

TH
B279

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOSEPH BELLAMY
TO
AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY

By

ELSIE ISABEL BARROWS

B.A., Mount Holyoke College
M.A., (Ed.) Syracuse University

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SACRED THEOLOGY
in
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York, N. Y.
May, 1961

**BIBLICAL SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY LIBRARY**
HATFIELD, PA.

20600

Dedicated
to
Richard M. Suffern, Ph.D.

Inspiring Teacher
Encouraging Leader

in
American Christianity
at
The Biblical Seminary in New York

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
A. The Subject	2
1. The Subject Stated and Justified	2
2. The Subject Delimited	3
B. Procedure	3
C. Primary Sources	4
I. THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOSEPH BELLAMY	6
A. Introduction	7
B. Early Influences	8
1. Ancestry and Home	8
2. Church Background	9
C. Education	11
D. His Ministry	12
1. Early Years	12
2. Itinerant Evangelism	14
3. A Call from New York	16
4. Preaching	21
a. Method and Delivery	21
b. Subjects	22
(1) Doctrinal	22
(2) Election Sermon	24
5. Teaching	26
a. In the Manse	26
b. In the Church	28
6. Writings	28
a. Method of Writing	29
b. Subjects	30
c. Influence	33
E. Death	34
F. Summary	35
II. JOSEPH BELLAMY'S SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY	36
A. Introduction	37
B. The New England Theology	37
C. Joseph Bellamy's Systematic Theology	40
1. What God Is	41
a. God's Being	41
b. God's Revelation of Himself	42
c. God's Relation to Evil	44
2. What the Moral Law Is	48
a. Love to God	48
b. Love to Neighbor	50

Gift of Author

A1534

May 1961

Chapter	Page
3. What Man's Ruin Is	51
a. Original Righteousness	51
b. The Manner of the Fall	52
c. The Effects of the Fall	52
4. The Manner of Man's Recovery	54
a. Election	54
b. The Atonement	56
c. The New Life	57
D. Evaluation	60
E. Summary	63
III. JOSEPH BELLAMY'S PRACTICAL THEOLOGY	64
A. Introduction	65
B. Bellamy as a Practical Theologian	65
1. Bellamy's Personal and Family Life	65
2. Bellamy as a Churchman	69
a. As a Pastor	70
b. As a Preacher	73
c. As a Teacher of Other Pastors	78
(1) Levi Hart	79
(2) Jonathan Edwards, Jr.	80
(3) Ammi Ruhamah Robbins	82
(4) Chandler Robbins	83
(5) John Smalley	84
(6) Samuel Niles	85
(7) Nathaniel Niles	85
d. As Fellow Minister	86
3. As a Writer	87
4. As Friend and Opponent	90
a. Jonathan Edwards	90
b. Samuel Hopkins	93
c. Others	95
C. Summary	97
IV. EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION	100
A. Evaluation	102
1. Revivalism	102
2. Biblical Preaching	103
3. Theological Teaching	103
4. System of Theology	104
a. The Being of God	104
b. Moral Law	105
c. Original Sin	105
d. The Problem of Evil	106
e. Church Membership	106
f. Conversion	107
g. The Atonement	108

Chapter	Page
5. Social Outreach	109
a. National	109
b. Missions	109
6. Need for Reappraisal	110
B. Conclusion	111
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 113
A. Primary Sources	114
B. Secondary Sources	114
C. Pamphlets	117
D. Encyclopedia	117

INTRODUCTION

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOSEPH BELLAMY

TO

AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY

INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject

1. The Subject Stated and Justified

The present revival of interest in the life and thought of Jonathan Edwards as evidenced by reprinting of his works and by recent appraisals of his philosophy and theology, has raised the question of how the New England Theology is relevant to our time. Joseph Bellamy, a student of Jonathan Edwards, made practical application of that theology to his work as pastor for fifty years in the church at Bethlehem, Connecticut. He has been grouped among those followers of Edwards who failed to "give the breath of life"¹ to the system which they passed on. However, an examination of the works of Joseph Bellamy, and a consideration of his activities in his parish, show that he made Edwards' theology vital in the lives of those he touched. Perhaps without his stabilizing influence, the

.

1. Ola Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1940, p. 327

Edwardean theology would never have survived to attain to the revival of interest which it now enjoys. Yet everyone knows of Edwards, but few have heard of Joseph Bellamy. This very fact justifies a closer study of the man himself, of his writings and of his influence.

2. The Subject Delimited

It is not possible in the confines of this study to deal exhaustively with the streams of influence converging upon Joseph Bellamy and flowing from him. Nor can a minute examination be made of his theology in comparison with that of Edwards or of Hopkins. Rather this study will set forth the facts about the man as shown by his sermons and writings, the estimate of his contemporaries, the immediate effect of his ideas. This will be of value to those who wish to pursue further the conclusions to which this study leads.

B. Procedure

The first chapter will give an account of Joseph Bellamy's life, spent almost entirely in Bethlehem, Connecticut, 1719-1790. This will show from what needs, from what materials, from what talents his fifty year pastorate was formed. The next chapter will present his theology, its main points and trends, as shown by his sermons and

writings. The third chapter will show how this system of theology was applied to the fields of his endeavors as a father, as a pastor, as a preacher, as a teacher, as a writer and as a friend. The final chapter will give an evaluation of him as a man and as a theologian.

C. Primary Sources

There are two editions of Joseph Bellamy's works. The first, published in 1811 in New York, contains the sermon preached at his funeral and an appreciation of him by some of his contemporaries. The second edition contains a memoir of his life written by Tryon Edwards from letters and journals. This was published in Boston in 1850. Unless otherwise indicated, the biography of Bellamy is taken from this source. There are 500 letters and sermons in the Case Memorial Library of Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Connecticut. The letters are catalogued and some have been copied by Mr. Frederic Fay. Some of these are quoted in the Memoir. The sermons are written with fine penmanship in little home-made booklets of eight pages measuring $3\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 inches. In places he has used a shorthand code which has been partly deciphered by Miss Elizabeth De W. Root, archivist.

A visit to Bethlehem, Connecticut, makes vivid the scenes familiar to Joseph Bellamy. There is a marker on the site of the first meeting-house. His home is still

standing, with a sign pointing it out as the site of the first theological school in America. At a distance, in the old churchyard, is the grave of Joseph Bellamy, his wife and the son who died of smallpox during the Revolution.

In 1951 a "Joseph Bellamy Day" was held in Bethlehem. This was written up in "The Waterbury Republican." The pictures of his home, his writing chair, his pulpit, and other illustrations are from photostatic copies of this newspaper account.

Mrs. Edward Eggleston, a Bethlehem inhabitant, has written an account of Joseph Bellamy for the Waterbury Historical Association.

Since Joseph Bellamy referred often to Jonathan Edwards' "Religious Affections" and "Freedom of the Will," these sources are included in the bibliography.

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOSEPH BELLAMY

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOSEPH BELLAMY

A. Introduction

During the life time of Joseph Bellamy, 1719-1790, American Christianity went through important changes. From the theocratic beginnings of the Pilgrim Fathers those forces were emerging which brought forth the principle of separation of church and state. The rigid Calvinism of the early settlers was, under the influence of the Great Awakening, assuming a more practical form. The covenant idea was also undergoing a change in its effect upon the younger generation, who desired the benefits of church membership without the spiritual experience on which that membership rested. Frank Hugh Foster has shown that in New England theology can be seen a microcosm of the steps through which Protestantism on the Continent emerged: construction, systematization, corruption, restoration.¹ Jonathan Edwards was the "protagonist of the theological revival."² His sermons, "God Glorified in Man's Depend-

.

1. Frank Hugh Foster, A Genetic History of the New England Theology, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1907, pp. 3, 4.
2. Ibid., p. 10.

ence" and "Divine and Supernatural Light," are called "the first booming of a solitary gun upon the opening of a great battle."¹

This battle was continued by Joseph Bellamy who outlived Edwards by thirty-two years. This man, who spent most of his life in the quiet environs of a small settlement, attained distinction on the Continent for his writings, in the colonies for his itinerant preaching, and in his own parish for his work as a pastor. This chapter will give his background, training, life and character.

B. Early Influences

1. Ancestry and Home

Joseph Bellamy's ancestor John came from London to New Haven but was lost on ship board in 1647 when returning to England to settle his affairs. He left one son Matthew who was called "the schoolmaster."² The people of New Haven were said to be jealous of him and he was reproached with having an "excitable and litigious spirit,"³ which may have descended to his grandson. This man's only

.

1. Ibid., p. 52.
2. Tryon Edwards, *Memoirs*, in *Bellamy's Works*, Vol. I, Boston, Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1850, p. vi.
3. *New England Historical and Geneological Register*, Vol. LXI, Hon. Ralph D. Smyth, compiler, Boston, published by the Society, 1907, pp. 338-340.

son Matthew, born 1677-8,¹ settled in Cheshire in the town of Wallingford, where he was proprietor of the copper and barytes mines. This did not yield sufficient income for the support of his growing family, so in 1722 he requested the Assembly of Connecticut to grant a license for him to maintain a lodging house for the copper miners.

Joseph, born February 20, 1719, was the fifth child and fourth son of Matthew and Sarah Bellamy. He was not quite two years old when his Brother Samuel was born and his mother died soon after, March 8, 1721, but in a little over three months his father married again and there were five more children, the last born in 1731.² Life in this large family with the busy mine and lodging house must have been very exciting. It was not conducive to contemplation but brought Joseph into contact with the hard working people such as would make up his own congregation.

2. Church Background

Matthew Bellamy was concerned not only for the physical maintenance of his large family but also for their spiritual welfare. In 1729 when Joseph was ten

.

1. In 1752 Parliament adjusted the difference between the civil and solar years by dropping 11 days, so dates occurring from January to March 25 were double dated. Rev. Heman R. Timlow, Ecclesiastical and other Sketches of Southington, Conn. Hartford, Press of the Case, Lockwood and Brainard Co., 1875, p. 8.
2. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. vii.

years old, his father sent a letter to the Bishop of London complaining that they had services only once a quarter but were compelled to pay taxes for the upkeep of the church and some had been imprisoned for failure to do so. He asked for alleviation from taxes and for more laborers.¹

What became of that Church of England is not known, but a Congregational Church had been organized in 1724 when enough families had been settled on the "West Farms" to be separated from the town of Wallingford and to form "New Cheshire." "Eleven males and fifteen females" made up the first membership with the Reverend Samuel Hall as minister, who served for fifty-two years.²

This pastor was the pastor with whom Joseph Bellamy studied. He was an educated minister, a graduate of Yale College in 1716 and Tutor at Yale 1716-18, ordained at Cheshire, December 9, 1724.³ He must have taken a special interest in Joseph, for Joseph too went to Yale. He also preached for Samuel Hall for a while. When he began his ministry it was with a few families, just as in the case of his pastor. In fact, Samuel Hall probably gave him his start.

.

1. Frederic Fay, Life of Joseph Bellamy up to 1740, Unpublished Manuscript, Case Memorial Library Archives, Hartford Seminary Foundation, n.d.
2. Historical Leaflet, The First Congregational Church, Cheshire, Connecticut, no publisher, no date.
3. Frederick L. Weis, The Colonial Clergy and the Colonial Churches of New England, Lancaster, Massachusetts, 1936, p. 99.

C. Education

Joseph Bellamy's early education is not known. Certainly he did not have such a thorough training as Jonathan Edwards did under his father, a minister. He was called by Ezra Stiles an indifferent scholar in languages and science,¹ but Ezra Stiles was very critical of him and was himself an exceptional student in Hebrew and in Latin.² However well or ill prepared he might have been, he entered Yale College and was graduated at the age of sixteen in the class of 1735. His name appears next to the last on the list of 24 graduates, but until 1767 the names were arranged by social rank of the families represented.³ It is even more to his credit that his father, a humble mine proprietor and inn keeper, should have a son who became so famous as Joseph did.

Soon after his graduation Joseph became interested in the subject of religion and gave evidence of experiencing the "renewing of the Holy Ghost".⁴ He consecrated himself to the work of the ministry and started his theological studies under Jonathan Edwards in whose

.

1. Elizabeth De W. Root, Joseph Bellamy and Theological education, Typewritten Manuscript, Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1954.
2. William Sprague, D.D., Annals of the American Pulpit, New York, Robert Carter and Brothers, 1857, pp. 470 ff.
3. Catalogue of Officers and Graduates of Yale University, 1701-1904, New Haven, Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor, 1905, p. 43.
4. William Sprague, op. cit., p. 404.

church at Northampton a revival had already begun.¹ He studied also with his pastor, Samuel Hall, at Cheshire. In 1737 he was examined by the New Haven Association and was licensed to preach.² This was the beginning of his active ministry, but it was not the end of his education, for he continued his studies all through his busy pastorate. It was said of him that he "searched for knowledge as for silver."³

D. His Ministry

1. Early Years

Even before he was licensed he was preaching for his pastor, Samuel Hall in Cheshire. For eighteen months, beginning in 1736, he was doing itinerant preaching near Cheshire and Worcester. Then he accepted a call to preach in North Purchase, part of the town of Woodbury.⁴ This town was probably settled before 1700. In 1710 it was purchased from the Indians. "Sequestered from the rush of modern traffic, it retains much of its old-time charm," says the guide book.⁵ Here fourteen families, finding it

.

1. Ola Winslow, op. cit., pp. 163, 164.
2. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. viii.
3. Noah Benedict, "A Sermon Delivered at the Funeral of Joseph Bellamy," in *The Works of the Reverend Joseph Bellamy, D.D.*, in three volumes, New York, Steven Dodge, 1811, p. 22.
4. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. ix.
5. Connecticut, *A Guide to its Roads, Lore and People*, Federal Writers Project, Boston, Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1938, p. 384.

impossible to go to Woodbury to church in the winter, petitioned the General Assembly in October, 1738 for "winter privileges" from November to March, to hire their own minister and to be exempt from paying taxes levied on Woodbury. This petition was granted on condition they should hire an orthodox minister and not vote in Woodbury. They asked Joseph Bellamy to be their preacher. He preached his first sermon there November 2, 1738. The services were held in a barn. At the end of the "winter privileges"¹ the people did not want to give up their preacher, so in May, 1739 they petitioned to hire a minister and set up a school. In October 1739 it was set up as a separate ecclesiastical society, and called Bethlehem. Joseph Bellamy was called on February 20, 1740, his twenty-first birthday. The day he accepted, March 2, was set apart as a day of fasting and prayer. Twenty males and twenty-four females, the first members, organized the church. The pastor was offered a salary and land to work, but he refused the land, as he wished to give himself wholly to the ministry.

On April 2, 1740 he was ordained. The ordination sermon, by John Graham, was from Acts 20:20. The young pastor was enjoined to observe faithfulness in points of

.

1. During the winter small communities requested the privilege of having their own service instead of going a distance to the regular church.

doctrine, in respect of his hearers and in the constancy of his labour and industry. He must teach from house to house, catechize and instruct the young, visit the sick and have an eye to watch over every family.¹ "That fourteen families in the wilderness should undertake to support a preacher shows the enduring confidence, the lofty trust of these men of iron," says Cothren.²

Soon after the setting up of public worship in 1738 the first fruits of the gospel appeared. The youth became serious, left off spending their leisure in "vanity" and gave themselves to reading, meditation and prayer. Every day some were going to their spiritual guide, under conviction of sin. But by the following spring and summer serious godliness was almost banished. "People were in a deep sleep of security."³ Thus wrote Joseph Bellamy.

2. Itinerant Evangelism

Then came the Great Awakening of 1740. Every man, woman and child was under religious concern. "Frolics were flung up." Prayer meetings began. "From December, 1740 to March, 1741, the New England revival reached

.

1. Frederic Fay, op. cit., pp. 140-160.
2. William Cothren, History of Ancient Woodbury, Connecticut, 1659-1854, Waterbury, Bronson Brothers, 1854, p. 243.
3. In History of Bethlehem Church for first 15 years, quoted by Cothren, op. cit., p. 243.

high tide."¹ Joseph Bellamy was one who was called upon to preach in different parts of Connecticut and other colonies. His itinerant preaching continued for two years and during that time he preached 458 times in 213 places. Multitudes crowded to hear him and came to his lodgings for private instruction.²

But there was much opposition to the revivals. Emotional demonstrations were common. Although Bellamy kept on in the face of opposition, preaching at Wallingford, though men with clubs were ready to break up the meeting, he finally gave up his itineration for his own parish needs. Charles Chauncy of Boston was one who led the "opposers" of the revival. Against these criticisms 90 ministers met at Boston on July 7, 1743 and drew up a censure of their opposition. Their statement showed that they were not favoring bodily seizures or passionate feelings as signs of a work of the Holy Spirit, that they had warned the people not to consider themselves eternally secure just because of a spiritual experience, but that it was clear that the revivals had resulted in a real "lively" Christianity. Joseph Bellamy was one of the 70 ministers who signed this declaration.³ Accord-

.

