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Lord Radstock and the St. Petersburg Revival

Andrey P. Puzynin

This article is a section of the book, *The Tradition of the Gospel Christians: A Study of Their Identity and Theology during the Russian, Soviet, and Post-Soviet Periods* by Andrey P. Puzynin (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock Pickwick Publications, 2011), pages 18-39, and is used by permission of Wipf and Stock Publishers, <http://www.wipfandstock.com>, and in association with the author. This book was reviewed in our issue of October 2012 (36:4, 372-3) by Dr Raymond J. Laird of Brisbane, Australia, who has kindly made the selection and provided this introduction which helps to set this excerpt in its context and highlights its significance for our readers.

KEYWORDS: *Revivalism, perfectionism, pietism, Biblicism, Evangelical Alliance, mysticism, prayer, adventism*

I Introduction

Biblical interpretation, theological frameworks and cultural tradition are the burdens of Dr Andrey Puzynin in his book on the study of the Gospel Christians, an evangelical group of churches birthed in a revival in Imperial Russia towards the end of nineteenth century. The agent of that movement of the Spirit of God was the Englishman, Lord Radstock, who with his background in the Open Brethren, the Keswick movement, and the Evangelical Alliance, brought a particular

nest of theological-biblical-practical emphases in his ministry among the St Petersburg elite which burst into flame in their hearts, and then spread throughout the land among all classes.

Puzynin locates those emphases in three frameworks which he describes as Puritan-Pietistic, Primitivism, and Perfectionism. As many evangelicals of our time have traversed at least part of those frameworks in smaller or greater degrees, this reviewer was of the opinion that the analysis of this representative of Anglo-American revivalism as it had developed in the eighteenth century and then took root in Russia would be of interest to the readers of (ERT) this journal.

The author's explanation of the

Andrey Puzynin (PhD, LicDD, University of Wales) serves at Hope Church in Donetsk, Ukraine. He has worked at Donetsk Christian University (1997-2001), and tutored and lectured at the MA program of Nyack College/Alliance Theological Seminary in Kiev, Ukraine (2001-2003 and 2006-2011). He recently joined the Department of Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham, UK as William Paton Fellow and is currently working on a new research project. This article is from his book mentioned in the Introduction.

historical origins and development of the numerous elements of those frameworks is instructive. In some instances these developments may be enlightening, not only of the past but of the present, both for the individual and the corporate bodies with whom we fellowship and minister.

The analysis raises some questions for readers who are heirs of that traditional bundle of elements in one way or another. It is of profit at times to ask, by what have we been shaped? What have we kept? What have we lost? How have we integrated those that remain?

II Lord Radstock's Theology

An understanding of Radstock's theological positions is important, not only because he initiated the evangelical tradition in St. Petersburg, but also because his views continued to influence the evangelical Christians of Russia for many years after his departure from Russia. Madame Chertkova, a member of the St. Petersburg evangelical group, writes: 'I am so sorry that all of us are so incapable of putting into words our devotion and gratitude to Lord Radstock, and of witnessing to the beautiful work the Lord honored him with for Russia!... Our intercourse with him lasted over thirty years and never varied in love and wise council.'¹

1. Theological Tendencies of the Time

Mark Noll provides another helpful description of the transformations that

characterized the Protestant Paradigm to which Lord Radstock belonged.² During the three centuries after the Reformation there were transformations (1) from Christian faith defined as correct doctrine towards Christian faith defined as correct living; (2) from godly order as the heart of the church's concern towards godly fellowship as a principal goal; (3) from authoritative interpretation of scripture originating with ecclesiastical elites towards lay and more democratic appropriation of the Bible; (4) from obedience towards expression; (5) from music as performed by well-trained specialists towards music as a shared expression of ordinary people; and (6) from preaching as learned discourses about God towards preaching as impassioned appeals for 'closing with Christ'.³ The tradition that was brought to Russia in 1873–74 was a result of these transformative processes that had been boiling for about three centuries in post-Reformation Europe.

Lord Radstock was neither a theologian nor an intellectual, nor did he want to be involved in any systematic or even written mode of theologizing of the sort that was typical of the evangelicals of the Reformation. Radstock breathed the air of Puritan-Pietist Christianity. His 'religion of the heart' can be properly understood against the background of the Pietistic tradition and Romanticism, whose rationality came as a reaction against the dry ra-

¹ Edward Trotter, *Lord Radstock: An Interpretation and a Record* (London-New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), 63.

² I am referring to the Post-Reformation Paradigm of Hans Küng, *Christianity, Essence, History and Future* (London: SCM, 1984), 614–34.

³ Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2003), 52.

tionalism of the Enlightenment and the scholastic dogmatism of the Reformed theologies.⁴

2. Radstock and His Theological Peers

John Kent locates Radstock in the Anglo-American revivalist tradition, alongside such people as Richard Weaver, Reginald Radcliffe, and Richard Morgan. 'All these men were committed to an aggressive evangelical way of life before the Ulster Revival in 1859. American influence mattered more than Irish, for the publication of Finney's *Lectures* in England, and James Caughey's long visit in the 1840s, helped to stimulate the group's development.'⁵

Reginald Radcliffe visited Russia in 1884 with the purpose of establishing a Russian branch of the Evangelical Alliance. Pashkov's correspondence contains several handwritten notes on Radcliffe's addresses.⁶ Radstock also shared much in common with his American revivalist peer D.L. Moody.⁷ Many similarities can be found in the

respective theological stances of these two revivalist preachers. Radstock participated in at least one revivalist meeting conducted by Moody in Britain. His answers to Moody's questions, asked for the benefit of the audience, are published in one of Moody's books.⁸ Radstock brought to Russia not only Protestant theology and forms of worship but also the evangelical sentimental hymns and music of I.D. Sankey, Moody's revivalist companion.⁹

