It is only as people become enlightened that Governments can follow suit'.²⁰⁵ Yes, war will eventually 'fall before the more excellent way which Christ has shown', so 'Let the Peace Society and the Society of Friends go on influencing public opinion; by doing this we shall be wiser than if we declared that our Government should do without war on the spot'.²⁰⁶ With Penington to support him,

²⁰³ 'Our Position about War', 304.

²⁰⁴ See Stewart J. Brown, *Providence and Empire: Religion, Politics and Society in the United Kingdom, 1815-1914*, Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2008, 301-2. .

²⁰⁵ 'Our Position about War', 304.

²⁰⁶ 'Our Position about War', 304.

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Graham felt free to assert that pacifists are called to embody 'the more excellent way' ahead of the general population:

The moral sense of our population is represented by a long and wavering column, pushed back and forward, and the whole nation can only act at or behind the centre of gravity of the column. Nevertheless those who are working at the head of the line for better things are the greatest helpers of the nation.²⁰⁷

And Quakers are in the forefront of the pacifists. For Graham, they were 'the steel point ... at the end of the softer metal of the general peace party'.²⁰⁸

7.9. World War 1

Given the declarations Graham made in the years immediately preceding 1914 he might have been expected to be subdued by the outbreak of war. Not a bit of it. In writing to the *Friends' Intelligencer*, the Hicksite journal in America, Graham's tone was almost exultant: 'The war has brought marvelous access of new life and influence to our Meetings here in Manchester ... All the meetings here throb with the tides of the Spirit', while outside the meetings 'The temper of the nation is admirable ... The streets are quiet and the people earnest, dignified and responsible'.²⁰⁹ It would take more than a Great War to dampen the hopefulness of John William Graham. A slightly earlier essay in *The Friend* expresses some ruefulness at being proved wrong, but even here he would not eat his words: 'Events have shown

²⁰⁷ *FQ*, 376.

²⁰⁸ Letter to Richard Graham, 11 February, 1913, JWGP, Box 11 (quoted by Laity, *British Peace Movement*, 179). At least one other Quaker also saw the Society of Friends as leading the way to peace. J.H. Midgley wrote in response to Graham's essay, 'Whence Comes Peace?' of his hope that Quakers, at the head of the other churches, would 'show the way to peace' (*BF*, March, 1896, 68).

²⁰⁹ 'English Friends and the War', *FI*, 3 October, 1914, 623.

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how right we were when we spoke of the utter abominableness of all war ... War, exactly as we have been saying, is unfit for the modern world and brings no well-being to conquer or to conquered'.²¹⁰ He uses the very horror of the war he thought would never happen to claim that he and his Friends were right. Moreover, the war, with all its 'abominableness' was a spur to unflagging action. He became known as an indefatigable champion of the anti-conscription cause and for his practical help to conscientious objectors, both when they stood before their tribunals²¹¹ and when they were in prison.²¹² His sympathy for all the war-resisters who suffered for their convictions was unstinting. It was, initially at least, hard for him to understand the 'absolutist' case:²¹³ the view propounded by Clifford Allen, the Chairman of the No-Conscription Fellowship,²¹⁴ and by leading lights in the Friends

²¹⁰ 'Friend and Citizen', *Friend*, 25 September, 1914, 701-3, 701.

²¹¹ 'Tribunals' were the judicial bodies appointed to judge individual claims for exemption from war service. See John W. Graham, *Conscription and Conscience: a History*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1922 (CC), Chapter 3, 68-109. Graham has much to say of the arbitrariness and unaccountability of the tribunals. See also John Rae, *Conscience and Politics: the British Government and the Conscientious Objector to Military Service 1916-1919*, London: Oxford University Press, 1970, 94-133. Rae considers Graham an unreliable witness (*Conscience and Politics*, 152-3). See also letter to Richard Graham, 12 February, 1916 (JWGP, Box 16, where Graham relates holding a 'specimen tribunal', and diary entry, 15 February, 1915, recording his acting as Chairman of a Conscientious Objectors' Meeting and the setting up of 'mock tribunals' (JWGP, Box 15).

²¹² See CC, chapters 8 and 9 on prisons, including incidental references to Graham's personal involvement.

²¹³ Kennedy draws attention to the split between the younger Friends who took the view of the Friends' Service Committee that only absolute exemption would meet the requirements of their consciences and older Friends like Graham who 'looked upon the Friends Ambulance Unit as the crowning jewel in their Society's efforts to provide useful national service for young men while avoiding open support for the war' (Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 331).

²¹⁴ Clifford Allen, Baron Hurtwood (1889-1939). See Jo Vellacott, *Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1980, and Kennedy, *Hound of Conscience*. Graham described Allen as 'a splendid fellow ... of the very highest type and in the true apostolic succession' (JWGP, Box 16: letter to Richard Graham, 6 June, 1916). Graham praised the Quakers for refusing to accept an exemption that would apply only to members of certain religious groups (CC, 55). He wrote: 'Some [socialists] would not help a

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Service Committee, like Alfred Barratt Brown and John Fletcher.²¹⁵ These men were convinced that to undertake any work at the behest of the Government, even if it did not contribute directly to the war effort was to compromise the no-conscription principle.²¹⁶ It was these men who suffered at the hands of the military from brutal attempts to force them into the army and when they were imprisoned.²¹⁷ As Kennedy has noted, Graham was anxious that his son Richard should not be an 'absolutist', and risk going to prison.²¹⁸ No doubt his attitude was influenced by paternal concern, but it was in keeping with views expressed elsewhere. He found fault with the man who declared before the Salford tribunal that he 'would not rescue or pick up a wounded soldier, and would do nothing towards any organised work which might restore men to the firing line ... Friends may surely be content to serve their fellow men and leave to the soldier himself the responsibility of what he does when he is well'.²¹⁹ In the end Richard agreed to accept work with the Friends' Ambulance Unit (FAU).²²⁰ 'Laus Deo' was the response of Graham père.²²¹

militarism which was the means of exploitation. Some of these would have been willing to take up arms in a violent revolution, others declined any such methods anywhere' (CC, 35).

²¹⁵ Vellacott, *Bertrand Russell*, 30.

²¹⁶ The position of the 'absolutists' is well illustrated in a letter to the NCF periodical the *Tribunal*, by B.J. Boothroyd arguing that it was the element of compulsion that provoked refusal to take alternative service (quoted by Boulton, *Objection Overruled*, 193).

²¹⁷ Documented in detail both by Graham (see especially CC, chapters 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10) and by Boulton, who takes many of his details from Graham.

²¹⁸ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 332-3.

²¹⁹ Letter to Richard, 8 March, 1916, JWGP, Box 16.

²²⁰ For the FAU, see CC, 157-159; Boulton, *Objection Overruled*, 54-57; Geoffrey Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter: a Life of Horace Alexander*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010, 26.

²²¹ Letter to Richard, 1 May, 1916, Box 16.

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For all his doubts, Graham was a devoted friend to absolutists, especially those in prison in Manchester, where he was prison 'chaplain' to Quakers imprisoned for refusing any kind of 'alternative service'.²²² Such service, as well as the FAU, might include work under the Pelham Committee,²²³ or under the Home Office Scheme, which, according to Graham, was 'intended by the Government to solve the problem of the men in prison'.²²⁴ Graham was angry about this scheme, which offered employment to men who would not work under the Army's instructions, as was required of members of the FAU and those who accepted 'non-combatant duties', or who had not found acceptable work under the Pelham Committee. It had the effect of dividing the anti-war protesters: some 'absolutists' considered that to accept any work offered by the Government was to compromise their opposition to the War, while others were glad to escape from prison and enforced idleness.²²⁵ Graham's view of the obligations citizens owe to the State may have been tempered by his experiences of the tribunals and of the sufferings endured by the COs: his indignation at Lloyd George's declared

²²² See Graham, *CC*, Chapter 6, 215-220.

²²³ Set up by the Government in April 1916 to advise tribunals on work which might be offered to men who refused to join the Army. The Quaker MP, T. Edmund Harvey, was a member. Graham approved of the Committee and its work, and lamented the failure of the Manchester tribunal in particular to make use of its services, thus condemning some men to prison (*CC*, 99; Vellacott, *Bertrand Russell*, 46).

²²⁴ *CC*, 222.

²²⁵ On the Home Office Scheme, see Vellacott, *Bertrand Russell*, 113-121 (117 on the various reasons why men joined it). Graham has a whole chapter on the scheme (*CC*, Chapter 7, 221-251), which includes vivid accounts of the hardships imposed and the useless nature of much of the work (*CC*, 235).

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contempt for the absolutists certainly smacks of something other than ‘friendly patriotism’.²²⁶

7.10. Patriotism and Other Obstacles to Pure Pacifism

In 1932 Graham summoned his powers of eloquence to write a memorial appreciation of Henry Goldey for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon Monthly Meeting:

The war came and he fought for *his* King and Country - the King of all this earth, and the citizenship of humanity, in which all men are brothers. So he was haled before the tribunals and cast into prison, where his body was beaten and broken.²²⁷

Goldey subscribed to a higher patriotism than any owed to any native land.

Yet the lesser patriotism also had a claim on Graham’s allegiance. His essay in *The Friend* written soon after the outbreak of War, tellingly called ‘Friend and Citizen’, considers this double loyalty.²²⁸ It takes the view that the Government could not avoid going to war, noting thankfully that Edward Grubb thinks so too,²²⁹ even though he considers that secret arrangements that have only just come to light mean that ‘the peace party has been hoodwinked and deceived’.²³⁰ He restates the view taken in the 1882 letter, that governments cannot occupy the same high ground as enlightened people like Quakers: ‘It is only as people [in general] become enlightened that

²²⁶ See CC, 221.

²²⁷ Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon Monthly Meeting, ‘Minute on Henry Goldey, passed by M.M. 20/1/32, signed John Wm. Graham, Frank W. Wilkinson’, JWGP, Box 2.

²²⁸ ‘Friend and Citizen’, *Friend*, 25 September, 1914, 701-703.

²²⁹ ‘Friend and Citizen’, 701.

²³⁰ ‘Friend and Citizen’, 702.

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Governments can follow suit'.²³¹ It is the Quakers' obligation to enlighten the rest of the people to the utmost of their ability, and Graham exhorts Friends to engage in promoting the ideal of peace for all they are worth.²³² But this does not preclude their serving the state in its hour of need, and service with the Friends' Ambulance Unit is a good way of doing so.²³³

'Patriotism' was not, in Graham's view, to be embraced without due reflection, any more than war. In 1900 he gave an address on the subject to Old Scholars at York,²³⁴ deploring the 'easy', flag-waving emotion that had greeted the Relief of Mafeking.²³⁵ True patriotism, he said, meant awareness of the nation's shortcomings as well as of its achievements; awareness of such features of national life as the miseries brought upon city-dwellers by smoke and destitution,²³⁶ and it entails energetic action to reduce such ills. Graham's programme of social service is limited and tintured by Victorian attitudes about 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor: his auditors are bid to 'try to confine hardship to those who deserve it'. Nevertheless, the address can usefully be set alongside 'Friend and Citizen' as an antidote to the notion that 'patriotism' is the same as service to the State, let alone 'My country right or wrong'.

²³¹ 'Our Position about War', 304.

²³² 'Friend and Citizen', 703.

²³³ 'Friend and Citizen', 703. Graham comments in the essay in the *American Friends Intelligencer* of 3/10/1914, cited 7.9., above, with respect to the institution of the FAU: 'Some Friends think this last move is too much under military organization. Others, including myself, do not feel that at all strongly' (623).

²³⁴ Published as 'Patriotism', *FQE*, 1900, 410-422.

²³⁵ 'Patriotism', 410, 411

²³⁶ 'Patriotism', 416.

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Twenty years before the Military Service Act (2) imposed conscription in Britain²³⁷ Graham reflected on the use of force and the extent to which it should be opposed in a double essay called 'Whence Comes Peace?'²³⁸ The essay argues for the use of compromise in the quest for peace, invoking the 'great fact of Evolution in Ethics'. The end-time, the Peaceable Kingdom, is as yet far off, and in the meantime human beings must do what limited good they can. A John Burns²³⁹ achieves more than a William Morris, 'the idle dreamer of an empty day', who would like a violent revolution tomorrow, and that being impossible, will have nothing else, and devotes his great talents to large money-making as artist and manufacturer'.²⁴⁰ We do not obey the injunctions of the Sermon on the Mount, nor should we, in this imperfect state of the world: 'Within the bounds of law and justice, we oppose force to force, inflict fines, exact damages, and curb the evil-doer in the convict prison. Our consciences entirely permit this'.²⁴¹ It is not reasonable to oppose all use of force, like Tolstoy and his followers.²⁴² We depend on policemen to defend us, and sometimes the army must be called in to enforce order, 'till an

²³⁷ See CC, 52 ff. Graham gives a detailed account of the debate about the Bill in the House of Commons.

²³⁸ John W. Graham, 'Whence Comes Peace?' *BF*, February, 1896, 27-29; April, 1896, 77-80. The second part responds to some letters criticising the first part. The context is the recent massacre of Armenians by Turks, which led many British people, including both High Church and Nonconformist clergy, as well as the untiring campaigner for peace, W.T. Stead, to call for Britain to intervene to halt the massacres (Brown, *Providence and Empire*, 363-7).

²³⁹ John Elliott Burns (1858–1943), Radical M.P., who resigned from the government in August 1914 when it became clear that the country would go to war in support of France in the event of a conflict with Germany (*ODNB*, accessed 10 November, 2014).

²⁴⁰ 'Whence Comes Peace?', 2, 78.

²⁴¹ 'Whence Comes Peace?', 1, 28.

²⁴² 'Whence Comes Peace?', 1, 28. Cf., 'Friends have never taken up the position of Tolstoy, who was against all government', *FQ*, 367.

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international gendarmerie arises'.²⁴³ Graham's son Michael might well reflect on the 'incompleteness of his [father's] Pacifism'.²⁴⁴

7.11. Conclusion

Graham's views on war and peace were riddled with compromise and qualification. In the second 'Whence Comes Peace?' essay he defends a 'noble compromise ... which strives to do what can now be done with the materials at hand'.²⁴⁵ Prophets and visionaries have their uses, but we need our Cromwells and our Gladstones to get things done.²⁴⁶ Evolutionary science shows that the ideal state to which we aspire, the state where Christ's commandments are carried out in full and war and enmity are overcome by love, must be built by slow stages, each with its necessary defects. Darwinian theory, at least as modified by Herbert Spencer, went to show that human society was evolving away from its animal, internecine origins towards a benign state where competition would give way to co-operation in activities like 'housing, feeding children, educating those who cannot afford to educate themselves'.²⁴⁷ Progress would be, is being, made. Despite the carnage of the Great War Friends were right about the nature of war, and their views must in time prevail. On September 9th, 1914, Graham spoke to Mount Street Meeting on 'God acting through man'.²⁴⁸ Human beings are not to expect a

²⁴³ 'Whence Comes Peace?', 1, 29.

²⁴⁴ See 7.1., above.

²⁴⁵ 'Whence Comes Peace?', 2, 78.

²⁴⁶ 'Whence Comes Peace?', 2, 78.

²⁴⁷ *EE*, 111.

²⁴⁸ Diary entry, 20 September, 1914, JWGP, Box 15 (Graham's emphasis).

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sudden irruption of God into the World to judge and transform it; rather, they must obey their divine inner endowment and thus enable the eventual coming of the Kingdom.

Quakers, like others, had to live in the 'meantime'.²⁴⁹ They did not isolate themselves from the world and all worldliness while awaiting the Second Coming: Graham and those who thought like him sought to be fully active in improving the world they found themselves in and encouraging it to move towards that better place reserved for the human race, not just the 'saved'. But that meant compromise. War had once been a means of progress; even now compulsion and other infringements of Christ's injunctions were necessary for the good ordering of society. Visionaries like Tolstoy might provide a useful tonic,²⁵⁰ but the world needed practical people, willing to compromise. Arbitration was an improvement on war. It was not the pure selflessness called for by Christ and demonstrated in his life, but it was a step forward.²⁵¹

Graham wanted Friends to think about what they believed. His youthful essay, 'Our Position about War', begins with the declaration: 'It is the sign of failing and of approaching death in any principle when its advocates cease to plead its intrinsic reasonableness and truth, and fall back instead on "the creed of the Church", the opinion of our ancestors, or, say, "the ancient

²⁴⁹ See 7.1., above.

²⁵⁰ See 7.3., above, and 'Whence comes Peace?', 1, 28.

²⁵¹ See *EE*, 98, quoted 7.6, above.

