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# The Fraternal

September, 1974

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## EDITORIAL

We are using the Editorial of this issue to convey an important pastoral message from David Jones, President of the B.S.F. He writes:

“The Baptist Union and Baptist Students’ Federation link-up scheme for students and nurses leaving home has been altered this year. Church secretaries have been sent a list of Baptist chaplains in university towns and have been asked to send details of all new students directly to them; this will establish a direct contact between churches near each student’s home and place of study. Every effort will then be made to contact the student, welcome him into the church or society and help him to settle into his new surroundings. Other link-up schemes also exist—one is run by the Inter-Varsity Fellowship—and these may be used as well. What is important is that the student should be offered some kind of Christian welcome and be made to feel at home amongst a group of Christian students as early as possible in his first term. Please help if you can.”

## PRAISE FOR TODAY

A supplement to the *Baptist Hymn Book*

A new Baptist hymn book, and after only twelve years? Isn’t the *Baptist Hymn Book* a success then? It is an outstanding success, even beyond these islands. Most Baptist churches in Australia, New Zealand and Jamaica now use it. It is used in some churches in other English speaking countries. And it is used beyond our denomination; one famous Public School in England has ordered music copies for their choir. Out of the profits made since the BHB was published in 1962 over £50,000 has been devoted to assisting widows and orphans of Baptist ministers and missionaries, and over £25,000 has been given to the HMF of the BU.

Why then a new hymn book after only 12 years? This was a decision made by the Trustees of the Psalms and Hymns Trust two years ago. The Trust by an old agreement with the BU and BMS has the sole right to publish hymn books for the BU of Great Britain and Ireland on the understanding that its profits are devoted as mentioned above. The Trustees, who have in every generation included some of the best known figures in BU and BMS circles, and who today have as their Chairman Dr L. G. Champion, realised that there had been a spate of hymns on contemporary themes since 1962. Many of our young people—and older people too—have come to like these, through familiarity with them on radio and TV, in schools and on records. In the past it has been thought by us and by almost every other denomination that a new hymn book is needed about every thirty years, i.e. for every new generation. Changes have been so rapid in these past few years however that it was thought wise to produce now a supplement embodying, say 100, of the best of the new hymns.

The Trustees therefore authorised the setting up of a selection committee. The committee was made as representative as possible. Ministers were included—the Rev. Eric Sharpe (chairman of the music committee which prepared the BHB), the Rev. Martin Howie (Youth Sec., BMS), the Rev. Geoffrey Marshall (ex Youth Sec., BMS), the Rev. John Matthews (who has given a great deal of thought to patterns of worship), the Rev. Michael Taylor (representing the colleges), the Rev. Peter Tongeman (who was just giving up as Youth Sec., of BU). Musicians were represented by Miss Evelyn Pritty (also an ex member of the Baptist Youth Movement committee), Mrs M. F. Williams (a music teacher and wife of our minister at Watford), Mr Gerald Barnes (organist at Bloomsbury, and representing the Baptist Music Society), Mr William Davies (of the BBC, and also organist at Sutton), Mr George Towers (organist at Loughborough and a music adjudicator) and Mr Alistair Stewart (organist, and secretary of the Scottish Baptist Music Society). Laymen were represented by Mr Victor Brown (Chairman, Lay Preachers’ Federation) and Mr John Hough. Mr Sharpe was appointed Chairman, and, as secretary of the Trust, I became secretary.

Following a note or two in the BT hundreds of letters were received—making suggestions, and in some cases sending original compositions. Our colleges, and some churches, sent in lists of hymns. Some people ignored what had been said in the notices and asked for old hymns to be revived—these had to be ignored because our instructions were that the book was to be a supplement of recent hymns.

The committee had a hard task wading through the hundreds of suggestions made by others, and by themselves. They read many semi-private and also commercial collections of hymns from all over the world. Finally they made a list of 107 hymns.

Next began the difficult task for me of asking for permission to use the hymns and the tunes. Some individuals were most kind and gave permission without asking for anything but a copy of the book. Some commercial firms asked large fees. Three hymns which we wanted to include, fine hymns too, had to be left out because the copyright was owned by American commercial music publishers. To have included these three hymns would have cost £1,250 in copyright fees! As it is copyright fees amount to over £2,250. So finally we had a supplement of 104 hymns.

Some of the hymns chosen may have only an ephemeral life, but for a while serve the present age. Some may last longer. No one is ever thoroughly satisfied with any hymn book, but we have done our utmost to include the best of the modern hymns and folk-hymns within the compass of a small supplement. And I emphasise that it is only a supplement to the BHB, and its life is not expected to be as long as a major hymnal.

The hymns chosen come from Britain, and from Australia, USA, Canada and the young churches of the East. 31 hymns

and 51 tunes have never appeared in any hymn book. 5 Baptist authors and 22 Baptist composers are represented. 71 hymns are of traditional style but in contemporary idiom. 11 are of the folk-hymn type. 22 fall somewhere between the two. There are fine new hymns for Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Communion. *Publication day is expected to be October 25th 1974.*

A great deal of time has been involved and a lot of money. However every effort has been made by the Business Committee of the Trustees to keep the retail price of PRAISE FOR TODAY within the reach of our churches. The music edition will be sold for 70p. The melody edition, with guitar chords also, will be sold for 45p. There will not be a "words only" edition. A *sample* copy of the music edition will be obtainable from the Trust for 65p, cash with order, packing and postage paid by the Trust. On the same terms a melody edition sample copy will be 40p. A leaflet giving details of very advantageous introductory terms for larger orders can be obtained ON RECEIPT OF A S.A.E. from the Psalms and Hymns Trust, 4 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4AB.

It is the hope of the Trustees that this supplement will be useful over the next few years in our churches, and perhaps others, that it will be an answer to the many ministers who wrote to say that they needed contemporary hymns to make their worship real for people not brought up in the tradition of church life, and that it will in general contribute something of worth to the Church's praise for today.

RONALD W. THOMSON

## CONSOLIDATED IN THE FAITH\*

In introducing the new Baptist Union Christian Training syllabus I want to speak first of all about the Why? of the new programme, secondly of the What? and thirdly of the How?

I First the 'Why?' of Christian Training. Here I want to say first of all that *the Bible teaches us to exercise our minds*, secondly that the Church needs the service of our minds and thirdly that the world provokes us to use our minds.

When we look at the Biblical teaching concerning human intelligence there are three points that we need to understand. First what is said by the doctrine of creation, secondly by the doctrine of redemption, and thirdly that which is contained within the doctrine of revelation.

(a) First then to the doctrine of *Creation*. It is the Christian understanding that man is made in God's image and that part of that divine likeness is the possession of a mind. This it is we believe that distinguishes man from the brute creatures. There may be arguments as to the nature of their brain systems, their possession of instincts, but it can hardly be said that any of them possess minds in the way

\* The substance of an address given by Mr J. H. Y. Briggs at the launching of the Baptist Union Christian Training programme. It is included in this issue of *The Fraternal* at the request of our Department of Ministry.

that man himself possesses mind. The Bible is clear that mind defines humanity. For example the author of Proverbs says these important words (30:2) 'I am too stupid to be a man, I do not have a man's powers of understanding nor have I received knowledge from the Holy One.' Mind too is the crucial tool that man possesses in fulfilling the creation ordinance to subdue the world and to rule over it. Mind too is a critical faculty in receiving the divine revelation. It is through our minds that God addresses us. Indeed Romans 1 would suggest that our guilt lies just here that God speaks through nature or revelation and we have the power to understand but choose so often not to do so. If then 'un-thinking' is a mark of the pagan world clearly thinking is a mark of the Christian man.

(b) *Redemption*. I have already suggested that the possession of mind marks a crucial distinction between the pagan and the christian personality. Redemption surely means the restoration of the divine image in man—the restoration of the divine image in all his being including his mind. St Paul speaks of the believer 'being renewed in the spirit of your minds', 'made new in mind and spirit' (Ephesians 4:23). And elsewhere of course the Christian is exhorted to possess the mind of Christ. It is my belief that we have too confined a view of salvation. We think in terms of saved emotions, our hearts being saved but do we think enough about the relevance of the doctrine of salvation to the renewing of the minds that God has given us. Harry Blamires, ten years ago, in his *The Christian Mind* sounded an important warning. He was convinced that the church today suffered from a critical loss of the Christian mind, a mind which he defines as 'a mind trained, informed, equipped to handle data of secular controversy within a framework of reference which is constructed of Christian presuppositions'—presuppositions for example concerning the supernatural, the pervasiveness of evil, presuppositions as to the existence of absolute truth, of some eternal authority, and presuppositions as to the value of human persons. But says Blamires—'the Christian mind has succumbed to the secular drift with a degree of weakness and nervelessness unmatched in Christian history. It is difficult to do justice in words to the complete loss of intellectual morale in the twentieth century church. One cannot characterise it without recourse to language which will sound hysterical and melodramatic. There is no longer a Christian mind. There is still of course a Christian ethic, a Christian practice, and a Christian spirituality. . . . But as a thinking being the modern Christian has succumbed to secularization.'

(c) *Revelation*. This loss is critical because the Christian gospel is essentially concerned with the discovery of truth, truth which once found emancipates and sets free. Hence ignorant Christians are essentially imprisoned Christians. In the Old Testament the prophet essentially was one who perceived God's truth and then applied it. Always it is understanding, enlightenment and knowledge of God that precedes proclamation and preaching. Again in the New Testa-

ment truth is a common description of the Christian faith. The Apostles are quite uncompromising in their commendation of the acquisition of knowledge, of gaining wisdom, of securing discernment and comprehension. The Jews rejoiced to know that theirs was a 'speaking God' the words that they had from him gave them moral and spiritual superiority over their contemporaries and so they loved them, treasured them, and studied them. The same responsibility comes to us as Christians: that we are given the gospel, the gospel of God's love, his revelation and hence we too must love it, treasure it, and study it.

So James Orr at the end of the last century said: 'If there is a religion in the world which exalts the office of teaching, it is safe to say that that is the religion of Jesus Christ. It has been frequently remarked that in pagan religions the doctrinal element is at a minimum—the chief thing there is the performance of a ritual. But this is precisely where Christianity distinguishes itself from other religions—it does contain doctrine. It comes to men with definite, positive teaching; it claims to be the truth; it bases religion on knowledge, though on a knowledge which is only attainable under moral conditions. . . . A religion divorced from thought, has always, down the whole history of the Church, tended to become weak, jejune and unwholesome; while the intellect, deprived of its rights within religion, has sought its satisfaction without, and developed into godless rationalism.'

So my first point—the Bible teaches the exercise of our minds.

II But secondly the *Church of Jesus Christ today, needs the service of our minds.*

Do you remember the title of William Sargent's book concerned with psychology and conversion. He called it *Battle for the Mind*. Others of us have been engaged with the Bible Society's publishing campaign entitled *Feed the Minds*. Listen to St Paul as he speaks to the Church at Colossae in the context of a potential gnostic threat to the young apostolic church. 'Be on your guard; do not let your mind be captured by hollow and delusive speculations, based on traditions of man made teaching and centred on elemental ideas belonging to this world. Rather be rooted in Christ; be built in him; be consolidated in the faith you were taught.' Here you will see the title of my talk *Consolidated in the Faith*. In preparing I had thought of a rather more jaunty title namely *Peter Pan in Church*. This I rejected. But sad reality attaches to it. It's an age-old problem. The writer to the Hebrews knew it all too well. In chapter five he writes: 'Though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need somebody to teach you the ABC of God's oracles over again. It has come to this, that you need milk instead of solid food. Anyone who lives on milk, being an infant, does not know what is right. But grown men can take solid food; their perceptions are trained by long use to discriminate between good and evil. The Revd John Stott entitled his Presidential Address to the Inter Varsity Fellowship in 1972 *Your Mind*

*Matters* and said he would like to give as a sub-title the words 'the misery and menace of mindless Christianity.'