With regard to theological convictions, Radstock also shared many commonalities with George Müller, the leader of the Open Brethren, who enjoyed international fame in the evangelical circles of the time. It is said that during his first visit to England D.L. Moody wanted to meet two people: Charles Spurgeon and George Müller.¹⁰ Müller in turn was visiting the places where Moody had preached, serving as an Apollos to the new converts of the revival.¹¹ Spurgeon invited Müller to preach in the Tabernacle Hall the same year. The arrival of Müller in

4 Ted A. Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991).

5 John Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism* (London: Epworth, 1978), 101.

6 Vasilij A. Pashkov, *Col. V. A. Pashkov Papers, 1874-1909*, University of Birmingham Information Services, Special Collections Department, 2/2/13. Hereinafter to be cited as PP. See also Sharyl Corrado, *Filosofia Shuzheniia Polkownika Pashkova* (St. Petersburg: Bibliia dlia vsekh, 2005), 111.

7 James E. Findlay, *Dwight L. Moody: American Evangelist, 1837-1899* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1969), 227-61.

8 Dwight L. Moody, Dialogue III, 'Mr. Moody and Mr. Radstock: What it is to be converted', in *Sovereign Grace: Its Source, Its Nature, and its Effects* (Chicago: Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1891).

9 Mark M. McCarthy, 'Religious Conflict and Social Order in Nineteenth-Century Russia: Orthodoxy and the Protestant Challenge, 1812-1905', PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 2004, 71; Nikolai Leskov, *Schism in High Society: Lord Radstock and His Followers*, trans. James Y. Muckle (Nottingham: Bramcote, 1995), 109.

10 William R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody, by his son* (New York: Revell, 1900), 119.

11 Arthur T. Pierson, *George Müller of Bristol* (London: James Nisbet, 1899), 248-249.

St. Petersburg in 1883 was in line with his strategy of visiting places where revival had recently taken place.

These four revivalists—Lord Radstock and Charles Spurgeon (British evangelicals), George Müller (a German Pietist and member of the British Brethren), and D.L. Moody (an American revivalist)—were the pillars on which the tradition of the Gospel Christians was established through the ministry of Radstock.¹²

3. Sources for Analyzing Radstock's Theology

There are a number of printed resources containing Radstock's addresses, making possible a reconstruction of his theological views and interpretational practices.¹³ Mark McCarthy has

recently provided a good description of Radstock's theology. However, because McCarthy's study has a historical focus, he describes Radstock's theological views without locating him on the theological map of evangelical developments in the nineteenth century or investigating his specific interpretive approaches.¹⁴ As was said earlier, McCarthy was significantly influenced by Heier's assumption of the non-denominational nature of Radstock's theology. Hans Küng's paradigmatic approach is more suitable for understanding the theological trajectory of the evangelical movement in Russia, as it provides an explanation for the clash of the paradigms.¹⁵

III The Three Frameworks of Radstock's Theology

Radstock's theological views can be located within three frameworks that appeared chronologically.¹⁶ The oldest

¹² All of these four influential evangelical figures of the nineteenth century can be located under the rubric of evangelicalism. Besides holding to the same evangelical convictions, all four of them were involved in the Keswick movement. Lord Radstock and Spurgeon were preaching from the same pulpit during evangelistic meetings (PP II/1/b/8) and attended the same Keswick meetings (McCarthy, 'Religious Conflict and Social Order', 271). Spurgeon's sermons were translated into Russian, and the early Radstockists were accused by the Orthodox of having been converted to 'the faith of Spurgeon' (PP 2/2/405). George Müller personally visited St. Petersburg in 1882 and theologically influenced the St. Petersburg Christians. See Modest M. Korff, *Am Zarenhof* (Giessen, Germany: Brunnen-Verlag, 1956), 37-38.

¹³ Granville Radstock, *Notes of Addresses* (London: J.F. Shaw 1870); Granville Radstock and Dwight L. Moody, *A Gospel Dialogue between Mr. D.L. Moody and Lord Radstock* (London: Morgan & Scott, 1884); Lord Radstock, 'The Christian, Who and What is He'

in *Blackheath Conference* (London: J. F. Shaw, 1883); Granville Radstock, *Separated unto God and a Living Sacrifice: Two Addresses by Lord Radstock* (Glasgow: Publishing House, 1884); Leskov included two sermons of Radstock delivered in Russia in 1874. See Leskov, *Schism*, 75-88.

¹⁴ McCarthy, 'Religious Conflict', 62-76.

¹⁵ Küng does not mention in his thorough study the evangelical revival in Russia but focuses primarily on Russian Orthodoxy.

¹⁶ Noll, *Rise of Evangelicalism*, 50-65. The frameworks are derived rather arbitrarily from Noll's discussion of the antecedents of evangelicalism which he identifies as: Puritan, Continental Pietist, and High-Church Spirituality. Noll points out that the crucial spiritual emphasis of the High-Church was its stress on 'primitive Christianity' (p. 66). However, it seems more logical to consider 'Primitivism'

and broadest framework can be described as 'Puritan-Pietistic', because the main theological themes of his addresses grew out of these two Protestant movements that influenced each other. The label 'Puritan-Pietistic' is used here to denote the following features that grew out of the Continental and British Protestant paradigm of the preceding centuries: Biblicism, Christocentrism, salvation by grace through faith alone, an accent on personal religious experience and sincere moral conduct, active faith, and simple church services.¹⁷

The next framework that appeared and grew out of the Pietistic-Puritan tradition in Britain in the nineteenth century can be called Primitivism, which was characterized by its charismatic nature, its revivalism in light of the impending return of Christ, its evangelical ecumenism, and its sacramentalism.¹⁸ And finally, the most

recent framework that played a prominent role in Radstock's interpretation of Biblical texts was that of Perfectionism, which grew out of the Wesleyan movement and the Anglo-American revivalist tradition.¹⁹