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principles of Friends”.²⁵² The same essay praises John Bright for not opposing war because he felt all war to be sinful but ‘has attacked each war on its own merits’.²⁵³ Graham did not entirely adhere to this principle: he often says that it is wrong for a Friend to engage in fighting even though it may not be wrong for everyone, thus resting on the teaching of Fox and Penington; but whatever the position he is defending he relates his arguments to the details of the current situation, rather than resting on abstract principle, especially in the topical essays.²⁵⁴ He would sometimes make false assumptions and certainly lacked insight: he was a man of his age and it shows. With these limitations and with several decades of thinking about imperialism and the use of force behind him, Graham set out for the Indian Subcontinent, currently engaged in its struggle for liberty from the imperial power.

²⁵² ‘Our Position about War’, 303.

²⁵³ ‘Our Position about War’, 304.

²⁵⁴ For instance, in the pre-war essays dealing with Germany. See 7.7., above.

CHAPTER 8. INDIA AND AFTER

8.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with Graham's visit to India as a representative of the Society of Friends in Britain in the winter of 1927-1928 and with his attitude to Indian religion, society and politics as expressed in letters and essays up to the time of his death in October 1932. India was the occasion of the last fight that Graham undertook with Friends in Britain: his struggle to convince them that they should support the British Government in India rather than the independence movement led by Mohandas K. Gandhi. Quakers opposed to him included his son-in-law, Horace Alexander, Lecturer in International Affairs at Woodbrooke¹ and author of *The Indian Ferment*, which describes Alexander's visit to India when Graham was also there.² His and Graham's impressions were widely different.³ Alexander's biographer, Geoffrey Carnall attributes this difference to the fact that whereas Alexander, following the advice of C.F. Andrews,⁴ did as little talking as possible, but listened and made friends, Graham did all the talking and had all his prejudices confirmed.⁵ One of the aims of this chapter is to consider the truth of this claim. By means of analysis of Graham's private letters to his family from India as well

¹For Woodbrooke see Introduction, 'Retirement and Death', above, and note. .

²H.G. Alexander, *The Indian Ferment: a Traveller's Tale*, London: Williams & Norgate, 1929.

³See Geoffrey Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter: a Life of Horace Alexander*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010, 77

⁴Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter*, 77. For Andrews, see Hugh Tinker, *The Ordeal of Love: C.F. Andrews and India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1979.

⁵Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter*, 77.

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as items published in *The Friend* and other Quaker periodicals it explores the nature and causes of the dispute over India. Comparisons are made between the views of Graham on the one hand and those of other members of the Society, especially those with experience of India, such as Jack Hoyland,⁶ Horace Alexander and Reginald Reynolds,⁷ on the other.

Graham's views on India serve as a test case for the thesis that he remained to the end an 'apostle of progress', for in his attitude to the Indian liberation movement he ranged himself among the more conservative Quakers and in opposition to those of more forward-looking, libertarian views. He thus found himself once more outside the main stream of the Society.⁸ Graham's stand on India could be understood simply as illustrating the common tendency of human beings to become more conservative as they get older, but in fact I maintain that his views on India were not inconsistent with his generally progressive outlook and views on social evolution.

It is not quite true, as Geoffrey Carnall claims, that Graham was so 'exhilarated' by addressing a total of nearly 30,000 people that he failed to

⁶ John S. ('Jack') Hoyland (1887-1957) spent 16 years teaching at Nagpur, in India, where he was visited by Graham in 1927 (letter 22 October, 1927, JWGP, Box 14), and felt himself qualified to speak on India's right to independence. See Hoyland's speech at YM, 1930, *Friend*, 30 May, 1930, 494. Hoyland wrote *The Case for India*, London: Dent, 1929, criticising British people for not troubling to understand India and the Indians.

⁷ Reginald Reynolds (1905-1958). See note to 8.6., below.

⁸ See especially 2.8, 5.5, 7.3., above. The differences noted here with other members of the Yearly Meeting arose from Graham's progressive leanings. See also his differences with other Friends on the question of absolutism versus alternativism in resistance to conscription in World War 1, high-lighted by Kennedy (Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: OUP, 2001, 331).

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listen to Indians.⁹ He did observe and listen while he was in India, and had ‘a great many private talks’.¹⁰ It is true, however, that his attitude was shaped not only by talk and text emanating from sources friendly to the imperial power,¹¹ but by years-long cogitation on questions to do with power and progress. He did not set out with the intention of opposing India’s claim to freedom. Rather, he wished to make known his core Quaker convictions, applicable, he thought, even in a non-Christian context. In interacting with Indian intellectuals, however, he was inevitably led from religion into politics and from there to his anti-libertarian stance. His very conservatism, in this instance, was determined by his belief in progress.

8.2. Paradoxes

On 3 December, 1927, Graham visited the ‘Famous Residency’, where, Graham recalled, the 87-day siege had taken place during what was then called the ‘Indian Mutiny’, commemorated, as Graham noted, in Tennyson’s patriotic poem, ‘The Defence of Lucknow’.¹² Here we can see encapsulated the tension between the up-to-date liberal-minded Quaker and the Victorian patriot, as Graham responded to Tennyson’s eloquent celebration of British

⁹ Geoffrey Carnall, *Gandhi’s Interpreter: a Life of Horace Alexander*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010, 77. Graham made careful records of the places he visited, how often he spoke, and the numbers in each of his audiences (JWGP, Box 14, paper prefacing collection of family letters). For the number 30,000 see his essay ‘Christianity in India’, *The Friend*, 30 March, 1928, 255.

¹⁰ ‘Christianity in India’, 256.

¹¹ See 8.6., below.

¹² For the siege of Lucknow and its potent symbolism for British people see John Keay, *India: a History*, London: HarperCollins, 2000, 440-443.

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heroism.¹³ The perceived oddity of his position with respect to British rule in India is illustrated by a remark made by Harold Morland, Clerk of Yearly Meeting in 1930, when he found Quakers who had been of the 'war party' during the First World War¹⁴ congratulating Graham on his opposition to Gandhi and the freedom movement: 'Strange company I see thee in, John Willie'.¹⁵ The spokesman for pacifism, the man who had written passionately against empire and conquest,¹⁶ was now siding with the imperial power against those who sought their freedom.

The paradox goes deeper. Marjorie Sykes, in her study of Quakers in India, draws attention to Graham's leadership among Quakers in Cambridge who were influenced by the liberal thinking of figures such as J.R. Seeley.¹⁷ She makes a strong connection between such thinking in Britain and the new universalism among Quakers in India, who, in opposition to the older evangelical approach which demanded that Indians abandon their faith in order to become Christian, advocated the promotion of Christian, and specifically Quaker, insights in dealings with Hindus and others without the attempt to convert them.¹⁸ She associates the older missionary approach with Henry S. Newman, one-time Editor of *The Friend* and Secretary of the

¹³ Letter, 3 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14. Cf. 7.6., above.

¹⁴ For 'war Friends' See 7.3., above, and note.

¹⁵ See Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter*, 86.

¹⁶ In *Evolution and Empire and The Moral Sequelae of Conquest*. See Chapter 7, above, especially 7.6.

¹⁷ See 7.4., above.

¹⁸ Marjorie Sykes, *Quakers in India: a Forgotten Century*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1980, 108.

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Friends' Foreign Missions Association (FFMA) from 1910.¹⁹ It was this same Newman who, according to Michael Graham, once accused Graham of being an 'esoteric Buddhist'.²⁰ By the time of Graham's visit to India there had grown up within London Yearly Meeting a new body, the Council for International Service (CIS), alongside the Friends' Foreign Missions Association (FFMA),²¹ the former supporting a more universalist approach to other faiths as opposed to the FFMA's evangelicalism.²² Graham too, when he first embarked on his mission, believed in the 'permeation' of Indian native religions with Christian ideals rather than wholesale conversion to the 'doctrine of redemption through the blood of Jesus', as Newman required.²³ Graham would never have described Christianity in these terms, but he did come to think differently about India's religious needs. In a letter to his family of 16 December, 1927, also recounted in *The Friend*, 3 February, 1928, Graham tells of a meeting with a Somerville-educated Indian Christian, Miss

¹⁹ *Quakers in India*, 108. Sykes states earlier that in 1892 Newman sent a delegation to Calcutta to find out if Quakers there 'held sound views "regarding this cardinal doctrine of redemption through the blood of Jesus"' (*Quakers in India*, 97).

²⁰ Michael Graham, 'Spokesman Ever: Lancashire Quaker J.W. Graham 1859-1932 and the Course of Reforming Movements' (ts, 1964), 5.23. The older Graham wrote a favourable review for the *Nation* in 1908 of H. Fielding Hall's *The Inward Light*, on Buddhism & other Eastern religions, saying, 'This book might indeed be known ... as "esoteric Buddhism"'. Graham used his review to state that Buddhism and Christianity, purged of their accretions, were at one in their perception of the Inward Light as fundamental: 'This is the absolute religion common to man' (JWGP, Box 4, 99). 'Esoteric Buddhism' is the title of a book by Alfred Percy Sinnett, which first appeared in 1883.

²¹ The FFMA was founded in 1868, the CIS in 1919 (see Jacalynn Stuckey Welling, 'Mission', in *OHQS*, 306-320, 312, 313). See Grubb, 'The Work of Friends Abroad', *Friend*, 17 September, 1926, 817-819, 817. Grubb names Henry T. Hodgkin of the FFMA and Carl Heath of the CIS as 'representing ... the two sides of our work abroad, the older "Foreign Missions" and the newer "International Service"'. Fortunately, he said, the two bodies were not in conflict.

²² Sykes, *Quakers in India*, 115; T.E. Harvey, *Friend*, 21 May, 1926, 425.

²³ See note 19, above. For more on 'permeation' see Sykes, *Quakers in India*, 108.

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Cornelia Sohrabji. He asked her whether 'permeation & purification of Hinduism, such as I am trying' is 'better than 'direct Christian missions', and found her advocating unapologetic Christianisation.²⁴ After his return to England, he was to write unequivocally, 'The really thorough way to oust the paralysing spiritual tyranny of Hinduism (as it is held by peasants) is by Christianity'.²⁵ The parenthesis is important: educated Indians might well imbibe something of the spirit of Quakerism without deserting Hinduism,²⁶ but this would not work for 'peasants'. The Hinduism of the masses was so overlaid by superstition, priestcraft and 'symbolism' that it served only to keep the people enchained.²⁷ So we have the strange spectacle of Graham siding with evangelicals rather liberals over the question how Christianity should be introduced to the Indians.

There is a further paradox in Graham's relations with London Yearly Meeting*. When Graham first proposed to Meeting for Sufferings* that he should go on Quaker business to India he had the Meeting's warm

²⁴ Letter, 16 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14; see also 'Current News among Friends, *Friend*, 3/2/1928, 95. For Sohrabji see Suparna Gooptu, *Cornelia Sorabji: India's Pioneer Woman Lawyer: a Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2010.

²⁵ 'The Poverty of India', *Wayfarer*, Vol. 10, February, 1931, 17-18, 18.

²⁶ This can be inferred from many places where Graham writes of an enthusiastic welcome for his views. For instance, a letter to his family of 14 October, 1927 tells of a meeting with a Hindu scholar who 'repeated lyrically a number of Sanscrit poems showing the harmony of my views with the ancient Indian sayings' (JWGP, Box 14). In another personal letter he records of a member of the Brahmo Samaj (an eclectic sect embracing some elements of Christianity), 'He thinks this kind of wider service in India the very thing that is needed, acceptable to begin with to the Hindu mind, and if you are not trying to proselytise they will hear you gladly' (Letter, 20 November, 1927, JWGP, Box 14).

²⁷ See 8.5., below.

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endorsement.²⁸ Whereas in the 1890s Graham's views had been considered 'unsound', by 1927 the Society had caught up with him: his theology no longer seemed dangerous.²⁹ It was after he came back that he found himself at odds with the Yearly Meeting once more, this time for being too conservative, too cautious.³⁰ Then, as W.E. Turner observed, 'the young man's daring' had exceeded 'the old man's caution'.³¹ Now Graham himself was old and inclined to set his face against the generous enthusiasm of the young, and it was they who embodied the 'sense of the meeting'.*

8.3. Graham's Commission

Graham proposed himself as a representative in India of British Quakerism in response to an appeal emanating from the Committee on Wider Service in India.³² The appeal followed reports brought back by a 'delegation' to India sent by the Yearly Meeting in 1926, chaired by T. Edmund Harvey.³³ On his return Harvey spoke to a meeting of the CIS of 'the extraordinary need in India today of the message Friends may give'. He appealed for English and American Friends to go to India to speak in universities and important towns.³⁴ Rufus Jones had already paid a visit in 1926 to Nagpur, as one of a series of

²⁸ See 8.3., below.

²⁹ See 2.8., above, for Graham's difficulties with the Yearly Meeting over his third visit to America, in 1904.

³⁰ See account of Yearly Meeting 1930, 8.8., below.

³¹ Letter from Turner to Graham, 1 July, 1904, JWGP, Box 1. (Graham was only relatively young in 1904. The 'old men' were represented most prominently by J.B. Braithwaite senior, who was in his 86th year.)

³² 'Meeting for Sufferings', *Friend*, 8 April, 1927, 297-299, 297. The 'concern' came through the approved channels of Monthly Meeting, then Quarterly Meeting before coming before Meeting for Sufferings, in conformity with Quaker 'Gospel Order'.

³³ See *Friend*, 21 May, 1926, 425.

³⁴ *Friend*, 8 April, 1927, 297.

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'Quaker ambassadors', speaking to students and intellectuals in India.³⁵ So there was nothing extraordinary in Graham's bringing before Meeting for Sufferings a 'concern* for service in India'. He cited as a qualification his long service at Dalton Hall, where he had come in contact with many Indians. He said that he would take to India 'a simple doctrine of the indwelling God and of the service of Jesus Christ following from it'.³⁶ He spoke of the turbulent political situation, but made it clear that his motives were religious, not political. J. Edward Hodgkin commended his purpose, praising his recent work in America.³⁷ There is a continuity with this earlier service, for in both countries Graham preached a Quakerism fit for 'a modern mystic who feels the need of escaping from creed, ritual and professional clergy'.³⁸ A minute was duly granted, 'cordially liberating our Friend'.³⁹

8.4. The Situation in India

Quakers in Britain were well aware of the liberation movement in India and the strife it entailed. T. E. Harvey was anxious because some who had earlier been Gandhi's disciples were now advocating military service in schools.⁴⁰ The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms⁴¹ of 1919 had purported to give equal place to Indians and to British people in the government, with a view to eventual

³⁵ Sykes, *Quakers in India*, 126.

³⁶ *Friend*, 8 April, 1927, 297.

³⁷ See 2.8., above, for Graham's recent year-long visit to Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, where he delivered the lectures that formed the basis for *DM*.

³⁸ Preface to *DM*, 10.

³⁹ *Friend*, 8 April, 1927, 297

⁴⁰ *Friend*, 21 May, 1926, 425.

⁴¹ So called from the names of the Secretary of State for India at the time, Edwin Montagu, and the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, who were jointly responsible (Patrick French, *Liberty or Death: India's Journey to Independence and Division*, London: HarperCollins, 1997, 32).

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Indian rule over their country within the British Empire, but Indians gave them a lukewarm reception, perceiving that the British were actually still in charge.⁴² Jack Hoyland, indeed, at the time, commended the reforms as demonstrating Britain's commitment to the cause of liberty,⁴³ but it did not seem so to the Indians. After the Government's attempt to arm itself against violent disorder by means of the 'Rowlatt bills', of 1919 Gandhi led his first all-India 'satyagraha' campaign, demanding 'swaraj [self-rule] within a year' by means of boycotts of shops, schools and colleges and the burning of imported cloth.⁴⁴ The protests, despite Gandhi's pleas, turned increasingly violent.⁴⁵ During the time that Graham was in India the Simon Commission, appointed to gather information in the lead-up to greater self-government, was attempting to do its work, and Graham sometimes refers to it.⁴⁶ The Commission had no Indian members, and it was met by boycotts and cries of 'Simon, go home!'⁴⁷ This was the India into which British Quakers were sending their 'ambassadors'. There was, as T.E. Harvey said, a great need for the Quaker message of peace.⁴⁸

⁴² French, *Liberty or Death*, 35.

⁴³ John S. Hoyland, 'Political Progress in India', *Friend*, 19 March, 1920, 159. By 1930 Hoyland was more prepared to criticise government policy (see 8.8., below).

⁴⁴ French, *Liberty or Death*, 37.

