

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_tbhs_01.php

Transactions

of the

Baptist Historical Society.

The Works of John Smyth.

IT is fitting that the *Transactions* should contain some notice of the most important literary event in the record of the Baptist Historical Society—the publication of the works of John Smyth. Dr. Whitley is to be heartily congratulated, both on the fulfilment of long-cherished hopes, and on the manner in which they have been fulfilled. The two handsome volumes just published through the Cambridge University Press are everything that could be desired, as the literary memorial of a spirit finely touched to fine issues, whose living monument is constituted by the Baptist Churches of to-day. For the first time, the whole works of the great pioneer are now made accessible, in accurate reproduction and attractive typography, to the student of Baptist origins. It may be confidently expected that, as a result of this publication, John Smyth will win a place in the history of religion in the seventeenth century which only a few have hitherto accorded to him.

The works, naturally printed in their chronological order, enable us to trace his whole development, through the Puritanism of his Lincoln lectureship (*The Bright Morning Starre*, and *A Paterne of True*

Prayer), the Separatism of Gainsborough and Amsterdam (*Principles and Inferences concerning the visible Church, The differences of the Churches of the Separation, and Paralleles, Censures, Observations*), the Baptist convictions that give him his denominational significance (*The Character of the Beast*, and various confessional statements), to that peace of God which guards his heart and thoughts in the closing period of his life (*Retractions and Confirmations*). The editor has increased our debt to him by prefixing a hundred-page biography of Smyth, and by adding an appendix of brief notes. The frontispieces to the two volumes are respectively an interesting map showing the position of Smyth's home in Amsterdam, and a photographic reproduction of the application made by Smyth and others for membership with the Mennonites, which is in his own hand-writing.

The chief contribution of the editor's biographical introduction consists partly in a careful presentation of the backgrounds to the successive phases of Smyth's career (notably the contemporary academic life of Cambridge, and the relations of religious communities in Amsterdam), and partly in the new emphasis placed on certain aspects of that career. These are, as the writer points out, the influence and significance of his university training, the consistency (in spite of all apparent inconsistency) of his development, and the importance of his influence. In this last connection, stress is laid on Smyth's predominant place in relation to John Robinson; Dr. Whitley suggests that the story of the Pilgrim Fathers will have to be re-written, in order to link them rather with Norfolk than with the Scrooby group: "What the Pilgrims derived from the north was their covenant; and its progressive character, the one thing that makes it memorable, is due to Smyth." This excellent biography will do much to reinforce the service rendered by the publication of the "Works."

Can we claim for these volumes a more general interest and significance than the furtherance of historical research? It must, of course, be frankly admitted that there is a good deal of material here which nobody but a professed student of Smyth's life and times would be likely to read, as is the case with the unattractive literary controversies included in the *Paralleles*, *Censures*, *Observations*. Life is too full of great and living interests for many of us to care whether John Smyth or Richard Bernard was the more logical in his syllogisms or ingenious in his Scriptural proofs, as to the ministry and worship of the Church. The tale may be full of sound and fury, but to most of us it will signify nothing. These are the ways of "dusty death," not because the problems have lost their importance, but because three centuries of history have given us new approaches to them. On the other hand, there is much in these volumes that deserves, for its own sake, to be more widely known. Even the long controversy about infant baptism with Richard Clifton, which forms the contents of *The Character of the Beast*, is an armoury of argument for the true meaning of baptism, which is by no means superseded. In spite of the attempts made by paedobaptists of the non-sacramentarian type to invent a defence of infant baptism which is true neither to the New Testament on the one hand, nor to the traditions and practice of the Church Catholic on the other, Smyth's alternatives must still be pressed by us: "The true constitution of the Church is of a new creature baptized into the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: the false constitution is of infants baptized." The paedobaptist, *so far as he takes his baptism of infants seriously*, is still in that position of unstable equilibrium which Smyth characterized when he wrote, "the Separation must either go back to England [i.e., the Anglican Church], or go forward to true baptism."

The false use made of the Old Testament covenant on behalf of infant baptism still calls for such denunciation as Smyth provides: "things must be made proportionable, and circumcision, which was a carnal seal, could not seal up the spiritual covenant to the spiritual seed, for to say so, is to leap over the hedge, and to make a disproportion betwixt the type and the truth."

We move, however, beyond the circle of our denominational interests when we turn to *A Paternne of True Prayer*. In view of the noticeable tendency amongst Free Churchmen of to-day towards some more liturgical form of public worship, there is much in this treatise that deserves to be pondered. Smyth's argument makes the Lord's Prayer the ground-plan or synopsis of all prayers: "there is no prayer in the holy Scripture but it may be referred unto this prayer: and all the prayers which have been, are, or shall be made, must be measured by this prayer, and so far forth are they commendable and acceptable as they are agreeable hereunto." Yet the mere repetition of this perfect form of words is valueless: "It is one thing to say the Lord's prayer, another thing to pray it." Wisely to build the house on this ground-plan is no light task, and it calls for earnest and diligent preparation: "it is our duty to strengthen our soul before prayer with premeditate matter: that our coming to pray and having our hearts filled with matter, we may better continue in prayer: for as a man that hath filled his belly with meat is better able to hold out at his labour than being fasting; even so, he that first replenisheth his soul with meditations of his own sins and wants, of God's judgements and blessings upon himself and others, shall be better furnished to continue longer in hearty and fervent prayer, than coming suddenly to pray without strengthening himself aforehand thereunto." In fact, Smyth links

the sermon and the prayer together, in a way that dignifies both: "there is no difference betwixt preaching and praying but this: that preaching is directed to men from God, prayer is directed from man to God, both preaching and prayer is the word of God, or ought to be so." Smyth is, however, sadly conscious how far our actual praying falls below this ideal of public prayer; for example, through wandering thoughts, "as about our dinner, our money, our cattle, our pleasures, our suits and adversaries [surely a personal touch], and a thousand of like quality: so that if our prayers were written as we conceive them, and our by-thoughts as parentheses interlaced, they would be so ridiculous as that we might very well be ashamed of them." Perhaps this is the best reason to be offered for breaking up the customary "long prayer" of our own services into a series of detached petitions with congregational responses.

The innermost sanctuary of Smyth's writings is, however, the *Retractions*, which form so fine an illustration of that Pauline phrase which John Stuart Blackie used to render, "truthing it in love." To read these eight or nine pages sympathetically is a devotional exercise, a true means of grace, nor is the devotional spirit at all checked by the touch of Pauline indignation at Helwys's unworthy imputation of selfish motives. There could be no more convincing proof of the genuine leading of the Spirit of God through the apparent inconsistencies of spiritual consistency, up to the Spirit's rarest fruit—peace. The writer of the *Retractions* has learnt to see life steadily, and see it whole, with his feet planted firmly on the common foundation of all Christian churches. He still condemns what he regards as unspiritual elements in the churches, wherever found, and holds fast to the essential convictions of his life; but he has penetrated to the inner brotherhood of all true Christians. The

measure of that penetration is given by his humble acknowledgment of regret for the spirit in which he has often censured others, and for his excessive insistence on the external features of Church life. "Without repentance, faith, remission of sin, and the new creature, there is no salvation, but there is salvation without the truth of all the outward ceremonies of the outward Church." Mark well that last phrase; there *is* a truth of outward ceremonies, as well as of inward spirit, and Smyth by no means abandons that truth, though he has come to see it in a new perspective. The supreme interest of John Smyth's life and writings lies in this spiritual development, so fitly crowned with peace. "My stress lay," says Browning in the preface to his most difficult poem, "on the incidents in the development of a soul: little else is worth study." That which *Sordello* labours heavily to portray, Smyth's works achieve, in the simplicity of a single-hearted devotion to spiritual truth. "That we should fall from the profession of Puritanism to Brownism, and from Brownism to true Christian baptism is not simply evil or reprobable in itself, except it be proved that we have fallen from true religion." The study of this pilgrimage on its inner side, now rendered possible to us all through the publication of these volumes, is full of fascination. In comparison with this, the interest of the outward circumstances of Smyth's life is secondary. "To certain types of mind," as Evelyn Underhill says in her preface to the autobiography of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, "the spiritual adventures of man will seem always the most absorbing of all studies; the most real amongst the confusing facts of life." Such minds should not miss this fine example of the quest of truth, none the less fine because it was carried through amid the practical religious needs and ecclesiastical controversies of

Smyth's own day. In some sense, Smyth is an epitome of the progressive religion of England during the seventeenth century; we may see in him a prophecy, not only of the movement from Puritanism to Separatism, but also of the spiritual emphasis which gives unity in diversity to the many religious groups of the Commonwealth. But the victorious peace of his last days does not correspond to the mere "toleration" in which the century ends; it was the deeper peace of loving and sympathetic insight, which is attained only through the spiritual baptism of the believer.

H. WHEELER ROBINSON.

Obadiah Holmes of Seekonk.

This man was one of the early Baptist confessors in New England. Benedict tells us that he arrived in America about 1639, and continued a communicant with the pedobaptists, first at Salem, and then at Rehoboth, about eleven years, when he became a Baptist, and subsequently united with the first church at Newport, Rhode Island. He was sent by the church to Lynn in Massachusetts, where he was arrested for being at worship in a private house, and in August 1651 was whipt thirty stripes with a three-corded whip. Soon afterwards he was chosen pastor at Newport, where he died in 1682. His son Obadiah was long a judge in New Jersey, and a preacher in the Baptist church of Cohansay. Another of his eight children, by name John, became a magistrate in Philadelphia; and his posterity is spread over the Middle States.

Such a fine record prompts enquiry for his English ancestry. Benedict says that he was a native of Preston in Lancashire, and that when he died in 1682 he was aged 76. It follows that he was born in 1606.

The registers of births at Preston for that period were extant in 1631, when an extract of 1604 was attested. Now the earliest book which survives covers 1611-1635. It records three christenings of Holmes, four marriages, and five burials. But there is no mention of Obadiah.

Trask in the Star-Chamber, 1619.

MR. C. H. GREENE of Michigan has been fortunate enough to find a record of this trial, which he kindly communicates, and is published herewith. The original minute-books of the Star-Chamber Council sittings seem to have been deliberately destroyed in the time of the Long Parliament. But the minute of the final session on Trask's case had been copied, and attested by F. Arthur. It was endorsed:—"Junij. 19: Anno Jacobi 16: The sentence in the Starr-Chamber against Jo: Traske." After the original Latin heading to the minute, an English version has been added in brackets; as this specifies that James was James I, it must have been made after the accession of James II in 1685. The document may be seen at the Bodleian Library in Oxford, Additional Manuscript C 303, at folio 38b; the present reproduction has been carefully collated with it.

In Camera Stellata Coram Concilio ibidem decimo nono die Junij Anno decimo sexto Jacobi Regis.— (In the Star Chamber before a council on the nineteenth day of June, in the sixteenth year of the reign of King James I; i.e. A.D. 1619, June 16.)