1. The Puritan-Pietistic Framework²⁰

Heier argues that from the point of view of religious practice, Lord Radstock's religious activity could be linked with Wesley and his successors in early Methodism: 'What he offered was a spiritual faith in opposition to the worldliness of the Established Church. His greatest desire was the reading and interpretation of the Gospel through which an intensification of faith was to be achieved and, as a consequence, salvation.'²¹

Radstock's connection with Methodism should be limited to its broad pietistic component and to Wesleyan teaching on assurance of salvation.

as a separate framework characteristic of the Victorian era, as suggested by Horton Davies (f.n. 88 below). Noll also states that the second legacy of the High-Church was establishing religious societies promoting personal piety and doing good among the people as a whole (p. 67). This legacy was part of Radstock's ministry in Russia, because within one year after his first visit to Russia in 1873 his followers started the Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Moral Reading (SESMR) that was patterned after the British SPCK. The first book published by SESMR was John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Bunyan was an influential Puritan writer of the seventeenth century.

¹⁷ Enger, Trond, 'Pietism', in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, eds A. Hastings, A. Mason, and H. Pyper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 539–41.

¹⁸ Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Newman to Martineau, 1850-*

1900 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), 139–43. Davies includes the following movements under the label of Primitivism: the Primitive Methodists (1812), the Plymouth Brethren (1827–1830), the Catholic Apostolic Church (1835), the Disciples of Christ (founded in 1833 and established in Britain in 1843), and the Salvation Army (1865–1879).

¹⁹ See Benjamin B. Warfield, *Perfectionism* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1980).

²⁰ This framework can be viewed as a meso-paradigm within the Protestant paradigm (Paradigm 4 of Küng). Küng, *Christianity*, 614–44.

²¹ Edmund Heier, *Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy, 1860-1900: Radstockism and Pashkovism* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), 32–33.

James Muckle is correct in saying that Radstock lacked the sophisticated theology of Wesley, which accommodated reason and tradition alongside experience and scripture as sources for Christian theologizing.²² Radstock was more similar to Primitivist Methodists than to Wesley.²³

Self-taught denominational Russian historian V.A. Popov suggests that the backdrop for the evangelical revival was German Pietism through the medium of the Evangelical Alliance.²⁴ Even though the impact of German Pietism on British evangelicalism through the medium of the Evangelical Alliance is not substantiated by evidence in his study, Popov's intuition is correct in principle.²⁵ Mark Noll has recently pointed out the mutual influence that existed between English Puritanism and German Pietism.²⁶

The compatibility of the two traditions can be observed in the biography of George Müller of Bristol, one of the most influential theological teachers of the Open Brethren, who visited St. Petersburg in 1882–83 after Radstock's departure. Müller had been a student in Halle, the centre of German Pietism, and his original impetus to start an orphanage in Bristol came from the ex-

ample of the father of German Pietism, August Franke.²⁷ It seems to have been no problem for young Müller to integrate his Pietistic Lutheran heritage with the newly developing Brethren movement, inspired by Müller's brother-in-law Anthony Groves from within the Anglican Church, years before the Evangelical Alliance came into existence.²⁸ Radstock can safely be located within this broad Puritan-Pietistic frame of theological reference.

a) Biblicism

Radstock believed in the verbal inspiration of scripture, as did all evangelicals of his time. 'Faith in the Bible was to the early evangelicals as fundamental as faith in God, and they made little distinction between the two.'²⁹ Radstock states:

While many are doubting the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, multitudes in many lands have, for eighteen hundred years, found by experience that in proportion as they are obedient to the Divine Revelation, not one jot or tittle has failed of the promises of God to those who believe His Word.... His teachings present the most perfect ideals known to the human race, and His Spirit is the one power by which corrupt humanity can be regenerated and changed

22 James Y. Muckle, 'Afterword', in Nikolai Leskov, *Schism*, 113.

23 Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 38–70.

24 V.A. Popov, 'Evangel'skie Khristiane-Pashkovtsy', Online: http://odessasem.com/publishing/bogomyslie_07_04.html; accessed 4 April, 2006.

25 The first meeting of the Evangelical Alliance was held in London in 1846. See Harold W. Fuller, *People of the Mandate* (London: Paternoster, 1996), 1–40.

26 Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 53.

27 Pierson, *George Müller of Bristol*, 15–62.

28 George Müller, *Autobiography of George Müller* (London: J. Nisbet, 1906), 20–33. See also Robert B. Dann, *Father of Faith Missions: The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves* (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2004).

29 Willis B. Glover, *Evangelical Nonconformists and Higher Criticism* (London: Independent, 1954), 16.

into the Divine Image from glory to glory.³⁰

Radstock was a person of the Book. Leskov writes that following his conversion, Radstock severed all connections with 'worldly' culture: 'He renounced music on the grounds that "he heard better sounds from heaven," and he ceased to read all the worldly books since "a man's life was insufficient even for the study of the Bible."' ³¹

b) Christocentrism

The resurrected Christ and a personal, affective relationship with him is the major theme of all of Radstock's addresses. The following testimonies of Radstock's contemporaries can best be understood within this frame of reference. Baron von Hügel points out that 'it was the Synoptic Jesus, His teachings, especially the Sermon on the Mount, which had saturated all the fibres of his mind and character'.³² It will be demonstrated below that Radstock interpreted all of reality from a Christocentric perspective.

c) Salvation by Grace through Faith

With regard to soteriology Radstock believed salvation to be free, present, eternal, and unconditional. This was his main message during the revivalist meetings.³³ Interpreting the Epistle to the Romans in the spirit of Luther with regard to free and unconditional salvation in Christ by grace and assur-

ance of salvation in the present and the future, Radstock never developed or crystallized the doctrine. He called his audience to take their position in Christ by faith and start a life of personal relationship with God in Christ.

