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A table of contents for the *Christian Brethren Research Fellowship Journal* can be found here:

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

CONTENTS

Take Courage! *Sosthenes* 1

Topic of the Issue

SOME HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY STUDIES

Recollections of the Walkerite or so-called
Separatist Meeting in Dublin *Prof. C. P. Martin* 2

The Wiedenest Bible College *Dr. John S. Andrews* 11

The Missionary Reporter *J. W. Forrest* 24

Wilson Carlile *Dr. John S. Andrews* 43

How Can We Improve Our Evangelism? —
Deductions from a survey of assemblies *Graham D. Brown* 44

Article Review

A New Testament Commentary *Prof. Carl E. Armerding*
57

TAKE COURAGE!

THE darker the hour, the brighter the light. When will we Christians grasp this simple proposition: that in our Faith we have that which speaks to the eternal need and the eternal longing in the heart of man? The trouble, of course, is that most Christians are bound in the grave clothes of prejudice and tradition—incapable of entering into dialogue (to use the cant phrase) with the men who need them most, because of fear to allow their minds to spread, or their imaginations to take wing. Where is the courage that will take the war into the camp of the enemy and match his weapons by the more glorious ones of God? And so the men of imagination and the men of vision are repelled, and move sadly away . . .

And the men who need Christ most of all do not cast Him a second glance, because they think that *we* are what Christ is all about.

After a gap of twenty-two months, the CBRF *Journal* resumes publication: and it is with thankfulness to the loyalty of those who have stayed with us. In the interval, the Fellowship has not been moribund: and the two best and most successful Annual Meetings of our short history have testified to the usefulness which lies to our hand, if God will give us grace to grasp the opportunity, and the strength to persevere.

In this issue we present a few historical and contemporary studies which will not be without their own special interest to our members. The article on the Walkerite movement gives an interesting insight from one of the last of those with first-hand knowledge of one of the movements which characterised the years immediately before the Brethren movement started. Other articles give glimpses of aspects of Brethren history that should be better known to all of us, while we are pleased too to present the first fruit (so far as the Fellowship itself is concerned—for the Evangelical Alliance has already used this work) of the survey of assemblies which Mr. Graham Brown carried out some year or two ago.

The publication of *A New Testament Commentary* at the end of 1969 was an event of considerable importance to Brethren. It has already drawn long article reviews in several contemporaries, and we are glad to include one from an American scholar now in Canada, which deserves its place in this issue.

SOSTHENES

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WALKERITE OR SO-CALLED SEPARATIST MEETING IN DUBLIN

C. P. MARTIN*

In a recent article¹ entitled: 'Secession from the Established Church in the Early Nineteenth Century', Dr. H. H. Rowdon mentions the so-called Walkerites. As one of the last surviving members of the Dublin Meeting of these people I can add some further information and I have been prompted to write at the instigation of my son, Dr. J. R. Martin. This is also an opportunity for calling attention to the posthumous edition of Walker's collected papers and letters². All the references in the following paper are to this valuable work.

John Walker (1768-1833), the son of an Anglican clergyman in Roscommon, was a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin in days when every fellow had to be an ordained minister of the Anglican Church. From his study of the Bible, undertaken along with a few friends, he reached the opinion that the Anglican was not the true church in the scriptural sense and that the position of a minister therein was unscriptural. Accordingly, on 8 October 1804 he called on the Provost of the College and offered to resign his fellowship. According to the story told me, the Provost somehow reassured him, but the next day the Board of the College publicly expelled him. In justice to the College it should be stated that they granted a pension of £600 a year to Walker, in 1833, a few months before he died.

On leaving college, Walker earned his living by teaching or coaching candidates for matriculation and other college examinations. Shortly after his dismissal he and his friends started the practice of meeting together on Sunday mornings in accordance with the custom of the early churches to remember the Lord, as He had appointed, by breaking bread and taking wine. This, the first Walkerite Meeting, began in 1804 and met in some rooms in Stafford Street³. As the scriptural warrant for their action, they referred to the Lord's promise that 'where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matt. 18:20). In 1819 Walker moved to London, but he returned to Dublin in 1833 where he died a few months later—in October.

The group was impelled to take the step it did by a conviction that a worldly semi-political organization, deriving mainly from the secular government of the Roman empire, had overspread and engulfed the Christian church until the latter was almost lost to view. In their opinion, from this false, material and worldly church all Christians should withdraw totally. 'Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you' (2 Cor. 6:17) was a passage they often quoted. For this reason they became known as 'Separatists' or 'Walkerites' though they repudiated both titles and simply called themselves 'Christians' or 'Primitive Christians'. The Dictionary of National Biography states they called themselves 'The Church of God'. I have no recollection of any of them ever using this title though, of course, they believed that the meeting was part of God's church.

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In Walker's day they did refer to a local church as a 'Church of Christ'⁴.

The separation or detachment from the world (that all Christians admit is enjoined on them in some sort in the Bible) they took to be a separation in religious or spiritual beliefs and ways of thinking, and not a refusal to participate in harmless amusements and social activities. In other words, they did not confuse asceticism with Christian unworldliness. On the contrary, they pointed out that asceticism is a very prominent feature in the natural man's ideas of godliness or of 'saintliness' in the modern corrupt sense of the term. Millions of pagans and unbelievers impose the most exacting prohibitions upon themselves and afflict themselves with incredible discomforts, hardships and physical suffering under the illusion that thereby they become holier and less sinful. This, Walker and his companions regarded as a form of self-indulgence and glorying in the flesh and not true self-denial (Col. 2:23). Consequently they saw no objections to dancing, going to parties, card-playing and seeing a good play. All things should be done in moderation, they admitted; and, of course, they condemned disorderly living and riotous behaviour of any sort. Walker's personal views on amusements were, perhaps, stricter than this. He believed, however, that this was an area where differences of opinion were perfectly legitimate, and denied that a meeting had any right to legislate on the matter; but he did not hesitate to rebuke those who he thought were abusing their liberty⁵. Nor did they condemn Christians marrying non-Christians; though many of them thought it an unwise step in most circumstances. At first they took a more serious view of such unions⁶.

However, in spiritual matters and religious ideas they believed that the separation of Christians from the world should be complete and absolute⁷. There an unbridgeable gulf existed; irreconcilable opposites were in conflict. This they conceived to be the lesson that needed emphasis in modern times when so many composite creeds and doctrines that are hybrids between the Biblical teaching and the views of the world masquerade under the name of Christianity. They carried this conviction to the point of refusing to take part in any religious ceremony or observance sponsored by any other church, or even to share with other Christians in prayer or saying grace before food. These other Christians, they argued, were 'walking disorderly', and, with such, the apostle Paul had commanded us not to associate. 'No, not to eat' (1 Cor. 5:11).

The Walkerite group differed from parallel groups in some other points as well. By saving faith they understood belief of the testimony that God has given in His word concerning His Son Jesus Christ⁸. Belief, that is, that Jesus was the Christ. It was not belief in one's own salvation, though that, of course, should follow, but does not always do so owing to the tortuousness of the human mind. Nor was it accepting a particular theory as to how Christ's death had saved us, though most or all the members accepted, I think, the Anselmic view that on the cross Christ had taken the punishment for our sins. This was not made an article of faith. We simply believed that Christ had died for us and thereby had saved us and all men who believe in Him. Nor did we agree with such expressions as: 'Knowing Christ as one's personal saviour'. Saving faith is believing that Christ is the Saviour; and that, of course, means knowing

He is our personal saviour. Nor again did we concur in the distinction that some preachers make between heart-belief and head-belief. The Bible says we must believe in our hearts, but in the days when the Bible was written everyone, including all the Greek writers except Hippocrates, placed the human mind in the heart, and not in the head. When the Bible speaks of believing in our hearts it means what we now would call believing in our minds. This led to some accusing Walker of making saving faith a mere intellectual assent to a proposition, which was grossly untrue. He recognised that the Bible distinguishes clearly between real belief 'that worketh by love' (Gal. 5:6), and belief with the lips, that is, a mere profession.

Repentance was another subject on which we deviated somewhat from evangelicals. 'To repent' means in the Bible to change one's mind. It does not mean 'penitence'; though that, of course, always accompanies true repentance. The point is well brought out in the Lord's parable of the two sons. The one who said: 'I go not', afterwards repented and went. The essence of his repentance was not that he felt sorry for having said 'I go not', though no doubt he did; it was in his changing his mind and going (Matt. 21:29). A little orphan girl of twelve (whose father and mother had been friends of my parents, and for whom my parents, though not her legal guardians, had undertaken much responsibility) was dying of tuberculosis. My mother visited her frequently. One day my mother found the child in great distress. A minister had told her that she must feel sorry for all her sins, and she was trying frantically to feel sorry for them, or to persuade herself that she did feel sorry for them. In substance my mother's reply was: 'I wouldn't worry, dear. You believe the Lord loves you and died for you; and you love Him, however poorly; and when we love someone we are sorry for having done anything that displeases him'. The girl died about four weeks later—her fears settled.

The group believed that the taking of an oath was forbidden to Christians⁹. They did not practice water baptism. Water baptism was, they held, an initiatory rite practised by the early Christians following the Jewish practice of baptising the whole family of proselytes, but not extending the rite to their, as yet, unborn children¹⁰. The Walkerites were non-sabbatarian and regarded calling Sunday 'the sabbath' a hopeless confusion in language and thinking¹¹. At one time the meeting elected, or formally recognised, Elders¹² to see that its meetings were conducted in an orderly manner and to look after its business affairs; but this was dropped when the meeting shrank in numbers; the two or three senior members then acting together in any matter that required a collective decision. The Elders, or senior brothers, exercised a quite firm discipline over the meeting, and called-on any brother who they thought was straying. My grandfather had, I believe, a very bad temper, and one day two or three brothers called on him to protest against it. 'You have a very bad temper for a Christian, brother Martin', they said to him. 'I admit it', my grandfather is reported to have answered, 'but you have no idea what it would be like if I were not a Christian', which we all thought was not a bad reply. A family in the meeting owned a good business in Dublin, but the father was not a good business man. Either shortly before or after his death the firm went bankrupt, and the family was left in great poverty. The girls had

been brought up not too wisely, and were utterly untrained for any employment. The youngest, an exceedingly pretty girl, but a mere child, was sent as a governess to a family in Buenos Aires—in those days very far indeed from all her relatives. There she was seduced by a married man, and after that shattering experience returned to Dublin with her little girl. A few members of the meeting were of the opinion that she should express public sorrow for her 'sin', but my mother stood for none of that. The first day she re-entered the meeting my mother took her in, and sat her down beside herself. Nobody in the meeting demurred! The young mother for a time called herself Mrs. . . . but then she insisted on using her maiden name as Miss . . . She refused to sail under false colours.

I joined the meeting in 1905 when I reached thirteen years of age. Members were admitted to break bread only when they reached that age. This was based on a belief that among the Jews thirteen had been the recognised coming-of-age in the religious sense. Shortly before my joining there had been a division in the meeting owing to a brother getting married in an Anglican church (by an Anglican clergyman)¹³. This, some contended, was 'touching the unclean thing', and they held that the brother should be excluded until he had expressed regret for his misdoings. The majority disagreed and the upshot was that one brother and several sisters withdrew, and started another meeting. Where it met I do not know, but it came to an end shortly afterwards with the death of its one male member. The original meeting met then in the Ancient Concert Rooms in Brunswick, now Pearse Street. There was another meeting in Birmingham. One of its most prominent members was a wealthy glass manufacturer named Chance†. I think his wife was a Unitarian, but I know little more about it beyond remembering my parents going on a visit to the Chances when I was a very small boy. A third meeting existed in Russia. I think it was somewhere in the Ukraine, and I remember my father corresponding with someone in it. Scattered about Ireland were several families, e.g., Dr. Burton of Co. Clare and the Parkinsons of Portlaw, who were connected with the Dublin meeting, but were seldom in Dublin. I have an idea that meetings were held in their homes. Walker during his fourteen years residence in London established a meeting there and another at Leith.¹⁴

In the meeting the men sat on one side and the women on the other. This was done to avoid scandal, for we recognised the oft-repeated injunction to 'greet one another with a holy kiss'; and, at the end of the meeting, had to kiss both of those sitting beside us¹⁵. I always sat beside an old cabman, a Mr. Woods, of whom I was very fond, and at the end of the meeting we kissed each other. It was not a bad reminder, to me at least, that in the Lord's sight we were equals and fellow members of His one body. Each Sunday at the beginning of the meeting, one of the senior brothers, in rotation, nominated one brother to preside, and another to read the scriptures, one to take the first prayer, and another to take the second prayer. The service was therefore ordered, but the participants were changed and renewed every Sunday. Speaking or exhorting was not set, but left to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Any adult male member could speak, and not necessarily on the scriptures that had been read.

