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A table of contents for *The Baptist Quarterly* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bq_01.php

THE BAPTIST QUARTERLY

incorporating the Transactions of the BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY



# EDITORIAL

WE know all too little about Thomas Helwys. One suspects that all too few Baptists know what little there is to be known. He is rightly to be remembered as the leader of the group who initiated the first Baptist fellowship in England in 1612. To remind us of this event, there is the Baptist Union's Ter-Jubilee pamphlet: *Thomas Helwys and the first Baptist Church in England,* written by Dr. Payne. It should be read by all Baptists and by all others interested in the beginnings of Separatism.

Heroes of history have a habit of becoming detached from the normal experiences of life, and remembered for their one particular contribution to history. They become part of the pageant of history rather than men. Thus it is right for us to recall, for example, that Helwys' life was over before he was much above forty; that when he and Smyth crossed to Amsterdam in 1607-8 Helwys left behind his wife and seven children under twelve. We may judge the depth of conviction held by Helwys in taking that course. He had no need to go with Smyth and the others. He could have financed the expedition and remained at home. But he chose to go.

There is every reason to believe that his wife encouraged him in his witness. We should never forget the part Joan Helwys must have played. R. A. Marchant in *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York,* 1560-1642, shows that Joan was arrested in the spring of 1608 and imprisoned at York on the charge of being a Brownist and of refusing to answer questions under oath. Although she was released before the summer, she must have spent

some time in York Castle and is cited again in the summer, still for being a Brownist. There were thus, in those early days, families who held deep convictions about Separatist principles, and who held them at great cost. Does such a spirit exist among Baptist families today?

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We would take this opportunity to remind you of the occasion on April 7th at Bilbrough Baptist Church—the church close to the site of Broxstowe Hall in Nottingham. A plaque commemorating Helwys will be unveiled. If any of you would like to come to Nottingham on that day, the Secretary of the Historical Society will be glad to provide you with details.

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April 30th is the date of our Annual Meeting. As usual it will be at 4.30 p.m. at the Institute Hall of the Westminster Chapel. Dr. B. R. White will be talking to us about Smyth and Helwys. We hope for the usual good attendance. Tea will precede the meeting.

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

HUGH MARTIN, C.H.,
Former Editor, S.C.M. Press.

W. KLAASSEN, D.Phil.,
Former Research Student, Regent's Park College, Oxford.

N. CLARK, M.A., S.T.M.,
Minister, Amersham.

Reviews by: G. R. BEASLEY-MURRAY, I. R. DUNCAN, MAURICE F. WILLIAMS.

# The Baptist Contribution to Early English Hymnody

THERE seems to be something in Baptist principles which inhibits poetic inspiration. Baptists have produced no great poet. Rash people have sometimes claimed John Milton, who agreed with us about believer's baptism but was never a member of a Baptist church, and disagreed with us about so much else that we cannot really count him. The genius of John Bunyan deserted him when it came to writing verse: he wrote reams of it, but it is nearly all sorry doggerel. Nor have we produced a great hymn-writer, though a number of us have written useful compositions which have taken their modest place in hymnody.[1] In the new *Baptist Hymn Book* forty-five Baptist authors and translators are included, though we did not consciously give extra marks to any merely because they were Baptists. Indeed most have found a place in the books of other denominations.

Nevertheless in this field of English hymnody, as in so many others, Baptists have been notable pioneers and have opened the way for successors who have often surpassed them. Baptist historians, and indeed some of other faiths, have too often made exaggerated claims as to the Baptist contribution here, but the sober truth is sufficiently impressive. A Baptist was probably the first to write hymns for children. Probably the first woman hymn writer, and certainly the earliest of any importance and distinction, were Baptists. Baptists did valuable pioneering work in hymn book editing and a Baptist was one of the first two serious students of hymnology. And it was a Baptist church which led the way in this country in introducing hymn-singing into the regular worship of a congregation. It is with the controversy that arose over this last most note-worthy development that I am now mainly concerned, but I shall first say enough to justify the other claims I have made.

According to the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*[2] the first known writer of hymns for children was Abraham Cheare, minister of a Baptist church in Plymouth, who suffered long terms

[1] H. S. Burrage in his *Baptist Hymn Writers* (Portland, Maine, 1888) lists 900, ninety-four of them from the British Isles. Very few are represented in present-day collections.

[2] Article on Hymns by T. G. Crippen, Vol. 7.

of imprisonment for his beliefs. In 1673, perhaps posthumously, for authorities differ as to the date of his death, was published his *Seasonable Lessons and Instructions to Youth,* which is said to have included hymns. I have not been able to see the book myself and I hesitate a little, because it is often stated that both Keach in his *Child's Instructor* and Bunyan in his *Country Rhymes for Children* wrote children's hymns,[3] but when the books themselves are examined one finds verses indeed but no hymns in any proper sense of the word. Yet Cheare apparently influenced Bunyan's famous book, and it in turn certainly helped to inspire the epoch-making *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* by Isaac Watts, in which the border-line between verses and hymns is definitely crossed.

The first woman hymn writer whom I have been able to trace is Anna Trapnell, a Fifth Monarchist Baptist given to ecstatic utterances, who published in 1654 a volume of "prayers and spiritual songs," under the title *The Cry of a Stone.* Whitley (op. cit. p. 186) says that "the first hymnbook published for congregational use was by Katherine Sutton, recommended by Hanserd Knollys in 1663." I have not seen either of these, but I suspect, with all deference to Whitley, that they were both collections of solos sung in Baptist meetings by the writers and not really congregational hymns. For John Smyth and most of his followers objected to congregational singing but held that an individual might sing in church if so moved by the Spirit. The word "hymn" is, in fact, very ambiguous and this adds greatly to the difficulty of disentangling the history. The permission given by Elizabeth I for the singing of a "hymn" at the beginning of Common Prayer was really a concession to those who wanted metrical as distinct from chanted Psalms. To Spenser and Milton a hymn meant a religious ode, and in the 16th and 17th centuries the word was often used in the general sense of a devotional poem. It was only gradually that it acquired our modern sense.

I return from this little digression to another woman "hymn" writer, Mrs. Anne (Williams) Dutton, 1692-1705, from all accounts a most eccentric creature. Egotistical in the extreme and given to dressing in the most ostentatious way, she "aspired," in Whitley's words, "to be the Countess of Huntingdon of the (Baptist) denomination," or, as we might put it, its female Pope. Brought up in Castle Hill Independent Church, Northampton, where at a later date Doddridge was minister, she became a member of College Lane Baptist Church. Her second husband, originally a prosperous draper, became minister of the Baptist Church at Great Gransden in Huntingdonshire. She is credited with having written fifty books, including an autobiography. Our immediate con-

[3] e.g., *History of British Baptists,* Whitley, p. 186.

cern is that among the books was a collection of sixty-one hymns, published in 1734.[4]

Mrs. Dutton bequeathed her Bible to Anne Steele, 1716-78, and in her we meet the first woman to make a real and lasting contribution to hymnody.[5] A member of the Baptist church at Broughton in Hampshire where her father was lay pastor, she published in 1760 a volume of *Poems,* mostly hymns, under the name of Theodosia. They became extensively used in nonconformist collections in Britain and America and several were included in Anglican books also. Though some are morbid or conventional they reach a high general level. Similar in style to those of Watts and Doddridge, they can bear the comparison. Two at least still find a place in modern hymn books, "Father of mercies, in Thy word" and "Father, whate'er of earthly bliss." Hers is a name to be remembered with honour.

Not least to her credit is her share in inspiring the compilation of one of the earliest books to contain the hymns of several writers, most of the previous ones being the work of one author.[6] This volume, published in 1769, was edited by two Baptist ministers, John Ash of Pershore and Dr. Caleb Evans of Bristol College. Among its 312 hymns are 62 by Anne Steele, with many by Watts, Wesley, Beddome, Addison, Stennett, Doddridge and others. It is an admirable selection. This Bristol hymn book, as it came to be called, is notable for its courageous challenge to the monarchic rule of Watts..

But the churches were not yet ready to break away from his domination, though the Bristol book had a wide circulation. In 1787 another Baptist editor, vigorously disclaiming any desire to supplant Watts, issued *A Selection of Hymns from the Best Authors, intended to be an Appendix to Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns,* and normally bound up with them for congregational use. This had a resounding success both here and in America. Dr. Benson, the distinguished hymnologist (*op. cit. p.* 144) writes that Rippon's "judgment and taste, his command of originals and his editorial discretion, were such as to secure to himself a permanent place in the history of hymn singing." Through Ash, Evans and Rippon, Baptists made a notable contribution to the development of the modern English hymn book on both sides of the Atlantic.

A Baptist did outstanding service in another field also. The

[4] Some account of this extraordinary woman can be read in Wheeler Robinson's *Life and Faith of the Baptists.* See also Whitley, *op. cit.,* p. 214, and Benson, *The English Hymn,* p. 213.

[5] An account of Anne Steele may be found in *Great Baptist Women,* ed. A. S. Clement.

[6] *E.R.E.* mentions one published in 1694, *A Collection of Divine Hymns on Several Occasions, Suited to our Common Tunes,* stated to contain hymns from seven authors, including Baxter and Mason.

first important student of hymnology in this country was James Montgomery, the Moravian, who was also one of our greatest hymn writers. But an honourable place must be given to his contemporary, the little-known Daniel Sedgwick, a member of the Baptist Providence Chapel off the Commercial Road in East London. He was in business as a second-hand bookseller and specialised in collecting hymns. In 1852 he began to publish reprints of hymns of the 17th and 18th centuries and though poorly educated became something of an expert. Sir Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Selborne, pays tribute in the preface to his fine anthology, *The Book of Praises,* 1862, to the help he had had from Sedgwick, who, he says, had "attained to a knowledge of (the literature of hymns) probably not possessed by any other Englishman." He was also consulted at every step by C. H. Spurgeon in preparing *Our Own Hymnbook* and by the compilers of *Ancient and Modern.*

My present concern is with the share of Baptists in introducing hymn singing into the regular worship of English congregations. In this they took a leading part, but not without a vigorous and sometimes even bitter controversy in the denomination. Foremost among the protagonists was Benjamin Keach, 1640-1704, whose name deserves to be held in honour not only among Baptists but by the Church at large. Of his life and record in general I say little here, partly because I have recently published a booklet about him.[7] He occupied a very prominent, perhaps dominant, position among the Particular Baptists in the generation living at the time of "the glorious revolution" of 1688. In his earlier life he had suffered severe persecution for his principles. He did great work as minister of a flourishing church in Southwark and was a leader in many aspects of denominational life, including ministerial training and sustentation, and church extension. His numerous books had a wide circulation and in the judgment of his contemporaries he rivalled Bunyan as a writer of allegories. It is unfortunate that his real contribution to English hymnody has been so often exaggerated, even by distinguished writers. I suspect there has been some copying of judgments from one book to another without independent examination of the facts. Someone has said: "History repeats itself and historians repeat one another." Keach has been given "the honour for the composition of the first modern hymn"[8] which is grotesquely undeserved. Even if the sentence was meant to read "hymn book" it would still be untrue. An expert on hymnology says he "published the first English Church hymns," an indefensible statement.[9] An authority on Baptist his-

[7] *Benjamin Keach, Pioneer of Congregational Hymn Singing,* Carey-Kingsgate Press, 1961.

[8] Horton Davies, *The English Free Churches,* p. 120.

[9] Routley, *Hymns and Human Life,* p. 148.

tory[10] attributes to him "the first hymn book in use." As a general statement this is far from true. If the word "English" were inserted the claim would be arguable, though almost certainly unjustifiable. Attempts have even been made to transfer to him the title of "father of English hymnody," which Lord Selborne, deservedly bestowed on Isaac Watts. Many hymns were written and published before Keach, some of them still in our current books, and, as we shall see, several hymn books were "in use" before his own appeared in 1691.

What can be claimed for him, and it is a great deal, is that he was the first to introduce the regular singing of hymns into the normal worship of an English congregation. This he achieved only gradually, with great tact, and against considerable opposition. Is 1673 he got his congregation to sing a hymn at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper, alleging the precedent of the "hymn" sung by our Lord and the disciples—which was almost certainly a Psalm. Six years later the church agreed to sing a hymn on "public thanksgiving days," and fourteen years after that, every Sunday; the whole operation thus taking twenty years. "If I am not mistaken," wrote Crosby, a deacon of the Church and Keach's son-in-law, "(this) was the first church of the Baptists that thus practised this holy ordinance." Though it was arranged to sing the hymn at the close of the service, so that those who disapproved could leave before it, twenty-two members resigned and joined another church where hymns were forbidden.