As was true of D.L. Moody, Radstock leaned towards the Arminian pole as far as the issue of predestination was concerned.³⁴ His theological position in this regard can be seen in the interplay of questions asked by Moody during one of his evangelistic meetings.

Mr. Moody. – Is salvation within the reach of every man here tonight?

Mr. Radstock. – Jesus said, 'God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

Mr. M. – What would you say to anyone who thinks he has no power to believe?

Mr. R. – He *has* the power to believe. Probably he is trying to believe something about himself, to feel something about himself instead of giving credit to God. He is not asked to realize this or that about himself, but to believe the faithful God.³⁵

The Calvinist John Nelson Darby is said to have been 'puzzled over how Moody could on the one hand accept the prophetic truths concerning God's sovereignty in history, and yet inconsistently allow room for a non-Calvinist

³⁰ Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 149.

³¹ Leskov, *Schism*, 18.

³² Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 56.

³³ Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 232–33. McCarthy, 'Religious Conflict', 55.

³⁴ Findlay, *Moody*, 242.

³⁵ Moody, *Sovereign Grace*, 125.

³⁶ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 46.

view of human ability when it came to personal salvation'.³⁶

Radstock's evangelical view concerning salvation can be summarized as follows: the transcendent God loves his fallen creation. The themes of God's love and the fallen condition of individuals are dominant in Radstock's addresses.³⁷ Every human being can be saved by God's grace. In order to be saved a person needs to exercise his or her faith by believing the testimony of the scriptures about salvation in Jesus Christ. Everyone who believes this testimony is given the new nature (the new birth) by the gift of the Spirit, which makes possible both fellowship with God and a proper understanding of scripture. Without personal faith and regeneration a person cannot understand scripture, nor can they have fellowship with God.

This regeneration constitutes a change in the existential orientation through which a person comes in contact with the ultimate personal reality of God manifested in Jesus and mediated by the Spirit. A mere intellectual assent to biblical truths must not be equated with regeneration.³⁸ True regeneration should have personal and experiential dimensions, accompanied by the receiving of God's power to overcome sin. Answered prayers and godly living are preferred over systematized theologizing. Regenerated people *know* that they are saved by taking God at his word.

Unregenerated people are not sure about their salvation. God will not allow a saved person to be lost. If people

sin after their conversion, they can be forgiven by Christ, who leads believers to Christian maturity and deliverance from the power of sin.³⁹ Regenerated people can be absolutely sure about their eternal security in Christ. 'Before we are asked to go into service we are put on the platform of eternal salvation; and then we are told to press forward, and stretch forth a hand to those who are perishing in the waters, battling with the waves, but ineffectually, because they have not got their feet upon the Rock Jesus Christ.'⁴⁰

This middle way between Arminianism and Calvinism was never systematically thought through by Radstock, which was typical of the evangelicals of his time. Chadwick describes the evangelicals of that period in general as follows: 'They were men of the Reformation, who preached the cross, the depravity of man, and justification by faith alone. Some of them were Calvinists and more of them were not. Most of them had little use or time for doctrines of predestination and reprobation.'⁴¹ The most important thing was the emotional plea to accept the New Testament's testimony about God's love in Christ and to live in the light of it.

d) Personal Religious Experience

The religious experience of regeneration was a central motif of Radstock's preaching. Sinners must appropriate by faith the unmerited salvation avail-

37 Leskov, *Schism*, 18, 24.

38 Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 27.

39 Moody, *Sovereign Grace*, 122–27.

40 Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 47.

41 Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1966), 440–41.

able in Christ. Human faith is the channel through which the Spirit of God gives new birth. 'Are you forgiven? Are you born again?'⁴² 'You are in Christ, or you are not. You have received the Holy Ghost, or you have not.'⁴³ 'To be a Christian is not merely to think about Christ; it means to be in union with Christ.'⁴⁴

Writing about the theology of the German Pietist, Philip Jacob Spener, Enger Trond states: 'At the centre of Spener's theology was the experience of rebirth, the creation of the new person. This was the passion that united all Pietists. This was the experience that could empower faith. In the concept of rebirth we find the Pietists' main concern: it expresses humanity's absolute passivity in salvation, just as in natural birth; it expresses the total change, the new status as God's child; it focuses on the necessity of development and growth. With this re-born person a new reality has entered the world.'⁴⁵

Sharing the Pietistic assumptions that were amplified in the context of Romanticism, Radstock's Christianity had an experiential nature. He was not so much concerned about intellectual evidence, but would often say that answered prayers were his evidence.⁴⁶ The sentimental nature of Radstock's spirituality was well described by Leskov: 'His ideas are shaky, but his spirit is splendid and by his success he excellently typifies the words of Taine,

that 'people understand not ideas, but feelings.' 'In studying the feeling of Radstock, I myself sense that the man is in love with Christ', one person who knows him well said to me, and this must be true. Radstock is in love, and this feeling is almost irresistible.'⁴⁷

In the same vein Trotter states: 'He did not see the extension of divine claims to the whole of being and to a great extent refused the intellect its part in the redemption of man. In the intellect he still clung to the old traditions of Puritanism.'⁴⁸

e) Active Faith

In accordance with the Pietistic impetus of evangelicalism, Radstock was concerned with the practical application of his Christianity. McCarthy writes: 'After Radstock's father's death in 1856, the rest of the family gradually turned from high society to the evangelical movement, donating the money to the religious outreach to the poor. Independently, Radstock's mother was very active in the slums of London where she entered brothels to rescue prostitutes and return them to "a life of honorable work". In London the Radstocks sponsored a home for recent immigrants that could accommodate almost seven hundred people. In Paris they supported a home for girls.'⁴⁹

In this religious activity the works of charity were not separated from evangelism. In fact, evangelism was the first and foremost activity in which every Christian was expected to be involved. Leskov wrote that Radstock

⁴² Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 17.