This daie was brought to the Barr John Traske, Clarke against whome Sir Henry Yelverton Knight his Maiesties Attorney generall informed this honorable Court, Ore tenus, That the said Traske beinge a Minister and an insolent detractour of the Ecclesiasticall gouernement and haueing a fantastickall opynion of himselfe with ambicion to bee the Father of a Jewish faccion and some new opynion in Religion to seduce simple people after him did publikely professe and teach that the lawe of Moses concerneing the differences of meates forbidden the eateinge of Hoggs Flesh, Conies, etc., is at this day to bee observed and kept, and that the seaventh daie which

wee call Sater Daie is the Lordes Sabbath and ought to be kept for the sabbath at this daie, in which Jewish opynion hee confirmed as many people as hee could: and beinge convented for the same before the lord Arch-bishopp of Canterbury and other Bishoppes and Comissioners of the high Commission, they dealte favorably with him by argumentes to make him see his Errors, but hee contineweinge obstinate, hee was only imprisoned and restreyned from company that hee might not infecte others, but was not restreyned from any meates vntill November last, and then hee was only allowed the Flesh meates in his opynion supposed to bee forbidden: Notwithstandinge which mylde dealeinge (in respect of his erroneous and high offences and obstinacy against true religion and the peace of the Church and his Maiesties governement) The said Traske very insolently and presumptuously wrott a most scandalous letter to the Kinges most excellent Maiestie with his owne hand, and therein conceyveinge as hee pretended his cruell handlinge by some of the prelates termeth their proceedings against him to bee cruell and bloody turranny and oppression, And that his Maiesty should take the sword speedily out of the handes of the bloud thirstie and not give way to any proud Papall Prelate; And beinge examined what hee meante thereby, hee saith that the proceedings against him by the lord Archbishopp and other Bishoppes and Comissioners to bee bloody and to bee a cruell oppression, as first for murthinge his Children for wante of educacion and instruccion, Secondly that hee hath byn deprived of maynetenance by ordinary Meanes, And thirdly for that hee hath bene kept from the exucucion of his ministry: And the said Traske contineweinge still in his insolent and obstinate course and opinions, did, presumptuously write a second scandalous Letter to the Kinges.

maiestie not in the way of submission but in manner of a private challengde to right his pretended greivances. And therein vseth many disdaynfull phrases and scornfull detraccion of the terme of hipocrisie, and thirtie two tymeas vseth the vncivill terme of Thow and Thee to the Kinges most excellent Maiestie in the said letter, and therein contineweth his impudent scandalizeinge of the lordes Bishoppes as hee did in the former lettre: And his highnes said Attorney further informeth this honorable Court that the said Traske hath heretofore and still doth tradiciously seeke and laboure to drawe and pervert his Maiesties subiectes from the Religion here established and from their obedience to his Maiesties gouernement, and to drawe Disciples after him in his Jewish opynions, All which appeareth by the said severall lettres, and by the said Traskes owne confession vnder his hand. For which high and erroneous offences and presumptuous attemptes his highnes Attorney prayed that the said Traske might receaue the sentence and Judgment of this honorable Court, wherevpon the Court takinge grave and mature deliberacion of the quallitie of the said Traskes offences, found and pronounced him guiltie of three most heynous and dangerous offences. First of an imediate detraccion and scandall vpon the Kinges most Excellent Maiesty in the highest degree: Secondly of a scandall to his Maiesty by scandalizinge his Ecclesiasticall gouernement and of foule and false accusacions against the lordes Bishoppes and the high Commissioners, Thirdly of a sedicious practice and purpose to divert his Maiesties subiectes from their obedience to followe him and his Jewish opynions, which opynions the Reuerend Bishoppes and the rest of the Court nowe sittinge did vtterly confute and condemne as false and erroneous, For which seuerall and heinous offences (the Court holdinge the same worthy of very seveare and exemplary pun-

ishment), hath ordered decreed and adjudged that the said Traske bee committed to the prison of the Fleete and there to bee kept close prisoner duringe his life, that hee may not infecte others, And the Court houldinge the said Traske not a meete person to bee any longer in the Ministry, but to bee thereof digraded, hath lefte the same to the ecclesiasticall power to bee done, And then the said Traske to bee whipped from the prison of the Fleete to the Pallace of Westminster with a paper on his head inscribed with these wordes, For writinge presumptuous lettres to the Kinge, wherein hee much slandered his Maiesty, And for slanderinge the proceedinges of the lord Bishoppes in the high Commission, And for maintayneinge Jewish opynions, And then to bee sett on the Pillory and to haue one of his eares nayled to the Pillory, and after hee hath stood there some convenient tyme, to bee burnte in the forehead with the lettre J; in token that hee broached Jewish opynions, And alsoe that the said Traske shall alsoe bee whipped from the Fleete into Cheepeside with the like paper on his head and bee sett in the Pillory and haue his other Eare nayled therevnto, And lastly that the said Traske shall pay a Fyne of one Thousand poundes to his Maiesties vse.

M: Goad:

Examinatur per F. Arthur.

[Note by the Editor.]

Mr. Greene's discovery is valuable in putting right several details of Trask's early career, which had hitherto been inferred incorrectly, from later episodes in his life. His story may now be summarised from good early sources:

He was a schoolmaster from Somerset, ordained by the bishop of Salisbury, who appeared in London

during 1617, aged 34, a strenuous upholder of observing the Lord's Day in the Jewish sabbatical style. He ordained evangelists, in Wycliffe's style, and sent them out to preach. One of these, Hamlet Jackson, seems to have been the first to say that the fourth commandment was to be taken complete, and that not Sunday, but Saturday, was to be observed. After some hesitation, Trask followed. Before long, not only was Returne Hebden put in the New Prison and Israel Holly in Newgate, for this practice, but Trask was brought before the High Commission for the province of Canterbury, and imprisoned. Two tracts were written against him in 1618, both to be seen in Dublin; one at Trinity College in manuscript, "The Sabbath not to be kept on Saturday," one in Marsh's Library, by a Catholic Divine, "A briefe Refutation of John Traske's Judaical and novel Fancies." Traske appealed direct to the king against the authority of the High Commission, and was therefore heard before the Council in Star Chamber. Lancelot Andrews was president, and spoke twice on the matter; the editor found the manuscript of his speeches at Cambridge in the University Library, Ff. v. 25 (3) and Gg. i. 29 (45). They show more oburgation and knowledge of ancient heresies than acquaintance with the tenets of Trask. The first act of the drama ended with the sentence as recorded above, setting forth his views.

It is often forgotten that while both the High Commission and the Star Chamber passed very severe sentences, these were in practice mitigated. There is no reason to think Trask ever paid £1,000, and it is certain he was not imprisoned for life. He recanted next year, and in 1620 published a Treatise of Liberty from Judaism, to be seen at the Bodleian. Pagett in 1645 said incorrectly that he was sentenced to remain in the Fleet Prison for three years; this may

perhaps suggest that he was in fact released after three years.

The State Papers show that he was free on 30 July 1627, when he got into trouble again, as he had desired to attend to the place of execution, a Puritan sentenced to death. Next day the bishop of London reported that he was "an unworthy person and a Jew." The original charge was lost sight of, and attention was paid to this feature. He was examined on 9 August, when it was charged that he and his wife observed the Sabbath. The result appears from his petition on 13 June 1629, pleading that he had been suspended from his living, had confessed his fault as ordered, both in the pulpit and in print, and begging that he might be allowed again to exercise his functions. The issue of this petition is not known. It must be noted that this second trial was after the death of Andrews in 1626; even the editor of the Calendar of State Papers for 1647 blundered here, and confounded the two trials. But when in 1629 the works of Andrews were published, they contained one of the speeches of 1618 in Star Chamber, which had received new interest. Perhaps it was at this period that the copy of the 1619 trial was made, which is printed above.

A third act opens with the trial of John Etsall in the High Commission, on 21 June 1632; in his defence it was said that he justified Trask. One of the few original books of the High Commission which escaped destruction, has been published by the Camden Society, and there may be seen at length the defence of Etsall. Not a syllable in it bears on any Sabbatarian doctrine, whether relating to Saturday or to Sunday; Trask had apparently dropped the subject and had turned to other topics. And although other disputants were busy on this question from 1632 to 1636, he was wise enough to keep quiet, and was

not referred to in the debate. It is said that in 1636 he published *The True Gospel*.

But on 20 February 1635-6 the High Commission gave a commission to John Wragg to search out conventicles. As a result we read in the records of the Jacob church, published in our first volume at page 222, that John Trask was taken by Wragg at Mr. Digby's; and not yielding to Wragg's general warrant, was had to the Lord Mayor, and was committed to the Poultry Counter for ten days and then was released on bail; wanted his health, and was shortly after translated.

Edward Norice that same year published a *Discovery of his late dangerous errors*, and in 1638 issued *The New Gospel not the True Gospel*. From these sources may easily be learned his latest opinions, which were exceptional, although he apparently belonged to the Jacob-Lathrop church at the last. It should be borne in mind that there is no syllable to suggest he ever abandoned paedobaptism.

Ireland and New Jersey.

A church was founded at Cloughkeating in Lower Ormond, by one of Cromwell's officers, and existed for about two centuries. In 1740 it had above 200 members, twenty years later it entertained the Association, and again in 1774. By that time it had flourishing daughter churches in the colonies, whose story is touched by Dr. Joshua Wills in a sketch of the Pittsgrove church in Salem County.

There are legends that Thomas Patient, the Baptist preacher in Dublin cathedral, had evangelised on the Cohansey river in lower New Jersey. It is certain that in 1665, three brothers from Cloughkeating, David, John and Thomas Shepard, emigrated with Sir Robert Carr to the Fenwick Colony. When a Baptist church organised at Cohansey in 1690, they were original members. Worship was held at many centres, three of which are known to-day as Pilesgrove, Pittsgrove, Schultown. Thomas Killingworth from Norwich was the earliest leader, Robert Kelsey from Drummore began about 1740, and thirty years later saw substantial buildings in which the daughter churches carried on their work.

“Grace Abounding” of 1680.

UNDER the above title an interesting Paper appeared in the *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* for October, 1915, in which the writer, Mr. J. C. Foster, makes reference to Bunyan's "Relation of his Imprisonment," which since 1765 has been appended to his well-known work, "Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners." Perhaps I may be permitted to supplement this reference by stating how this vivid prison story came to be printed for the first time, seventy-seven years after its author had departed this life in 1688.

In 1691 Charles Doe, a personal friend and devoted admirer of John Bunyan was very bent on bringing out a Collected Edition in folio of all Bunyan's writings. For this purpose he issued a paper entitled "The Struggler" by way of obtaining subscribers' names to the proposed edition. This paper contained a list of all Bunyan's printed works with their dates of issue; and at the end of this list mention was made of four manuscripts which as yet remained unprinted, namely: A Christian Dialogue; a Pocket Concordance; The Heavenly Footman, and a Relation by Bunyan of his own Imprisonment. The first two of these four appear never to have been printed but the remaining two have fortunately been preserved. The "Heavenly Footman" was published in 1698, but the Prison Recollections were not given to the world till far on in the next century. Some five and

thirty years ago, in a second-hand book shop I came upon a copy of the *first* edition, bearing date 1765 and having for its publisher James Buckland at the Buck in Paternoster Row. I naturally began to wonder to whom—after this long interval—we were indebted for the printing, and therefore permanent preservation, of this most racy product of Bunyan's pen. My first conjecture was, that it was to Samuel Palmer, in after years the editor of Calamy's Nonconformist Memorial, we were indebted for this act of service. For in his youth he joined the Church at Bedford, was for years in affectionate relations with its minister, and for years also a fellow-worshipper with Hannah Bunyan, Bunyan's great-grand-daughter, who was the possessor of the manuscript in question, and who must therefore have been well-known to him. Moreover, in later years Samuel Palmer, as a minister, had business relations with James Buckland, the publisher. I therefore came to the conclusion that he was the man who took the necessary steps for giving to the world the work in question. It was perhaps a natural conclusion, but it has turned out to be wrong. I know now as a matter of certainty that the man to whom we are indebted for this act of service was Thomas Gurney, at one time official shorthand writer to the Law Courts and who married the grand-daughter of Thomas Marsom, the founder of the first Baptist Church at Luton in Bedfordshire. On a stray leaf of the *Evangelical Magazine* for May 1813, which accidentally came into my possession a few years ago, Joseph Gurney, the son of Thomas, in a letter to the Editor, tells us how the whole thing came about. Writing from Walworth he refers to the fact that some people doubted the authenticity of a small publication entitled "A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan," and he asks leave of the Editor to lay the circumstances of its discovery before his readers. He

says: “I accompanied my late honoured father in his annual visit to his relations and friends in Bedfordshire in the summer of 1765. When at Bedford my father was informed that a grand-daughter of Mr. John Bunyan’s had a manuscript of her grandfather’s for which she wished to find a purchaser. She was aged and infirm. My father and I went to her lodging, and she delivered the manuscript to my father in my presence requesting him to sell it. The manuscript was in Mr. Bunyan’s handwriting. The copy was very fair; and it was sewed up in a little book. When my father returned to London he offered it to several booksellers, but the late Mr. Buckland was the only person who was willing to purchase it; he gave five guineas for it, which the poor woman joyfully accepted; and Mr. Buckland immediately printed it.”