It will be well to review the situation before considering the arguments for and against, strange to our modern outlook. Congregational singing, as distinct from choral, was both an instrument and a result of the Reformation. Hus and his followers had a hymn book in 1501 and Luther published one in 1524. Anabaptist books are known from 1564. All these were in use long before Keach was born. Calvin believed in congregational singing as strongly as Luther, but only of the Psalms and not of "human composures." Since Calvin's influence was dominant in the English Reformed churches only metrical Psalms, in many different versions, were used in church asd meeting-house in this country, though some of the dissenting groups objected even to them. The early versions prided themselves upon being literal. When men began to select and paraphrase in order to make the Psalms more relevant to contemporary life, as John Patrick did in 1679, a step was taken towards the hymn as we know it.

The 16th and 17th centuries also saw much devotional poetry from which later editors have made hymns, though the writers mostly wrote for private reading with no thought of public wor-

[10] *Baptist Quarterly*, X, 1941, pp. 369ff.

ship. Among them are such great names as those of Donne, John Austin, George Herbert, Crashaw, Ken and Crossman. But as early as 1623 George Wither produced an actual hymn book, furnished with tunes and intended for use in church. Even with the backing of the king he failed to get it adopted. Two later attempts, both earlier than Keach's book, met with some success, though definite evidence is hard to find. William Barton, who had already issued an influential version of the Psalms, published his first volume of hymns in 1659, when vicar of St. Martin's, Leicester. They were used in some nonconformist churches, including the Independent Church in Southampton attended by the parents of Isaac Watts. K. L. Parry says that if Watts was the father then Barton was the grandfather of English hymnody. Barton's book was known to Keach, who quotes from its preface in *The Breach Repaired,* his great polemic for hymn singing, of which we shall hear more in a moment.

Then in 1674 another Anglican, John Mason, published *Songs of Praise,* apparently for use in his own congregation. It sold twenty editions and Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology* says it was used in public worship in the later 17th century, mostly by nonconformists. Several volumes of hymns from Baptist sources were published in the middle of the century and some of them are said to have been "sung in the congregation," though as already indicated this probably means as solos. Vavasor Powel advocated hymn singing in Wales before the Restoration and a volume of his hymns was published after his death. Several Baptists towards the end of the century composed hymns to be read out line by line and sung after the sermon in their own churches, among them the celebrated Joseph Stennett, 1663-1713, who published a collection for use after the Lord's Supper in 1697, later than Keach's first book, followed by a collection of hymns for baptismal services.

This rapid survey makes it clear that Keach was certainly not the first to write hymns or to publish a hymn book actually used in public worship. He published *Spiritual Melody* in 1691, with a sequel, *Spiritual Songs* in 1696, containing between them 400 hymns, all his own writing. As a prose writer Keach is far from negligible, but his hymns and other verses are just terrible. If the dissidents had left on the ground that nothing on earth would induce them to sing *his* hymns, I should wholeheartedly sympathise, having read his two volumes through and sampled his other effusions. I can only endorse Spurgeon's judgment that the less said about Keach's verses the better, and I leave it at that, especially as I have given quotations in my booklet. His hymns are best forgotten, but for his long campaign to establish hymn singing in our churches he deserves our cordial thanks. To that campaign I now turn.

Prominent among the opponents of hymn singing was Thomas Grantham, 1634-92, an influential General Baptist layman of Lincolnshire and later of Norwich. In his *Christianismus Primitivus*, 1678, he complained that the Church was suffering in many ways by "the encroachment of humane Innovations." It is a large volume, covering a great deal of ground, on what we might now call apologetics and ethics, and only a small part deals with hymn singing. It reveals wide reading and real learning, though much of it is taken up with futile argumentation. Among the undesirable innovations is reckoned "the Custom which many have taken up to sing David's Psalms or their own composures in a mixed multitude of voices." "This new device of Singing what is put into Men's Mouths by a Reader" is "foreign to the sincerity and simplicity of this holy service" of worship and might even, he fears, open the way for "Forms of Prayer." "Alas, what a groundless practice have we here? The Holy Scripture is a stranger to it, none of the Apostles used to do thus that we read of: Nor is there any Reason that any man's Verses should be introduced in the Church as a part of the Service of God, or that all should be tyed to one Man's Words, Measures and Tones in so great an Ordinance." He writes vigorously but temperately. "I would not be understood to censure them that differ from me in understanding or practice in this particular, who have a pious mind in setting forth God's Praises in some of the modes here opposed." I shall quote him further, though the controversy took place among the Particular Baptists and not among the Generals to whom Grantham belonged.

For the General Baptists almost all agreed with Grantham. They disapproved of "promiscuous singing" of believers with unbelievers, and thought the use of "set forms" for singing or for any other purpose unspiritual. So their General Assembly was disturbed when it was reported to them in 1689 that some of their churches were actually using metrical Psalms by Barton, "which," they declared, "appeared so strangely foreign to evangelical worship that it was not conceived anywise safe for the churches to admit such carnal formalities," though it was permissible for one worshipper to sing by himself to lead the praises of the congregation just as one might lead its prayers.

Among the Particular Baptists there was not the same unanimity of opinion and a sharp debate took place.[11] Robert Steed, minister

[11] The only lengthy discussion on the controversy known to me is a chapter in J. J. Goadby's *Byepaths in Baptist History*. I have found this helpful, but my own account is independent and based upon a first-hand study of the writings of Grantham, Keach, Crosby and other contemporary writers, for access to which I am indebted to Dr. Williams's Library and the libraries of the Baptist Union, the Baptist Historical Society and Regent's Park College.

of the Bagnio Church, Southwark, to which the malcontents from Keach's church joined themselves, declared in *An Epistle Concerning Singing,* 1691, that set hymns were as bad as set prayers if not worse. The whole thing was a human invention not a divine institution. Isaac Marlow, a leading layman, wrote at least three books against the practice. On the other side were the great Hanserd Knollys, and Hercules Collins of Wapping, who is said to have been the first among the Particular Baptists to urge that singing was "a public duty." John Bunyan wrote in favour in his *Solomon's Temple Spiritualised,* 1688, but though he set his pilgrims singing on many occasions he could not persuade his own church in Bedford to follow their example. It was not until after his death that hymns were accepted there.

Keach had advocated hymn singing in two earlier volumes but his main statement of the case is to be found in *The Breach Repaired in God's Worship, or Singing of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs proved to be an Holy Ordinance of Jesus Christ. With an Answer to All Objections,* 1691. It was written in reply to Marlow's *Discourse Concerning Singing* of the previous year. Keach's book impresses the reader with its ability, cogency and good temper. It is forcefully written but there is no trace in it, any more than in Grantham's of that personal abuse of opponents which was all too common in pamphlets of that time. The furthest he goes is to describe Marlow's arguments as preposterous and nonsensical, as indeed they were. Keach appeals to Biblical precedents in a way that few of us would do nowadays, but in this he is only a man of his own generation. Granted his presuppositions his case is presented logically and persuasively. Some of his arguments are foolish but they are mostly provoked by the still more foolish contentions of Marlow and company. Marlow twists and turns and contradicts himself in the most amazing fashion. I am reminded of the story of the man who was charged with assault and battery. He presented his defence in a series of alternative submissions. He didn't really hit the man at all; it was only a friendly push. Alternatively, the other fellow was a blackguard and thoroughly deserved the good beating up he gave him. But alternatively, he was not there at all and had a complete alibi for the time when it was supposed to have happened.

Marlow starts by maintaining that when the New Testament speaks about singing it really means a "mental singing," "melody in the heart." "What can be more plain," he writes, "than that Singing and other Gifts of the Holy Spirit have their Essence in our Spirits, wherein we are capable of worshipping God without Verbal or Vocal Instruments of the Body." So Keach is obliged to begin with a chapter in which he reasonably declares that

"Singing is a Duty performed always with the Voice, and can't be done without the Tongue. The Essence of Singing (if that word may be admitted) lies no more in our Spirits than the Essence of Preaching." How can a man make "a joyful noise" without using his voice? "Truly," concludes Keach at the end of quite a long chapter, "I am almost ashamed I have this occasion to speak and to be so large upon it; but knowing what I have met withal from some poor, weak and doubting Christians who stumble at Noonday about the very Act of Singing, not knowing what it is . . . I have thought good to begin here."

Then he gets down to business. "My first Argument shall be taken from the Antiquity of the Practice, 'tis as ancient as this world: the World and singing of the Praise of God came even in together, or very near each other, when the Morning Stars sung together and all the Sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38). Secondly, as the Angels sang at God's laying the Foundation of the first Creation, so also they sang at the beginning or bringing in of the second Creation . . . even at the Birth of Christ they sang 'Glory to God on High'. There are more Precepts that injoin all Men to sing the Praises of God in the Old Testament than there are for them to pray unto him: which seems to be done as if it were on purpose to silence those Men's Spirits (whom the Holy Ghost might foresee would in some Age or another oppose this Sacred Ordinance)."

Besides, singing is natural to man. "We see all Men and Women more or less are naturally as apt and ready to sing as to speak. Now was this tunable and musical Tongue, or that Faculty of Singing, not given to us and to all Mortals, think you, to sing forth the Praises of our Creator?" You might as well argue, retorted his opponents, that God approved of dancing, which would be a *reductio ad absurdum* indeed; for dancing, laughing, shouting, whistling are as much faculties as singing. In any case, Robert Steed pointed out, some people cannot sing, not having "tunable voices," and women are forbidden by the apostle to open their mouths in church.

No doubt, admitted the opponents of hymns, there is singing in the Old Testament, but that was under the Law and it is done away under the dispensation of grace. The Old Testament precedents are dismissed by Grantham as a concession to the "gross hearts of the Jews . . . and in no-ways transmitted to the Church of Christ by any part of Christ's doctrine in the New Testament." But surely, argued Keach, there are many precedents for singing in the New Testament also; such as Zacharias, Simeon, Elizabeth, the Virgin Mary, and our Lord Himself with His disciples. Indeed when Paul and Silas sang in prison God showed how pleased He

was by working a miracle in response.[12] Besides, he urges, the fact that there was the singing of praise to God at the Red Sea (Exodus 15, 1) before the giving of the Law proves that it is not part of the Law but belongs to God's natural worship.

But, asserted his opponents, if your argument holds good you are committed to the use of musical instruments in church, for they are certainly associated in the Old Testament. Hymns and music must stand together, and, said Grantham, "sith those musical instruments are laid aside, sure all Poetical Singing ceased with them." Here was a nasty problem. Keach and his fellows heartily agreed that the use of musical instruments in worship was unthinkable, yet the Old Testament facts could not be denied. His reply is unconvincing, even though he calls in the new world to redress the shakiness of the old. "Singing with instruments we say, with Reverend Mr. Cotton[13] was typical and so a Ceremonial Point of Worship and therefore ceased, but Singing, saith he, with Heart and Voice, is a Moral Worship, such as is written in the Hearts of all Men by Nature . . . and so continueth in the New Testament." Alternatively, he argues, singing with instruments was "only an external Solemnity of Worship fitted to the Sense of Children under Age (such as the Israelites were under the Old Testament." (Gal. 4, 1-3.)

Admitting that the apostles and others in the New Testament did sing, says Marlow, shifting his ground again, they are no real precedent for us since they had "an Extraordinary Gift" of the Holy Spirit. True, replied Keach, but so they had in everything. "From hence it will follow There is none now can, or ought to, Preach, Pray, Interpret, etc., or dispense any one Ordinance of the Gospel."[14] Certainly, as Keach shows by numerous quotations from the Fathers, the early Church continued to sing. And it was clearly prophesied in the Old Testament that they would do so. For example, Psalm 96 in calling upon all the earth to praise the Lord must be referring to the time when the Gentiles had been

[12] Oddly enough Keach makes no reference, so far as I have noticed, to what seems the most obvious precedent, where the assembled Christians "lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, 'Lord, thou art God which hast made heaven and earth and the sea'." (*Acts* iv. 24). This suggests to me the use of a familiar hymn in public worship. Some commentators think it means only that one man offered prayer to which all responded by saying Amen—a rather far-fetched explanation.

[13] Rev. John Cotton published in Massachusetts, about 1640, *Singing of Psalms a Gospel Ordinance* from which Keach was probably quoting. Cotton insists that "singing of Psalms with a lively voyce is an holy duty of God's worship. Women should not take part in this" (1 *Cor.* xv. 34) and "spiritual songs" which were not versions of Scripture might be sung privately, but not in public worship.

[14] Grantham agreed with Keach that no argument could be drawn from the exceptional spiritual endowment of the apostles.

converted through missionary work of the Church. So also, as Paul points out in Romans 10, 15, when Isaiah (52, 7f) says, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing," he must refer to "the Times of the Gospel and to Gospel Ministers." Further, the fact that we shall sing in heaven, as the Book of Revelation demonstrates, conclusively proves that singing is "in the highest state of Grace" and not only under the Law.