⁴³ Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 121.

⁴⁴ Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 45.

⁴⁵ Enger, 'Pietism', 540.

⁴⁶ Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 103.

⁴⁷ Leskov, *Schism*, 23.

⁴⁸ Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 100.

⁴⁹ McCarthy, 'Religious Conflict', 51–52.

would often fill his pockets with copies of the New Testament and give them to passers-by, even though he could not speak a word of Russian.⁵⁰

f) Simplicity

In his description of a Radstockist meeting, Leskov does not mention the use of musical instruments. Biblical messages were the centre of these religious meetings. The songs of I.D. Sankey were sung in English. As with the theology and preaching of Radstock, the songs were also emotion-oriented and sentimental.⁵¹ His prayers were extemporaneous, which was very unusual for people of an Orthodox background. The space of the hall was 'sacramentalized' by signs with biblical texts such as John 3:16, Luke 12:32, and Colossians 3:23 that were hung on the walls and which mistakenly were taken by some in the audience as 'no smoking' signs!

2. The Primitivist Framework

In a sense the Primitivist framework grew out of Puritanism, with its call to return to the simplicity of the apostolic era, its conversionism, and its promotion of meditation on the work of the Holy Spirit.

a) The Charismatic Dimension

The ministry of Radstock was typically charismatic. From the outset of his meetings, Radstock assumed the role of a pneumatic preacher who was being led by the Spirit to reveal the true meaning of the scriptures. The stir of

interest among the St. Petersburg aristocracy can partly be attributed to this charismatic stance.

b) Mysticism

Trotter defines the word mysticism in terms of '... the inner meaning of the words of Scripture, the facts of history, the world of Nature. The mystic learns to discern between the world of sense, the shadow world, and the Reality that lies beyond, among the things "which are not seen" where God is all and in all.... Hence to him the distinction of time, country, race and organization are subordinate to or absorbed in the all-embracing truth of the divine unity of the Spirit....'⁵²

This definition of mysticism in Platonic terminology is revealing, both for Radstock and for Trotter, his major biographer. Radstock was indeed interested in seeing and experiencing the transcendent reality of the resurrected Christ. However, his subjective mystical vision of certain aspects of this reality was ultimately reductionist, because from the outset his framework for viewing the mystical reality of the resurrected Christ was limited by a Protestant theology that excluded and suppressed other forms of Christian spirituality. His preoccupation with the pneumatic Christ of faith and with mystical union with him, as well as his radical disinterest in the Christ of history and the ecclesial tradition, resembled in this regard more the spirituality of Docetism that had grown out of Platonic rationality than it did Chalcedonian Christology.⁵³

⁵⁰ Leskov, *Schism*, 38.

⁵¹ McCarthy, 'Religious Conflict', 71.

⁵² Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 83–85.

⁵³ Cf. Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1986), 21.

Radstock is depicted as a typical evangelical mystic who waited on the guidance of the Holy Spirit in daily circumstances. Trotter provides many examples of this.⁵⁴ In one anecdote, Trotter tells how once in St. Petersburg, when Radstock was finishing a meeting with a certain person, he found himself constrained to stay on, even though his conversation was at an end. After about eleven minutes he felt he needed to leave at once.⁵⁵

Having gone out into the street, Radstock met a gentleman whom he would have missed had he gone out ten seconds earlier or later. Radstock's meeting with that gentleman had important ramifications for this new convert. Kent describes Radstock in the following terms: 'He was a great renouncer: he associated the conversion of his sisters with giving up shooting, for instance. He solved the problem of his right to preach without ordination by asking God to give him three instances of the value of his doing so within twenty-four hours; he received them in the form of unsolicited letters, and went on preaching.'⁵⁶

c) The Role of the Spirit in Understanding Texts

The mystical experience of the transcendent Christ in the present was much more important for Radstock than were historical questions about Christ. Radstock believed that biblical texts could be understood properly only when a person received illumination from the Holy Spirit. Thus, talk-

ing to a person who had reservations about biblical trustworthiness, Radstock stated:

I am not going to explain them [difficulties in the Bible]; for you cannot understand them; they can only be understood by a supernatural power; till you get that supernatural power, you will not understand.... Suppose you were an ignorant man, and had never seen a telescope; I say to you, Do you see that star? That star is a cluster of stars. No, you say, I have looked all my life, and my sight is clear, and it is one star, and you tell me wrong for my eyesight is right. I will not look through the telescope.⁵⁷

Access to supernatural power (the telescope of the metaphor) comes by means of individual and personal prayer to God through Jesus.⁵⁸ Only after the Spirit is received can a person understand the meaning of the Bible. Without the Spirit the Bible is a dark text. Taking the Spirit as the starting point for understanding biblical texts, Radstock prefigured the Pentecostal way of theologizing.⁵⁹

Apologetics of this sort is consciously affective, personal, and fideistic. The text of the Bible is not understood by natural human reason or historical research. In order to overcome rationalist barriers to faith erected within the meta-narrative of modernist rational-

⁵⁴ Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 202–7.

⁵⁵ Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 206.

⁵⁶ Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 126.

⁵⁷ Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 113.

⁵⁸ Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 114.