⁴⁵ See for instance Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1989, 131-133.

⁴⁶ For instance, on 6 December he writes that the great Muslim potentate, Sir Syed Ali Imam, 'has now declared himself in favour of the boycott of the [Simon] Commission' (JWGP, Box 14). He remarks that because Sir Syed is going to give a political speech about this, his lecture has been cancelled. ' "The background of Jesus" had no chance!'

⁴⁷ French, *Liberty or Death*, 33.

⁴⁸ See 8.3., above.

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8.5. Graham's Quaker Message

The message Graham took to India was the one now synthesised in *The Faith of a Quaker* and *The Divinity in Man*. It was expressed in three lectures, repeated in various contexts all over India: 'The Divine in Man', 'Symbolism in Religion' and 'War and Evolution'. 'The three lectures together', he said, 'cover most of the fundamental positions of our Society'.⁴⁹ Other topics included the 'religion of Ruskin'⁵⁰ and, in church circles, subjects relating to the Bible, such as 'the Apocalyptic influence on Christ'.⁵¹ (Graham was interested in educating missionaries as well as natives.⁵²) He also found himself speaking to Indian audiences on 'war and democracy' or 'the conditions for democracy', subjects touched on in 8.7., below. 'The Divine in Man' and 'Symbolism in Religion' could well be preached to an Indian, especially a Hindu audience. As for Muslims, 'I was very nervous about presenting my doctrine of God & Man to a Moslem audience. I modified a sentence (without tampering with truth) to suit their form of thought. But the result was the best ever'.⁵³

⁴⁹ In his essay, 'Christianity in India', *The Friend*, 30 March, 1928, 256.

⁵⁰ Letter 7 October, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

⁵¹ Letters of 7, 10, 22 and 30 October, JWGP, Box 14.

⁵² A letter home of 12 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14, tells of a difference with Wesleyan Missionaries, who, he thought, perceived him as not being Christian enough; that is, insufficiently concerned with 'sin'. 'It is the first experience I have had', he writes, 'of the missionary orthodoxy I have always feared would be critical of me'.

⁵³ Letter 15 November, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

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We have seen that Graham lectured on 'Lamarckian evolution' in India.⁵⁴ In Madras he lectured on 'the Lamarckian theory of evolution', where 'the biologists from the university came, and I was relieved to find they were satisfied', and in Bangalore on 'Lamarck, war and evolution'.⁵⁵ Graham, like others of his generation, favoured the Lamarckian idea that creatures evolved when their organs were altered through the formation of habits and that these alterations were passed on to succeeding generations.⁵⁶ Lamarckism allowed for the possibility that creatures could improve themselves, make themselves fitter for survival, by their own efforts. In the Indian context Graham could interpret it as meaning that the Indian people could make progress by trying hard: it was a kind of moral tonic. It was also a preservative against the racism which classic Darwinism might promote; the notion that differences between human races are genetically determined.⁵⁷ Graham may have been tempted sometimes to attribute the supposed defects of Indians, such as 'feebleness of character, lying' to congenital factors.⁵⁸ He does actually in one essay mention 'congenital faults' in the context of difficulties missionaries

⁵⁴ See Introduction, 'The Wider World', above.

⁵⁵ 'John W. Graham in South India', *Friend*, 2 March, 1928, 177.

⁵⁶ Samuel Butler's neo-Lamarckian *Life and Habit* was first published in 1878, but his ideas enjoyed a new lease of life in the 1920s. Graham wrote in *DM* of his 'theory of evolution, now at last generally acceptable' (*DM*, 132). See James R. Moore, *The Post-Darwinian Controversies: a Study of the Protestant Struggle to Come to Terms with Darwinism in Great Britain and America, 1870-1900*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, 146-151.

⁵⁷ Graham was wont to argue that the 'brute law of survival', whereby those who inherited certain characteristics useful for life in particular environments, did not apply to human beings. Crocodiles might be 'fit', by virtue of inheritance, for life on mud banks, but human beings could 'fit' themselves for a higher life by means of the 'Divine Creative Power' which enables them to supplement muscular strength with crowbars, etc. (John William Graham, 'War and the Survival of the Fittest', *Friend*, 12 November, 1909, 762, 764).

⁵⁸ Letter, 27 September, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

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have in improving the morality of their converts.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the whole basis of his enterprise and the tenor of his arguments was that these defects could be overcome, with the help of the British, by effort on the part of the Indians. He even grants that 'a slow effort for improvement is going on indigenously', remarking that 'these moral questions are best treated by the Indians themselves', even though 'perhaps we cannot yet leave it to them'.⁶⁰

Graham compared his presentation of Christianity to that described in a book called *The Christ of the Indian Road*, by E. Stanley Jones.⁶¹ Both, he said, had a message of a pared-down Christianity, without 'the Creation story, Adam and Eve and the Flood, all the Old Testament wars, miracles and prophecies ... We have left out also all philosophising about our Lord's Divinity and Atonement, the Apocalyptic Heaven and Hell, and the Second Coming [and much more]'. Instead, Jones preaches 'the historic Jesus, Jesus as a personality', whereas Graham focuses on Christ as indwelling presence. Both presentations, Graham claimed, found wide acceptance among Indians.⁶² This is in accord with the opinion of Rabindranath Tagore as recorded in an account of a Quaker visit to him while he was in England in 1926,⁶³ that 'India was ready to accept Christ but not the usual presentation of him, covered as it

⁵⁹ 'Christianity in India', 256.

⁶⁰ 'Christianity in India', 256.

⁶¹ E. Stanley Jones, *The Christ of the Indian Road*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1926. Reviewed by A. Priscilla Fowler in *Friend*, 19 August, 1926, 734, 5.

⁶² 'Christianity in India', 256.

⁶³ 'Rabindranath Tagore in England', *Friend*, 13 August, 1926, 717-8. The account is signed 'X'.

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was with lifeless accretions of our own'.⁶⁴ Graham had been trying to free Quakerism from these 'lifeless accretions' all his adult life. His experience of preaching this simplified Christianity led him to conclude, 'the central message of Quakerism suits India'.⁶⁵

Graham found popular Hinduism repugnant aesthetically as well as morally and theologically. At the holy bathing places of Benares⁶⁶ he was disgusted at the ostentatious mendicancy and asceticism of the Brahmins instructing their 'customers' as to the correct rites to perform in service to the dead.⁶⁷ 'One holy beggar covered himself, practically naked, with ashes, and used a hand mirror after bathing to make sure that his face, with matted hair and beard, was hideous enough with its marks'. Occasionally, however, he met a Hindu who was nearly as good as a Quaker. One of these is 'Mr. Moolba', who 'remains a Hindu, but is as good a Christian as I have known. His Hinduism is that of 2000 B.C. & so he escapes the horrors of modern priestly Hinduism ... The Quaker form of worship seemed to be just what suited him'.⁶⁸ For the path of progress is not necessarily straight. Just as

⁶⁴ *Friend*, 13 August, 1926, 718.

⁶⁵ Christianity in India', 256. See also a letter to his family of 4 December, 1927: 'Here, in this land of contending faiths everybody is an admirer [of Quakers]. I preach Quaker ideas every time – and don't conceal their source – and everybody is glad I am a Friend. This applies in all mission circles and to Mohammedans and reformed Hindoos' (JWGP, Box 14).

⁶⁶ Now called Varanasi.

⁶⁷ 'Letters from India', *Friend*, 20 January, 1928, 48. The corresponding description in the family letters is even more contemptuous: 'It is the haunt of humbugs'. The sacred ghats at Benares also provoke some of Katherine Mayo's more lurid prose, chiefly on account of the insanitary nature of the proceedings (for Mayo see 8.6., below).

⁶⁸ Letter 3 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14; 'Letters from India', *Friend*, 20 January, 1928, 48-49.

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Graham and those who agreed with him looked back to early Friends,⁶⁹ and behind them to the early Church,⁷⁰ for inspiration in their modernising work, so Hindus might look back 4000 years for a pure form of their faith, suited to today's needs.

In another family letter Graham writes of 'a very superior barrister, [who] wd. have been a Christian but he prayed for the recovery of a college friend who nevertheless died! My ideas on prayer wd. have saved him'.⁷¹ Graham would have liked to 'save' Indians from other features of old-fashioned Christianity. He found, for instance, that 'Christianity was much more acceptable without the Virgin Birth'.⁷² When he was asked to write an answer to a 'scurrilous' attack on Christianity, 'centring on the Virgin Birth',⁷³ he declared that he did 'not accept the V.B.', and the matter was allowed to drop.⁷⁴ Progressivism in religion was a qualification for his work that he had not mentioned to Meeting for Sufferings, but which he now found at the root of his appeal. This was the Christianity that was needed to defeat 'Brahminism'.

There was a moment when Graham confessed to doubt about all this. (How much doubt habitually lay beneath the confident exterior can only be

⁶⁹ See, for instance, *FQ*, 98, quoted in 2.10., above.

⁷⁰ See 5.1., above.

⁷¹ Letter 5 November, 1927 (JGWP, Box 14).

⁷² Letter 1 November, 1927.

⁷³ 'Trouble over the Virgin Birth' came to stand in Graham's family for all the arguments Graham had with Friends over dogma. Graham, 'Spokesman Ever': 7.8.

⁷⁴ Letter 1 November, 1927.

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guessed.) He was speaking at the Friends' meeting at Itarsi,⁷⁵ he says, when 'I had a misgiving as to whether the natives really have the experience I postulate.⁷⁶ I must not give way to that idea, however, or my Gospel and the Quaker Gospel fall to the ground or shrivel up'.⁷⁷ The Quakerism Graham had been working all his life to perfect must be universally valid or else a delusion.

Tagore was another Hindu of whom, while he was in India, Graham approved. He visited Tagore at his ashram-cum-educational establishment Santiniketan,⁷⁸ and was impressed by his 'Tennysonian' looks.⁷⁹ Indians at Santiniketan were close to the Quakers in spirit. When Graham spoke there, 'it was a congenial & happy occasion & I felt to be among many friends – even Friends – and we fell into devotion instead of argument & questions, at the end.'⁸⁰ Graham took the opportunity to show Tagore some verses of his (Tagore's), quoted in *The Divinity in Man*.⁸¹ But however 'dignified, venerable and benignant' Tagore might be he did not escape Graham's indignation when he called for Indian independence at the Yearly Meeting of May 1930.⁸²

⁷⁵ The town of Itarsi, in what is now Madhya Pradesh, with the neighbouring settlement of Hoshangabad, was the centre of Quaker activity in India (Sykes, *Quakers in India*, Chapter 7 and p. 70).

⁷⁶ For the fundamental experience which is, for Graham, the ground of faith see 6.2., above.

⁷⁷ Letter 1 November, 1927.

⁷⁸ For Santiniketan see Tinker, *The Ordeal of Love*; Sykes, *Quakers in India*, 106; E.P. Thompson, *Alien Homage: Edward Thompson and Rabindranath Tagore*, Delhi, OUP, 1993, 70 and *passim*.

⁷⁹ Letter 28 December, 1927 (JWGP, Box 14).

⁸⁰ Letter 30 December, 1927 (JWGP, Box 14).

⁸¹ Letter 30 December, 1927. See *DM*, 194.

⁸² See 8.8, below.

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8.6. Onslaught on Indian Religion and Culture. Katherine Mayo

Graham's praise for Mr. Moolba, in both private and published letters, is closely accompanied by a fierce attack on Indian morality in general, among both Hindus and Muslims, and indeed Christian converts too. A Christian professor complained to Graham of his students' lack of moral fibre: 'He says his students have no backbone in moral sex difficulties & asked me how to provide one! The Christians are the worst because they are the children of the lowest of the people and have no background of culture or character'.⁸³

The last sentence is missing from the version published in *The Friend*,⁸⁴ which also retains 'moral' where the informal letter substitutes 'sex'. This reported slur on the morals of Indian male Christians is balanced by Graham's praise for missionary schools which have 'rescued' Indian girls (Hindu or Muslim) from early marriage and blighted childhood. At Sohagpur he visited a school for Christian girls who 'wd. have half of them been premature mothers & slaves of their mother in law, if they had remained Hindus'.⁸⁵ Not that Muslim customs are any better. An American missionary working in zenanas⁸⁶ told Graham that 'Muslim men have more immoral habits "even than those of the Hindoos", & this is confirmed'.⁸⁷

⁸³ Letter of 4 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

⁸⁴ *Friend*, 20 January, 1928, 48.

⁸⁵ Letter of 5 November, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

⁸⁶ 'Part of house in which women of high-caste families are secluded in India', *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 5th edition, Oxford: Clarendon, 1964.

⁸⁷ Letter of 4 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

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Graham was evidently ready to believe such accounts, and to find fault with Indian morality more generally. The British have an obligation to bring ethical uplift to their colony: Indians must be taught that 'lying, bribery, stealing and every form of cheating is wrong ... We must teach, too, that begging is a disgraceful, not a holy way of getting a living: also that cruelty to animals is an abomination'.⁸⁸ No cultural relativism for Graham, although he can admit that the English are not always best: 'Indians are an example to us in courtesy and dignity, and the affectionate response to friendship'.⁸⁹ In one of his letters home he wrote 'Michael need not fear my too great idealising of Indians. Horace is more on that line'.⁹⁰ Here is a hint of the difference of opinion between himself and his son-in-law which became blatant at the Yearly Meeting of 1830. In his family letters Graham does not mention any disagreement when they met at Poona⁹¹ and again at Darjeeling.⁹² Indeed, he wrote of the first meeting, 'I can appreciate the comfort Paul had in the coming of Titus', and admitted to feeling 'very sad & lonely',⁹³ when Alexander left him after the second. Yet Carnall (who mentions only the Darjeeling meeting) says that Alexander told Ted Milligan years later that 'there was no meeting of minds at all – his father-in-law was solely preoccupied with all the material things (roads, etc.) the British had done'.⁹⁴ It is true that Graham

⁸⁸ 'Christianity in India', 256.

⁸⁹ 'Christianity in India', 256.

⁹⁰ Letter of 4 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

⁹¹ Letter of 15 October, 1927.

⁹² Letter of 22 December, 1927.

⁹³ Letter, 26 December, 1927.

⁹⁴ Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter*, 77.

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assigned importance to economic advances brought to India by the British: in a belligerent reply to an article by Alexander in the Quaker periodical *The Wayfarer*, Graham sneers sarcastically at Alexander for describing Britain's attempt to bring reforms to India as 'blundering':

The Government, in its blundering way, has induced and helped the peasants to start 300,000 co-operative banks, to oust the usurer. There are government agricultural training centres and technical schools to teach home industries, which may fill the peasants' annual five months of idleness. Perhaps there should have been more of these blunders, but they mean taxation and a struggle with local inertia'.⁹⁵

At the time it seems that either Alexander was very tactful or Graham very insensitive. At any rate, it is unlikely that they actually quarrelled.

Perhaps Graham did not talk to Alexander about Katherine Mayo and her attack on Indian, and particularly Hindu culture;⁹⁶ but her book *Mother India*⁹⁷ figured prominently in Graham's letters, those written on shipboard on the way out and from then on. This is the book that Reginald Reynolds called 'a pornographic classic which has become almost a text-book of anti-Indian propaganda'.⁹⁸ Graham often refers to it, and it presents such striking

⁹⁵ 'The Poverty of India', *Wayfarer*, 10, February, 1931, 17. Alexander's article pleading the cause of India's independence, is 'India Today', *Wayfarer*, 10, January, 1931, 224-225.

⁹⁶ Mayo has a distinctly pro-Muslim bias. See for instance *Mother India*, 156, 7, where she contrasts the caste-ridden Hindus with the 'utterly democratic' Muslims. This is not so noticeable in Graham.

⁹⁷ Katherine Mayo, *Mother India*, London: Cape, 1927. Reviewed by Graham, *Friend*, 25 November, 1927, 1061.