1. William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1950, p. 133.
2. Tryon Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. x.
3. Benjamin Trumbull, D.D., *A Complete History of Connecticut Civil and Ecclesiastical in two volumes*, New London, H.D. Utley, 1898, pp. 205-209.

ing to Bellamy there were some false experiences and some fell into despair, some into carnal security. The elderly were fomenting contention, the middle aged were standing up for false religion, the young serving the flesh. This was the state of things in Bethlehem 1740-50.¹ He, therefore, confined himself to the duties of his parish and to writing his great work, "True Religion Delineated" which was published in 1750.² Not a minute too soon, for in that same year the anger of the Lord was hot against the people. A "nervous fever" broke out as a destroying angel, smiting 30 people. By 1753 a reformation had set in and they became a "peaceable," orderly people.³

3. A Call from New York

Joseph Bellamy had now become famous as a preacher. He was not a noisy preacher, but "grave, sentimental, searching and pungent."⁴ In New York there was a turbulent congregation. The First Presbyterian Church had started in 1717 from humble beginnings of a congregation of four members. James Anderson had been called to be their minister, and he was a "graceful", popular preacher. But he was accused of domination, and his "opposers" withdrew to form a new society. Jonathan Edwards had been

.

1. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., pp. xiii, xiv.
2. Ibid., pp. xiii, xiv.
3. Cothren, op. cit., p. 243.
4. Ibid., p. 246.

pastor of this seceding group for eight months when he was only eighteen.¹ The seceders returned to the parent church in April, 1723, but although the church had grown in temporal prosperity and had increased in numbers during the Awakening, there was dissatisfaction over the authority of the trustees and over a new version of the Psalms introduced into the worship. The matter was referred to the Synod who exhorted the people to lay aside their animosities, but the ministers requested dismissal. After a day of prayer and fasting Joseph Bellamy was called to be their pastor on December 31, 1754.² He had made a strong impression. From then on until January 11, 1755 there was much correspondence. There are 78 letters on this subject in the Hartford collection. One of these, written January 23, 1754, quoted by Tryon Edwards in the Memoirs, gives some of Bellamy's reasons for declining. He wrote:

They are a difficult people; don't like my terms of communion; and some of their great men are against my coming. I am not polite enough for them! I may possibly do to be minister out in the woods, but am not fit for a city. I may die with the small-pox and leave a widow and fatherless children in a helpless condition. My people will be in a danger of ruin. It breaks my heart to think that the interests of religion must sink among my people, and the youth run riot, and the little children be left without an instructor.³

.

1. Ola Winslow, op. cit., pp. 86-87.
2. Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller, Sketch of the Early History of the First Presbyterian Church, Reprint, 1796, pp. 6-20.
3. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. xvii.

He accepted the suggestion of the presbytery that he go there for six weeks of preaching, and he did, being the means of reconciling their difficulties. He found them a people ready to be reformed, but still he did not feel it his duty to remain.¹

The letters poured in beseeching him to come. John Robinson, collector of pew rents, wrote March 18, 1754, "Neither shall we ever so unanimously all agree and center in only one man again as we all do in you."

Obadiah Wells wrote on April 8, 1754 telling of the effect of Bellamy's preaching on a club of deists or atheists who were discussing his sermon. One rose up and said he would be Joseph Bellamy's constant hearer and decided to seek to amend his life. The rest were put to silence. A prayerless person intended to set up the worship of God in his family.

But all these entreaties did not move him. Aside from the personal inconvenience of giving up his house and farm, the New York Church's profession of faith was too broad, their covenant terms inconsistent with his preaching in Bethlehem, and the people were still not fully agreed. Some still thought him deficient in refinement of language and his delivery poor.

On January 22, 1755, he wrote to Nathaniel Hazard of New York recommending Mr. Gregory of Nutley, N. J.

.

1. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. xviii.

He said a man who had moved a hundred miles to sit under Bellamy's preaching and had heard Mr. McGregory preach thought "he preaches more politely and genteelly than I do." Then he gave advice to put the question to the congregation to vote, to keep rumor from spreading and to leave off scolding the Presbytery.¹ This gives us an insight into his real reasons for refusing the call, together with a letter on October 7, 1754 from Samuel Lowden, who wrote:

The Devil has been striving much to have your character traduced among ministers and people, but I think is like to fail in it, thanks to God.²

To Mrs. Elizabeth Breese of New York Bellamy wrote:

God in his providence has released me from the dangerous work. - - - I do not want courting and to have a poor distressed people beg and pray, - - - It almost breaks my heart. - - - I hate dissimulation.³

To John Graham he wrote:

I could give you an account of a vast variety of particulars and point out the real springs of action through the whole affair, but it would do more hurt to the interests of religion than good. I had rather some odium should be on me than to reveal such secrets as ought to be kept hid till the day of judgment.⁴

And to Aaron Burr, March 3, 1755:

.

1. Letters about the New York call, collected by Mr. Frederic Fay, pp. 148, 149.
2. Ibid., p. 144.
3. Ibid., p. 147.
4. Ibid., p. 134.

What thanks do I owe to God who has preserved me from ruin through so great a storm. For the talk is now all over in this part of the country, and my people are as quiet and kind as if it had never been. - - - I wish Mr. Bostwick and his wife would be a little cautious what they say when up in New England for it will in spite of me fly back to New York and so do hurt in the end.¹

Although he was willing to abide by the decision of the Consociation and of the Bethlehem church, both voted that he was not to be released. And so the matter ended. He was free to devote himself to his beloved parish and people, to his home and family and to his writing. He now had four children and in the same year of the call to New York he started building the spacious home which now stands opposite the village green. Here four more children were born. Here too he had his theological school. It was the custom in those days for ministers to entertain ministers who were traveling. There is a record of Rev. Ebenezer Baldwin and his daughter staying over night at Dr. Bellamy's in Bethlehem, where they "made a very good racon."² He was accounted the richest minister in the state, with a fortune of 1800 lb.³ The woodwork in his house was designed by him and fashioned in Liverpool, England, by convict labor.⁴ He was no longer a "boy

.

1. Frederic Fay, op. cit., p. 150.
2. "a racon tavern" was a place where overnight guests might stop, making a "raconing" or reckoning for their expenses.
3. Marion Dickinson Terry, editor, Old Inns of Connecticut, Hartford, The Prospect Press, 1937, p. 16.
4. Waterbury Republican, Magazine Section, July 22, 1951.

preacher," but a great man.

4. Preaching

a. Method and Delivery

Mention has been made of Joseph Bellamy's power as a preacher, both as an itinerant evangelist and as a pastor. At this point the question arises as to which critics were right about his manner of preaching. His objectors in New York said his sermons were "not sufficiently methodical, proportionate and coherent" and he was "poor in delivery, modulation of voice and gesture."¹ On the other hand, Noah Benedict in his funeral sermon said of his preaching:

As a preacher he had perhaps no superior and very few equals. His voice was manly, his manner engaging. Even those who were unfriendly to his religious sentiments were pleased to hear him speak. His voice was music to their ears, his method inviting. In the desk he appeared to understand human nature to perfection and knew how to address himself to his auditory so as seldom to fail of gaining universal attention.²

And Benjamin Trumbull says:

- - - a large and well built man, of commanding appearance; had a smooth, strong voice and could fill the largest house without any unnatural elevation.³

And Again:

He paid little attention to language but when warmed

.

1. Frederic Fay, op. cit., summary of objection.
2. Noah Benedict, op. cit., p. 23.
3. Benjamin Trumbull, op. cit., pp. 124, 125.

and filled with his subject would produce the most commanding strokes of eloquence, making his audience alive. Nothing in his writings was equal to what was to be seen and heard in his preaching. His pulpit talents exceeded all his other gifts.¹

Mr. Trumbull remembered a sermon he heard Bellamy preach at New Haven and in his history he gives a clear account of the preacher's dramatic presentation of the blessings and cursings of the law, calling Gabriel down to show the futility of his objector's arguments.

b. Subjects

(1) Doctrinal

A further chapter will discuss Joseph Bellamy's theology. His sermons were, as were those of Jonathan Edwards, his teacher, doctrinal. Tryon Edwards speaks of his full command of knowledge, of his imagination, logic, and graphic power.² Even without the illumination of his bodily presence these qualities are shown in his choice of subjects and in his skillful framing of his argument. Most of his written works were originally given as sermons. "The Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin" was originally four sermons. "The Evil of Sin," "The Law our Schoolmaster," "The Divinity of Christ," "The Millennium" were a few titles. The subjects are lofty, the argument irresistible, the logic conclusive. There are

.

1. Ibid., pp. 124, 125.

2. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., pp. lx, lxi.

few illustrations except from Scripture. An examination of "The Great Evil of Sin" will show the pattern of his logic. The text is, Psalm 51:4 - "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned." The introduction sets forth the need to see the evil of sin if we are to repent, and to see our obligation. He shows what David's sin was and that it was a sin against God. From this he deduces the doctrine that every sin is committed against God and therein lies its evil. Then he sets forth his heads: 1. How and in what respect sin is against God. 2. How great an evil it is on that account. 3. That this is the great evil of sin. Each of these heads is proved. Under the first head are these points: 1. Sin is contrary to the nature of God. 2. It is against the law of God. 3. It is against the happiness of God. In proving these points he imagines the arguments of the sinner and against them pleads as God has pleaded in His Word. Next he makes six remarks, on the blindness of the sinner, the patience of God, the dreadfulness of the day of wrath, our inability to make amends, the necessity of the Redeemer being God, the goodness of God in giving His Son. Then comes the application, mainly hortatory. He propounds six questions and concludes with further entreaty to the stupid sinner to repent. This sermon, preached at Goshen at a consociation meeting, May

30, 1753,¹ is a fair example of his sermon construction, a microcosm of his theological system.

This seems stern fare to modern parishioners, but it has been said:

The discourses of Edwards and Bellamy and Hopkins and Emmons were spoken to New England farmers, their wives and their sons and daughters; and when they were published, they were read largely by the same class of persons. There was in those days eagerness to attack and master a difficult subject; keen interest in matter that, in order to be understood, had to be read a score of times; enthusiasm for some attainment in rational strength and in argumentative skill.²

(2) Election Sermon

Every time new magistrates were to be elected the ministers of Joseph Bellamy's day preached election sermons. This gave an opportunity to bring the Word to bear on current problems. Sometimes the ministers gave advice to the magistrates. Magistrates, in turn, gave advice on church disputes, determined where new ministers should be located, and upheld the moral law of the community.³ These were heard by great audiences and when published were read by many more. The ideas of the clergy became by these means "part of the warp and woof of

.

1. The Works of Joseph Bellamy, D.D., in two volumes, Boston, Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1850, Vol.I, pp. 463-490.
2. George A. Gordon, Humanism in New England Theology, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920, p.17.
3. Jerold C. Brauer, Protestantism in America, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1953, p. 32.

New England thought."¹

On May 13, 1762 Joseph Bellamy delivered the election sermon before the General Assembly of Connecticut. His text was, "Righteousness exalteth a nation," Proverbs 14:34. He spoke of the righteousness of God, of the perfect conformity to law contained in love. He said that God never uses His power to oppress, contrary to some earthly princes. If righteousness should descend on crowned heads and spread to the poorest beggar, heaven would soon begin. Peace would soon be proclaimed. He pictured the delight of such a state, affecting clergy, merchants, courts of justice, taverns, homes. Guardedly he depicted the present state of prosperity and privilege in the colonies but solemnly warned rulers to bring about a reformation, ministers to dwell in unity and all to cry to God for deliverance from sin, the source of all misery and ruin.²

Not until 1777 did the unrighteousness of rulers invade peaceful Bethlehem, snatching away Joseph Bellamy's second son Jonathan, a graduate of Yale and a lawyer of promise. He died of smallpox when in the service of his country in the Revolution. In the old cemetery off Bellamy Lane in Bethlehem he lies in the grave of his father,

.

1. Alice M. Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1928, p.6.
2. *The Works of Joseph Bellamy*, 1850 edition, Vol. I, pp. 577-596.

the inscription reading:

Virtue, not rolling suns the mind matures.
That life is long which answers life's great end.

5. Teaching

a. In the Manse

Outside the spacious home of Joseph Bellamy is a sign which says, "In this House Rev. Joseph Bellamy Held the Earliest Theological School, 1738-1759." "This counts," says the Connecticut Guide Book, "as the first theological school in America."¹ Here the young men desiring to be preachers came to live in the third floor dormitory and to subject themselves to his method of teaching. The applicant would be submitted to a series of questions on God, man, revelation, original sin, repentance, the Church. Having probed their deficiencies he directed them to books to read and had them write dissertations. He had them read works of "opposers" of the truth and showed the fallacy of their doctrines. They had to write sermons and deliver them, and he would criticize them.²

Those students who were licensed to preach were required to preach in the outskirts of the parish. Dr. Hart, one of his pupils, recalls that as teacher and pupils

.

1. Edgar L. Heermance, compiler, The Connecticut Guide, Hartford, The Emergency Relief Commission, 1935, p. 104.
2. Appendix, Works, 1811 Edition, pp. 34-35.

returned from listening to him, Bellamy made no comment until almost home. Then, passing a field of buckwheat so rich in growth that it had fallen to the ground by its own weight, he said, "Do you see that buckwheat? That's your sermon. You've put your whole system of theology into one sermon." To another he said, "When I was young, I thought it was the thunder that killed people; but when I grew older and wiser, I found out it was the lightning. So I advise you, thunder less and lighten more."¹

He was interested not only in his pupils' mental equipment, but also in their spiritual growth. Tryon Edwards says:

With deep seriousness he pressed upon them the indispensable importance of a heart truly roused to the service of Christ, and a life of watchfulness, spirituality and prayer; discoursing occasionally on the various duties, trials, comforts and motives of their intended work, and conversing with each on his personal experience as a Christian, that thus his pupils might be, as far as possible, "well instructed to the kingdom of God."²

His love of dialogue which appears in his sermons and writings, played a part in his instruction, for he would "put himself in the attitude of an objector, with a view at once to extend their knowledge and increase their intellectual acumen."³

.

1. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. lviii.
2. Ibid., p. lix.
3. William Sprague, op. cit., p. 406.

b. In the Church

One of Joseph Bellamy's theological pupils was Ammi Ruhamah Robbins. His son, Rev. Thomas Robbins, writing in 1850 from Hartford for Sprague's "Annals of the American Pulpit" gives Bellamy the credit for originating the system of Sunday School instruction in America.¹ In his church between sermons he would catechize and instruct classes in the Word of God. He had two classes, one for the eldest children which he himself taught in the Bible, the younger class to whom a deacon taught the catechism.²

6. Writings

In the present church in Bethlehem is still shown the ample wooden straight chair with large tablet arm on which Joseph Bellamy did his writing. His works consisted of sermons, pamphlets and letters. His sermons have already been mentioned. His pamphlets were originally given as sermons. They were eagerly read. In those days it was customary to spend the entire Sabbath at church. Between the two sermons those who had come from a distance would warm themselves in the "Sabba-Day" or "Nooning" Houses erected near the meeting house.³ Those houses had a table

.

1. Ibid., p. 410.
2. Cothren, op. cit., footnote, p. 253.
3. Ola Winslow, Meeting House Hill, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1952, p. 57.

with a Bible and the sermons of Bellamy or Smalley or Hopkins in pamphlet form. These would be read and discussed warmly.¹

a. Method of Writing

Since many of his writings were originally sermons, we find the same style prevailing as has been mentioned. He relies heavily on Scripture, dialogue and logical proof. His wit is ready, his sarcasm relentless, his argument irrefutable. Minutely he takes the statements of his opponents and turns them back to show their inconsistencies within their own argument. He takes the part first of Parishioner, then of Minister until Parishioner owns himself defeated. This is the method of his writings on subjects under dispute.

But in his sermons we find a tenderer note, a pleading, wooing tone. "O sinner, if you never saw the great evil of sin, you are to this day a stranger to God, and blind to the infinite beauty of his nature."² Questions are used to good effect. "For is it fit the sinner should be pardoned before he sees and owns what he is, and wherein, and how much he has been to blame?"³ There are few illustrations except from Scripture itself. He

.

1. Rev. Heman Timlow, op. cit., p. 73.
2. Works, 1850 Edition, Vol. I, p. 485.
3. Ibid., p. 403.

takes a text and makes it illuminate a whole discourse, as in "The Wisdom of God" Joseph's statement, "Ye meant it to me for evil but God meant it for good," is the basis of his whole system of philosophy, or in "True Religion," Jesus' summary of the commandments is made the sum and substance of the whole duty of man.

b. Subjects

His first work, published in 1750, was "True Religion Delineated." The title page of this work of 350 pages says it is "adapted to the weakest capacities and designed for the Establishment, Comfort and quickening of the People of God in these Evil Times." The sub-title is "Experimental Religion, as distinguished from Formality on the one Hand, and Enthusiasm on the other, set in a Scriptural and Rational Light. In Two Discourses, in which some of the principal Errors both of the Arminians and Antinomians are confuted."¹

A preface by Jonathan Edwards calls attention to the need of an understanding of the principles of true religion as shown by the activities of Satan in producing counterfeit religions "to obscure, obstruct and bring to a stand" revivals of religion. He testifies that the author has undertaken the work not from a desire for applause,

.