Now various groups within the Church would dispute that she does indeed today need the service of the minds of her members. Some would say (a) that *this is vain, because you can never really know the truth because you possess a fallen mind*. And certainly we should heed the warning that all our faculties are wretchedly marred but belief in the fallenness of man's mind should not be made an excuse for a retreat into the world of emotion for our emotions are equally fallen. Indeed one might argue that we need especially to guard fallen emotions with as much alertness of mind as possible.

Others would say that (b) *you must not exercise your mind for the gospel is essentially a matter of simple faith*. Paul himself had to admit that not many wise men were chosen to be Christians and that 'God had chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.'

The President of the Christian Union at Keele University came to see me only a short while ago and was indeed saying just this kind of thing, in the process commending the 'Jesus people' and the impact of Neo-Pentecostalism. Now let me make it quite clear that I would not want to say anything which might be interpreted as favouring a cold academic Christianity. Indeed I more than welcome the sensitiveness of the Church to the workings of the Holy Spirit at the present time. But as an historian I would note just this—that there has in Protestant history been a fatal tendency for the Evangelical churches to veer to one of two extremes—either to erect what has been called 'the sound barrier' and be concerned simply with the orthodoxy of various systems of belief or secondly to make the test one of temperature and warmth. Not so much the question is it a sound church but is it a live church? It is the either-or that I would quarrel with. All too seldom have people been concerned to test the church in terms of both mind and spirit. And I would say just this—that it would be a great pity if the harvest of the Spirit in our days should be limited by not being undergirded with the discipline of study. I believe it is not a question of either-or but both-and.

Again let us heed the warning that Paul wrote to the church at Rome concerning the Jews of his day which you will find in Romans chapter 10:2. When he said: I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened.' You cannot, you must not and thirdly some other Christians would say (c) *you ought not to exercise your minds for the gospel is essentially doing not thinking*—whether that doing be evangelistic or whether it be in the service of the needy, it is doing and not thinking that comprises discipleship.

My reply to such friends would be simply to suggest that the Scriptures insist that an embracing of principle is an essential prerequisite to either. We have to think through the faith before engaging in a strategy of evangelism or indeed in a strategy for obedient service. Only so can we dis-

cover what that strategy ought to be

When we look out at the world in which the Church finds herself then we realise how important it is that the Church capitalises upon all her intellectual resources. So my third point, the Bible teaches the exercise of our minds, the Church needs the exercise of our minds and thirdly *the world provokes us to use our minds*.

In a world of rival creeds, where many corrosive forces attack the authority of faith; in a world where our young people have to live more and more in a post-Christian culture; in a world where relativism invades every experience and every area of belief, faith must be nurtured and nurtured in particular by the cultivation of the Christian mind as we learn of Jesus.

We live in a world of ever increasing educational maturity. This is a fact that every lay preacher must heed if any considerable number of young people are in the congregations to which he speaks. We live in a world where qualifications become ever more important—scan the situations vacant columns in the newspaper and you will soon be convinced of this. Would you yourself willingly sign up with a doctor of doubtful qualifications? Would you send your accounts to be dealt with by a junior clerk in some business concern? Would you travel hopefully on one of our motorways in the sure knowledge that the engineer who designed the bridges had failed all his exams? . . . of course not. Why then suppose that the pulpit and Christian service are the only areas where no training is necessary?

On the contrary if we in our day are to be faithful to the apostolic injunction to give a reason for the hope that is within us we must study the faith and study the culture of those to whom we would make that faith known. And it is here that I believe that our programme of Christian training is so timely. So much for the Why? of our programme.

Let us turn secondly to consider what it embraces—the ‘What?’ of the Christian training Programme. Basically the courses which we have planned seek to inculcate a triple kind of awareness. First and above all to enable you to know the Gospel. Secondly in that light to know yourself. And thirdly to know the world in which God has set you.

With these aims in mind the material with which we deal is first Biblical and Doctrinal; secondly, Historical and Contemporary; and thirdly, concerned with the theme of Christian leadership.

I In the *Biblical and Doctrinal* section upon which we place a heavy emphasis, two kinds of study are embraced. Firstly there is the ‘atlas’ approach, the grand sweep of contextual information, the looking at the architecture of God’s plan of salvation in large and coherent terms from the first day of Creation through to the end of time.

There comes a time however when it is necessary to close the atlas in favour of the local sheet of the Ordnance Survey map. We believe that in our programme it is crucial not to leave our students at a level of general superficial study. Selected parts of the course involve a detailed study of par-

ticulars which are both important in themselves and important in allowing us to communicate a way of study which we hope the students will be able to make their own, thereby becoming equipped to build further upon the groundwork of their study within the Christian training programme.

II Our second section is concerned with matters which are *historical and contemporary*, the story of how God has led his people in the past and the tasks to which he is directing her today.

III The third theme of *Christian leadership* is explored in both thought and action. Within these three groups of subjects there is a basic course that all must take which leads on to a number of options thereby enabling us to secure both balance and variety. We believe here we have a programme which provides in the first place what a mature Christian ought to know. And which secondly provides for the specialised needs of different groups: the needs of the Sunday School teacher, the Youth worker, the Deacon, the Lay Preacher, the Christian in Industry, the Christian in his laboratory, the Christian in commerce etc. . . .

Let me emphasise that what we have proposed is a structure of Christian Education not an imprisoning curriculum: the scheme does indeed allow for local variants where these are available and appropriate.

And so thirdly the ‘How?’ of our scheme.

May I emphasise that as chairman of the Diploma Committee I have been concerned to provide a scheme which will offer maximum encouragement to as many people as possible. The course is designed for all—from those who are graduates, perhaps with higher degrees, to those who feel that they have forgotten more than they ever learnt in school. For those who are highly qualified the committee will still give exemptions for existing qualifications where possible.

Similarly we want to give as much help as possible to those starting or re-starting study. And for these we have provided a special introductory course which is self-contained and which leads to the award of the Baptist Union Certificate. Those who undertake this course may, however, re-submit their work to get exemptions from certain Diploma options.

We have moved away entirely from assessment by examination to a scheme whereby assessment is through various assignments. These move from simple exercises such as for example the writing of a paraphrase of a passage of scripture through to the writing of simple essays. Secondly each course will be assessed as it is completed. We do not put a premium on memory work. There will no longer be the need to keep in one’s mind until June the study that one has taken earlier in the year. And thirdly there is freedom for every student to proceed at his or her own pace. More than this you may take the courses in any order you choose. Instruction will be greatly assisted by the new purposely produced manuals that we have commissioned. But we hope that in many areas these will be supplemented by regional

tutorials and where that is not possible we hope to provide supervision by correspondence.

Let me return to a basic principle. In the short time at our disposal we cannot hope to instruct our students in all that ideally we would like them to know. In consequence we need to lay emphasis upon *how to study* and the excitement of discovery, working this out with regard to particular topics with the hope that once the general principles are grasped the candidates will be equipped to continue their studies independently.

In this respect we must sell our product. I believe that my committee has done all that it can reasonably do to produce an attractive product. I have told those that have written manuals for us that if they're dull they've failed. We have tried to set out this programme of Christian teaching in terms which are readily understandable to our constituency and which are relevant and appropriate to discipleship today. It is for you the Association Secretaries, the Lay Preachers' Federation Secretaries to persuade your people first of all that this is a scheme that they *can* undertake, and more than this that this is a scheme that they *must* undertake. I believe very firmly that our members must be aroused to a potential that they already possess. They must claim what the Scriptures say about remade minds. I believe we've got a good product and if our people will only taste it they will come to the conclusion that learning is exciting and worthwhile.

One final plea—I believe that our Christian Training Programme is most timely as we move into the era of the lay church when more and more it is we laymen who will be called upon more and more to shoulder responsibilities in crucial areas of witness. As I was thinking how I ought to commend the plan to you I could not help but meditate upon the word 'disciple' itself—'disciple' the word which described those who were learners of Jesus. And of course it is from the same root that the word 'discipline' arises—'discipline' the rule that a scholar accepts if he wants to be a true learner. And how we need discipline today. How we need system and organisation: discipline in our stewardship, in our evangelism and I believe in the study also. Billy Graham has gone on record as saying that if he had his ministry over again he would study three times as hard. He said: 'I've preached too much and studied too little'. Dr Donald Barnhouse said: 'If I had only three years to serve the Lord I would spend two of them studying and preparing.'

I would suggest that this same kind of balance in the distribution of time should also be true of our Sunday School teachers, our Youth workers, our Lay Preachers and Deacons, of all indeed who would seek to be a Christ to their neighbours.

So then a final plea to those who would be disciples: the words of the Apostle himself when he said: 'Study to show yourself a workman approved unto God who needs no excuse.'

JOHN BRIGGS

## THE TRANSLATOR'S NEW TESTAMENT: A BACKGROUND STUDY AND REVIEW

Any serious student of the history of the outreach of the Bible into all the world will have recognised that of all fields of Christian enterprise the Bible translator's is one of the most difficult and complex. He would also agree that the measure of success which many translators have achieved in terms of communicating the living gospel to millions of people of diverse languages and cultures is solid evidence for miracle in a modern age. The story is largely that of the Bible Society movement and in particular of the British and Foreign Bible Society which, throughout one hundred and fifty years of unparalleled missionary expansion in many parts of the world, bore the main responsibility of ensuring that the Scriptures in the vernacular should be available to the Church.

Until the spate of modern English translations began to disturb our complacency it would seem that the great majority of Christians in the west tended to take for granted, not only the existence of one standard English Bible but of the thousand and more versions in as many different languages which represent the toil and tears of a small army of mostly anonymous missionary scholars and which are today the very life-blood of the church. Perhaps it would have a tonic effect on some of our thinking about the nature, meaning and significance of Scripture if we knew more about the manifold complex problems which every translator must try to solve if the Word is to come alive with meaning in the modern world.

The *Translator's New Testament\** is largely the outcome of the Society's efforts, sustained through many decades by world-wide correspondence with scholars and missionary linguists and by field researches, to understand these problems and to help the translator in his task at those points where help is least available from other sources. It is only one of many tools which have been forged for this purpose and is designed to fit into a pattern of consultation with Bible Society and professional experts which is an essential characteristic of all contemporary Bible translation work.