It may interest some readers if I mention that, the year after this visit to Bedford with his father, the Joseph Gurney who wrote the letter married Rebecca Brodie at St. Andrew’s, Holborn, and they had a son, William Brodie Gurney, born to them in 1777. This son, again in after years married Ann Benham, and of two of their daughters one married the Rev. W. A. Salter, and another, Amelia, married the Rev. Joseph Angus, D.D.

When it is remembered that the “Relation of Bunyan’s Imprisonment” contains some of its author’s raciest utterances:—his own account of his arrest at Samsell when going there to preach; his subsequent conference with Justice Wingate and the Vicar of Harlington at the old manor house; his trial at the quarter-sessions at Bedford before Justice Keeling, who told him that he ought to use the Church Prayer Book because it had been ever since the time of the Apostles; and to whom Bunyan made the final answer that if he were out of prison to-day he would preach the Gospel again to-morrow; when it is further remem-

bered that this little book contains Bunyan's after-conference with the Clerk of the Peace who tried to get him to submit at the end of three month's imprisonment; and, not least, that it contains Bunyan's wife's plea for her husband before the Judges in the Swan Chamber, one of the noblest manifestations of Puritan Womanhood:—when we remember all this we may well be glad that this little book has become a possession for ever to the Church of God. Further, may we not sincerely congratulate the family of Dr. Angus and their kinsfolk, the Salters, that it was an ancestor of theirs who rendered this inestimable service to all those, and they are many, who are heart-lovers of the Dreamer of Bedford Gaol?

JOHN BROWN.

Marriage License of 1756.

Given by His Excellency Jonathan Belcher, Esq., Captain-General and Governor-in-chief in and over His Majesty's Province of New Jersey and territories thereon depending in America, Chancellor and Vice-Admiral in the same. To any Protestant Minister or Justice of the Peace. Whereas there is a mutual purpose of marriage between Joseph Sheppard of Fairfield in the County of Cumberland of the one party, and Mary Sayer, of the other party, for which they have desired my license, and have given bond upon condition that neither of them have any lawful impediment of free contract, affinity or consanguinity to hinder their being joined in the holy bonds of matrimony. I empower you to join the said Joseph Sheppard and Mary Sayer in the holy bonds of matrimony and then to pronounce man and wife. Given under my hand and prerogative seal at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, the third day of January, in the twenty-ninth year of the reign of our lord, George the Second, by the grace of God of Great Britain France and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith.

Entered in the Secretary's office,

J. BELCHER.

Association Life till 1815.

IN 1644 seven Particular Baptist churches in London co-operated in issuing a Confession. Without any formal organization, they continued to act together, and they had constantly before their eyes the Westminster Assembly elaborating a revised system for the National Church. By June 1646 this resulted in a Presbyterian plan set to work in London, and in Lancashire by September. Elsewhere there was great reluctance, and Parliament had to take strong measures to erect and start synods; it is remarkable that the final ordinance was issued on 29 August 1648, when a second civil war had ended in the decisive defeat of the Presbyterians and the victory of the New-Model Army. That Army passed over to Ireland which it subdued between 1649 & 1652, planting strong garrisons, in all of which were Baptists who organized churches. These military Baptists had been accustomed to a strong inter-regimental voluntary organization from 1647, and they naturally carried over their customs to an inter-congregational voluntary association.

We owe to Benjamin Stinton the preservation, & to John Rippon the printing, of a letter sent from Ireland, dated at Waterford 1 June 1653. "The Churches of Christ in Ireland, united together, reside in the several places following:" Dublin, Waterford, Clonmell, Kilkenny, Cork, Limerick, Galloway, Wex-

ford, Carrick Fergus, Kerry. These churches sent a letter to the brethren in England by the hand of John Vernon, telling what advantage they had from mutual letters and loving epistles, bringing about a closer union & knitting of heart. They desired, not for the first time nor the second, a correspondence with all churches in England Scotland & Wales, & requested that there should be regular quarterly communications.

The matter received prompt attention, and on 24 July a letter went out from "the several churches of Christ in London" to the brethren in Wales, enclosing & endorsing the Irish letter.

Now the Irish letter implies that the Association idea was already in the air, if indeed it had not taken material shape. And we turn to other quarters showing that the Baptist churches were already acting in concert.

We have an account of a meeting at Wells on 6 & 7 November 1653 under the leadership of Thomas Collier, dealing with the question of laying on of hands. It implies that there had been previous meetings, but the minutes of these do not seem to be extant. We find however that in 1651 Collier put out "A Second General Epistle to all the Saints," so that there was some kind of brotherhood evinced even then.

We have also the early minutes of the Berkshire Association, detailing the actual meeting on 8 October 1652 at Wormsley, when the Association was organized, and the adoption of a constitution & by-laws on 17 March 1653 at Tetsworth.

When we enquire if there is any other factor that may have contributed to these gatherings, we may note one action of the Rump Parliament in February & March 1650. The northern counties of England had always been under a separate administration, & so had Wales. This custom was followed, and two Commissions were erected to propagate the gospel in the

two districts. We know that some of the Commissioners were, or soon became, Baptists, & that some of the preachers sent were Baptists, so that Baptist churches arose in each area. It would seem probable that the fact of the preachers being under control of the Commissions, would lead to their churches associating, & not being left in isolation.

The records of the church at Ilston, printed in part by Joshua Thomas in 1790, show that on 6 & 7 November 1650 there was a conference of three Welsh churches, and a similar conference held on 19 March 1651, appointing a third at Gelligaer. Another was held on 14 & 15 July 1653 at Abergavenny, & appointed one in September at Aberafon. Others were held at Llantrissaint, Hay, Brecknock; the minutes of some of these are printed by Thomas, & show how rapidly a system was agreed upon.

Since then we find concerted action in London, Somerset, Berkshire, Gloucestershire, Wales, we recognize that the feeling as to union in Ireland was due not only to the military precedents, but also to a general Baptist tendency; and we cannot forget the action of the General Baptists in the Midlands, meeting & elaborating a Confession in 1651. Yet the Irish churches did stimulate the movement, & we can see two men prominent in the matter. The letter pays a tribute to "the never-to-be-forgotten young Drapes," & was conveyed by Vernon. Some three years earlier, Drapes had published on Worship, while Vernon pre-faced with an address "to all scattered saints." Both men had been concerned in the Welsh beginnings.

Now it has not been noticed that it was under these circumstances the Association idea developed strongly. When any attention has been paid to the subject, it is generally on Baxter that attention has been focussed. And it is true that as the Presbyterian system was collapsing, Baxter did promote a monthly

meeting of Justices & Ministers & Deacons & Ancient godly men of his own congregation, followed next day by a meeting of ministers only. It is further true that a similar plan was hit upon in Cheshire & in Cumberland at the same time, & that the idea was rapidly taken up. But this system, so far as it linked together separate congregations, was rigidly clerical, and it was soon regulated by the Provincial Synod of London. The publications speak of the "Associated Ministers"; the minutes of one elaborate Association, for Devon, condensed by Shaw (Hist. Eng. Ch. II. 447) show none but ministers. But Baptist Associations were never thus limited. Indeed of "ministers" in the old sense, formally ordained by bishops or presbyters, Baptists thought little or nothing. It rested with the church to call a man to the ministry, & whenever we find the names of delegates to any meeting, we find pastors and ministers outnumbered by others. Since also the Puritan Associations date from 1653 at earliest, & Baptist meetings are seen as early as 1650 in Wales, 1644 in London, it is clear that Baptist Associations owe little to the others, while they absolutely gave the model which the others altered.

In October 1653 we have a letter forwarded from London to Hexham which shows us two groups of churches. The London group included the congregations under Jessey, Knollys & Simpson; & it had sent out a letter dealing with "nearer communion" among other things. The western group included eight churches in Gloucester, Hereford, Worcester & Monmouth, apparently all due to John Tombes; it was making overtures to Hexham for communion by letters or messengers in meeting. The objects specially contemplated were to rectify one another, retain consent of doctrine, approving and sending out teachers.

From this time the movement made rapid

progress. The Western Association in 1654 issued a Circular Letter, written by Collier. This evangelist had already, like others, issued General Epistles; but this seems the first time when an Association took up & endorsed such a message with its collective authority. Next year we find Collier ordained "General Superintendent & Messenger to all the Associated Churches," and messengers from eighteen of these signed the documents. Further, there was a second Assembly of Divines convened, in consequence of the Instrument of Government or written constitution of December 1653. Twenty Articles of Fundamental Doctrines were reported to the First Protectorate Parliament in December 1654, and it seemed opportune to put out a second Confession. The Western Association therefore published XLVI. articles, & two of these bear on the theory of Associations. "It is the duty of the members of Christ in the order of the gospel, though in several congregations & assemblies (being one in the head) if occasion be, to communicate each to other, in things spiritual, & things temporal. As it is an ordinance of Christ, so it is the duty of his church in his authority, to send forth such brethren as are fitly gifted and qualified through the Spirit of Christ to preach the gospel to the world."

In the same year, as early as 3 May, messengers from seven midland churches met at Warwick, and drew up Sixteen Articles of Faith & Order, which they duly reported to their churches. On 26 June they met again, at Moreton in the Marsh & formally inaugurated a Midland Association. Five objects were now specified for the Association, & were referred to the churches; a third meeting on 24 October compared the replies. Henceforward this Association aimed at three meetings each year.

But when the Protectorate ended, & the Long Parliament resumed its sessions in 1659, its intolerance

caused the cessation of all Association meetings. There was continual persecution thenceforward till the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672, and the only note we have of any meeting is of the Western Association in 1669, the year when the second Conventicle Act had expired, & the third was not yet passed.

On 2 October 1675 an invitation went out from London for a general meeting next May. This was probably held, though the records do not survive, for we know that the General Baptists met regularly every year at this time, quite openly. And in 1677 the Particular Baptists were bold enough to issue another Confession in print; it was the Westminster, revised in the light of the Savoy declaration of the Independents in 1658. Its appearances implies another general meeting. Immediately afterwards we find a revival of Association life.

From 1678 to 1683 a series of meetings was held at Abingdon, London, Hemel Hempstead & St. Albans, in which the Petty France church was represented. References to resolutions carried & acted on, may be found in some of the church books. But renewed persecution in 1683 checked the revival. With 1688 we hear of the Western Association meeting at Taunton, & the Berkshire Association assembled again that year or next. The great London Assembly of 1689 inaugurated a new period, and within two years we have detailed lists of the churches grouped in twelve associations, to which another was speedily added of Churches in west Yorkshire & Lancashire.

Here then we see the informal co-operation of 1644, imitated in Wales within six years & rapidly spreading till Associations had become a typical Baptist institution before the Protectorate closed. They revived with each cessation of persecution, & with 1690 entered on continuous history.

For eighty years the Associations continued their

course with very little change. It has been difficult to trace their proceedings, since they had no permanent officers or minute-books. When they met, for one or two days, a chairman was chosen, often the local pastor; & the minutes, if kept at all, were entered in the local church book. Five associations have however explored their records and published results; the Western, Midland, Northern, Berks., Yorkshire and Lancashire. And we know also of the following General Baptist Associations during the period; Bucks, Cheshire-Salop, Essex, Kent-Sussex, Leicester, Lincoln, London, Northants, Western; the Bucks, Kent, Lincoln associations kept minute-books, and extracts from these have been published; they all show a steady decline, and except in Kent, extinction from mere inanition about 1760. The Particular Baptist Associations ran the same risk, but the Evangelical revival brought new life; especially in the Midlands, where the Northamptonshire Association met first in 1765. Also in 1760 a Leicestershire movement organized into five General Baptist churches with quarterly conferences, whence in 1770 came the New Connexion. Minute-books of two conferences are available, and some extracts are being prepared by the courtesy of a private owner.

Through all this period, the great influence of the Western Association is an outstanding feature. Bristol was then the second town in the kingdom, and it far outshone London in its attachment to corporate Baptist life. Indeed there was a temporary arrangement that there should be a General Assembly every Easter in Bristol, & another every Whitsuntide in London. But the apathy of the Londoners soon caused this to drop, & in 1698 Taunton claimed the privilege of entertaining the Assembly. Next year was the last in which the Welsh churches appeared, & with 1700 they settled down to hold their own meetings, con-

ducted in Welsh, within their own borders. The Western meetings, which up to this point may be called indifferently the Western General Assembly, or the Western Association, now no longer professed to be more than Association; Exeter, Bristol & Taunton were the usual meeting-places, Trowbridge & Bampton appearing presently.