1. The Sunday Republican, Waterbury, Conn., July 22, 1951.

but in concern for the glory of God. The work will be profitable to every serious reader, learned or unlearned, though aimed "at the benefit of persons of vulgar capacity."¹

A work of next importance is "The Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin," published in 1758 during the dark times of the French and Indian War. This is a shorter work than "True Religion," combining four sermons and designed "to give consolation to such as fear the Lord."²

This called forth a remonstrance which was answered by another pamphlet, "A Vindication of God's Wisdom."³

There is a small collection of letters and dialogues, entitled "Theron, Paulinus and Aspasio," a reply to the sentiments of Rev. Messieurs Hervey and Marshall, in which the author takes the role of Paulinus.⁴ This concerns the nature of spiritual blindness and Divine illumination. It is followed by a supplement entitled "The Nature and Glory of the Gospel of Christ."⁵

Next in length to "True Religion" is the series of pamphlets attacking the Half-Way Covenant.⁶ These were

.

1. Works, 1850 edition, Vol. I, pp. 3-6.
2. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 3-96.
3. Ibid., pp. 99-155.
4. Ibid., pp. 159-267.
5. Ibid., pp. 271-452.
6. Ibid., pp. 455-711.

not published until 1796, but the subject had been a matter of controversy for years. The covenant idea of a church can be traced back to Anglo-Saxon tradition of government by compact and to Calvin's idea of a holy community, a city dependent on none but Jesus Christ.¹ The covenant was an expression of an inward experience of conversion. Only the regenerate were citizens. But as time went on, these experiences of new birth gave way to the establishment of settlements, to the business of making a living. A generation arose which lived upright lives but could not say they had any definite moment of salvation. They wished to have their children baptized but did not wish to be full members of the church. Thus in 1662 a synod in Boston adopted the Half-Way Covenant which gave parents a right to have their children baptized if they declared their sympathy with the ideas of the church and intent to lead moral lives. This led to a decline of piety and true religion.² At a Reforming Synod in 1679 church officers were directed to keep watch of the faith and order and see that those renewing the covenant purify themselves from the sins of the times. However, Solomon Stoddard, pastor of the church at Nor-

.

1. Ola Winslow, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.
2. Conrad Wright, *The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America*, Boston, Starr King Press, 1954, pp. 12-13.

thampton and grandfather and predecessor of Jonathan Edwards, maintained that the Lord's Supper was a converting ordinance and he admitted half-way members to the sacrament that thereby they might be regenerated.¹ His own brother-in-law, Increase Mather, opposed him and later, in 1749, Jonathan Edwards proposed in a pamphlet "A Humble Inquiry" to abandon the Half-Way Covenant. The result of the controversy was Edwards' dismissal in 1750.² This fateful year was the year when the Half-Way Covenant was laid aside in the Bethlehem church. Apparently both he and Jonathan Edwards had arrived at the same conclusion separately. Bellamy was invited by Edwards to preach at Northampton a sermon which he had prepared on the topic. Edwards was intensely interested, the two conversing earnestly afterward and Mr. Edwards being so engrossed that he forgot his hat.³

Williston Walker comments that it was not until almost twenty years after Edwards was dismissed that Bellamy began his pamphlet attack on the Half-Way Covenant by a dialogue "On Christian Sacraments," published in 1769.

c. Influence

"True Religion" was widely praised both in

.

1. Peter Y. De Jong, *The Covenant Idea in New England Theology, 1620-1847*, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans, 1945, pp. 94-152.
2. Ola Winslow, *Jonathan Edwards*, N.Y., The Macmillan Co., 1940, pp. 242-254.
3. Tryon Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. lvi, footnote.

America and in England. It won for him, through the influence of his friends, John Erskine and others, in 1768 the degree of Doctor in Divinity from the college of Aberdeen,¹ a degree held by less than 30 in the Colonies at that time.

In a recommendation prefacing the first edition of his works and signed by twelve eminent divines and theological professors we read these words:

The character and writings of Dr. Bellamy have been deservedly held in high estimation by the churches in New England and by many friends of Evangelical truth in other parts of the Christian world. - - - We consider him as one of the most distinguished and useful writers of the last age.²

His "Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin" is considered of sufficient importance to receive comment and extensive quotation in a recent history of American Christianity. It is hailed as a harbinger of new forces.³

E. Death

Dr. Bellamy's wish was that he might drop dead in the pulpit at the close of a public service, but such was not the case. After the death of his wife he married again. Shortly after this, on November 19, 1786, he was

.

1. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. xxxv.
2. Bellamy's Works, 1811 Edition.
3. Shelton Smith, Robert Handy, and Lefferts Loetscher, American Christianity, N.Y., Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960, Vol. I, pp. 349-354.

stricken with paralysis. He lingered for three years with impaired intellect but with unshaken faith. He died on March 6, 1790.¹ On his tombstone in the old cemetery in Bethlehem is inscribed, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, - - and their works do follow them."²

F. Summary

The life of Joseph Bellamy is an outstanding example of fidelity to the task to which he was called. With his talents as a preacher he might well have been carried away into an undue desire for applause. Content as he was to remain in the small parish where he began his labors, he had an unusual opportunity to meditate on the great truths of the Gospel, to communicate those truths for the benefit of his parishioners, of his family, of his friends and of posterity. At a time when old theological forms were changing and being attacked, he played a large part in preserving the best of the old and in making it pertinent to new situations. As a defender of the faith against Arminianism, Arianism, Socinianism, Stoddardeanism he played an important part. The wonder is that he is so little known whereas Jonathan Edwards is known by almost everyone.

.

1. Sprague, op. cit., pp. 406-407.
2. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. i.

CHAPTER II

JOSEPH BELLAMY'S SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

CHAPTER II

JOSEPH BELLAMY'S SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

A. Introduction

The contributions of Jonathan Edwards to American Christianity were those of a man of singular genius. But genius needs a stabilizer and a channel if it is to reach into the common walks of everyday life.

Frank Hugh Foster has said:

It was fortunate for the new theology of New England that so rich a nature, with so warm a heart and so intensely practical interests as Bellamy had, stood at its fountain-head to direct its course.¹

The purpose of this chapter is to scan the theological background of the times and to examine Bellamy's system of theology as shown in his works with a view to determine into what course Bellamy directed the system he handed down.

References to Bellamy's works in this chapter will be to the Boston edition of 1850.

B. The New England Theology

The earliest settlers in New England were a chosen

.

1. Frank Hugh Foster, *A Genetic History of the New England Theology*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1907, p. 129.

and holy people who had entered into covenant relations with God. But pioneer life was demoralizing, bringing a decay in vital religion by the second and third generations. Calvinism was the theology which prevailed, but the doctrine of man's inability to repent was "so preached as to deplete the churches by discouraging repentance and faith."¹ The Half-Way Covenant increased the number of baptized but did not encourage a vital Christian experience. Heresies were creeping in, such as Antinomianism and Arminianism. A new note was sounded with Jonathan Edwards' sermon in 1734 on "Justification by Faith." Revival started in his church in Northampton and spread through the Connecticut valley. He has related vividly the particulars in his "Narrative of the Surprising Work of God." He says of his sermon which was an attack on Arminianism:

Although great fault was found with meddling with the controversy in the pulpit, by such a person, at that time, and though it was ridiculed by many elsewhere; yet it proved a word spoken in season here; and was most evidently attended with a very remarkable blessing of heaven to the souls of the people in this town.²

Back of this revival were two factors in Edwards himself. One of these was the mystical experience which occurred when he was seventeen. A "new sense of things"

.

1. Ibid., p. 43.

2. Jonathan Edwards, Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England, 1740, to which is prefixed A Narrative of the Surprising Work of God, in Northampton, Massachusetts, 1735, New York, American Tract Society, no date, p. 13.

came upon him when he read Paul's epistle to Timothy and became "wrapped and swallowed up in God."¹ The other was his background, for he mentions that in his father's parish in East Windsor there had been "four or five seasons of the pouring out of the Spirit"² and that his grandfather Solomon Stoddard had had five harvests of souls in the Northampton church. Thus Edwards was accustomed to seeing the phenomenon of conversion and was able to counsel those who had a stirring of the soul to seek after divine things.

The New England Theology is the term used to designate the change in the old Calvinism which Edwards heralded by his sermon on justification. It was the dominant school among the Congregationalists, led to the division of Presbyterians into New School and Old School over the question of revivals, and disappeared after 1880.³

Edwards' vital experience of the living God and his zeal to urge men to seek Him have constituted him "the first Augustinian Calvinist in America,"⁴ yet he himself

.

1. Ola Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1940, p. 77.
2. Jonathan Edwards, op. cit., p. 21.
3. Frank Hugh Foster, "New England Theology" in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Samuel Macauley Jackson, editor, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1953, Vol. VIII, p. 130.
4. Douglas Elwood, The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards, New York, Columbia University Press, 1960, p. 153.

said, "I utterly disclaim a dependence on Calvinism."¹ It was not a system of Calvinism, then, but an experience of the sovereign God Himself, which directed the course of thinking for the period of the New England Theology. Under him "legalistic Calvinism became a personalized Calvinism searching out the hearts of individuals."² But his fearless dealing with sin and his opposition to the Half-Way Covenant brought about his dismissal from the pastorate. He never did get his proposed theological summary written. But his ideas persisted in the work and writings of his followers. The New England Theology maintained its position for more than a hundred years after his death. That position was strengthened and modified by the work of Joseph Bellamy.

C. Joseph Bellamy's Systematic Theology

Joseph Bellamy's theology was a simple and consistent system. It was outlined in "True Religion Delineated," written in 1750 but was reiterated and expanded in his other writings. In the preface to "True Religion Delineated" he said:

.

1. Jonathan Edwards, Freedom of the Will, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1957, p. 131.
2. William Warren Sweet, Revivalism in America, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944, p. 20.

Labor after determinate ideas of God and a sense of his infinite glory, - - - learn what God is, and then what the moral law is, and this will help you to understand what our ruin is and what the way of our recovery by free grace through Jesus Christ.¹

These four points dovetail together, for the first point of the law, to love God supremely, is impossible until man sees what God is. Seeing God makes man aware of his sinfulness from which there is no recovery except through Christ. This section of this study will follow Bellamy's outline.

1. What God Is

This includes God's being, His revelation of Himself and His relation to evil

a. God's Being

In writing to Samuel Austin, Bellamy stated that the basic error of all false schemes of religion is "denying the Divinity of God the Father."² Calvin wrote of the glory of God, Jonathan Edwards of His beauty, but Bellamy used the terms amiability and wisdom as the sum of His attributes. God's infinite amiability has many facets. Bellamy classed them as natural perfections and moral perfections. His natural perfections are His infinite un-

.

1. Joseph Bellamy, Works, Boston, Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1850, Vol. I, p. 11.
2. Letter to Samuel Austin, February 10, 1765, Hartford Collection.

derstanding and His almighty power. His moral perfections are His infinite wisdom, perfect holiness, impartial justice, infinite goodness, truth and faithfulness. These perfections are underived and His being is necessarily infinite, eternal, unchangeable, independent, self sufficient and all sufficient.¹

Against such a Being who can argue? Yet much of the thought of the time turned toward the glorification of man and questioned the perfection of God in His being, in His creation and in His ways with men. To one of these Bellamy replied:

He, then, who denies the infinite amiableness of the Deity, as he is in himself, saps the whole Scripture scheme at the foundation. He must be an infidel.²

Bellamy did not waste time with proofs of the existence of God, but simply dwelt on the perfections of God; if these are seen, all the rest of the system follows.

b. God's Revelation of Himself

There are three ways by which God has revealed Himself, His works, His word, and His Spirit. His works include the creation, preservation and government of the world and His redemption, sanctification and salvation of His people. Bellamy pictured God as loving Himself for being what He is and taking delight in acting forth

.

1. Joseph Bellamy, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 26, 27.
2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 290, footnote.

and expressing all His heart. He sits on His throne and views the courts above, the earth and the caverns of hell. His omniscience is aware of what is right and wrong, fit and unfit in the natural and in the moral world. His commands are designed to promote conformity to the moral law the ground of which is the intrinsic fitness of things, not His own pleasure or the happiness of His creatures. His final aim is to display all His perfections and to exhibit an exact image of Himself. When man is able to see the plan as a whole after judgment, he can more worthily magnify the Creator.¹

God's works are the subject matter of the Bible, the second means of revelation. If man takes the Old and New Testaments together he has a complete picture of God's plan.

Man does not need the Holy Spirit to reveal any new truths, but the Holy Spirit awakens man to see what God is and to enkindle a love for Him in the heart. Thus the plan of salvation is set forth and begun in the individual.

Thus far, in "True Religion Delineated," a glimpse is revealed of the whole system of Bellamy's theology, centering on the perfection of the Deity.

.

1. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 44.

c. God's Relation to Evil

Since this topic was treated more fully by Bellamy in a later best seller, "The Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin," it deserves further consideration in this thesis. The very title of his dissertation justifies God. He is all-wise; therefore there must be a purpose for evil. He permits it; therefore He is in control of it, but not the author of it. The treatise is in sermon form and in four parts. The text of the first sermon is, Genesis 51:20, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." The setting of the text in the life of Joseph is described. Then the doctrine is laid down: A sight of the wisdom of God in the permission of sin, is very useful to promote holiness of heart and life. Then the points are given: 1. What God's permitting sin means, 2. The wisdom of God in the permission of sin, 3. Conclude with a practical argument. Under point one: God does not love or approve of sin, does not deprive the sinner of freedom of will, is not unconcerned but forbears to interpose because He has chosen to act in the best manner. Taking up the second point, Bellamy showed how much good finally came out of the evil which Joseph's brothers did, out of Pharaoh's hardness of heart, out of the wilderness wanderings of the Israelites.

The next sermon continues the illustration from Scripture and leads up to the question of why God ever

permitted sin to enter the world. Arguing from the part to the whole, the illustrations cited lead to the conclusion that of all possible systems open to God's choice He chose the best, for He cannot make a mistake. Man cannot solve the difficulty, for man cannot see the whole plan. The heart of mankind is fallen, depraved, guilty, and hence cannot appreciate the divine conduct until renewed and sanctified by divine grace.

The third sermon explains that God did well by His creature, man, putting him in control of things and laying him under obligation to love and obey Him, giving him "sufficient internal abilities and outward advantages, to know and do his duty."¹ Here Bellamy indulged in a little speculation. Perhaps God put the angels in charge of man when he was created. Perhaps Satan thought this degrading to his superior nature and so pride entered, Satan fell and in revenge on God and man planned man's ruin. Bellamy speculated also on God's reasoning about man's liability to sin. God alone is immutable, because infinite. The only way for finite creatures to be established in love to Him was for Him to be their surety. But then they would not know they were dependent wholly on Him. So man was left to find out by sad experience the "mutability" of his nature. Thus divine sovereign grace was able to stand revealed.

.

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 45.

Bellamy imagined God saying:

Now shall it be known what is in their hearts. And occasion shall be given to show what is in my heart. And it shall be known that I am the Lord. And the whole intelligent system shall be filled with my glory.¹

This necessity of evil in order to discern the good, Bellamy illustrated by a speculation about the fallen and the elect angels. He assigned degrees of happiness to the innocent angels and of misery to the fallen, and proved mathematically that ninety-six hundred million degrees of happiness accrued to the blessed by contemplating the misery of the damned. How much more will their joy increase at the millennium and Christ's coming again!

In the fourth sermon Bellamy imagined a conversation among patriarchs, prophets, saints and angels taking place at the final consummation of the divine plan as they magnify the glory of the Creator. Then he dealt with objections. Was there no other way to make angels and men as holy and happy? There might have been, but the objector cannot present one and since God chose this and He is infinite wisdom, it must be best. How can it be right for God to do evil that good might come? He did not do evil but merely did not hinder it. A master often

.

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 52.

lets a servant persist in wrong that he may reform him. Would it not be better for all to be saved? Christ died in the place of sinners and man acquiesces, but then why not acquiesce in the punishment of the obstinate? Why does not mankind prefer the present plan? Because mankind has no sense of the honor due to God, but only of its own happiness.

The fourth sermon concluded with an exhortation:

O ye seed of Jacob! Joseph is safe, and Benjamin is safe; the honor of God is safe, and the good of the system is safe; all is in good hands, and under the conduct of infinite wisdom. - - - Wherefore, set your hearts at rest. For, let the state of the world and of the church look ever so dark, you may safely trust in the Lord, and stay yourselves upon your God.¹

In reply to Bellamy, Sam'l Moody wrote "An attempt to point out the fatal and pernicious Consequences of Rev. Mr. Joseph Bellamy's Doctrines respecting moral Evil." He stated that Bellamy's system made God the author of sin and limited His wisdom; that God is a wise and tender and indulgent parent; that God could not prevent sin.²

Bellamy replied with a second pamphlet, "A Vindication of God's Wisdom in Permitting Sin." In this he did not yield an inch in his thesis that the plan is good because it is God's; that it is not for man to censure the works of his Maker. He said:

.

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 94.

2. Joseph Haroutunian, Piety versus Moralism, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1932, pp. 36-39.

Is it not pride, my brother, unsufferable pride, in us, poor contemptible worms, to get up into the judgment seat, call Almighty God to our bar, examine his conduct, and then boldly pronounce it bad, - - - and all because we cannot see the reasons of his conduct?¹

Rightly is Bellamy called a "most God-intoxicated Calvinist."² He wrestled ably with one of the most vexing problems of human existence. He displayed the wisdom of God. He dramatically presented the justice of the whole scheme of God's ways with man.