⁹⁸ Reginald Reynolds, *White Sahibs in India*, 3rd revised edn., London: Socialist Book Centre, 1947 (first published 1937). Reynolds was a student of Horace Alexander at Woodbrooke (see Carnall, *Gandhi's Interpreter*, 65). Marjorie Sykes says that Alexander encouraged him to go to India in 1929, and that 'on his return [he] made many young Quakers vividly aware of the moral dimension of India's struggle for freedom'. See also Reginald Reynolds, *My Life*

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parallels with Graham's observations as to suggest that it is the source of many of Graham's 'prejudices'. It was published in 1927, the year Graham went to India, and several copies of it were circulating among the passengers on the ship which took him there in the autumn of 1927.⁹⁹ Mayo was an American journalist who had already written a book about the Philippines denouncing the native culture and applauding the American régime.¹⁰⁰ The suspicion arose at once that she was paid to write the book by the British government, who did not want anyone British to be implicated: Graham on board ship was warned that 'the natives' would say this.¹⁰¹ A book published in India in 1971 contains strong evidence that the claim is true.¹⁰² Its author maintains that the British Government was anxious to counteract any sympathy with Indian aspirations that might arise in America.¹⁰³ A certain J.H. Adam, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Criminal Investigation Department,

and Crimes, London: Jarrolds, 1956, 55. Reynolds was a vigorous opponent of Graham. In a personal communication Edward H. Milligan tells me, 'I seem to remember TEH [i.e. T.E. Harvey] writing to his wife that it is difficult to reach unity in a committee that includes both J.W. Graham and Reginald Reynolds'. In another book Reynolds writes of a 'British Quaker who had been pouring out entirely fictitious information and figures about India' in *The Friend*, falsely denigrating India in general and Gandhi in particular. Reynolds complains that he cannot get the paper to publish his replies (Reginald Reynolds, *To Live in Mankind: a Quest for Gandhi*, London: Andre Deutsch, 1951, 77). The Quaker in question is probably Graham.⁹⁹ Letter 24 September, 1927.

¹⁰⁰ Katherine Mayo, *The Isles of Fear. The Truth about the Philippines*, London: Faber & Gwyer, printed U.S.A., 1925.

¹⁰¹ Letter 23 September, 1927.

¹⁰² Manoranjan Jha, *Katherine Mayo and India*, New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1971. See also Anupama Arora, ' "Neighborhood Assets" or "Neighborhood Nuisances?"', *National Anxieties in Katherine Mayo's Mother India*, *Women's Studies*, Vol. 37, 2008, 131-155, which claims that Mayo seeks to raise and exploit fears of contamination of America by India, and Mrinalini Sinha's *Specters of Mother India: the Global Restructuring of an Empire*, Durham, NC: Duke University, 2006, which sets Mayo in a feminist context, showing Indian women striving for their own rights.

¹⁰³ Jha, *Katherine Mayo*, 15.

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posted at Lahore, became her guide & monitored her writing.¹⁰⁴ She submitted to him for approval the outline of her thesis, which was that early marriages and the prevalence of sexual disease meant that India could not produce citizens fit 'to run a mouse-trap, let alone a government'.¹⁰⁵

On the ship and everywhere he went in India Graham would ask people (mostly British) what they thought of Miss Mayo and her book.¹⁰⁶ At least as far as the Indian population is concerned, he writes, the book seems to be counter-productive, creating antagonism towards America as well as Britain: 'All Indians are out to prove that America is as bad as India ... Thousands of lynchings are believed to occur every year. They say to America "You're another" '.¹⁰⁷ A 'Mr. Natarajan', 'the veteran editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*', wrote a series of articles against *Mother India*.¹⁰⁸ 'He argues with the missionaries as to the unfairness of the impression made & the author's reliance on a bigoted Catholic of the eighteenth century, the Abbé Dubois'.¹⁰⁹ Graham is trying to achieve a balanced view on the subject, but

¹⁰⁴ Jha, *Katherine Mayo*, 36.

¹⁰⁵ Jha, *Katherine Mayo*, 37.

¹⁰⁶ See letter 24 September, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

¹⁰⁷ Letter, 8 November, 1927.

¹⁰⁸ For K. Natarajan, see also Alexander, *Indian Ferment*, 191. Alexander summarises some of Natarajan's rebuttal of Mayo, commenting, 'It is a much more effective answer than I had been led to suppose'.

¹⁰⁹ Letter, 15 October, 1927. Mayo does mention Dubois several times, but generally she claims to have witnessed herself the horrors she describes, a claim which according to Alexander, cannot always be true. Alexander castigates Mayo for reproducing Dubois' evidence as if nothing had changed (Alexander, *Indian Ferment*, 191).

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the essays he wrote against the *swaraj* movement after his return to England strongly suggest that he relied on Mayo for some of his data.¹¹⁰

Mayo's most hair-raising passages deal with the abuse of child-brides by sexually rapacious husbands.¹¹¹ (No doubt this is the part that Reginald Reynolds found 'pornographic'.) Mayo quotes a list, made in 1891, of cases brought to hospital of victims of marital ill-treatment.¹¹² The list was brought as evidence in a plea made by 'all the women doctors then working in India' for legislation to outlaw very early marriage. In 1922, when the subject was being again debated by the Indian Legislature, it was apparent that the situation remained the same.¹¹³ According to Mayo, Rabindranath Tagore himself, by using his 'poetic' rhetoric to justify child marriage as 'a flower of the sublimated spirit, a conquest over sexuality and materialism won by exalted intellect for the eugenic uplift of the race',¹¹⁴ had only made matters worse.

This view of the matter was hotly denied by Reynolds and in slightly less strident terms by Alexander. The former maintained that the measure outlawing marriage of girls under the age of 14 or of boys under 18 which became law as the Sarda Act in 1929 was steadily advocated by Indian politicians and opposed by the British. This was because the government needed the support of native princes with a vested interest in maintaining the

¹¹⁰ See, for instance, 'The Case against Mr. Gandhi', *Friend*, 3 October, 1931, where Graham details the miseries of child brides in the Brahminical system.

¹¹¹ *Mother India*, 29-30, 57.

¹¹² *Mother India*, 61.

¹¹³ *Mother India*, 63.

¹¹⁴ *Mother India*, 50.

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status quo.¹¹⁵ For Reynolds this illustrates the difficulties faced by even reform-minded individuals in government circles in pushing whole-heartedly for social improvements: 'they dare not offend their only Indian supports and give strength to a social revolution that would engulf both themselves and their allies'.¹¹⁶ As for Tagore, Alexander praises Natarajan for the way in which 'he castigates [Mayo] for her wicked misrepresentation of Tagore's attitude towards marriage'.¹¹⁷ Graham could have read *The Indian Ferment* before he began writing his series of essays directed against Indian culture and aspirations,¹¹⁸ but if so he must have been unmoved by it. He continued the onslaught until the eve of his death.¹¹⁹

In his view Indians had to look to a modern nation like Britain if they were to move forward to freedom and enlightenment. The religion of the majority had become a massive hindrance. Decadent rather than primitive, it had to go, as indeed was its doom:

Hinduism is a decaying, a slowly dying faith. Indeed, I do not see how it can be anything else in face of the modern alternatives to it. It makes so many people miserable. Sixty million outcastes are made miserable ... All little mothers are

¹¹⁵ Reynolds, *White Sahibs*, 12. See also *White Sahibs*, 178-9, for an account of the Sarda Act and its vicissitudes.

¹¹⁶ Reynolds, *White Sahibs*, 128. Mayo, needless to say, gives a contrary account. See *Mother India*, 39.

¹¹⁷ Alexander, *Indian Ferment*, 192.

¹¹⁸ For instance, 'The Case against Mr. Gandhi', *Friend*, 3 October, 1931, 979-80; 'The Poverty of India', *Wayfarer*, 1931, 17-18; 'Gandhi in India', *FQE*, 1932, 280-288.

¹¹⁹ Graham died on October 21st 1932. In late September he was still attacking Gandhi for his *swadeshi* policy (see 8.9., below). See exchange under the title 'India and Tariffs' between Graham and Gilbert Slater in the periodical *Reconciliation* (31 August, 1931), in JWGP, Box 2.

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wretched. Widows suffer.¹²⁰ All men look forward to a long series of unhappy lives under the law of Karma. . . There is neither strength nor charm in Hinduism to withstand Christianity. It lives on in the past. There is a vast mass of helpless inertia; that is all.¹²¹

The other native religions were no better. 'A Buddhist shrine, of the Thibetan variety' was 'the lowest thing in religion I have seen. From Buddha to symbolism! ... Two entirely irreligious priests, grinning and fooling, & receiving money from worshippers'.¹²² A Jain temple 'was idolatrous, had a shrine for worshipping their founder. Another reformation gone to seed'. The fact that 'their ideas are the same as Gandhi's [in] points of conduct' served as no commendation. Islam does not come in for this kind of criticism, but as I have shown above Graham saw Muslims as just as guilty as Hindus for their treatment of women.¹²³ While Graham was travelling he did see signs of hope within Hinduism in such movements as the Arya Somaj,¹²⁴ but only because they combined a religious outlook with 'modern' (i.e., western) elements.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Graham's first introduction to the wretchedness of Hindu widows may well have been the 7th chapter of *Mother India*, where it is attributed directly to their religion: 'That so hideous a fate as widowhood should befall a woman can be but for one cause – the enormity of her sins in a former incarnation. From the moment of her husband's demise till the last hour of her own life, she must expiate those sins in shame and suffering and self-immolation, chained in every thought to the service of his soul. Be she a child of three, who knows nothing of the marriage that bound her, or be she a wife in fact, having lived with her husband, the case is the same. By his death she is revealed as a creature of innate guilt and evil portent, herself convinced, when she is old enough to think at all, of the justice of her fate'.

¹²¹ 'Christianity in India', 256.

¹²² Cf. 8.2., above, and note.

¹²³ See above, this section.

¹²⁴ An aggressively Hindu revivalist movement, according to John Keay, in his *India: a History*, 458.

¹²⁵ In 'The Case against Mr. Gandhi', *Friend*, 23 October, 1931, 980, Graham writes of the 'very attractive' 'intellectuals and sceptics' who have 'learnt from the West' and associates reforming Indian sects with them. He asserts, however, that Indian intellectuals on the whole have little public spirit.

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8.7. Conditions for Democracy

Given Graham's sense that Indian culture and religion were helpless to redeem themselves without the help of European, and particularly British, attitudes and achievements it becomes less puzzling that the man who wrote *Evolution and Empire* should spend the last years of his life defending imperial power even when it was in the process of losing whatever credibility it still retained in 1912, when that book was published. He refers to the apparent contradiction in his essay 'Gandhi in India'¹²⁶ claiming that he has not changed:

An Empire is essentially temporary, based on unsafe foundations. May I be forgiven if I add that twenty years ago I wrote in a book called *Evolution and Empire*, a book written to show the weakness of Empire, that the British Empire in India, though the best in history, could not finally survive unless it ceased to be an Empire and became a Federation.¹²⁷

'That is my view still', he claims. 'But', he goes on, 'great modifications must be gradual, and since I have been to India I have become cautious'.¹²⁸ Of course, he maintains, India must eventually be free,¹²⁹ but she is not ready yet. The essay contains a list of 'conditions for democracy' in all of which India is shockingly deficient.¹³⁰ The conditions include such features as 'Self-determination; only to be achieved where a Self, a conscious national unity,

¹²⁶ 'Gandhi in India', *FQE*, 1932, 280-287.

¹²⁷ 'Gandhi in India', 283.

¹²⁸ 'Gandhi in India', 283.

¹²⁹ 'Case against Mr. Gandhi', *Friend*, 3 October, 1931, 980: 'In the end it [independence] must come'.

¹³⁰ 'Gandhi in India', 280.

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has first been secured', and 'freedom and honour to women'.¹³¹ Graham is positing democracy as a kind of heavenly reward for good behaviour rather than a means towards a just society, as others, such as Alexander or Reynolds, might see it. Graham gave a talk on 'conditions for democracy', lasting half an hour, to students up and down the Indian Sub-continent when time did not allow for his major lectures.¹³² He was, he says, 'eagerly encouraged to take this subject by the Principals, to whom the frothy politics of their students were even then, in 1927-8, causing anxiety'.¹³³ This, in so far as Graham's observation is accurate, can be taken as an instance of that resistance to change on the part of people with a vested interest in the *status quo* which was recognised by Reginald Reynolds.¹³⁴

Graham's defence of pacifism was also put to the test. A lecture on 'War & Democracy' was challenged by students claiming that all nations have won their freedom by fighting, and that Indians must learn to do so too. Graham comments, 'I shall have to work up a reply. It is a dangerous idea'.¹³⁵

¹³¹ This point may well have come from Mayo, whose work focuses so much on the enslavement of women. See especially *Mother India*, Chapter 6 (pp.69-80), and the piteous account of the personal grief that can result from the wife's utter powerlessness.

¹³² See 'Gandhi in India', *FQE*, 1932, 280-288, 280. See also letters, 8 November, 1927, 14 November, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

¹³³ 'Gandhi in India', 283

¹³⁴ See 8.6., above.

¹³⁵ Letter 2 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

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8.8. The Yearly Meeting of 1930

Graham might have expected Friends in Britain to agree with him as to the danger of such bellicose ideas; yet the 'sense of the meeting'* of 1930, when it came to discuss Indian affairs, was largely on the side of those excitable students, the kind of people whose 'politics', Graham said, were 'childish'.¹³⁶

The Saturday session was held in the presence of Rabindranath Tagore.

'The occasion', commented the *The Friend*, 'was surely an historic one . . .

Everybody felt something of its significance, remembering the lowering darkness of the background in India, the other great Indian leader lying in prison, the personality of our visitor, the traditions of the Society and the duty that might lie before us'.¹³⁷ 'The other great Indian leader' was Mohandas K.

Gandhi, whom at least one Quaker believed to be 'the modern Christ'.¹³⁸

Gandhi was in prison as a result of perhaps the most powerfully symbolic act of his career, the 'salt march'. In April 1930 he had walked with a band of followers from his ashram 240 miles to the sea at Dandi, there to commit an act of civil disobedience by picking up and purifying some sea salt, in defiance of the Government's tax on salt. Afterwards a number of disturbances took place, followed by government reprisals in which two people were killed and

¹³⁶ *The Friend*, 30 May, 1930, 494.

¹³⁷ *The Friend*, 30 May, 1930, 470.

¹³⁸ This was J. Rowntree Gillett (1874-1840) (DQB). See 'Notes on the Last Days of John William Graham' in JWGP, Box 2, p.3. See also Hoyland, *The Case for India*, 24-5, for comparisons made in India between the arrest of Christ and that of Gandhi in 1924.

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320 injured.¹³⁹ The Yearly Meeting debate on India took place in the shadow of these events.

The person who introduced Tagore was Horace Alexander. In his introduction Alexander emphasised the closeness in outlook between the Hindu tradition represented by Tagore and Quakerism. Tagore's Santiniketan, he said, was 'a place where the whole community was guided and inspired by a belief in the essential or potential goodness of man, or, perhaps, a belief in the divine that was in every man'.¹⁴⁰ When Tagore spoke he professed himself an admirer of Britain's 'noble idealism', of European 'illumination', 'science', and 'spirit of service', which ought to complement the 'spiritual ideals' of the East, but he lamented that Britain

has not come to Asia to reveal the generosity of her civilisation, but has come with a hard hand, using the truth itself for an ignoble purpose of self-aggrandisement ... The economists who drive the complicated machine have had long training in power, but they have no tradition in human sympathy ... Asia must refuse to yield to slavery and to the ambitious belief that humanity can succeed with only the help of science.¹⁴¹

The first person to speak after Tagore was Jack Hoyland. Recalling his 'experience as a member of what was looked upon as an oppressive, tyrannical and bullying race', he suggested that the Meeting should 'send a message to the Labour Party' (then in government, under Ramsay Macdonald) 'declaring that the Society believed that men and nations had the

¹³⁹ French, *Liberty or Death*, 79-80.

¹⁴⁰ *Friend*, 30 May, 1930, 490.

¹⁴¹ *Friend*, 30 May, 1930, 492.

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right to choose their own future'.¹⁴² At this point John William Graham rose 'to protest against putting the Society on the side of Gandhi and rebellion'.¹⁴³ He asserted that the tyranny India would endure under 'Brahminical' rule would be far worse than anything imposed by the British. Addressing Tagore's points, he denied 'that England was in India for the ignoble purpose of self-aggrandisement', and put the burden on Gandhi to 'call off the revolt'.¹⁴⁴

The discussion on India, formal and informal, continued through the weekend and Monday with opinion divided between 'the more ardent spirits possessed of a very deep sense of sympathy for M.K. Gandhi's conception of non-violence' and 'a few Friends on the opposite wing who would have condemned M.K. Gandhi'.¹⁴⁵ On Monday, in the face of continuing disagreement, the Clerk read a statement responding to what had been said, in part as follows:

The Society of Friends believes that God reveals Himself in the hearts of all men. This belief makes us advocates of freedom and inspires us to take the risks of freedom rather than maintain a system of tutelage, however beneficent it may have been both in purpose and results, which is now felt to be galling to an awakened and developed India.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² *Friend*, 30 May, 1930, 470.