†Chance Bros. Ltd. are today one of the largest British glass manufacturers—*Ed*

The presiding brother gave thanks for the bread, and gave out the hymns which had been chosen by the nominating brother. The brother who read the scriptures gave thanks for the wine. To the best of my recollection the order of service¹⁶ was: hymn, first prayer, hymn, breaking of bread, scripture reading, exhortation, collection, hymn, second prayer, and kiss of peace. We read a Psalm, a chapter from some other Old Testament book, a chapter from the gospels, and one from another New Testament book, each Sunday. Subject to this, our reading proceeded in order through the Bible. Visitors sat apart from the members of the meeting and were not asked, or allowed, to contribute to the collection. When I joined the meeting there were two elderly ladies who were regular and constant members, but who would never take communion because, they argued, there was no authority in Scripture for women doing so. On the last Sunday of each month there was an evening meeting for Bible study. The meeting supported all its poorer members: a not inconsiderable load on its finances that found some relief when old-age pensions were established.

In September 1908 my family moved from Dundrum to Co. Wicklow, but my parents went one week-end each month to Dublin and attended the meeting there. The remaining Sunday meetings were held every Sunday in our home outside Wicklow town, the attendance being almost wholly a family affair except for occasional visitors. I had started attending a Bible class run in the local Y.M.C.A. by the Anglican and Methodist ministers. This caused my parents some misgivings at first, but after they got to know P. B. Johnson, the Anglican minister, all misgivings vanished; and my father even asserted that he was welcome to not only attend, but to participate in, any of our meetings—which he never could do because the hours of his service and our meeting coincided. A change, in fact, had been coming over the meeting. Humanly speaking, this was largely due to a Mr. Doull, a very lovable Christian who came from Caithness in the north of Scotland. He was a clerk to a cattle salesman. To enable himself to read the scriptures in their original languages he had taught himself to read Hebrew and Greek. During the terrible scarlatina epidemic in the nineties he had—in one week—lost his wife and three children, and was left with an only son. He had a great influence on my father, as also had some of the books my father read—notably Spurgeon's sermons. Other incidents tended in the same directions. Outsiders, that is, people who were not members of our circle of meetings were allowed to attend the monthly Bible study sessions and to partake in the discussions. Because of their presence no collective or open prayer was made at these meetings. One day an undoubtedly Christian man who often attended protested that we should open the meeting by jointly asking God's blessing on our study. My father answered that he had been in silent prayer for many minutes. 'So have I', the man replied, 'but that is not enough. Should we not all join in a common open prayer?' My father was deeply affected by his remark which he felt was completely justified.

The meeting had been extremely exclusive, and while this was not intended to be a judgment on others, but an effort in all charity to move them into reconsidering their position, it was, in fact, an implied judgment on them. It gave ground for others to suggest that we were setting our-

selves up as better Christians than anyone else, and I think that sometimes, or often, in our zeal to give no recognition to the 'unclean thing' we were offensive to other Christians who did not see eye to eye with us. Our non-Sabbatarian views frequently gave offence. We became too concerned with church government, and too little concerned with 'maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace'. We lost all sense of proportion. Things that ought not to be left undone dominated our view, and things that ought to be done were forgotten. Now the exclusiveness, and rather self-righteousness, began to disappear until the Dublin meeting reached the point of professing to be simply a group of Christians, meeting together on the first day of the week to remember the Lord in His appointed way, who welcomed to His table all who believed in and loved Him. In effect we became indistinguishable from an 'Open' Brethren meeting.

In 1912 I went to live with the Flints in Dublin. They were members of the Dublin meeting and I attended it with them. Shortly afterwards the meeting moved from the Ancient Concert Rooms to a room over a shop in Lincoln Place, and then after a very short interval to Mill's Hall in Lower Baggot Street where it remained until it terminated. Fred Flint was employed in the Bank of Ireland. He had a beautiful tenor voice and as a young man had been much in demand as a singer in Dublin. This was a tremendous asset to the singing in the meeting. His brother, McHardy Flint, became a Roman Catholic and professor of elocution in Maynooth College, the training college for the priesthood. The whole family were greatly interested in elocution and the art of speaking in public; and, when I about this time began to take a part in the ministry of the meeting, were of immense benefit to me and others in a like situation. They criticised us freely and trained us to speak properly and to articulate. It is a subject that is much neglected nowadays and I think Brethren meetings would do well to follow their example.

Needless to say, what the world regarded as our quirks and oddities led us into situations with sometimes an amusing side. In earlier days our refusal to take an oath led sometimes to loss of employment and even to imprisonment. It was not till 1833, five years after all disabilities had been removed from Roman Catholics, that an act of Parliament was passed legalising our affirming instead of taking the oath¹⁷. My father one time had to give evidence against a man charged with fraud who over many years had made a firm profession of Christianity and, among other things, would not take an oath. When my father came forward and declined to take an oath an audible snigger ran round the room, and the presiding judge looked at him as much as to say: 'O goodness, here is another of them!' Whether the man's professions had, or had not, been sincere we cannot say, although my father had believed them to be sincere. We have to take such incidents, sniggers and all, as they come. 'It's all in the commission' as they used to say in the army. In 1914 I was admitted into the Royal Irish Constabulary (R.I.C.) as a cadet. The first incident affecting myself arose when I refused to take the oath of allegiance. I was marched before the Commandant, at that time a man named Pearson, who after satisfying himself that I was not refusing for any reasons of a disloyal nature, asked if I would subscribe the official and recognised form of affirmation. I

replied that I would, but they could not find the authorised form of words anywhere so I was told to go away and return in two hours. When I returned they had found the formula somewhere and, with a weary air, presented it to me for my signature. I carried away no illusions of their admiration and respect. Then I had to fill in a form giving all sorts of particulars about myself, including my religion. Under this heading I wrote either 'Christian' or 'Christian of no denomination'. I think it was the former. A sergeant watching what I wrote remarked: 'Well, we never had one of them before'. A few days later a message from Dublin Castle arrived saying the Inspector General, the head of the Constabulary, wished to see Cadet Martin at a certain hour three days afterwards. This created a tremendous impression, for when the I.G. wished to see anything as insignificant as a cadet it usually meant that the cadet had done something awful, and was in for peremptory dismissal or a very severe reprimand. So for three days I was almost the centre of attraction as a deep and devilish sort of fellow doing all sorts of dreadful things on the sly, and posing as a conscientious man who would not take an oath. I was very apprehensive myself not knowing what it was all about. In due course I was ushered into the presence of Sir Neville Chamberlain, the I.G., 'Well, young man', he said, 'you have upset the organisation of the whole constabulary'. I expressed due regret for such an enormity and asked what I had done. He explained: 'I have to provide the answers to questions asked in the House of Commons as to why there are so many Protestant or Catholic District Inspectors in such and such a Catholic or Protestant County, and now I have to say I have so many Protestants, so many Catholics—and a Christian!' I could not help bursting into laughter. He was very nice and insisted that I was not to change what I had written unless I was perfectly willing to do so, but that it would be of great help to him if I would change my entry to 'Protestant' which, of course, I gladly did.

One more personal anecdote may be permissible. I tell it in honour of a man who befriended me in an hour of need. The war had broken out and we all were super patriotic. One guest-night in the mess a senior officer suddenly stood up and proposed the toast: 'To hell with the Kaiser!' I was taken by surprise and could do nothing. During the ensuing week I learned that this officer intended to repeat the toast on the next guest-night when some officers from the Sixth Reserve Cavalry would be our guests. I went to my company commander, P. O. Holmes, afterwards Major Holmes of the Royal Irish Regiment, and told him that if the toast were proposed I would refuse to drink to it; which, in so obscure and insignificant a creature as a cadet, would look very badly. Holmes was one of the most courageous men I have ever met. He made neither a confession nor a denial of Christianity; he was just casual. He told me I was 'a damned fool', and my scruples were ridiculous, and marched me off to the adjutant, Major Fleming, of the Irish Guards. He more or less repeated Holmes' opinion. They were getting thoroughly fed-up with me and my conscience. They sent me away and I heard nothing more for some days, then the guest-night arrived. The officer proposed the same toast, but Holmes, who happened to be the senior officer present, at once said: 'No, so and so, that is too strong. We drink defeat to the Kaiser!' A number of officers

protested against his squeamishness and asked what had come over him, but Holmes stuck to his guns and never gave me away. He took all the taunts on himself and I cannot say what a relief to me his self-effacing and generous action was. A few months later when the officers of the R.I.C., who had volunteered, were being seconded into the regular army, Major Holmes did me the honour of writing and asking me to serve in the Royal Irish Regiment with him. He was killed in the County Kerry during the Irish troubles.

On returning from the war I worked for eighteen months with the Agricultural Wages Board, and was away from Dublin. Then I was posted to R.I.C. headquarters in Dublin Castle. My father had died in 1916 and my mother in 1920. The meeting had shrunk to a handful as members died or moved from Dublin, and new recruits came seldom and few. There also was an unfortunate clash of personalities between two of the few remaining members. I felt we were accomplishing nothing and had cut ourselves adrift from almost all our fellow Christians. In 1921 the Dublin meeting came to an end, but I kept in touch with its few remaining members.

We are all adept at seeing motes in our brother's eye and remaining oblivious to huge beams in our own. It is easy to look back and criticise; but with all its faults the meeting, when all is said and done, left a deep impression on all who came under its influence; and, to the best of my knowledge, an impression that was never wholly effaced. It implanted in their hearts a reverence for the Bible. It taught them to go to the Bible, and to the Bible alone, for guidance and instruction in the things of God. In these days when a complete and cold, or even a contemptuous, indifference to the Bible pervades so much of the world, and so much of the so-called Christian world, this was a worth-while achievement.

As a postscript I may add that a hymn written by Walker in 1794, 'Thou God of Power and God of Love', has found its way into many hymnals.

I apologise for the excessively personal nature of these recollections, but then recollections are usually rather personal, aren't they?

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- 2 John Walker: *Essays and Correspondence, Chiefly on Scriptural Subjects*. Collected and prepared for the Press by William Burton. Two volumes. London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman's; E. Madden and R. M. Tims, Dublin; A. and C. Black, Edinburgh, 1846.
- 3 By 1821 there were some 130 individuals in fellowship, including twelve former clergymen. In addition there were six or seven smaller churches in other parts of Ireland. John Walker: *op. cit.*, 1, 557; 2 243, and H. H. Rowdon, *op. cit.*, 78.
- 4 John Walker: *op. cit.*, 2, 278.
- 5 John Walker: *op. cit.*, 2, 343, 497.
- 6 John Walker: *op. cit.*, 2, 321-2, 386. It should also be noted that during Walker's lifetime they restricted the term 'believer' to one in fellowship with their circle of meetings. John Walker: *op. cit.*, 2, 500.

- 7 Walker insisted that in any truly scriptural group of churches there must be: 'Unity of sentiment upon the faith of the gospel and upon the revealed rule by which they are to walk together'. For his ecclesiastical views see John Walker: op. cit., 1, 244, 355-6, 556-60, 2, 24-6, 170, 209, 257, 496-7.
- 8 Walker attached supreme importance to a correct understanding of saving faith. He was quite emphatic that in conversion man played a completely passive role and that those who taught the contrary were preaching salvation by works. For Walker's doctrine of soteriology see John Walker: op. cit., 1, 19-24, 451-6, 474-5; 2, 228, 239-40, 248, 252, 259, 262, 280, 436, 503, 521-22, 526.
- 9 John Walker: op. cit., 1, 560.
- 10 John Walker: op. cit., 2, 258-308; 2, 260, 283-4, 472.
- 11 Walker considered the custom of ceasing from labour and amusements on the first day of the week as human traditions for which no scriptural basis could be found. John Walker: op. cit., 2, 505-7.
- 12 In Walker's day elders were not elected or appointed, but the meeting was expected to 'acknowledge' or 'recognise' as elders those who had the qualifications specified in the pastoral epistles. Elders were a 'gift' to the assembly and not an essential prerequisite for its proper functioning. John Walker: op. cit., 1, 243-4, 560.
- 13 John Walker would have applauded the action of the minority. In his day to resort to a clergyman for the performance of a marriage was an excommunicable offence. Anyone wishing to be married without loss of ecclesiastical status was obliged to travel to Scotland where civic ceremonies were available. John Walker: op. cit., 2, 308-9, 379-81, 542-3.
- 14 John Walker: op. cit., 2, 287, 324, 388, 522. In the hope of establishing intercommunion he corresponded with the Bereans in Scotland and with a branch of the Sandemanians in the U.S.A.; but nothing appears to have come from these approaches. John Walker: op. cit., 2, 241, 278.
- 15 John Walker: op. cit., 1, 560.
- 16 Essentially the same pattern was followed in Walker's day. He regarded the weekly observation of the Lord's Supper as the one obligatory service for Christians. His principles precluded anything in the nature of a service for a mixed audience of Christians and unbelievers. He deprecated multiplicity of meetings, but at various times the public was invited to hear a presentation of the gospel. John Walker: op. cit., 2, 25, 254-6, 261, 263, 358, 462.
- 17 John Walker: op. cit., 2, 1-22.