2. What the Moral Law Is

The reason why a right concept of God is essential is that man must know what God is in order to love Him as He commands. The moral law is summed up in the two commandments, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."³ This was the pivot of Bellamy's system.

a. Love to God

In discussing this summary of the law, Bellamy wrote at length showing first what is implied in man's love to God. The first thing implied is a true knowledge of Him, a sense of His glory and beauty in being such as He is. Another thing is esteem. This makes men glad

.

1. Joseph Bellamy, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 153.
2. Joseph Haroutunian, op. cit., p. 39.
3. Mark 12:30, 31.

that He is Governor and they are His subjects. From this, man is led to benevolence or the wish that God be glorified and that man be devoted to Him. Man will also delight in Him and love to conform to His law. The law to love Him is infinitely, eternally, unchangeably binding. It is that from which all other obligations rise. The least disposition to "disesteem" Him is infinitely sinful and deserves infinite punishment. Thus, Paul called himself chief of sinners and relied not on his works but on the free grace of Christ. Christ did not die to abate the law and to procure lawless liberty.

Bellamy had just been through the strenuous times of the Great Awakening and had been dealing with souls, so there was, no doubt, real reason for his picturing counterfeit love to God. He showed that hypocrites love God simply for His benefits. They set their minds to repent that they may escape hell or enjoy heaven. Such become so secure that they do not stand up under testings. Others think themselves especially favored by receiving dreams, visions and revelations. These are not the true lovers of the true God.

But what is the extent of the love to God which He demands by His law? Bellamy made here a distinction between man's natural capacity and his moral capacity. God has made men with differing natural capacities but expects a love in proportion to the natural capacity of

each one. Therefore man is inexcusable if he does not love God with all his heart. It is the bad temper or disposition which is to blame. But man is to blame for this bad temper, even though it came from Adam's fall. His inability is moral. "The more unable to love God we are, the more we are to blame."¹ This makes necessary the work of the Holy Spirit to bring men to repentance.

b. Love to Neighbor

Bellamy's conception of neighbor took in the whole human race, for he said one's neighbor is his brother by Adam. "We are all but one great family, the offspring of the same common parents."² Love of neighbor has not only been commanded by God, but has been exemplified in His love in giving His Son. He said:

Since the great Governor of the world has treated us worms and rebels as he has, one would think that after all this we should never be able to hate or injure any mortal.³

The standard of love to neighbor is man's love to himself. This love to self is "habitual, unfeigned, fervent, active and permanent."⁴ It should include spiritual welfare and exclude exposure of the neighbor's sins and weaknesses.

The quality of this love is more than compassion,

.

1. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 100.
2. Ibid., p. 124.
3. Ibid., p. 125.
4. Ibid., p. 126.

good-nature, natural affection, party spirit, gratitude for favors. God loves Himself with all His heart. Man must love Him first, then see himself in his true light and do as he would be done by. This is the essence of true religion, the religion of the Bible, a religion different from all other religions in the world. The moral law is holy, just and good. It is God's image and a transcript of His nature.¹ But it must be put in the heart of a sinner by divine grace, and then all duties will follow naturally in daily practice.

3. What Man's Ruin Is

Bellamy has discussed under this topic Adam's original righteousness, the manner of the Fall and the effects of the Fall.

a. Original Righteousness

Adam, created in the image of God, was perfectly suited in mind and heart to love God with all his heart, from a sense of the beauty of His nature. He was made in the natural image of God and in the moral image of God. He looked upon the created world and wondered and adored the Maker. He saw the infinite wisdom, holiness, justice and goodness of God and the infinite evil of disobedience. He loved Him not from a desire for ben-

.

1. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 290, 298.

efit to himself but because of who He is.¹

b. The Manner of the Fall

Adam was under a covenant or constitution to love and obey God. He was constituted our public head. God was not obliged to be his keeper, for he had abilities and advantages sufficient to know and to do his duty. God left him to his own choice. By the tempter's wiles he was deceived, disobeyed and suffered the threatened penalties of both natural and spiritual death, by the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit.

Bellamy's use of the word "constitution" has been called a modification of the Puritan covenant idea, because it accents the initiative of God. But the covenant idea is there, by whatever name Bellamy called it.²

The Fall was not God's fault. If man blames God for making Adam his public head, he must blame Him for constituting Christ man's public head through whom he has redemption.

c. The Effects of the Fall

Through the disobedience of Adam, man lost the moral image of God. Bellamy described this state as follows:

We are, in fact, born like the wild ass's colt, as senseless of God, and as void and destitute of grace;

.

1. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 135, 136.
2. Shelton Smith, Changing Conceptions of Original Sin, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955, p. 7.

we have nature, but no grace; a taste for natural good, but no relish for moral beauty.¹

Bellamy was not interested, as was Calvin, in the effect of the Fall on particular parts of man's being, as the will, the affections, the intellect. But he did speak of the native bent of man's heart to be selfish. These earliest dispositions are not a part of the essence of men's souls, but are present even in the new made soul. He called them "connatural" or "native". Little children show this native bent before they are capable of learning it from others and the self-centeredness remains, however much parents instil good principles.² Wordsworth should have consulted Bellamy before writing of the "clouds of glory" around the new-born child.

God could have left man to eternal despair, but instead He doomed the tempter and allowed man a reprieve, a time for repentance. This is of mere grace through Jesus Christ, before He shall come as Judge. Bellamy pictured the plight of man:

God is exalted; a guilty world lies at his mercy; they are in a sense, continually under his rod, and every moment liable to drop into an eternal hell. They are held up in his hand; hell gapes to receive them, and now he lets one fall, and then another; now this and then that, just as it seems good in his sight. Surely, this is awful!³

.

1. Joseph Bellamy, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 137.
2. Ibid., pp. 139-141.
3. Ibid., p. 312.

But Bellamy recognized many common favors have been granted even to sinners, as permission to live on the earth and to enjoy its fruits. God also lays restraints on man, keeping his evil nature from breaking out completely. Many are from natural instincts inclined to tender-heartedness, love each other with natural affection, have a civil behavior.¹

Bellamy has shown himself a true Calvinist in his presentation of the Fall and its effects on man. The century following him was to witness many battles on the question of Original Sin, the doctrine finally being overridden by the increasing awareness of man's inherent goodness. But in these years since two world wars man has lost his status, and shown the depths of evil within. Brunner, Niebuhr and Tillich have revived with new terminology the doctrine of sin as a part of man's being.

4. The Manner of Man's Recovery

This final point in Bellamy's system includes the question of election, the atonement, the new life.

a. Election

Calvin's doctrine of election receives some modification in Bellamy's system. Calvin wrote:

All are not created on equal terms, but some are pre-ordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation;

.

1. Ibid., pp. 150, 157.

and accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death.¹

In America the original settlers were all of the elect, covenanted to form a holy community to the glory of God. Sweet has commented that "Calvin had a very low opinion of the common people."² He also says:

Fortunately, the great Calvinist preachers have not been consistent Calvinists; and they have gone ahead in spite of their doctrine of election, as though there was hope for every man.³

The way Bellamy explains the dilemma is as follows. God is under no obligation to provide salvation. Because of Adam's sin, all deserve eternal damnation. But He has chosen some before the foundation of the world to be holy and to be His children. This is of His own sovereign pleasure and mercy. The law is opposed to the natural bent of the human heart. To come into conformity with it requires special sovereign grace, grace which is irresistible, which is given while man is still opposed to Him. This grace, moving in the heart and producing love to God and sorrow for sin is perceptible. How does the sinner know he is elected? Whosoever will may come.

.

1. John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, translated by Henry Beveridge, Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1957, Book III, chapter XXI, section 5, Volume II, p. 206.
2. William Warren Sweet, Revivalism in America, N.Y. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944, p. 23.
3. Ibid., p. 28.

No revelation is necessary. Simply accept the gospel, accept the free invitation to come. The truth of the gospel is the ground of hope, and "any, poor, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving wretch may come."¹ The door of mercy is open.

b. The Atonement

How has the door been opened? Bellamy's answer is that:

Jesus Christ did, by his obedience and death, open such a door of mercy, as that the supreme Governor of the world might, consistently with his honor, take what methods he pleased, in order to recover rebellious, guilty, stubborn sinners to himself.²

The infinite evil of sin, the infinite honor of God demanded a Mediator who was both God and man. Such was the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Bellamy, in "A Treatise on the Divinity of Christ,"³ has set forth a very high view of the character of Christ. In Genesis He was portrayed as the Creator of the whole universe. He was not the mere instrument of creation, but was Himself the supreme God who created all things. He was the Angel of the Lord who appeared to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses. He was the King of Israel, the One dwelling in the tabernacle in the wilderness. But when He became incarnate, He took on Him the form of a servant, and so was not re-

.

1. Ibid., p. 297.
2. Ibid., p. 299.
3. Ibid., pp. 417-441.

cognized by "His own" but was put to death. As a man He had a human body, grew in knowledge but did not have absolute omniscience. He was "unobliged" to undertake to pay the debt of sin. But he was left to do this, worthy the honor and qualified for the work.

Look up, and stand astonished at this greatest of all God's works. The Creator of the universe on the cross; dying as a propitiatory sacrifice for sin; offering up himself to his Father, as a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the world; that by faith in his blood we might be justified and saved.¹

Christ, then, opened the door of mercy whereby sinners may be saved from eternal damnation and enter into life eternal. He not only suffered the penalty of sin but gave to the law the perfect obedience which God demanded of Adam. Consistently with His honor the great Governor of the universe may pardon those who come to Him through faith in His Son.

c. The New Life

Bellamy was very definite about the nature of this justifying faith. Much is wrapped up in it: approval of the law and the gospel, a conviction of God's infinite greatness and the rightness of His punishment of sin, regeneration, repentance, obedience. This is true not only of the first exercise of faith but of every act of faith. The results of this are a new nature, the

.

1. Ibid., p. 440.

restoration of the image of God, the law written on the heart, the seeds of every moral virtue and every Christian grace, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Bellamy's opponents had quite different ideas of salvation. He censured the Sandemanians and Antinomians for believing that justification takes place before repentance and all man needs is a sense that God is his friend. To leave out the terrors of the law and a sense of his sin leads to a graceless, unregenerate life. Pelagians and Socinians tended to leave out the evil propensities of the carnal mind and so dispensed with the Holy Spirit.

Pages of refutation of false doctrines of regeneration show how many errors were cropping up concerning the way of man's recovery of the lost image of God.

From the point of view of present day problems it would be interesting to trace the development of these errors and to consider whether they may still be in the minds of modern Christian workers, but that is beyond the scope of this study.

Before leaving the topic of the atonement, man's recovery, the writer would like to discuss the view of the atonement held by Frank Hugh Foster in A Genetic History of the New England Theology that Bellamy introduced the Grotian theory of the atonement into the New England Theology. A study of Foster's translation of Grotius and

of his introduction to the work, as well as the study of all of Bellamy's works brings into doubt the statement that Bellamy introduced the theory to New England thought.¹ In his introduction to the translation of Grotius, Foster traced the knowledge of the Grotian theory back as far as 1653. He believed President Edwards had read it for he used an illustration from it in one of his sermons. He said:

In the case of both President Edwards and Bellamy, one cannot avoid the impression that various thoughts are stirring in their minds which do not start from any determinate principle, or tend to any definite end.²

He also said that Hopkins completely adopted the Grotian view.³ Then why did he attribute the introducing of the theory to Bellamy?

There are several reasons why this does not seem probable. Granted that Grotius and Bellamy are in agreement in certain points. The most important of these are the rejection of the Calvinist conception of the arbitrariness of the will of God; the belief that God's government flows from His character; that God does what He does, not without reason. The two men would also agree in their opposition to Socinus' statements that Christ's

.

1. Frank Hugh Foster, A Genetic History of the New England Theology, p. 113.
2. Hugh Grotius, A Defence of the Catholic Faith concerning the Satisfaction of Christ, against Faustus Socinus, translated with notes and an Historical Introduction by Frank Hugh Foster, Andover, Warren F. Draper, 1889, p. XLVII.
3. Ibid., p. XLVIII.

resurrection and ascension are more important than His death; that man may imitate the way of salvation which Christ exhibited; that in man's sin God is the offended party; that God did not intend that Christ pay the penalty for our sins. Bellamy's theory of the atonement lacks many of the features of Grotius'. Grotius dwells at length, with classical examples and Greek word study, on the meaning of propitiation. Bellamy does not. Nor does he use the example of Zaleucus, though his master Jonathan Edwards had used it. Bellamy's system lacks the legal terminology which the jurist Grotius had used, except for the word "satisfaction." Moreover, Grotius had been condemned as an Arminian at the Council of Dort. This would be enough to keep Bellamy from using his ideas, for he was ever opposing the Arminians. Bellamy does call God the moral Governor of the universe, but his portrayal of the role is rather as a father of a family or as a master over servants, one looking out for the best good of His subjects though that means correction. Perhaps Bellamy learned from Grotius, but his system as a whole is so logical and consistent and Biblical, that it seems not to give allegiance to any theory outside itself.

D. Evaluation

This chapter has shown some of Bellamy's ideas about the great theological problems which assail the

heart and baffle the mind of man. His system, though simple, is wide in scope, is centered on an all powerful God, on Christ who was the perfect Sacrifice, on the Holy Spirit who draws man to God. His arguments strengthened the Calvinist position concerning God and the Trinity.

However, Bellamy's view of God made Him less arbitrary than Calvin's view. Calvin is said to have been influenced by the schoolmen in his ideas that God's sovereign will is governed only by its own pleasure and that His will determines right and wrong.¹ Bellamy considered that this view made God's moral perfections empty names. God's demand that man love Him is thus unreasonable and His moral government is overturned. This is as bad as to make the happiness of His creatures the chief end of God. No, there is, according to Bellamy, an intrinsic moral fitness, absolutely, in things themselves, antecedent to God's will.² This was as far as Bellamy went, philosophically. He was not interested in explaining where this moral fitness comes from, but there seemed to him to be a need to justify the moral nature of the universe and to place this moral fitness above or prior to God's will.

By summing up the moral law in the two great commandments Bellamy was able to confront men with their

.

1. A. Mitchell Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, Westwood, New Jersey, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1950, pp. 53-55.
2. Bellamy, *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 36-38.

inability to love God and neighbor as demanded and hence with their need of a Savior and the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit. His explanation of man's inability was referred to the doctrine of the Fall and the imputation of Adam's guilt to all the race even infants. In the doctrine of election he broadened the scope of God's offer of mercy to "whosoever will."

He refuted the errors of the day: Antinomianism, that the law is done away in Christ; Arminianism, that all depends on man's effort; Socinianism, that the life of Christ was more important than His death; Sandemanianism, that forgiveness is before repentance; Stoddardeanism, that the Lord's Supper is a converting ordinance; Universalism, that all men will be saved.

In his treatise on "The Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin," he declared clearly for the final triumph of God's plan that all His perfections be revealed more brightly because of the presence of evil and of eternal punishment.

The values of Bellamy's system are in its simplicity, its consistency, its conservatism and its Scriptural basis.

It furnished a framework for his pastorate of fifty years and for his many contacts in the colonies. It was free from the philosophical speculations of Jon-

athan Edwards, though it was influenced and shaped by his thought and experiences. It dealt with the practical applications of doctrine to the way of regeneration. It became flesh and walked among men, even as did the God it glorified and the Word it interpreted.

E. Summary

This chapter has considered the formation of the New England Theology out of the Calvinistic system with adaptations to the needs of the times. It has discovered that Edwards by his experience of the immediacy of God and his power to call men to repentance was an instrument in the Great Awakening which put new life into the old forms. The system of theology formulated by Joseph Bellamy has been considered under his own four headings: what God is, what the moral law is, what man's ruin is, what the manner of recovery is. The system has been shown to express the main doctrines of Calvinism in such a way as to appeal to the hearts and awaken the consciences of men to repentance. It is Scriptural and adapted to refute the errors of the day.

CHAPTER III

JOSEPH BELLAMY'S PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

CHAPTER III

JOSEPH BELLAMY'S PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

A. Introduction

The test of a system of theology comes when it is applied to the problems of real life situations. This chapter will deal with the question of how well Joseph Bellamy's theology worked in his personal, family and church life, in the effect of his writings and in his relations with friends and opponents. His system was consistent in itself. Did it make a difference in the lives of people? How did it meet their problems and needs?

B. Bellamy as a Practical Theologian

Four areas will be discussed in this section. In each of these, evidence will be presented by which Bellamy's success as a practical theologian may be judged.

1. Bellamy's Personal and Family Life

Joseph Bellamy's whole life was changed by a conversion experience which came during his seventeenth year, during the time between his graduation from Yale in 1735 and the beginning of his preaching in 1737. Little is known of this experience but since he went to Northampton

to study with Jonathan Edwards who had recently had a "surprising work of God" take place in his church, it is clear that this conversion stood the test of a genuine experience. Walker has said, "No disciple of Edwards more fully shared his views regarding conversion than Joseph Bellamy."¹ Jonathan Edwards in the Preface to Bellamy's "True Religion Delineated" says that the truths contained therein come not only from Scripture but from "very clear experience in his own soul."²

This experience affected his whole life. It was the inspiration for his entering the ministry and was the backbone of his theology, the basis for his explanation of the fourth point of his system on regeneration, the point of controversy with Arminians and Half-Way Covenanters.