The Bible Society began to be aware of the translator's special problems from the very beginning since manuscripts in new languages were frequently presented for publication the accuracy and integrity of which there was no means of checking. From the earliest days accuracy and integrity were matters of supreme concern to the Society even if, against a background of widespread belief in the verbal infallibility of the Authorised Version, most Bible Society leaders could not then foresee where insistence on them

\*(A translation from the Greek with notes and glossary, designed as an aid to those translators who use English as a second language and depend on it for access to the materials of Biblical scholarship). 579 pp. and appendix and maps. The British and Foreign Bible Society, £2.75p.

would ultimately lead. These words, the 'guaranteeing of accuracy and integrity of translation' became a formula which was to dictate all the Society's translation activities for the next century and a half. Preposterous though such a requirement may seem to those who know by experience the supreme difficulty of the Bible translator's task it is hard to say what lesser ideal the Society could have set before itself. Professor T. H. Robinson, himself a translator of no mean order, not infrequently reminded the Society's Translations Committee that the first qualification of any Bible translator was to know that his task was impossible. Nevertheless he would have been among the last to discourage any competent and qualified person from trying. The Society's methods and procedures were slow to evolve. For as the Church took root in India, Asia and Africa, translators became profoundly aware of the massive barriers to communication afforded by time, language, culture and of the immensely complex problem of overcoming them. Translation was proving to be not so simple a business as finding exact verbal equivalents for the English Authorised Version or even the Greek *Textus Receptus*. Those who were required to guarantee the accuracy and integrity of new translations found themselves involved in a three-fold process. First there was the necessity of understanding in depth the meaning of the original text of Scripture, combined with the ability to understand and interpret contemporary Biblical scholarship to colleagues who were often ill-equipped academically for such an exercise. Then there was the necessity of coming to terms with the social, cultural and religious sanctions, many of them rooted in antiquity, of the non-Christian peoples for whom they were translating. Thirdly there had to be a mastery of the languages and linguistic systems into which the thoughts and writings of the ancient authors of Scripture were to be transferred. Indeed it would not be too much to claim that it was largely on the researches of pioneer missionary investigators in all these fields that the modern sciences of cultural anthropology and biblical linguistics were largely founded.

A great proportion of this investigation analysis and codification of new knowledge was done by English-speaking missionary scholars and translators at a time when the English language was playing an increasingly important part in the newly-forming educational systems of Africa and the Orient. Throughout the 19th century these men came to realise that, if the Scriptures were to be effectively reproduced in the languages of Asian and African cultures, a solid bridge, capable of carrying in both directions the full traffic of the intellectual, cultural, social and religious ideas and patterns of thought between the ancient and modern worlds, would have to be built. In the process of building that bridge the English language was to prove to be of very great importance since effective communication in practically every field of biblical learning depended on it. And English remains today an indispensable tool in the process of bringing minds together, whether they be those of the original

authors of Scripture or those of modern biblical scholars or of those who, enlightened by modern studies seek to apply them to the task of making Scripture come alive in some remote and alien culture of the modern world.

This, then, is the background which must be taken into account if the function and purpose of TNT is to be rightly understood. In trying to ensure accuracy and integrity in translation the Society has acted as liaison between many hundreds of translators of many nationalities on the one hand and the world of academic scholarship on the other. Its chief task has been to mediate, in intelligible English, the solid and assured findings of the latter to the former and in particular to offer advice and counsel at those innumerable points of tension, credal, theological, cultural and linguistic which inevitably arise among even the most devoted of colleagues in the process of Bible translation. In due course the Society found it desirable to formulate the experience accumulated by these means and after a few years it produced a small manual called "Rule for the Guidance of Translators" which almost immediately assumed a dominating role over translational methods and procedures. This little manual has long since been superseded in practice; nevertheless it embodied much wisdom of the sort that Bible translators and revisers of any and every period ignore at their peril. There was, for instance, the Rule which declared the objective of the Society to be to "produce versions in a language, not as it *should be* but as it *is*." It went on to advise that "The simplest and best known words should be used in the idiomatic forms of the living tongue, and that translations should be literal". Here was a statement which, however naively expressed, laid full emphasis on the use of contemporary idiomatic language as the proper vehicle for presenting the living gospel. It is of course true that the use of the word "literal" betrayed a lack of understanding of the way in which language works. Nevertheless, the real intention was to combine faithfulness in translation with the maximum impact of meaning and intelligibility. Its nearest counterpart will be found in the modern translator's use of the terms "dynamic" and "closest, natural equivalent". Now, in pursuit of these ideals those who have worked under Bible Society auspices as translators or consultants have had to come to terms with an anomaly that was built into the very structure of all Bible Society thinking and policy. That anomaly arose from the Society's official attitude to English versions. For from the earliest days, and in keeping with the attitude prevailing in the English Churches at that time, the Society had resolved to circulate in English only the Authorised Version of 1611. And though subsequently (after 1904) the Revised Version was also accepted, on the whole the general policy was dictated by an attitude to the relationship of "Word" to "words" and by excessive caution resulting from it, which at no time and in no way informed their policies towards translations into any other language. Perhaps it seemed safe to assume that since the English of these two officially authorised



versions was reasonably within the grasp of the majority of church-goers in the Western world, it could be equally well understood by those for whom English was an acquired language and who depended on it for access to the Bible. That this assumption was unwarranted was well illustrated firstly, by the fact that in the 100 years prior to 1957 no fewer than 159 translations into modern English were made (all catalogued in the Bible House Library)—clear evidence that there was a wide-spread and growing desire to hear again the authentic tones of the gospel in contemporary language: secondly, by the recognition that English acquired as a second language in the social, cultural and religious milieu of India, Asia and Africa differed from British and American English in a variety of subtle but significant ways, thus making the understanding of the Authorised Version and Revised Version still more difficult for the Asian or African reader. Advisers of the Society who had had long missionary experience in these areas both as translators and linguists were well aware of this situation and in all their attempts to throw scholarly light on the manifold translational problems submitted to them for solution had tried to take it into account. In more recent years this has been most noticeably so in the type of correspondence which has passed between the Translations Department in London and those more highly educated African and Asian translators who now play a leading part in the making of translations into their own languages. “Second” English, the medium of these communications, may be said to be a form of English in its own right, though how to describe it with detailed precision is not an easy task. Its chief features are as follows:—Grammatically and syntactically it avoids complicated forms and structures. It prefers active to passive forms. It prefers short sentences and uses as few connectives as possible, depending on the clarity of simple syntax to carry forward and develop related ideas. It prefers simile to metaphor but is sparing in the use of both and invariably draws on its own cultural background for this purpose. This is equally true of idiomatic usage in general, the tendency being to avoid idiom which has a western literary flavour or which derives its meaning from an understanding of mainly or exclusively western features of life.

But it takes no liberties with the accepted grammatical and syntactical forms of conventional English and is scrupulous about correctness in this matter.

As to vocabulary it does not favour the use of word-lists or artificial limitations such as are essential to “Basic English” and other “word-count” systems. It naturally chooses simple, concrete terms and avoids abstract, indeterminate and ambiguous language wherever possible.

What is said here about idiom should make it clear that “second English” presents itself in a number of forms since each major English-using country draws on its own social and cultural patterns in the process of devising new ways of self-expression. Nevertheless all forms of it have the above features in common. It is the universality of involvement

in Biblical translation, an area of highly specialised character, which helps to make second English recognisable as a distinctive form of the language; for, once the main principles are understood, it is possible greatly to simplify the whole process of communication amongst “second-English” users wherever they may live or whatever their mother tongue may be.

During the period between the two world-wars the Society’s agents in S.E. Asia, India, Oceania and Africa, impressed by the growth of the use of English throughout their areas and increasingly aware that the English of the AV and RV frequently stood in the way of a proper understanding of the Bible, urged the Society to consider the need to apply its own Rules about translation in “language as it is” to the making of a new translation into “second” English (then described as “simple” English). At that time linguists and educationists were beginning to pay serious attention to the technical aspects of adapting the great English classics as well as to providing new literature in the medium of “simple” English. More and more the English taught in schools and used in colleges as a medium for advanced learning was seen to be in stark contrast with that of the great classical English versions of Scripture. But equally impressive was the fact that “second” English was proving itself to be an instrument of increasing value to missionary scholars, not only in the primary matter of explaining the meaning of the Greek and Hebrew text to African and Asian translating colleagues but also in elucidating the technical and sometimes abstruse language of the standard Bible commentaries and in throwing light on the many new advances in critical studies of the original texts.

In this process a number of modern versions began to play their part and by the early 1950s when the Society’s translational commitments had reached an unprecedented level, Moffat, Weymouth, Kingsley Williams, RSV, Darby, Phillips and many others all had their place on the translator’s table. Once again, and this time with renewed significance, the vexed question of “accuracy” and “integrity” began to raise its head.

What did these words really signify and how were they to be achieved in translation? For, if all these modern versions proclaimed the basic desirability of making the Scriptures intelligible in modern language, they by no means agreed with one another on all points of text and interpretation and, as they were mostly one-man versions, inevitably reflected individual and often arbitrary judgements about vital matters of text and meaning. So, while on the one hand greatly helping forward the main cause of dynamic translation into “language as it is”, on the other they raised in a new way the whole issue of accuracy and integrity. Clearly the time had come for the Society to address itself to this problem. In 1953, the General Committee, freeing itself at last from the inhibitions and restrictions of an earlier age, formally sanctioned the production of a translation into “second” English, the primary function of which was to aid

translators who depend on English for access to the originals and for a proper understanding of the Greek and Hebrew originals as a preliminary to producing dynamic versions in their own mother tongue. The new translation was to observe the principle of close, natural equivalence. In keeping with all Bible Society translations it was to be a committee project and would not therefore be dominated by the views of any one individual. In matters of biblical and textual scholarship it was to reflect accepted contemporary scholarship. There were to be notes which would draw attention to and deal with such problems as belong exclusively to the processes of translation and which are not treated in standard commentaries. The plan was not simply to produce one more annotated English version. It was to formulate, intensify, and focus the services which had been rendered by the Translations Department through many decades, to many hundreds of translators of all nationalities by correspondence and field visitation. It was to take account of the work of all the scholarly English versions and help the translator form his own judgement at those points where modern scholars, for quite good reasons, sometimes come to different conclusions about the meaning of the Greek text. The task of producing it was to be entrusted to those who, by scholarship in the relevant fields and by missionary experience in the knowledge and use of 'second English', were qualified for the undertaking.

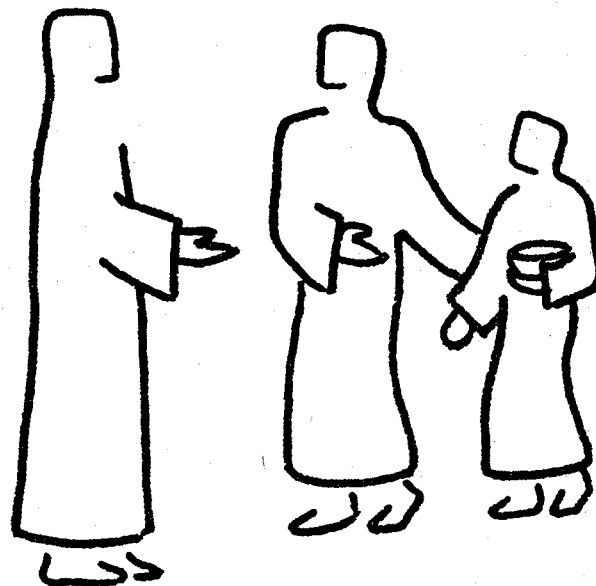
The aim was to establish a translation in the appropriate form of English which, supplemented by explanatory notes, would help the translator into the vernacular to understand and use intelligently the insights of modern scholarship as represented in the best contemporary translations and commentaries.