THE WIEDENEST BIBLE COLLEGE¹

JOHN S. ANDREWS*

I—THE COLLEGE IN BERLIN

DURING the second half of the last century Dr. Friedrich Wilhelm Baedeker, whose cousin Karl founded the well-known travel guides, made many evangelistic tours in Russia. His ministry, which was a pastoral as well as an evangelistic and teaching one, did much to encourage groups of Christian believers in Siberia and the Caucasus. During the years of Tsarist persecution no Bible courses and conferences or Christian literature were allowed. The young believers therefore lacked instructed leadership. Baedeker's concern at this state of affairs, expressed in his reports home, eventually led in 1905 to the establishment of a special missionary work for Eastern Europe. This was a Bible and Missionary College in Berlin, where two- and three-year courses of systematic instruction in Scripture were instituted for a small number of Russian brethren².

Apart from Baedeker the founders of the College included Missionsinspektor Mascher of the Cameroons Mission, Missionsinspektor Simoleit, and the Freiherren von Thümmeler and von Tiele-Winckler. The two noblemen were associated with the Evangelical Alliance of Bad Blankenburg in Thuringia. Von Tiele-Winckler was the brother of 'Mother Eva', the founder and director of Friedenshort³. The hymn-writer, Bernard Kühn, was another person associated with the Alliance who played a prominent part in setting up the College; he edited the magazine of the Alliance.

The decisive meeting took place in the Berlin home of Fräulein Toni von Blücher, a great-niece of the Prussian field-marshal who fought at Waterloo. She owed her conversion to the revival movement in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The American, Pearsall Smith, had conducted special evangelistic services in the old Garrison Church of Berlin. Baedeker, who had acted as interpreter, continued the services after Smith's departure. It was after one of Baedeker's services that Toni von Blücher was converted. She then herself began active evangelisation, especially among mothers and children. As a result a Brethren assembly was formed at number 65 Hohenstaufenstrasse; there in 1905 the opening ceremony of the College took place.

Another founder was the evangelist, General George von Viebahn, one of the Elberfeld Brethren (a Darbyite group). He played an influential part in setting up the College and was responsible, for example, for the appearance of reports of the work in the magazine of the Evangelical Alliance. For many years he preached at special May services held at the College.

A clergyman, Christoph Koehler, and his assistant, Johannes Warns, resigned in February 1905 from the State Church in order to live 'on faith lines' and according to what they held to be more scriptural principles. An unexpected invitation to become principal and lecturer respectively at the

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newly-formed College was seen by them as an answer to prayer. Accordingly they began in September to conduct the first set of courses at the College. This was then housed in the Steglitz district of Berlin, but was soon transferred to the assembly rooms in the Hohenstaufenstrasse. That first year there were eighteen students.

Koehler's father had been in charge of an orphanage at Buchenschachen near Saarbrücken. Christoph was converted when quite young and studied for the ministry. After holding a prison chaplaincy at Herford he was called to a living at Schildesche near Bielefeld. His preaching, visiting and Bible teaching, prepared the ground for a revival in 1903, at which some hundred people (including whole families) were converted. After much inner conflict he gave up his office, although this cost him both pay and pension. The call to become principal of the College confirmed his belief that he had taken the right action; as a pastor he had already himself thought of setting up such an institution. The fact that he had a wife and five children meant that this was a real step of faith. It also meant that the young students of varying nationalities were welcomed into a family circle.

From the outset the College was run without appeals for money and with no guaranteed income. The story of the direct dependence upon God for the daily provision of physical needs through two World Wars reads like the testimony of George Müller⁴. Up to 1914 the number of students steadily grew. Most of the missionary courses were attended by thirty or more people. During the war, activities were restricted, but not stopped. Shortage of food caused Koehler and the students to work in the fields and gardens to supplement their rations. The unaccustomed physical strain, together with inadequate food, affected Koehler's health. When shortly after the war the College moved to Wiedenest, he remained in Berlin to serve the assembly in the Hohenstaufenstrasse. He occasionally visited Wiedenest to help with Bible courses, and it was at such a course that he was taken ill and died in 1922.

Warns was the son of an East Frisian clergyman. For three generations his ancestors on his mother's side had been clergymen at Wiedenest. This is a picturesque Rhineland village on the Westphalian frontier, sixty-six kilometres east of Cologne. A bus service links it with the 'Kreisstadt' of Gummersbach. The maternal grandfather of Warns, Gottlieb Georg Trommershausen, through his fervent preaching and personal piety, had been a blessing to many; a revival broke out in the neighbourhood and people came from a distance to hear him. When Warns was only nine years old his mother died, and he came to the village to spend a few months with his grandparents. From that time the village became his second home. Later, as a theological student in Berlin, he was invited by a washerwoman to a Salvation Army service, where he was converted. While still a student he met the Koehler family, and eventually married Christoph's eldest daughter, Annemarie. At Schildesche he helped Koehler in the cottage meetings which sprang up as a result of the revival there. When Koehler resigned his living, Warns also resigned. Soon afterwards he asked Josef Bender, a missionary to China, for baptism⁵.

On the establishment of the College in 1905 Warns joined Koehler as a fellow-worker. The former had always been interested in missionary

work, particularly in the Balkans. As early as 1901 he had undertaken his first missionary journey to South Europe. Throughout his life he made no fewer than twenty-seven missionary journeys to many countries.

II—THE MOVE TO WIEDENEST

In the first World War, Warns visited a friend in the small Hungarian village of Sofava during one of his missionary tours. In this village was the old country house of a Christian Countess, Irma von Lazar. She suggested to him that the College should be transferred from Berlin to Sofava and offered to bequeath to the work her entire property, namely two country houses, a large acreage of land and a mill. (One is reminded of the offer made two centuries before by Count Zinzendorf to the Moravian Brethren⁶.) However, Koehler and Warns preferred to wait to the end of the war in order to be more sure of the Lord's will.

Other suggestions were made. In fact, the two brethren were on the point of buying a house in Thuringia, but were not convinced that this would be right. They nevertheless felt the need to move out of the capital.

In March 1919 two friends in the Rhineland, Major August Freiherr von Wedekind and Ernst Reuber, read of an inn for sale at Wiedenest. On the way to inspect it they met a business acquaintance, who repaid Reuber in the open street a debt of 5,000 marks. By the time that they reached the inn someone else was already negotiating a sale. While waiting Wedekind and Reuber committed the matter to God in prayer and became convinced that the property would be ideal for the College. The owner then expressed willingness to sell to them if they could provide an immediate deposit of 5,000 marks. The deposit was promptly paid, and Wedekind informed Warns by telegram: 'Open doors in Wiedenest. Expect you immediately. Wedekind⁷. Soon afterwards another inn, almost opposite to the previous one, was offered for sale and through the sacrificial help of anonymous friends was purchased.

Nearly four hundred guests attended the dedication service on 5th October 1919, at which Koehler and Warns spoke and a choir sang the German original of 'Praise to the Lord, the Almighty'.

III—WIEDENEST BETWEEN THE WARS

With the move Warns succeeded Koehler as Principal. He had the support of Major von Wedekind (one of the two men primarily responsible for the purchase of the site), Oberst Ferdinand Peterssen, Heinrich Koehler and (from 1920) Erich Sauer. Despite the post-war depression and shortage two houses were built for Wedekind and Peterssen; these houses later reverted to the College. Wedekind lived in one of these houses serving the College and local churches until 1927, when he had to move to Bad Homburg on account of asthma. He died in 1948.

The origin of Peterssen's conversion may be dated to the day when he read in a newspaper that General Booth of the Salvation Army was preaching in the Busch Circus in Berlin. Peterssen attended the service, was deeply moved, and surrendered his life to Christ. Later his wife was also converted. He knew the College when it was in Berlin and wanted to keep

in touch when it moved. He and his wife were not able, as planned, to live on the site because of her severe rheumatism; but they lived in the neighbouring town of Bergneustadt. In old age he still came daily on foot to teach at Wiedenest. It was there in the cemetery that he and his wife were buried.

During the early post-war years, when food was scarce and money lost its value, an elder sister of Warns, Antoinette Lehmann, gave faithful service to the College as matron. She was succeeded in 1928 by Rudolf Bohn and his wife, who had long laboured as missionaries in Turkestan. After imprisonment and suffering they had come to work at the College. They stayed there until 1933, when Rudolf's health necessitated retirement.

Their successors were Johann Legiehn and his wife. He had been a grammar school art teacher; his talents were seen later in six of the portraits which hang in one of the College lecture rooms⁸. He acted as house parent and also Missions Tutor until he and his wife left as missionaries to the German *émigrés* in South America. There he taught at two Bible Colleges and in 1954 published a textbook entitled *Unser Glaube: eine kurzgefasste Biblische Glaubenslehre (Our Faith: an outline of Biblical doctrine)*. This found acceptance among German-speaking Christians far beyond Brazil, where it first appeared.

Other house parents were Paul Kämpfer and his wife. When he was killed on active service, she continued the work and is now a secretary at the College. Fritz and Luise Noss were house parents until 1954, when a former Bible student, Christoph Valke from the East Zone, came to Wiedenest with his wife and children. He still serves in the College as house father.

From 1905 onwards hundreds of students have gone out as missionaries all over the world. Often at evening services a hymn was sung to one tune but in several different languages. Imperfect command of German (the *lingua franca*) sometimes led to amusing incidents. A Rumanian brother, testifying to the change brought about in his temperament by Christ, exclaimed (in German): 'Then I got a completely new . . . temperature'⁹. Some students showed a gift for languages. On arrival one Slovak had only forty or fifty words of German. After six weeks he was able to pray simply, but clearly, in public and after another six weeks to give his testimony.

In 1932 while most of the College were at lunch someone noticed smoke rising from a hayloft. Thanks to the swift action of the local fire brigade and a providential sudden change in direction of the wind the main building was saved. In all, nine living rooms were destroyed; but the cattle were rescued. One of the students salvaged enough material to construct a fine hen-house! This was later converted into a peaceful summerhouse, which now serves as a quiet room or a guest room.

Through the activities of members of the College in their early days at Wiedenest a Brethren assembly was formed. At first, services were held in association with a small group of Christians in Bergneustadt. Then an increasing need arose for regular services at Wiedenest itself. So on 6 March 1921 the first meeting for the breaking of bread took place on the College verandah. In connection with this the College staff gave a series of

addresses on the theme of 'The Church'. From these beginnings an independent assembly developed. While a careful distinction is made between it and the College, the two co-operate to mutual advantage. Members of the College are members of the assembly.

Under pressure from Hitler an event occurred in 1937 of considerable consequence for the history of the Brethren movement in Germany. Most 'Open' and some 'Exclusive' Brethren joined with the Baptists and others to form a federation, the Bund Evangelischer Freikirchlicher Gemeinden (the Federation of Protestant Free Churches). The increased fellowship brought about by this enforced union is still evident today; many local assemblies contain a mixture of Baptists and Brethren¹⁰. In at least one small assembly, where only one family is 'Brethren', the traditional open communion service is held normally once a month, a ministry meeting being held on the other Sundays.

One fortunate consequence of the reunion of the Elberfeld Brethren with the Open Brethren has been the close links forged between the firm of Rolf Brockhaus of Wuppertal and the College. This firm (not to be confused with F. A. Brockhaus of Wiesbaden, the encyclopedia publishers) made its name with J. N. Darby's German translation of the Bible, the so-called 'Elberfeld Bible'. Today its list includes many authors familiar to English readers, e.g., William Barclay, Elizabeth Elliot, Billy Graham, Roy Hession, Watchman Nee, John Pollock, John Stott, and Jim Vaus. Among recent publications are the *Wuppertaler Studienbibel* (the *Wuppertal Study Bible*) series and the *Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament* (*Encyclopedia of Theological Terms found in the New Testament*). Children's books are well represented, for instance, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Scripture Union's Kingfisher series. Brockhaus also publishes two hymn-books widely used in German Brethren assemblies, *Geistliche Lieder* (*Spiritual Songs*) (latest edition, 1961) and *Glaubenslieder* (*Songs of Faith*) (latest music edition, 1967)¹¹. The firm issues the books by Erich Sauer and other publications of the College, including *Offene Türen* (*Open Doors*), an illustrated missionary magazine.

In 1937 the College suffered the loss of its Principal, Johannes Warns. He was succeeded by Heinrich Koehler, son of the first Principal.