Life in the manse must have been strenuous. Joseph and Frances Bellamy had eight children to provide for and instruct. When their first child was two years old, Bellamy preached a sermon entitled "Early Piety Recommended" in which he declared that parents have, in a sense, no right to their children, for they are the Lord's by sovereign right.³ Yet, as a father and as a spiritual

.

1. Williston Walker, *Creeeds and Platforms of Congregationalism*, New York, Scribners, 1893, p. 285.
2. Bellamy, *Works*, Vol. I, p. 5.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 527-565.

father, he exercised great concern for his children. When his favorite son Jonathan was away at school, he wrote for fatherly advice. Joseph replied, "You need an almighty and all-wise Father, my child. - - Become his child. - - Are your sins great? - - The favor of God is worth more than all the world."¹ When Jonathan died of smallpox in New Jersey, the father was comforted by his son's words, "I hope to meet you in heaven."²

The letters reprinted in the Memoirs also show Bellamy's concern for Betsey who married Mr. Charles Sheldon of Springfield. From 1783-1789 he lost no opportunity to press upon her her duty to "ratify" her baptism, which otherwise was of no avail and she must if dying in this state perish forever. Evidently she considered herself an impenitent sinner for she asked whether such a one should join with the church or neglect it.³

Betsey had taken her brother William into her home, so his father begged her to keep him out of bad company and employ his time.⁴

There is no record which assures us that Betsey and her family and her brother William became penitent and were regenerated, but their father had followed his

.

1. Tryon Edwards, Memoirs, p. xxxix, Letter of Feb. 6, 1773.
2. Ibid., p. xli, Letter of Feb. 4, 1777.
3. Ibid., p. xlv, Letter of Nov. 20, 1785.
4. Ibid., p. xliii, Letter of Nov. 6, 1784.

own instructions to parents given in his sermon "Family Religion." In this he had said that our total depravity should teach us humility, that parents should instruct their children and servants in the principles of religion, in the Word, and in pious conduct, setting an example and "frowning them out of their faults."¹

Of the eight children one, David, became a minister, in New York City.² Rebecca married Rev. Levi Hart, a pupil of her father. Hart maintained a fine friendship with his father-in-law when he was pastor in Preston, Connecticut.³ A grandson, Joseph Hart Bellamy, son of Joseph Sherman Bellamy, became a lawyer in Bethlehem, was a representative in the legislature and the senate of the state. His character secured the confidence and respect of all who knew him. Though he made no public profession of piety, he studied the Bible and heard the gospel. In ecclesiastical councils he "would tell us what was right and straighten us out," said Dr. McEwen in his Centennial Discourse at Litchfield County Consociation.⁴ His daughter Elizabeth married Rev. Aretas Loomis, minister of Bethlehem.⁵ She was the one who preserved the letters

.

1. Bellamy, Works, Vol. I, pp. 567-577.
2. Cothren, op. cit., p. 467.
3. Sprague, op. cit., pp. 590, 591.
4. Quoted by Cothren, pp. 355, 356.
5. New England Historical and Geneological Register, op. cit., p. 338.

and sermons of her great-grandfather by presenting them to Case Memorial Library of Hartford Seminary.¹

It can be said that though his children may not have attained all of their father's spiritual hopes for them, they exhibited the effects of a thorough religious training by becoming useful and respected members of their communities. He had instructed them and he had shown a resignation to God in all the vicissitudes of his own life, the death of Jonathan, the death of his wife, his own last illness which incapacitated him for three years. It is related that during this time a former pupil paid him a visit. He remarked that it was a mysterious Providence which had laid him aside from his usefulness. Then the white haired old man lifted his hand and pointed upward, saying, "Infinite wisdom, infinite goodness!"² So to the last he trusted in the One whose Being he had by word of mouth, work, writings and life exalted.

2. Bellamy as a Churchman

Did Bellamy's theology have practical application in his work in the church? This question covers many fields, pastoral work, preaching, teaching and working in the Consociation.

.

1. Elizabeth De W. Root, Joseph Bellamy and Theological Education, The Hartford Seminary Foundation Bulletin - No. 21, Winter, 1955-6, p. 35.
2. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. xlix.

a. As a Pastor

Bellamy is mentioned as a pastor diligent in duties, skilfully guiding those who came to his house in private to inquire about their spiritual state. Many did come at the time of the revivals. He had a keen sense of the true and the false in religious profession. The story is told that in the Great Awakening two young preachers came to a church in Bellamy's neighborhood and he went to hear them. The young men pronounced some of their hearers converted, but Bellamy saw they did not know why they were converted, so he preached to them himself on the character of God, the nature of His law, and submission to Christ as Savior. His hearers saw that they had not submitted to a holy God but were relying on their determination.¹ Rev. Thomas Robbins records that his mother was not a professor of religion when she was first married and came to Norfolk. Dr. Bellamy called on her and showed a kindly interest in her, expressing the belief that God had sent her there to make her His own child and to sanctify her for His service.²

There was much practical experience in dealing with souls which was the basis of his pamphlet entitled "Theron, Paulinus and Aspasio," a series of dialogues, in which an imaginary Theron had been counseled by a Mr. Her-

.

1. Ibid., p. lx, footnote.
2. Sprague, op. cit., p. 409.

vey of England, called Aspasio, to believe Christ died for him but had not been relieved of his sins. Paulinus, the author, showed him he must behold the glory of God, approve the law, acknowledge the need of a Savior through whom he might be justified. Theron had the truth brought home to him and was gloriously converted.¹

Establishing rapport is one important part of pastoral work. Rev. Thomas Robbins recalls a story which shows that Bellamy knew how to get into the graces of a family who stood in awe of him. He rode to their home, inquired if they were to have pudding for dinner and said he would take dinner with them. He did and thereby secured their confidence and good will. Another time he visited Stockbridge where a revival was taking place among the Indians. He had just sat down to a meal when he heard the Indians singing in another room, so he left the table and went to listen to them.²

Tryon Edwards says:

No one could be more faithful to the sick, the afflicted, and the dying than he was. Few have ever watched for souls, in every sense, more assiduously than he did.³

The question of salary is one which requires of a pastor tact and love in dealing with firm facts and

.

1. Bellamy, Works, Vol. II, pp. 161-267.
2. Sprague, op. cit., p. 409.
3. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. liii.

stubborn people. By 1769 his circumstances had become such that he felt he would have to go to work. This, he felt, would interfere with the work of the ministry. He therefore wrote a letter to the church society, offering to resign in favor of a man who could live on a smaller salary. He reminded them that he had assisted them when they were a small, poor society. The question was coming up of annexing the society of Woodbury, so it seemed a good time to bring up the question. Some of the men had offered privately to increase his salary but the news got out and he feared the parish would be split over the question. He said, "disaffection and contention are dreadful things." So he left the question to the society to decide. The close of his letter shows his high sense of honor to the One he served:

Now, the God of wisdom, and of peace, direct your hearts into the ways of wisdom and peace, to the glory of his own name, and for the good of you and your posterity, of his infinite mercy through Jesus Christ.¹

This was one example of his loving his neighbor as he loved himself.

The Bethlehem church was among the first churches in the country to abandon the Half-Way Covenant. In 1750, according to a record quoted by Tryon Edwards, the practice was called unscriptural. He refused to baptize children

.

1. Ibid., pp. xxxiii-xxxv.

unless the parents had made a profession of faith.

He wrote:

It is a sinful thing for a minister, who professes to be a congregationalist, to baptize the children of Sabbath breakers and those who neglect family prayer.¹

The year when the Bethlehem church took action on the matter was the year when Jonathan Edwards was dismissed from his pastorate at Northampton for coming out against the open communion which his grandfather Solomon Stoddard had used. Joseph Bellamy's courage in taking a stand on this matter and his handling it in such a way as not to cause rupture in his parish are noteworthy features of his churchmanship. Whether he influenced Edwards or Edwards influenced him in this question is hard to determine but it would be an interesting subject for further investigation. For both men, the stand taken was a matter of conviction, springing from their theology. It helped stem the tide of error creeping into the churches. The Half-Way Covenant fostered the Arminianism of grace by works, i.e., coming to communion that thereby one might be saved. It also favored the loose idea that a man's Christianity is to be taken for granted unless conduct is scandalous. This resulted in Unitarianism.²

b. As a Preacher

Bellamy as a boy preacher showed much power.

.

1. Ibid., op. cit., p. lvi.
2. Robert Baird, Religion in the United States of America, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Blackie and Son, 1844, pp. 621-624.

When he was itinerating during the Great Awakening he was himself astonished at the effect produced. He came home and reasoned with himself. He decided that it was not the work of the Holy Spirit that he should bring a congregation to their feet with joy or prostrate them with wailing. This he felt was mere animal excitement, so he went out no more but devoted himself to his own church duties.¹

His church was called a church which received abundance of spiritual food, a church sound in the faith. It never had a stated supply and there were only four years when it was without a pastor.² Azakel Backus succeeded him and said he was "obliged to preach poignant awful sermons, for the people were kicked and spurred by Dr. Bellamy."³ An anecdote is told that one day Backus met an old Negro who had for many years heard Bellamy. He asked the parishioner how he liked the new preacher and received the frank reply, "Very much, but he does not preach as well as Massa Bellamy. Massa Bellamy, he makes God so great - so Great." Another minister added, "Great in his character and great in his government."⁴

It was the custom in those days for a visiting minister to be asked to preach. One time Bellamy went to

.

1. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. lxiii.
2. Cothren, op. cit., pp. 1059-1061.
3. Ibid., p. 254.
4. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. lix.

a church in Hartford. Several prominent members were opposed to him and told the minister not to ask him to preach, for they did not like his theology. The minister, Dr. Strong, told him the situation and left the decision up to him. "I will preach and - - - I shall please them all," said Bellamy. In the morning he preached on the happiness of the millennium and the audience was delighted. He said he would tell them in the afternoon how this change would come about. The theological issue was the question of regeneration by "light," or by the special influence of the Holy Spirit. In his sermon Bellamy refuted the argument in favor of light and defended the truth eloquently. The result was that the very men who had opposed him circulated a subscription paper to have his sermon printed.¹

This fearlessness was part of his commitment to the great truths of theology which he had formulated. He preached not for emotional effect but to stir minds to accept the truth and wills to act upon it. In the New York church he preached on the very questions which divided the congregation and he wrote:

The people now know my opinions touching the most tender points, - family prayer, keeping the Sabbath, terms of communion, church discipline, the religious education of children, etc., and the more strict I preach, the more they are pleased, and commend my preaching, and in private conversation manifest a great forwardness to be reformed.²

.

1. Ibid., p. lxiv.

2. Quoted by Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. xviii.

He was famed as a preacher not only in his own church but, during the Great Awakening, as an itinerant preacher in various parts of the colonies. Trumbull, who heard him preach at Yale College, considered that Jonathan Edwards did not excel him.¹

Tryon Edwards calls him "one of the most discriminating, eloquent, and powerful preachers ever known in this country."² He attributes his power to his dwelling on the great truths and distinctive doctrines which most deeply stir the human mind and heart. He also speaks of Bellamy's commanding appearance, rich voice, common sense, reasoning powers and deep sincerity and earnestness coming from his devotion as a Christian.

The fact that he was chosen to preach an Election Sermon is an indication of his fame as a preacher. Alice Baldwin in her careful study of New England clergy and the Revolution shows that there was an application of the theology expounded from the pulpit to the political questions of the day. She says:

Indeed, as one studies this everyday literature of the time, it becomes increasingly evident that the New England ideas of government were intimately connected with the interpretation of the Bible.³

.

1. Quoted by Percy Coe Eggleston, *A Man of Bethlehem*, New London, printed for the Bethlehem Tercentenary, 1908, p. 7.
2. Tryon Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. lix.
3. Alice Baldwin, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

The same author sums up the theology of New England under the points of God as Sovereign and the giver of law. This she finds acknowledged by both Arminians and Calvinists. Civil government was ordained of God, for the good of the people. In the century before 1763 there was a frequently expressed analogy between religious and civil governments.¹

Joseph Bellamy did not in his election sermon set forth any political theory, but by picturing a state of righteousness in the nation, he upheld the application of the moral law for both princes and governors, clergy and people. By giving his sons, to fight, one even to die in the service of his country, he demonstrated his own belief in justice in government as a moral principle to be defended.

One reason why Bellamy's preaching was effective was that it was Biblical, as was his theology. Most of his illustrations were from Scripture. He must have devoted many hours to studying the Bible. The method of the day was expository. One of his sermons shows his way of studying the Bible. In "The Law Our Schoolmaster" he says:

Now, in order to understand any text of Scripture, we are to consider the various circumstances of the discourse; such as the character of the persons spoken

.

1. Ibid., pp. 13-31, passim.

to, the manner how the text is introduced, and for what purpose; that we, seeing the occasion of what is written, and the scope and design of the inspired writer, may the more readily and certainly discern the true sense of the passage.¹

This study of the context and the background is part of the inductive method of Bible study which has in this century been most fruitful in certain seminaries as part of a minister's training.

In this particular sermon he gives a lively paraphrase of the chapters of Galatians preceding the text. He uses Exodus to show what the law is. He shows the number of times obedience to the law is mentioned in various books. It is refreshing to find such a thorough expository preacher in the person of Joseph Bellamy.

c. As a Teacher of Other Pastors

Not many preachers to-day are also good teachers, but one important part of Bellamy's work was teaching. He taught from house to house. He taught in his letters. He taught in the Sunday School classes for children held between morning and afternoon services.

But his most important work in teaching was in the informal theological school in his home. Young men would come for a few months or a year, live in the manse, and undergo Bellamy's rigorous course of training in doctrine, Bible, church discipline and preaching, and have

.

1. Bellamy, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 363.

the benefit of intimate association with a pastor and theologian in action. This apprenticeship was similar to that used in teachers' colleges to-day.

The results of Bellamy's system of theology are particularly observable in the thoroughness of his system of teaching, and also in the lives of his pupils. There were about 60 of them who came during the forty or more years in which Bellamy continued the practice. A few of these mentioned in various references have been checked by the author of this thesis in Sprague's Annals of the American Pulpit to learn more about their work and influence.

(1) Levi Hart

Levi Hart, who took from the Bellamy home his training and his wife, came from Southington, Connecticut. He became pastor in Preston, Connecticut. During the Revolution he preached at a camp at Roxbury and at Groton delivered a memorial address which "breathed a spirit of patriotism, sympathy, and piety." He helped start the Connecticut Missionary Society. His interest in missions was shown by a mission he conducted in Maine and other parts of the North, preaching to the destitute. He was honored with the degree of D. D. by the colleges of Dartmouth and of Yale. He helped in the union of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. He has left a diary and several printed sermons. His diary shows his pious

devotion. One of his fellow preachers wrote of him:

He had great penetration and grasp of mind. He was never satisfied with superficial views of any subject, but always wished to go to the bottom. He was well acquainted with all the various systems of Theology and could give reasons perfectly satisfactory to himself, why he received one and rejected all the rest. - - - He dwelt much on the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel.

He too had a theological school and he too was wise in healing differences in the Church as well as in detecting errors. His labors were greatly blessed.¹

(2) Jonathan Edwards, Jr.

Jonathan Edwards, Jr. was another pupil of Bellamy. His congregation in White Haven differed from him about the Half-Way Covenant and, after twenty-six years, brought about his "dismissal" but in Colebrook in Litchfield County he found a more congenial field of endeavor. From this he was called to become President of Union College in Schenectady, New York, but served only a few years until his early death. He, too, received an honorary D. D. degree from the College of New Jersey.²

He contributed to posterity the editing and publishing of his father's unfinished History of the Work of Redemption, two volumes of his sermons and two of his theological observations. His own publications are also important. They are: a pamphlet on the injustice of the slave

.

1. Sprague, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 590-594.

2. Ibid., pp. 653-656.

trade, three sermons on the Atonement preached before the Connecticut legislature, a volume arguing against Chauncey's ideas of universal salvation, and a dissertation stating his observations on the language of the Indians and its resemblances to Hebrew.

His sermons on the atonement form the basis of the Edwardean theory as it was handed on in the New England Theology.¹

Walker gives Dr. Edwards the credit for originating the Plan of Union of 1801 in which Levi Hart also played a part. This plan was helpful in the pioneer work in the west, making possible the settlement of a Presbyterian minister in a Congregational church or vice versa with provisions for settling difficulties. Although this arrangement was not permanent, it enabled many new churches to be established. In New York and Pennsylvania many Congregational churches were transformed into Presbyterian churches. In Ohio Congregational ministers became members of presbyteries. In the west the Congregational churches

.

1. Frank Hugh Foster, "Jonathan Edwards the Younger," in Schaff-Herzog, The New Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 82.

The Plan of Union is a reminder that Congregational churches were originally Calvinistic in doctrine but that liberal tendencies were creeping in, resulting in Universalism and Unitarianism which have recently joined forces. The Plan of Union was much more flexible than the recent Plan of Union of Congregational, Christian and Evangelical and Reformed Churches to form the United Church of Christ, for this has involved a new change of polity.

were inclined to Arminianism and did not give up their Congregational form.¹

(3) Ammi Ruhamah Robbins

Ammi Ruhamah Robbins was the son of Rev. Philemon Robbins who was arraigned, tried and deposed by the Con-sociation after the law was passed by the Legislature of Connecticut forbidding a minister to preach outside the confines of his own parish. Most of his congregation sympathized with him, so he continued to preach. Called before the Legislature, he made his defence so ably that the penalty was removed. His congregation paid his salary more punctually than when he was under the guardianship of the law. His friends in the ministry continued to exchange pulpits with him and he finally attended again the meetings of the Association. He preached the sermon at the ordination of each of his two sons.