Thus, the whole venture was conceived originally as a substantial undergirding of the efforts of the Society's Translations Department to carry out its original commission to secure accuracy and integrity at a time when all the evidence was pointing to a world-wide and unprecedented intensification of activity in the whole field of Bible translation.

And so, in October 1954 the processes were set in motion which nearly twenty years later were to lead to the publication of the Translator's New Testament. Throughout those years the work has been subjected to constant testing in the hands of some hundreds of Bible translators of many different nationalities of widely varying levels of academic and linguistic attainments. The needs, comments and queries of this élite corps of mostly anonymous scholars and servants of the world-church have been heeded at every point. As new materials of scholarship have become available they have been taken into account. This is notably reflected in the adoption of the UBS Greek Text in 1965 and the recognition of the NEB, TEV, JB and William Barclay's NT as new translations of far-reaching importance to our constituency. Above all, matters of 'second' English form, vocabulary, usage and style have been kept constantly under review.

Modifications and changes have been introduced only as the result of consultation with translators and others con-

*"There is a lad here" . . .*



*. . . who has a need*

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cerned. It may perhaps be said that the material which forms the nucleus of the Glossary and Translators' Notes in its present form has been the basis of the Society's services to translators for some decades.

It has been the Society's good fortune to have had Professor W. D. McHardy, Regius Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament in the University of Oxford at the head of the project from start to finish. The work has been ecumenical in character and NT scholars and missionaries of many denominations have cooperated in it. For nine critical years the Rev. George D. Reynolds of the BMS, a highly-gifted missionary linguist and scholar, with many years of experience in the use of second English, organised and coordinated the work, and provided drafts for the team of thirty-five colleagues. Professor Wm. Barclay, Dr. C. K. Barrett, Dr. G. R. Beasley-Murray, Professor J. M. Plumley, Bishop Montefiore and Dr. T. F. Glasson were among those who helped on the side of NT scholarship while the Rev. William D. Reynolds, Rev. H. Angus, Rev. W. W. Winfield, Rev. E. T. Ryder, Bishop O'Ferrall and Bishop T. G. Stuart Smith were among those who served as missionary consultants and translators on the various panels. In the final stages, when the Society decided to make the work available to a wider constituency of NT students in the West, the Rev. Dr. H. K. Moulton of the MMS, who had been intimately associated with the project almost from the beginning, was invited to cooperate with the present writer in coordinating and reviewing the results of many years' labour and preparing the work for press.

It was this partnership in association with Dr. Wm. Barclay, Dr. John Gray and Professor W. D. McHardy that undertook the responsibility for the published work and gave it the form in which it has now been supplied to more than a thousand NT translators in all parts of the world.

It is hoped that for many years to come it will continue to serve translators many of whom have already welcomed it as an instrument of the highest value to them in their work.

But in making the book available to the general public there is a further hope that many an English reader who wishes to know his New Testament in greater depth and is ready to bring an inquiring mind to its study will find here not only a translation that is accurate and lucid but a body of explanatory material which, though brief and simple, shirks none of the basic difficulties from which confusion often stems and which are so often projected into modern translations.

Some may feel that £2.75 is a high price to pay for a New Testament in days like these. Let would-be purchasers be assured that every copy bought enables the Society to fulfil its policy of free distribution to translators for whom the book has been primarily prepared.

W. J. BRADNOCK

## II

Most readers will have had some experience of translation even if it was only in the examination room where we

were thankful if we could recognise a sufficient number of Greek words to enable us to spot the passage and recall the particular English Version in vogue in our student days. None of us would claim that this was real translation, which demands a long and close familiarity not only with the language itself but with the whole culture underlying it. In modern language study this is best gained by living in the country where the language is spoken. Unfortunately we cannot go back to the days of Hellenistic Greek. We may immerse ourselves in classical Greek language and culture but even then we shall only be half equipped, for the NT comes, in the main, from people whose native language was Aramaic and whose religious language was Hebrew. We need therefore to be as familiar with Semitic words, ideas, idioms and general culture as we are with Greek. Translation, then, is not a task for the first year student but for the mature biblical scholar.

The Translator's Translation has been carried out by such people, but they had an additional problem to face for this translation is intended for those who speak English only as a second language. Therefore they must avoid the apt phrase, the neat idiom and those words which are understood only within Western culture. The exercise is a salutary one for all who engage in it and the outcome of it is a valuable tool for all translators into, say, African or Indian languages. But this also has a 'spin-off' for us, for it provides us with a translation which is the result of this wrestling for simplicity and clarity.

Let me begin with an example which is almost too obvious for comment. We know that the phrase 'drink the cup' (NEB) means, in fact, 'drink the wine that is in the cup' and we do not need to spell it out, but the people for whom TT is intended may be baffled by it. How much better, then, to translate 'drink from the cup'! This search for simplicity can easily result in English of poor quality which TT wanted to avoid. Take, for instance, the Magnificat (Lk. 1.46). NEB has preserved the poetry of it.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

Rejoice, rejoice, my spirit, in God my Saviour.

But 'soul' and 'spirit' are not easy words for the translator. TEV has lost the poetry without improving the sense

My heart praises the Lord

My soul is glad because of God my Saviour.

What do 'heart', 'soul' and 'spirit' really mean in this context? Has not TT preserved both meaning and poetry in

With all my being I declare that the Lord is great

And I rejoice in God my Saviour

It would be unfair to suggest that TT has succeeded in every case in combining clarity, simplicity and good English. In Rom. 6.3 what does NEB's 'baptised into his death' mean? TEV is no clearer with 'baptised' into union with his death'. In trying to spell out the meaning TT has come up with a combination of prepositional phrases which sound clumsy and need to be read over a few times if the meaning is to be understood, 'were united with him by it in his death'.

At some points translation seriously affects interpretation upon which theological judgements are made. What does the Greek of Eph. 1.23 really mean? It is not difficult to provide a word for word translation of it, 'the church which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all things in (with) all'. The speaker of second English would be as bewildered as we are! The NEB understands it to mean that Christ, and therefore his Body, the church, is filled by God.

the church which is his body and as such holds within it the fulness of him who himself receives the entire fulness of God.

In the margin it provides two alternative translations which take a similiar line. But, supposing *pleroma* is taken in opposition with *eklesia*, a very natural way of taking it. Then the passage says that the Church 'fulfils' Christ. TEV have taken this view with their

The church is Christ's body, the completion of him who himself completes all things everywhere.

TT has the advantage of a series of Translational Notes and at this point it suggests that the Greek may well have combined both these thoughts, that the Church is completed by Christ and Christ is completed by his Church. It has tried to preserve this by translating *pleroma* by the phrase 'when the body joins the head'. Hence,

The Church is his body, and when the body joins the head then he who completes all things will himself be completed.

At least this is clear and does no violence to the Greek, while the problem is well covered in the Notes.

In Rom. 8.3 there are severe problems associated with the words *homoioima* and *sarx*. NEB have used 'form like' and 'nature'

by sending his own Son in a form like that of our own sinful nature, and as a sacrifice for sin, (or, and to deal with sin) he has passed judgement against sin within that very nature.

TEV has been unable to get rid of the word 'nature' and uses it three times in the verse. TT's note draws attention to the fact that the term 'likeness' must be avoided in order to safeguard the reality of the Incarnation and claims that the translation of *sarx* as 'human body' avoids the dangers of implying an incomplete incarnation and of implying also that the Son was sinful. So it has

He sent his Son in a human body that was the same as our sinful human body in order to deal with sin and through that human body he condemned sin.

'Human body' is also marked with an asterisk to show that it is dealt with in the Glossary, where the reader is referred to the word 'Flesh'. Surprisingly, the first sentence here says that the word *sarx* 'is not to be equated with the body'. It does go on, however, to say that in the Epistles the word *sarx* is 'most frequently used to denote human nature without God.' The result of this is that the translation along with the Note and the Glossary will give the reader a clear idea of what the problems of translation are and will un-

doubtedly help him to understand what is intended by the Greek.

All terms discussed in the Glossary are marked with an asterisk and Baptists will be interested to know what is said about certain terms. 'Baptism' became the Christian sacrament of initiation after the death of Jesus. There is no discussion of the mode, other than the usual mention of the literal meaning of the term, or of the faith or otherwise of those who received it; rightly so, for these questions do not affect translation. 'Church' is defined as either the universal Church or the local church/congregation and full references are given to both usages. 'Bishop' has been retained in the translation at a few points, e.g., Phil. 1.1, but the Glossary note explains clearly the sense in which this is to be understood. The Glossary comes to the rescue again in the case of *doxa* which is translated throughout as 'glory'. What other English alternative is there and yet what does the word mean? The discussion in the Glossary makes it clear. Though 'God-fearer' occurs, one looks in vain for a note on 'Fear of the Lord' an important phrase which could easily be misunderstood by translators.

The translation of money, weights and measures is always a problem—especially in days of inflation and decimalization! But in a translation meant for use mainly in the Third World it is particularly difficult. TT overcomes the money problem by retaining a transliteration of the Greek terms and providing an Appendix which relates all terms to the *denarius* which is then defined as a 'day's wages for an agricultural labourer', a neat solution. Weights and measures are given in the Appendix in both Imperial and decimal terms.

The format of the book is excellent. It is of convenient size, the print is large and clear enough to be used in comfort. Book, chapter and verse are indicated at the top of each page, making reference very easy. There are 432 pages of translation, 115 pages of translational Notes and 26 pages of Glossary—and all this for the very modest price of £2.75.

Even if I had no book token waiting to be spent, even if I could not persuade my church to buy me a copy for my Anniversary, I would still go out and buy a copy for myself. Its usefulness is by no means limited to those translators for whom it is intended. Anyone who is charged with understanding and expounding the treasures of the New Testament will find the Translator's Translation invaluable.

HARRY MOWVLEY

### JOHN MILTON: A TRICENTENARY TRIBUTE

"The poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English Literature, the champion and the martyr of English Liberty." (Macaulay)

Born on December ninth 1608 at Bread Street, near St. Paul's, he attended the Cathedral school from an early age, leaving for Christ's college, Cambridge in 1625.

The daily eight hours' schooling was rigorous. Four years of intense Latin followed by three or four years of Greek

and some Hebrew. English was not taught. Against this method, when he had done some teaching, Milton protested in his TRACTATE ON EDUCATION (1644). School lessons were augmented at home when his father a well-to-do Scrivener, a "man of wonderful integrity," and a musician of repute, arranged for John to have private tuition in French and Italian, and himself taught the boy to play the organ and the bass-viol.

Nick-named at Cambridge the "Lady of Christ's" because of his slight build, fresh complexion and courtesy, he nevertheless learned, and then taught others, wrestling and the use of the broadsword. He refused to equate heavy drinking, loutish behaviour and brothelling with manliness. Two humorous poems of these days recall the University Carrier, Hobson, of "Hobson's Choice" fame.

Steeped, in his late teens, in the Latin and Greek classics and their respective mythologies, and also in the 1611 version of the Bible, Milton found inspiration and a liberal imagery for his great epic poems, for him "the noblest form of all poetry." He did not, however, come early to maturity.

"My hasting days flie on with full career,

But my late spring no bud or blossom showeth . . ."