IV—THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND AFTER

On the outbreak of war an official attempt was made to close down the College completely; but by a liberal interpretation of the regulation the local authorities allowed the work to continue, though under difficulties. The buildings were soon occupied, first by soldiers, then for five years by evacuees and civilian casualties from Cologne. In the autumn of 1944 the entire premises were commandeered; according to police instructions they were to house a Nazi social welfare organisation. Yet throughout the war it proved possible to continue Christian activities on a restricted scale. Bible weeks and conferences were held, including a three-month Bible-study course in 1941 for seventeen Ukrainians, run in conjunction with the Baptists. Towards the end of the war the presence of five different military units attracted low-flying bombers. Miraculously the buildings were

not seriously damaged, and no one in residence at the College was killed.

In 1943 the Baptist Theological College at Hamburg was destroyed by bombs. The Baptists moved to Wiedenest, where they and the Brethren enjoyed mutual fellowship until the buildings in Hamburg were restored in 1948.

The immediate post-war period was one of privation. The principal and the house parents had difficulty in obtaining food for the students and themselves. However, God once more overruled and brought them through this time of crisis. All the College property was in a poor state of repair; but friends soon helped to restore and refurnish the rooms.

When the College began full-scale work again after the war, Erich Sauer took over the principalship.

At about the age of thirteen a prominent eye specialist had warned his parents on no account to allow him to take up a profession that involved much reading or writing; the specialist had advised gardening instead. Nevertheless at eighteen Sauer had begun studying at Berlin University. After two semesters he had been brought to the verge of blindness. After a second, more severe, attack in the seventh semester he had started learning Braille, and he was recommended to go into the country for convalescence. Johannes Warns, who had been a fellow-member of the Hohenstaufenstrasse assembly in Berlin, invited him to Wiedenest. That was in 1920. There he stayed, apart from frequent travels abroad, until his death in 1959.

First as lecturer, later as principal, he inspired the whole life of the College. The considerable volume of his written ministry was the precise opposite to what had been diagnosed as possible. He was in all things greatly helped by his wife, Frau Charlotte Sauer, who as the second daughter of Christoph Koehler, the first principal, had herself lived through the early history of the College. Erich Sauer's life-long absolute dependence upon the Lord for his eyesight was, to use his own words, 'a testimony to the grace of God'. Like many of the early Brethren, he devoted himself to a study of the Second Advent. His substantial works on this subject have been translated into several languages. For the English versions we are indebted mainly to the late G. H. Lang, a personal friend of his, and the Paternoster Press¹².

On Sauer's death in 1959, Ernst Schrupp became principal, a position that he still holds. He had come to the College in 1948 after experience of evangelistic work among students. He has taken a keen interest in foreign missions and has for many years edited the College's missionary magazine, *Offene Türen*. His book, *Blicke in die Weltmission*, provides historical and current surveys of the various mission fields¹³.

V—MISSIONARY WORK

The document dated 11 April 1905 announcing the establishment of the College in Berlin bore the texts, John 4:35 and Luke 10:2. Contact with Berlin has been maintained by annual conferences and by the commending from the Berlin assemblies of missionaries to Japan, Nepal, Pakistan and Tanzania. Between the wars missionaries from Wiedenest carried the

gospel to many countries in Europe. Sometimes they met with misunderstanding or even persecution, particularly from the Greek Orthodox Church. At the annual ministry and missionary conferences at Wiedenest many nationalities were represented. The first such conference was held on the verandah. Later, owing to increasing numbers, a tent was erected in the grounds. Twice the conferences took place in a barn. In 1930 a large hall was built to celebrate the silver jubilee of the College. Much of the construction work was carried out by visiting friends.

A major advance was the incorporation in 1951 of the Missionshilfe Velbert (the Velbert Missionary Aid Society), into the work at Wiedenest. This body was responsible for supporting a circle of missionaries, of whom Ernst Kuhlmann was one. For forty years he had exercised a fruitful ministry in China, and for many of those years close ties of friendship had linked him with the Brethren at Wiedenest. In fact, some of the College staff belonged to the Missionshilfe. Since its foundation the Missionshilfe had been connected with the Deutscher Evangelischer Missionsrat (the German Protestant Missionary Council) and was therefore entitled to forward gifts from German friends and churches to the mission field. At the suggestion of Kuhlmann and others the Missionshilfe was transferred to Wiedenest. On the return from China and America of Kuhlmann and his wife they went round assemblies stimulating interest. They are now elderly and live in Wiedenest, in the same house as Frau Sauer.

Under the Third Reich it had been almost impossible to send regular support to missionaries, and many countries did not welcome those from Germany. After the war the situation gradually improved. The College began commending its own missionaries. In 1952 a document signed by many leading Brethren was circulated, in which the amalgamation of certain missionary activities was reported and an appeal made for more overseas workers. The first to respond was Walter Kretschmer, who went to Nigeria under the joint auspices of the Sudan Interior Mission and the College. In 1955 Gottfried Schalm did likewise. In 1961 Kretschmer was killed in a car accident at the age of thirty-three. His wife and their two children returned to the field.

Meanwhile the gateway to Japan opened. An experienced Brethren missionary, Heinrich Ruck, had already been working there for some years after having to leave China. In 1954 two brethren and a sister were commended to work in Japan at a moving service at Wiedenest. In the following year another two brethren (one of them Dutch) were commended at a similar service.

Another call, this time from North India, was answered in 1955 by a sister, who was sponsored jointly by Wiedenest and a Brethren assembly in Berlin. She went to a hospital run by English Brethren.

A fourth field was Pakistan, to which country went Daniel Herm. His brother, Bruno, works in Aden, another Moslem area. Their father, also named Bruno, an ex-Wiedenest student, had worked for years among Moslems in Bulgaria.

A number of students from Wiedenest have visited England to learn the language or to take a medical course in London.

A field nearer home and one where the language presented no problems

was Austria. After an appeal from Ricardo Huck, who had spent some years in that country, several brethren volunteered to go there.

A total of about a hundred missionaries have gone out from Wiedenest into eight different countries. They are commended and supported by their local assemblies, a practice encouraged by the College. Such assemblies have testified in consequence to a quickening of spiritual life. Many missionaries have been sent out by Brethren assemblies in East Germany.

The increasing number of enquiries from women about missionary instruction led in 1955 to a farm building in the College grounds being converted into a women's hostel. The College has co-operated with the Diakonissenmutterhäuser 'Bethel' in Berlin, 'Tabea' in Hamburg, and 'Persis' in Wuppertal. These institutions train 'deaconesses', that is, Protestant nursing sisters. George Müller, following the Pietist leader, August Hermann Francke of Halle, had advocated the setting up of such an order. Medical work forms an important part of the missionary endeavours of Wiedenest, for example, the orphanage and hospital at Mbesa in Tanzania. Much help has been received from the Deutsches Institut für Ärztliche Mission (the German Institute for Medical Missions), the headquarters of which are in Tübingen.

Another body to which the College owes much is the Deutscher Evangelischer Missionsrat (already mentioned in connection with the Missionshilfe Velbert). This has facilitated such matters as currency exchanges.

VI—GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The badge of the College consists of an open Bible, from which light shines forth into all the world. One page contains the Lord's last commission, (Matt. 28:19f); the other, Paul's command to teachers (2 Tim. 2:2). From the outset the College has combined missionary enterprise with an opportunity for concentrated and consecutive study of Scripture. The syllabuses cover a wide range: introduction to the various books of the Bible, exegesis, doctrine, soteriology, eschatology, homiletics, pastoral theology, and practical questions affecting the local church. The historical and archaeological background to the Old and New Testaments and an outline of church history from apostolic times are also studied. Hebrew and New Testament Greek are optional. For missionaries instruction in English is available, and so is instruction in German for those who need it. Full-time courses last one, two, or four years. Not only evangelists and preachers are trained, but also those wishing to return to 'secular' callings. There are also short conferences to meet special needs. Each year, for example, there are well-attended women's and young people's meetings.

Every candidate for admission to a course is expected to be a committed Christian, to show evidence of consistent living, to have sufficient intellectual and spiritual gifts for the ministry of the Word, to be in some way already active in the Lord's work in his local church, and indeed to be commended by the elders of that church.

The inaugural meeting held on 11 April 1905 acknowledged the Scriptures as the sole rule and guide of faith, of personal life, and of witness in the

local church. The divine origin, infallibility, authority, and all-sufficiency of the Scriptures were to be accepted by all the teaching staff. Confessional and national differences were to be no bar to admission¹⁴. All these principles have been maintained since, and the unity of all God's children has been demonstrated. The students do not all come from Brethren assemblies; many come from Baptist churches, free evangelical churches, various fellowships, and the Lutheran Church. At times as many as ten nationalities have been represented.

The College is conducted 'on faith lines'. Students able to pay fees are, however, expected to do so. Others, especially missionaries, are exempt from part or the whole of the charges. Although, strictly speaking, the work is independent, the College has invited responsible elders from a number of assemblies to give regular service. At the annual general meeting, when about forty brethren are present, a council and a committee are appointed, which meet regularly during the year. Minutes are kept of all such meetings.

Through committee representatives the council takes responsibility for all essential decisions, inspects the accounts, and (in co-operation with the teaching staff) decides enrolments, visits to mission fields, and the basic support of missionaries at work in them. As far as missionary work is concerned, the College insists that it is only the servant of the local assemblies and that it in no way exercises central control. In most cases it is the assemblies that send out and support the workers, which is one reason why the College is anxious that the assemblies are properly represented in deliberations.

In one of the lecture rooms at Wiedenest are portraits of leading figures in church history, each representing at least one principle in the life of the College. Catholicity of outlook is illustrated by the first five portraits: Nikolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorf (1700-60), the hymn-writer, who led and inspired the Moravian missionaries¹⁵; Caspur von Schwenkfeld (1490-1561), the Silesian nobleman and mystic, who preached and practised the unity of all believers¹⁶; Menno Simons (1496-1561), the founder of the Mennonites, who insisted on believers' baptism and the independency of the local church¹⁷; George Fox (1624-91), the Quaker leader, who emphasised the inner light of the Spirit¹⁸; and Johann Amos Comenius (1592-1671), the bishop of the Bohemian Brethren, who stood for Christian education¹⁹.

The remaining portraits are of men associated with the ('Plymouth') Brethren movement: Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853), the pioneer 'faith' missionary, who gave up a fortune²⁰; George Müller (1805-98), the German-born ex-profligate philanthropist, who ran the orphanage at Bristol without appeals for funds²¹; Dr. Friedrich Wilhelm Baedeker (1823-1906), the evangelist to the Russians mentioned at the beginning of the present paper²²; and Colonel V. A. Pashkov²³. The latter was an aristocratic Russian Guards officer, who was one of the leaders of a revival at the end of the last century in North Russia and at the Tsarist court of St. Petersburg. Both Baedeker and Pashkov were converted under the influence of an Englishman, Lord Radstock (1833-1913), an evangelical Anglican layman who mixed freely with the Brethren²⁴. Immediately after

Pashkov's conversion he used the ball-room of his palace for the Lord's work. He preached in factories, courtyards, and prisons, and was unconscionable of class distinctions. His followers were known as 'Pashkovtsy', that is, 'Pashkovites'²⁵. For his intrepid witness he suffered severe persecution, was exiled by Tsar Alexander III, and died abroad.