¹⁴³ *Friend*, 30 May, 1930, 470.

¹⁴⁴ *Friend*, 30 May, 1930, 470.

¹⁴⁵ *Friend*, 6 June, 1930, 515.

¹⁴⁶ *Friend*, 6 June, 1930, 524.

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In a further paradoxical twist, J.B. Braithwaite, Jr., son and namesake of the man who had stood in the way of Graham's progressive work in America and one of the 'war Friends', supported Graham in his opposition to Gandhi.¹⁴⁷

After the 1930 Yearly Meeting a stream of increasingly passionate invective against the Indian freedom movement flowed from Graham's pen into the pages of various periodicals. It was particularly directed against the man who more than any other embodied the spirit of that movement, Mohandas Gandhi.

8.9. Graham and Gandhi

Graham did not meet Gandhi in India,¹⁴⁸ and he makes few references to him before his return. He heard, indeed, from fellow passengers on the voyage to India, that he was 'a perfect scoundrel & humbug', although that was from the wife of a police-officer, whose brother, another police officer, had control of Gandhi.¹⁴⁹ He grants, even at this stage, that 'there is no doubt his policies have been a mistake & caused bloodshed and strife', but acknowledges his saintliness.¹⁵⁰ Later Graham was less respectful. The Gandhi he attacks in an essay of 1931 is more two-faced than saintly, as he makes a half-promise to his followers to 'arrange the destruction of the Indian [cotton] mills' in order to protect the 'khaddar' industry, after depending on the owners of the mills to

¹⁴⁷ *Friend*, 6 June, 1930, 525. For Braithwaite as a 'war Friend' see Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 389.

¹⁴⁸ Letter, 7 October, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

¹⁴⁹ Letter, 27 September, 1927.

¹⁵⁰ Letter, 27 September, 1927.

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finance his boycott movement. 'He would not like that to be reported in India'. Moreover, he says, Gandhi has used his political organ, *Young India* to attack as *goondas*, or criminals, the government with whom he has made peace. 'Such is the trustworthiness of our charming friend round whom so much glamour is cast. He is an Indian saint or fakir with ostentatious asceticism, who "fasts and does his alms" very much in public'.¹⁵¹ Gandhi is not so different from those fake 'saints' whom Graham saw advertising their asceticism at Benares.¹⁵²

As a Lancashire man Graham was particularly bitter about the effect that Gandhi's *swadeshi* policy, if successful, would have on workers in Lancashire's cotton mills.¹⁵³ Gandhi's attempt to placate them during his visit to England in 1931 served only to infuriate him. 'He has tried various blandishments in Lancashire, and used his great personal charm in a very daring effort to please the sufferers. He says he never meant them any harm and pats the children's heads. But his boycott was for the very purpose of doing England harm'.¹⁵⁴

With respect to *khaddar* (India's hand-made cotton products) Graham now took a stance diametrically opposed to that he held in earlier years, for all his claims of consistency. In *Evolution and Empire* we find the following statement, astonishing in terms of what Graham said later:

¹⁵¹ Quotations from 'The Case against Mr. Gandhi', *Friend*, 23 October, 1931, 979.

¹⁵² See 8.5., above.

¹⁵³ '*Swadeshi*, meaning "of our own country" or "home produced", expressed a determination to be self-reliant and included boycott of imported products, most obviously British textiles' (Keay, *India*, 466).

¹⁵⁴ 'Case against Mr. Gandhi', 979.

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We put an export tax on native manufactures to prevent them being sold in England, while compelling free entrance for our own machine-made products into India. These two forces have destroyed the beautiful hand-woven fabrics which the natives made at their homes with immemorial skill.¹⁵⁵

This statement refers to the past, when Britain's rule has been less 'just' and 'benevolent' than it is now. Still, he might have borne it in mind when he attacked Gandhi over the *khaddar* issue.

Graham's case, however, was not essentially about provincial or national self-interest. Gandhi offended against Progress itself. Free exchange of goods was part of the new world order from which war would be banished: 'Countries who desire well-being should not be self-sufficing but interdependent. Each country should be allowed to work at what it can do best, in the economic commonwealth of the world'.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, 'A tariff adopted by any country is ethically an expression of nationalistic selfishness and the power of money, and contains the germ of war, whether the country be a debtor or a creditor'.¹⁵⁷

The tariffs issue was, relatively, a side-line in Graham's assault on Gandhi in particular and the independence movement in general. 'The case against Mr. Gandhi' was, essentially, that he stood for 'Brahminism' and the tyranny and backwardness that Brahmin rule entailed.¹⁵⁸ That meant the wretchedness of young wives and the especial misery of widows, all as

¹⁵⁵ *EE*, 183.

¹⁵⁶ 'Tariffs and Peace' *Reconciliation* [1932], 374, JWGP, Box 2.

¹⁵⁷ Letter in *Reconciliation* (JWGP, Box 2). On protective tariffs compare *EE*, 148-9. Graham believed strongly that free trade favoured peace and friendly relations among nations.

¹⁵⁸ 'Case against Mr. Gandhi', 979-980.

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Katherine Mayo had described.¹⁵⁹ That meant poverty, for several reasons, for instance: 1. Brahminism was a cause of over-population, as the girl-wives each produced a baby every year.¹⁶⁰ 2. The cult of the sacred cow meant there were far more cattle than could be fed, so that the cows' milk-yield was deplorable, while the bulls 'roam and feed ownerless in the bazaars'.¹⁶¹ 3. The general veneration for life meant that animal pests such as rats might not be killed.¹⁶² 4. Brahminism demanded that families impoverish themselves to pay for their daughters' weddings.¹⁶³ Add to this a general mindless adhesion to traditional 'wasteful' customs, such as spending money on jewellery instead of banking it or spending time making dung-cakes for fuel instead of tending children,¹⁶⁴ and it was obvious, at least to Graham, that India's problems have nothing to do with the government and everything to do with the Indians themselves.¹⁶⁵ Then there is the caste system 'It is the sheet anchor of

¹⁵⁹ 'Case Against Mr. Gandhi', 980.

¹⁶⁰ 'The Poverty of India', *Wayfarer*, February, 1931, 17.

¹⁶¹ 'The Poverty of India', 17.

¹⁶² 'The Poverty of India', 18; 'Gandhi in India', 282; letter, 2 December, 1927, JWGP, Box 14. In case it seem strange that Graham, who considered that a nation's progress might be measured in terms of its people's kindness to animals (see *Evolution and Empire*, 75) should find fault with this aspect of Hinduism, it may be remarked that Graham comments on 'the criminally starved & beaten animals' that clog the streets in India (Letter, 2/12/1927, JWGP, Box 14). Veneration for life does not equate with kindness. Mayo comments on the habitual cruelty with which Hindus treat their draft-animals, which they see as compatible with 'veneration for life' (*Mother India*, 219, 220).

¹⁶³ 'Gandhi in India', 282.

¹⁶⁴ Letter 21 November, 1927, JWGP, Box 14.

¹⁶⁵ It might be supposed that Graham might have brought in some evidence that Muslims do better because they are free of 'Brahminical tyranny', just as girls in Christian schools escape the horrible fate of their Hindu sisters (see 8.6., above), but I have not found any instances of this. Graham saw Christianity as the solution, not Islam or any other religion.

8. India and After

Brahminism, and is the most dreadful block of tyranny and human contempt on a large scale on the earth'.¹⁶⁶

Gandhi will do nothing to alleviate all this. He is a Hindu, who implicitly supports the caste system (Graham's evidence is Gandhi's resistance of separate constituencies for outcastes).¹⁶⁷ By his policies 'missionaries, doctors, traders and investors' would all have to go.¹⁶⁸ Strife between Hindus and Muslims would continue unabated: 'Gandhi's method of cure is to let them go on fighting till the stronger wins'.¹⁶⁹ In conclusion, 'As a public man he stands as the great hindrance to the gradual evolution of self government, and a mere architect of ruin'.¹⁷⁰ Thus the opponent of empire-building as 'of no evolutionary value'¹⁷¹ came to defend imperial power as a necessary step towards that freedom to which it is by definition opposed – Beelzebub is called on to drive out Beelzebub.

8.10. The End of the Conflict

The opposition to Graham's views on India and Gandhi became more evident in the months leading up to Graham's death at the same time as he became more insistent. In mid-1932 he was complaining that Gandhi 'has become a myth'.¹⁷² Even the Hicksites, who had given hospitality to Graham's writings in their periodical the *Intelligencer* ever since the days when he first

¹⁶⁶ 'The Case against Mr. Gandhi', 980.

¹⁶⁷ 'The Case against Mr. Gandhi', 980.

¹⁶⁸ 'Gandhi in India', 287.

¹⁶⁹ 'Gandhi in India', 287.

¹⁷⁰ 'Gandhi in India', 288.

¹⁷¹ *Evolution and Empire*, 111.

¹⁷² 'India and Tariffs', 435. JWGP, Box 2.

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befriended them,¹⁷³ balked at publishing some of what he wrote. 'I cannot get [*The Intelligencer*] to insert my views on India', he complained.

'Americans seem to us to be sentimental about Gandhi, and to be easily deceived by historical analogies, none of which apply. The British Empire in India is unique'.¹⁷⁴ (So much for Mayo's attempts to sway American opinion in favour of the government in India).¹⁷⁵

Graham did not reach a point of agreement with his fellow Quakers through any softening of his views. Yet immediately before his death he came to feel less estranged. A letter to his son Richard of October 10th (a week before his death) describes a recent Meeting for Sufferings* which discussed the activities of the Indian Affairs Committee, set up following the 1930 Yearly Meeting.¹⁷⁶ Graham rejoiced that the Society 'would no longer be in danger of being thought to be on the side of Gandhi', and was rewarded when Carl Heath, the Clerk of the Committee, 'asked Friends to believe that the Government was just as fair and honest and desirous of the well-being of India as they were'.¹⁷⁷ In the letter Graham expresses relief that he has been listened to 'with respect and sympathy' and that pro-Gandhi fervour has abated.¹⁷⁸ The dispute with Friends must have weighed on the family as well as on Graham, because Richard mentioned what his father has told him when

¹⁷³ See 2.8., above.

¹⁷⁴ Letter to Russell Tylor [n.d.], JWGP, Box 2.

¹⁷⁵ See 8.6., above.

¹⁷⁶ See *Friend*, 13 June, 1930, 550.

¹⁷⁷ See *Friend*, 14 October, 1932, 881.

¹⁷⁸ Letter, 8 October, 1932, JWGP, Box 2.

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he wrote to his brother Michael of John William's death, and it is repeated in 'Notes on the Last Days of John William Graham', prepared mainly for family members (including Michael and his wife) who could not be present at the memorial meeting.¹⁷⁹

8.11. Conclusion

Graham opposed the immediate granting to India of her independence because he was a champion of progress. What he saw and heard in India and what he read convinced him that if Britain left India would be plunged back into the religious, social and moral darkness from which, with the help of the British government and mostly British missionaries, she was beginning to emerge. He took up this position despite having attacked empire and conquest in general because of what he saw as the unique relationship between Britain and her vast colony. In holding tenaciously to this attitude Graham found himself in painful disagreement with many good friends among the Quakers, including his son-in-law, whom he had been so glad to see in India. This is in keeping with a pattern in Graham's life, a tendency to persist in advocating unpopular views, and thus to place himself outside the main stream, even of his natural allies. In spite of the contradictions which seem at first sight to characterise his stance in relation to India, he was in this essentially true to himself.

¹⁷⁹ Typescript, October 1932, JWGP, Box 2.

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CONCLUSION

Introduction

This Conclusion is used not only to summarise the main points of the thesis and set out its claims to originality, but also to consider some previous treatments of John William Graham's life and work and make the case for the different assessment made in this study. A final statement refers to Graham's discipleship of John Ruskin, showing how in Ruskin Graham found confirmation for his sense of Quakerism as the true, prophetic, mystical and progressive Christianity, adapted to the needs of the day.

The thesis provides a new perspective on various elements in the history of Quakerism and on the history of ideas more generally at this period: questions about religion and science, as affecting the Quakers and the wider society; the nature of the 'Quaker Renaissance', its origins and future; the nature and viability of the Quaker ministry; the possibility and acceptability of war-resistance. Graham was well placed, by accident of history and by temperament, to respond to the new features that rose on his intellectual horizon during his formative years: he therefore provides a way of looking at these elements in a different light from more generalised studies. The focus has been on his faith in progress, as the work of God enacted by human beings inspired and directed by the Divine Indweller. Graham was sure that Quakerism was the best vehicle by which faith could prosper in a world where Darwinism and historical criticism of the Bible had rendered untenable what

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Martin Davie calls the 'Core of Belief'.¹ It was able to fulfil this mission thanks to its historic resistance to the 'outward' authority of church and creed and its reliance on the Light Within as manifested in prophetic ministry. This was what made Quakerism 'mystical'. This was the divinely ordained cause of progress.

Graham's espousal of this cause was, however, beset with paradox. To him progress entailed looking back: back to the early Friends and back beyond them to the dawn of Christianity. For the very idea of progress he looked back to the Victorian age: belief in progress might look regressive by the time that Graham's major publications appeared, in the 1920s, after World War 1 had so altered the landscape for most people. There is something paradoxical in the very basis of progressive Christianity: if the world is continually advancing in religious understanding, how can it make sense to look back two thousand years for a model to aspire to? Graham does not show awareness of these paradoxes.

Originality of Thesis and Implications for Previous Scholarship

The thesis describes other Quakers engaging alongside Graham with the subject of progress. Scholars of Quakerism have not made this a major theme in their studies, although Kennedy gives some attention to the

¹ Martin Davie, *British Quaker Theology since 1895*, Lewiston, NY; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen. 1997. See Conclusion, 'Analysis of Key Texts on the Quaker Renaissance', below.

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discovery of 'progressive revelation' as shown in the Bible.² General studies of the idea of progress abound, some of which are discussed in Chapter 1. The biographical approach to the history of ideas has pitfalls: Graham cannot be taken as merely representative of his age, and equally the researcher has to beware of assuming that some ideas are original to him when in fact they are commonplace. In order to guard against such errors in this thesis Graham's debts are noted, and his views compared with those of other Quakers. He has a unique perspective on the events and concerns of his day and this highlights some aspects which might otherwise be overlooked. For example, his impassioned opposition to evangelicalism, as detailed in Chapter 2, supplements the exploration in T.C Kennedy's book of Renaissance Quakers' rejection of the idea of an 'angry God'.³ We do not see in the Graham records much of the process affectingly recalled in Edward Worsdell's *Gospel of Divine Help*, a book which takes the reader through the stages of guilt, despair and liberation into a new kind of faith.⁴ Yet it is easy to see how personal experience fuelled Graham's pugnacity. We see how the faith that came to be formulated in *The Faith of a Quaker* and *The Divinity in Man* was built on the ruins of a discredited system.

The treatment of psychical research in Chapter 3 is the most original part of the thesis. It tends to confirm Janet Oppenheim's view of the uses of this

² Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism: 1860-1920: the Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: OUP, 2001, 58.

³ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, Chapter 3, 86-118, 'An Angry God or A Reasonable Faith?'

⁴ Edward Worsdell, *The Gospel of Divine Help: Thoughts on Some First Principles of Christianity* [1886], 2nd edn., with prefatory note by J.G. Whittier, London: Samuel Harris, 1888, especially p. 75. (See 2.5., above.) For Graham's 'painful doubts' see 2.3., above.

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science (or pseudo-science?) for intellectuals seeking a remedy for religious doubt.⁵ The research establishes a connection between psychical research and the Quaker belief in direct communication with God, open to everybody. Graham borrowed from Myers the idea of the subliminal self as a vehicle for this communication, and explored it thoroughly in *The Divinity in Man*, although it had already been used in a similar way by Rufus Jones.⁶ Graham, in his persona as a man of progressive views, believed that he was using up-to-date science to validate a faith that could stand the test of time. The significance of these findings is indicated by the extent to which interest in the psychical persists among Quakers today, especially as connected with concerns about the survival of bodily death. This was evidenced in the address given by Jan Arriens in March 2015 at the Annual Conference of the Nontheist Friends Network⁷ and by the existence of a group called the 'Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies'.⁸ Outside the Quaker world there has been something of a revival of interest in Graham's friend and mentor, Frederic Myers.⁹ The psychical has, however, as far as I know, been generally ignored by historians of Quakerism. My findings on Graham's

⁵ Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850-1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, especially her treatment of Sidgwick, 111ff.

⁶ Rufus M. Jones, *A Dynamic Faith* [1900], (3rd edn.), London: Headley, 1906, 52, 53.