But the opponents of congregational singing are not crushed yet. Grantham declared that when Paul referred to church meetings at which "everyone of you hath a Psalm, etc." (I Cor. 14, 26) he meant "something further than to be able to read or sing them out of a Book or as set forth by another." And he could not be referring to the Psalms of David which *everybody* had. "He that hath a Psalm is required to sing a Psalm in the Church *and no-one else,* like as he that hath a Doctrine . . . The Church is to attend on him or to what he holds forth in the way of Psalmody that they may be taught and admonished by him, or have their hearts exhilarated or drawn up to praise the Lord in Conjunction of their Spirits with his, and so be said to sing with him that singeth, as they may be said to pray with him that prayeth." The apostle did not mean that the Psalm should be "sung promiscuously of the whole congregation."[15]

Nor did the opponents of hymns admit that the "singing at the Last Supper" proved anything. We are not told, they said, what the hymn was or who sang it. "There is nothing to justifie such a confused singing as many use in these days," and it should be noted that when Paul gave instructions to the church at Corinth as to the conduct of the Lord's Supper he did not mention a hymn. "Might they not be said to sing together though none sung but Christ only, and his disciples at the close say Amen, as in Prayer. Men are said to pray when there is but one that is the Mouth." "If the Disciples did not joyn in singing that Hymn," Keach replies, "but only by silent Consent, then they might as well be said to have taken the Bread and blessed it . . . for all this Christ did with their silent Consent. But what our Saviour did alone is expressly recorded as done by himself . . . But observe, this of Singing or Hymning is laid down in the plural Number, when they had sung an Hymn."

The many Biblical references to singing and making a joyful noise, said Keach, could not possibly refer to one man singing. Take, for example, the passage in Exodus (32, 17f) when Moses came down from the mount and exclaimed, "the noise of them

[15] So far Grantham was probably right: Paul is here referring to an ecstatic outburst on the part of an individual.

that sing do I hear." "Certainly one Man's Voice could not have made such a Noise, nothing can be more clear but that they sung with united Voices together." Yes, his opponents retorted, but they were praising the golden calf not God. "Tis no matter to whom they sung," said Keach, with perhaps a touch of irritation, "it was their Sin and horrid Wickedness to give that Divine Worship and Praise to a molten Image that belonged to God only, but there is no question but they sung now to this false god as they had done to the true God of Heaven and Earth."

As for objecting to singing "precomposed hymns" you might equally object to any prepared sermon, "and I am satisfied," decleared Keach, "I have equally in them both the like assistance of the Spirit. Our sermons are no more made for us in God's Word than our Hymns are," Keach argues cogently against those who were prepared to sing nothing but the Psalms of David. Apart from the fact that other passages of the Bible are suitable for singing and were so used by the early Church, such as the Magnificat, "Hymns may be plainer than Psalms and more suitable to Gospel occasions. As we are not tied up by the Lord in Preaching to do no more than barely read the Scripture or quote one Scripture after another . . . but may use other Words to edify the Church provided they agree with and are congruous to the Word of Christ . . . so when that which we sing is taken out of God's Word or in Scripture, absolutely congruous, truly and exactly agreeing thereunto, it may as truly be called the Word of Christ as our Sermons are."

His opponents urged that if there had to be singing at least it should be by church members only. Promiscuous singing of believers and unbelievers together was unspiritual. "If it be unlawful," replied Keach, "to let them sing with us, tis unlawful to let them in their Hearts joyn in Prayer with us. Must not the Children have their Bread because Strangers will get some of it? Besides in the church of Corinth, when singing was brought in among them . . . the Apostle speaks of Unbelievers coming into their Assemblies: and tis one Reason he gives why they should take heed to prevent confusion." It is in any case the duty of all men to praise God and it cannot be unlawful to join with them in doing their duty. Such an attitude would also mean an end of evangelism. "Tis evident the Church is not bound to worship God alone in the Administration of the Gospel, and not suffer the People to come among them, unless she intends to become no Church in a short time, for how shall she increase or have Children born in her? Is not hearing the Word of God preached and Publick Prayer as Sacred Ordinances of the Gospel—Worship as Singing?"

Marlow objects that he cannot find in the New Testament any command to sing in public assemblies, either before or after the

sermon. "You must take heed," begs Keach, "and avoid needless Questions and Contentions. We have no Command to Pray in our Publick Assemblies either before or after Sermon . . . Must we not use the Practice therefore?"

The argument in the denomination seems to have been so hot that a special committee in its report to the Particular Baptist Assembly in 1692 rebuked both sides and urged charity and mutual forbearance. They begged that all the books should be withdrawn and no more of the kind written. Keach's book certainly does not deserve such a censure. Marlow's is more violent and no doubt others that I have not seen. I can only assume that angry words had been spoken. Keach was notoriously hot-tempered, as he often penitently confessed, and perhaps in public speech had gone far beyond his book. On the merits of the issue the Assembly did not pronounce. Public controversy apparently ceased for a time at least and each congregation took its own course, with the result that the singers rapidly gained ground. Even the church in which the disgruntled minority from Keach's congregation had taken refuge had to fall into line when a new minister whom they called refused to come unless they agreed to sing hymns!

Marlow, however, was not subdued either by Keach's book or by the rebuke of the Assembly. His volume *The Truth Soberly Defended* in 1692 may indeed have been issued before the Assembly met, but he had not that excuse for another in 1696, curiously called *The Controversy of Singing Brought to an End,* which in fact started it all over again! His summary statement of the issue as he then saw it is worth quoting, if only because it shows that he had given up some of his earlier positions. "The question between us and our brethren is not whether any such thing as vocal melodious singing is exhorted unto in the New Testament, for this we freely own; but the controversie lyes herein, viz., (1) Whether the saints were moved to the exercise of it in the Apostles' time only as an extraordinary spiritual gift, depending on divine inspiration, as some other gifts did; or that it was appointed as a constant Gospel ordinance in the church in an ordinary administration also. (2) In what external manner it was thus exercised; whether in a prestinted [i.e., prescribed] form of words, made in artificial rhimes, or as the Spirit by His more immediate dictates gave them utterance. And (3) Who was it that sang? Whether the minister sang alone; or with him a promiscuous assembly of professors and profane men and women with united voices together."

Marlow complains that "the infection" of "such rotten notions" about singing had spread so far by 1696 that there were few London churches free from it. He realised that he was fighting a losing battle, though the General Baptists, still under Grantham's influence, held out longer than the Particulars. But forty-

four years after their earlier condemnation of the whole business, in 1733, when the Northamptonshire Association complained that some of their churches were singing psalms and hymns the General Baptist Assembly declared that the teaching of Scripture was not clear and that they did not wish to pronounce any judgment on the issue.

It is perhaps safe to say that by the end of the 18th century the use of hymns had become a generally recognised part of public worship among Baptists and Independents. It took the Anglicans another half-century to get so far.

HUGH MARTIN

# Hans Hut and Thomas Muntzer

ONE of the most interesting persons we encounter in the Reformation era is Thomas Müntzer. Born in Stolberg in the Harz mountains in Germany in 1488 or 9 of perhaps fairly well-to-do parents, he was a lover of books from his chidlhood, matriculated at the University of Leipzig in 1506, and later studied at Frankfurt. He early acquired a large library in which were found works by Augustine, Jerome, Apuleius, Suso, Tauler, Plato and Basil. He gained a working knowledge of Hebrew and Greek in order to be able to study the Bible more effectively, and his writings give evidence of extraordinarily thorough acquaintance with the Bible. From 1506 to 1520 he always seems to have frequented places where he could study. In 1519 he made the acquaintance of Luther. When in that year he came to Zwickau, he already showed traces of his mystic inclinations. He became fond of the writings of the chiliast Joachim of Fiore. and it was here at Zwickau that his fateful acquaintance with Nicholas Storch began, whose views on chiliasm and revelation decisively influenced Müntzer. Although he seems to have been freed from Romanism through Luther's influence, his emerging radical tendencies soon caused considerable friction and eventual separation, each becoming the implacable foe of the other. In their respective polemics against each other they were to give vent to their mutual intense dislike for one another. Müntzer, ousted from his living by Luther, soon became a restless wanderer, gradually becoming more and more radical, and identifying the salvation and judgment of God with the Peasant's Revolt of which he along with many others was the victim in 1525.[1]

Among Mennonites this man's very name has been a bad word for a long time and no wonder. From the time of the Reformation until now he has been called the founder of the Anabaptist movement by historians and critics, and Mennonites have rightly repudiated this assertion or charge as it was often meant to be. Only recently have historians become more careful in what they say about the Müntzer-Anabaptist question, although the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church,* published 1957, still perpetuates the fiction that the Anabaptist movement come directly frof Thomas Müntzer.[2]

Now that historical research has established that although there were contacts between Müntzer and men who later became Anabaptists he has nothing to do with its origins, we can take a good look at the man as a Reformation personality, and also as a man who in some ways significantly influenced Anabaptism. That this is the case is the conviction of this writer. Nor is there any more need to steer clear of the man simply because he is Thomas Müntzer. The thing that has frequently inhibited Mennonites from giving this man serious consideration is of course his radical revolutionary activity from which they anxiously seek to dissociate themselves. Since, however it has been established by Mennonite historians, and others as well, that Anabaptism had no connection with such social revolution as he advocated and practiced, we can calmly and without panic consider another completely different side of this man. For Thomas Müntzer was not only a revolutionary: he was also an intelligent man, a theologian of some ability, and a mystic. In the blurb on the dust cover of Otto Brandt's biography of Müntzer he is referred to as one of the great Protestant mystics, and this is certainly accurate. It was Karl Holl who first pointed this out in his essay "Luther und die Schwärmer." In that work he takes Müntzer the mystic theologian, seriously, regarding him as a creative thinker, and outlining his system of thought in some detail. Otto Brandt does the same thing in his book. This does not mean, of course, that either Holl or Brandt were Müntzer fans, but it does mean that they had the courage and the integrity to give this, in some respects tragic figure, a firm place in the history of Reformation thought. Ought we to be any less courageous, particularly when the work of these men is already nearly thirty years old?

Müntzer was a mystic. No one who has read his brief works can really doubt this. Who his teachers were is not hard to guess. Connections between his thought and that of Medieval mystics and especially Tauler can easily be traced. He took over from Tauler the idea that the way of discipleship is suffering with Christ which leads to union with God and to faith,[3] a point of view that was very prevalent in certain Anabaptist circles in the late twenties of the sixteenth century. Although Münzter's mysticism was mixed with Joachimite chiliasm and also with ideas that were distinctively his own, it is his mysticism that we want to isolate here as the point at which he became important for Anabaptism.

Another very striking personality of that turbulent time is Hans Hut. He was a native of Thuringia. By trade he was a bookbinder and also a book salesman, helping to circulate Reformation writings. There is preserved for us a verbal portrait of Hut, originally published by the city Council of Nurmeburg, a sixteenth cen-

tury version of "This man is wanted by the F.B.I." In it he is described as

> The highest and chief leader of the Anabaptists . . . a well educated, clever fellow, rather tall, a peasant with light brown cropped hair and a blonde moustache. He is dressed in a grey, sometimes black, riding coat, a broad grey hat, and grey pants.[4]

This gives the impression of a man of striking enough appearance as would attract the attention of those who saw him. His writings add to this portrait, showing us a deeply religious man, of unquenchable and energetic zeal for his new found faith; a strong man, willing to take upon himself the sufferings about which he wrote so much; an obedient man, doing the bidding of his Lord under all circumstances. In 1524, due to a conversation with several artisans near Wittenberg, he began to think seriously about baptism. He went to Reformation headquarters in Wittenberg for help, but was not satisfied. His thinking produced positive, or should one say negative, results when he refused to have his newborn child baptized. This refusal led to his expulsion from his home. The rest of his life was to be spent wandering from place to place. In the course of his travels he became acquainted with Müntzer in his capacity as a bookbinder and salesman, but also because he had found in Müntzer some of the answers to his questions that were not forthcoming in Wittenberg. They must have been well acquainted as is indicated by Müntzer's stay at Hut's house during his flight from Frankenhausen. On May 26, 1526, on his way through Augsburg he again met Denk, who, after some considerable debate finally convinced Hut of the necessity for baptism. This marked the beginning of an amazing career of missionary work. The man seems to have taken no time to rest; he was on fire for his Lord and the church, and this took him, in a period of eighteen months, through Germany, Moravia, Austria as far as Vienna, and back again to Augsburg where, in August 1527 he was arrested along with other Anabaptist leaders. Later in December he died as the result of a fire in the prison where he was confined. Hut was certainly one of the most striking, interesting and influential leaders of the early Anabaptist movement in South Germany and Austria. It is for this reason that it is important to examine his thought.