Ammi Ruhamah was ordained at Norfolk. He volunteered as a chaplain in the Revolution in Schuyler's brigade, ministering faithfully to the sick during a smallpox epidemic. In his church there were four revivals and the new church grew to be one of the largest in the State. He had an "uncommon degree of harmony" among his people. His religious views were the same as Dr. Bellamy's and he hand-

.

1. Williston Walker, Creeds and Platforms of Congregation-alism, pp. 529-530.

ed them on in a theological school of his own.¹

(4) Chandler Robbins

Chandler, brother of Ammi Ruhamah Robbins, taught in Eleazer Wheelock's school for the Indians at Lebanon. During this time he decided to go into the ministry so became Bellamy's pupil. He became pastor of the church of Plymouth, Massachusetts, where he remained until his death. He was successful in preserving harmony in his church which "embraced not less than twenty-five hundred souls." He was a man of "integrity and symmetry of character." He was a Calvinist, a practical preacher, and a friend of revivals.² Thus wrote his son Thomas for Sprague's Annals

A fuller account of the harmony preserved in the church is given by Conrad Wright. According to his story, based on "Plymouth Church Records," he had accepted the Half-Way Covenant though he did not approve. After ten years, the question was discussed heatedly at church meetings but no action was taken. He refused to baptize the children of Half-Way members and became more strong in his convictions. A revival brought fifty conversions. A confession too broad to suit the Calvinists was proposed but Robbins opposed it and a Calvinistic confession was adopted. According to Wright, the liberals waited until Robbins

.

1. Sprague, op. cit., pp. 367-370.
2. Ibid., pp. 573-575.

died and then called a man to their liking. The Calvinists withdrew and formed a new church.¹

Thus, the position of Bellamy which he had taken in the church in Bethlehem and in the pamphlets on the Half-Way Covenant were defended by his pupil.

(5) John Smalley

Like his famous teacher, John Smalley became pastor of a newly formed church and remained its pastor for fifty years. The church was in Berlin, Connecticut. His contemporaries writing for Sprague's Annals mention his dislike of emotional preaching, his strong conviction of the theological truths he held, and the response of his congregation to his doctrinal preaching. He too received a D. D. degree from the College of New Jersey, and preached an Election Sermon.²

John Smalley's works were important. According to Royal Robbins who contributed to Sprague's Annals, Smalley's treatise on "Natural and Moral Inability" clarified Jonathan Edwards' statements on this question and he was considered the father of this branch of the New England Theology.³ According to Foster, his reply to Relly's Universalism introduced by John Murray into America, defined more clearly Bellamy's ideas that Christ died for all, by

.

1. Conrad Wright, *The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America*, Boston, Starr King Press, 1955, pp. 233-234.
2. Sprague, *op. cit.*, pp. 559-565.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 564.

stating that God is not obligated to justify the believer but that He acts from pure grace. This idea had already been put forth by Bellamy, but Smalley clarified it and by his use of the illustration of Zaleucus shows that he had read Grotius.¹

(6) Samuel Niles

Samuel Niles labored as pastor in Abington, Massachusetts. His sermons "not only commanded the serious and eager attention of his hearers, but deeply impressed their hearts and consciences." He was considered as having few superiors in the field of theological controversy.²

(7) Nathaniel Niles

Samuel Niles' elder brother Nathaniel was a man of versatile abilities. He studied medicine and practised without compensation. He invented a method of making wire from bar iron by water power. He preached in several places in Connecticut and Massachusetts but did not take a regular parish and finally gave up the ministry because of his health. He took up residence in Vermont in Fairlee, then a wilderness. In this place he became useful in public affairs, as Speaker of the House, Judge of the Supreme Court, Congressman from the State, and an elector six times of President and Vice President of the United States. He

.

1. Foster, Genetic History, p. 200.

2. Sprague, op. cit., pp. 713-716.

took part in the discussions in the ministers' Association meetings, showing his knowledge of theological subjects. He preached in his own house for twelve years and rode to outlying places where he preached in school houses for the destitutes, without pay. His great object in life was to do good.¹

d. As Fellow Minister

In the Consociation of Litchfield county he exerted a strong influence. Tryon Edwards has said:

The orthodoxy, purity, piety, and order for which the churches of Litchfield county have in time past been celebrated, are attributable in no small degree to his influence, exertions, and instructions.

He had a talent for healing breaches and for preventing them. He was often called in for such purposes because of his wisdom and discretion.² "He would tell us what was right and straighten us out," said the speaker at the Centennial celebration of Litchfield County.³

The Consociation sent him a very friendly letter when he was confined to his home by illness stating their sympathy and their regret at the lack of his presence which used to give them pleasure and instruction.⁴

At his funeral sermon Noah Benedict stated that Bellamy was "a rich blessing to the church of Christ in

.

1. Ibid., pp. 717, 718.
2. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. lv.
3. Cothren, op. cit., p. 251.
4. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. xlviiii.

New England and to the Christian church in general."¹
He also mentioned his facility for looking for ways to a
just and friendly settlement.²

This judgment seems to outweigh that of Ezra
Stiles, his enemy, who called him "litigious and impa-
tient," one who disturbed the peace of the churches.³ But
Ezra Stiles was not on Bellamy's side. Stiles' funeral
sermon was preached by James Dana who had occasioned much
controversy by his doctrinal position when he was pastor
in the Wallingford church, not far from Bellamy.⁴ It is
the writer's opinion that this controversy might have
stirred up enmity between Stiles and Bellamy.

3. As a Writer

The writings of Joseph Bellamy had a wide influ-
ence. "True Religion Delineated," his first work, is con-
sidered his greatest. It was read at Princeton among the
students and was instrumental in promoting a revival of
religion there in 1772, as well as in other places. It
had often been republished in Great Britain and in America.
In 1850 Tryon Edwards prefixed his "Memoirs" to the second
edition of Bellamy's Works. "The Wisdom of God in the Per-

.

1. Noah Benedict, "Funeral Sermon," in Joseph Bellamy's
Works, 1811 edition, p. 11.
2. Ibid., p. 22.
3. Elizabeth De W. Root, Unpublished Manuscript, p. 11.
4. Sprague, op. cit., pp. 565-569.

mission of Sin" is called "perhaps, on the whole, his ablest work."¹

His sermons were printed and widely read. A letter from David Bostwick said:

I believe your proposal of prefixing your sermon on Galatians and printing them at Boston will be apt and if printed proposals could be sent down here by the time our Synod meets, it would be a very good opportunity to get a number of subscriptions. - - - I do not think there will be a treatise of greater importance. - - - May the Lord succeed your attempt to give light to a dark world.²

His pamphlets on controversial subjects had a strong effect in preserving the tenets of Calvinism as interpreted by Edwards and himself and establishing the New England Theology. The Half-Way Covenant pamphlets, which occupy three hundred pages of Volume II of his Works, are brilliant in their logic, proving the inconsistency of Mather's "graceless covenant" whereby the owner promised to live a good moral life without a converting experience. This could not be done without the grace of God. Said Bellamy:

You may as well say, that black is white, or that a dead man is alive, or that a graceless sinner is a real saint, as say, that "a man, who knows he has no grace, can profess a compliance with the covenant of grace, honestly and with a good conscience."³

.

1. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. lxiv.
2. Letter from David Bostwick, New York, March 22, 1759, Hartford Foundation Collection, Case Memorial Library.
3. Bellamy, Works, Vol. II, p. 703.

Walker comments that Bellamy's putting of the case had an immediate effect. The battle was continued after Bellamy's death and finally the half-way system came to an end.¹

It is significant that in the First Congregational Church of Southington, Connecticut, a church whose pastor refused to allow Bellamy to preach there during the Great Awakening,² these words appear in the Church Covenant on the back of the bulletin, "We do covenant that with the Grace of God assisting us, we will love and serve Him all our lives."³ Thus was the battle of the pamphlets won, even for the present day.

Ezra Stiles' grim comment was, "His numerous noisy writings have blazed their day, and one generation more will put them to sleep."⁴

However, in 1811 when Bellamy's works were first collected and printed, they were prefaced by Recommendations signed by twelve eminent pastors and theological teachers of the day, saying in part, "(His writings) appear to us eminently calculated to promote the knowledge of God in the world, and to make men wise, good and happy."⁵

.

1. Williston Walker, *Creeeds and Platforms of Congregationalism*, New York, Scribner's, 1893, p. 286.
2. Rev. Heman R. Timlow, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
3. Church bulletin, First Congregational Church, Southington, Connecticut, November 13, 1960.
4. Elizabeth De W. Root, Unpublished Manuscript, p. 11.
5. Bellamy, *Works*, New York edition, *op. cit.*, Preface.

In 1850 they were published again and this century might well profit by a reprinting.

4. As Friend and Opponent

Bellamy had a wide circle of friends and many opponents. With all of these he maintained Christian charity, though he was zealous to defend the truth. A few of these will receive special attention.

a. Jonathan Edwards

Between Bellamy and his teacher and friend Jonathan Edwards, there was the greatest intimacy. He referred to his works many times in his writings, especially to Religious Affections and Freedom of the Will. Edwards wrote Bellamy in 1749 of his impending dismissal.¹ He wrote him for books on the Arminian side when he was contemplating in 1746 his rebuttal which was not completed until 1754.² The dismissal must have been painful to Joseph Bellamy, for he had preached on the subject of the Half-Way Covenant in Edwards' church just after Edwards broached the subject and before the storm gathered full force. Bellamy suggested his name to the New York church which he had refused. He said that Edwards would unite the people and make the congregation a flourishing one, that he was "the best preacher in America."³ At Stockbridge Edwards

.

1. Ola Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, p. 250.
2. Ibid., p. 370.
3. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. xxiii.

was near both of his friends, Samuel Hopkins and Bellamy, and used to ride out with them and engage in conversation, planning his great work, History of the Work of Redemption.¹

When Stockbridge became a dangerous place, Bellamy wrote Edwards inviting him and any of his family to come to Bethlehem and enjoy "all the comforts our house affords."² The same letter asked for instructions about teaching some Indian boys from Stockbridge whom Bellamy called "very ignorant and stupid as to the things of religion."

When Edwards was leaving Northampton he was called to Virginia. Samuel Davies wrote Bellamy asking him to go to him in person and try to persuade him to come, but if Edwards would not, Davies wished Bellamy to come himself. He said that they were "the only two men whom the people could make an implicit venture on."

Tryon Edwards has printed in his Memoir a letter from Bellamy to Esther Edwards dated Aug. 22, 1752 on the occasion of her marriage to Aaron Burr, President of the College of New Jersey. He made this joyous event an opportunity to remind her not to forget the Lord, but to have "wisdom and grace to act a noble and pious part."³

Jonathan Edwards sent Bellamy books to aid him in preparing his "True Religion Delineated."⁴ This would

.

1. Ola Winslow, op. cit., p. 310.
2. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. xxiv.
3. Ibid. p. xv.
4. Ibid., p. xiv.

seem to indicate that they had talked over the scheme.

It is interesting to note that although there was such an agreement between the two men in theology, yet each had his own way of expressing his thoughts. Bellamy was not concerned with the minute distinctions that Edwards loved to draw between similar ideas nor with the detailed account of conversion experiences such as Edwards has left us. Edwards said in his preface to "True Religion Delineated" that the author had not "labored for such ornaments of style and language as might best suit the taste of men of polite literature." Yet probably more people "of vulgar capacity" read Bellamy than read Edwards.¹

It must have been a shock to Bellamy to learn of the deaths of Jonathan and of Esther Edwards, both of smallpox inoculations. One of the reasons for Bellamy's not accepting the New York call had been his fear of smallpox. Then too, Bellamy had been one on the Council which had advised Edwards to accept the call to be President of Princeton.² But to one who had been pondering "The Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin" there was comfort in the knowledge that Edwards had resigned himself to the will of God and died in peace.³ There is a poignancy in

.

1. Bellamy, Works, Vol. I, p. 6.
2. Winslow, op. cit., p. 316.
3. Ibid., p. 319.

the fact that this great work was published in 1758, the year of Edwards' tragic death.

There was comfort, too, in the service Bellamy could render in taking young Jonathan into his home as a theological student. He was a pupil to be proud of, one whose theological contributions were important in the stream of the New England "New Light" school.

b. Samuel Hopkins

The third in the trilogy near Stockbridge was Samuel Hopkins, pastor at Great Barrington, Massachusetts 1743-1767. He had had religious inclinations at the age of fourteen. But when he was in college the revival was under way and David Brainard confronted him about his soul's state. Hopkins saw that his first experience had not been real, but after staying at Jonathan Edwards' home as a pupil, his ideas became more clear. Foster says he was "better acquainted than any other man with the peculiar views of Edwards."¹

Hopkins was dismissed from his pastorate and went to Newport, Rhode Island, where he was pastor from 1770 until his death in 1803. Trouble of soul was not the only affliction he suffered. At Great Barrington the church had been imperilled by the French and Indian War. In New-

.

1. Frank Hugh Foster, "Samuel Hopkins" in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. V, pp. 363-364.

port during the Revolution he was exposed to danger from the British troops and compelled to flee. The army destroyed the manse and used the church for a hospital. At the close of the war the church was too poor to pay him but he continued without salary.¹

Newport was a great slave market. Hopkins took an interest in writing and preaching against the slave trade. He joined forces with Ezra Stiles in circulating a petition for aid in educating two colored men as missionaries to Africa. Finally after forty years these two were sent with sixteen others to form a church in Liberia.²

It is related that Hopkins called on Bellamy and urged him to free his slaves, doing by them as he would wish to be done by. Bellamy argued that they were happier as they were, and to prove it, he called in one of his slaves and asked him if he would be happier free. When the slave said that he would, Bellamy replied, "From this moment, you are free."³

Hopkins inherited Edwards' letters and papers. He inherited the ideas of both Edwards and Bellamy. He published after Bellamy's death Systems of Doctrines which follows closely the Westminster Confession. His ideas

.

1. Sprague, op. cit., pp. 428-433.
2. Frank Hugh Foster, "Samuel Hopkins" in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, Vol. V, pp. 363-364.
3. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., p. liii.

went beyond Bellamy and Edwards in some points. His system was called "Hopkinsianism" and was partly accepted and partly opposed by Bellamy. His discussion of the attributes of God, of His threefold benevolence, and justice adds mere words to the many controversies of the times. His best known statement is that a man should be willing to be damned for the glory of God. His system was carried on by Emmons, Woods and Park.¹

c. Others

Joseph Bellamy had a wide correspondence with friends in America and in England. David Brainard, son-in-law of Jonathan Edwards wrote of spending the evening in sweet conversation with him. At another time when Brainard was about to leave his house with several of his friends, they prayed together and, as he says, "We gave ourselves to God with all our hearts to be His forever."²

Tryon Edwards remarks of Bellamy:

A thinker himself, he made others think, and his friends rarely parted from him without both satisfaction and improvement. The letters of his numerous correspondents show a deference to his judgment which was paid to no man of that day in New England, except his friend and teacher, Jonathan Edwards.³

If a sermon or pamphlet was not understood, he was sure to receive a letter which inquired or complained of

.

1. Frank Hugh Foster, A Genetic History of the New England Theology, p. 189.
2. Tryon Edwards, op. cit., pp. lii, liii.
3. Ibid., p. lii.

some point of doctrine. Bellamy would reply at length. Several of his answers have been included in Tryon Edwards' "Memoir."

He wrote to a Mr. Lee, 1763, explaining a larger and a more limited sense in which "repentance" is used. The Antinomians held that forgiveness was before repentance. Bellamy admitted that his sermon might not have been clear, but that Mr. Lee liked his essay and this was clear in statement. He said:

And you like my Essay, it seems. If so, we do not differ; and is it not a pity to enter into controversy, if we do not differ? Would not Satan be glad? And would not good people be grieved? ¹

Another letter called a preacher to task for praising his sermon to his face but criticizing it to his back. He said he was ready to retract if he had preached wrong, or to beg pardon if he had injured, but it was a pity if all arose from the preacher's misunderstanding. ²

To Mr. Punderson Austin he wrote in 1766, explaining how love is the sum of virtue in God and in man. ³

To another he wrote of the value of creeds. He spoke of "false brethren" and of the need for a true Christian to let his principles be known. All heretics should be rejected from communion after warning. ⁴

.

1. Ibid., p. xxv.
2. Ibid., p. xxvi.
3. Ibid., pp. xxix-xxxi.
4. Ibid., pp. xxxi-xxxiii.

He wrote at length in 1770 to Rev. Mr. Smith of Sharon. The controversy was over his being called a "Sandemean." He listed thirteen mistakes his opponent has made. The letter is interesting because it indicates that Hopkins had been considered a Sandeman but was also misunderstood. In a postscript Bellamy invited Mr. Smith to meet him and settle differences privately, as Christ commanded, "as becomes the professed ministers of Jesus Christ, the Prince of peace."¹

Bellamy's friends and opponents were means of upholding the truth and vindicating the points of the gospel.