⁷ Notes kindly supplied to me by the author. Arriens believes Quakers and others should pay serious attention to records of unexplained psychic phenomena.

⁸ See their magazine *Reaching Out* (latest edition, Spring 2014) and the article by Angela Howard, Clerk of the Fellowship, in *The Friend*, 'An Eternity Before us', *Friend*, 9 January, 2015, 12-13.

⁹ See Edward F. Kelly, *Irreducible Mind: Toward a Psychology for the 21st Century*, Lanham, Md; Plymouth: Jason Aronson, 2006. I am grateful to Jan Arriens for drawing my attention to this work.

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dependence on psychical research for his understanding of the meaning of mysticism, the source and efficacy of the Quaker 'prophetic ministry' and his ideas about the relationship of God and man inform the other theological chapters.

The value of the concluding chapters, on 'War and Evolution' and on 'John William Graham in India' depends mainly on detailed research carried out among the original papers and in Graham's printed output that has gone towards building up a picture of the complexities and paradoxes in Graham's approach to questions of war and of empire. These have to do with his personality, but the ambivalences also illustrate the challenges posed for all thoughtful human beings then and now by these contentious elements in human existence. Again the biographical approach is vindicated.

Analysis of Key Texts on the Quaker Renaissance

In this section I focus on the three recent texts which I have found most useful for understanding the Quaker Renaissance and Graham's place in it: Thomas Kennedy's *British Quakerism, 1860-1920*,¹⁰ Brian Phillips's PhD thesis, 'Friendly Patriotism',¹¹ and Martin Davie's *British Quaker Theology since 1895*.¹² I indicate ways in which my research supplements or corrects their

¹⁰ See note above.

¹¹ Brian Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism: British Quakerism and the Imperial Nation, 1890-1910', PhD Thesis, Cambridge University, 1989. There is a summary of 'Friendly Patriotism' by Rebecca Wynter on the website: <http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/pages/summaries-of-postgraduate-theses-on-quaker-topics.html> (accessed 10 November, 2015).

¹² Martin Davie, *British Quaker Theology since 1895*, Lewiston, NY; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen, 1997.

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findings, thus extending comments on the implications of my work for earlier scholarship.

Kennedy's book not only gives a thorough account of the way in which British Quakers succeeded in breaking free of evangelical thought and practice, but also gives considerable weight to Graham's place within the movement. My focus is on Kennedy's treatment of Graham, who is, of course, only one among many Quakers whom Kennedy brings to life. Inevitably he does not cover every aspect of Graham's life and work, leaving room for a fuller treatment, especially of Graham's theology. Kennedy has a particular bias: he declares in his introduction that 'the most important product of the Quaker Renaissance was the revitalization of the Society's peace testimony'.¹³ His sense that uncompromising resistance to any call to fight is of the essence of Quakerism gives a colour to his work that calls for some rectification. Kennedy duly notes the pro-war stance of some 'weighty' Friends, as well as the fact that as many as one-third of eligible Quakers did in fact join the army; but he presents this as a lamentable failure to uphold the Peace Testimony in its purity, rather than the result of an honest process of discernment.¹⁴ Thus Graham's hesitation as to whether the Government was entitled to demand universal service in the War is described as 'waffling'.¹⁵ Kennedy does not, in my view, sufficiently take into account the vigour with

¹³ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 9.

¹⁴ See Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 388-414. Although Kennedy is scrupulously fair in recording the views and activities of 'war Quakers' his preference for those of the war resisters emerges from the ordering of his material.

¹⁵ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 327.

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which Graham opposed first the South African War of 1899-1902,¹⁶ then the build-up of militarism before the outbreak of war,¹⁷ nor his dedicated service to the no-conscription cause during the war years.¹⁸ Graham's *Conscription and Conscience*, with its laudatory Preface by Clifford Allen, the absolutist leader of the No-Conscription Fellowship, figures in Kennedy's bibliography but is not dealt with in the text. Kennedy is certainly less than generous when he suggests that Graham may have been 'simply going through the pacifist motions in the full knowledge that while he could not affect the progress of the war, he could retain his place of honour and influence among Friends'.¹⁹ Graham did not hesitate to go against current opinion among Friends when he disagreed with them, as is amply shown by his stance on Indian independence.²⁰

Such bias is less evident in Kennedy's treatment of Graham as opponent of the Richmond Declaration²¹ or as defender of the Quaker way against incursions on the part of the Home Mission Committee,²² but some animus can be seen in his censure of 'the shallowness of Graham's intellectual grasp' and 'self-confident moral superiority', as shown in *Evolution and Empire*. Graham's book articulates a theory of evolutionary progress in

¹⁶ See 'England and the Transvaal', *FI*, 1900, 192-3; 'Patriotism', *FQE*, 1900, 410-422.

¹⁷ See 7.6., above. See also Michael Graham, 'Spokesman', for his father's newspaper campaign against military training in schools and universities and letters to the *Manchester Guardian* in JWGP, Box 4.

¹⁸ Kennedy does, however, note that by 1915 Graham 'had come to be considered round Manchester as something of a peace crank' (*British Quakerism*, 327).

¹⁹ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 328.

²⁰ See 8.8., 8.9., above.

²¹ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 114 - 118. See 2.7., above.

²² Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 126, 128. See 5.3., above.

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secular rather than in religious terms, and sheds some light on the reasons for his ambivalence about war. Graham did not believe that peace is an eternally valid injunction placed on all humanity in all ages and all places.

Nevertheless, few Quakers who did not actually go to prison for the cause of peace can have fought harder for it than Graham. War might have been necessary in the past, but he was fighting for the future.

Kennedy is silent as to Graham's theology: his approach to 'mysticism', his contribution to the theory (or the practice) of Quaker ministry, his original readings of the Bible. He does not mention psychical research, although Graham was not the only Quaker to feel its influence. Edward Grubb's biographer, James Dudley, mentions Grubb's interest in the subject,²³ and the anonymous writer in the *British Friend* using the sobriquet 'Spes' cites the authority of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* on human personality.²⁴ As we have seen, Grubb even drew on psychical research in an attempt to 'explain' the resurrection of Christ as 'veridical hallucination', an idea promulgated by the psychical researchers.²⁵ Further, although Kennedy mentions imperialism and particularly J.A. Hobson's essays in the *British Friend* attacking its British perpetrators,²⁶ he mentions only peripherally Graham's engagement with the subject in *Evolution and Empire*, although he does note a typically ambivalent attitude to British control of the tropics on

²³ James Dudley, *The Life of Edward Grubb, 1854-1939: a Spiritual Pilgrimage*, London: J. Clarke & co., ltd [1946], 51.

²⁴ 'Christ and Evolution', by Spes (first article of 7), *BF*, January, 1985, 8.

²⁵ See 4.6., above.

²⁶ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 267-8. See 7.5., above.

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Graham's part.²⁷ Graham's involvement with India and with British rule there is no part of Kennedy's concern, since Graham's visit and nearly all his writings relating to India came after 1920, the end-point of Kennedy's work. Engagement with Graham's interests, particularly the belief in evolutionary progress that underlies all his thinking and also his use of psychical research to support his theology, supplements the complex picture presented in Kennedy's invaluable work.

Kennedy holds that the Quaker Renaissance was instrumental in providing British Friends with the coherence and self-belief they needed to withstand as well as they did the belligerent forces unleashed at the time of the First World War. Brian Phillips presents a less flattering view of the Quaker movement in the years leading up to the War, focusing on their peace campaigns. He argues that Renaissance Quakers retained the 'evangelical temperament' while exchanging an emphasis on the salvation of individual souls for an endeavour to win the world for Christ and for peace.²⁸ He is critical of the way Quakers of the time engaged in national and international politics, maintaining that the radical religious belief in the aspect of divinity inherent in every individual – even the most autocratic ruler – which could be uncovered and encouraged through skilful ministry, became perverted into a frequently 'unctuous posturing' before the thrones of Europe.²⁹ In this, he

²⁷ Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, 304-5.

²⁸ Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism', 24. Phillips is clearly taking only one aspect of evangelicalism, its missionary 'activism', as representing the whole (see 2.7., above).

²⁹ Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism', 155.

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says, they departed from the tradition of great Victorian Quakers, such as Joseph Sturge and John Bright, who were also driven by conscience to take part in public life.³⁰ He finds Renaissance Quakers suffering from the self-induced illusion that through collaborating with such people as the German Kaiser and the Russian Tsar they might bring about justice and peace.³¹ Kennedy has commented on the one-sidedness of Phillips's attacks on the Quakers as a body, demonstrating that 'for every example of Quaker support for the potentialities or results of British imperialism, two other might be found that questioned or protested against imperial adventures'.³²

Phillips mentions John William Graham several times as one who promoted 'friendly patriotism',³³ support for 'the true glory and joy of the Empire',³⁴ as well as proclaiming the fundamental goodness of such potentates as the Kaiser.³⁵ In Phillips' thesis Graham figures among leading early twentieth-century Quakers eager to participate in public life but unfitted for the task of 'speaking truth to power' by their weakness for crowned heads and their susceptibility to flattery. He is one of those suffering from vanity-

³⁰ 'Friendly Patriotism', 155.

³¹ See, for instance, Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism', 155.

³² *British Quakerism*, 263.

³³ The phrase is used by Graham in the context of the 1910 general election, describing how he exhorted a crowd 'to good spirit of broad humanity & friendly patriotism & cosmopolitan sentiment', JWGP, Box 15: diary entry, 14 January, 1910.

³⁴ 'Friendly Patriotism', 39 (quoting a report of an address by Graham, printed as 'Patriotism' in *FQE*, 1900, 410-422, 411). Phillips fails to remark that Graham here warns his audience of Bootham Old Scholars against patriotism of the uncritical, flag-waving variety.

³⁵ See Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism', 277, quoting Graham's essay 'Building against Germany', *FQE*, 1909, 172-176, 176.

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induced delusions about Quakers' ability to change the course of history through their imaginary influence with the great of the earth:

Graham's confidence in an as yet unarticulated demand for Quaker truths among the princes and politicians of the world sprang from his experience of a kind of dream world where Friends had come to see themselves as the wise men at Court. It was a world where the flattery of the great became hopelessly confused with real political power, and where the Society's leaders too often lost their heads in a rush of spiritual pride.³⁶

This thesis departs from Phillips' in showing that Graham's attitude to Empire, like his attitude to peace, was not only highly ambivalent (even in the *FQE* piece of 1900 that Phillips quotes) but also not entirely static. He moved from unquestioning endorsement of British rule overseas in a school debate at Scarborough when he was a teacher there³⁷ to an onslaught on empire in general in *Evolution and Empire*, though with a partial exception in the case of the British Empire, and thence to defence of British rule in India towards the end of his life. It is easy to mock at Graham, who laid himself open to being proved wrong by over-confident untested assertions. It is not my purpose to defend him, but rather to understand how he was led to make the rash statements for which Phillips derides him. My argument is that he was impelled by his commitment both to the Society of Friends and to faith in progress, a faith inseparable from his faith in Christianity. The God who had devised evolution as the way in which to work out his will on earth was using 'the princes and politicians of the world' as his present means. Graham and

³⁶ 'Friendly Patriotism', 309.

³⁷ See 7.4., above.

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his peers were also conscious of being in a direct line from early Friends. Fox and other early Friends had no hesitation in addressing 'that of God' in Cromwell and other rulers,³⁸ though Phillips could answer that early Friends were not so prone to be dazzled by power or to flatter it.³⁹ Phillips makes a good case, but Graham's case brings some necessary nuance to the picture.

Martin Davie is the only writer I have read on the Quaker Renaissance to focus chiefly on its theology. He brings an orthodox Protestant outlook to bear on it, by which light he finds it wanting. His 'core of conviction', against which he judges liberal Quaker theology, is close to basic evangelical doctrine as outlined by Bebbington, with its emphasis on the Bible and on the cross, although he includes creedal items like the Trinity and the physical Resurrection of Christ. He finds that in distancing themselves from evangelical doctrine, liberal Quakers also departed significantly from the beliefs of George Fox and the early Quakers, which themselves departed in some respects from the 'core of conviction'.⁴⁰ Like Phillips he ascribes some of the positions adopted by modernising Quakers to their desire for integration

³⁸ See, for instance, Fox's letter to Cromwell in *Journal*, 195. W.C. Braithwaite writes of Fox's 'confidence that his message was what was needed for the government of the state' (W.C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (1912), 2nd ed., revised by Henry J. Cadbury, York: Sessions, 1981, 434. Francis H. Knight, speaking at Meeting for Sufferings in 1932, 'was reminded of George Fox and the early Friends and of Mary Fisher. They had never left Governments and Czars alone', *Friend*, 14 October, 1932, 881.

³⁹ Phillips emphasises the degree to which first-generation Quakers opposed established authority, and that their 'anarchical' tendencies were less diminished during the Restoration period than W.C. Braithwaite maintained (*Friendly Patriotism*, 61-64).

⁴⁰ See Davie, *British Quaker Theology*, 19-37, for the early Quakers and the 'Core of conviction'; Chapter 3 (99-144) for liberal Quaker theology.

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with the wider society,⁴¹ integration, that is, with the Broad Church theology of figures like Charles Gore and R.W. Dale.⁴² For him Quakers like Grubb and Graham have more in common with these liberal theologians than with Early Friends, however fervently liberal Friends might claim the support of George Fox and his peers in their campaign against the narrow dogmatism of evangelicalism.⁴³ He argues that Renaissance Friends departed in their theology from Quaker tradition as well as from the 'core of conviction'.⁴⁴ This was not the perception even of older Quakers at the time when the Quaker Renaissance was getting under way. A Quaker calling himself 'Senex' (or 'old man') asserted in the *British Friend* in 1893 that 'In this country, at any rate, we are certainly witnessing a remarkable revival of Old-fashioned Quakerism' – especially among the young'.⁴⁵

Davie's commentary on the theology of the generation of 1895 includes an analysis of Graham's *Faith of a Quaker*.⁴⁶ Graham falls under opprobrium for departing not only from the 'core of conviction' but also from the theology of early Friends with respect to Christ, the Atonement and the Bible.

Painstaking and careful as Davie's analysis is, it fails sufficiently to take into

⁴¹ 'Friendly Patriotism', 23.

⁴² Davie, *British Quaker Theology*, 55. Charles Gore (1853–1932), Anglo-Catholic but in some ways liberal theologian, editor of the influential collection of essays, *Lux Mundi* (1889); R.W. Dale (1829-1895), Congregational minister, preached views of the atonement and the after-life which emphasised the love of God and denied Hell, *ODNB*, accessed 9 December, 2015.

⁴³ See 2.5., above.

⁴⁴ See *British Quaker Theology*, Chapter 3.

⁴⁵ 'Senex', 'An Ideal of Quakerism', Chapter 11, 'The Present Condition and Future Prospects of the Society', *BF*, March 1893, 60-62, 62. The series began with the first number of the new, progressive incarnation of the *British Friend*, in January, 1892, and ended with Chapter 12, in May, 1893.

⁴⁶ Davie, *British Quaker Theology*, 117-127.

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account the belief in progress which was fundamental to Graham's approach to such theological matters as the doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement or the authority of the Bible. He makes no attempt to understand Graham's struggle to formulate a new faith that would accommodate inescapable conclusions from the advance of scientific and historical thought, including the perception of the Bible as a compilation of ancient texts from different eras and of uncertain provenance. His judgment of the differences between Graham's theology and that of early Friends lacks historical perspective, and fails to note the point made by Graham himself in *The Faith of a Quaker*, where he says:

The Quaker upheaval did not ... concern itself, to begin with, with systematic theology at all, but with practical religion; and the early Friends, therefore, only attacked the current theological positions where these appeared to conflict with the freedom of the soul and its undivided loyalty to the Indwelling God ... They did not doubt the historical existence of Adam, but when they referred to him it would be because of the old Adam within themselves as expounded in the New Testament ... In face of the miracles worked in the soul of man they took but little interest in the miracles of the Old Testament, though if asked they would have accepted them as everyone else did at the time.⁴⁷

Thus in dealing with Graham's Christology Davie picks up the point that Graham uses the concept of the subliminal self to account for Christ's nature and its point of contact with ours, though without any attempt to explain what this concept is or where it comes from. He then goes on to state that the concept does not appear in the writings of early Friends!

⁴⁷ FQ, 407.