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- 1 The present account is based largely upon Erich Sauer's jubilee pamphlet, *50 Jahre Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest* (Wiedenest, 1955) and Ernst Schrupp's article, 'Sechzig Jahre Bibelschule', *Offene Türen* (Wiedenest, March/April 1965), 3-7. See also Gerd Rumler, 'Die Bibelschule heute', *ibid.*, 38-41. Frau Charlotte Sauer kindly read an early draft of my typescript and made helpful comments.
- 2 R. S. Latimer in his book, *Dr. Baedeker: and His Apostolic Work in Russia* (Morgan & Scott) 1907, does not mention the part played by Baedeker in the establishment of the College. His influence was probably indirect. Short biographies appear in Henry Pickering's *Chief Men Among the Brethren*, 2nd ed. (Pickering & Inglis) 1931, 142-6, and F. Roy Coad's *History of the Brethren Movement* (Paternoster) 1968, 193-4, 196. (Coad's book, with its full bibliography, is essential reading for an understanding of Brethrenism.) The spelling of the missionary's name varies. I have adopted that used by Sauer and Schrupp.
- 3 See Mrs. Howard Taylor, *A Story without an End* ['Sister Eva', with a continuation by Annie Whisler], 2nd ed. (China Inland Mission) 1930 and Annie Whisler, *Sister Eva of Friedenshort*, 6th ed. (Hodder & Stoughton) 1947.
- 4 Those unfamiliar with Müller's philanthropy should consult the selected extracts from his *Diary* by A. Rendle Short (Pickering & Inglis) 1954 and *George Müller and His Orphans* by Nancy Garton (Hodder & Stoughton) 1963. On Müller and the early Brethren movement see Harold H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren, 1825-50* (Pickering & Inglis) 1967, chap. 5 et passim, and Coad, chap. 3 et passim.
- 5 In 1913 Warns published his defence of believers' baptism, *Die Taufe* (English translation, 1957). For this and his other publications see the bibliography below.
- 6 See A. J. Lewis, *Zinzendorf, the Ecumenical Pioneer . . . the Moravian contribution to Christian mission and unity* (S.C.M.) 1962.
- 7 'Offene Türen in Wiedenest benützt. Erwarte dich sofort. Wedekind'. The College's missionary magazine is entitled *Offene Türen*.
- 8 See my closing paragraphs.
- 9 'Da bekam ich eine ganz neue—Temperatur', instead of 'Temperament'. He was not the first to feel his heart 'strangely warmed'. Sauer quotes another, this time untranslatable, malapropism: another Rumanian, wanting to use a chaff-cutter in the College barn, asked, 'Wo sind die Schwierigkeiten?' instead of 'Gewichte?'
- 10 H. L. Ellison gave examples of similar unions in a conference address: *Christian Unity: papers given at a conference of Brethren at Swanwick* (Bristol, Evangelical Christian Lit.) 1964, 44-5. Of the Russian churches he remarked: 'according to the ecclesiastical background of the foreign visitors they are referred to as Baptists or Brethren'. Walter Kolarz, in his well-documented *Religion in the Soviet Union* (Macmillan, 1962) gives the history of the 'All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians/Baptists' (chap. IX). For the current situation see Michael Bourdeaux, *Religious Ferment in Russia* (Macmillan, 1968) and, at a journalistic level, J. C. Pollock, *The Christians from Siberia* (Hodder & Stoughton) 1964.
- 11 The former, more traditional hymn-book, contains 250 items, of which only 24 are specifically evangelistic. The 506 items in the *Glaubenslieder* are arranged in 9 sections covering a wide range of Christian (and pre-Christian) experience; this book gives references to the other one so that at large gatherings both can be used.

- 12 See the bibliography below and the anniversary article on Sauer in *Offene Türen* (March/April 1969).
- 13 See the bibliography below.
- 14 In 1965 *Offene Türen* (March/April, 50-51) reprinted approvingly a document of the European Evangelical Alliance, 'Unser Bekenntnis zur Heiligen Schrift' ('Our Confession on Holy Scripture'). Erich Sauer had long been a committee member of the Alliance at Blankenburg.
- 15 See Lewis, op. cit. and John Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology*, 2nd ed. (Murray), 1907, 765-9, 1301-05 et passim.
- 16 See Paul L. Maier, *Caspar Schwenckfeld on the Person and Work of Christ* (Assen, Van Gorcum) 1959. However, George H. Williams' exhaustive study, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia, Westminster Press) 1962, passim, shows the danger of over-simplifying the historical role of Schwen(c)kfeld and Menno Simons.
- 17 See Cornelius Krahn, *Menno Simons . . . ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Theologie der Taufgesinnten* (Karlsruhe), 1936. See also note 16 above and Ernst Crous, 'German Mennonites' in *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*, ed. Guy F. Hefshberger (Scottsdale, Pa., Herald Press) 1957, cited by Coad, 196 note.
- 18 A revised edition of Fox's *Journal* by John L. Nickalls was published by Cambridge U.P., 1952. See also the standard histories by William C. Braithwaite: *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 2nd ed. (C.U.P.) 1955 and *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 2nd ed. (C.U.P.) 1961.
- 19 See *The Teacher of Nations*, ed. Joseph Needham (Cambridge U.P.) 1942 and J. E. Sadler, *J. A. Comenius and the Concept of Universal Education* (Allen & Unwin) 1966. Both books have good bibliographies. Some indication of the present-day significance of Comenius is given by the fact that the University of Lancaster has named its Centre for Central European Studies after him.
- 20 See G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves, Saint and Pioneer*, 2nd ed. (Paternoster) 1949.
- 21 See above, note 4.
- 22 See above, note 2.
- 23 I have adopted the modern transliteration used by Kolarz, op. cit., 284-5. Latimer refers to him as 'Paschkoff' (op. cit. 34-8); so does Pollock (op. cit., 65-70). E. H. Broadbent gives his Christian names as 'Vassilij Alexandrovitch', *The Pilgrim Church* (Pickering & Inglis) 1931, 328.
- 24 See Mrs. E. Trotter, *Lord Radstock: an interpretation and a record* (Hodder & Stoughton) 1914.
- 25 J. S. Curtiss referred to them as being 'a small sect in St. Petersburg', which united in 1906 with several other bodies to form the 'Evangelical Christian Baptists', *Church and State in Russia . . . 1900-17* (New York, Octagon Books) 1965, 232.

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PERIODICALS

Mitteilungen der Bibelschule. 1907-39.

Offene Türen. 1908 to date. A missionary magazine now published six times a year by Brockhaus. The editors have been Warns, Sauer, and (at present) Schrupp. During the Second World War it was replaced by duplicated (later printed) *Missionsbriefe*.

INDIVIDUAL WRITERS CONNECTED WITH THE COLLEGE

Where possible, details of their first editions are given. Reviews in the *Evangelical Quarterly* (London, now Exeter: Paternoster Press) are noted.

JOHANN LEGIEHN (1895-)

Unser Glaube: eine kurzgefasste biblische Glaubenslehre (Ponta Grossa, Paraná, South Brazil) 1954.

ERICH SAUER (1898-1959)

55 Jahre Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest. Ein Zeugnis von der Gnade Gottes (Wiedenest) 1955.

Es geht um den ewigen Siegeskranz. Kampf- und Sportbilder des Neuen Testaments als Ansporn des Glaubens (Brockhaus) 1955.

Gott, Menschheit und Ewigkeit. 2 Aufl. (Brockhaus) 1955.

Der göttliche Erlösungsplan von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit. Eine prophetische Karte mit erklärendem Text (Brockhaus) 1950.

From Eternity to Eternity. An outline of the divine purposes. Translated by G. H. Lang (Paternoster) 1954. *EQ* xxvii, No. 3 (July 1955), 175-7. Also translated into Norwegian, Swedish and Japanese.

In der Kampfbahn des Glaubens. Ein Weckruf zu neuem Leben nach Hebräer 12 (Brockhaus) 1952.

In the Arena of Faith. A call to a consecrated life. [Translated by Dr. and Mrs. A. E. Wilder Smith and G. H. Lang.] (Paternoster) 1955. *EQ* xxviii, No. 1 (Jan./March 1956), 62. Also translated into Japanese and Finnish.

Der König der Erde. Ein Zeugnis vom Adel des Menschen nach Bibel und Naturwissenschaft (Brockhaus) [1959].

The King of the Earth. The nobility of man according to the Bible and science. [Translated by Michael Bolister.] (Paternoster) 1962. *EQ* xxxv, No. 2 (April/June 1963), 108-10.

Das Morgenrot der Welterlösung. Ein Gang durch die alttestamentliche Offenbarungsgeschichte (Wuppertal: Der Rufer-Verlag) 1937.

The Dawn of World Redemption. A survey of historical revelation in the Old Testament. Translated by G. H. Lang (Paternoster) 1951. *EQ* xxiv (April 1952), 110-12. Also translated into Swedish, Norwegian, Japanese, Dutch, French, Spanish, Finnish, the Dualla dialect of the Bantu tribe in the Cameroons, and the Hausa language of Nigeria.

Offenbarung Gottes und Antwort des Glaubens. Eine Auswahl aus seinen Schriften (Brockhaus) 1969. Includes biographical introduction, 7-12.

Der Triumph des Gekreuzigten. Ein Gang durch die neutestamentliche Offenbarungsgeschichte (Wuppertal: Der Rufer-Verlag) 1937.

The Triumph of the Crucified. A survey of historical revelation in the New Testament. Translated by G. H. Lang (Paternoster) 1951. *EQ* xxiv (April 1952), 110-12. Also translated into Swedish, Norwegian, Japanese, French, Spanish and Chinese.

Vom Adel des Menschen (1940). Translated into Swedish.

Zweck und Ziel der Menschenschöpfung. Heilsgeschichtlich-apologetische Studie (Berlin: Frose) 1931.

See also:

E. P. LUCE

Maran Atha! Vier Vorträge gehalten auf der Konferenz in Wiedenest, 1925. Translated by Erich Sauer (Wiedenest) 1926.

ERNST SCHRUPP (1915-)

Blicke in die Weltmission (Brockhaus) 1953.

Der moderne Mensch im Geisteskampf der Zeit (Brockhaus) 1950.

Der Sinn des Lebens? (Brockhaus) 1950.

Wer bewegt sich um wen? (Brockhaus) 1951.

See also:

Der lebendige Christus heute. Studenten- und Schülertag in Wuppertal vom 28. bis 31. x. 1948. Hrsg. von Ernst Schrupp (Brockhaus) 1948.

JOHANNES WARNS (1874-1937)

Aus dem Wunderland der Tiere (Witten: Bundesverlag) 1925. A children's book.

500 Entwürfe zu biblischen Ansprachen (Stiegau: Urban) 1932. Translated into Czech.

Gedanken über eine schriftgemässe Abendmahlsfeier (1917) 2. Aufl. (Bad Homburg: Wiegand) 1920.

Grenzen der Schriftauslegung (Witten: Bundesverlag) 1922.

Kurzgefasstes Lehrbuch des neutestamentlichen Griechisch für den Schul- und Selbstunterricht (Gotha: Ott) 1925.

Russland und das Evangelium. Bilder aus der evangelischen Bewegung des sogenannten Stundismus (Cassel) 1920.

Staatskirche? Volkskirche? Freikirche? Ein Wegweiser durch die kirchlichen Wirren der Gegenwart für fragende Christen (Bad Homburg: Wiegand) 1920.

Die Taufe. Gedanken über die urchristliche Taufe, ihre Geschichte und ihre Bedeutung für die Gegenwart (Bad Homburg: Wiegand) 1913.

Baptism. Studies in the original Christian baptism, its history and conflicts, its relation to a state or national church and its significance for the present time. Translated by G. H. Lang (Paternoster) 1957. *EQ* xxx, No. 4 (Oct./Dec. 1958), 231-3. Also translated into Swedish.

See also:

Wahrheit in der Liebe. Hrsg. von Johannes Warns. 1.-5. Jahr. (J. Warns: 1904?-08). No more published. Originally subtitled *Hefte zum Verständnis der Gemeinschaftsbewegung* and issued from 26 Speyererstrasse, Berlin W.30, then *Hefte zur Förderung biblisches Christentums* and issued from 65 Hohenstaufenstrasse, Berlin W.30.

A substantial history of the Brethren movement remained uncompleted at Warns's death.

'THE MISSIONARY REPORTER'

J. W. FORREST*

Its Inception and Objects

IN a certain issue of the CBRF *Journal*¹ there appeared an article on the life of James Van Sommer (1822-1901), and reference was made, naturally, to the missionary magazine he edited. The object of this article is to concentrate on that magazine as named in the heading. Based on the dates given in the aforementioned article Van Sommer would have been about thirty-one years of age when, while residing at Tottenham, he commenced production of *The Missionary Reporter*. He was, therefore, quite a young man—like so many of the early Brethren. The first number was published in July 1853, and the last, apparently, in December 1861—a span of eight-and-a-half years. His main declared object was 'to afford information respecting, and to establish a bond of sympathy with, such evangelical missionaries as may be brought before the notice of the editors, and whose labours, through not being connected with societies, are at present unknown'. In practice, this policy neither excluded those connected with sound evangelical missions nor home news 'if there was room', and the 'information' was mainly in the form of letters from missionaries being published in full. From the outset he stated that 'the responsibility for any peculiar views which may occur in the communication must rest with the writer'; so they had them then too—as always—and sometimes they are subsequently proved to be right!

But it is not the intention here to quote any of the numerous usual letters, nor to cover the same ground as that covered by Mr. W. T. Stunt in *Echoes Quarterly Review*². That article included a representative view of the work throughout the world as seen through its pages, and of the scriptural and practical interest shown in it by Mr. Van Sommer and his readers. In this article the interest will be mainly on the magazine itself and those mentioned therein other than the missionaries. Let it suffice to say here that so far as the latter are concerned we read such thrilling names as the pioneers Elizabeth Beer (George died soon after publication, just as Anthony Norris Groves died shortly before), William and Elizabeth Bowden, John Aroolappen (Indian), Tom Heelis, all of India, and James Hudson Taylor of the then China Inland Mission³.