The problem of the influences that shaped the thinking of Hans Hut has caused increasing comment during the last few years. Lydia Müller saw a close connection between the thought of Thomas Müntzer and Hut as she prepared the first volume of *Glaubenszeugnisse oberdeutscher Taufgesinnter* in 1938. Grete Mecenseffy, the Austrian historian, claims a direct connection be-

tween the thought of Müntzer and Hut in her essay "Die Herkunft des oberoesterreichischen Täufertums" which appeared in *ARG* in 1956.[5] Dr. Gordon Rupp of Manchester, in his fascinating and thought-provoking article "Word and Spirit in the First Years of the Reformation,"[6] makes similar suggestions. At one time he even went so far as to suggest that Hut's "Von dem gehaimnus der tauff" was actually Müntzer's work, but has since retreated from that position. From the Mennonite side have come a number of outright denials of this.[7]

The resemblance in the writings of Müntzer and Hut are too obvious to be passed over without comment. Even Mennonite historians have recognized this. But it serves no purpose hotly to deny any formative influence of Müntzer on Hut without offering a satisfactory alternative. This appears thus far to be lacking. A comprehensive biography of Hut and a detailed study of his thought and its sources has become an absolute necessity for the proper study of South German Anabaptism. Many of Hut's ideas vary so much from those of the Swiss Brethren, for example, that an explanation for them must be found.

At the centre of the controversy have been concepts common to Müntzer and Hut such as "the creatures," "the cross and suffering," their view of the Scriptures and points of resemblance in their eschatology. Grete Mecenseffy selects especially the theology of "the cross" as the most obvious example to illustrate the dependence of Hut on Müntzer. There is no doubt that this is the most important point of similarity between the two, followed closely by the teaching about 'the creatures,' and by an unusual view regarding the Scriptures. The common source of these three concepts is Medieval Mysticism. From this it appears that the mystic strain in South German Anabaptism of the Hut tradition came in in large measure by way of Thomas Müntzer. He was not himself the originator of these views, but, as in a relay race, received the torch from someeone else, in this case the Medieval mystics, and then passed it on to Hans Hut who in turn committed it to others.[8]

It is to be expected, of course ,that Müntzer, being an intelligent thinker in his own right, would put his own stamp on these inherited ideas, and this is what happened. Likewise Hans Hut too was a man of some ability, and was in his turn able to sift the wheat from the chaff in what he received from Müntzer. That we get changes from the original formulations of the mystics is therefore not surprising, but this does not prevent us from being able to trace clearly, both in Müntzer and in Hut, these mystic ideas. Nor do they, in the process of modification, lose much of their essentially mystical character.

We will proceed now to a comparison of Müntzer and Hut with reference to the three concepts of "the creatures," "the Scriptures, and "the cross and suffering." This order has been chosen because it lends itself best to a consecutive study. Actually these three concepts although they are here dealt with separately, are of one piece, as will be seen in the frequent necessity to explain one in terms of the other.

The notion of "the creatures" or "the creation" is a fascinating one. Upon a first reading of Müntzer, although the term is used frequently, one does not get the impression that there is an organization of ideas that accounts for the use of these words. The writer suspected this and said so in his dissertation which forms the basis for these articles.[9] Renewed reading of Müntzer's works has led to the conviction that Hut did not merely borrow the term "creatures" and then proceed to use it in his own way, but that he also took over Müntzer's use of it which is fairly clearly defined. "Creatures" or "the creation" and God were considered by Müntzer to be opposites. It is the ancient mystic dualism of matter and spirit which are mutually exclusive having nothing to do with each other. They are in fact actively opposed to each other.

There are a number of passages in Müntzer's writings which indicate what he thought of as the function of the "creatures" in man's relationship to God. The most important passage here is from his *Exposition of the 19th Psalm:* "Die Werk der Hände Gottes müssen die erste Verwunderung von Gott bewiesen haben, es ist sonst alles Predigen und Schreiben verloren."[10] "The Creatures" are the first witness to man of an omnipotent God who is concerned about men, and only after man has heard this witness is it possible for him to respond to the preaching of the Gospel or reading of the Bible. The witness of the creatures is the witness of God which man can apprehend with his natural reason, and is therefore the natural starting place for all men in their knowledge of God since all men have this natural reason. This is the "order of God in all the creatures."[11] God has ordered His purpose in this way, and this, says Müntzer in his earliest definitive theological tract the "Prague Manifesto," is a thing he has not heard even one learned man mention with so much as single word, and consequently no one knows about it. All he has heard from the cursed parsons is the bare Scripture.[12] But Müntzer goes further than this. Not only do the "creatures" constitute the first witness of God to man, but they also preach Christ and His suffering.[13] This means therefore, that even a man who has never read the Bible or even heard a preacher can be a true believer in Christ. It is here that one finds the explanation to Müntzer's insistence that true faith is possible without the Scriptures. That

Müntzer actually taught such a "gospel of the creatures" appears from one of the writings of Urbanus Rhegius of 1525 entitled *Widder den newen irrsall Thomas Müntzers und D. Andreas Karlstadt.* "It is now two years since your partner Thomas Müntzer thought to belittle the Bible and supposed that he could instruct a farmer in the faith from the created things."[14]

This teaching about the creatures is to be found in the mystics whose writings Müntzer had studied. Many years before Bernard of Clairvaux had written, "Believe me, for I have experienced it; you will find vastly more in the woods than in books. Wood and stone will teach you what you can never receive from teachers."[15] Meister Eckhart was even more explicit when he said to his congregation:

> How is that I know more of God than you do? This is not the reason that I have studied or read more books. Education is of little value. All creatures are speaking of God. The same thing that my mouth says and reveals can be perceived from the rock, and one gains greater understanding from the works, than from words . . . Every creature is full of God and is a book.[16]

The creatures witness to God, and man has only to see them to perceive the message they preach.

But the word "creatures" also had another meaning for Müntzer. The "creaturely" is the opposite of the "spiritual." Faith can come only when the creatures have been overcome, that is to say, when man has, in a tremendous struggle transferred his dependence from the creatures to God. Although the creatures teach man about God, he must never depend on them for they are only creatures and cannot help man to acquire faith. In fact, they *prevent* him from depending on God alone. When a man comes to the point where he wants to believe, says Müntzer he desires only what God can teach him. The creatures with their disobedience and independence of God are to him as bitter gall, for their way is a perverted way.[17] Only as man understands the creatures and God and their proper relationship to man and to each other can he begin to comprehend the Bible.[18] Again we see that knowledge of the creatures in Müntzer's view precedes a proper use of the Scriptures.

Here, too, one can point to the mystics as the source of the idea. "Soll Gott hinein, so muss die Kreatur hinaus" said Tauler in one of his sermons.[19] Another sermon contains the following words "Know that none of the creatures that God ever made can ever deliver you or help you. Only God alone can do this."[20]

Although the teaching on this subject appears in very scant form in Müntzer's writings, it must have been something like the reconstruction here attemped since other points of his theology depend upon it. There is also the possibility that Hans Hut's treatment of the subject is more dependent on Müntzer than would appear from Müntzer's writings, although it is impossible to demonstrate this.

Hans Hut took over from Müntzer his idea of "the creatures." Clearly this can never be proved beyond dispute, but a comparative study of the writings of these two men leaves no doubt in the writer's mind that this is what happened. Hut, after all, associated with Müntzer during the years when his own views were being shaped. He met with Müntzer on several occasions.[21] He took care of the publishing of the *Ausgedrückte Entblössung,* a short work on the first chapter of Luke. We can be reasonably certain that an enquiring mind like that of Hut would carefully have studied this writing, and perhaps others as well, since he was clearly interested in Müntzer, but more because he was looking for answers to his questions. Much emphasis has been placed on Hut's later words, "er hab in ettlich malen hoeren predigen, ine aber nit mögen vernemen,"[22] and this has been translated, "He could not understand him." It could also be rendered, "He could not hear him," perhaps because of noise or being too far away from the preacher. Hut seems to have understood Müntzer well enough, so well indeed, that he was able to take over from him what he considered to be good and reject that which did not agree with his Anabaptist convictions. Again; why was it that Hans Denck had to spend considerable time in persuading Hut to be baptized?[23] It was precisely because Hut did not at that time consider water baptism to be of any importance as Müntzer also held. Indeed, Hut later continually emphasised in his writing about baptism that water baptism is insufficient of itself, unless accompanied by the baptism of the Spirit and of suffering.

When we go to the writings of Hut, particularly his "Von dem gehaimnus der tauff" we find this idea of "the creatures" worked out in greater detail and given what he considered to be a firm Biblical basis. It has assumed the shape of a doctrine under the title "The Gospel of all the Creatures." This strange expression is a result of a grammatical error in the German. The phrase is taken from Mk. 16 : 15, "darum gehet hin in alle Welt und prediget das Evangelium aller Kreatur." In German the genitive and dative case endings of a feminine noun in the singular are identical, so that the adjective "aller," which modifies the collective noun "Kreatur" which is written as a singular noun, also has the same ending. Thus the dative "to all creatures" could easily be

taken to mean the genitive "of all the creatures" and this is the way in which Hut understood it.

This 'gospel of all the creatures' was, according to Mk. 16:15, the gospel which Christ commanded the apostles to preach. A more significant passage dealing with this idea was found in Rom. 1: 20.

> Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and diety, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.[24]

This was to Hut and his followers ample evidence that this 'gospel of all creatures' was Biblical, since here Paul says that men can recognize the existence of the great and almighty God from the created universe. The words of Heb. 11: 3, "By faith we understood that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear," were used to prove that God has created the things that are seen, so that through them men might perceive unseen things.[25] Moreover, Hut says, and this appears to have been as important an argument as any, Jesus Himself always preached the 'gospel of all creatures' to the people, since they understood it more readily than book knowledge.[26]

Hans Denck said that even before he was born again God was working in him by His Spirit. This, he said, is the case with all men basing himself on John 1: 9. Hut also believed that God speaks to man before man responds, but he held this speaking to be external instead of internal. In "Von dem geheimmus der tauff" he says:

> For all the elect from the beginning of the world to Moses have read in the book of all creatures, and from this they have perceived that they have a natural understanding which has been written in their hearts by the Spirit of God. . . . All men thus deal with creatures, even the heathen who do not have the written law, nevertheless do the same as those who have the written law.[27]

The creatures witness to God, and God has given man the faculties by which he may perceive that the witness of the creatures in this first stage is to the fact of the existence of a righteous and Almighty God, and this, according to Paul, even the heathen can perceive, but there is no thought that through the creatures man may come to a saving knowledge of God. So far then, Hut agrees with Müntzer, namely that the creatures are a witness, the first witness of God to men.

Hut then follows Müntzer a further step to say that the creatures also show as in a type the sufferings of Christ.[28] The similarity between Müntzer and Hut is so striking here that it is worth quoting them both. Here is Müntzer in his *Hochverursachte Schutzrede*: "Die ganze heilige Schrift saget nit anders—wie auch alle Kreaturen ausweisen—denn vom gekreuzigten Sohne Gottes." Now follows Hut in his *Von dem geheimnus der tauff*: "Wie auch die ganz scrift und all creatur nichts anders anzaigen den den leidenden Christum." Müntzer's writings do not show any amplification of that bare statement, which, as I said earlier, explains his conviction that man can have true faith without the Scriptures. Hut could not quite follow Müntzer in this, so he expanded the idea, saying that the creatures show the sufferings of Christ. Jesus Himself taught the poor the gospel by means of things with which they were familiar, the created world which surrounded them, for the common man was more readily taught in the creatures than from the Scriptures.[29] In fact the Scriptures themselves continually point to the creatures. "Derhalben," says Hut, "ist auch die ganz scrift durch eitl creatur beschrieben."[30] Hut therefore believed that a man could actually see the truths of the Gospel of Christ in the creatures. The true significance and force of this conviction is seen when we remember that in the sixteenth century there were still many illiterate folk who could not read the Scriptures, but who *could* read from the created world about them the 'Gospel of all the creatures.' Although, as stated above, Müntzer did not expand that one statement, the words of Rhegius quoted previously[31] are important here, namely that Müntzer had been attempting to teach a farmer, perhaps an illiterate man, the faith, and for Rhegius this certainly meant faith in Christ, from the natural creation. Thus Hut may have been dependent on Müntzer even for his *expansion* of the idea. This impression is increased when we compare the views of Müntzer and Hut about the Scriptures.

The importance of the Scriptures in Reformation thought is so well known that it is not necessary to say anything about that in a general way here. Everyone who had any interest in the Reformation, be he Lutheran, Zwinglian, Roman Catholic or Radical, had something to say about the Bible. It is therefore not surprising to find Thomas Müntzer mentioning the Bible frequently in his own writings, and because he was a Protestant, to find him using it as the basis of thought and his programme of social revolt. But although the Bible was normative for him as for the rest of the Reformers, his views on the Bible collide head-on with those of Luther. In fact some of his most virulent attacks were focused, not on the Scriptures themselves as has often been thought, but on the use men, and especially Luther, made of the Bible.