He would not write to curry favour or to "flatter princes," but of his destiny as a poet he had no doubt. In sonnet VII he laments:

"How soon hath Time the subtle thief of youth,

Stoln on his wing my three and twentieth yeer!

My hasting dayes flie on. . . ." yet ends:

All is, if I have grace to use it so,

As ever in my great task Masters eye."

His first poem was a tribute to Shakespeare:

"What needs my SHAKESPEAR for his honour'd

Bones,

The labour of an age in piled Stones. . . ?

Thou in our wonder and astonishment

Hast built thy self a live-long monument."

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY was, he said, "his birthday gift to Christ". It came to him "with the dawn of Christmas day." (1629) "I am singing of the heaven-descended King, the bringer of peace. . . ." contrasting this with his friend Diodati's poem written in praise of the "feastings that honour the heaven-forsaking God."

From his early years Milton had learned of Christ, of whom, in his later years, in PARADISE REGAINED, he wrote:

"When I was yet a child, no childish play

To me was pleasing, all my mind was set

Serious to learn and know, and thence to do

What might be publick good; myself I thought

Born to that end. . . ."

Thus, from boyhood, he was inspired to nobility of purpose. At St Paul's he would hear the poet-preacher, John Donne; during his Cambridge years George Herbert was the Public Orator.

After gaining his M.A. Milton left Cambridge (1632) to

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To the Readers of the "Fraternal"

Dear Friends,

"What's inside it?" asked the Mole

Wind in the Willows—Grahame

I hope we all know the answer to that one but just in case you haven't read the book recently (I confess I read it at least once every year) let Rat answer the question.

"There's cold chicken inside it," replied the Rat briefly;

"coldtonguecoldhamcoldbeefpickledgherkinsaladfrenchrolls  
cresssandwidgespottedmeatgingerbeerlemonadesodawater—"

That sounds a very sensible and rewarding approach to the contents of a wicker luncheon-basket!

You may wonder why I am writing in this way but for the first time in nearly thirty years in this Company a deacon has written about what he calls "small print". What had really happened is that my correspondent had looked at his policy wording in a sweeping glance and made an assumption and had not taken the trouble to look carefully at what after all is a legal document.

A sweeping glance at the Rat's description of his hamper makes nonsense too—but a little trouble reveals all—how I like "cress sandwiches" on the river or at Lords!

Remember too that you or your deacons can only get out of the hamper what is put in.

Tastes in hamper contents vary and so do tastes in the selection of perils to be insured. Both need keeping up to date and of course so do sums insured too!

Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN

General Manager

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live in the Buckinghamshire village of Horton where in a further six years of study he wrote: L'ALLEGRO and IL PENNEROSO (1633) ARCADES and COMUS (1634) LYCIDAS (1637). IL PENNEROSO recalled worship in the earlier Gothic cathedral destroyed with eighty-nine other churches and much property in the Great Fire 1666. The first stone of Wren's monument was laid seven months after the poet's death.

"But let my due feet never fail,  
To walk the studious Cloysters pale,  
And love the high embowed Roof,  
With antic Pillars massy proof,  
And storied windows richly dight,  
Casting a dim religious light."

Of COMUS (Revelry) John Richard Green writes: "Its historic interest lies in its forming part of a protest by the more cultured Puritans against a gloomier bigotry fostered by persecution." \* It is also thought that the MASKE, in which virtue triumphs over vice, was written in the belief that the stage could be used more effectively than the Church to cleanse the nation of much that was vicious and licentious.

LYCIDAS, "a beautiful monody," is a tribute to the poet's friend, Edward King, drowned whilst crossing the Irish Sea, but it also sharply rebukes a corrupt Church and a dissolute clergy.

"Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold  
A Sheep-hook, or have learned ought els the least  
That to the faithfull Herdsman art belongs:  
. . . the hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

LYCIDAS, "written in English that the more thereby might read it," has its Latin companion in LAMENT FOR DAMON (EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS) which commemorates a school friend, Charles Diodati, British born but of Italian descent, who died whilst Milton was abroad. Had he lived it is possible that ARTHURIAD in which the poet planned to set forth the glory of Britain's past as Virgil had done for Rome, might have added another epic poem to our language. He had purposed to discuss this with Diodati.

PURITAN, first used to denote those who demanded a more thorough-going Reformation, is now a loosely used term usually of denigration. But to the Puritans of the 17th century we owe an incalculable debt. Their suffering witness secured for us our liberty of conscience and civil rights. They not only combined "grandeur of thought with sanctity of life," they were men of amazing courage.

"Whipped, mutilated and branded, persecuted with a cruelty worthy of the Holy Office, they presented the stumps of their ears to be grubbed out by the hangman's knife . . . whilst ordinary people treasured rags soaked in their blood . . . the mutilated defenders of liberty defied the vengeance of the Star-chamber. . . ."<sup>†</sup>

\*A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE, p. 527).

†CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS, Macaulay, vol. 1 pp. 118-119. J. M. Dent.

## WHO WILL COME?

The Baptist Union of Bangladesh

The United Mission to Nepal

The Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago

The Baptist Community of the River Zaire

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All of these are asking the same question

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**93 Gloucester Place,**

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In the sense that Milton defended these principles, hating ecclesiastical and political tyranny, he may be thought of as a Puritan. The Milton home knew nothing of puritanical dourness. It echoed to music, dancing and singing; books and plays were enjoyed. To Diodati the poet had written of his gratitude to God who "has instilled in to me, if in to anyone, a vehement love of the beautiful." "His nature drew to itself whatever was great and good."

If Milton is to be labelled at all it would seem to be as an Individualist. His early Calvinism was tempered by a strong humanism; the depraved state of the Church caused him to repudiate his earlier intention to be ordained; he left Presbyterianism when he found to his dismay that "New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large. His Independency, never of the strictest type, was of Arminius, not of Calvin. Probably no man could say of himself with greater truth than Milton: "My mind to me a kingdom is . . ." His *DE DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA*, lost for over a century, was published in 1825.

In his day, Latin was the "universal" language, an open door to scholars throughout Europe. English was parochial. Yet, one day, he would achieve his desire and clothe "graver subjects" in the "richest robes" of his native tongue.

"Hail native language, that by thy sinews weak

Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak . . .

Here I salute thee. . . ." (A VACATION EXERCISE)

In paraphrasing the Psalms he continued a practice known since the days of Wycliffe, although some of Milton's finest paraphrases are found in *PARADISE LOST*.

In 1638 Milton set out on a proposed two year European tour—mostly France and Italy—but, learning of a worsening situation at home, returned after fifteen months. The political cauldron was coming to the boil. Laud in the Church, and Wentworth (Rex is Lex) in the government, were bent on measures to crush all opposition. The period 1640-1660 was devoted almost entirely to polemics and social work; there was no time for poetry. Before leaving Italy, however, he had called on the blind and aged Galileo still held prisoner by the Inquisition.

Settling in London in 1640 he decided to teach, adopting the methods of the famous Moravian Comenius who had been invited by Parliament to set up a Universal College. Besides five ancient languages Milton taught Italian, history and morals. His father's death, seven years later, left him with means enough to give up teaching. Of his prose works at this time the *HISTORY OF BRITAIN TO THE CONQUEST* is perhaps, the most important.

To those who knew the circumstances, the early breakdown of Milton's marriage to Mary Powell (1643) could have caused no surprise. She returned to him after three years, dying in childbirth in 1652, three months after the poet's total blindness. Between the three daughters of the marriage and their father there was, in his later years, a strained relationship.

During her absence he wrote, and published *WITHOUT*

*PERMISSION*, pamphlets on the *DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE OF DIVORCE*, advocating less stringent laws. Action taken against him by the Stationer's Company and the House of Commons inspired *AREOPAGITICA*, "a speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing," which was presented to the Lords and Commons in 1644. Almost every age has to consider the question of censorship. It has been tried, it is argued, since Roman times, but has never achieved the desired end.

"As good almost to kill a man as kill a good book,

. . . he who destroys a good book kills reason itself. . . ."

If the search for truth is not as a "continual streaming fountain" it becomes "a stagnant pool."

Structured on the style of the Athenian orator, Isocrates, from whom the title is borrowed, and embodying the thoughts of Euripides, friend of Socrates, *AREOPAGITICA* has been hailed as the greatest oration in the English language. Macaulay wrote of its "sublime wisdom."

"This is true Liberty, when free-born men,

Having to advise the Public, may speak free,

Which he who can, and will, deserv's high praise;

Who neither can nor will, may hold his peace,

What can be juster in a state than this?"

Not all who stood for freedom of speech, conscience and worship could clothe their thoughts with the grandeur of Miltonic phraseology, but not least among those who defended these sacred principles are our Baptist forefathers.\* Thomas Jefferson knew his Milton: "I have sworn on the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of enslavement of the mind of man."

*EIKONOKLASTES* (1649) (broken image) repudiated with scorn the spurious *EIKON BASILIKE* (portrait of a king) supposedly written by Charles during his imprisonment, whilst in his *DEFENCE OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE*, Milton dealt almost violently with the French Saumais (Salmasius in literature) who had hurled insults at the English people and set forth Charles as "saint and martyr."

"Our liberty is a blessing received from God,

which to surrender would be to degrade our very nature."

Yet the zeal for Liberty has never been shared by all, and the poet was well aware of its dangers.

"License they mean when they cry libertie;

For who loves that must first be wise and good. . . ."

*AREOPAGITICA*, "its political grandeur and expression of the soul of the great movement of Puritanism," was not immediately applauded. Like Lincoln's brief oration on the Gettysburg battlefield, recognition of the greatness came later.

Milton married again in November, 1656. By her gentleness and affection, Kathleen Woodcock, twenty years his junior, gave him renewed strength, even as her untimely

\* cf *LIFE AND FAITH OF THE BAPTISTS*, ch. 7, H. Wheeler Robinson.

death fifteen months later intensified his grief. Few can read unmoved sonnet XIX.

"Her face was vail'd (he had never seen her)  
yet to my fancied sight,  
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined  
So clear, as in no face with more delight.  
But O as to embrace me she inclined  
I wak'd, she fled, and day brought back my night."

In this year, as Latin secretary to Cromwell, he dictated thirty letters. In 1663 he married his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, a woman of twenty four "and of a peaceful and agreeable humour."

By 1650, however, a choice had to be made. His left eye was useless and the right eye painful. He must stop writing or go totally blind. In the cause of Freedom he deliberately chose the latter.

"Cyriack, this three years day, these eyes, though clear  
To outward view, of blemish or spot;  
Bereft of light thir seeing have forgot. . . .

What supports me dost thou ask?  
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them overply'd  
In libertyes defence, my noble task. . . ."

Cyriack Skinner was one of the poet's younger and most loyal friends.

Better known is the sonnet:

"When I consider how my life is spent,  
E're half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one Talent which is death to hide,  
Lodged with me useless. . . .  
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied,  
I fondly ask. . . .  
They also serve who only stand and waite."

In the sonnets, it is said, the greatness of Milton's mind and nobility of purpose, are most clearly seen. He challenged as well as advised Cromwell, as, for that matter, did Baptists and other Dissenters.

". . . yet much remains to conquer still,  
Peace hath her victories no less renowned than warr. . . .  
Help us to save free Conscience from the paw  
Of hireling wolves whose Gospell is their maw."