⁵⁹ See Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), and Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

ist philosophies, one has to go beyond the boundaries of an impersonal and instrumental worldview by taking for granted the Christian meta-narrative, in which reality is perceived in personal terms, and establish a personal relationship with God by taking a leap of faith.

d) The Ministry of Healing by Prayer

Lord Radstock's revivalist meetings were accompanied by many cases of physical healing.⁶⁰ He had taken up faith healing on the basis of the Epistle of James as early as 1873.⁶¹ He believed in the operative healing power of the Spirit and the command to pray for the sick. He saw that sickness is connected in Scripture with spiritual rather than physical causes.⁶² Trotter writes: 'Through a long life Lord Radstock remained steadfast to that Voice of God which he had heard, and when in 1905 a new witness from the Antipodes, in the person of Mr. J. M. Hickson, came to confirm the reality of Christ's healing power, and to declare that the gifts had never been withdrawn from the Church, he heard with gladness this new testimony and watched its development with great sympathy.'⁶³

One year before his first visit to Russia in 1873 Radstock witnessed a remarkable demonstration of the heal-

ing power of the Lord. His seven-year-old daughter was healed of curvature of the spine, which had produced great nervous irritation. The Radstocks asked a visiting American pastor to pray for their daughter. After a short prayer the girl jumped up and said, 'Jesus has done it!'⁶⁴ Trotter, following the nature of the genre, tends to downplay the darker side of Radstock's faith healing. His daughter Mary, who was born in 1871, gives insight into it: 'My father, being a faith-healer, no medicines were ever given to us on any occasion.'⁶⁵ Writing of her experiences while in Russia in 1878, she continues: 'Besides my illness... two at least of my sisters and brothers had diphtheric throats, while my mother had a bad miscarriage. No nurse and no doctor were called in....'⁶⁶

e) Revivalism

Revivalism was a characteristic phenomenon of the nineteenth century. The history and geography of revivalism suggest a phenomenon closely linked to industrialization and modernization. Richard Carwardine notes the following characteristics of revivalism:

Charismatic evangelists, mass audiences, Bible-based preaching, a gospel of repentance, the elevation of heart and experience over head and theology and the proliferation of dramatic, often physical, experiences of conversion, stress on born-

60 Cf. C. Peter Williams, 'Healing and Evangelism: The Place of Medicine in Later Victorian Protestant Missionary Thinking', in *The Church and Healing*, ed. W.J. Sheils (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), 271–85.

61 Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 148.

62 Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 23.

63 Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 24.

64 Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 167.

65 Daisy Bevan, 'Odd Memories of an Ordinary Person', in Bevan Collection (London: School of Slavonic and East European Studies), 4.

66 Bevan, 'Odd Memories', 4.

again relationship with Jesus; the obligation to evangelize, faith in an inerrant Bible, strict personal discipline; social conservatism, and, very commonly, adventist, millennialist, and dispensationalist expectations founded on a conviction of God's personal intervention. On one reading revivalism has been a way of resisting modernity. Early Methodists sought in enthusiastic religion a warmth and social network, and an escape from uprootedness, market upheaval, and an emerging factory system.⁶⁷

All the characteristics of revivalism as described by Carwardine can be found in the ministry of Lord Radstock. Even though Radstock was not a professional revivalist like Finney or Moody, 'he was perfectly willing to associate with professional revivalists; he was present, naturally, at Smith's English Holiness meetings'.⁶⁸ Kent notices that Radstock's connections with the Plymouth Brethren were typical for revivalists of that time:

Like many of the lay revivalists of his time he had links with the Plymouth Brethren, whose hard core was mostly ex-Anglican, but whose ethos had developed in reaction against Anglican Tradition: the Brethren dispensed with the priesthood and cared nothing for the visible Church in the present dispensation. Anglicans, for whom the 'Church' had a personal rather than

an institutional existence, found the ruthlessly negative attitude of the Brethren horrifying. In most ecclesiastical circles Brethren were feared as a solvent of loyalties as well as a source of strange doctrine; in the 1870s, however, the influence of the Brethren waned as their original creative leadership aged and was not replaced.⁶⁹

Radstock was a revivalist in his own right. In the evangelical seaside and watering-place tradition, he had conducted personal missions in Brighton, for example, in 1867, and in Scarborough in 1869.⁷⁰ Dr. Frederick Baedeker, who later had a long ministry in Russia, was converted during Radstock's revivalist meetings in Weston-Super-Mare in 1866.⁷¹

Radstock used the technique of multiple repetitions of main ideas which was common among revivalist preachers of the time. Leskov reports that during one of his short talks Radstock managed to ask nine times if a person 'was with Christ or not'.⁷²

f) Adventism⁷³

The dramatic events of the French Revolution in the 1790s had a special effect on the evangelical interpretation of scripture. Reading the Bible in the light of their immediate experience, the

⁶⁷ Richard Carwardine, 'Revivalism', in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, ed. Adrian Hastings et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 622.

⁶⁸ Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 126.

⁶⁹ Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 126–27.

⁷⁰ Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 148.

⁷¹ Robert S. Latimer, *Dr. Baedeker and his Apostolic Work in Russia* (London: Morgan & Scott 1907), 26.

⁷² Leskov, *Schism*, 77.

⁷³ Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 47.

persecuted Protestants had developed an interpretive tradition that identified the Antichrist with the Papacy. However, the downfall of the Roman Catholic Church in France at the end of the eighteenth century opened up new horizons that reshaped the Protestant theological map of the nineteenth century.

A seventeenth-century Cambridge Scholar, Joseph Mede, had suggested that 'one day' in the book of Daniel (7:25) should be taken as meaning one year. According to Mede's interpretation, the fourth beast of Daniel 7, was taken to signify the Papacy, which should reign for 1260 years (time, times, and half a time = three and a half years = 1260 prophetic days = 1260 calendar years). The beginning of the Papacy was counted from the time when Belisarius entered Rome in 538, subjecting it to the Emperor Justinian's jurisdiction. In 1798, that is 1260 years later, Napoleonic armies entered Rome and banished Pope Pius IV.⁷⁴

Thus the French revolution opened a new vista in the interpretation of biblical prophecy in the light of contemporary historical events. The *parousia* was expected in the imminent future. The premillennial expectation shared by Radstock was based on the belief that Jesus would dramatically step into history and establish his millennial

kingdom (Revelation 20). This premillennial expectation reflected a pessimistic and world-denying attitude. Adventist notes were often appropriated in Radstock's addresses: 'Have you noticed that the Gospel is "preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations?"'⁷⁵

There is no trace, however, of a developed system of Darbyite dispensationalism in his preaching.⁷⁶ According to the adventist teaching of John Nelson Darby, God had established several distinct historical time-frameworks, or dispensations, within which he reveals his particular purposes for a particular dispensation. With regard to the millennium, Darby believed that Christ would come the first time to take the church to heaven, meeting her in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:13–17). The rapture of the church was believed to be followed by a period of tribulation (Matthew 24:21), which would be ended by the visible return of Christ to the earth with the church, to establish the millennial Davidic Kingdom promised in the Old Testament. Radstock does not indicate that he believed in two comings of the Lord—the invisible (the rapture of the church) and the visible (establishing the millennial Kingdom)—as Darby taught.