The writer's purpose here is to show that Hans Hut adopted in its essential features Thomas Müntzer's view of the Scriptures and their function. To do this requires first of all a statement of Müntzer's position.

As Otto Brandt suggests in his book, faith was for Müntzer the prime essential,[32] as also it was for Luther. Müntzer then immediately asks the question as to the source of faith and promptly answers that it does not come from the Scriptures. His evidence for this position is based on two considerations. The first is the nature of faith itself. "Faith" he writes in *Von dem gedichteten Glauben,* "is an assurance that one may depend on the word and promise of Christ." This faith, as the Scriptures themselves testify, is not easy to come by. "Let every pious and staunch chosen one of God search the Bible. . . . He will find that all the Fathers, the Patriarchs, Prophets, and especially the Apostles, achieved their faith only with great difficulty."[33] After all, they *had* no Scriptures and yet they had faith.[34] Consequently it is clear that faith cannot come from the Scriptures, for if it did, it would be easy to get and not difficult, since all one would have to do is read the Bible. But the problem is that the world is full of those who suppose that faith comes from the Scriptures and these *Schriftgelehrte* or scribes not only believe this themselves, but they also deceive the poor people so outrageously that it is hard to express in words.[35] This deception is so shocking because the faith that they suppose they gain from the Scriptures is not the true faith that will make a man righteous before God. It is a fabricated and purloined faith. There is no doubt of this since such a faith would be easy to obtain: indeed anyone who could read could have it, but the Scriptures themselves say that true faith is difficult to come by.

Again it is impossible that faith could come from the Scriptures because of the nature of the Scriptures themselves. Müntzer, as also the other mystics, accepted the matter-spirit dualism. The Bible, he taught, is a creature, created by God for a special purpose, and that purpose is to witness to God. Because it is a material creature and therefore opposed to the spiritual, it cannot possibly produce that faith which belongs to the world of the Spirit.[36] Because faith does not come from the Scriptures they are not necessary to a true Christian faith. "Even if a man had never heard nor seen the Bible," he wrote in *Aùsgedrückte Entblössung,* "he could have a true Christian faith through the teaching of the Spirit, as all those who wrote the Bible had without recourse to any books."[37] This does not mean it is useless, for Müntzer is anxious that it be used for the purpose for which it was created. This is not to make alive, but to kill.[38] No doubt this a reference to Paul's words about the letter that kills (II Corinthians 3 : 6), words which

were such a favourite for those in the Reformation period who had an inclination to mysticism. It appears also from this that Müntzer regarded the written Scriptures in much the same way as St. Paul regarded the law. But even for the Bible to fulfil its function of killing rather than making alive there is the condition that the reader must have the Key of David without which it remains a closed book. Only with this Key of David can a man understand the Scriptures and this key can be got only after the independent advent of faith. Without the Spirit of Christ which is the Key of David the contradictions in Scripture cannot be reconciled. This inability of men to reconcile opposing Scriptures is the cause for all the trouble in Christendom.[39] Whoever therefore does not have the inner witness of the Spirit can never understand the Bible "even though he had swallowed one hundred thousand Bibles."[40] Once man is able to understand the Scriptures he sees that they teach what he has already experienced, namely that the way to faith is through suffering and dying.

Now it is a terrible calamity, writes Müntzer in *Ausgedrückte Entblössung,* that the Scribes have practically monopolized the Scriptures insofar as their interpretation is concerned. They take from it what they please, each according to his desire, and the deception of the common man is so enormous that no one can express it.[41] Because of this the poor man will have to get his instruction elsewhere, and this can be accomplished only by the Spirit of Christ.[42] Not only do these Scribes mislead the people by telling them that faith comes from the Scriptures, but they use the Scripture as a cloak of maliciousness, and thus prevent the true nature of the Christian faith from shining out into the world.[43]

Müntzer is therefore not directing his words against the Bible. His own constant use of it testifies to his belief that it is important. He sincerely believed that his own programme of violence was legitimized by the Bible. This is perfectly clear from his sermon before the Princes. No, he is not directing his attack against the Bible but against the misuse of it. Luther's use of the Scriptures appeared to him as to a good many others a renewed externalization of religion, preventing men from appreciating and experiencing its true inwardness.

Those are broad outlines of Müntzer's view of the Scriptures. Now to take a look at Hans Hut. Hans Hut begins his writing *Ein Christlicher underricht* with words very much like those used by Müntzer:

> Since the Holy Scriptures, a witness of God, written by Moses, the prophets and the apostles, is rarely composed of large sections but rather piecemeal, there follows from it nothing but error, unless we are able to reconcile the parts with the whole.[44]

Men who use the Scriptures without being able to reconcile contradictions in Scripture are certainly in error themselves and lead others astray as well.[45] The reason for this is, says Hut, that they lack proper judgment, a judgment that can be learned only in the school of suffering.[46] This expresses Hut's conviction that the Scriptures are very important indeed, as they also were for Müntzer, and that the main problem is that they are being misused by those who do not have the proper equipment to use them. Such persons, and here Hut is referring to the clergy who he calls *Schriftgelehrte,* know less about the Scripturse than the apes, even though they purport to be masters and teachers of it. As far as they are concerned it remains sealed with seven seals, and they are not willing to have it opened to them through the work of God, *namely suffering.* Consequently everything they teach is false and has the wrong order, and by it the poor man is seduced, deceived and led into all manner of harm. The only thing to do therefore is to avoid these false teachers, for they are not interested in themselves in the first place, and more important, all they can talk about is faith, but no one has any idea about how to arrive at it. They say they have faith, but it is a spurious and fabricated faith that is purloined from the Scriptures. Therefore the poor man must turn to the poor, those despised by the world, who are called enthusiasts and devils, as also were Christ and the Apostles. It is to these that he must listen, and they will hear how good God himself teaches them the faith in the school of suffering.[47] All this has been outlined above as belonging to the thought of Müntzer, and has been taken almost verbatim from Hut's book on baptism.

Hut further depends on Müntzer when he says that before there were any written Scriptures, that is, before Moses, men nevertheless had a knowledge of God. From the creatures they learned that they must renounce the world and depend on God. The same is true of the heathen even yet. Furthermore Jesus himself did not teach the poor man out of the Scriptures, but from the book of the creatures. "Thus," he writes, "he did not refer them to books, to chapter and verse as our scribes do, for what can be learned from the Scriptures can also be learned from the creatures, and Christ used the Scriptures only to convince the tender Scribes."[48] Hut himself did not say anything specific about how he regarded the Scriptures, but he had a number of disciples whose writings provide parallels to Müntzer's thought. It is legitimate to use these non-Hut sources, since these men were obviously guided and influenced in their thought by Hut. If it was not by Hut then it must have been by someone else who thought like him. In any case we have here again such striking parallels to Müntzer's thought that to attribute them to his influence seems like the most

obvious way of solving the difficulty. The written word is not the true word of God because it too is a creature, wrote an unknown Anabaptist in his confession.[49] The best statement of the Hut tradition on the Scriptures comes from the pen of Ulrich Stadler in his tract, *Vom lebendigen Wort und geschriebenen,* written about ten years after the death of Hut. All things, he writes, were ordered and created by God including the written and spoken word. Therefore he who desires to use the Scriptures in the right way, and not to impute to them more than they claim for themselves or is proper, must distinguish them carefully from the inner word of the heart. The written word is only a testimony or sign of the truth. The mere Scriptures are of no use without the inner word; they are no more than stories and an illusion. It is clear that this written word is not the word of God, otherwise the multitudes, who constantly hear it read, would have forsaken their evil ways to do the good.[50] Again we have the same points that were previously raised by Müntzer; the Scriptures are only a witness; man must not impute to them more than they claim for themselves; it must be recognized that they are not the source of faith, but that this comes to man from God Himself in the depth of the soul.

Again this does not mean that the Scriptures were unimportant for Hut and his disciples. The exact opposite was the case. Their writings abound with references to the Bible, as also do the writings of Müntzer. In the Scriptures, writes Hut, the cross of the suffering of Christ the Mediator are shown, the works, truth and righteousness of the crucified Son of God.[51] Only through Christ can man be saved, out of the pure grace and mercy of God through faith in Him.[52] This knowledge can be gained only from the Scriptures. Through this seed of the outer Word the true word of God will be born in man.[53] The Scriptures are the bridge over which man passes from dependence on the creatures, that is the external witness to God and His working, to dependence on God alone. The Scriptures are the witness to the way; Christ Himself *is* the way. When man, desiring to know God, reads the Scriptures, writes Leonhard Schiemer, he becomes horrified at his condition which the Scriptures point out to him, and this leads him to listen to sermons, read the Scriptures, pray and ask questions, all with a sincere heart. To such God gives His Grace continually that they will begin to know Him without media, in the depth of the soul.[54] But as the creatures are a witness from which the elect must be weaned, so the Scriptures also must be left behind and not depended upon as the truth itself.

As with Müntzer therefore, we have here not an attack on the Scriptures as is often claimed, but against their misuse and for the same reasons. These men had come out of Romanism which to

them was a purely externalized form of religion, and to them it seemed that Luther, their chief evangelical opponent was returning to the thing against which he had revolted. This accounts for the strong emphasis on the inner word, while at the same time clearly delineating the function of the outer. Here, as elsewhere, a great deal has had to be left unsaid due to limitations of space, but this is sufficient to show that the connections between Müntzer and Hut are broader than has heretofore been recognized.

There remains now the *theologia crucis*. As was stated above this has been singled out as the most important point of resemblance between Müntzer and Hut. The writer believes this to be correct, since it includes much of what has already been discussed. Beginning again with Müntzer we find that his theology of the cross commences with the answer to the question about the origin of faith. The advent of faith can only come through personal experience of the cross, and can never come merely from believing.[55] This experience of suffering is the most arduous experience through which man can pass and it is therefore no wonder that we read in the Bible that men of old were beset with difficulty and trouble before they were able to lay hold of this faith.[56] Before man can receive this faith he must be prepared for it by God Himself by means of the cross of suffering. "As a field cannot bear a plenteous harvest of wheat without the ploughshare, similarly no man can say that he is a Christian, if he has not before been made willing to wait for the work and word of God through His cross."[57] This preparation means cleansing. All that is contrary to God, and His will, all the weeds and thistles and thorns must be eradicated, before the heart can be filled with that which is good.[58] Long ago Tauler had said:

> The Holy Spirit has two works in man. The one is that He empties, and the other is that He fills again what He has emptied. Emptiness is the first and most important preparation to receive the Spirit. The emptier a man is the more receptive he is. If God is to come in, the creature must leave. Everything that is in you and that you have taken to yourself must of necessity be put away.[59]

The only way to gain divine blessings is to be made empty and receptive by prolonged chastisement through the suffering of the cross.[60] Once this suffering begins it quickly becomes so severe that man comes to despair of himself and everything on which he has depended so far. In this condition, which is really the suffering of the pain of hell, man believes that there is in him not the slightest vestige of faith. All he has is a desire for it, but even this is so faint and weak that it is hardly perceptible.[61] When man recognizes his condition as hopeless, his heart becomes quite broken and helpless and yielded. In this condition man may re-

ceive the gift of God which is faith, and God will not despise such a broken and contrite spirit.[62]. It is this yielded and broken condition which Müntzer refers to as *Langeweile*,[63] and which elsewhere in mystic writings is called *Gelassenheit*. In this condition the man can hear God's word, pay undivided attention to it and accept it. All this is referred to by Müntzer as "being crucified with Christ" and in His suffering man becomes *Christformig*.[64] This is the bitter Christ from whom everyone turns away, for the sweet Christ is what men want.[65] Once a man has thus come to the faith through this experience of the suffering of the cross he can understand the Scriptures perfectly, for all through them he sees the mirror of his own experience. This suffering is the key of David.