A Very Personal Letter

The latter pioneering veteran referred to *The Missionary Reporter* and to its contemporary *The Chinese Missionary Gleaner* in a letter which was published in the issue of November 1855. This reference and some other interesting matters appear in the latter part of the letter, and it shows that the problems of missionaries then were in some ways much the same as they are today: lack of peace, money, and time for reading except for the magazines; and, positively, plenty to discourage and to make one irritable, and so causing them to plead, above all, for fervent prayer support. It is quoted as follows:

*Mr. J. W. Forrest is a Technical Officer at H.M. Stationery Office, London.

(Extracts from letters of J. H. Taylor to different correspondents. Shanghai, China, May 3rd and June 28th, 1853.)

As to your magazine, I do not get to see it at all. A long time since I desired it and the "Gleaner" to be sent to me: we have got the latter now for a few months, but have not heard anything of the former. If you have any convenient way of sending it, I should be very glad to receive it, as I have only seen the first three numbers, which were out just before I left England. As to books, I have but very little time for reading, nevertheless, I do sometimes wish my selection of profitable works was not quite so limited.

The Society provides me with sufficient funds for all we at present have undertaken. I have taken a Chinese boy to clothe and educate, and have applied to that purpose £10 which were kindly put at my disposal by A. B., so that I shall not be in want on that score for more than a year yet, in all probability; but had we more funds at our disposal, we would gladly undertake the board and education of other children, believing it is likely to prove an efficient means of usefulness.

I must now conclude, as my time has expired. You must excuse this short, abrupt letter, as I have been interrupted repeatedly. Continue to pray for us; we much need your prayers, and particularly I do. There is so much to discourage, and the climate produces such a degree of nervous irritability, that we need much grace.

Give my christian love to &c.,

Yours in Christ Jesus,

J. H. TAYLOR.

A Pastoral Letter

Another interesting character of those days whose writing appears in the magazine was James Harrington Evans. He was one of a number of clergymen who left the Church of England when they decided to practise New Testament principles⁴. Later, as the pastor of John Street Chapel (which was situated near the junction of Grays Inn Road with Theobalds Road, London, W.C.1), he was instrumental in the conversion of Robert Cleaver Chapman who was such an outstanding saint during most of the last century. One of Evans' pastoral letters entitled: 'Missionary Work Among Our Fellow Christians: Visitation' was reprinted in the issue of September 1853. Strangely enough, the only scripture actually quoted was 'she hath done what she could'—and that without the reference (Mark 14:8). The heading showed that the Editor believed that it was just as much missionary work to visit sick, needy and lonely saints in the homeland as on the mission field. This helpful exhortation appeared as follow:

How many have been translated from our little section of the church below to the glorious gathering place of the church above, whose removal into brighter realms and purer skies, when we have heard it, has excited the sensation of regret, painful but unavailing, bitter but remedyless, because it can lead to nothing—that there has been so little personal intercourse, so little exchange of little offices of love, so little interchange of any sort. Conscience has told us that the commendation, "she hath done what she could", cannot be ours in such a case. If there has been no time for frequent visits, or a lengthened call, yet a call now and then, a call with earnest prayer for a divine blessing, and with the hopeful expectation of receiving it, might have been paid. We know it, and we feel it as we allow it.

When they die, then we regret that it should have been so. Yet but too oft it leads to but little alteration. Bear then, beloved, the word of exhortation from one, who in that very word would chiefly exhort himself. To visit the saints of God is a costly duty,

especially the poor saints. The great Head of the body calls it not kind in us to neglect them, or rather Himself in them. If our beloved sister had wanted a cup of cold water, I believe she would not have wanted it long. But she might have said,—not that she did say it, for she thankfully acknowledged the kindness of many amongst us,—but still she might have said, “I was in pain, and a sisterly call would have soothed me; in lowness of spirits, and a look of love would have brightened me; in bodily sinking, and a little, yea, a trifling present for my sickly frame would have soothed me and comforted me; I was sometimes in spiritual darkness, and a few words of prayer might have, through Him who works how He will, and by whom He will, lifted me up, and made me go on my way rejoicing.

If, my beloved, we all consider two things duly, and with deep feeling of the Lord’s mind, and with earnest prayer that we might be suitably affected by it in our walk and conversation, it would be a great blessing to us. First, that whatever we have is really not our own, but the Lord’s; that our time, our talents, our money, our influence, yea, our very trials, are not so much our own property as His, whose we are. Secondly, that what we have is to be simply for His glory. Oh! did we truly enter into what is contained in these two principles, what a life of self-denying, Christ-exalting conduct would be, must be, the result! How it would lead us to feel for poor, thoughtless, Christless, Godless, hopeless sinners; how it would lead us also to long after, sympathize with, and do good unto the called, chosen, sanctified family of God. How many a time should we reason thus:—This poor saint, this solitary one, this one who may, perhaps, think himself or herself neglected, overlooked, forgotten, must be seen, must be called on, must be cheered, soothed, comforted. The word demands it, my conscience enforces it, and Jesus Himself will own it.

TABLE A

Some Interesting Stages in the Life of the Magazine

<i>Date</i>		
July	1853	} Publishers’ imprint above editor’s private address. Never printed as ‘Vol. I’ ^s (212 pages). Three agents’ particulars.
Dec.	1854	
Jan.	1855	Beginning of Vol. II, and so printed.
Nov.	1855	Last appearance of publishers’ imprint and list of ten agents. Circulation about 1,030.
Dec.	1855	Last appearance of expenses and receipts.
Jan.	1856	Trade no longer supplied. All copies by post.
Feb.	1856	Initials (‘having no precedent in Scripture’) to be superseded by names of contributors.
July	1856	Circulation increased by about 400.
Sept.	1856	Volume II deemed to be completed (182 pages).
Oct.	1856	Volume numbering discontinued. This the fortieth issue called ‘No. 40’. Advertisements invited.
Dec.	1856	Proposes to continue another year.
July	1857	Not published owing to editor’s engagements.
Oct.	1857	Business address supersedes private address.
Dec.	1857	Remittances invited for the ensuing year.
Jan.	1858	Scale of prices restated. No hint of cessation.
Balance to		
Dec.	1861	Since 1921 it is apparently not known whether any copies now exist. Research is continuing.

Some Details of Format and Prices

In appearance, the magazine was $9\frac{3}{4}$ " deep by $6\frac{1}{4}$ " wide (as bound), and the first number consisted of eight pages; No. 2 was sixteen pages, both priced at a penny; No. 3 was twenty pages; Nos. 4 and 5 were sixteen pages, all priced at twopence. After that most of the issues were of eight pages; and in accordance with a statement made in February 1854 that the price would vary with its length: twelve pages and under seem to have been priced at a penny; over twelve pages at twopence—until April 1856 when the cash price ceased to appear. After the first few issues the style settled down, typically Victorian, to two columns, separated almost only by a line, covering an area of 8" deep by $5\frac{1}{4}$ " wide, with a running heading and page number above a line, and the whole enclosed with a double-line border (average overall dimensions expressed as 220 mm × 140 mm in this branch of research). Most of the matter was set (by hand) in the old non-point type size of approximately eight-and-a-half lines to the inch (bourgeois); some was set a size smaller (brevier); a short introductory article was set a size larger (long primer); while certain lengthy items, accounts, acknowledgments, technical and tabular matter were set as small as twelve lines to the inch (nonpareil)⁶. But sometimes a small item was 'leaded' (spaced between its lines) to fill the available space.

TABLE B
Details of Page Content of Available Issues

<i>Page Content</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
4	1	minimum
8	37	common
$9\frac{3}{4}$	—	average
12	8	—
14	1	odd leaf
16	6	—
20	1	maximum

Total issues and period: 54 covering 4 years 7 months

On one occasion, at least, there was over a page of nonpareil comprising a translated extract from *L'Eco di Savonarola* by Signor Ferretti to whom another reference will be made later. And in the third and fifth issues there appeared some tables of missionary statistics comprising five columns of nonpareil to the whole of a single column in the first instance, and involving seven columns of nonpareil across the double column, occupying one-and-a-half pages, in the second instance^{6a}, for which, in this case, the printer charged an extra thirty-nine shillings. There was thus plenty to read in relation to the size of the magazine, even if the type-sizes were rather small by today's standards. The actual paper was not always of a reasonable quality. All this information, and what follows, is mainly derived from the issues of July 1853 to January 1858 held at the British Museum as a bound volume⁷.

Duration of the Magazine

Without any further evidence one might have concluded, in spite of certain weighty factors to the contrary, that the publication ceased then. But a statement by the late Professor Arthur Rendle Short, written in 1921⁸, cannot be ignored. It reads: 'The numbers from January 1st 1858 to December 10th 1861, are before me as I write'. In the previous sentence he mentions its continuance until 1862, but by that statement, he probably meant to be understood as meaning: up to, but not including all of, 1862; and the date of 'December 10th 1861'⁹ would support this argument on the basis that that issue of the magazine would be current until 9 January 1862. The argument is further supported by the Professor's words on the next page which read: 'Then for ten years there was no missionary periodical'; for if the magazine had continued until the end of 1862 the vacant interval just mentioned would have been reduced to nine years—and that deduction would conflict with January 1872 as the known date of *The Missionary Echo's* commencement. But now we are left with the problem as to why Rendle Short did not explain the reason for the demise of the magazine if he had the last issues at hand as he wrote. Perhaps he did not think that that matter came within the scope of his book¹⁰.

It will be seen from Table A that the July 1857 issue never appeared—as the June issue indicated might happen. And without the above clear statement of the actual existence of further issues, the explained absence of the July 1857 issue and the unexplained presence of the odd January 1858 issue would pose a problem. This is made worse by someone, mistakenly, having written in pencil on the first page of the last bound issue: 'No more publ'd'. The apparently odd January issue was never intended financially to take the place of the missing issue. True, there was a note in the August 1857 issue that there would be an adjustment for yearly subscribers to cover the omitted issue, but it was never stated that this would take the form of an extra issue. And, as Table A shows, continuance is the impression created by the odd January issue. Why the donor of the bound volume so presented it will always remain a mystery; an explanatory label on page three of the cover could have explained the reason—that is if he *did* so present it^{10a}.

TABLE C

Details of Copies Printed so far as Published

<i>Quantities</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1,250	3	minimum
1,500	14	common
1,750	1	estimated
2,000	7	average
3,000	1	—
4,500	1	—
5,000	2	maximum

Total issues and period: 29 covering 2 years 5 months

Cast and Circulation

While Van Sommer at first used the services of a publisher it is fairly obvious that he took the financial responsibility himself and that the publishers gave their services freely. Every issue until December 1855 had a statement of the expenditure up to the time of the previous issue from the commencement of its volume. From these we learn how many copies of the last issue were printed, what the printer charged, and the cost of postages. The receipts were also shown, but the deficit was left unexpressed until the completion of a volume. Incidentally, the loss on the eighteen issues which constituted Volume I amounted to £40 13s. 1d. according to the January 1855 issue. Twice one reads: '1,000 for sale, 500 for gratuitous distribution to the Colonies'. And in the case of Volume II (when only one issue reached 2,000 copies, three were down to 1,250, and the balance of seven were all of only 1,500) the November 1855 issue stated that 'the circulation is about 1,030 and until it reaches 1,500 there is a loss of £2'. In fact it did reach 1,450 copies in September 1856, circulating in 160 localities—an average of nine copies. Did it later seriously decline? And why did he then conclude Volume II when continuance until the end of the year would have balanced the page content with Volume I?

The first issue consisted of 5,000 copies of which only a few hundred appear to have been sold. Hence it is not surprising that the next issue was reduced to 1,000, but we read of: 'Printing expenses for a further printing of No. 2: £2 5s. 6d.'. Strangely enough, this is the only instance where the quantity is not stated, but this reprint from 'standing type' was probably in the region of 750 copies. In the case of Volume I the quantities fluctuated from 5,000 to 1,500 copies. Perhaps the reason for these erratic quantities was known and expected opportunities for their free distribution (if the recipients did not offer to pay) at home and abroad; missionaries on the field could always obtain small packets freely.

TABLE D

Summary of Statistics

<i>Item</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Pages</i>	<i>Quantities</i>
Volume I	July 1853 - Dec. 1854	18	212	41,250
„ II	Jan. 1855 - Nov. 1855	11	98	16,750
	Sub-total	29	310	58,000
Volume II	Dec. 1855 - Sept. 1856	10	84	no record
Is. 40 - 54	Oct. 1856 - Jan. 1858	15	132	„
Preliminary pages to Volume I		—	4	?
	Grand total	54	530	incomplete

Average cost for 2,000 copies per page as delivered: 67½p (13s. 6d.).¹¹

Naturally, the printer's charges varied according to the amounts of small and large type used and for any tabular work involved, as well as for

the number of pages and copies printed. Tables B, C and D are intended to give the general reader some idea of the trend of the page content and of the quantities printed, so far as details are available in each case, and of the cost of such 'print' in the middle of the last century. Writing as one with general printing knowledge, it was interesting to study the various prices charged and to wonder whether at times there were hidden factors such as heavy author's corrections and unused type matter, although these seem unlikely.