A comparison of minutes from widely different parts of the country shows an astonishing similarity of procedure. The ministers & messengers usually left home on Monday & rode to the inn designated the year before. Meetings began at Tuesday, often at six o'clock, & lasted till Thursday. Three sermons were the usual number. The local minister was Moderator for the whole series of business meetings. Each church sent a letter, read by one of its representatives. A member was chosen to draw up a Circular Letter to be sent from the meeting as a reply: this was read & approved or amended, then signed by the Moderator—not by the actual writer, a point that has misled many modern readers. Copies were made by the representatives to take home and read to their churches. In these early years there were frequent Cases proposed for solution, usually on points of discipline as to which a church sought the advice of sister churches; but naturally as these were settled, they passed into precedents, and while the custom kept a remarkable uniformity within an Association, it narrowed the margin of difficult cases, so that these tended to diminish. Thus in 1695 we find the Yorkshire & Lancashire Association repudiating a claim of an evangelist to some superiority on the ground of his being ordained a Minister at large by the Bromsgrove church; the Association decided that every minister or “gifted brother” must be called by a church & was under its orders to preach for it, & to preach nowhere else except by its leave. This

decision is to be contrasted for its result with the decision of the Western Association as to Thomas Collier; but the point now is that Associations were regarded as the right body to discuss & settle such cases. A record of all business was made, usually in the book of the church which entertained the meetings, and "breviates" of this record were often copied & taken away together with the Circular Letter. It is only by searching the records of our ancient churches that these Letters and Minutes can be recovered & pieced together so as to regain a consecutive history of any association; the pioneer work in this direction was by J. G. Fuller for the Western Association.

Sometimes the formation of new churches or the division of old ones was decided by Associations, as also the reception of existing ones. Berkshire discussed also in 1708 the possibility of encouraging young people likely to become ministers, and the advisability of providing instruction for them by some able persons. At the same gathering there were resolutions on public questions, such as the war with France & the moral condition of the country; but such a width of interest was rather exceptional.

The London Association in this period was very intermittent; we hear of it in 1697 soon after the collapse of the London Assembly. Then there was a new formation in 1704, when thirteen churches appeared; but five churches withdrew next year, & it dropped into insignificance. Some kind of fellowship was kept up between the ministers by the legal existence of the Three Denominations, & the benefactions of Thomas Hollis culminating in a baptistery being built at Paul's Alley, & in the foundation of the Particular Baptist Fund in 1717. But this has been administered apart from any Association.

The closing years of Queen Anne were marked by

stringent legislation to check the rights of all dissenters, and as soon as the Hanoverian dynasty was firmly established, an attempt was made to estimate the strength of dissent, especially in county voters, so that an organized attempt might be made to secure religious equality. The enquiry was made by a "Presbyterian," but presbyteries & synods had already dropped out of use, and he dealt with single congregations only. In all his results there is no indication that he had ever heard of the Baptist Associations; but as his object was chiefly political, there was no need for him to mention them. The change in the times is illustrated by the fact that the church founded at Hexham in 1652, nucleus of the Northern Association, which had for many years entertained that Association in a farmhouse, now ventured to erect its first building, at Hamsterley; & this now became the usual meeting place. At Tottlebank early in 1719, proposals were made to reorganize the Yorkshire and Lancashire Association, which entered on renewed activity.

During 1718, the Presbyterians of Exeter became conscious that a prominent minister & school master among them was leading his pupils into new paths of theology. Great discussion arose, involving their western Assembly, & they at length appealed for advice to the Three Denominations in London. This led to meetings at Salters' Hall in 1719 when two parties defined themselves, the one concerned with safe-guarding the doctrine of the Trinity, the other objecting to all human interpretations & choosing the Bible as the only standard of faith. The outcome of this was to start the Presbyterians generally on a path that led most of them to Unitarianism, & to put their Assemblies outside the pale of orthodox dissent. On Baptist life it acted chiefly in the Exeter district, so that the Western Association was in storm for fourteen years. Rules were drawn up in 1721, the title was

altered two years later & the doctrinal position was defined as against Antinomianism, Arminianism & Socinianism. Yet this did not allay unrest, and in 1732 a division took place, the Arminians appointing Moreton Hampstead as their next place of meeting, the Calvinists appointing Bristol. So in 1733 Broadmead persuaded twenty-four churches to endorse the 1677 revision of the Westminster Confession, & to adopt other conservative measures.

It appears probable, though the collection of MS letters may yet alter our knowledge, that it was under these circumstances the formula was devised which spread as if it were of inspired & unalterable value. One association after another defined itself as maintaining, sometimes inviolably, the important doctrines of "three Equal Persons in the Godhead: Eternal & Personal Election: Original Sin: Particular Redemption: Free Justification by the Imputed Righteousness of Christ: Efficacious Grace in Regeneration: the Final Perseverance of Real Believers: the Resurrection of the Dead: the Eternal Happiness of the Righteous; & the Everlasting Misery of such as die impenitent: with the Congregational Order of the Churches."

If, however, a certain doctrinal stability was thus assured, there was as yet no fervour, and the next twenty years were sterile in the extreme. The Y. & L. Association became higher & drier, and with the death of Crosley in 1744 its meetings seem to have lapsed. The documents of the Northern Association are lacking between 1727 & 1740, though it is known that meetings were held.

In 1739 however, George Whitfield revived the practice of field-preaching, & the next few years saw an outburst of religion. Although in the Church of England the prospect seemed so gloomy that Butler in 1747 saw no hope but rather a speedy downfall, yet

in humbler circles there was already a spirit of hope & enthusiasm. It did not affect Baptist circles speedily, and yet it created a new atmosphere in which the old stocks began to blossom anew. And though no great field-preacher arose in the Baptist churches, yet new converts joined them, and the old traditional forms became filled with new power.

A sign of the flowing tide was seen in 1752 when the venerable Western Association restored the practice of printing the Circular Letter, adding Breviates of the minutes two years later. Five years later the Northern & the Y. & L. Associations took out new leases of life, while in 1759 the Midland & the Irish also began a use of the press, Wales following next year. On 17 October 1764 six ministers met & planned a new Association for Northamptonshire & parts adjacent; this was destined to be the cradle of a still mightier movement. And whereas the Circular Letters had too often been about nothing in particular, & frequently complained of doctrinal declension; the Northants letters were soon definite & constructive. Thus in 1768 Robert Hall senior, of Arnesby, wrote on the Nature of the Glorious Gospel of the Grace of God, & next year J. C. Ryland senior, of Northampton, wrote on the Assistance of God to true Christians.

By 1770 there was not only a new Bristol Education Society to develop the academical work endowed by Terrill, but an Association in the Midlands of some fervid converts from Methodism, and a new Calvinistic Association emerged, termed the Eastern, whose strength lay in East Anglia, though there were no boundaries. Thus in 1776 the meeting was at Hemel Hempstead, while Robert Robinson of Cambridge came to the front as the leader.

When the Americans declared their independence in 1776, & proceeded to maintain it vigorously, there

was a corresponding outbreak of energy among the English Dissenters, who obliged Parliament to end the subscription of their ministers to the XXXIX articles. In 1779 the Calvinistic churches of Kent & Sussex drew together at Ashford & published a letter stating their reasons for organizing. The same year there appeared a new force in the Northants, John Sutcliff of Olney, soon reinforced by Andrew Fuller. When the latter settled at Kettering, he proclaimed that the Gospel was worthy of all acceptance, & the new revival spirit definitely challenged the high Calvinism which had long paralyzed the denomination. As early as 1782 he wrote for the Association on the Utility of the grace of hope, which had a new and practical ring about it. Three years later he followed it up with another on an enquiry into the causes of declension in religion, with the means of revival. In that same year the Western turned over a new leaf and decided that its circular letter should no longer be extemporized, but that the writer & subject should be selected in advance. With 1786 it was decided to reorganize the Yorkshire & Lancashire Association, & henceforth the press was used to circulate a letter on some definite theme.

With these signs of growing life, Carey of Moulton found his opportunity at the meetings of the Northants Association. Yet there was so much opposition to the idea of plainly appealing for conversions, that he finally cut loose from the old methods, and the B.M.S. was founded not in connection with it, where it might be stifled, but at a separate meeting.

The Northern took heart again, & the minutes from 1795 are in perfect order, while next year the Essex churches organized distinct from the East Anglian. In Bedfordshire two rival movements came to a head in 1797, a Union to include all evangelical churches of the Old Dissent, & a Baptist Association

for the Calvinistic churches. In Kent also it is needful to distinguish the old G.B. churches still in Association life, & the newer Calvinistic churches which drew together in 1779 & reorganized in 1799 together with others in Sussex. Next year twelve G.B. churches met at Canterbury & twelve P.B. at Rye; both circular letters may be seen at the Museum. With 1802 a new Association formed in & near Oxfordshire, & six years later the Shropshire churches drew together. In connection with one of the Yorkshire and Lancashire Association meetings, was founded the Northern Education Society in 1804, whose work is now conducted at Rawdon; but the Regent's Park College owes its origin to private energy which built on the foundations of a London Education Society & the Particular Baptist Fund.

The course of Association life in London is peculiarly intricate, and peculiarly interesting, as indicating many cross-currents, with disunion always threatened as to limits of communion, strength of Calvinism, as well as church independence. Such a study deserves to be undertaken with care.

So far attention has been given only within England; but the colonists took with them the same customs, and associations were formed in America, to quite the same extent; in 1776 there were twelve in England, but some were in suspended animation, while there were ten across the Atlantic, all active. Still more remarkable was the comparison in 1815, when the United Kingdom could count at most 22, with one more in Nova Scotia, while the United States had more than 34. Since that date the organizations have diverged in character; the tendency in England has been to relate each Association to a county or a group of counties, and to appoint officers not only for the meeting, but to act throughout the year; in America the unit chosen has been the State, and a State Con-

vention has arisen, which in some respects corresponds better with the English Association than the American association does. As so often happens, an American association shows to-day what an English association was two hundred years ago; within our four seas we have left only the Suffolk & Norfolk association which to some extent preserves the antique traditions.

By 1815 on each side of the ocean, new bodies had been formed, destined to overshadow the Associations. At Kettering the Baptist Missionary Society had arisen in 1789, and at London the Baptist Union in 1813; at Philadelphia the General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions and other important objects relating to the Redeemer's kingdom, was organized in May 1814. To study the course of organized Baptist work for the last century, these new factors are all important.

The minutes of some associations are extant in manuscript, and specimens appear sometimes in these pages. A list of printed Circular Letters has been prepared, & will appear next year. Appended here is a list of the earliest associations with the date of their organization or of the first known records.

ASSOCIATIONS TILL 1776.

- 1644 London
- 1650 Welsh
- 1652 Berkshire
- 1653 Western
- 1654 General Baptist Assembly
- 1655 Midland
- 1657 Kent General Baptist
- 1691 Northern
- 1695 York and Lancaster
- 1707 Philadelphia
- 1751 Charleston, South Carolina.

- 1758 Sandy Creek, North Carolina
 - 1759 Irish
 - 1764 Northampton
 - 1765; Kehukee, North Carolina
 - 1766 Ketockton, Virginia (from Philadelphia)
 - 1767 Warren, Rhode Island
 - 1770 Congaree, South Carolina
 - 1770 Rapid Ann, Virginia; both from Sandy Creek
 - 1770 New Connexion of General Baptists
 - 1771 Eastern
 - 1772 Stonington, Connecticut
 - 1776 Strawberry, Virginia
-

The Baptist Board, 1724.

This is one constituent of the Three Denominations referred to above. It is essentially a London Fraternal, and its minutes are complete from the beginning. By the acumen of its new president, Mr. Longhurst, the earliest records have been disinterred from their obscurity. By the courtesy of the Board and its secretary, Mr. Payne, they are in the hands of the editor, who is preparing them for the press. An instalment may be expected in our next issue.