The eschatological views of Radstock played a threefold role. First, as was the case with D.L. Moody, who quite possibly never became a thoroughgoing dispensationalist, the eschatological millenarian perspective in Radstock's preaching and teaching served the real purpose of his address-

74 Timothy C.F. Stunt, *From Awakening to Secession: Radical Evangelicals in Switzerland 1815-35* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000), 22; Grayson Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals: Protestant Secessions from the Via Media, c. 1800-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 152–248; Binfield, 'Jews in Evangelical Dissent', 225–70; Oliver, *Prophets and Millennialists*, 35–36.

75 Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 248.

76 Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals*, 220–27.

es, which was to bring his audience into contact with the transcendent and personal reality of the resurrected Christ. 'It was a way of urging sinners to turn from their too exclusive concerns to contemplate more important matters of the spirit.'⁷⁷ Second, taking into account the fine distinction made by James Patrick Callahan between 'primitivist piety' and 'restorationism', it can be argued that Radstock shared the primitivist pietistic position.⁷⁸ He consciously avoided the restoration of primitive ecclesiological structures (and rituals such as baptism) which, according to the early Brethren view, had failed in other western denominations.

Thus, taking the position of 'a mourner' with respect to historical Christianity, Radstock was not attempting to revive first-century Christianity, but was eagerly waiting for the glorious return of the Lord. This primitivist position of the Brethren may account for Radstock's unwillingness to establish any evangelical ecclesial structure in St. Petersburg, as well

as his resistance to the discussion of any 'denominational theologies'. And finally, his premillennialist views may have played an important role in his handling of material possessions. Daisy Bevan is worth quoting again:

Soon after this our house at Sheen of many happy memories was given up, also 'the stripping' of our London House was nearly completed. My father's people, for two or three generations, had been collectors of furniture and pictures.... I believe some of it was really wonderful and all was good. But fiat went forth, and all was sold.... Books, of which there was also an excellent collection, had already gone away in 'four wheeler' loads, in fact anything of value, including jewels, that my father had not forgotten the existence of, were turned ruthlessly into missionary donations.⁷⁹

Two days before he died he wrote in a letter, 'In common with many others, I believe the Lord's return is close at hand.'⁸⁰

g) Evangelical Ecumenism

Radstock was an active member of the World Evangelical Alliance, which had been established in London in 1846.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Findlay, *Moody*, 253.

⁷⁸ James P. Callahan, *Primitivist Piety: The Ecclesiology of the Early Plymouth Brethren* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 1996). According to Callahan's thesis, the Brethren movement, in its origins, did not intend to restore the primitive Christian church with regard to spirituality or ecclesiology. Rather, having observed the pathetic condition of contemporary Christianity in Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century, the early Brethren started a non-denominational or better post-denominational movement that consisted of small gatherings of believers of different denominations who met for Bible reading and Christian fellowship. These gatherings were viewed as meetings of true believers practising biblical piety and awaiting the soon return of the Lord.

⁷⁹ Bevan, 'Odd Memories', 20.

⁸⁰ McCarthy, 'Religious Conflict', 76. Emphasis in original.

⁸¹ See John Wolffe, 'The Evangelical Alliance in the 1840s: An Attempt to Institutionalize Christian Unity', in *Voluntary Religion*, eds W.J. Sheils and D. Wood (London: Ecclesiastical History Society, 1986), 333–46; J.B.A. Kessler, *A Study of the Evangelical Alliance in Great Britain* (Goes, Netherlands: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1968), 10–17; Fuller, *People of the*

The unity represented by this alliance was born in the vortex of great social and religious uncertainties, the consequences of the French Revolution, the increasing influence of the humanistic philosophy of the Enlightenment, and the development of Marxist ideology. The first four decades of the nineteenth century had also given rise to ecclesiastical movements that fragmented the religious map of the British Isles.⁸² Out of the chaos of fragmentation, there grew a sense of the need to cooperate interdenominationally. The Alliance was formed as a confederation, with the purpose of promoting the Christian unity that already existed among 'all who, loving the Lord Jesus Christ, are bound to love one another'.⁸³

Even though evangelical unity was the proactive motif, the anti-Catholic and anti-Tractarian drives also played an important *reactive* role in the formation of this Protestant body. A preliminary meeting in Liverpool in 1845, which was intended to prepare the ground for a subsequent international meeting, was called 'to associate and concentrate the strength of an enlightened Protestantism against the encroachments of Popery and Puseyism, and to promote the interests of scriptural Christianity'.⁸⁴ The people who met in London agreed upon a doctrinal

statement that defined basic evangelical views. Lord Radstock was a typical representative of this Protestant body.