Hut states his *theologia crucis* in his short work *Von dem geheimnus der tauff*. In fairness it must be said here too that Hut goes beyond Müntzer in his attempt to relate his mystic insights to the Reformation doctrines of justification by faith and *sola scriptura*. He anchors himself in the New Testament when he expands the meaning of Christian baptism as commanded by Jesus to include the theology of suffering. Again we have the same censure of the clergy who preached only the faith but do not go beyond this to tell the people how one may get this faith about which they preach so glibly.[66] There is a condition which must be fulfilled before man can believe and this is cleansing. Man in his natural state has given his allegiance to the creatures rather than to the Creator. He chooses to depend on what he can see rather than on what is invisible. Before faith, which is trust in God, can enter, man must be weaned from his dependence on the creatures to a sole dependence on God. He must be cleansed of the creatures who rule his life. As a farmer prepares his field before he plants the seed so God cleanses and prepares man before His word is given that it may grow and bear fruit.[67] God cannot sow the seed of His word into a soul that is full of thistles and thorns, that is to say, whose desire and love is alone for the creatures. All this must be taken away before the word can be sown.[68]

Everyone, says Hut along with Müntzer and Denck, wants a sweet Christ, one who does not demand anything and no will have anything to do with a bitter and challenging Christ. It is possible to experience the sweet Christ, but not before one has tasted of the bitter Christ, and this is precisely the cleansing of the man from his dependence on the creatures.[69] This suffering, for that is what it is, is a part of the sufferings of Christ, for the whole Christ suffers, that is, He with all His members. It is false when the Scribes say that Christ the Head has done it all.[70] For as Christ the Lamb of God has suffered from the beginning of the

world, so He must continue in His members to suffer until the Body of Christ is complete. The creatures themselves as in a parable show that man must suffer. Even as the creatures must suffer the will of man, man must suffer the will of God. Before the creature can be of any use to man as food it must be cleansed and prepared and cooked. In the same way God proceeds with man. If he is to be useful to God he must be cleansed inside and out through suffering.[71]. No man may come to blessedness except through the way of suffering and tribulation which God works *in* him.[72] Whoever desires to rule *with* God must be ruled *by* God; whoever would do *God's* will must surrender his *own*. God can dwell in a human life only to the extent to which it is delivered from itself,[73] and the only way in which the domain of self can be reduced is through the cross of suffering which God Himself imposes on His own.[74]

According to Hut this suffering is the baptism about which Jesus speaks in the Gospels and without which it is impossible to be saved. Consequently water baptism which follows the preaching of the Word and the response of faith is not the true essence, but a sign, a parable, and a memorial that daily reminds man of the true baptism, the waters of tribulation through which the Lord cleanses, washes and justifies from all fleshly lusts.[75] The waters that invade the soul are *Anfechtung,* sorrow, anxiety, trembling and grief, all suffering in its most acute form. Thus baptism is suffering.[76]

This experience of suffering is so severe that a man may think that there is left in him no trace of faith or trust and that he is cast off by God. This is the descent into, and the suffering of, the pains of Hell. Here no creature can comfort him, but He alone who has led man into Hell. In the midst of this suffering of the cross man becomes aware of his faith,[77] and it is at this point that God, who lets no man perish in this baptism, leads him out of it.[78] No one can apprehend the truth unless he follow in the footsteps of Christ and His elect in the school of suffering.

It will be seen that this corresponds in every respect to the summary of Müntzer's view on this subject with the exception that Hut calls this whole experienec the true baptism. However, Hut tries to relate these mystic views to the Reformation view of justification by faith. The sign of baptism or water baptism is given first and then follows the true baptism.[79] This implies that man had already responded in faith before the suffering, which Hut, like Müntzer, holds can alone produce faith. How is this to be reconciled? Hut has the answer. "The faith which comes from hearing is accounted for righteousness *until man is justified and cleansed under the cross,* at which time such faith becomes like (*gleichförmig*) the faith of God and one with Christ."[80] In other

words, what he seems to be saying is that the faith which comes from hearing is a sort of "interim" faith. It merely accepts the word as true and then, through suffering, matures into a trust in, and a reliance upon, God alone. What we have here is something like the later Wesleyan distinction between justification and sanctification. That Hut means this becomes clear from a last quotation: "The true baptism is nothing else than a battle with sin throughout the whole life."[81] It is also clear that Hut along with the rest of Anabaptism, considered the hearing of the word to be the necessary starting point for this whole theology of suffering.

Further it seems as though outward sufferings were only incidental to this process for Hut. The suffering about which he speaks here does not come under the theology of martyrdom which is ascribed to Anabaptism, but it is the process of weaning men from dependence on the visible created things to dependence on the invisible God. This is a mystic train of thought and although, as indicated, he tries to reconcile it with Reformation dogma, it remains mystic both in its formulation and in its function.

This comparison between Müntzer and Hut does not, to be sure, tell the whole story, since only several parts have been singled out for discussion. But the longer one reads the writings of these two men side by side the more resemblances emerge. It could be claimed, of course, that Hut got his mystic views elsewhere, but this would be almost like saying that Grebel got his evangelical views from someone other than Zwingli. The fact that Müntzer and Hut were acquainted rather intimately is a strong point in favour of a dependence of the latter on the former.

But this is not the only consideration here. It is clear that South German Anabaptism had a large mystic component in its thought, and that this comes not *from* Thomas Müntzer but *through* him from Roman Catholicism. George Huntston Williams, in a new book on the Radical Reformation that is about to be published, adds further information on this question, saying that in some cases there has been direct borrowing from Roman Catholicism, although this is disguised in mystic and evangelical terminology. It must also be said that this mystic strain in Anabaptism did not survive in any influential form. In the Hutterite movement which was the inheritor of it, it eventually came to a dead end, and among the Swiss Anabaptists it was never an important factor.

There is no need for Mennonites to be embarrassed by the presence of mysticism in their tradition, for mysticism has traditionally concerned itself with the investigation of the depths of the inner experience of the Christian. Out of Anabaptist mysticism have come some of the most deeply moving and beautiful spiritual writings of the Protestant heritage. Whether it came through

Müntzer or in any other way really makes little difference to the genuine faith and trust in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to which it gives expression.

## NOTES

[1] Otto Brandt, *Thomas Müntzer. Leben und Schriften*, (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1933), pp. 3-23. Hereafter referred to as *Brandt*.

[2] *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 933.

[3] *Brandt*, p. 24.

[4] *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertaeufer II. Bd. Markgraftum Brandenburg* (Bayern I. Abteilung), ed. Karl Schornbaum (Leipzig: M. Heinsius Nachfolger, 1934), p. 19. Hereafter referred to as *TA* II.

[5] Grete Mecenseffy, "Die Herkunft des oberoesterreichischen Tauefertums," *Archiv fuer Reformationsgeschichte*, XLVII (1956), pp. 252-258. Hereafter referred to as *ARG*.

[6] *ARG* XLIX (1958), pp. 13-26.

[7] Herbert C. Klassen, "Ambrosius Spitelmayr; His Life and Teachings," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XXXII (1958), pp. 251-270, (hereafter referred to as *MQR*); H. S. Bender's review of Grete Mecenseffy's *Geschichte des Protestantismus in Oesterreich*, in *MQR*, XXXIII (1959, pp. 78-80; Robert Friedmann, "Thomas Muentzer," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, ed. H. S. Bender *et al* (Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House), III, pp. 785-789.

[8] Hans Schlaffer, Leonhard Schiemer, Peter Riedemann, Jacob Hutter, Wolfgang Brandhuber, Ulrich Stadler.

[9] Walter Klaassen, *Word, Spirit and Scripture in Early Anabaptist Thought* (unpublished D.Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, p. 191).

[10] *Brandt*, p. 145.

[11] "Prager Anschlag," *Brandt*, p. 59.

[12] *Brandt*, p. 54.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 189.

[14] Urbanus Rhegius, *Widder den newen irrsall Thomas Muntzers und D. Andreas Karlstadt.*

[15] F. Kropatschek, *Das Schriftprinzip der lutherischen Kirche*, I. Bd. *Das Erbe des Mittelalters* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1904), p. 194.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 193.

[17] *Brandt*, p. 131.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

[19] *Ausgewaehlte Predigten Johann Taulers*, ed. Leopold Naumann (Berlin: pp. 239, 241, 243. Hereafter referred to as *Tauler*.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[21] Christian Meyer, "Zur Geschichte der Wiedertaeufer in Oberschwaben," *Zeitschrift des historischen Vereins fuer Schwaben und Neuburg*, I. (1874), pp. 239, 240, 243. Hereafter referred to as *Meyer*.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 243.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 245.

[24] Revised Standard Version.

[25] *Glaubenszeugnisse oberdeutscher Taufgesinnter* I, ed. Lydia Mueller (Leipzig: M. Heinsius Nachfolger, 1938), p. 49. Hereafter referred to as *GZ* I.

[26] *GZ* I, p. 19; cf. pp. 94-95.

[27] *GZ* I, p. 19.

[28] *Brandt*, p. 189; *GZ* I, p. 17.

[29] *GZ* I, p. 17. Cf. A. Nicoladoni, *Johannes Buenderlin von Linz* (Berlin, 1893), p. 251 (hereafter referred to as *Nicoladoni*), and *GZ* I, p. 95.
[30] *GZ* I, p. 17; cf. *Nicoladoni*, p. 251 and *GZ* I, p. 95.
[31] See above p. 214.
[32] *Brandt*, p. 26.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 127.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 168.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 130.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 179.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 128.
[39] *Ibid.*, p. 164.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 154.
[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 165, 168.
[42] *Ibid.*, p. 165.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 168.
[44] *GZ* I, p. 28.
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 31.
[46] *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[47] *GZ* I, pp. 13-14.
[48] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[49] Hans J. Hillerbrand, "Ein Taeuferbekenntnis aus dem 16. Jahrhundert," *ARG*, L (1959), p. 45.
[50] *GZ* I, pp. 212-214.
[51] *GZ* I, p. 34; cf. *Brandt*, p. 189.
[52] *GZ* I, p. 87.
[53] *GZ* I, p. 34; *Brandt*, p. 142.
[54] *GZ* I, p. 65; cf. *Brandt*, p. 128.
[55] *Brandt*, p. 26.
[56] *Ibid.*, p. 126.
[57] *Ibid.*
[58] *Ibid.*, pp. 134, 139.
[59] *Tauler*, p. 28; cf. p. 51.
[60] *Brandt*, p. 177.
[61] *Ibid.*, p. 142; cf. p. 131.
[62] *Ibid.*, p. 174.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 177.
[64] *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 185.
[65] *Ibid.*, p. 129.
[66] *GZ* I, p. 13.
[67] *Ibid.*, p. 17; cf. *Brandt*, p. 126.
[68] *Ibid.*, p. 18; cf. *Brandt*, pp. 134, 139.
[69] *Ibid.*, p. 26; cf. *Brandt*, p. 129.
[70] *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[71] *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[72] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[74] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[75] *Ibid.*, p. 20; cf. p. 24.
[76] *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[77] *Ibid.*, p. 23; cf. *Brandt*, pp. 131, 142.
[78] *Ibid.*, p. 121; cf. *Brandt*, p. 174.
[79] *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[80] *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[81] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

WALTER KLAASSEN

# In The Study

DARTON, LONGMAN & TODD are putting all Protestants heavily in their debt by making available in English translation a judicious selection of the best of modern Roman theology. Rome may or may not be irreformable; but Continental theologians are striking out on new paths, and surprising things are happening. Upon the broad-based renewal in biblical studies, kerygmatic and dogmatic theology is being reared. Here are three substantial works[1] which should not be ignored. For in their varied ways they are all of ecumenical significance.

Karl Rahner demands the most of the reader. This is not for the beginner, nor for the general practitioner. For most of us the Continental milieu is remote and the philosophy of existence a dark mystery. Nevertheless, only those completely lacking in perception will fail to sense the contemporary orientation of these studies, the boldness of their reach, the challenge of the restatement they provide. This is a fruitful labour of an original mind that is from first to last intent in bringing the modern world and "the faith once delivered to the saints" together. Father Rahner will not take refuge behind the walls of scholasticism. He must always venture out to grapple with the relentless questions of today.

The collection of theological essays inevitably lacks the coherence of the planned survey of a delimited field. The author ranges widely in discussions that include dogmatic theology, the doctrine of God, christology, mariology, nature and grace. He seeks to fill a lacuna in modern "Catholic" theology, which he adjudges to have largely failed to come to grips with the contemporary situation. A Protestant, seeking to assess the precise nature of the ecumenical divide at this juncture, is conscious once again of the ambiguity and inexactness of so much of the theological writing of his tradition when set against the precision of "Catholic" terminology. Yet, on the other hand, he is heartened by the constant recognition of familiar emphases that promise something approaching common ground. In his discussion of the development of dogma, Rahner stands firmly on the biblical understanding of revelation, as being saving happening before it can become propositional truth. And in his exploration of current problems in christology, he lays enormous weight upon the full humanity of Christ, as being more than an episodic and transitory significance. The Ascension begins to

[1] *Theological Investigations,* Vol. I, by K. Rahner. 63s. 1961. *The Bible and the Liturgy,* by J. Danielou. 42s. 1961. *The Meaning of Sacred Scripture,* by L. Bouyer. 35s. 1961.

assume its rightful governing position in Christian theology; and the statements of Chalcedon are used with a disciplined but historical understanding that should rebuke the unimaginative woodenness of some orthodox Protestant theologians.