To General Fairfax:

"O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand;  
For what can warr but endless warr still breed,  
Till Truth, and Right from Violence be freed. . . .  
In vain doth Valour bleed  
While Avarice, and Rapine share the land."

Perhaps most poignant of all: THE MASSACHER IN PIEMONTE. Two thousand souls, Waldenses, living a simple Christian life in one of the remote canyons, brutally slaughtered because of their Protestant faith, on orders of the Duke of Savoy.

"Avenge O Lord, they slaughter'd Saints, whose Bones  
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold. . . .  
Slayn by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd  
Mother with Infant down the rocks. . . ."

It was not Rome's religious life that 17th century England feared, but Rome's domination and tyranny.

At the Restoration (1660) Milton was saved from imprisonment by influential friends and the payment of a heavy indemnity. EIKONOKLASTES and DEFENSIO were burned by the public hangman. Others were less fortunate. The royalists exacted a terrifying vengeance on the regicides, resorting to the barbaric disembowelling and dismembering that Cromwell had prohibited.

Among those who read to Milton and wrote at his dictation, first place must be given to the young Quaker, Thomas Ellwood, who also procured the cottage\* at Chalfont St. Giles, thus enabling the Milton family to leave the plague stricken London. After three months in Newgate amid the putrifying corpses of headless and mutilated men, Ellwood joined the family there.

His question: "Thou hast had much to say about Paradise Lost, what hast thou to say of Paradise Regained?" is now thought by many to be fanciful. But not necessarily so. Milton might well have pondered the question without actually putting it into words. The poem (1667) was well received by friends and enemies alike.

"And chiefly Thou O Spirit . . . Instruct me . . .

. . . What in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That to the highth of this great Argument  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men."

(Book 1. lines 16-26)

PARADISE REGAINED and SAMSON AGONISTES appeared together in 1671. The latter, used by Handel, suggests, in some ways, a parallel to Milton's own fate. Besides his blindness Milton suffered much from gout fearing that he might die in one of the more acute attacks. "He sang loudest when the pain was at its worst!" The end came quietly in 1674, a month before his 66th birthday; so quietly, indeed, that those in the room were not aware at first that he had "slipped away."

His remains, laid near those of his father in St. Giles, Cripplegate, were disturbed in 1790, when, during alterations, the lead coffin was opened, the corpse exhibited on payment of a shilling. Eventually, the bones were sold.

Amid the adulation the poet has never lacked detractors, in our day, for instance, Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. The last half century has seen a growing number of studies of a philosophical nature.†

AREOPAGITICA is not universally accepted. In many countries, not all of them Communist States, it is anathema; nor, unfortunately, is this attitude peculiar to politicians only. Yet:

"The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance, which condition, if he break,

\*For many years now a museum visited by many thousands of people yearly.

† of Professor Trevor-Roper's article, *Times Literary Supplement*, June 8, 1973.



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## WEST HAM CENTRAL MISSION

409 Barking Road, Plaistow, London E13 8AL

My dear Brother Minister,

I remember once when I was preaching in one of those mammoth American Churches a young boy of about 9 years joined the queue to talk to the visiting preacher with the funny accent. He had a riddle to ask. "What did the arithmetic book say to the other arithmetic book?" he said with an engaging grin.

The answer was "I have got my problems too", and he could say that again.

We have got our problems. The inflation last year was roughly 20% and it looks like being the same at least this year. We are managing to keep our income steady but not much more than that and, of course, the income is buying less and less as the years go by.

We are finding it very difficult in our dealings with certain Local Authorities to persuade them to take a reasonable and realistic view regarding our standing charges. Apparently Local Authorities reckon they can beat Charities down even when they are doing a wonderful job of work at a ridiculously low cost and I must admit that at times my blood boils and the old Adam in me rises to the surface.

Nevertheless God is good and we acknowledge His many blessings. We are not in any way fearful but I know that we must pull something extra out of the bag. I am sure that not one of our Baptist Churches would be willing to see us have to cut back on our programme if they could do anything to avoid this, and I am, therefore, asking for your help.

It is difficult to write the same letter to apply to everybody. Some Churches help us magnificently but hundreds of our Churches apparently do not know of our existence. I am asking you to see if there is any way in which you can persuade either your Church or one of your Organisations to send us a gift. An extra £5 from each Church in our Denomination would make all the difference in the world.

You know that we have a good colour film strip setting out the details of our work, and you can have it with a manuscript of a taped recording. It doesn't cost you a penny although, of course, we hope for an offering!

One final word, over and above our financial need, we have need of prayer. We are living in stirring times, change is in the air and we at the Mission want to do the right thing to make quite sure that we are equipped to deal with the things of this age. Please ask your people to put us on their prayer lists.

Thank you for reading right the way through to the end!

With warmest good wishes for God's blessing on you and on your own fine work.

Yours very sincerely,  
STANLEY TURL  
Superintendent of the West Ham Central Mission

servitude is at once the consequence of his crime and the punishment of his guilt." (John P. Curran. 1790).

A generation ago, Wordsworth's: "Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour, England hath need of thee. . . ." had become a wearisome cliché. But, in every age, for all who value human dignity and genuine freedom, who seek to uphold moral and spiritual values in both individual and public life, Milton *must* always be alive.

W. E. BOOTH-TAYLOR

## SOME EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY PREACHERS

Many years ago Beverley Nichols told of how, as a junior reporter on a London daily, he was suddenly packed off to interview a senior member of the peerage about a current political issue. The interview, from a political point of view, was not very satisfactory except that quite suddenly a light came into his Lordship's eyes and he said, "I remember a speech by Disraeli" and clearing his voice proceeded for nearly ten minutes to report the speech. "It was", wrote Nichols, "an astonishing feat". But that, surely, is the mysterious way in which an old person's mind works. The things of yesterday or last week cannot be recalled; names, even of those in the family are forgotten but events and people of years long dead come back to mind vividly and clearly.

A very old lady in my first Church would have great difficulty in bringing me to mind or why I should be visiting her although I was doing so quite regularly but given the least opportunity she would begin to recite with accuracy a long poem, she had learned as a girl, in praise of Cheshire Cheese.

With these examples in mind and being now an octogenarian I may perhaps, be excused if I recount some memories of preachers I heard when as quite a young man I made London my home for about two years.

There must be few among us now who heard the famous or, as many would have said, the infamous Dr. R. J. Campbell of the City Temple. This was the height of the New Theology controversy. I was not perhaps capable of appreciating the theological implications of this new doctrine but I know only too well the divisions it created and the offence it caused in many devout quarters. Londoners travelling into the City were arrested one morning by a wide banner across the front of the Church with the one word ICHABOD—truly for many people the glory of the City Temple had departed. But it was not all loss. This action and the reports in the daily press and the religious weeklies acted as an unpaid advertisement and greatly increased the congregations. On a Sunday evening queues would begin to form 30 or 40 minutes before service time and in the end with people occupying chairs in the aisles, sitting on the gallery and even the pulpit steps, large numbers would be turned away. The reaction of many can be illustrated by a friend who was persuaded to accompany me to the Temple on one occasion. On reaching the street at the close of the

service he gave a deep sigh of relief and confessed that he had been sure in mind that God would punish him or even strike him dead for giving ear to such heretical preaching. R. J. Campbell had a magnetic personality. When preaching his eyes shone and his voice took on an almost magical quality. Agreeing or disagreeing, there could be few among those great congregations who were not gripped by the preacher. This experience taught me one thing which has stood me in good stead. It was to be tolerant and to appreciate that while there were those who expressed themselves in different ways and words they could still have a real love to Christ and a passionate desire to know and express the truth as they understood it. Thinking back over those days and the heat the New Theology controversy generated, the theological discussions of our day seem little more than a storm in a tea-cup.

I went quite often to Whitfields Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road. Here again was preaching which attracted the crowds and it was only the early comers who could be sure of a seat. This was no penalty for a quartette of fine voices sang for about 15 minutes prior to the service. The minister, Sylvester Horne was very different in physique and bearing to the preacher drawing the crowds at the City Temple little more than a mile away. Dr. Horne had a commanding personality and knew and practised the true art of preaching. The critics said that too much emphasis was laid on the social gospel and there certainly was a serious call to the conscience to face up to the social injustices and evils of the day. It may be recalled that Horne entered Parliament as a Liberal and probably the attempt to combine Ministerial and Parliamentary duties helped to bring about his death at a comparatively early age. The recollection I have is of first rate preaching, truly awake to the issues of the day but with a strong evangelical emphasis even if it was not evangelical. Dr. Horne's book on preaching and pastoral work is probably never seen or read today but it records one incident which comforted me in my pastoral work. Horne tells of how in the very early days of his first ministry he was called to visit a young woman whose husband had died suddenly while on their honeymoon. He was so stunned he could find no words for such a situation. He sat with the bereaved woman for about 30 minutes and left without saying a word. This, he thought, was ministerial failure. Long afterwards the widow acknowledged that the fact he was there, sharing a sorrow too deep for words, brought her more comfort than many of the spoken words had done. I often reminded myself of this incident when in my own pastoral care I too was faced with so great a sorrow and words would not come.

I heard Dr. Campbell Morgan at Westminster Chapel. This was an entirely different style of preaching. Morgan was the Expositor and the evidence can be found in his books and his Analysed Bible. Few who worshipped at Westminster, even only occasionally, could fail to be enriched in mind and spirit: the regular worshippers must have had a feast of good things. The use of the Bible was more

evident than at any church I visited. Dr. Morgan was the kind of man you looked at twice. His slim body, almost ascetic type of face, crowned with well groomed and tidy grey hair all contributed to a most attractive man. The look of the saint—if such falls within our ken. Morgan preached in Westbourne Park Chapel at what Dr. Clifford called his “Anniversary”. It was a mid-week service. Somehow or another the sermon didn't come across: failed to “click” the modern expression might be. I have often reflected on this. Was it me? But others felt the same! Was it the theme or different style of presentation? Could it have been the building? Yet there was not such a vast difference, except size, between Westminster and Westbourne Park! Most preachers, particularly those who have had to exercise a peripatetic ministry, find that a sermon which goes over well in one church seems to fall lamentably flat in another, and of course, vice versa. There may be physical and psychological considerations on the part of the preacher. Fatigue or anxiety play a part. The “atmosphere” created by the spirit of the worshippers. The type of building and the interior plan of seating often make a tremendous difference. If it is true there has been a decline in the quality of preaching and the development of the homily rather than the proclamation of the Word in what measure can this be laid on the shoulders of our modern church architects? If Glasgow “flourishes by the preaching of the Word” it may be that only by preaching our churches will flourish again.

Living, as I was, in Bayswater I frequently shared the worship at Westbourne Park and listened to our own John Clifford, the little man with a massive brain and a great heart. What a man he was! He was one to whom Kipling's lines applied in truth. Clifford could talk with crowds and never lost his virtue or sacrificed his principles and walked with those of high rank and leadership and never lost the common touch. He took a keen interest in the Liberal Party and addressed political meetings up and down the country particularly on the education issue. He was pressed, as was Sylvester Horne, to enter Parliament but resisted the pressure. His political activity created in the minds of many, particularly those of the other Party, the impression that his preaching was politically motivated and the social gospel his main theme. This was very far from the truth and in many ways an attempt to discredit Clifford. My own memory of him is very different. Few could share the worship as he conducted it, or listen to his prayers or seek to appreciate the message without the heart being strangely moved. I see him now in what seemed a characteristic attitude, moving slightly to the side of the pulpit, often with his hands tightly clenched and the words vibrating with a vitality and passion never to be forgotten. There was a strong Biblical and evangelical note in all Clifford's preaching and it can never be forgotten that he passed into the great beyond in what is now the Shakespeare Room of the Church House having just made an earnest plea for personal evangelism.