One of Radstock's Russian followers gave the following testimony about him:

All churches are equal to Radstock *in so far as they all similarly believe in salvation by faith* [italics mine—A.P.]. By invitation, and sometimes on his own initiative, he speaks to gatherings of all these denominations; but most of all he is in sympathy with the Plymouth Brethren, who have no ministers. He is not sympathetic to the Quakers, though sometimes he speaks in their meetings. In his view, the Quakers have 'little spiritual life.' He also has little sympathy for the Irvingites although he shares their view of the second coming of Christ, which he expects at any moment. He interprets the Apocalypse, as far as I can judge, by taking something from La Mother Guyon and something from Jung-Stilling, and adding something the source of which it is impossible to trace; doubtless it is home-grown.⁸⁵ If anyone tries to make him state his opinion on some teaching of whatever church, either he remains completely silent or, if the questioner is insistent, he will say briefly: 'I cannot speak of that, it is not my affair, I can only explain the Word of God, using the text I find therein.'⁸⁶

However, this 'non-denominational' attitude is limited only to the realm of the Protestant Paradigm, as we have mentioned earlier.

Mandate, 14–20; Ruth Rouse and Stephen C. Neill (eds), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948* (London: SPCK, 1954), 103, 338.

⁸² Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters*, vol. 2, *The Expansion of Evangelical Nonconformity* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 37.

⁸³ Ewing, *Goodly Fellowship*. Quoted in Fuller, *People of the Mandate*, 18.

⁸⁴ Wolfe, 'The Evangelical Alliance', 338.

⁸⁵ Leskov, *Schism*, 51–52.

⁸⁶ Leskov, *Schism*, 31.

h) (The Lack of) Sacramentalism

Lord Radstock considered that outward confession of Christ corresponded to the baptism by water of the early Christians, by which they were separated forever from the world around them.⁸⁷ Radstock believed in two kinds of baptism: baptism in water and baptism in the Spirit. He defined them as baptism of the body and baptism of the soul respectively.⁸⁸ Baptism in water 'is an acknowledgment of sinfulness and [of] a need of forgiveness'. However, due to the fact that the ritual of water baptism had been practised in all traditional Christian churches, Radstock appealed to apostolic times and interpreted the meaning of baptism in the following way:

Real baptism was when a soul acknowledged itself lost and ruined, and once for all gave itself right over to God, before the world, and was known by the world as belonging to Christ. You may have been baptized in whatever water ceremony you please; but what you need is that heart baptism into Christ, which will be followed by the sealing of the Holy Ghost. *Then* you know what conversion is.⁸⁹ This baptism is the baptism of the soul, which will be evidenced by an outward confession towards the world; it is the signing of the deed of partnership; the definite acceptance of the soul, from which time the whole inheritance of Christ becomes the portion of the poor sinner.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, 20; PP 2/1/b/8 a letter to Tikhonov dated 1884.

⁸⁸ Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 58–60, 115.

⁸⁹ Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 59.

⁹⁰ Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 61.

The Slavic Baptist denominational writers attribute Radstock's lack of emphasis on the importance of water baptism to his association with the Plymouth Brethren. However, infant baptism was practised in the Darbyite communities. The Müllerites (Open Brethren) were considered and called 'Baptists' by the Closed Brethren, because Müller believed that the Bible taught that baptism should take place following the conversion experience, even though he did not impose his view on those who disagreed with him. Radstock's perspective cannot be attributed to either Open or Closed Brethren views on the issue.

His ambivalent attitude on the issue of baptism and other outward identity markers prolonged the process of separation of evangelical converts from the Orthodox Church. Leskov compares Radstock's view on baptism with that of some Russian sectarians such as the Molokans and Stundists, who also understood the ritual metaphorically.⁹¹

3. The Framework of Perfectionism

Being among those who initiated the Keswick meetings in the mid-1870s, prior to his longest visit to Russia in 1878, Radstock shared the perfectionist position of the early Keswick movement.⁹² According to the teaching

⁹¹ Leskov, *Schism*, 59–60.

⁹² Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 148; J.C. Pollock, *The Keswick Story* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1964), 34–35. It should be mentioned here that all the evangelicals who visited Russia between 1870 and 1880 were part of the perfectionist movement, which was spilling over from America to Britain and to

of Pearsall Smith, who brought this movement to Britain on the wave of D.L. Moody's revival and whose works had appeared in print in England seven years earlier, a believer can reach a state of perfection already in this life by an act of faith. Radstock seems to have shared this vision.⁹³

According to this perfectionist view, there is a difference between knowing Christ as Saviour and knowing him as Lord.⁹⁴ Radstock held the view that it is not enough to receive salvation by grace. That is only the first stage; the person who goes no further than this stage will be saved only as a log is from fire.⁹⁵ Christ needs to be experienced not only as Saviour but also as Lord. The life of Christ mediated by the Spirit should take hold of believers to such a degree that they stop sinning and live lives of service in total dedication to the Lord.⁹⁶

Continental Europe. Besides Radstock and George Müller, Otto Stockmeyer and Dr. Baedeker were active propagandists of perfectionism. Baedeker served as the interpreter for the initiator of the perfectionist movement during his trip to Germany.

93 See D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 151–80.

94 Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 8.

95 Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 110.

96 Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 9, 43.

Thus, according to Radstock, there are three categories of Christians. First, there are nominal Christians—those who bear the name of Christ and give intellectual assent to Christian doctrines but do not possess saving faith. Such people are not to be considered real Christians. The second group of Christians consists of those people who have trusted the Lord for salvation but have not dedicated themselves completely to his service. Then, finally, the third group of Christians is comprised of those people who have come to know the Lord not only as their Saviour, but also as the Lord of their lives, having thus broken the bonds and attractions of this world.⁹⁷

The path from the second to the third stage goes through identifying with Christ by being united to him: 'He wants simply that you be united to Him; then you will not merely get the putting away of the sins you have committed; but the living God will put forth his power to keep, to save, to deliver. Not merely today; but to the end he will keep you, and will present you one day, as a proof of His grace and His love, faultless before the throne of God.'⁹⁸

97 Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 43, 88, 107.

98 Radstock, *Notes of Addresses*, 63.