Especially valuable is the interpretation of the dogma of the Assumption which seeks to illumine its real content and meaning and demonstrate its logical coherence with other accepted Christian doctrine. Yet it is just at this point that hope and despair mingle inextricably. If, in the end, the voice of the *magisterium* is decisive, then the Roman Church would appear to be free—both for good and for ill. She is free to depart from false accretions in tradition: hence partly the enormous potentialities for reform and the doctrinal flexibility that she possesses. She is free also to succumb to the intuitions of her historical consciousness: hence the limits that so often seem to fetter reformation. It is this paradox and tension that at one and the same time exhilarates and depresses.

Whatever else may be obscure, one thing is clear: that the catalyst in this confused situation is Scripture. Indeed, it is with the Bible that both Bouyer and Danielou are, in varied ways, concerned. Father Danielou's study in Bible and liturgy has been a standard work since its original publication in French a decade ago. It is an attempt to uncover the typological lines that link the Old Testament with that understanding of the sacramental rites and the major liturgical festivals betrayed by the expositions of the Fathers. The mass of patristic material collected is not the least valuable feature of this presentation. The judicious discussion of it that is provided is of still greater importance. But it is the theological acumen clarifying principles and drawing conclusions that is of highest significance. Something of the inner heart of scripture and of liturgy is here unveiled.

On the whole, patristic interpretation is rooted in and expressive of a common tradition that is biblical through and through. It is the unity of the saving history and the consistency of the God who is active in it that render so fruitful for our understanding of the inner life of the People of God the use of eschatological typology as the golden key. Persons, events, and institutions point backwards and forwards for their fullness and fulfilment. It is the figure of Jesus Christ who binds together Old Israel and New Israel, because He is at one and the same time end and beginning. So it is that the sacred history has its three phases—the time of the Old Covenant, the time of Jesus Christ, and the time of the Church; and the theological analogy is found to operate in this threefold way. The prophecies point forward as type seeking antitype not only to the person of Christ but also to the Church.

Danielou works out this approach with particular care in relation to baptism and eucharist. He argues that the sacraments must be viewed in two ways. There is the reality that they embody and

enshrine. There is also the visible sign, the sacramental symbol. To both of these we must apply the typological key, and in both these directions the Old Testament is found to be significant and controlling. In general the Fathers remain conspicuously faithful to the scriptural emphases. But typology has its own dangers. Even such an enthusiast as Danielou has at times to confess that patristic exegesis begins to run off into the vagaries of allegorical interpretation. And their problems and uncertainties are our own.

Are there governing principles and criteria to direct and steady us? Perhaps. Yet it would seem that the more fruitful approach will be by way of a continuing attempt to breathe deeply in the biblical air itself and accustom the eyes to its own characteristic perspective. This is the contribution of Bouyer, whose collected lectures range broadly over the whole content of Scripture in order to expound the unity and continuity of the saving purpose and action of God in and upon His People. The presentation is clearly simple. The plain man, baffled by Rahner and overawed by Danielou, will find himself free in these waters. But he will be wise not to equate simplicity with superficialiity. For Bouyer is laying the foundations upon which ultimately so much of Danielou's structure depends.

It may be a trifle disturbing to read that 'the exegesis called allegorical is . . . only the rightful development of literal exegesis." But closer study suggests, I think, that there is here some confusion of terms, that the concern in the main is with the method of theological exegesis that is more strictly typological. Further, it is interesting and significant to find that (apart from the spelling of biblical names) there is scarcely a feature or paragraph in the whole work that betrays the distinctive affiliation of the author. Almost all of this might have been written by a Protestant. That fact in itself proclaims something of enormous potential ecumenical importance.

To say that there are echoes of Phythian Adams here is but added commendation. But among so much that offers both inspiration and illumination, two sections stand out. One is the extended discussion of the Wisdom literature. Just here, where so many of the Protestant scholars falter and fail us, Father Bouyer comes into his own. He sets the Wisdom writings in a context and against a background which fill them with meaning and make them live. He relates them fairly and fully to the central facets of revelation. He rescues them from the periphery to which we are always inclined to banish them, and anchors them at the pulsating heart of biblical testimony. The other most notable achievement is his excursus on the Psalms. In his exposition of them as the prayer of the Church he magnificently draws out the true meaning of scriptural revelation. Here the biblical images are set ablaze and the biblical pattern is portrayed with power. An intensely moving meditation finds climax in that psalmody that draws aside the veil and provides prophetic

vision of the King come at last to His Kingdom. "When we have arrived at this point, it seems as if the surface of the Psalms has become like that sea of crystal on which stand the singing multitudes of the Apocalypse, and that from the transparence of their depths mounts the last, the ineffable revelation of the *Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancte* with which the Church concludes them."

The Muirhead Library of Philosophy has a deservedly high reputation which will in no way be diminished by two recent additions to it.[2] Their authors may not have a great deal in common, but at least they are united in the quality of their writing, in their immediate preoccupation with ethics, and in their antipathy to Kierkegaard!

The history of Western ethics may fruitfully be seen as a continuing attempt to define and harmonise the parts played by reason and emotion in contributing to good life and action. The Greek stress on the essential connection of goodness with intelligence finds its most radical expression in Stoicism. The Hebraic-Christian emphasis upon the overriding importance of the attitude of the heart, of feeling and disposition of will is epitomised in the life of St. Francis. But for most thinking men the lesson of history is surely that "the achievement of good is a joint product of our power to think and our power to feel." The point at which controversy arises and continues to arise is the point at which attempt is made to translate the general into the specific, to assess the precise contributions which thought and feeling in fact make. It is this problem that has engaged the continuing interest of modern British moralists. It is with the examination and critique of their positions that the major portion of Professor Blanshard's work is concerned.

In general, the subjectivists in ethics have held that the assertion that an action is right is no more than the expression of an attitude on our part, while the objectivists imply that there is actually a rightness attaching to the act itself or the agent of it. Clearly there have been gradations of viewpoint, half-way houses, more extreme and less extreme positions; but on the one side we locate Hume, Westermarck, Stevenson and the emotivists with their linguistic successors Urmson, Hare, and Toulmin, and on the other hand we find Sidgwick, Ross, and Moore. And running through the dialectic of reason and feeling are related problems, of the ultimacy of the "good" over against the "right," and of the meaning of "duty." Blanshard's own position is a moderating one. He holds that the fundamental moral judgment is the judgment of the "good" not of the "right," that the goodness of an experience is objective and yet dependent upon feeling in that the truly and finally "good" is the most comprehensive possible fulfilment and satisfaction of impulse-

[2] *Reason and Goodness*, by Frand Blanshard (George Allen & Unwin), 42s. 1961. *The Theological Frontier of Ethics*, by W. G. Maclagan (George Allen & Unwin), 28s. 1961.

desire. It follows then that our duty is to attempt to discern the "right" and to do it, that the "right" is that act that does not produce less than the greatest "good," and that "good" is "what fulfils those impulses or strivings of which human nature essentially consists, and in fulfilling them brings satisfaction." And in the discerning and moulding of the 'good" there must be granted to reason a high place.

It will quickly be apparent that Professor Blanshard fits uneasily into the outlook of current ethical orthodoxies and stands right in the path of the prevailing winds. But he is a figure of weight and influence not only in the United States, and what he has to say must always be heeded. His learning is vast, his mind is acute, and he always makes words speak simply and clearly. The reader who is prepared to deal attentively with the four hundred pages offered to him will, I think, conclude that the author is on the side of the angels; and certainly none can lay down this volume without being conscious of an immense debt for clarification in matters too often neglected now by Christian scholarship. Would that there were evident a more obvious recognition of the twisted depths of human nature to counterbalance the optimism that stakes so much on reasonableness and rationality, an injection of Augustinian realism to qualify Professor Blanshard's Platonic spirit.

The Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow is also concerned with moral values and with duty; but for most of the time he keeps at least one eye on theism and theology. Morality is independent of religion in the sense that the moral law and the moral demand do not depend for authority upon some further and more ultimate ground which is the will of God. Rather must we identify the moral law with God, and God with the moral law—though not without remainder. We must insist upon the existence of an objective order of values. But we are not led to the postulation of a personal God who stands behind that objective order as its guarantor.

As complement to this moral demand we must reckon with the moral response. And as the demand is seen as the absolute claim upon us to do our duty, so the response is to be understood in terms of dutifulness. Here what is in question is a freely dutiful response. Professor Maclagan is with the libertarians; he sides with Pelagius; he will allow divine grace only as extraneous and environmental, never as constitutive to the will.

The theses thus baldly stated are worked out with close and adroit argument that commands the attention of the theologian. The muddled illogicalities of some recent Christian thinking in this field are fairly revealed. Can we in the end impute all moral achievement to the grace of God and all moral failure to ourselves? Does not the conventional assertion that morality depends essentially on religious belief open wide the door to a debased morality springing from a debased religion? These are the sort of practical issues

that are forced into view. They are real problems that we avoid too easily and too often.

Where this book disappoints is first in the absence of that constructive formulation which its critique leads us to demand, and secondly and more importantly in its failure to come to grips with more than one emphasis in contemporary theology. Many a Christian thinker is as concerned to safeguard the rightful autonomy of ethics as is our author. No one who takes the Old Testament seriously is likely to forget the prophetic contribution on morals and religion. Indeed, it seems to me that at times Professor Maclagan has been so dazzled by the image of duty that he has wandered on to the wrong frontier, has lost touch temporarily with the seeming opponent who might turn out to be friend and ally. After all, concepts may be looked at formally or materially, and we must be careful to distinguish the two . Obligation and duty as sheer demand may have all the independence this book claims for them. But the content of duty, the obligation as filled and made concrete, is another thing.

The Library of Constructive Theology has, of recent years, given hospitality to contributions that surely fit uneasily into its original purpose and pattern, and even a revised editorial introduction scarcely prepares us for the inclusion of the recent series of Speaker's Lectures in the University of Oxford.[3] Nevertheless, when the author is "Myth and Ritual" Hooke and his work is a study in the pattern of revelation, few will worry as to the auspices under which he is presented so long as his thinking is made available to us.

Dr. Hooke's concern is with images as a mode of divine revelation, and he develops his thesis by way of selective examination of the scriptural witness and record in its length and breadth. He finds that the significant images always arise in the context of divine-human relationships within history and are given birth by a man's surrender in faith and obedience. It appears also that within the pattern of revelation we must discern three levels of reality. There is the truth of history, the historical level, rooted in conditions and conceptions of the time, and demanding from us critical attention to sources oral and written. There is the interpretative level, manifested by the reflection of prophetic participators and their successors, who understand history in terms of the activity and intervention of God, and developed and refined the images down the years. There is the divine level, concerned with the divine activity in its purity and its fulness, with ultimate meaning and eternal reality, found in the Word made flesh by whom the images are filled and broken open. And from first to last revelation is seen to be the divine response to the total commitment of faith.

All this is undeniably impressive. It recognizes the importance and necessity of analogy in our speech about God. It points towards

[3] *Alpha and Omega*, by S. H. Hooke (Nisbet & Co. Ltd.), 21s. 1961.

the possibility of a controlled use of typology. Yet there are elements of ambiguity and incoherence in the presentation, and the occasional sense that the range has exceeded the grasp. It may be questioned as to how far the division into three levels gives us precisely what is required. The level of interpretation is clear enough. It is the historical and divine levels that raise the problems. If at first glance we think to see what we mean, a closer scrutiny may make us wonder. For then it would appear that the level of interpretation intrudes both above and below, eating insatiably into our compartmental dividing lines. Is there to be found an historical level which lacks the element of interpretation? Is there to be known a divine level which lacks the interpretative admixture? Dr. Hooke might retort that the distinctions remain, even if they are admittedly not absolute. But we still enquire how much erosion is to be allowed before all value is destroyed.

At the more detailed points there is room for uneasiness; and it is the New Testament section that raises the queries. That the examination of the Epistles cries out for development is tribute rather than criticism. But the exposition of synoptic material does reveal weaknesses. Dr. Hooke gives most of his attention to St. Matthew and attaches most unusual reliability to the First Gospel as source for authentic material concerning the words and works of the historical Jesus. He may be right. But we shall need a closer argument of the evidence. Again, while recognizing the extent to which deliberate purposes dictate the framing and use of material by the separate evangelists, he yet shows inclinations towards an uncritical conflation of Gospel records where it will confirm his theses. Once more, in his treatment of the Sermon on the Mount he argues that this corpus of teaching is given as a parallel to the Book of the Covenant, as analogue to *Exodus* 19-23, and he instances the correspondences introduced by the "You have heard that it was said . . . but I say unto you." This sounds decisive, until we realize that in several cases the parallel is not with Exodus at all but with Leviticus or Deuteronomy. If this fact does not negate the argument, it rather obviously blurs the comparison.