Publications in 1916.

By agreement with the Congregational Historical Society, our Transactions will now appear in January and July, theirs in April and October. Thus each subscriber to either society will obtain an issue once a quarter. Our subscribers in Class A, who have lately received the works of John Smyth, due for 1914 and 1915, will be glad to know that the printing of another valuable work is well advanced, and will be issued for 1916 and 1917.

Minutes of the Monthly Conferences

held by the ministers of officers of the churches in Leicestershire which
were the nucleus of the

New Connexion of General Baptists.

A N evangelical movement beginning at Ratby in Leicestershire in 1741, became Baptist in 1755. Five years later, distinct churches were organized; "monthly meetings of the ministers were held for mutual advice and assistance; and quarterly conferences met, at each place in rotation." A few years later, they were solicited to join the Lincolnshire Association of General Baptists, but they held aloof till Michaelmas 1769, when the leading ministers went to Lincoln, and met W. Thompson of Boston, with a young minister from Yorkshire, Dan Taylor. It was agreed to form a New Connexion, holding an Assembly of Free Grace General Baptists.

[This was duly established on 6 June 1770, at a meeting in London, attended by Samuel Deacon of Barton, John Tarratt and Nathaniel Pickering of Kegworth, John Grimly of Loughborough, William Smith and George Hickling of Hinckley and Longford, Thomas Perkins of Melbourne, with Dan Taylor, William Thompson, Henry Poole of Fleet, John Buttain of Church Lane, and seven of Kent and Essex.

[As a consequence of this organization, the Leicestershire ministers began to keep minutes of their monthly meetings, which however had been held for

ten years already. The new Assembly speedily divided into two Associations, of which the Southern died as speedily. The Northern by 1772 consisted of the five Midland churches with about 870 members, Birchcliff with 70, Boston with 80. But while the Midland churches were thus the mainstay of the New Connexion, they yet continued their former meetings, which were seen to be so useful that Taylor imitated them in Yorkshire at once, Thompson in Lincolnshire in 1791, Taylor in London by 1799. The minutes of the Midland Conference till 1802 have been lodged with the Society, and those of the Lincoln Conference are being copied. Extracts from the former follow.]

Rules to be observed in the
Monthly Conference.

- Rule 1. The moderator shall open the meeting with prayer.
- Rule 2d. Whatever is to be proposed in the Conference shall be committed to the Moderator in writing; and be proposed by him in the best manner he is able: and if at any time any person be desirous to propose any thing that is not committed to writing, this not to be done until all the business contained in the papers be finished, and the[n] not without the consent of the major part of the Brethren present.
- Rule 3d. The Moderator shall endeavour to prevent and suppress, all Irregularities; such as wandering from the subject, or two speaking at once, or any thing else that appears to him to be disorderly.
- Rule 4th. When the Moderator thinks a matter has been sufficiently debated for that time, the question shall be put, whether it is expedient to drop all further conversation about

it at Time [?], and the matter always to be decided by a Majority of votes.

Rule 5. In all cases of voting when the number happens to be equal on both sides, the Moderator shall decide it, being allowed a double vote.

Rule 6th. The Moderator shall have the liberty to depute, or appoint any person or persons to assist him when he thinks it necessary.

Rule 7th. The Moderator shall always enquire at the Quarterly meetings what the Brethren think of the Discourse that has been delivered; respecting both matter and manner, prayer also included.

Rule 8th. At the conclusion of the Conference he shall resign up his Office, but first appoint some one to succeed him in it, who shall conclude the meeting with prayer. [This was cancelled at a date not mentioned, and instead:—] The moderator to be ye minister of ye place where the Conf^{ce} is held.

Rule 9. The Moderator shall always appoint the person who is to preach at the Quarterly meeting: and likewise him who is to open the meeting with prayer, against which appointment no objection shall be made, unless reason satisfactory to the Conference can be given.

[opposite] N.B. At Hinckley Conference June 6th. 1780 [altered incorrectly to 1770]. Article the 9th was thought improper, and the following agreed to instead of it by a majority of twelve to six.

Rule 9. At the Conference next preceeding the Quarterly, the Ministers or officers of the church where the Conference is to be held shall nominate the Person who is to preach,

and also him who is to pray. That the Persons present judge of the propriety of their choice, and confirm or alter as they think proper. And the Persons appointed will be expected to perform, unless they then object, and give reasons for their refusal which influence the Conference to choose others in their stead.

Rule 10. When 5 of the brethren are come together, they shall open the meeting, and proceed to business; and if the Moderator be not there, him that was last in office shall officiate for that time; and the person before appointed to continue for the next time. [Subsequently cancelled].

Rule 11. The Moderator shall chuse a scribe at each Conference, that he may be more at liberty to the other business belonging to the Conference.

July 31 1770 Conference at Hugglescoat Tho^s Perkins [Melbourn] Sam^l Deacon [Barton] Fra^s Smith [Melbourn] John Grimley [Loughborough] Nath^l Pickering [Kegworth] John Tarratt [Kegworth] Will. Smith Geo. Hickling Moderator Rob^t Milligain Josh^h Dunicliff [often entered Donisthorp] [both of Hinckley] Jos^h Stokes [Coventry?]

This Conference lasted 2 days some persons attended as above with Bro^r Adcock.

Brother Grimley Moderator

[The names are henceforth omitted; attendance varied from six to fifteen.]

Aug^t 27 1770 Conference at Hugglescoat

At this Conference it was agreed as many as thought it convenient to go into Yorkshire.

It was also agreed when there, that two should stay about the Hymns; the time fixed for going was the 16 of Sep^r.

Oct^r 8. 1771 Conference at Hinkley

At which time some conclusions were come to, about the Hymn Book, and the Money to be raised Advices ask'd and given respecting three disorderly Members. [The credit for compiling the Hymns and Spiritual Songs which appeared at Halifax in 1772 has often been given to Dan Taylor. But the preface is signed, The Compilers. Samuel Deacon was at this Hinkley conference, and published the Barton Hymns in 1785, with a second edition in 1797.]

Nov^r 17 1771 Conference at Hugglescoat

At which time there was much Conversation about the proper method to part the Long[f]ord Church into two Body's: As also the time when this Important business should be done, which was appointed to be at Longford on Tuesday 13 Dec^r 1772.

At the same time it was judged right for Bro^r Yates to be ordained, and the time appointed was 26 of Jan^y 1773 at Barton.

Apr^l 6 1773 Conference at Hugglescoat.

At this Conference it was asertained to us by M^r Cotton secretary to the Commitee in London, that all Licensed Ministers are exempt from serving any Town offices by virtue of their licence. But a Minister is not intitled to settle in any place by virtue of his Licence. [This was incorrect. A minister needed no licence; he was entitled to settle in any place as much as any other man; he could certify any place he chose to quarter sessions, and compel the clerk to record it. Then if he took the oaths of allegiance and of supremacy, and signed certain Articles, he could claim a certificate which exempted him from serving the offices. There was no more discretion lodged with the justices or the clerk of the peace, than with the registrar whose duty it is to register a death.]

May 4 1773 Conference at Barton

It was agreed the reasons that Bro^r Grimley had drawn up, as objections a Travelling preacher, shou'd not be altered, provided the Association be private; but if pu[b]lic, then that about buying Books to be omitted.

Secondly. Agreed that it would be right for a pastor to desire an offending and disorderly member not to attend at the Lord's table, if they think proper.

Thirdly. Agreed that Bro^r Thompson of Boston go to the Assosiation at London, and one of us to go to Boston &c &c at the same time. [The last time that the Southern Association is heard of.]

Fourthly. Concluded that two Public Houses be encouraged to make prov[i]sion against the Asso-si[a]tion at Melbourn.

Fifthly. It was agreed that Bro^r Wyatt should be privately admonish'd for drinking to axcess and afterwards brought to the Church, to confess the crime, and to be restored, provided the Church be satisfied with his conviction and repentance. On the 17 of May the styn [?] was taken, as directed to above, and his Confession satisfactory.

June 29 1773. Conference at Hugglescoat

Query. Has a Church any authority from the Scr[i]pturis to exclude a member for any crime, sup[p]ose the Church beli[e]ves the person to be a sincere penitent? Answered in the Negative.

Query. What ought we to judge sufficient proof of a persons penitency in case of Capital. It was sup[p]osed that this question was too difficult to determine by reason that circumstances being so very different.

July 27 1773. Conference at Barton.

We think that the expence that attended our

journeys to Maltby, and when any Church calls any Minister to assist them, that they shou'd pay the expence, if they be able. [The result was the withdrawal of fifteen members from the old G.B. church there, and the formation of a new one in 1773, a meeting house being built in 1776. Perhaps the old cause fused with the new after 1843, for the returns of 1891 put down Maltby as originating in 1696, and this date is now assigned in the handbook.]

Agreed ye Bro^{rs} Grimley and Smith should write an answer to Bro^r [William] Thompsons letter, and to send to M^r [Josiah] Thompson in London, in order to inform him of our first convictions &c.

Query. Is a person in the office of a ruling Elder, and ordained to that office, Quallified by virtue of his office to administer the Lords supper, if the Church to which he belongs call him to it? Answer. It was agreed by a Majority, that he is not quallified.

Aug^t 24 1773. Conference at Hugglescoat.

Agreed for Bro^r Smith or Perkins, to go to Maltby on Oct.^r 2 1773.

Two letters read drawn up by bro^r Grimley and bro^r Fra^s Smith, in consequence of an appointment made last Conference. Agreed that bro^r Grimley's (after some correction) shall be sent to M^r Thompson of Boston in order to be transmitted to M^r Thompson of London.

[In Josiah Thompson's manuscript at D^r Williams' Library may be seen a long note, which it thus appears was based on a careful authoritative statement. Fortunately the other letter was preserved, and was edited by James Smith, grandson of the writer, for the General Baptist Repository of 1836, where it begins at page 132. Both ante-date Adam Taylor by 45 years.]

Oct 19 1773 Conference at Barton

[After three theological questions.] Query. Is it

right to admit and encourage unbelievers to learn to sing among our brethren? Answered in the Negative.

Nov 16 1773 Conference at Hugglescoat.

At this Conference the following things came on for consideration (viz)

Sup[p]ose a Member of any of our Churches shou'd contract an acquaintance with an unbeliever in a way of Courtship and after private admonition, and advice of the Church, he, or she still persists in the affair, even so far as to marry, (but no other crime wou'd be alleged against them) ou[gh]t such a person to be seperated from the Church, merely on that account? Answered in the Negative, only Three n[e]uters.

Some conversation had about Bro^r Rich^d Stokes of Coventry, respecting his writing to Maltby people, with a view to visiting them in the capacity and charractor of Minister, by way of approbation and trial, and two letters read over upon the occation, one from the people of Maltby, and the other from Bro^r Thompson of Boston.

After much deliberation upon the subject it was unanimously agreed to discourage him going down to Maltby. Agreed also at the same time, that a letter be drawn up by bro^r Hickling, to express the sence of the Conference unto the Maltby people.

(To be continued.)

The First Serampore Memoir, 1808.

THIS is reprinted from a copy once belonging to Isaac Mann, of Horton College and Maze Pond church. It was bound with the eight succeeding memoirs, and other reports, into a volume uniform with seven others, all lettered "Serampore Pamphlets." On 18 October 1830, Mann carefully indexed the whole series on the fly-leaves of each volume. Through William Brodie Gurney of Maze Pond, treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society, the set passed into the library of that society, where it stands in the appropriate place. Shortly after reading it, the editor took from a shelf above it a valuable contribution to Indian Bibliography by Dr. G. A. Grierson, reprinted from the "Indian Antiquary" of 1903, entitled, *The Early Publications of the Serampore Missionaries*. This states concerning the First Memoir, "No copy of this is available. Neither the Baptist Missionary Society nor the British and Foreign Bible Society possesses a copy." Had Dr. Grierson tried the British Museum, he would have found it catalogued under Carey's name, as 3128 bb; this copy also has been known to the editor for years. But as the Memoir is so rare, it is reproduced by the kindness of the Rev. W. Y. Fullerton, Home Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society.