The Annual Prospectus

Also in the second issue there was a reference to 10,000 prospectuses costing £2 2s. 0d. and a similar item is referred to again twelve months later, and it seems to have been a yearly feature. In this connection it was stated in the December 1856 issue: 'A few copies of the Prospectus are enclosed in each Magazine, which our friends are requested to distribute'. Unlike a report which looks backwards, a prospectus looks forwards, and at ten for a halfpenny Van Sommer evidently thought that this was one economical way of persuading fellow Christians to become missionary-minded. What good reading the prospectus would have probably made! Unfortunately, pamphlets, etc., unlike bound books, are easily destroyed, and so are usually more rare, and sometimes more interesting.

When, as from January 1856, as shown in Table A, Van Sommer only supplied copies of the *Reporter* by post (two shillings per annum regardless of size) from his Tottenham address, he required that 'payments be made in advance by post office order or in postage stamps if under 10s.'. And he stated, almost from the beginning, that under certain reasonable conditions he undertook to re-purchase unsold copies from 'poorer fellow-christians'. He was one who thought of everything.

The Printer and the Publishers

As a solicitor, Mr. Van Sommer's business address was 19 Tokenhouse Yard; this place still exists, but the present buildings have replaced those which he knew when editing *The Missionary Reporter*, as they bear the dates 1871-2. This narrow court is opposite the northern side of the Bank of England in Lothbury. It would not therefore have taken him much more than ten minutes to reach his printer, Mr. John B. Bateman, in Ivy Lane, out of Newgate Street, and his publishers, Messrs. Partridge & Oakey, around the corner in Paternoster Row. Both of these little streets, with others, have now disappeared in the Paternoster Development to the north of St. Paul's Cathedral. It is certain that both of these firms were owned by Christians, but from investigations made neither appears to exist today. Incidentally, within twelve months of giving their services the publishers became Partridge, Oakley & Co.; it is not known what attracted additional partners, but we can be sure that it was not the big profits being made on *The Missionary Reporter*! Incidentally, the same firm apparently commenced publication of *The Gleaner in the Missionary Field* in 1850. A month before *The Missionary Reporter* started (July 1853) the former was renamed *The Chinese Missionary Gleaner*. Of this change Van

Sommer wrote: 'This leaves room, therefore, for the present work; and, in commencing it, the editor is happy in knowing that it does not interfere with any other of the kind'.

Certain Advertisements Invited

When advertisements for 'Gospel, Missionary and other religious publications (other advertisements if approved)' were invited in October 1856 the printer's judgment, according to the notice, seems to have been regarded as adequate, as it read: 'advertisements to be addressed to the printer only, and to be sent not later than the 22nd of the month'. After all, Bateman was also a publisher of Christian literature who himself subsequently advertised in the magazine. Incidentally, Partridge, Oakey & Co. do not appear ever to have advertised in the periodical they once published, although they are mentioned as selling a pamphlet on open-air preaching along with Seeley, Nisbet and Haselden in February 1856.

The Printer's Timetable

By the date mentioned, Bateman would probably have received passed proofs (presumably he gave them), cut the paper, and gone to press with all except the sheet that included the back page which normally carried the advertisements. Judging by the appearance of items such as a poem, entitled 'A Missionary Prayer', on one back page, and an extract from *The Cape Advertiser* reporting a converted Kaffir's impressive preaching on another such page, it seems that Bateman was provided with some timeless features which he could either include or exclude at his discretion to accommodate any advertisements he accepted up to the deadline (of the 22nd). Bateman then had a fairly tight schedule with which to comply. He had to 'make-up' the back page after setting any remaining advertisements (with no time for proofs); complete the printing; fold (entirely by hand); insert one folded sheet into another when necessary (as is normal for such as twelve standard-size pages); thread-sew (wire stitching was then unknown¹²); trim (to open up any folded edges at head and fore-edge, and to level the foot); count, pack, and deliver to Tokenhouse Yard for Mr. Van Sommer to convey to Tottenham, probably by hansom cab, in time for him to issue 'at least two days before the first of the month'—with the probable help of his wife. It is hoped, and believed, that Bateman had a steam engine and shafting to drive his printing machines and guillotines—if only for the sake of his operatives! And the editor, in November 1855, urged those interested in the magazine to order several copies for distribution, pointing out that 'under the new postal regulations ten copies can be forwarded for 1d.'¹³ And the periodical was eventually 'registered for foreign transmission'. He was a man who missed no advantage.

A Selection of Advertisements

Reverting to the advertisements, for which the charge was 'not exceeding eight lines, 3s. 6d.; per line extra, 6d.; some of them are worthy of repetition. Here is one that appeared in May 1857: 'Just published, price

6d. or by Post for 7 postage stamps. *An Attempt to Answer The Questions, May the Lord's Coming be Expected Immediately? and Will the Translation of the Church be Secret?* by George Walker. Teignmouth: J. Nicholson; London: Whittaker & Co., 13 Ave Maria Lane'. So this subject was a live topic of discussion then! And here is another, couched in typical Victorian phraseology, appearing on the last page of the last available issue: 'Just published, Crown 8vo, Price 7/6. *The Types of Genesis Briefly Considered* as revealing the Development of Human Nature in the World, Within and Without, and in the Dispensations. By Andrew Jukes. "The invisibility of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made", Rom. 1.16. "As it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel", Ezek. 1.16. London: Longman, Green, Brown, Longmans, and Roberts, 1858 [*sic*]. 'From the publishers' imprint one will detect the present and well-known name of Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd'. or, popularly, just 'Longmans'¹⁴.

On the subject of education this one appeared at the same time: 'EDUCATION FOR BOYS. A gentleman in S. Devon, who has for some years engaged in Tuition—chiefly with the view of superintending the education of his sons—receives 5 or 6 youths to Board and Educate them. The principles of Pestalozzi, Mayo and J. Taylor are those which he seeks to act upon. There are two vacancies at present. Address D.S.D., Castle View House, Dartmouth'. (An earlier advertisement indicated the name as Mr. and Mrs. de St. Delmas, and that French and German were spoken.) What exactly were those principles? Still on the subject of education, here is one for teachers: 'Will be published, if the Lord will, Nov. 1st, price 1s. 6d., cloth, *Instruction founded on the Gospel of Luke*; for a village school. . . London: J. B. Bateman, 1 Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row/W. Yapp, 4 Old Cavendish Street, Oxford Street'. Was this a joint publishing arrangement?

Some other Authors and Publishers

We are reminded of *Anthony Norris Groves* through a *Memoir* written by his widow, and published by 'James Nisbet & Co., Berners Street, London'. Other authors mentioned were John Elliott Howard and W. C. Boardman whose books were published by Yapp and Bateman respectively. And (formerly Rev.) Leonard Strong, of British Guiana and Torquay, wrote a missionary book on the West Indies. Other publishers of books and tracts in various parts of the United Kingdom, which then included the Irish Republic, were mentioned, but only two appear to exist today, and they are Oliver & Boyd of Edinburgh and Evangelical Christian Literature whose imprint appears in this magazine. The latter are, as readers may know, the successors of the Bible and Tract Warehouse which was situated at 34 Park Street, Bristol, as mentioned in *The Missionary Reporter*¹⁵. The work continued there until 24 November 1941 when it was 'blitzed'. In 1957 it was able to return to the same street, but at number 60—and since enlarged. And it is surely worth mentioning that the latter publishing house was the one opened by George Müller about 130 years ago in connection with the work of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution which he had instigated in 1834.

Two Little Notices

Among the minor notices, here is one that might be intended 'for sisters only' (to use our modern jargon) about a missionary society's new magazine 'for promoting female education in China, Africa and the East', and consistently, but artlessly, entitled *The Female Missionary Intelligencer!* Those interested were invited to communicate with 'Miss Webb, 15 Shaftesbury Crescent, Pimlico, London'. On a more serious tone, here is one which commands our respect: 'The Party who kindly paid £50 into a Bank in Bath last July, on account of a Brother in the Lord there will much oblige if they will write stating the *fact*. The name and Bath is sufficient'. The mention of 'Bath' was a happy omen, and the '£50' was more like £500 when judged by today's standards.

Just Published, price 2s. cloth,
**The Blood, The Cross, and The Death of
Jesus Christ,**
THEIR USES AND APPLICATIONS BY THE SPIRIT IN SCRIPTURE.
In three vols., price 1s. 4d. each, cloth,
SIMPLE TESTIMONY,
For the Comfort and Profit of the Children of God,
PUBLISHED CHIEFLY FROM PAPERS SENT FROM DEMERARA.
The Hopes of the Church of God,
In connection with the destiny of the Jews and the
Nations. By J. N. Darby. 4th edition, 1s. 8d., cloth.
GOSPEL PREACHING. By L. Strong. Nos. 1 to 3, 1½d each.
THOUGHTS ON ROMANISM. By C. H. M. Price 4d.
IGNATIUS, A Drama. By John Gambold. Price 6d.
HYMNS adapted to be used at the Preaching of the
Gospel. Price 1s., cloth.
LONDON: J. B. BATEMAN, 1, IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW.

FIGURE 1.

Returning to the advertisements again, Figure 1 is a facsimile of one that appeared in October 1856. It reveals that Bateman did quite a good publishing business, besides that of printing, and it is fairly obvious that the items mentioned were of the type that he would have printed himself, but, possibly, the binding was 'put out' to William Yapp, And the '4th edition' of a book written by none other than J. N. Darby shows that the original was probably published before the unhappy division that occurred among 'Brethren' in 1845-8. So far as the other authors are concerned: the initials 'C.H.M.' refer, as all readers will know, to the famous C. H. Mackintosh. But who was John Gambold? According to other references to him, he appears to have been a travelling evangelist. There was an Ignatius who was among those who knew the apostles, and the 'drama' presumably relates to him.

A Testimony to 'The Reporter's' Usefulness

What advertisements there were, if any, in the issues at present unavailable we do not know, but they did not save the magazine; that is, if lack of money had been the trouble. Be that as it may, there were those who, we can be sure, would have still continued their work on 'the home front' of a century ago, but they would have missed the help which the magazine gave them to assist the Lord's servants across the seas. This is evidenced by the following: 'The value of the newly inaugurated ministry of *The Missionary Reporter* was now demonstrated'¹⁶. This was in reference to a letter and remittance that arrived for the Beers when George fell fatally ill, and which paid for his removal to hospital. Some of those who helped by transmitting funds were as follows: Colonel Foquett, Weston-super-Mare; S. F. Kendall ('now in England'), 2 Hornsey Lane, Highgate; John Spenser, 48 Fenchurch Street, London; Leonard Strong, Torquay; A. Steedman, 17 Gracechurch Street, London; George Pearce, Stock Exchange, London; G. J. Walker, Teignmouth; and Signor Ferretti, 35 Church Road, Kingsland¹⁷, who had been a missionary in Italy, and now edited *L'Eco di* (The Echo of) *Savonarola*¹⁸; he also gave lessons in Italian language and literature to families and schools according to his advertisement.

Then there are a few interesting names and addresses in connection with the work of The Evangelical Tract Association. One of them has already been mentioned but with his business address, and this reminds us of the motto of the now defunct *Links of Help*: 'The light that shines the farthest shines the brightest nearest home'. They were: 'C. H. Berger, 1 Maitland Road, Clapton; H. Heath, Barum Cottage, Dalston; E. Spenser, 2 Pembury Road, Hackney; W. T. Berger, 23 Dalston Rise, Kingsland (*Treasurer*); and G. Pearce, 10 Clarence Road, Hackney (*Secretary*)'¹⁹.

A Little Nostalgia

All of these places, and from the City to Tottenham and adjacent areas, were among the writer's regular haunts during the first twenty-five years of his life. So he is well fitted to say that if one could draw a reversed 'S' bend from Clapton Station through Hackney Downs Station to Dalston Junction Station, it could be said that all of these London brethren resided a short distance from it. They would have been members of the Hackney assembly which then met at the School Room, St. Thomas' Square²⁰, and this place is referred to in the February 1854 issue. This square can still be located on a London street map a little north of the junction of Mare Street and Well Street. Incidentally, Paragon Road, from which the present assembly hall, now in Clapton (near Lea Bridge Road), takes its name, is a little further north, and still a little further north is Morning Lane—its subsequent home—from which it was 'bombed out'. (Then it met in an elder's home; and, after the war, at a hired hall nearby.) And, if the writer may add a personal note, it was just off that unhedged 'lane' that he first learnt the rudiments—perhaps 'crudiments' might sometimes have been a more descriptive word—of the ancient craft of printing. But he was never a member of the Paragon assembly.