It is important that these warning signals should be raised because of the great significance of this admirable study. It should drive us back to L. S. Thornton's majestic trilogy, *The Form of the Servant*, and encourage us to treat the work of Austin Farrer more seriously than many have been inclined to do. For this book leads into the future of biblical understanding and strikes out with incomparable power the road that those preoccupied with the crucial problem of "revelation" must take. The exposition of the Old Testament, and in particular of the prophets, is a profoundly acute and moving delineation which will surely become one of the classics of our time. And after all, the publishers were right. This belongs to a library of constructive theology.

N. CLARK

# Reviews

Philip Carrington, *According to Mark: A Running Commentary on the Oldest Gospel.* 384 pp. 50s. Cambridge University Press.

Archbishop Carrington is known among students of the New Testament for his studies in the Primitive Christian Catechism and the Primitive Christian Calendar. In the latter work he sought to show that Mark's Gospel was arranged by the evangelist to serve as a lectionary, to be read by a congregation during the course of one year. In the present volume the author has produced a full scale commentary on Mark in which he has utilised his previous studies for the illumination of the text. For the convenience of the reader the calendrical theory has been summarised in an appendix at the close of the book; it could well be read by one unacquainted with Dr. Carrington's work before the commentary is begun.

The commentary takes on an unusual character by reason of the author's viewpoint. The introduction itself is unorthodox for a commentary on a Gospel. Questions of authorship and date are speedily dealt with : the writer is content to urge with respect to the former issue, " The simplest of all explanations is that Mark played the part of Boswell to Peter's Johnson," and he adds, somewhat humorously, " And his name *was* Johnson—Simon son of John !" With such a viewpoint the characteristic positions of the Form Critics are more than once attacked, above all the " curious assumption " that personal contact with first generation disciples early ceased, before the material took oral or written shape, and that all reliable memory of the life and teaching of Jesus was quickly erased; this, it is held, is unrealistic, for the disciples of Jesus would have been ministering to the Churches in their fifties, sixties and seventies. (The Archbishop might have pointed out that for disciples of a similar age to Jesus that would have meant the fifties, sixties and seventies of the first century, the period when the Gospel traditions were formed and the first Gospel was written.) It is believed that the disciples of Jesus would have followed the Jewish mode of conveying oral tradition; they would have formed a school or household about Jesus their teacher or Rabbi.

The division of the Gospel is of such a kind as to make one rub one's eyes, as when one watches a conjuror and wonders how he does it. The Gospel is seen to fall naturally into two parts, the Gospel in Galilee and the Gospel in Jerusalem. The latter divides

into three sections, the Ministry in Jerusalem, Little Apocalypse, Passion narrative; the former into four: the call of the four Apostles with the preaching in the Synagogue, the appointment of the Twelve with the parables, the Mission of the Twelve with the Five Thousand, Peter's Confession with the Transfiguration. These four sections are related to the four seasons, and therefore to the popular feasts and fasts: the parable chapter to the season of the sowing, as the parable of the seed suggests, the Five Thousand is placed by John at Passover, and so the rest fall into easy place. These four sections divide into fifty sections; assigning the first of them to the week after the Feast of Tabernacles, when the synagogue year begins, they cover the liturgical year nicely, one reading per Sunday, leaving the Passion Narrative for Passover, as was always done in the early Church. To crown all, the fifty divisions independently worked out by Dr. Carrington are precisely those contained in *Codex Vaticanus,* and the passages he assigned to the seasons of sowing, passover, pentecost and the summer fast are all so related in that ms.!

How does all this work out in exposition? Not so neatly nor so plausibly. But it should be made clear that the commentary is not intended to be a prolonged demonstration of a theory of the composition of Mark. The author rightly and generously closes his introduction with the statement: "The lections, the sequences, the calendar associations, the literary analyses, and so forth, are all useless antiquarian encumbrances unless they contribute to the illumination of the narrative and its central figure; my prayer is that unless they do this, they may be forgotten. The purpose of the 'oral tradition' was to keep alive in the Church the impact of the living Christ in his words and in his acts; the purpose of Mark in writing his Gospel was subsidiary to this. What value is there in a commentary unless it contributes to this end?" Dr. Carrington has undoubtedly written a commentary that fulfils this purpose, though at times, in my judgment, his spiritual insight and critical acumen contribute to that end better than the application of his theories.

The method of lectionary association may be illustrated from the exegesis of the prologue of the Gospel. It is presumed that Mark intended it to be read on the Sunday following Tabernacles. In the synagogue Genesis 1 is read on that Sabbath: its opening words, "In the beginning God..." are thus echoed by Mark's opening words, "The *beginning* of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of *God.*" Jesus is baptized and the Spirit descends on Him: the creation story is believed to be in mind, where we read of the Spirit moving on the waters, the voice of the Creator speaking and the breath of life breathed into Adam. (*N.B.*—the Spirit descended *into* Jesus—who is Adam, God's man). My mind is perhaps too prosaic to appreciate subtleties of this kind but I confess that I am not

impressed by them. I doubt that Mark had *Gen.* i. 1 in mind when penning his first sentence. We cannot even be sure that he himself was responsible for the word "the beginning," for it may simply be a scribal note to indicate the beginning of another Gospel! The linking of Jesus' baptism with the creation appears to me fanciful and without warrant.

This, however, is not a just illustration of the exposition which Dr. Carrington gives when he deals straightforwardly with the text. It is better seen from a further observation on the baptism of Jesus: "The kerygma . . . began from the baptism of Jesus and included his death and resurrection, but ended with the baptism of the convert. It began and ended in sacrament. It began in Israel and ended in the Church. It was at home in both. It is illuminated by both." Exposition of this kind proceeds from a mind at home in the Gospels and the Gospel and it is not everyday. But there is much of it in this book and for it the reader will be grateful.

G. R. BEASLEY-MURRAY

*One Lord, One Baptism*—Reports of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, with a Preface by Oliver Tomkins, 79 pp. 6s., S.C.M..

The publication of this book, containing two reports entitled "The Divine Trinity and the Unity of the Church" and "The Meaning of Baptism," is both a testimony and a challenge: a testimony to the Spirit of truth who will guide us into all the truth by creating the conditions in which it can be heard and done, and a challenge to listen as the same Spirit declares unto us the things that are to come.

Oliver Tomkins notes in his preface that the Faith and Order Movement worked from its foundation "to draw the Churches out of isolation into conference." After the second World Conference in1937 it was seen that the roots of division among Christians were to be found in different conceptions of the nature of the Church; and so theological commissions were appointed to study the Church, Ways of Worship and Intercommunion in preparation for Lund 1952. At Lund, however, came a new insight: "We have seen clearly that we can make no real advance towards unity if we only compare our several conceptions of the nature of the Church and the traditions in which they are embodied . . . it is of decisive importance for the advance of ecumenical work that the doctrine of the Church be treated in close relation both to the doctrine of Christ and to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit." As a result the Theological Commission on Christ and the Church—significant nomenclature—was established in 1954, not to suggest the way to

unity from a starting-point of a given disunity but to acknowledge the unity that exists already in Christ and in the Spirit and to draw consequences for the actual life of the Church: the call to unity is a call to Christ.

Both reports were presented to the Faith and Order Commission a few days before the service commemorating the jubilee of Edinburgh 1910. Their contents, as well as their date, bear abundant evidence that the Spirit has taken what is Christ's and declared it to us. Theology, said Lord Altrincham recently, is bunk: on this premise he was able as an Anglican to engage in a "stimulating" discussion with Unitarians! "The Divine Trinity and the Unity of the Church" has thirty pages of Biblical theology for its main section which, going a fair way towards being a miniature introduction to Christian doctrine, makes it quite obvious that "the question of sound doctrine is inescapable." For example, the authors are convinced that the affirmations of the Nicene creed and the Chalcedonian definition are, because of their doxological-kerygmatic character, invaluable for our understanding of Christ and the Spirit. They are also rightly convinced that their approach from the consideration of the one Christ rather than from a survey of the many churches is a real contribution to significant understanding.

*The Meaning of Baptism* has the same orientation, conceiving it to be its central task to elucidate the connection between baptism and Christology, and thus asking to what extent baptism is bound up with the unity in Christ which is given to us. The position presented is consciously similar to that theology of baptism "written round the two poles of the baptism of Jesus at Jordan and the fulfilment in His death, Resurrection and Ascension"—a sentence quoted with approval from a source all readers of the *Quarterly* will recognise—and considers baptism as the expression of the whole *Heilsgeschichte*. Other rites of the Church thus renew or express its fulness, not depending on the rite of baptism but on that which it mediates.

This book is challenge as well as testimony because the "interim" reports it contains are specifically issued for consideration by the churches. To do this for the second of them will mean, for example, to give attention to the context in which one can speak of regeneration in baptism, namely, Christ's incorporation of man into himself and of the baptised into the continuing life of the Church as an act which covers the whole of life. To do it for the two together will be to share in the important insight of the Lund Conference that the way to unity is through the centre.

MAURICE F. WILLIAMS

Douglas Stewart, *The Ark of God,* 158 pp., 8s. 6d. Carey Kingsgate Press.

In his contribution to the Symposium, "Faith that Illuminates" (1955), T. S. Eliot expressed the view that nearly all contemporary novelists except James Joyce belong to what he called the third phase in the secularization of our literature over the last 300 years. This was the phase of those who had never heard of the Christian Faith spoken of as anything but an anachronism. Modern literature, says Eliot, repudiates, or is wholly ignorant of, our most fundamental and important beliefs; it preaches a gospel of this world alone.

To deny that modern literature—or any literature for that matter—is first and foremost about this world is to deny its worth as literature; but to suggest that our most serious and worthwhile contemporary novelists are not concerned as much as Eliot is about the meaninglessness, confusion and waste within the spiritual life of this world is to make what must be a superficial judgment. Perhaps it depends on how you look at it, and at least Eliot's condemnation of modern literature is in keeping with the attitude of the Churches—an attitude about which Douglas Stewart is deeply concerned. It is this concern which led him, for the W. T. Whitley lectures for 1960, to make analyses of the work of five modern novelists who had over the years "profoundly influenced" him. These lectures now appear under this title, *The Ark of God.*

Unlike Eliot, Mr. Stewart feels that "the great Christian themes of man's moral dilemma, of his spiritual anxiety, of sin and of salvation" are increasingly apparent in the writings of secular novelists. Unfortunately, it seems as though the Churches are suspicious of the secular novelist, or even fail to recognize that Christian themes exist in secular literature. They fail to see that many modern novelists have a message not only for the world, but for the Churches, and that through such writers as these there is a way of making contact with the new generations.

The five novelists particularly dealt with are James Joyce, Aldous Huxley, Graham Greene, Rose Macaulay and Joyce Cary, and Mr. Stewart sees each of them as representing an attitude or belief which throws some light on our spiritual situation. In the essays on Joyce and Huxley which he entitles "Apocalypticism" and "Mysticism" respectively, Mr. Stewart shows that these authors compel a Christian re-thinking. Joyce confronts the world with "the emptiness of its own heart, with its hidden and unspoken despair," he reveals the modern fear of meaninglessness. Equally, all Huxley's novels are concerned with the human condition—"Created sick, commanded to be sound." The answer, or lack of answer, in the work of these two novelists is not important: what matters is the essentially Christian vision of human nature and the human dilemma.

The position of the Churches and their duties are discussed more closely in the essays on Graham Greene and Rose Macaulay. Although, says Mr. Stewart, "it is the glory of Christianity that it possesses a living ethic to meet the living human situation," the Churches are not tackling the right problem, which is man's spiritual disease itself, but are too narrowly concerned with the symptoms only. In a fine analysis of Greene's "whisky-priest" character, the author shows him to be a symbol of the essentials of the Church—faith, hope and charity—the qualities which the Church must use in judging this modern world.

Finally, in his most sympathetic and thorough study, Mr. Stewart discusses the work of Joyce Cary under the heading "Protestantism," revealing, however, Cary as the most truly Christian writer of them all. Such is Cary's charity and compassion that there are no villains in his books; and his tragic vision of the world is resolved in his tremendous certainty of the love of God. This too is Mr. Stewart's final answer to his own view of the spiritual problem which he has revealed through these essays.

I. R. DUNCAN

*Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzegebiete,* Vol. VII. £4 7s. 0d. Patmos-verlag, Düsseldorf.

Volume VII of this journal has now appeared (Vol. VI was reviewed in our last issue) and lists some 1959 articles that have appeared on biblical studies in about 350 periodicals mainly during 1958 and 1959. The references to articles in the accessible journals or in the more remote languages are often accompanied by short summary statements. Like its predecessors the work is well classified and well indexed, and men who are engaged in any form of biblical research will want to have a copy or to ensure that it is available in their local library.