The Second Memoir states that the first was printed both in England and in Scotland: Mann's copy is the English edition. There is nothing to show whether it was originally printed at Serampore. The B.M.S. specimen consists of two sheets, each of twelve pages, 190 mm. by 170, within a four-page sheet, 180 by 170; with an inset 307 by 170. The present edition follows it closely, except that the inset is reproduced at the end instead of in the middle; a few notes are added, within crotchets.

The importance of the Memoir in 1808 was that it showed a new era in Bible translation. A band of scholars was busy executing versions into thirteen Eastern languages at once, many already in the press. Nothing like this had ever been known before. The importance of the reprint now, beyond many incidental statements, is that it brings to light three early pamphlets not known to Dr. Grierson, though two were noted by Dr. Moule at the Bible House. (1) Bengali Psalms and Isaiah, 1804; besides Bengali Psalms alone. (2) Bengali Luke-Acts-Romans, 1807, ten thousand copies. (3) Marathi Matthew in Devanagari character, quarto. The editor is not skilled enough to test whether these pamphlets are in the Mission House library; its experts say that they are not discoverable, so search is being made at Serampore.

MEMOIR relative to the
TRANSLATIONS OF THE SACRED *Scriptures* :
TO THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN ENGLAND.

Printed by J. W. Morris, Dunstable, 1808.

MEMOIR, &c.

Very dear brethren,

THE BRETHREN OF THE MISSION AT SERAMPORE beg leave to lay before you, and their fellow christians in Britain and America, especially those who have interested themselves in the Translations of the sacred Scriptures into the Eastern languages, the present state of that work; and that you and they may have an opportunity of forming a clearer idea of its nature and progress, they intreat permission very briefly to state the circumstances which gave rise to the undertaking, and which have attended its progress.

2. Nearly fourteen years have elapsed since the first and remote step was taken in this work, by Mr. Carey's immediate and assiduous application on his arrival in India, first to the Bengalee, and afterwards to the Sungskrit languages.¹ Nearly five years since, circumstances seemed to call our attention to the translations of the sacred Word, not merely into the Bengalee language, but into those spoken in the neighbouring countries, and closely allied with the Bengalee

¹ Justice to the memory of our deceased brother, Mr. John Thomas, requires us to mention, that the idea originated with him; and that, though more particularly calculated for other parts of missionary labours, he had actually translated Matthew and James before Carey's arrival. [This fact also has been forgotten. It is not said that his version was printed, or even that it was used as a basis of Carey's work.]

by their springing from one common parent, the Sungskrit; and by an affinity in the great mass of words in idiom and construction, scarcely to be imagined but by those well acquainted with the fact.

3. The circumstances which encouraged us to this undertaking have already been partly detailed to you. Of the indispensable [*sic*] nature of this duty, as far as within our power, the perishing state of our fellow-creatures around, and the inestimable value of the word of God as the means of everlasting life, had long impressed us—and the facility of acquiring languages, with the greater part of the words and the idiom of which the Sungskrit and Bengalee had already made us acquainted—the ease with which learned natives could be obtained, the advantages arising from proper helps in the originals, and from having been already accustomed in some degree to the work—the printing press, and the opportunities of casting new founts of types—these with the well-known effects of the Divine blessing upon persevering, though feeble attempts to glorify Him, encouraged us to engage in the work.

4. We were by no means, however, without our discouragements; the idea of three or four men succeeding in the acquisition of a number of languages, and the unspeakable responsibility attached to translating the word of God with other difficulties, weighed so much with us, that we determined to conceal the fact of our having engaged in such a work till we had advanced so far as to convince ourselves and others of its practicability.

5. This resolution we in part observed; for though circumstances constrained us to lay our plan before the public much sooner than we intended, yet it was not till more than a year's assiduous application had convinced us that we were not laying before the friends of religion a chimerical scheme, but a

plan which required only the continuance of the same Divine blessing which had marked its commencement, in order to bring it to a happy conclusion.

6 With peculiar sensations of gratitude to the Author of all good, we would now, dear brethren, in Christ, lay before you the present state of the work in each of these languages, beginning with those most immediately connected with the Sungskrit..

7. The *Bengalee*. It is already known to you, that early in 1801 the first edition of the New Testament was published, consisting of 2,000 copies, all of which have been long since distributed. This was followed by an edition of the Pentateuch, consisting of 1,000 copies, which have also been some time distributed; and we wait only for ability to put to press a second and improved edition of it. In 1804 an edition of the book of Psalms (and the prophesy of Isaiah was published, consisting of nearly 1,000 copies, the whole of which have been for some time distributed: a number of the Psalms alone were also printed off, and distributed at the same time. In 1806 another volume of the Old Testament, containing the book of Job, the book of Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, was published. This is properly the *third* volume of the Old Testament. The fourth, consisting of all the Prophets, is also nearly completed: it contains about 700 pages. Of all these we have printed the same number of copies, namely, a thousand. Thus far we have proceeded with the *Old* Testament: one volume remains, the second, which will comprize the historical books, from Joshua to Nehemiah, which we expect speedily to put to press.

The first edition of the *New* Testament being distributed, a second became necessary; and a view to future improvement, together with the state of our finances, made a moderate number appear pre-

ferable to a very large edition. We therefore agreed to print 1,500 copies. As the desire for the Scriptures however seemed great, we thought a selection could be made, of which a larger number might be printed. The gospel by Luke, the Acts, and the Romans, were chosen for this purpose; the first, as containing a complete account of the Redeemer's life; the second, as exhibiting the gospel in its first promulgation and progress; and the last, as containing a summary of Christian Doctrine and Practice. Of this selection, which makes above 260 pages octavo, we have printed an edition of nearly 10,000.

8. In the *Orissa*, we have been greatly helped. The proportion of words already familiarized to us by the Sungskrit and Bengalee, may be about nine in ten. This of course has rendered application pleasant, and proficiency comparatively [*sic*] easy. Nearly the whole of the New Testament is translated; as well as several books of the Old; and in printing we have advanced as far as the middle of Luke. The whole of the New Testament will make an octavo volume of about 650 pages. The number of copies we are printing is a thousand.

9. The *Telinga* and *Kernata* languages follow next in the order of the countries. In these the words already known to us through the general medium, are about three fourths: in the former, the translation of the New Testament has advanced as far as the gospel by John, and in the latter to the end of Luke. There is a happy similarity between the characters of these two languages; so that the addition of a letter or two unto the alphabet of one, will enable it fully to express the other.

10. In the *Guzzerattee*, the translation has advanced also as far as the Gospel by John. The proportion of words already known is about six in seven, which renders this part of our work pleasant

also. The first sheet of Matthew is printed off in a quarto size, and in the Deva Nagree, the character in which learned works are printed throughout India.

11. We next notice the *Mahratta*, spoken by a nation who on the western side are our nearest neighbours. Their language of course early engaged our attention, and the general affinity of languages both invited and amply repaid application. The proportion of words already known to us was about nine in ten. In this the New Testament is nearly finished, and several books of the Old. The Gospel by Matthew was printed off nearly two years ago, in the Deva Nagree character: it was included in about 100 quarto pages. We have now however cast a fount of types in the current Mahratta character, which will comprize the whole New Testament in 700 octavo pages. Of this edition, which consists of a thousand copies, the Gospel by Matthew is nearly all printed.

12. The *Hindoostanee* has admitted perhaps a greater number of foreign words than any of the dialects of India. This mixture is indeed so great as to render two translations necessary; one into that which draws principally on the Persian and Arabic for its supplies of difficult words [Urdu²], and another into that which has recourse in the same manner to the Sungskrit [High Hindi³]. Indeed the difference

² [The gospels had been published in 1805 at the Hindoostanee Press, Calcutta, under the superintendence of William Hunter, a capital Urdu scholar, who deliberately used Persian and Arabic as much as possible. The language was adopted by the H.E.I.C. for official purposes, despite the exposition of its artificial character in the Sixth Memoir, 1816. Yet the version was a failure; its being printed in the Devanagari character perhaps tended to this. In 1814 Martyn's version was printed at Serampore in Arabic script, and it became the basis of all later work.]

³ [In the fourth memoir, 1812, the text calls this Hindee, and a note explains:—"We apply the term Hindooee, or Hindee, to

in these two kinds is so great, that the gospel translated into the former kind of Hindee, under the auspices [*sic*] of the College of Fort William,² is in many places quite unintelligible to Sungskrit Pundits, born and brought up in Hindoosthan; while our Mussulman Moonshis have professed, if not felt, equal ignorance relative to common words derived from the Sungskrit.³ In this Sungskrit-Hindee version, nearly the whole of the New Testament waits for revision, and the book of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, and some other parts of the Old. We have begun printing the New Testament in the Deva Nagree character, and in a quarto size: it will probably make a volume of about 600 pages. The book of Matthew is nearly finished. Conscious that a number of defects must unavoidably attend a first edition, we have in this also restricted the number of copies to a thousand.

13. The language of the *Seeks* is a modification of the Hindee, and has nearly the same affinity with the Sungskrit. Although so nearly allied to the Hindee, however, its grammatical terminations are different, and it has a different character, to which the *Seeks* are so much attached, that the mere circumstance of a book being written in it, recommends it strongly to their notice. These considerations have determined us to attempt alluring this nation to the perusal of the sacred word by presenting it to them in their vernacular language and character. A learned *Seek*, eminently skilled in Sungskrit, has been for some time retained for this purpose, and the translation has advanced to the Gospel by John.

that dialect of the Hindoost'hancee which is derived principally from the Sungskrit, and which, before the invasion of the Musulmans, was spoken throughout Hindoost'han. It is still the language most extensively understood, particularly among the common people." The Gospels and Acts were issued in 1809, the whole New Testament: 1811.]

14. We will now mention another version which it has appeared our duty to begin. Though the languages spoken by the great mass of people will necessarily have the first claim on the attention of those who feel the worth of immortal souls, and this, however uncouth some of them might appear, yet it has occurred to us that a *Sungskrit* version of the sacred oracles is an object worthy of attention. The language itself, from its copiousness and exquisite grammatical structure, seems fitted to *receive* the divine oracles beyond almost any other, while its being a language in which the meaning, not only of the terminations but of every individual word has been fixed for ages, enables it to retain and preserve the precious treasure with as much firmness perhaps as the Greek itself. The currency of it exceeds that of any other language in India. Every pundit converses in it: the Word of God therefore, in this language, will be rendered equally intelligible to the pundits of Nepaul and of Malabar, of Guzzerattee and Cashmire; while its being the language esteemed sacred by the Hindoo pundits, may incline them to read what their fastidiousness would lead them to despise in the vulgar dialects. Under these impressions, we began a translation of the Scriptures into the Sungskrit, which has proceeded so far that the Four Gospels are already printed off. The edition is in quarto, and will be included in about 600 pages in the Deva Nagree, the proper Sungskrit character. This version, while it is to us one of the most easy, will we trust come nearer to the idiom of the original than any of those in the common dialects. Its ample and exquisite grammatical apparatus permitting us to follow the Greek, not only in rendering tense for tense and case for case, but generally in the collocation of the words.

15. Respecting the *Persian*, we were aware that

little could be expected from affinity of languages; and that except the assistance to be derived from the currency of a number of Persian words in the Bengalee and Hindoosthanee languages, and a few already familiar through the medium of the Hebrew, we had entirely a new language to acquire. This inclined us to apply to it at an early period; and we had proceeded so far as to complete a great part of the New Testament, as well as the Psalms and some other parts of the Old.⁴ Providence however has been pleased in a singular manner to provide for this version, by preparing a person for the work peculiarly qualified; NATHANIEL SABAT, a native of Arabia, a descendant of Mahommed, and one his devoted follower; who by residing some years in Persia, has acquired that language in a degree of perfection scarcely to be attained by a European. A number of circumstances concurring to bring him to Bengal, he has been retained for the Persian translation, and is at present at the Mission House, Serampore.⁵

⁴ [Apparently this version was never published. Its existence has been forgotten, and Dr. Moule makes no mention of it.]

