patterns in American Jewish life make up a colorful tapestry of history in developing America.

Throughout the history of the Jewish Experience in America, beauty has had to endure the pain of bigotry. Nor is freedom won but once. Every generation must secure the blessings of this freedom to the oncoming generations. By the age patterns of history, America is a very young country. A very old people, full of the wisdom of history, from America's earliest days has nurtured the ideals and potentials that make it the greatest social dynamo for human redemption that mankind has ever witnessed.

_The Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle_  


This book is the product of an unpremeditated but fortunate collaboration. Dr. Christie (who grew up in Pittsburgh and attended the theological seminary there) is a Presbyterian minister of Wilmington, Delaware. He is a close student of Presbyterian history and his special interest is the antislavery movement. Dr. Dumond was, until his recent retirement, a professor of American history at the University of Michigan. His major field of research and publication is American slavery, on which he is an outstanding authority.

Dr. Christie got on the trail of George Bourne some forty years ago, through a brief reference to him in connection with the Garrisonian antislavery campaign. Over the years Christie made a wide-ranging search for information about Bourne, which was not too plentiful. But Bourne was a voluminous writer, and his biographer-to-be steeped himself so thoroughly in the Bourne literary style that he could spot it in the unsigned contributions which Bourne made to Garrison's _Liberator._

At length, having come to the end of his research, Christie was getting his findings ready for publication, when, almost by chance, he met Dumond on the campus of the University of Delaware, where Christie was a familiar figure, having done some teaching there himself, and where Dumond, now retired from Michigan, was a summer-session visiting professor. Said Christie to Dumond, "Will you help
me with this?” Said Dumond, “I will,” and the result is this book.

The volume under review is divided into two parts of almost equal length. The second part is a republication of Bourne’s *The Book* (that is, the Bible) and *Slavery Irreconcilable*, which, though his most important work, is today a very rare book. (The authors list four known copies.) The first part of the book is biographical, showing how Bourne came to write the book, his contribution to antislavery thought, and his work on the early years of Garrison’s *Liberator*. There is also a list of some thirty of Bourne’s published writings.

George Bourne was an Englishman who in 1804, at the age of twenty-four, emigrated to Baltimore and started a newspaper. During the next few years, along with his editing, he published several books. By 1809 or 1810 we find him in the Valley of Virginia, teaching school and preaching to a small congregation of Presbyterian country people, among whom he seems to have been highly regarded. Bourne would not admit slaveholders into his congregation, and he was shocked by the cruel treatment of their slaves by some of his neighbors. At length he came across a note in the Catechism which equated slaveholding with manstealing, a sin of the first rank and worthy of death. In 1815 he raised the question in the Presbyterian General Assembly, whether members of the Church who kept slaves could be considered Christians.

Bourne was then deposed from the ministry by his presbytery, an action which he appealed to the General Assembly. That body finally (1818) ruled against Bourne. At the same time it adopted unanimously a statement of the Church’s position on slavery, which Presbyterians have always pointed to with pride, but which, say Christie and Dumond, was merely a pious declaration, without teeth in it, “a masterpiece of equivocation.” The Assembly had already voted to omit the footnote about manstealing in future editions of the Presbyterian Constitution. In getting rid of this and of troublemaker Bourne, the Presbyterian slaveholding interests had got what they wanted, and could afford to go along with some high-sounding but harmless rhetoric about slavery in general.

While awaiting the settlement of his case by his Presbyterian superiors, Bourne put together his conclusions about slavery and published them in a little volume called *The Book and Slavery Irreconcilable* (Philadelphia, 1816). It was an impassioned denunciation of slaveholding as manstealing, a sin not to be tolerated among Christians under any circumstances. Bourne’s contemporaries were unwilling to accept this view, but fourteen years later his book fell into the hands
of a more receptive reader, young William Lloyd Garrison. Christie and Dumond contend that it was Garrison’s reading of Bourne’s book, and not his own cogitations, that changed him suddenly from a supporter of Benjamin Lundy’s gradualism in dealing with slavery to a proponent of immediate and unconditional emancipation.

Garrison then went on to establish the Liberator, in which he aired his views on slavery. For material for the early issues he relied heavily on Bourne’s book, and on contributions from Bourne himself, who at that time (1831) was editing an anti-Catholic journal called The Protestant. Bourne was glad to help, and in 1833, when Garrison was in Europe, Bourne furnished a number of articles for the Liberator. However, none of Bourne’s contributions had his name attached to them. They were either unsigned or under pen names such as “Onesimus” or “A Colored Baltimorean.” Christie and Dumond have been able to identify this unsigned material, proving that much of what has been attributed as a matter of course to Garrison was actually Bourne’s work.

This book is a major contribution to the history of the antislavery movement in the United States. It demonstrates conclusively (1) that the original inspiration which launched Garrison on his antislavery career came not from within himself but from reading Bourne’s little book; (2) that much of the matter in the early Liberator which has hitherto been regarded as typically Garrisonian was in fact lifted from Bourne; and (3) that Bourne was a frequent contributor of new material to the columns of the Liberator. And for good measure we have also a new interpretation of the Presbyterian pronouncement of 1818 on slavery, which future Presbyterian historians will not dare to overlook.

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H. Clay Reed


Admiral Samuel Eliot Morrison, author of forty-two books, co-author of two, and editor of three, on various phases of American history, has returned in his forty-third book to his original subject