He was a wide reader on various subjects, especially on theology, all his reading strengthening and confirming his convictions that his system was based on the Scriptures.² A near by minister said he could take his horse and ride down to Bellamy's and from one conversation with him get more material for his sermons than by a fortnight of study at home.³

C. Summary

This chapter has shown the practical value of Bellamy's theology for his personal and family life, in

.

1. Ibid., pp. xxxvi-xxxviii.
2. Ibid., p. lvi.
3. Sprague, op. cit., pp. 410,411.

his church life, in his writings and among his friends. His life has been shown to be consistent with his doctrine, furnishing comfort by the belief in the infinite wisdom of God. His concern for his children's spiritual good was exerted by presenting the personal demands of God. As a pastor he was enabled, by his discernment of true and false religious experience, to counsel wisely. As a preacher he made clear the Scripture truths and applied them to the lives of his hearers by illustration and exhortation. His influence through his theological school promoted sound doctrine and thorough preaching. His pupils showed a similar steadfastness to his own, in length of pastorates, in their ability to defend the truth by writings and in establishing theological schools of their own. Many were honored by receiving the D.D. degree and some took an active part in the controversies and missionary efforts of their day. Bellamy's relations with his fellow ministers were such that even those who opposed him respected the strength of his ideas and the consistency of his character.

His writings were highly regarded and widely read on both sides of the water. He was loyal to his friends, eager to maintain peace with his opponents, though he was an ever watchful foe of false doctrine.

The necessity of love to God and neighbor and of the Holy Spirit to change the heart and life was not

only expounded but demonstrated in his own experience, his personal contacts, and in his writings. The system worked.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

The previous chapters have sketched the life of Joseph Bellamy, presented his system of theology, and shown how his theology was applied in various phases of his life and work. His theology was the theology of Calvin as expressed in the Westminster Confession but it was put in terms which the common people could understand. Then too it was somewhat modified so as to call men to repentance and to a seeking for God. At a time when there was a decay of morals, it brought a reform born of revival, while Calvin's theology had brought to the city state of Geneva a reform by outward conformity.

Joseph Bellamy was next in succession to Jonathan Edwards in the line of the New England Theology. He lacked his teacher's absorption in metaphysical speculation, but he spoke and wrote plain truth to plain people in a plain way. His pastorate and his theological school passed on the Gospel to hundreds. The stream of influence from him has gone underground for years but it is ready to bubble up to refresh a tired modern world.

What has Joseph Bellamy to say to this world? Of what value are his activities, and his writings to an average pastor struggling with present problems? This chap-

ter will evaluate his contributions both to his own time and to modern times. It is hoped that this study will bring a better appreciation of the man and of his message.

A. Evaluation

Joseph Bellamy's revivalism, his preaching and teaching, his theology have pertinence to-day.

1. Revivalism

In the first place, he was both the recipient and the transmitter of the new life which came to New England with the Great Awakening, which Ola Winslow calls "the most potent, constructive force in American life during the mid-century,"¹ while Gaustad says it was "a phenomenon as wondrous as it was inexplicable."² Because Bellamy experienced conversion, he was able to deal with the souls of others and, by a preaching almost as powerful as Whitefield's, to awaken them to repentance. It was true of him as of Edwards that "His religious development colored all he thought and wrote in later years."³ However, he manifested a restraint in his manner of preaching compared with the "noisy" preachers and had the good sense to give

.

1. Ola Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, p. 175.
2. Edwin Scott Gaustad, The Great Awakening in New England, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957, p. 16.
3. Ralph G. Turnbull, Jonathan Edwards the Preacher, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1958, p. 16.

up itineracy in favor of concentrated efforts in his own parish. The result was revival in his own church and in the churches of his theological students.

The church of Christ to-day needs revival but there has been a trend away from the visiting evangelist type to the visitation evangelism type in which the local church trains its own members to present the Gospel in personal confrontation.

2. Biblical Preaching

Another contribution Bellamy has made to the modern pastor is his Biblical preaching. A recent writer has said:

Whatever be the marks of the contemporary American pulpit, the centrality of biblical preaching is not one of them. A famine is abroad - "not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." Amos 8:11¹

Preachers to-day need to be able to find the food in the Word and to feed it to hungry hearts.

3. Theological Teaching

To that end, seminaries might well give greater attention to Bible study in the curriculum, not to destructive criticism, but to letting the Bible speak for itself. The method of Bellamy as a theological teacher could be studied to good effect. His students had a concentrated

.

1. Donald G. Miller, The Way to Biblical Preaching, New York, Abingdon Press, 1957, p. 17.

practical training which was easily carried over into making them effective pastors. The apprenticeship plan might well be revived to-day. Its benefits are represented by the present growing emphasis on internships and on courses in pastoral counseling.

There is an increasing sense of need for ministers to be aware of varying theological viewpoints which are behind the cults and "isms" which draw members away from the church. Bellamy's method of training his students by taking the side of the heretical groups of his day and expecting them to answer his arguments made the students keenly aware of theological differences and prepared them to defend the truth.

4. System of Theology

Bellamy's system of theology was a compacting of the doctrines of the Westminster Confession into a few outstanding emphases, complete, interdependent and logical.

a. The Being of God

Foremost was the Being of God, infinitely amiable, infinitely just, with the law of love and love of the law imbedded in His nature. Elwood says:

To-day an understanding of God is required which will do justice to his greatness in terms of the staggering dimensions of interplanetary space, but which will

at the same time provide us with renewed assurance that we will not lose touch with God in the sheer vastness of our expanding universe.¹

Bellamy's God can expand with the universe as modern man accepts by faith His greatness and comes into an experience of His love.

b. Moral Law

Modern man's problem is that he is in love with his own greatness as he beholds the devices he has discovered. The epitome of this is in the boasts of the sputnik-maker who taunts, "Where is now your God?" But in even this type of man is a built-in need of loving God and neighbor. Without this, science makes a shambles of life. Beyond the stratosphere is written the moral law. Man must respond or perish. Bellamy's summation of the moral law in love convicts the sinner.

c. Original Sin

Pressures of the past half-century have brought theology back to the acceptance of the doctrine of original sin. Shelton Smith has stated this in a chapter entitled, "The Revival of the Idea of the Fall and Original Sin."² He calls attention to Rauschenbusch as one who "foreshadowed a realistic view of sin" which found expression in Niebuhr. Another modern theologian who has revived the idea of the fall and original sin is Paul

.

1. Douglas J. Elwood, op. cit., p. 156.
2. Shelton Smith, op. cit., pp. 198-229.

Tillich, who views man as estranged from his essential being. This is putting in modern psychological terms what the Edwardeans put in Biblical terms.

d. The Problem of Evil

In Tillich's terms, evil is a consequence of finitude. This is another way of saying, as Bellamy did, that there is a necessity in the universe that there be evil so that God's glory and man's dependence might be recognized, that God chose the best possible plan when He chose to create the finite. But Bellamy also looked beyond history to a final time when men and angels shall declare it was all of wisdom. In the meantime, repentance and conversion will assure one of a participation in the visible and invisible church.

e. Church Membership

There is to-day on the part of many churches much the same condition which prevailed in New England in the middle of the seventeenth century, the practice of allowing parents to have their children baptized though they made no profession of faith. Too frequently is Christianity looked upon as decency of living instead of a living faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Joseph Bellamy's firm stand in his own church against the Half-Way Covenant was an outgrowth of his belief in the necessity of a new heart for obedience to the law of love. He encouraged his pupils to take an equally firm stand in their churches. But for

him many New England churches to-day would be using a covenant of works instead of the covenant of grace. The controversy with Increase Mather might well be read and heeded to-day as pastors face problems of standards of church membership.

f. Conversion

Bellamy's clear analysis of the conversion experience and his attack on his opponents bring to light many issues crucial in the life of the church to-day. Is it necessary to point to a definite time of conversion? Can conversion be gradual? Must one know he is elected? Can He know it? Does a good life count the same as an experience? Arminianism was spreading in Bellamy's time which at that time meant as he explained, that men could become good of their own free will by using common means of grace.¹ Even his friend Hopkins inclined toward an emphasis on means.² Antinomians who were against the law, said a man need only believe he is pardoned without repenting.³ Mr. Sandeman taught that there was no need of the death of Christ for forgiveness,⁴ and no exertion is necessary on the part of the sinner.⁵ Mr Cudworth said that God is not amiable because He punishes sin and requires of us what we are not able to do.⁶ Messrs. Hervey

.

1. Bellamy, Works, Vol. I, p. 308.
2. Harountunian, op. cit., pp. 56, 59.
3. Bellamy, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 311.
4. Ibid., P. 385 footnote.
5. Ibid., p. 447, footnote.
6. Ibid., p. 303.

and Marshall said that salvation is a truth only when we believe it.¹ Mr. Stoddard said the unconverted should come to the Lord's table as a means of conversion.² All these errors Bellamy took up and refuted. The surprising work of God in the Great Awakening brought many years of controversial interpretation. Many of these views are present to-day both in liberal and evangelical churches, and need to be clarified for the ordinary man.

g. The Atonement

In Bellamy's system God must punish sin. To let it go unpunished is contrary to His nature. But He gave His Son to show Himself reconcilable if man would repent and be converted. The death of Christ showed God's hatred of sin, but also maintained the honor of God.³ Bellamy's explanation hardly does justice to the part of Christ in offering Himself, in obedience, in suffering, in oneness with the Father. Though he has given a marvellous exposition of the pre-incarnate Son, he has not the tender note which pictures the human side of Christ. The centuries since Bellamy's day have perhaps emphasized the human side to the exclusion of the Divine, but to-day's preacher has the benefit of years of development of a more appealing Christology than Bellamy's.

.

1. Ibid., pp. 188, 189.
2. Ibid., p. 671.
3. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 257-272.

5. Social Outreach

Bellamy could not be said to have preached a social gospel, but he was aware of world's needs, as shown in two areas.

a. National

Bellamy's Election Sermon applied the aspect of God's righteousness to the walks of every day life, from the justice of rulers to proper conduct in the taverns. This was probably an example of such sermons as he preached to his own congregations, though his published works do not contain them. There is a footnote in his "Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin," in which he mentions "our sinful land" and the need for the New England churches to pass through dark and trying times before God should work deliverance.¹

b. Missions

Although Bellamy's friend Samuel Hopkins was an ardent missionary and many of his pupils had an interest in extending the Gospel to the frontier, Bellamy did not seem to feel any call to go beyond his own parish and immediate friends to spread his theology. He stressed strongly the accountability of the heathen to love God. For this he relied on Romans 1:18-24. Present day practice has im-

.

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 21.

proved upon this but now the time has come when a clearer witness is needed in our own pagan America so that a city parish especially is a real mission field.

6. Need for Reappraisal

Before concluding, the writer would like to stress the value of further investigation of Bellamy's works and influence. There are three historical studies of the New England Theology: Foster's Genetic History published in 1907, Boardman's in 1899 and Haroutunian's Piety Versus Moralism, 1932. Boardman's is concise and clear, with a good final chapter comparing Edwardeanism with the "new theology" of 1899. It has excellent Chronological Tables at the end. Foster's work is criticized by Haroutunian for its misunderstanding of Edwards' psychology. (pp.256-7) Haroutunian is himself to be censured for his disparagement of Calvinism and of Joseph Bellamy. For instance, he belittles the importance of the Half-way Covenant issue, saying that "some" churches discontinued it, but in practice only enthusiasts demanded more than moral sincerity as a qualification for membership. He takes no notice of the fact that Joseph Bellamy and Jonathan Edwards had discontinued baptizing children of the morally sincere twenty years before Bellamy's pamphlets were written, that Bellamy did not even receive his own children as members without their profession of faith, and that many of Bellamy's

pupils took a firm stand with him on the question. Writing before World War II, Haroutunian uses grim words about the decay of Calvinism as if it were dead and buried, i.e. (p. 14) "controversies - - - fatal to Calvinism," (p. 42), "the idea of the sovereign God was doomed," In fact, the end of each chapter sounds like the swan song of Calvinism. It is hoped that the return to the concept of original sin, the lessons learned by the horrors of the past twenty years and the trend back to reappraisal of Jonathan Edwards' theology may have reached the author and caused him to revise his ideas. It is to be hoped that Bellamy's works will be republished, his life rewritten, his efforts evaluated for this generation. It is to be hoped that the historian of theology will write a completely new history of the New England Theology in the light of modern thought, not by schools, ideas or men, but by the colonial history and of the part played in that history by the history of the church.

B. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to show the vitality of Joseph Bellamy's work as a pastor for fifty years. The first chapter told of Bellamy's life, the events leading up to his ministry, his work in his own parish, as an itinerant preacher and as a candidate for

a New York church, his theological school, his chief writings. The second chapter explained his system of theology, as that of Calvin adapted to the needs of the times to call men to repentance. The third chapter showed how his theology was related to his own life and that of his family, influencing him personally. It also showed the effects of his theology upon the lives of his parishioners, of his theological pupils, of his friends and of his opponents. The first part of this final chapter has indicated some areas in which his theology is valid for the modern world.

It has also pointed out the need for further study and publicizing of Joseph Bellamy's life and thought as well calculated to bring encouragement and comfort and inspiration to a world fast becoming non-Christian, non-moral, self-centered and afraid. The center of Bellamy's private world was God, all-powerful, all-loving, all-wise. That centering upon an "infinitely amiable" Being who has a plan for these dark times is needed in the expanding world of to-day which has had other gods of science, power, pleasure, technology before Him, which has made unto itself many graven images, which will one day cry out for Him. May there be many prophets like Joseph Bellamy who have found Him and can lead His world to find Him!

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources

Bellamy, Joseph, D.D., *The Works of Joseph Bellamy, D.D., with a Memoir of his Life and Character*, in two volumes, Boston Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1850.

The Works of the Reverend Joseph Bellamy, D.D., in three volumes, New York, Steven Dodge, 1811.

Letters of Joseph Bellamy, Case Memorial Library, Hartford Seminary Foundation.

Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by Henry Beveridge, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans, 1957.

Edwards, Jonathan, *Freedom of the Will*, edited by Paul Ramsey, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1957.

Religious Affections, edited by John Smith, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1959.

Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England, New York, American Tract Society, n.d.

Grotius, Hugo, *A Defence of the Catholic Faith concerning the Satisfaction of Christ, against Faustus Socinus*, translated with notes and Historical Introduction by Frank Hugh Foster, Andover, Warren F. Draper, 1889.

B. Secondary Sources

Atkins, Gaius Glenn, and Fagley, Frederick, *History of American Congregationalism*, Boston and Chicago, Pilgrim Press, 1942.

Baird, Robert, *Religion in the United States of America*, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Blackie Son, 1844

- Baldwin, Alice Mary, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1928.
- Boardman, George Nye, *New England Theology*, New York, A. D. F. Randolph Company, 1899.
- Brauer, Jerald C., *Protestantism in America*, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1953.
- Connecticut, *The American Guide Series, A Guide to its Roads, Lore and People*, written by Workers of the Federal Writers' Project for the State of Connecticut, sponsored by Wilbur L. Cross, Governor of Connecticut, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1938.
- Cothren, William, *History of Ancient Woodbury, Connecticut, 1659-1854*, Waterbury, Bronson Brothers, 1854.
- DeJong, Peter Y., *The Covenant Idea in New England Theology*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1945.
- Denney, James, *Studies in Theology*, New York, A.C. Armstrong and Son, 1896.
- Dunning, Reverend Albert, D.D., *Congregationalists in America*, Boston and Chicago, Pilgrim Press, 1894.
- Elwood, Douglas, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1960.
- Fisher, George Park, *History of Christian Doctrine*, New York, Scribners, 1899.
- Foster, Frank Hugh, *A Genetic History of the New England Theology*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1907.
- Gaustad, Edwin Scott, *The Great Awakening in New England, New England*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957.
- Gordon, George A., *Humanism in New England Theology*, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920.
- Harountunian, Joseph, *Piety versus Moralism, the passing of the New England Theology*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1932.
- Hermance, Edgar L., compiler, *The Connecticut Guide*, Hartford, Emergency Relief Commission, 1935.

- Hunter, A. Mitchell, *The Teaching of Calvin*, Westwood, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1950
- McGiffert, Arthur Cushman, *Protestant Thought before Kant*, London, Duckworth and Company, 1911.
- The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1915.
- Miller, Donald G., *The Way to Biblical Preaching*, New York, Abingdon Press, 1957.
- Miller, Samuel, *Sketch of the early History of the First Presbyterian Church*, New York, Reprint, 1796.
- Oberholzer, Emil Jr., *Delinquent Saints*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1956.
- Sanford, Elias B., *A History of Connecticut*, Hartford, S. S. Scranton and Company, 1887.
- Smith, H. Shelton, *Changing Conceptions of Original Sin*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955.
- Smith, Shelton, Handy, Robert and Loetscher, Lefferts, *American Christianity*, Vol. I, New York, Charles Scribners' Sons, 1960.
- Sprague, William B., *Annals of the American Pulpit*, New York, Robert Castor and Brothers, 1857.
- Stephenson, George M., *The Puritan Heritage*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1952.
- Sweet, William Warren, *Religion in Colonial America*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942.
- Religion in the Development of American Culture*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.
- Revivalism in America*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944.
- The Story of Religion in America*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 2nd Revised Edition, 1950.
- Terry, Marian Dickinson, editor, *Old Inns of Connecticut*, Hartford, The Prospect Press, 1937.
- Timlow, Heman R., *Ecclesiastical and other sketches of Southington, Connecticut*, Hartford, Press of the Case, Lockwood and Brainard Company, 1875.