Conclusion

Graham is not necessarily right about early Friends: undoubtedly he can be faulted for special pleading. But he does show a historical imagination which Davie either lacks or thinks unimportant. Graham dismisses with a progressivist flourish Robert Barclay's undeniable attempt to create 'systematic theology' in his *Apology* (first published in Latin in 1676, in the third decade after the Quaker movement began to gain strength), as a work of its age and for its age: 'It is fair to remember that the very atmosphere which renders it philosophically useless to us was what rendered it useful to the Friends who welcomed it. It was the voice of their age'.⁴⁸ In a similar way my research has been directed towards an understanding of Graham in his historical context.

The factor in my research which most clearly marks it out from the other work on the Quaker Renaissance discussed above is the factor of progress. Progress underlies all the areas where Kennedy shows Graham engaged. He is 'Hammer of the Evangelicals' because he sees the Evangelicals as blocking the way to an open-minded faith, capable of sustaining itself before the onslaught of modern ideas. He campaigns for the free ministry within the silent meeting because this arrangement best keeps mind and heart ready to receive the divine promptings leading disciples into the future, unhampered by the obsolete doctrine to which professional preachers are so often tied. His attitude to British imperialism, equivocal though it is, stems from his sense that for the present governed and

⁴⁸ *FQ*, 149.

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governors alike can move forward to a more humane, more just condition by means of temporary, benign British rule, though a better future where nations will be self-governing and national armies will be replaced by an international 'gendarmerie', is to be hoped for.⁴⁹

Graham's whole approach to war is suffused with his sense of its belonging to a phase in evolution which was destined to pass. Brian Phillips' picture tends to confirm that 'Friendly patriots' entertained the vainglorious belief that they were at the forefront of progressive thought and action. In their opinion, they led the liberal-minded non-conformists, whether in the field of education or of peace-building.⁵⁰ Graham did indeed believe that Quaker pacifists were at the head of a 'long and wavering column'⁵¹ leading into the Peaceable Kingdom. We do not need to accept Phillips' jaundiced view of the futility of Quaker efforts. Rather, we can appreciate their sincere sense that they belonged to the wave of the future, especially marked in the case of Graham. We do not necessarily condemn the young idealists of the 1960s for singing 'We shall overcome', however unfounded their belief may have been. Graham and his peers strove mightily for their beliefs, especially after the outbreak of war, which is not in the period covered by Phillips. Of course they did not stop the War, but it is not necessary to sneer at them for their attempts.

⁴⁹ *Evolution and Empire*, 118; 'Whence Comes Peace?' (1), *BF*, February, 1896, 29.

⁵⁰ See summary of 'Friendly Patriotism' by Rebecca Wynter, 14 (<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/pages/summaries-of-postgraduate-theses-on-quaker-topics.html#QuakerHistory>, accessed 10 November, 2015).

⁵¹ See 7.8., above.

Conclusion

Martin Davie's premises would seem to preclude his appreciating a progressivist view of life and thought such as we see in Graham. If every deviation from the 'core of conviction' is a denial of the truth once received there can be no development or evolution in religion. I am indebted to Davie for his careful analysis of the theology of *The Faith of a Quaker* (he does not mention *The Divinity in Man*, nor any of Graham's other theological writings) and for his high-lighting of the ways in which Graham departs from Christian orthodoxy. My research, however, reveals the sense seen in Graham as in other Renaissance Quakers of Quaker Christianity as a 'dynamic faith',⁵² one that is capable of change and adaptation. Or, to quote the hymn by James Russell Lowell that Graham liked:

New occasions teach new duties,
Time makes ancient good uncouth,
They must upward still and onward,
Who would keep abreast of truth.⁵³

Implications for Future Scholarship

My work suggests that understanding of the Quaker Renaissance would be enhanced by further studies on similar lines of other influential Quakers of the time, especially, perhaps, Edward Grubb. I have not come across any reference to an archive for Grubb comparable to the treasure-trove of the John William Graham Papers. Grubb, however, did so much, in his

⁵² See Rufus M. Jones, *A Dynamic Faith* [1900] (3rd edn.), London: Headley, 1906. (Preface to 1st edn. dated 1900).

⁵³ See papers relating to 1904 Hicksite Conference in Toronto, JWGP, Box 1. Lowell's poem, first written in 1845, was arranged to be sung as a hymn by William Garrett Horder in 1896. Full text of hymn to be found on the website: <http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/o/n/c/oncetoev.htm>, accessed 2/6/2015.

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voluminous, painstaking and deeply committed writings to explain the Quakers to themselves that a study focussing mainly on his published work would be of great interest and value. It would complement and add perspective to my work on Graham. By means of comparison and contrast they could be shown to represent between them two faces of the movement, to be set alongside the work of Rufus Jones and the rest.

With respect to Graham, something that emerges strongly from my work is the importance and meaning of mysticism for Renaissance Quakers. Quite apart from the validity of Rufus Jones' identification of mysticism as the core of George Fox's message,⁵⁴ it is time for a recovery of a sense of its centrality for Quakers of Jones' time. Carole Spencer has included J. Rendel Harris, the first Director of Woodbrooke, among her exemplars of mystical holiness, but in her book he appears isolated in a crowd of rationalists, like the authors of *A Reasonable Faith*.⁵⁵ It may be true, as averred by one of the reviewers of Graham's *Divinity in Man*, that Graham was 'very far from being a mystic',⁵⁶ but that gives his insistence on mysticism as the essential heart of Quakerism a particular salience. He did not take up his position in order to promote his own experience: indeed, as we have seen, he said his

⁵⁴ See Douglas Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word: the Life and Message of George Fox (1624-1691)*, Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 1984, xii-xvi. Jones states his thesis in many places: Gwyn refers to his introduction to William C. Braithwaite's *Beginnings of Quakerism*, London: Macmillan, 1912; but see also Jones, *A Dynamic Faith*, [1900] London: Headley, 1906, Chapter 3, 45-59.

⁵⁵ Carole Dale Spencer, *Holiness: the Soul of Quakerism: an Historical Analysis of the Theology of Holiness in the Quaker Tradition*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007, 207-212.

⁵⁶ See 4.4., above.

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experience was 'ordinary'.⁵⁷ He did so because he was convinced that Quakerism was 'an adventure in organised mysticism',⁵⁸ a communal way of accessing the divine springs of inspiration.

All this was for Graham largely dependent on the findings of the Society for Psychical Research, especially Frederic Myers' ideas about the subliminal self.⁵⁹ In view of a current revival of interest in Myers⁶⁰ the significance of this concept for religion in general is well worth pursuing. Research on the importance of Myers' ideas and on other non-rational aspects of human mentality for Quakers in particular would also be timely. The historical perspective offered by familiarity with the Quaker Renaissance would add depth to such research. If it could be put in a popular form it might produce work that could stand with Jack Wallis's *Jung and the Quaker Way*.⁶¹

Conclusion: Quakerism and a Wider World: Ruskin

In showing how a particular Quaker absorbed and made use of intellectual currents of his time my work extends that of other writers on relations between science and religion in this period. It supplements the work of Cantor in showing in detail how much Quakerism had to change in order to accommodate evolutionary science. It shows how psychical research could be put to use in defending a specifically Quaker type of Christianity, focusing on inspiration from within, and connects this to the emphasis on Quaker

⁵⁷ See 4.4., above.

⁵⁸ Preface to *FQ*, vii. See 5.7., above.

⁵⁹ See 3.6., above.

⁶⁰ See Conclusion, 'Originality of Thesis', above.

⁶¹ Jack H. Wallis, *Jung and the Quaker Way*, London: Quaker Home Service, 1988.

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mysticism as developed by Rufus Jones. It shows the relation between mysticism and the theory of the silent Quaker meeting, along with the free prophetic Quaker ministry, and why it was so important for Graham and his peers to defend their peculiar practices. Graham was able to synthesise his Quakerism with his understanding of 'modern thought' in a way that could be inspiring or comforting to readers or hearers of his day.⁶² It is true that from this distance Graham's steady progressivism may be seen as a limitation, and it may even be a reason for the neglect that he has suffered, even among historians of Quakers. Yet his passionate and intelligent involvement in so many of the concerns of his day bring them alive for us in a way that a more broad-based study cannot do. Moreover, Quakers of liberal views have reason to be grateful for his part in opening up the movement and making it more capable than it would otherwise have been of elastic responses to the new challenges that have arisen since. He helped to create 'a dynamic faith', one that could change with the times without losing its spiritual basis. In rebutting the 'materialism' of a Haeckel or a Clifford⁶³ more was at stake than reconciling religion and science in intellectual terms. Graham may not have been a mystic, but he knew that there was more to life than the world accessible to empirical science. He found evidence for it in Fox and the early Friends, in Tennyson, and especially in Ruskin.

⁶² 'Very many will testify to the fact that "The Faith of a Quaker" brought them, or materially helped to bring them, into a living religious experience' (H.G. Wood, 'John William Graham as a Religious Thinker', *FQE*, 67 (1933), 102-112, 102).

⁶³ *DM*, 94. Ernst Haeckel, (1834-1919), German developmental scientist, author of *The Riddle of the Universe* (1899). For Clifford see 1.4.1., above.

Conclusion

According to Graham's son Michael, one of the 'causes' to which his father dedicated himself was the propagation of John Ruskin's views, but Ruskin was not so much a cause as a life-long inspiration. Ruskin touched all of Graham's main concerns, so that it would be possible to summarise them through his allusions to Ruskin. On war and empire, indeed, he could not wholly follow the Master, although he insisted that Ruskin was actually a 'peace advocate',⁶⁴ but in matters relating to religion Ruskin could both confirm him in his Quakerism and show how Quakerism might include a breadth and humane vision that it had not always had. We find him talking 'a great deal abt. Ruskin' as early as January 1881, before he went to Cambridge,⁶⁵ and he was still quoting him at length in *The Divinity in Man* of 1927.⁶⁶ His admiration led him to visit the sage at his house, Brantwood, on Lake Coniston, with a party of Quakers, in 1884.⁶⁷ There he was struck by Ruskin's comment: 'Your early Friends would have carried all before them if they had not been false to that which is obeyed by the whole of the animal creation, the love of colour'. Graham quotes this both in *The Harvest of Ruskin*, and in *The Faith of a Quaker*,⁶⁸ admitting that Ruskin has a point if he meant by 'colour' such amenities of civilised living as music and dancing.

⁶⁴ See John W. Graham, *The Harvest of Ruskin*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1920 (*HR*), 203-221, 219.

⁶⁵ Letter to parents, 9 January, 1881, JWGP, Box 5.

⁶⁶ *DM*, 196-198.

⁶⁷ There was a further fortuitous encounter in 1894, after Ruskin had largely succumbed to mental illness, recounted in a letter to Margaret of 25 September, 1894, JWGP, Box 17. (Both men raised their hats but did not speak.) Graham also tells of a meeting in 1896 (perhaps the same one, if Graham mistook the date), recounted in 'Ruskin in his Home at Brantwood', *FI*, 3 February, 1900, 85, where Ruskin is described as having 'the appearance of an ancient seer', 'an aged Elijah'.

⁶⁸ John W. Graham, *HR*, 1920, 75; *FQ*, 154.

Conclusion

Ruskin could give support to Graham's agenda for a Quakerism free from ritualistic adherence to 'plain dress'⁶⁹ or fears about the evil influence of theatre or music.⁷⁰ But there was much more.

Graham believed that Ruskin was, without knowing it, 'a real and very completely furnished Quaker'.⁷¹ The third chapter of *The Harvest of Ruskin*, which consists largely of quotations from Ruskin on ecclesiastical matters, is devoted to demonstrating this: Ruskin agrees with genuine Quakerism in insisting that ministry must be prophetic and unpaid,⁷² that authority does not reside in the Church or in a holy book but in the Spirit of God,⁷³ that true religion has no need of outward ornament.⁷⁴ In fact, Ruskin could give the enormous weight of his authority to what Quakers have believed all along: 'It looks as though Quakerism is not an arbitrary group of doctrines gathered up, as he fancied them, by George Fox, but a coherent system, all whose parts hang together as they all appear together when they rise up in Ruskin'.⁷⁵

Apart from this claimed support for the modern Quaker way, admiration for Ruskin does not obviously sit easily with belief in progress: Ruskin was vehemently opposed to the most salient features of his age. These included

⁶⁹ See Graham 'American Papers', 3: *BF*, Dec., 1896, 313, for a denunciation of the 'uniform' adhered to by 'Orthodox' Quakers in Philadelphia: 'Its closest parallels are the monastic habit, the Salvation bonnet, and the priestly garb, which last the "plain" dress is at times mistaken for'.

⁷⁰ See Introduction, 'Early Life and Education', above, for Graham's early confrontation with these issues among Friends.

⁷¹ *HR*, 71.

⁷² *HR*, 56-58.

⁷³ *HR*, 67.

⁷⁴ *HR*, 68.

⁷⁵ *HR*, 76.

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industrialisation, with its machine-made 'perfection' replacing the 'savageness' of medieval Gothic.⁷⁶ Then there were the destructive elements in evolutionary science: 'those dreadful Hammers! I hear the clink of them at the end of every cadence of the Bible verses', and equally the frightened reaction by some Christians to the geologists' hammers: 'these unhappy, blinking Puseyisms'.⁷⁷ Worst of all was the supposed science of economics as expounded by John Stuart Mill and attacked in *Unto This Last*,⁷⁸ which Ruskin interpreted as denying and quenching honesty and generosity in human dealings. Accordingly, Graham undertook a 'reconciliation' of Ruskin and Mill in *The Harvest of Ruskin*.⁷⁹ He also defended against Ruskin commercial practices such as usury.⁸⁰ Ruskin was certainly a help to him in his strictures on smoke: Ruskin's *Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884)⁸¹ and his *Queen of the Air* (1869), where Ruskin complains that even in the Alps, 'the air which once inlaid the clefts of all their golden crags with azure is now defiled with languid coils of smoke, belched from worse than volcanic fires',⁸²

⁷⁶ John Ruskin, 'The Nature of Gothic', From Vol. 2 of *The Stones of Venice* (1853). In *Unto this Last and Other Writings by John Ruskin*, edited by Clive Wilmer, London: Penguin, 1985, 77-109.

⁷⁷ Letter to Henry Acland, 1851, quoted in Michael Wheeler, *Ruskin's God*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 25. Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882) was the leader of the Oxford Movement from 1841, attempting to stem the tide of rationalism in the Church of England through a return to dogmatic faith (*Concise Dictionary of National Biography*, 3 vols., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

⁷⁸ Published in book form in 1862; reprinted, Wilmer, *Unto this Last*, 155-228.

⁷⁹ *HR*, Chapter 4, 78-119.

⁸⁰ *HR*, Chapter 7: 'Usury', 185-202.

⁸¹ Quoted in John W. Graham *The Destruction of Daylight: a Study in the Smoke Problem*, London: George Allen, 1907, 31.

⁸² *The Queen of the Air: being a Study of the Greek Myths of Cloud and Storm*, with an introduction by Charles Edward Norton [1869] (Brantwood edition, New York: Maynard, Merrill, 1893), Preface, p. xviii.

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chimed with Graham's sympathetic observation.⁸³ But Graham believed industry itself could find a remedy for the evils it produced.⁸⁴

Graham tended to focus on the practical aspects of Ruskin's vision, as one reviewer complained, writing, 'It is a little absurd for the Principal of Walton [sic] Hall, Manchester, to begin by proving that Ruskin had all "The Signs of the Prophet", and then go on to garner only a small sheaf of "practical proposals" from his works'.⁸⁵ Graham's discipleship took practical shape in his support for the Guild of St George⁸⁶ and his labours in the museum in Manchester which Ruskin had helped to set up.⁸⁷ Graham would not have believed himself sincere had he failed to act in this way.

Nevertheless, it was the religious and specifically the mystical aspects of Ruskin that, I believe, made the profoundest impression on the younger man. In the *Harvest of Ruskin* he refers to Ruskin's approach to nature in terms suggestive of Otto's sense of the numinous: he writes of Ruskin's early 'continual perception of sanctity in whole of nature', of the 'indefinable thrill, such as we sometimes imagine to indicate the presence of a disembodied spirit' that Ruskin experienced in solitary ramblings.⁸⁸ Graham does not mention Otto here, but Otto himself recognised the numinous quality of

⁸³ Graham, *Destruction*, Chapter 1, *passim*, and 4-5; 8-9.

⁸⁴ See especially, Graham, *Destruction*, Chapter 8, 109-129, on the example set by companies like Cadbury, Rowntree and Joseph Crosfield in addressing the smoke nuisance.

⁸⁵ Review of *HR*, *The New Age*, 15/6/22, JWGP, Box 19.