⁵ [This statement also has been forgotten. The Persian New Testament of 1815 is usually credited to Nathaniel Sabat "under the supervision of Henry Martyn." And it is true that the Second Memoir, in November 1809, states that the preparation of the Persian translation "is removed from under our care." But this First Memoir shows that Sabat began his work at Serampore, and was there in August 1807. Paragraphs 30 and 31 discuss the expense of the version, 2½ years at 200 rupees monthly for translation alone. How far Sabat proceeded at Serampore, the Second Memoir does not say; but in 1809 the Serampore Press printed for the Calcutta Corresponding Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, a version of Matthew and another of Mark, by Sabat. Dr. Moule says that Matthew (at least) was translated under the direction of Martyn at Dinapore. But it deserves enquiry whether the gospels of 1809 should not be credited to Sabat, on foundations laid by the Serampore missionaries. The Journals of Martyn, published in 1837, might throw

16. The *Chinese*. In no language has the care of providence over the translation of the divine Word more eminently appeared, perhaps, than in this. So effectual indeed has it been, that this version, which once appeared to present almost insuperable difficulties, is now brought into a course, which in the exercise of diligent and patient application, seems to render it as certain of accomplishment as any of the others. *Mr. Lassar* is steady and diligent, and through divine goodness we have been enabled to advance in the translation to the middle of Luke. The lads who with *Mr. Marshman* have engaged in the study of the Chinese, have applied to it with constancy and diligence, and their proficiency has been such as could scarcely be expected from those more advanced in years: so great indeed as to encourage the hope of the work being continued by the assistance of native Chinese, should any unforeseen circumstance deprive us of our present able teacher. The helps afforded in the work have been very great. Among these are to be reckoned a learned Chinese, with whom the lads can converse pretty freely in his own language, and a valuable collection of Chinese books to the amount of nearly 300 volumes; including among others, two editions of the works of Confucius; that is one of the simple text, and the other the text with the addition of a commentary. This work the lads are now reading and committing to memory, after the manner of the Chinese. But a more valuable acquisition is that of three different Chinese

light on the question. *John C. Marshman* simply says that it was during 1807 *Sabat* came to Serampore, that he gave up his time and attention to the translation of the scriptures, that the Serampore missionaries were prosecuting the Persian translation with the aid of *Sabat*, but relinquished it at *Buchanan's* strong desire. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* implies that it was not at Dinapore, but at Cawnpore after April 1809, *Martyn* turned from Urdu to Persian.]

Dictionaries; viz. a small one in four volumes 12mo, said to be in most general use in China; another in fourteen volumes 12mo, and a third is the Imperial Dictionary in thirty-two volumes 12mo, compiled many years ago by command of the Emperor Konghi. This is the standard dictionary in China, and is said to include every Chinese character, both ancient and modern. When these dictionaries are completely accessible, a period by no means distant, it will in due time being in our power to examine the translation with a degree of accuracy, almost equal to that with which the English has been examined. Furnished with these invaluable helps, we are enabled to advance with a degree of pleasure, both in the acquisition of the language, and in its translation. *Printing* in this language is very far from being impracticable with us; nor is the expense likely to be very great, especially if, as we have reason to expect, we should be favoured with a brother from England skilful at engraving in wood. The patterns of the letters can be given here with accuracy; and through the cheapness of labour in Bengal, it is probable that the Chinese Scriptures may in process of time be printed to nearly as great advantage at Serampore as at Canton or Pekin.

17. Providence has also given us an opportunity of entering on another work of this nature. It has pleased the God of mercy to open a door for us into the *Burman* empire, and therewith to afford us an opportunity of translating his Word into the language of that extensive and populous country. A native of Rangoon has been obtained, who is acquainted with Hindoostanee as well as with his native tongue; by whose assistance a translation of nearly the whole of Matthew has been effected, which our brethren, Chater and F. Carey, about to depart thither, will be able to take with them, and improve themselves

in the knowledge of the language, even by correcting its defects.

We are also preparing a fount of Burman types: their written character (for they have at present no printing among themselves) is distinct and beautiful, and moderate in size. We have reason to hope therefore, that providence is opening a way for the introduction of the sacred Scriptures into that country, in a form intelligible to the inhabitants, and not enormous in its expense.

18. Thus, dear brethren, we have laid before you a plain and brief statement of the progress of these translations, in which divine providence has called us to engage. You will perceive that of the *twelve* here mentioned, *six* are in the press, and the other six advanced as far as the Third Gospel; and that of those in the press, a second edition of the New Testament as well as three volumes of the Old, has been printed in one; in two more, the Gospels nearly completed, and in the other three, nearly the Gospel of Matthew;—that in the greater number of these translations, the work has been rendered easy by the affinity of the different languages; and in those of peculiar difficulty, such helps have been unexpectedly furnished by divine providence, as the work seemed to require.

19. On the whole, we are abundantly encouraged; and through the encreasing [*sic*] assistance with which God is favouring us in the study of these different languages, from brethren added to the mission and the rising branches of the family, are ready to indulge the hope that under the divine blessing, this work will be carried forward, not merely to the completion of a first edition, but through successive ones, till the Word of God in its pure and genuine form pervade all the countries around us.

20. We lay this before our brethren in Christ,

with peculiar pleasure and confidence; because the experience we have had in the work has solidly convinced us that we are not entreating their support to an impracticable scheme nor inviting them to adopt plans, which present the idea of expense undefined and unknown. On the contrary, we are happy to lay before them not only a faithful account of the monies received and expended in this work, but also a rough statement of the probable expense attending *its full completion*. It may not be improper however first to notice the article of Types.

21. It will be obvious to you, that the present state of things in India, it was in many instances necessary to cast new founts of types in several of these languages. Happily for us, and India at large, *Wilkins* had led the way in this department; and by persevering industry, the value of which can scarcely be appreciated, under the greatest disadvantages with respect to materials and workmen, had brought the Bengalee to a high degree of perfection. Soon after our settling at Serampore, the providence of God brought to us the very artist, who had wrought with *Wilkins* in that work, and in a great measure imbibed his ideas. By his assistance we erected a letter foundery; and although he is now dead, he had so fully communicated his art to a number of others, that they carry forward the work of type casting, and even of cutting the matrices, with a degree of accuracy which would not disgrace European artists. These have cast for us two or three founts of Bengalee; and we are now employing them in casting a fount on a construction which bids fair to diminish the expense of paper, and the size of the book, at least one fourth, without affecting the legibility of the character. Of the Deva Nagree character we have also cast an entire new fount, which is esteemed the most beautiful of the kind in

India. It consists of nearly 1,000 different combinations of characters, so that the expense of cutting the patterns only, amounted to 1,500 rupees, exclusive of metal and casting.

22. In the Orissa we have been compelled also to cast a new fount of types; as none before existed in that character. The founts consists of about 300 separate combinations, and the whole expense of cutting and casting has amounted to at least a thousand rupees. The character, though distinct, is of a moderate size, and will comprize the whole New Testament in about 700 pages octavo, which is about a fourth less than the Bengalee. Although in the Mahratta country, the Deva Nagree character is well known to men of education, yet a character is current among the men of business which is much smaller, and varies considerably in form from the Nagree, though the number and power of the letters nearly correspond. We have cast a fount in this character, in which we have begun to print the Mahratta New Testament, as well as a Mahratta dictionary. This character is moderate in size, distinct and beautiful. It will comprize the New Testament in perhaps a less number of pages than the Orissa. The expense of casting &c. has been much the same.⁶

23. We stand in need of three more founts; one in the Burman, another in the Telinga and Kernata, and a third in the Seek's character. These, with the

⁶ [Specimens of type are bound in Mann's set of the Memoirs, after the Memoir for 1813 printed at Kettering in 1815. The Mahratta is second, just below the Sungskrit in Devanagari. A tiro can see that though smaller, it is akin. The Eighth Memoir contains a certificate by the chief Marathi pandit of the H.E.I.C., saying of this version that, all Mahrattas would understand it. The certificate is printed in the same character, but a yet smaller size. Dr. Moule says that the type employed for the New Testament "is variously described as an antiquated form of Modi, and a form of Devanagari with Modi peculiarities."]

Chinese characters, will enable us to go through the work. An excellent and extensive fount of Persian we received from you, dear brethren, last year. The expense of these founts of types we have not thrown on the fund for Translations; as we sometimes use them for other purposes, we could not feel ourselves justified in charging this expense to a fund which, as it is subscribed solely for the sake of Translations, common probity requires, should be sacred to that work alone.

24. Here follows a statement of all the monies subscribed for the purpose of translations from the beginning of the mission, and of the manner in which they have been expended. For the sake of greater accuracy, the sums subscribed in England have been extracted from the Periodical Accounts, in whatever manner they may have been remitted to us.⁷

25. Our brethren will perceive, that in addition to the generous benefaction of the friends of religion in Britain, we have to acknowledge the liberality and the public spirit of our worthy friends in America, who have so cordially interested themselves in the work, that unsolicited by us, they have within the last two years collected and sent out for that purpose nearly 6,000 dollars.⁸

⁷ [Every pound sterling is treated as equivalent to eight sicca rupees, as if that coin were worth half a crown. Different states in India coined rupees, of varying size and value. When the English power was dominant, in 1835, the rupee of the H.E.I.C. was fixed at one tola weight, 150 grains. The rate of exchange then varied, but was seldom less than two shillings till 1873. Since 1899, India has had a gold standard, fifteen rupees being accepted as equivalent to the sovereign. Thus the rupee is now sixteen pence, the anna a penny.]

⁸ [The dollar, which had been a Spanish silver coin, was in 1787 adopted as the unit in the United States; and a bimetallic system was enacted in 1794. Each dollar sent exchanged for nearly two rupees and one anna in 1807.]

26. In the effort made to raise a fund in India for the purpose of translating, we acknowledge with gratitude the zeal of our worthy friends in the Establishment. This attempt succeeded in a considerable degree, and a sum was subscribed amounting to nearly 14,000 rupees: out of which fund we received monthly 300 rupees for Mr. Lassar's salary, and the same sum towards the support of the translations in general, from May 1806 to 1807: since which time, the fund being reduced below 5,000 rupees, has been confined to the Chinese and Persian translations.

27. On examining this account, it will appear that the greatest expense attending this work is that of *printing*.⁹ This, by the end of 1806, had amounted to nearly £3,500, though confined almost entirely to the Bengalee; while that of translating had scarcely amounted to a third of that sum, though the Chinese and indeed the whole of the translations were included. This will enable us to speak with a degree of precision respecting the probable expense of finishing the whole of the twelve translations.

28. Of the expense attending ten of these, namely, the Sungskrit, the Bengalee (Old Testament), the Hindee, the Orissa, the Mahratta, the Telinga, the Kernata, the Guzzerattee, the Burman, and that in the language of the Seeks, we can speak with a good degree of certainty. The printing of the whole *ten* will probably be completed in about *four years*.¹⁰ Less than half that period however, will probably complete the New Testament in several of these; as, the Sungskrit, the Orissa, the Hindee, and the Mahratta, as well as the whole of the Scriptures in the Bengalee.

⁹ [The first Bengali New Testament cost 12/6 a copy; even the book of Psalms about 11d. Modern prices are 1/-, and 2d.]

¹⁰ [The Third Memoir, four years later, mentions five Testaments in print and in circulation, four at press, three preparing.]

If however a pundit were retained in each of these languages, during the whole of that period, the expense of ten pundits on an average of about 25 rupees monthly, and 300 annually, would be for the whole ten a yearly sum of 3,000 rupees.¹¹ So that 12,000 rupees will probably defray the remainder of the expense attending the *mere translation* of the New Testament in these ten languages.