Perhaps a personal reference may be permitted. One

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## BAPTIST PUBLICATIONS

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evening as I was leaving Westbourne Park a steward touched my shoulder and said that Dr. Clifford would like to speak with me. Would I follow him round to the vestry and Dr. Clifford would soon be free. I followed hardly daring to analyse my feelings. After a few minutes Dr. Clifford came into the vestry and said that he had often noticed me in church and wished to meet me personally. He enquired where I was living, what I was doing and what I was hoping to achieve. The wonder to me then and still is that I could be singled out from such a big congregation and in spite of all the pressures upon his thought and time John Clifford could give to a young man “up from the country” nearly half an hour for a friendly chat. To me this has always been a shining example of a caring ministry and I only wish I had followed it more closely in my own ministry.

I worshipped at Bloomsbury and listened to Tom Phillips, but my most vivid memory of him as a preacher came from hearing him in Birmingham and Manchester either on anniversary occasions or at the mid-day services at the Methodist Central Halls.

Altogether I have the happiest memories of the Sundays spent in London and the preachers I was privileged to hear. One can truly say there were giants in those days; great preachers: who could attract and hold the crowds. Whether they could do the same today may well be questioned.

Not long ago I was asked who was the finest preacher I heard in those years prior to World War I. My reply was Dr. T. Charles Williams of Menai Bridge. I heard him in Manchester on a number of occasions but never without being helped and inspired. It would need a Welshman to write of him and his preaching. Dare we hope that the Principality will again produce great preachers who will warm our hearts and give lift to our spirits.

H. L. WATSON

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM

I have recently conducted the first baptismal service in my present pastorate and have been not a little humbled by the numerous appreciative comments about the way in which Baptism was administered. While some remarks have referred to the entire service some have been with direct reference to the immersion itself—“No splash. How do you do it?”

My answer has been “W. D. Jackson taught me how to baptise”. In my second student pastorate four adult people were being prepared for Baptism and I was privileged to have instruction from W. D. J. who was then the Area Superintendent. The advice he gave sounds—and is—so simple, yet the comments made throughout my ministry on the way I administer Baptism seem to imply that there is something unusual about it. Before entering the ministry I had seen immersion carried out in a manner that made me squirm; one has seen the sacrament administered through the medium of television and one has had alarming descriptions given one of how other ministers have baptized and one is

forced to the conclusion that no training is given in colleges on this important matter.

The advice given to me in a few minutes' conversation is so straightforward.

1. Hold the clasped hands of the candidate with one hand, placing the other hand at the base of the candidate's neck.
2. Having pronounced the words of institution lay the candidate slowly back into the water. A gentle pressure is all that is needed to immerse the candidate. W. D. Jackson added some such words as "You are baptizing a believer not sinking a ship."
3. Then, equally slowly and gently, raise the person to a standing position and allow him or her to pause for some moments for quiet recollection. It was in that moment that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus.
4. The advice continued "Then don't stand on the rostrum making the appeal with a pool of water gathering round you; stand on the last but one step of the baptistery."

To these simple comments one may add that the essence of the whole thing is slow, unhurried movement. One gains the impression that, in their own nervousness, some ministers plunge, splash and push as though in a race against time. Candidates are hustled from the baptistery more conscious of the shock following a sudden ducking than of the living Christ. Clumsily administered, the experience is not one to be remembered with joy. The stature of the minister and the size and stature of the candidate have nothing to do with the administration. The water is buoyant and stabilising.

Some people are extremely nervous of being totally immersed and in such cases I can see no virtue in making sure that the nose and mouth are under water. Others, of course, will feel they are not baptised properly unless totally immersed; such points can be discussed with the person beforehand.

I have always made it my practice to have a short personal word to the candidate as he or she stands awaiting the great moment. Then, with all the assurance and the sense of humble privilege one says "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit".

Since ministering in the West Country I have consistently followed the practice of following Baptism by the laying of hands and Holy Communion. There is early Baptist precedent for this, but, more important, it seems to me to be in line with scriptural practice. Again, from the time angle, there is no problem. The Baptism is followed by a fairly long hymn such as "At the name of Jesus" or "O Jesus, I have promised". This gives one ample time to remove one's waders and gown, don one's jacket and whatever other pulpit dress one normally wears, and be back in the church for prayers of intercession and the offering. By the time another hymn has been sung the person who has been baptised has had the best part of quarter of an hour in which to be ready. There then follows the reception into church membership by the laying of hands, preferably by the minister and one or two deacons, and the Lord's Supper. I have never actually

adopted the practice of the newly baptised bringing in the Bread and Wine, but there is no problem in this being done. I have found deacons only too ready to share in the laying on of hands. The whole service, with two scripture readings, takes only 1½ hours.

These comments are offered in the hope that they might be of as much help to others as W. D. Jackson was to me some years ago.

As a matter of history, Jewish proselyte baptism, which was the antecedent of that of John, our Lord's cousin, was self-baptism in the presence of witnesses. By the very nature of the case it was therefore immersion in a vertical position, and Christian Baptism as shown on B.M.S. films appears to be administered in a similar way. The minister places his hand on the head of the candidate who then, presumably, bends his knees to permit immersion. In such cases the height of water in the river is greater than that in the average baptistery.

The baptistery in the ancient meeting house at Loughwood, near Axminster, Devon, is very shallow and could only allow immersion with the candidate in a kneeling position. This mode is in fact used by some Baptist ministers. Whilst I have never seen Baptism thus administered nor spoken with any who have been baptised in this way, one would guess that the sensation of being bowed face downward into the water cannot be altogether pleasant.

A study of baptisteries would be an interesting one. In the village of Southwick in Wiltshire near the Somerset border there are two. One is in the open air and is used by the local Baptists whose church dates from 1655. It was not for another two hundred years that an Anglican place of worship was opened but, when it was, a baptistery was provided, though whether it has ever been used for the immersion of believers I do not know. St. John's Anglican church, Torquay has what is referred to as an "immersion font". These, and one in an Anglican church in Lambeth (now, I believe, closed) are all situated at the west end or back of the churches. Dunsford Baptist church in Devon has a baptistery under the porch, the porch being in fact a bridge over a small stream. The last time there was a service of Believers Baptism, however, the sacrament was administered upstream. The candidate is now a Moravian minister.

Crofton Park Baptist Church, S.E. London and Broad Cyst, Devon both have baptisteries at the rear end of the building, the former by deliberate design, the latter because the baptistery was added as an afterthought. Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, which was for many years a Free Church without specific denominational attachment (though due to its loose affiliations with the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion through the old Surrey Chapel the Anglican liturgy was in use) had a baptistery installed in the school-room, presumably during the ministry of Dr. F. B. Meyer. When a new church building was erected in the late 1950s a font for infant christening and baptistery were both provided. When Christ Church, Cotham in Bristol was formed

by a coming together of Baptist, Congregational and Methodist congregations the Methodist building was adopted for use and it is interesting that it was the Congregational and Methodist participants who insisted on the installation of a baptistery. At a recent service there the baptismal candidates were from a neighbouring United Reformed Church.

With all this in mind it behoves Baptists to lay greater and not lesser stress on our conception of Baptism, to expose it freely for trade in the ecumenical market-place and to ensure that its very administration commends it to others.

IAN MALLARD

## THE BAPTISTS OF POLAND

We received a long article from Michael Stankiewicz, President of the Baptist Union of Poland, describing the history and present work of the Baptist movement in that country. The following is a summary, without addition, of the article, for which we are very grateful. We would also like to thank Bruce Hardy for his helpful editorial work.

Poland is south of the Baltic Sea, east of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, north of the republic of Czechoslovakia and west of Germany. It is a Slav country. The history of Poland begins with the Christianisation of Europe: and the country was the region where the missions of two great churches—the Byzantine or Orthodox, and the Roman or Catholic—met and crossed. By the early middle ages it was clear that the contest was to be won by the latter, and Poland has remained a deeply Catholic country throughout the upheavals and disasters of its often unhappy history.

Polish Catholicism was however no more immune to pre-reformation thought than was the Catholicism of other European regions. In fact our country seems to have been very open to new ideas and hospitable to those who brought them. The Waldenses were sheltered in the towns of Malopolska and Klodzko; the Czech Brethren existed in Kujawy after 1480 under their teacher Komenski; the Hussites propagated the teachings of John Wyclif in Krakow and Silesia. There were Anabaptists in several towns during the 16th Century. Reforming thinkers were putting about reforming themes familiar to students of the Reformation period—the separation of church and state, the abolition of church jurisdiction and papal taxes, the supremacy and authority of Scripture. Poland was a region of refuge for would-be reformers who had fled from less hospitable European lands.

In the mid-sixteenth century, during the reign of King Sigismund Sary, the Reformation came to our country in the familiar forms of Lutheranism and Calvinism, with the latter having the greater appeal and spread, largely due to the greater place given in its life to the role and responsibilities of the laity. During this period religious differences were the cause of severe internal strife in the land as a whole: and there were disputes amongst the churches themselves. Within the Calvinist churches many issues were strongly argued over, not the least of these being the question of infant baptism and its propriety. After several years of discord on this and other questions, a formal division occurred at the Synod in Pinczow in 1562. The

smaller of the separating parties—to be known as the Polish Brethren—immediately began to put into practice principles familiar enough to free church life everywhere. There were baptismal differences even amongst the Brethren themselves, but the first baptism took place at Wegrow in 1565. Many books and pamphlets appeared on the baptismal issue at this period. A pastor named Jerzy Szoman in his 'Testament' makes the following entries:-

15 January 1562 my son was born and baptized as a baby because I did not know the truth about baptism.

22 January 1564 my daughter was born. I did not allow her to be baptized as a baby, because I then knew and taught others that the baptism of infants is of man and not the commandment of God.

31 August 1572 when I was 42 years old I was baptized by immersion in the name of Jesus Christ in Chmielnik. In 1573 my wife was baptized and in 1574 my wife's mother.

The Polish Brethren, taken as a whole, were a varied denomination with many differing branches. We Baptists especially look back to the Rakow-Lublin branch of the Brethren, whose leaders were Martin Czechowicz and J. Niemojewski. But in our country, as in others of preponderant Catholic influence, the full force of the counter-reformation was felt. The Polish Brethren were expelled by the Jesuits in 1658, and they emigrated to other parts of Eastern Europe, and also to Holland and England. The American historian A. H. Newman considered that English Baptists derived their baptism from the influence of the Polish Brethren. In Poland itself some of the Brethren were left behind, but worshipped in conditions of the greatest secrecy and under constant threat. There remained links with other clandestine groups in Prussia, a connection which was to be re-emphasized in the start of modern Baptist life rather more than a century ago.