⁸⁶ See a letter of 1906 in the *Christian Commonwealth* in answer to one from Graham on behalf of the Guild objecting to a proposal relating to land use (JWGP, Box 4, p.57 in Graham's numbering).

⁸⁷ See Introduction, 'Dalton Hall Years', above. For Ruskin and the Ancoats Gallery, see also *HR*, 255.

⁸⁸ *HR*, 11.

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Ruskin's experience when his attention was drawn to the passage from which this quotation is taken. So impressed was he that he reprinted the passage in an appendix to *The Idea of the Holy*, adding the comment: 'Will not a Ruskin arise to divine and reveal the non-rational and numinous character of our own epoch?'⁸⁹ Ruskin's 'real religion', Graham comments, 'was born at Friar's Crag, Derwentwater, when, at four years old, he looked with awe into the dark lake over the mossy tree roots, and felt himself in the Presence'.⁹⁰

In *The Harvest of Ruskin*, before he even gets on to proving that Ruskin is a Quaker, he quotes from *The Queen of the Air* testimony from Ruskin against the nay-saying arrogance of scientists like Clifford:

This only we may discern assuredly; this, every true light of science, every mercifully granted power, every wisely restricted thought, teach us more clearly day by day, that in the heaven above, and in the earth beneath, there is one continual and omnipotent presence of help, and of peace, for all men who know that they Live, and remember that they die.⁹¹

Graham may not always have been assured about 'omnipotent help': he knew that God did not prevent earthquakes.⁹² But he was glad to lay hold of assurance from one so acute, so wise, so reverend as Ruskin for a faith to live by, a faith verified in his own experience of the natural world and in the Quakers' silent meetings. This was 'mysticism': it was what Quakerism was for.

⁸⁹ Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: an Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*, translated by John W. Harvey; 2nd edn., Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1950, Appendix 9, p.215.

⁹⁰ *HR*, 27.

⁹¹ *HR*, 45.

⁹² See 6.8., above.

Conclusion

In promoting the work of Ruskin Graham was advocating what he considered the essential Quaker values: freedom to respond inwardly to the God who cannot be contained in word, ritual or organisation, the God who is forever leading his creatures forward, calling them to new enterprises in thought and in practical activity. Ruskin indeed looked to the past for inspiration, to Gothic art, to a world without machinery, but he had a vision for the future which he endeavoured to realise through the Guild of St. George. Graham also looked to the past, to early Friends and the early Church, and tried to make the Society of Friends more worthy of its antecedents in order that it might better serve the wider world of his day. Thus Graham, disciple of John Ruskin, was also John William Graham, Quaker Apostle of Progress.

GLOSSARY OF QUAKER TERMS

Note. This glossary has made extensive use of *Quaker Speak*, by Alastair Heron (3rd revised edn., York: Quaker Outreach in Yorkshire, 2003) and of *The A to Z of the Friends (Quakers)*, by Margery Post Abbott *et al*, Lanham, Maryland; London: Scarecrow Press, 2006 (abbreviated to QS and *A to Z* respectively in what follows. Definitions generally accord with British usage – usage elsewhere may be different. An asterisk (*) denotes other entries in the Glossary.

Book of Discipline. A compilation of quotations and advice intended as guidance in the Quaker way. The first version was a manuscript compilation issued in 1738, of minutes of counsel previously sent out to meetings. Graham will have known *Rules of Discipline* of 1861, *Christian Discipline* of 1883, and thereafter the versions divided into separate volumes dealing with organisation (*Church Government* in 1906, 1917 and 1931) and faith and practice (*Christian Practice* in 1911 and 1925, *Christian Life, Faith and Thought* in 1921 and *Advices and Queries* in 1928).¹ For the current version see under 'Quaker Faith and Practice'.

Business Meeting. Properly 'meeting for worship for business' or 'meeting for church affairs'. See under 'Quaker business method' and 'Sense of the meeting' for the theology and practice of these meetings.

Clerk. 'A member of a Quaker meeting appointed to "sit at the table" in a "meeting for worship for business". He or she prepares the agenda and guides the meeting through it; listens to what is said; and in each item tries to frame the "sense of the meeting"* in a written minute'.²

Concern. 'The name, dating from earliest period of Friends, given to a leading* from God "laid upon" an individual [or group] as a call to action. Testing the concern with the local meeting* provides a check on its validity'.³

Convincement. The name given by early Quakers to the two-stage process by which a person was 'convicted' of sin by means of the Light Within* and then enabled by the same Light to achieve freedom from sin.⁴ In our day the term 'Quaker by convincement' is used to denote a person who becomes a Quaker by choice, in adulthood, as opposed to one brought up as a Quaker.

¹ *Quaker Faith and Practice: the Book of Christian Discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain*, [London]: the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, 1995. See David Olver, 'The History of Quaker Faith and Practice, *Friends' Quarterly*, 3, 2014, 12-22.

² QS, 18.

³ *A to Z*, 58.

⁴ *A to Z*, 63.

Epistle. A formal letter, often sent to 'Friends everywhere'⁵ on behalf of a Yearly Meeting*, reflecting the matters considered and the experience of those present. Early leading Quakers were in the habit of sending 'epistles' to groups of disciples, in the manner of St. Paul.

Friends. 'Friends' is the term Quakers use for themselves among themselves. Nowadays the term 'Quakers' is more generally used in public discourse. Early Quakers called themselves 'Friends' or sometimes 'Friends of Truth' or 'Friends in the Truth'.⁶

Leadings. Promptings from God to undertake ministry, in speech or action. A 'leading' may become a 'concern'. Both should be tested in the community of Friends.⁷

Light, Inward or Inner Light (also 'Light Within'). According to Alastair Heron, 'the term used to denote the source of leading and inspiration, to be found at the still centre sought through the silence of personal or corporate worship. For early Friends it was unequivocally the light of Christ, "come to teach the people himself".'⁸ Liberal Friends of Graham's day and after emphasised the universality of the Light, its indwelling in all people regardless of religious affiliation.

London Yearly Meeting (LYM) (since 1994 known as 'Britain Yearly Meeting'). 'The title denotes both the "final constitutional body of the Religious Society of Friends* (Quakers) in Britain", and the annual gathering of those in membership in its constituent Monthly Meetings*, all of whom have a right to take part in its proceedings'.⁹

Meeting. A gathering of Friends, commonly in a 'Meeting for worship' but also in a 'meeting for worship for business' or 'business meeting' or possibly a 'meeting for clearness', or 'Meeting for Sufferings' (see below). The word refers both to the gathering itself and to the body of Friends to which those present belong. See 'preparative meeting', 'yearly meeting', etc., below.

Meeting for Sufferings. 'The standing representative committee of the Yearly Meeting* [in Britain] entrusted between the meetings thereof with the general care of matters affecting [Britain] Yearly Meeting as a whole'.¹⁰ Its name derives from the time when many Friends and their

⁵ During the times of troubled relationship with American Friends the Epistle was sent 'To the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of Friends in Great Britain, Ireland, Australasia and elsewhere, and to all with whom we have religious fellowship'. During the Yearly Meeting of 1915 M. Ethel Crawshaw pleaded that the Epistle be sent to 'all Friends in America', and the Epistle of that and following years was sent 'to Friends everywhere' (*Friend.*, 28 May, 1915, 407; 04 June, 1915, 433).

⁶ See John Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: a Short History of the Quakers*, London: Quaker Home Service, 1984, 72.

⁷ *A to Z*, 152.

⁸ QS, 29, quoting George Fox (see *The Journal of George Fox*, revised ed. by John L. Nickalls, London: Religious Society of Friends, 1975, 48).

⁹ QS, 16.

¹⁰ QS, 31.

families were imprisoned or subjected to pecuniary loss, and the Meeting was concerned with alleviating their "sufferings".

Ministers. Quakers have no separated, ordained, ministers. 'In the Quaker faith, every believer is a minister, witnessing to the central message that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" '.¹¹ Special gifts for ministry are, however, recognised. See 'Recording of Ministers', below. Graham was shocked to meet in New York two young women who did not understand his use of the word 'minister'. To them it had to mean someone in charge of a meeting. (See 3.8.)

Ministry. Any activity undertaken from a sense of duty, especially in response to the perceived needs of other Quakers. It is often taken to mean 'vocal ministry' in a meeting for worship, as defined below.

Minute. 'Drafted by the clerk during a meeting for worship for business, and offered as a concise summary of the position reached by the meeting of the matter in hand ('the sense of the meeting')'.^{*12}

Monthly Meeting. Both a body of Quakers belonging to several local meetings in a certain area and the occasions when they meet, in this case, monthly. (In Britain the name has recently been changed to 'Area Meeting', to reflect the fact that they do not necessarily meet every month.) The gatherings are primarily 'meetings for church affairs' or 'meetings for worship for business'. Monthly or Area Meetings receive 'concerns'* from 'Preparative Meetings'* and in Graham's day might pass them on to the 'Quarterly Meetings'* which in turn might forward them to the 'Yearly Meeting',* as considered appropriate. With the demise of Quarterly Meetings* the 'Area Meeting' has become the basic unit of organization for business purposes, intermediate between local meetings and the Yearly Meeting.

Peace Testimony. 'The basis of the Quaker opposition to the use of war and other forms of organized violence as a means of dealing with national or international problems, or of settling disputes'.¹³ See also under 'Testimonies', below.

Peculiarities. Distinctive practices such as modes of dress and of speech which served to mark out Quakers from society at large. They included the refusal to swear oaths (still extant), opposition to the arts of painting and music and especially fiction (condemned as 'lies')¹⁴; also the prohibition on 'marrying out' of the Society, in force until 1860.¹⁵

Preparative Meeting. Both a gathering of a group of Quakers who habitually worship together and the collective noun for the group itself. They were called 'preparative' meetings, to denote the fact that items, or

¹¹ *A to Z*, 178.

¹² *QS*, 33.

¹³ *QS*, 36.

¹⁴ 'It was untruthful to tell a story that never happened' (*A to Z*, 11).

¹⁵ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 115.

'concerns' arising within them could be passed as appropriate to the 'Monthly Meeting', thence to the 'Quarterly Meeting' and finally to the 'Yearly Meeting'. They are now called 'Local Meetings'.

Programmed, unprogrammed worship. 'Programmed' worship includes some degree of pre-planning, sometimes hymns or set prayers. Unprogrammed worship is based in silence, with vocal ministry 'as led'.

Quaker business method. The process of discernment by which Quakers reach 'unity in the Spirit' (see under 'Sense of the Meeting') in a meeting for church affairs through focusing on the 'Light Within', and through listening to each other's ministry (all vocal contributions in a meeting are seen as ministry), without voting.¹⁶

Quaker Faith and Practice. The name of the current 'Book of Discipline' for Britain Yearly Meeting (1995, with partial revisions in succeeding years). For earlier editions see under 'Book of Discipline'.

Quarterly Meeting. In Graham's day intermediate between Monthly and Yearly Meeting. Now discontinued as such in Britain Yearly Meeting.

Quietist, quietism. Terms often applied to eighteenth-century Friends in Britain and America. 'Quietism called for an emptying of all actions motivated by human will to be open to the guidance of God in worship, in the conduct of business meetings, and in attending to leadings'.¹⁷ Graham respected the quietists' faithfulness in waiting for divine inspiration, especially in spoken ministry, but believed that quietists erred in their distrust of intellect.

Recording of ministers. Practised among British Friends from 1723 to 1924, it was a public recognition of particular gifts, especially in spoken ministry. Recorded ministers often sat on a 'ministers' bench', separated from the body of Friends in the meeting. Recording was laid down in Britain after Friends came to feel that it was divisive, discriminating against 'ordinary' Friends and discouraging them from offering ministry. Edward Vipont Brown was incensed when Graham was not 'recorded' by his Monthly Meeting, and became involved in a campaign to abolish recording. In an article in the *Christian World*, of May 23rd, 1895, Graham said: 'To "record" a minister does not make him an official or alter his status, except from the moral support he has from knowing that his ministry receives the approval of his hearers. But the process of "recording" is done in a very irregular way, differing much from place to place, and a large part of the ministry now exercised is, for one reason or another, unrecorded. Many Friends think that it would be better to cease even this semblance of differentiating between one Friend and another.'

¹⁶ A to Z, 37 'Business Meetings'.

¹⁷ A to Z, 236.

Religious Society of Friends. The formal name of the body of Quakers, in Britain and elsewhere. 'At the start of the 18th century Friends began to speak of "our religious society" when corresponding with non-Quakers ... With the availability and use of printing, the name became formalized as the Religious Society of Friends, so that by the 19th century this was the normal title used by Quakers.'¹⁸

Sense of the Meeting. 'Unity in the Spirit', as discerned in the course of a business meeting. Not the same as 'consensus', but ideally a sense that the meeting has received divine guidance as to the way it is to take.¹⁹

Spoken ministry. See 'Vocal ministry'.

Swarthmore Lecture. The 'Swarthmore Lecture' was instituted in 1908, and is delivered yearly at the same time and in the same place as the Yearly Meeting. 'It is usual for a full version to be published simultaneously'.²⁰ 'The lectureship has a twofold purpose: first, to interpret to the members of the Society of Friends their message and mission; and second, to bring before the public the spirit, aims and fundamental principles of Friends'.²¹

Testimony. Testimonies are the ways in which Quakers bear witness to certain values, most famously that of peace. They may or may not have a written form. They are inspirational rather than prescriptive, and there is no definitive list. Caroline Stephen (1834-1909) wrote: 'Our testimonies are . . . to a degree which is, I think, hardly understood outside the Society, the result of individual and spontaneous obedience to the bidding of conscience, and to the guiding of the Divine light shining in each heart, rather than of conformity to rules enforced or even precisely laid down by any human authority'.²² (In some places and periods, however, they have been strictly enforced on pain of 'disownment' or expulsion. See, for instance, Jack D. Marietta, *The Reformation of American Quakerism, 1748-1783*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984, p. 82, and *passim*.) The word is used in another sense in the phrase 'Testimony to the grace of God in the life of XY',²³ a form of tribute to a deceased Quaker.

Travelling in the ministry. From earliest times it was usual for Quakers seen as possessing authority to travel throughout the country, and indeed the world, to give advice, reproach and encouragement to other Quakers and to the public, as moved by particular concerns.*

¹⁸ *A to Z*, 241.

¹⁹ *A to Z*, 37.

²⁰ *QS*, 49.

²¹ From preliminary note to the printed version of every recent Swarthmore Lecture.

²² Caroline Emelia Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, London: Kegan Paul, 1890, 126.

²³ *QS*, 50.

Vocal (spoken) ministry. 'It is a part of the Quaker tradition from the beginning, that during a meeting for worship anyone may rise to speak or to pray. Until recently, it was understood that the call to offer spoken ministry should arise from a clear sense that it came from the Holy Spirit',²⁴ and it is still understood that it should not be prepared in advance, but should be given by the speaker 'as led' by inner prompting.

Weighty Friend. 'An individual in the meeting who is seen by others to have spiritual weight and whose insights are trusted'.²⁵

Yearly Meeting. A body of Quakers which includes a number of smaller meetings; also an annual gathering of representatives of meetings so included. In Britain there is only one 'Yearly Meeting', whereas other countries (notably the United States) have many. In Graham's time 'London Yearly Meeting' comprised a handful of 'Quarterly Meetings' each comprising several 'monthly meetings',* which in turn embraced a larger number of 'preparative meetings'* (boxes within boxes). (Since Graham's time the terminology has changed, and what used to be quarterly meetings no longer have a constitutional role.)

²⁴ QS, 33.

²⁵ *A to Z*, 132.

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<i>BF</i>	<i>British Friend.</i>
<i>FQE</i>	<i>Friends' Quarterly Examiner.</i>
<i>Friend</i>	<i>The Friend</i> (London).
<i>FI</i>	<i>Friends' Intelligencer.</i>
<i>JFHS</i>	<i>Journal of the Friends' Historical Society.</i>
<i>JSPR</i>	<i>Journal of the Society for Psychical Research.</i>
<i>LSF</i>	Library of the Society of Friends
<i>OCCT</i>	<i>Oxford Companion to Christian Thought.</i>
<i>OCP</i>	<i>Oxford Companion to Philosophy.</i>
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary.</i>
<i>OHQS</i>	<i>Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies.</i>
<i>QRT</i>	<i>Quaker Religious Thought.</i>
<i>RPP</i>	<i>Religion Past and Present.</i>

1. Archives

'John William Graham Papers' (JWGP) held in the Main Library of the University of Manchester. These comprise 21 boxes of uncatalogued material, with brief descriptions by the Librarian of the contents of each box.

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