29. The expense of *printing* each respective version can be easily calculated. It may probably be as follows:—

						<i>Rupees.</i>
The Sungskrit, 1,000 copies, about 600 pages, 4to	...	...	...	...	...	5,000
The Hindee, ditto	700			...	...	5,500
The Mahratta, ditto	800	8vo		...	...	4,000
The Orissa, ditto	700			...	...	3,500
The Guzzerattee, ditto	700	4to		...	...	5,500
The Kernata, ditto	900	8vo		...	...	4,500
The Telinga, ditto	900			...	...	4,500
The Seeka, ditto	700	4to		...	...	5,500
The Burman, ditto	900	8vo		...	...	4,500
The Bengalee (last vol. of the Old Testament), 1,000 pages				...	...	3,500
		Printing	...	...	...	46,000
		Translating	...	...	...	12,000
						Rupees 58,000

Or £7,250 sterling. When from this we deduct 12,371 rupees, or £1,546, the surplus now in our hands (the sum advanced for printing these versions excepted) the sum required to complete these ten versions will be about 46,000 rupees, or £5,750 sterling. So that about fourteen hundred pounds annually, for four years, will as far as we can guess, enable us, not only to finish the whole of the Scriptures in the Bengalee, but also to translate the New Testa-

¹¹ [A scholar for £3 a month.]

ment into the Sungskrit, the Hindee, the Orissa, the Mahratta, the Telinga, the Kernata, the Guzzerattee, the Burman, and the language of the Seek, and print an edition of a thousand in each.¹²

30. The expense of the Chinese and Persian translations is considerably more than that of the others. Mr. Lassar's wages are 300 rupees monthly, and Mr. Sabat's 200 rupees. In the Chinese, the New Testament will probably be finished in two years.¹³ Mr. Lassar's wages will in that time, at 3,600 annually,

¹² [The Sanscrit, 600 copies, more than 600 pages, cost 4,000 rupees, and was finished 1808. The Hindi was a quarto of 600, issued 1810. The Marathi, an octavo of nearly 800 pages, also came out in 1810; both of these were delayed by lack of funds. The Orissa ran to 976 pages octavo, cost 3,500 rupees, was published 1809. The Gujarati was delayed till 1820, when it appeared in a dialect and a character not in general use; it filled 675 pages. The Kanarese or Kurnata version was finished in 1809, and in 1811 the type was ready for it; both were destroyed in the fire of 1812, and only in 1823 did the New Testament appear, in 1,008 pages; work was then relinquished in favour of the L.M.S. Of the Telinga or Telugu, a version of the synoptics by Des Granges was printing in 1811, 160 pages; the Serampore band also revised their own version by his, but lost the MS. and the types in the fire; a new version was published in 1818, in 960 pages. The Panjabi version for the Sikhs appeared in 1815, in 647 pages. In Burmese, Chater and Felix Carey edited extracts from a version by a Catholic, before December 1811; Matthew was published in Chater's version during 1815; the work was then left to Judson. In Bengali, Joshua-Esther completed the Bible in 1809, 1500 copies costing 4,500 rupees.

[The Memoir of 1809 confirmed the estimates given here, after two more years' experience. This and succeeding memoirs repeated that the cost of no version was charged to the account of the public till it was issued. In June 1812 more than 8,000 rupees had been expended on editions in press, and had not been carried to account. The fire of that year naturally made many estimates antiquated. On the other hand, the sympathy evoked drew forth large gifts for the work.]

¹³ [By 1810 only Matthew and Mark were published; the New Testament about 1816.]

amount to 7,200.¹⁴ If we allow two years and a half for the completion of the Persian, this will be 6,000 rupees. Together 13,200 rupees, or £1,650 sterling.

31. The expense of *printing* the Persian will be rather less than that of the Sungskrit, as the New Testament may be comprized in about 500 pages quarto. We also have a fount of Persian ready.¹⁵ Nor is it probable that the expense of printing the Chinese version will much exceed, especially if we procure a brother from England capable of cutting the types (or rather blocks) as we have reason to expect.¹⁶ This would indeed curtail the grand article of expense; as these, being in the mode of stereotype, require only two men to throw off any number of copies at pleasure.¹⁷ Chinese paper can be procured

¹⁴ [Lassar was an Armenian from Macao, and this high rate of wage had been fixed by Brown and Buchanan of the College of Fort William.]

¹⁵ [This fount had been sent from England, see paragraph 23. It was apparently used for Sabat's Matthew and Mark in 1809, and for Sebastiani's Gospels; but it must have been destroyed in the fire. As the punches and matrices were not made at Serampore, the type does not seem to have been replaced. Not till 1841 did the Baptist Mission Press issue any other version in Persian.]

¹⁶ [The Second Memoir, November 1809, describes how Bengali wood engravers had been set to cut double pages of Chinese on tamarind blocks, in the style employed in China for twelve centuries. The Third Memoir tells how a Bengali lad had suggested improvements. The Fourth, in July 1812, alludes to the new Chinese types, cut in metal. This style of printing has gradually made its way in China for newspapers, where speed of composition is important. At Serampore it was found that a lad could set up two pages from metal types in half an hour.]

¹⁷ [The comparison with stereotype is due to the fact that this process had recently been made practical, and an English Testament had been produced by it in 1805. But printing from wooden blocks had been practised in Europe from the fifteenth century, and did not die out till 1880.]

in abundance at Calcutta.¹⁸ If to the 13,200 before, we add 10,000 more for the expenses of printing, this will make 23,200 rupees or £2,900. So that about three thousand pounds more, will, we trust, finish the translation of the New Testament in the Chinese and the Persian. If we add this sum to that required to complete the other ten, it will appear that somewhat more than *eight thousand pounds* are required to finish these *twelve translations* of the New Testament. It is with propriety that the sum for the two last versions is added; for although three thousand rupees remain of the fund subscribed in India, yet we have at present no ground to expect that anything further will be subscribed; the whole must therefore, as far as we can say, depend on the generous exertions of the friends of religion in Europe and America; and we cannot but feel thankful to our gracious God, that this work has been so far succeeded by him, as to require only the sum of *two thousand pounds annually for about four years*, to complete Translations of the New Testament in *twelve languages*, and to print an edition of a thousand copies in each of them.

32. As the Old Testament consists of a little more than thrice the quantity of the New, the expense of that part of the work is easily calculated. Several circumstances may also concur to reduce the expense; such as, facility in the work, improvement in the types, and other things of that nature. It is however scarcely necessary, to touch on this part now, as the way being once opened in these languages by the completion of the New Testament, no one can doubt that the friends of religion will give every due encouragement to the Translation of the whole Scriptures.

33. Thus far helped of God, we desire to adore his

¹⁸ [The Third Memoir, 1811, describes how a paper-mill had been set up for the manufacture of a new paper invented at Serampore.]

mercy and wisdom, and through you, dear brethren, to present our grateful and cordial acknowledgements to the friends of religion in England, Scotland,¹⁹ and America, who have so generously come forward to assist in the work. To press them to go forward, is as unnecessary as it would be unkind in us, after the liberality we have experienced, to doubt their future support. Nor is it less superfluous to represent the nature of the work. It commends itself to the conscience and understanding of all who love the word of God. Were it only for the assistance it will afford European Missionaries in attempting to spread the gospel in these languages, it would deserve attention; but we cannot help looking to something beyond this. It is promised, that the Spirit shall be poured out on all nations; to HIM alone it belongs to know the times and the seasons, but we cannot forbear hoping that the Spirit of God may be poured out on the natives of these respective countries in the perusal of his holy word; nor avoid foreseeing that, were He to vouchsafe this blessing on his word, the wilderness would soon become a fruitful field, and the desert blossom as the rose.

¹⁹ [The first entry in the accounts is of money from the "Edinburgh Missionary Society." The fact has been obscured for two different reasons. That Society, formed in 1796, afterwards changed its name to the "Scottish Missionary Society." Its work among the Fulahs near Sierra Leone was exchanged for a mission to the Tatars; when the hostility of the Russians ended this in 1824, India and Jamaica were chosen. The Church of Scotland took over the former in 1835, the United Presbyterian Church took over the latter in 1847. Thus the first Society which had the honour of aiding the Serampore work, passed out of existence, and perhaps few know what a share Edinburgh had in this translation work. The aid explains why this Memoir was printed in Scotland as well as in England. Again, the publication in England aroused more interest, and the new British and Foreign Bible Society found its best opportunity for foreign work in helping Serampore, as it continued to do for thirty years.]

Intreating your earnest supplications for Divine assistance through the whole of this work, and for the hastening of these glorious days,

We remain,

Very dear brethren,

Most affectionately yours,

W. CAREY

J. MARSHMAN

W. WARD

J. CHAMBERLAIN

R. MARDON

W. MOORE

J. CHATER

J. ROWE

W. ROBINSON

F. CAREY.²⁰

Serampore,

Aug. 14, 1807.

N.B.—It may not be improper to add, that the advanced state of four versions now in the press has taken up nearly half of the balance in our hands, and that about nine months more will probably absorb the whole sum.

²⁰[Felix Carey went to Burmah this year and "shrivelled from a missionary into an ambassador" in 1814. Chater was transferred to the Ceylon mission in 1812, and lived till 1829. Mardon died 1812; Chamberlain 1821; Rowe and Ward 1823; Carey 1834, Marshman 1837, Moore 1844, Robinson 1853.]

The First Serampore Memoir, 1808

DR. TRANSLATIONS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

		<i>sa. rs.</i>	<i>as.</i>	<i>p.</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1801	To 2,000 Bengalee Testaments, 1st edition, on Patna Paper, 8vo, 900 pages ...	10,000	0	0	1,250	0	0
	„ 500 Matthew's Gospel in Bengalee, ditto, 118 pages ...	250	0	0	31	5	0
1802	„ 1,000 Pentateuchs, ditto, 732 pages ...	3,000	0	0	375	0	0
1803	„ An edition of 900 of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song, ditto, 400 pages ..	2,000	0	0	250	0	0
	„ 900 of the Psalms alone, ditto, 220 pages	337	8	0	42	3	6
1805	„ 465 Matthew's Gospel in Mahratta, Nagree type (quarto), 108 pages ...	465	0	0	58	2	6
	„ Bengalee Pundit's wages for 7 years, down to December 1806 ...	1,680	0	0	210	0	0
	„ The Hindoosthanee, Persian, Oorea and Mahratta Pundit's wages from March 1803 to April 1806 ...	2,021	0	0	252	12	6
	„ Eight month's wages for pundits in the different languages, including the Chinese, from May to December 1806	3,703	14	3	462	19	3
1806	„ 1,500 Bengalee Testaments, 2nd edition, on Bengalee Paper, 8vo, 900 pages ...	4,500	0	0	562	10	0
1807	„ 10,000 Luke, Acts and Romans, ditto, 264 pages, at 12 <i>as.</i> ...	7,500	0	0	937	10	0
	„ Seven Month's wages for pundits in the different languages, including the Chinese, from January to July ...	3,485	7	7	435	13	5
	„ An edition of the Prophetic books, 8vo, 660 pages, 1,000 copies..	2,500	0	0	312	10	0
<i>Sicca Rupees</i>		41,442	13	10	£5,180	6	3

The First Serampore Memoir, 1808

CONTRA.

CR.

		<i>sa. rs. as. p.</i>	<i>£ s. d.</i>
1799	By Cash received from the Edinburgh Missionary Society	2,000 0 0	250 0 0
1800	„ Ditto, collected from 1798 to 1799	1,600 0 0	200 0 0
1801	„ Ditto 1799 to 1800	9,142 15 1	1,142 17 4
1802	„ Ditto 1800 to 1801	164 0 0	20 10 0
1803	„ Ditto 1801 to 1802	9,258 2 7	1,157 5 5
1804	„ Ditto 1802 to 1803	140 13 0	17 12 0
1805	„ Ditto 1803 to 1804	184 9 5	23 1 6
1806	„ Ditto 1804 to 1805	} 10,387 14 9	1,298 9 10
	Received from England by way of America		
	<i>sa. rs. as. p.</i> 9,818 0 0		
	In Books, &c. 569 14 9		
	By Amount received from America in		
	September 1806	2,858 12 0	357 6 6
	„ Ditto in October	4,139 0 0	517 7 6
	„ Messrs. Alexander & Co., from the fund raised in India	5,100 0 0	637 10 0
1807	„ Ditto for 7 months, from January to July	3,900 0 0	487 10 0
	„ 2,398 Dollars from America	4,938 0 0	617 5 0
	Amount received, Sicca Rupees	53,814 2 10	6,726 15 1
	Expended	41,442 13 10	5,180 6 3
	*Balance in hand, Sicca Rupees	12,371 5 0	£1,546 8 10

** Of this sum above five thousand rupees are already expended in the outlay for the versions now in the press, which will absorb the whole balance in about nine months, as they require nearly a thousand rupees per month.*