When we come to the modern period, we have to set events in the background of a region which was divided territorially between three sovereign states—Russia, Germany and Austria: during 1795-1918 there was no Polish state as such. We recall 28 November 1858 as the key date of our new beginnings. A teacher named Gustav Alf, employed at Adamov near Warsaw, had gathered around himself a pietistic circle of earnest believers who, in the course of Bible study and prayer, began to consider the nature of Christian baptism. They were in touch with a Baptist congregation at Stolzenberg, Prussia, and its pastor, one Wilhelm Weist, baptized Alf and eight others at Adamov on the date mentioned earlier. The next day seventeen others were baptized similarly. Thus the Baptist movement commenced—and so also did persecution.

At this early time the Baptist movement was largely a German-speaking one: the deep-seated animosity between native Poles and Germans was a check to Baptist work amongst the former. However, in 25 years some six churches and 17 mission stations were founded, and there are records

of nearly 2,700 baptisms, although emigration meant that church membership was a much lesser figure. The first Baptist church of Slavic people was founded by a Czech, Jersak by name, who established a church in the village of Zelow in 1872. The Warsaw Church was established in 1908. During these years the earlier, German congregations began to attract members from amongst the Slavic population also. A seminary was founded in Lodz in 1907, since that town had become the centre of Baptist life: and by the time of the first World War the Baptists of Poland could count 9,800 members in 43 churches.

The consequences of the war were drastic for the Baptist movement. War deaths, emigration and the redrawing of international frontiers reduced the numbers of Baptists by more than half. Following the institution of the Polish Republic in 1918 and the establishment of Roman Catholicism a period of persecution ensued directed against all non-registered religious groups. By 1921 however the newly formed Slavic Baptist Union was accorded official state registration, and there began a strong forward movement by both Slavic and German-speaking Baptists. By the outbreak of World War II Polish Baptists numbered over 16,000 with a children's work of over 5,000. During this period the work was greatly assisted by the presence of several American missionaries, whose work was specially concerned with the Slav Baptists, not least amongst the students at Krakow University. The year 1926 was to see the foundation of a publishing house with American help. Books, magazines and tracts came from the press freely. We recall with pride that Baptist congregations were the centres of local literacy training in many village areas during this period of national struggle and construction amidst poverty and ignorance.

No English reader needs to be reminded of the disasters which befell our country in World War II. No figures survive for the numbers of worshippers and churches still functioning during these dark days. Although German-speaking congregations were able to have legal existence, many of their members were taken or drafted to Germany and its army: Slavic churches were closed, although in 1941 permission was granted for the formation of a 'Union of Non-German Free Churches'. Inevitably congregations of different traditions came together, a factor which determined the immediate post-war situation.

The political and population changes at the end of hostilities meant that the churches would henceforth be completely Slavic in composition and number. Our leaders can recall meeting in 1945 amongst destroyed houses and smoking ruins to plan for future activity. The first attempt was a union (legally recognized by the new Polish Government) of Baptists, Free Christians, Pentecostals, Darbyists and the Church of Christ. Two years later the Baptists decided, for their part, to discontinue this association which still continues as the United Evangelical Church: the Baptists from that time have existed as a separate group. The

situation was daunting—no churches, no chapels, a State which (quite apart from its dominant ideology) had no spare reserves for other than necessary projects. So in 1947 the BWA inaugurated Baptist Relief for Poland, under the special leadership of the Scandinavians. Our work has grown slowly but steadily, so that the Polish Baptist Union now reports a company of nearly 2,400 church members in 50 churches, served by 40 ministers and over 130 local preachers. Children and young people attached to the churches number nearly 2,000. The Union supports one home for elderly people in Narewka, and is active in evangelistic outreach. Just how active can be judged by the following factors.

- (i) the Baptist magazine 'Slowo Prawdy' circulates freely and has a monthly issue of 3,500 copies.
- (ii) Polish Baptists have printed some 30 titles in the last ten years including translations of Billy Graham's 'Peace with God' and 'The Seven Deadly Sins'.
- (iii) Polish Baptists report 102 preaching stations organised and supported by the local churches.
- (iv) the larger churches hold evangelistic weeks twice a year as a regular activity, while oversight and help is given to smaller churches who cannot run such a week by themselves.
- (v) each year the Union organises an evangelistic youth camp lasting three weeks and a children's camp of similar length.
- (vi) five years ago a correspondence course in theology was commenced with nearly 100 enrolments to begin with.
- (vii) our missionary radio work is specially noteworthy. Each week 15 minutes-worth of broadcasting material is taped in the Polish Baptist Union building in Warsaw and finds its way via Ruschlikon, the Baptist student seminary, to the Trans World Radio Station, Monte Carlo. This is broadcast as 'Slowo Prawdy z Warsaw' on Fridays at 5.15 p.m. on 31 metres, and letters are requested from interested listeners. In response to these requests New Testaments and other Christian literature has been sent, and in 1973 the first convert from this ministry was baptized and received into church membership.

Polish Baptists have full legal existence under Polish State Law: there is no discrimination between religious groups regardless of size. Thus they were permitted to build a large central Baptist building in Warsaw in 1961, housing a church, a theological seminary, administrative departments and the publishing house. It is the hub of Polish Baptist life.

We in Poland are deeply grateful for past gifts to our work from your country, and wish to express our heartfelt thanks for your interest in our life. We seek your intercession on our behalf. More information can be obtained from the BWA Office, Baptist Church House, London WC1B 4AB.

MICHAEL STANKIEWICZ

## BUILT AS A CITY: A REVIEW ARTICLE\*

There are few books written about the work of the Christian Church in urban areas, and even fewer which approach the subject from an evangelical viewpoint. David Sheppard draws upon his experience in inner London to illustrate the needs of such urban areas, and to open up discussion about the way in which the church has responded to the needs. This book could be a landmark for us as it explains some of the thinking that has been going on for a long time, and I would hope and expect that the book will stimulate discussion in all the churches. There is a personal honesty about this book, for it is something of the record of the changing attitude of a man who entered the ministry of the church with fairly orthodox views about the way in which ministers and clergy ought to work through the local churches. He began his work in a famous traditionally evangelical parish church, moved on to the dockland settlement, and then on to the work of a bishop in a very mixed diocese. David Sheppard has not carried over all the assumptions with which he began, and has been asking questions, meeting disappointment and frustration, continuing to struggle with the situations he has met, and now before the answers have come and before his own ideas are fixed on many facets of the work, he has gone into print. This is not a second volume for Parson's Pitch. It is a wide ranging survey of situations and ideas which he has grappled with, and on which some light is breaking.

There is a danger that the book will be read only by those working in, or living in the inner-city areas of our land. If that happens many people will be the poorer and will have missed the point of the issues which are being raised. There is another danger that people will read so far, and coming to the premature conclusion that the author is talking about social class and political matters will either not read any more or will dismiss it as irrelevant or biased in a way in which Christians ought not to be. It is no accident that the areas in which our churches are strongest are the suburban areas of our cities. Country churches tend to be small and struggling. The inner suburbs of cities are "holding-on". The inner city areas are places where (with the exception of the prestige commuter churches) many church buildings are becoming redundant and where small groups of Christians attempt to provide a living witness in a situation which sees them as irrelevant. David Sheppard examines the pressures on the city. He is an Anglican, and speaks largely of the Anglican set-up. It needs to be said that in terms of survival the Anglican Church does rather better than any of the Free Churches. With notable exceptions the relevance and life of the Christian churches in such areas is minimal.

Today many men who began ministry in inner-city areas have moved out to the suburbs to minister to the flock that has taken to new pastures. Pick up a Baptist Union Handbook for 1920 and trace on a map of London the number Sheppard, David, *Built as a City*, Hodder and Stoughton.

of churches and their size on a line going East from Baptist Church House. Then pick up the handbook for 1970 and trace the same factors. The comparison certainly highlights the issues that David Sheppard is writing about.

Part of the argument of the book is that as Christians we have only managed to couch the gospel that we love and live by in terms which are acceptable to white-collar, owner-occupier, suburban people. In terms of class we have a gospel shaped to fit the middle-class consumer and not the working-class consumer. For many years we have recognised this, and have seen that when people from working class situations become Christians they have tended to identify with middle-class values and attitudes. We have explained this as a natural process, for "they will naturally better themselves." Such a way of thinking is seriously challenged by this book. It pleads for the validity of working class culture, and more than that, presents a threat to the middle-class pattern of church life. Suburban church life is not only challenged as the only way to express the Christian faith but it is argued that it is in itself denying many aspects of the fullness of the message of Christ. For David Sheppard it is not that we must spend our time and energy reproducing suburban church life in the inner-city, but that we must spend our time and resources establishing Christian life in the inner-city. If we cling on to the suburban image of the church as that which we aim towards then we are not doing God's work and we are placarding the comfortable culture we know and tend to depend on, as that which Christ wants for all people.

One theme of this book which needs careful consideration is the subject of power and choices. It is here that the political bells begin to ring. The inner-city areas are marked by a severe limitation of choice for the people who live in them. This has always been so, and is no less so now. A brief survey of some historical factors leads the author into a review of the situation as it is today. If political matters are viewed only from a party standpoint then it may be right for us to be worried by the emphasis that he brings. It is his argument and one that is followed through, that when we consider decisions made about housing, the building of schools, the amount of work available in an area and so-on, then we are considering political issues. In so far as all of these are saying something directly about the quality of life in these areas then as Christians we ought to be involved in such issues. David Sheppard is asking you to consider the relationship between symptoms and causes in society. The different attitudes that people have when they either stay put in the street they are in or become homeless is important to consider. If a large factory closes down and hundreds are redundant then it is important to consider what real choices are open to the wide age and skill range of workers that are left without employment.

In any discussion of class it is possible to get lost in arguments about definitions. This book shows clearly that the writer has not idealised the working-class man. This is not the work of a well-known ecclesiastic being patronising

adopted the practice of the newly baptised bringing in the distinction between the poor and the general mass of working-class people. He has not fallen into the trendy Marxist trap of seeing all working class as good and all middle-class as bad. He knows the warts on the faces of people he is writing about, and one suspects has been bruised in the past as a result of experiencing their response to his own approaches. If he has not idealised working-class man it is true that he has not accepted the divine right of industry and commerce to dictate the lives and choices of people without being called to give account. In view of the general passivity of Christians when it comes to the structure of society David Sheppard has been courageous in clearly demonstrating that whilst he is not demanding revolution he is demanding change. For him the concept of the Kingdom of God, and the implications of the total teaching of Christ (as distinct from the simple gospel message usually associated with evangelical rallies) means that Christians ought to be saying and doing something about these matters, because they are not peripheral to people but are the context in which they are living. The way a man lives and the situation in which he lives are important to Jesus Christ. This is not "soul-saving" theology, it is the redemption of the whole man.

Everyone reading this book would like more on some topics and less on others. In places the treatment of a subject is uneven, and at times one feels that one is reading outline notes that could have been amplified by the author. I would have liked to have seen more on social control and order, and more on the relation of professional ministers to the structure and organisation of the church in such areas. Perhaps we will have more on these matters later on. Whatever your frustrations and anger at this book do not let it prevent you from reading it carefully and working out its implications for the whole of the church. We are used to missionaries returning from far lands telling us of the problems they have had in understanding the culture of the people to whom they have been ministering. This book will help you to take seriously the culture of the people amongst whom you work. It can also help you to work out the nature of the gospel and its implications without the severe constraints and limitations of the cultural framework through which you received it.

ROY DOREY