- Trumbull, Benjamin, D.D., A Complete History of Connecticut, Civil and Ecclesiastical, in two volumes, New London, H. D. Utley, 1898.
- Turnbull, Ralph G., Jonathan Edwards, The Preacher, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1958.
- Walker, Williston, Creeds and Platform of Congregationalism, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893.
- Weis, Frederick L., The Colonial Clergy and the Colonial Churches of New England, Lancaster, Massachusetts, 1936.
- Winslow, Ola Elizabeth, Jonathan Edwards, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1952.
- Wright, Conrad, The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America, Boston, Starr King Press, 1954.

C. Pamphlets and Articles

- Eggleston, Mrs. Edward, Unpublished Manuscript, Bethlehem, Connecticut, 1959.
- Eggleston, Percy Coe, A Man of Bethlehem, Joseph Bellamy, D.D., and his Divinity School, printed for the Bethlehem Tercentenary, 1908.
- Fay, Frederick, Unpublished Manuscript, Letters of Joseph Bellamy, typewritten, West Hartford, Case Memorial Library, Hartford.
- Joseph Bellamy Day, The Sunday Republican, Waterbury, Connecticut, July 22, 1951.
- Root, Elizabeth De W., Joseph Bellamy and Theological Education, in Hartford Seminary Foundation Bulletin, Winter 1955-1956, pp. 33-36.

D. Encyclopedia

- Jackson, S. M., ed., The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1953.

THE SUNDAY

REPUBLICAN

WATERBURY, CONN., SUNDAY, JULY 22, 1951



COLONIAL PREACHER HONORED IN BETHLEHEM

Next Saturday, July 28, is going to be "Joseph Bellamy Day" in Bethlehem. In honor of the minister who served the town for over 50 years from 1738 to 1790, and who founded in Bethlehem the country's first theological seminary, there will be an exhibition at the Federated Church the Bellamy collection of manuscripts, sermons and letters loaned by the Hartford Seminary Foundation. Bellamy family portraits, the Bellamy chair and the Bellamy pulpit which is still seeing service in the church.

In addition there will be a tour, from 2 to 5 p. m., of the original Bellamy home, now the home of Mrs. Elsie Ferriday and Miss Caroline Ferriday, along with five other Bethlehem homes built during the years that Dr. Bellamy was in charge of the parish.

"A. D., 1738, Nov. 2, came Joseph Bellamy, A. M., upon the desire of the people of the Eastern part of the North Purchase of Woodbury afterward called Bethlehem to preach the gospel among them, they having obtained a temporary licence to hold a meeting among themselves", reads the first page of the church records on file at the state library in Hartford. Bellamy was only 19 at the time, having been born in Cheshire, then part of Wallingford, in 1719. A remarkably bright farmer's boy, he went to Yale where he graduated in 1735 when he was only 16. He studied divinity with the famous theologian Jonathan Edwards and was licenced to preach when he was but a few months over 18.

When a distinct ecclesiastical society had been formed in "Bethlehem," a call was extended to Mr. Bellamy to settle there permanently, the impression he had made as a temporary pastor having apparently decided the par-

Manuscripts, Family Portraits, Sermons Of Dr. Joseph Bellamy, Who Served Town From 1738 To 1790, Will Be On View On Saturday Along With Homes

ishioners favorably in his behalf.
Known As "Boy Preacher"

Bellamy was known as the "boy preacher" for several years because of his youth, but the title was dropped in 1744 when he married Frances Sherman of New Haven. They had seven children before she died in 1785. The next year Bellamy married again, a lady already twice widowed whose maiden name was Abiah Burbank.

During the first years of his pastorate, Bellamy was full of enthusiasm for the Great Awakening and for the New Light theology, inaugurated by Jonathan Edwards, because it enabled the preacher to call men to repentance as the older Calvinism had not. In this vein Bellamy preached with fervor and success to his parish which gave him frequent leaves of absence to spread his gospel over the state. In two years he preached 458 times in 213 places. His influence grew wider and he became one of the theological triumvirate dominating New England—the others being Edwards in Massachusetts and Samuel Hopkins in Rhode Island.

Bellamy was a man of commanding presence, with a fine voice and a keen mind and was regarded as even more powerful as a preacher than he was later as a writer. He was, however, domineering and censorious of any that stood in his way, with a biting wit, although he mellowed somewhat as he grew older.

His first notable defense of his theology was published in 1750 as

"True Religion Delineated". In this work which brought him into immediate prominence he defined religion, in accordance with Edwards' theory of virtue, as love to God. He clarified the distinction between natural and moral inability which was the foundation of the New Light theology, and he argued for a more humane theory of atonement which made it universal instead of being limited to the elect.

Aaron Burr Came To Study

Young men came to him to study for the ministry, and a sort of theological seminary, believed to be the first in the country, grew up at the Bellamy home in Bethlehem. Aaron Burr was one of the students that came to Bellamy to study for the ministry.

Bellamy wrote several other religious books, the most notable of which appeared in 1758 and was called "The Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin". God, he argued, did not ordain, but only permitted sin, and that because he saw it to be the means to the greatest good. The book attracted considerable attention and aroused great controversy. His last important theological work was a series of pamphlets from 1762 to 1770 in opposition to the Halfway Covenant which the New Light theology had made superfluous.

Bellamy was a striking example of bold, independent thinking in early New England. His fame spread even to England and Scotland where the University of Aberdeen bestowed upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Twice he was called to take over First Presbyterian Church in New York, but he turned the offers down, preferring to remain in Bethlehem. In 1786 he was struck with a paralysis which lasted for three years, and on March 6, 1790, he died. He was buried in Bethlehem and his tombstone may still be seen, a large slab supported by four pillars.

Bellamy Slipper Found In Wall

The Bellamy house stands at the head of the Bethlehem Green, the oldest part dating back to 1754. It served as a home to four generations of Bellamys. Dr. Bellamy added the front section

of the house a few years later and for the woodwork in his front parlor he sent to England where it was made to his specifications by convicts at Liverpool. According to the custom of the time, Mrs. Bellamy had one of her slippers built into the new section of the house, and this was found 20 years ago during alterations by the Ferridays sealed into a window seat in the second floor hall. The third floor of the house served as a dormitory for the theological students who studied with Dr. Bellamy, and there was a separate study to the south of the house where Dr. Bellamy wrote his books and prepared his sermons. This has since been moved to the rear of the house.

All of these points of historic interest (except for the dormitory) may be seen by visitors to Bethlehem Saturday. Headquarters and information center for the Bellamy Day will be at the home of Dr. and Mrs. H. B. Risley facing the Green. Other houses which will be open include the homes of Mrs. David Higham, Mr. and Mrs. John Maxwell, Mrs. and Mrs. Theodore Johnson and Mrs. William Doolittle.



THIS IS THE Bellamy homestead, facing the Bethlehem Green, built in 1754, and in which four generations of Bellamys lived. It is now the home of Mrs. Elsie Ferriday and Miss Caroline Ferriday.

The front section was added after the central structure. The third floor served as a dormitory for the young men who came to study theology under Dr. Bellamy.

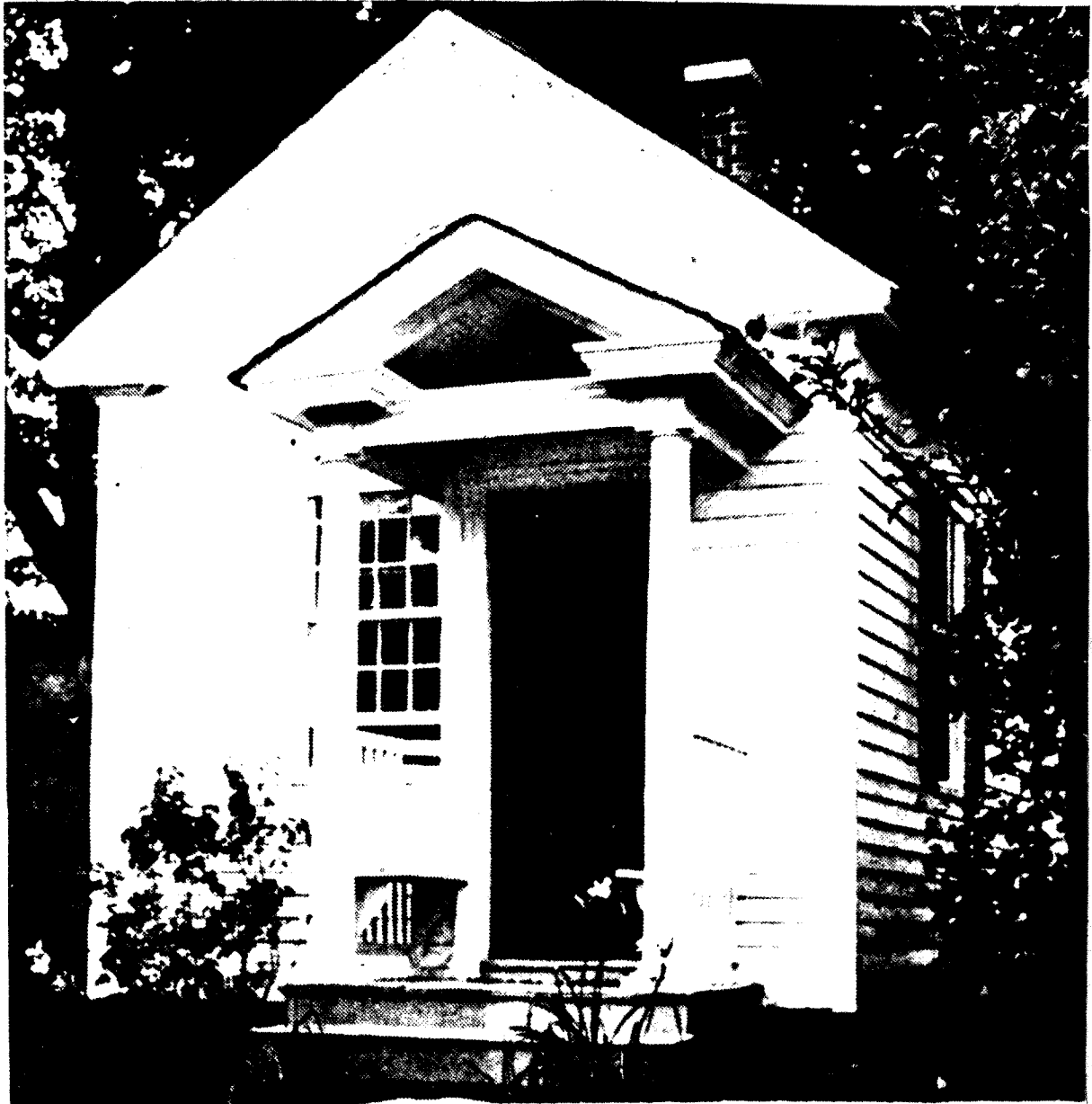


THE PARLOR of the Bellamy house still contains all the original woodwork that the famous preacher had installed. In one room he sent specifications to England for the panelling and it was made

by convicts in Liverpool. Now the Ferriday home, it will be on exhibition Saturday as part of the tour of old homes built during the years when Dr. Bellamy lived in Bethlehem.



FAMILY PORTRAITS of Dr. Bellamy's son, David Bellamy, left, and grandson, Joseph H. Bellamy, right, will be on exhibition in the church. There is no known portrait of Dr. Bellamy in existence.—Goodman Photos.



THIS IS Dr. Bellamy's study in which he prepared his sermons and wrote his books. His grandson later used it as a law office. It originally stood to the south of the house, facing the Green, but it has since been moved to the rear of the house.



THIS IS THE original pulpit used by Dr. Bellamy in his church and from which such famous ministers as Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Hopkins preached. It is still being used today in the Bethlehem Federated Church.



THIS IS Dr. Bellamy's chair which will form part of the exhibit of manuscripts, letters and sermons of the famous theologian. They will be on view to the public Saturday from 2 to 5 p. m. in the Federated Church.

True RELIGION delineated; 1712

O R,

EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION,

As distinguished from FORMALITY on the one Hand, and
ENTHUSIASM on the other, set in a Scriptural and
Rational Light.

In Two DISCOURSES.

In which some of the principal Errors both of the
ARMINIANS and ANTINOMIANS are confuted, the
Foundation and Superstructure of their different Schemes
demolished, and the Truth as it is in JESUS, explained
and proved.

The whole adapted to the weakest Capacities, and designed for the
Establishment, Comfort and Quickening of the People of GOD,
in these Evil Times.

By *Joseph Bellamy, A. M.*

Minister of the Gospel at *Bethlem* in *Connecticut*.

With a Preface by the Rev. Mr. EDWARDS.

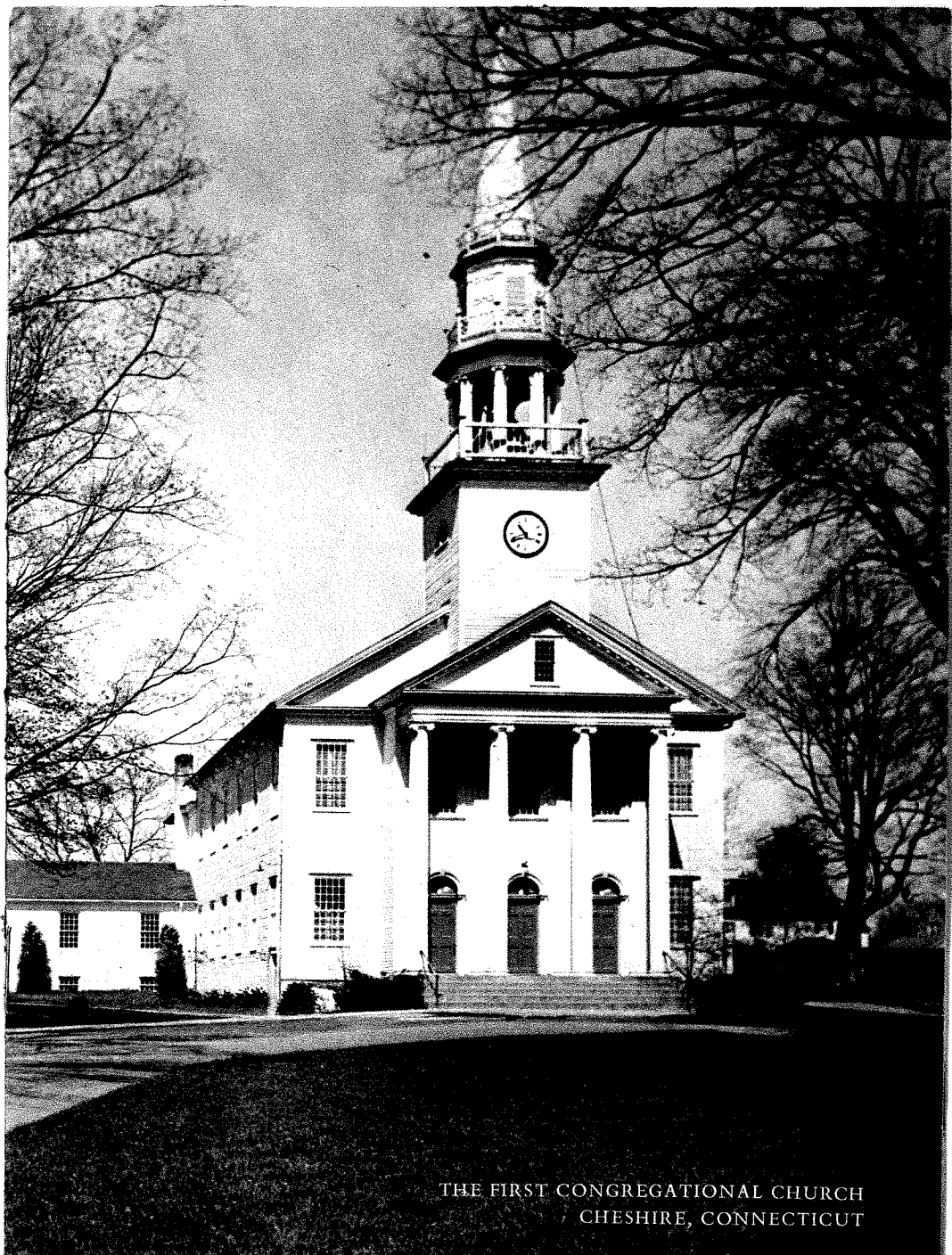
*Isa. xxx. 21. And thine Ear shall hear a Word behind thee, saying, This
is the Way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right Hand, and when
ye turn to the left.*

*Matth. vii. 13. 14. Enter ye in at the strait Gate; for wide is the Gate,
and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be
which go in there at: Because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way
which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.*

B O S T O N

Printed and Sold by S. KNEELAND, in Queen-Street: 1732.

THIS IS THE title page of Dr. Bellamy's most famous theological
work, "True Religion Delineated," published in 1730. It is from the
collection of Miss Caroline Ferriday.



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT

THE CHURCH

BETHLEHEM FEDERATED CHURCH

BETHLEHEM, CONNECTICUT



Pastor REV. A. H. KAUFFMAN, M. A.

Director of Music MRS. GEORGE W. PELZER

Organist MRS. MALCOLM BURR