The Agents for the Magazine

Even now our lists of interesting names and addresses are not exhausted. While Bateman was also a publisher it is obvious that he had not the bookshop contacts that Partridge & Oakey had, and who, at first, supplied the magazine to the trade. These agents steadily grew; they began with 'Mrs. Prior & Son, Tottenham', and soon included the following: J. K. Campbell, Holborn, London; Miss Dunne, Palace Lane, Waterford (in the south of the Catholic Ireland!), Coventry, Hackney; William Yapp, Old Cavendish Street, London; Langford, 68 Leadenhall Street, London; Fletcher & Alexander, Norwich; Sparkes, Exeter; Colling, Teignmouth; Luxmore, Crediton; Gallie, Glasgow; 'or through any bookseller'. We know that William Yapp (of 'yapp-edge' fame²¹) was one of the early Brethren. It is understood that he owned a bindery as well as a Bible warehouse in Welbeck Street besides the bookshop. He was a member of the Orchard Street²² assembly of those days. And it was at his premises in Welbeck Street that the assembly eventually met.

But what was the reason why the others were agents for *The Missionary Reporter*? To say the least, it seems that some of them may have been so-called 'non-conformists', and that they were able to include 'religious' books, etc., with anything else that formed their trade—Christian bookshops are a rarity even today. One might wonder whether the Priors were in fellowship at Brook Street Chapel; they do not appear in the register, but this is not decisive it is understood. The above names, and those mentioned in other connections may, it is hoped, prove useful to others who may be engaged, either now or in the future, in some research; or, at least, the names may some day 'ring a bell' to remind some of past, and even present connections.

A Census of Religion

Probably the most interesting item in the whole of the available issues appeared in February 1854 when the following comment was made on the then recent census of religious worship in this country. It is quoted in full, as follows, so far as it is of comparative interest today. The varied, yet closely related, designations reveal that independence of thought and action that has always characterized 'evangelicals'. Naturally, it is possible that a few cranks were included.

We have before us the last Census of Great Britain, relating to religious worship in England and Wales. It contains some particulars of all the religious congregations in this country—both of those who have obtained a denominational title, and of those who have scarcely any, and in some instances no, distinguishing name whatever. Looking at the Census in a missionary point of view, the question arises—what is the true church of God, within these different outward professing bodies, doing in the foreign mission field? The reports and publications of the "Church Missionary Society", the "London Missionary Society", the "Baptist Missionary Society", the "Wesleyan Missionary Society", the "Moravian Society", &c., &c., will furnish such information, so far as relates to those religious bodies who have missionary societies specially attached to them. But what of the other members of Christ, who have no society attached to them? For instance, what of the 96 bodies in the Census called "Christians" only? What of the

132 called "Brethren?" What of those 7 congregations whom the returning officer, in his perplexity, could only denominate, "no particular denomination", of 7 congregations called "Non-sectarian", and of 2 congregations called "Believers?" These congregations number about 20,000 persons in the morning, and 25,000 in the evening. There are many other congregations under the general head "*Isolated Congregations*", having 539 places of worship:—for instance, Christian Association, 8; Orthodox Christians, 1; New Christians, 1; Christ's Disciples, 8; Primitive Christians, 1; New Testament Christians, 2; Gospel Pilgrims, 2; Free Gospel Christians, 14; Evangelists, 4; &c., &c. The practical question is, what are the Lord's people, among these 25,000 persons and these other congregations, doing for the spread of the truth throughout the earth?

Another Interesting Notice

A minor sensation occurred in some circles when *The Christian* ceased publication at the end of May 1969 after only a few years of life as a weekly Christian newspaper. Therefore the following major notice, which appeared in the *Reporter* in January 1854, concerning the inception of a monthly paper of that kind, may be of considerable interest to many. It is published in full. One wonders how long that managed to survive too! Yet its nearest modern equivalent—*Crusade*—appears to be vigorous.

Early in 1854 will be published the first number of *The news of the Churches, and Journal of Missions*.

"The news of the Churches and Journal of Missions" is projected as an ecclesiastical and religious newspaper. It will aim at supplying the place in the ecclesiastical and religious newspaper. It will aim at supplying the place in the ecclesiastical and religious field, which is occupied by the ordinary newspaper in the department of social and political intelligence, and will furnish a monthly record of what is doing everywhere throughout Christendom and Heathendom, for and against the cause of Christ more particularly.

1st. The home department will contain, from month to month, a statement of the chief events and movements in connection with our various churches and religious societies. The readers will be fully informed of all matters of interest in the affairs of the church of England, the Wesleyan Methodist connection, the Congregationalists, Baptist, and other churches in England and Wales; of the different Presbyterian churches and other bodies in Scotland; of the established church, the Presbyterian church, &c., in Ireland, and of the sayings and doings of Romish and infidel emissaries.

2nd. The foreign department will present an abstract of ecclesiastical and religious intelligence from all parts of the world, beyond our own shores. An extensive correspondence is being instituted with the chief centre of action and influence on the continent, in the East, in America, and in our own colonies.

3rd. *The missionary department will furnish a summary of the most interesting intelligence contained in the various British, Continental, and American Missionary Journals, classified and arranged under the various localities, so that the reader may see at a glance the progress of the collective missionary efforts of the churches at any particular point. Occasional historical sketches of particular missions will also be given, and the correspondence of Missionaries will be invited as to the best means of conducting their Evangelistic operations.*

4th. The literary and educational department will contain lists and notices of new works published in Great Britain, the Continent, and America, and intelligence as to

the condition of Colleges and Theological Seminaries. The notices of books will generally be short, and more analytic than critical in their character.

5th. The miscellaneous department will embrace short articles on matters of special importance. The correspondence and suggestions of subscribers will be invited.

“The News of the Churches” will be conducted on the broad basis of Evangelical Protestantism, free from all denominational bias and antipathies; its main object, indeed, being to appraise members of all the branches of the church of Christ of the state and progress, the difficulties and trials of each branch; thus to elicit for each the sympathies and prayers of all, and to enable all to profit from the practical experiences of each. It will recognize no adversaries but the adversary of God and of His people: the Romish and infidel antichrist, and those who, under whatever name, seek to unsettle the foundations of the christian faith.

The size and form of to be publication will be sixteen pages, very similar in appearance to such papers as the “Christian Times”. It will be published on the 15th of every month, and will be forwarded as a stamped newspaper, by post, to all subscribers. The subscription will be six shillings yearly, payable in advance. Intending subscribers will oblige by forwarding the amount to the publishers, by post-office order, or otherwise.

November, 1853. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 15, Princes Street.

An Opportunity for Schoolmasters

Turning to another subject: we sometimes hear today of opportunities abroad for pursuing one’s occupation or profession and of engaging in the Lord’s service as much as possible in one’s spare time. But owing to the rise of nationalism this avenue of service has become much more restricted of late. The following extract from the issue of December 1853 shows that this form of service was known then, but in this case the opportunity for evangelism was involved in the employment itself.

Schoolmasters are much wanted at Peter’s Hall, Demerara, and for Canal No. 3 in the same Parish. The government have passed a liberal law, by which Schools will be helped where the Bible is taught and the children are instructed in useful knowledge. Any qualified christians going out would thus obtain an occupation and be in the midst of a sphere of missionary service. This suggestion is only made to those who may not see it to be the Lord’s will that they should give all their time to spreading the gospel. Should any desire further information, we shall feel happy in putting them in communication with those who have personal acquaintance with the subject.

Some Extracts from Readers’ Letters

Other than the missionary news, another category of items which should not be overlooked were the letters from readers at home. A spate of extracts from such letters appeared in the issue of February 1856. These not only justified the existence of *The Missionary Reporter*, and helped to mould its character, but foresaw the need for the missionaries to visit various assemblies, or for home brethren to do so after seeing the work at first hand, and for the wise distribution of gifts. Thankfully, all these needs have been supplied: names appear instead of initials, home brethren as well as missionaries tell what they have seen at first hand, and the editors of *Echoes of Service* constantly endeavour to make an equitable distribution of gifts. The extracts are as follows, but the break lines and a heading

in the original suggest extracts from four letters when only two may be involved.

“The probability of evil coming in, is a reason for great care as to what is said, but to my mind it is not a reason for not informing the churches concerning the Lord’s servants by name. I find living persons named, and also commended, in the New Testament: (1) some as ‘of note among the apostles’; (2) some ‘laboured’; (3) some ‘laboured much’; (4) some ‘had the thanks of all the churches of the Gentiles’; (5) a slave was called ‘a faithful and beloved brother’; (6) ‘thou doest faithfully’; (7) no ‘man like minded’; (8) ‘whose praise is in all the churches’; (9) ‘labouring fervently in prayers’; (10) ‘great zeal’; (11) a hope ‘that the body was prospering even as the soul’; &c. All these expressions and that by name in writings by apostles, might tend to pride, but this possible or probable evil did not debar these persons from being named, and that with words of commendation”. (*Extract from a letter.*) The practice of giving or signing initials instead of names is felt by many to be unsatisfactory, and has no precedent in scripture. ED.

“There needs, I am sure, some organization to keep up a general interest in the missionary cause; for home wants are so pressing and constant that our feeble minds cannot, in addition to them, embrace the necessities of distant lands. Your paper helps to supply this lack, but regular visits to the churches either from missionaries themselves, or those who are well acquainted with their work, are requisite to carry out the object perfectly. What is every body’s duty is nobody’s duty. Some must take it up as their proper business and then it will prosper”.

“If any brother had it on his heart to travel through England and Ireland and confer with the saints, good might be done”.

“Is not great wisdom needed as to the persons through whom donations are sent? I question if all are gifted for distributing, I mean as channels through whom help should come. God will direct all if we look to Him. Great grace is needed to give in a God-glorifying way”.

In the case of the first extract the figures in parentheses have been added by the present writer for the sake of reference to the following. The names of the ‘living persons’ and the biblical references are: (1) Adronicus and Junia (Rom. 16: 7); (2) Clement (Phil. 4: 3); (3) Tryphena and Tryphosa (Rom. 16: 12); (4) Priscilla and Aquila (Rom. 16: 3, 4); (5) Onesimus (Col. 4: 9); (6) Gaius (3 John 5); (7) Timotheus (Phil. 2: 19, 20); (8) evidently a well-known brother (traditionally Luke) who accompanied Titus; the letter writer seems to have overlooked the fact that no name *is* mentioned here, and also to have omitted the words ‘the gospel throughout’ after the word ‘in’ (2 Cor. 8:16-18); (9 and 10) Epaphras (Col. 4: 12, 13); (11) Gaius (3 John 2). And we are exhorted to ‘greet the friends by name’ (3 John 14).

The Value of Missionary Letters Discussed

Lastly, let us look at the link between the Lord’s servant on the field and His servants in the homeland. Like some other features of our church

life today we probably take the reading of letters from missionaries as nothing extraordinary. But there was a time when these were recommended as a new source of deep spiritual exercise. This is proved by the following extract (and note the graciousness of the second paragraph) from the issue of September 1853:

How different is the effect between a general statement concerning the church's work on behalf of missionaries and a detailed statement of fact from the missionaries to the church.

Suppose, for instance, a collection of money is made, and the amount is paid over to a Society, or an individual, to be used as such person may see well for missionary purposes, and that with an acknowledgment of the receipt and a word of encouragement, there the matter ends. This is well so far as it goes. We rejoice in it. We have no sympathy with those who would stand still because they see imperfection in this mode. Let us be thankful for all the good we can see. Nevertheless if there is a more excellent way, let us walk in it.

Suppose on the other hand, this collection is sent by the church with a kind word to a hard-working missionary, who in time sends back a letter, and that instead of a dry statement to the church that so much money has been received and paid to some person deputed to perform this duty, one of the church rises with a letter in his hand, a real foreign letter, come thousands of miles perhaps, from the very man with whom the church has had fellowship in his labour of love. Attention is awakened, the mind is aroused to grasp some definite information from the scene of labour. The imagination pictures no mere scenes of fancy, but living actual realities, real inroads on the kingdom of sin and Satan. The darkness and ignorance of those who are made of one blood with ourselves, and who have to live for ever as monuments of God's mercy or of His wrath, are heard with compassion. The faithfulness or decline of the new converts is listened to with feelings of gratitude to the God of all grace or of mourning over the sinfulness of the heart, and the power of Satan. The peculiar circumstances of the missionary and his family are entered into with more cordial interest. In short, definite thoughts and feelings fill the hearers, and the church departs refreshed from this opportunity of having the better feelings of the man called afresh into livelier exercise, because caused to flow out of self towards others. And his children go away with something worthy to draw out their affections, perhaps with the seed of a missionary spirit dropped in some quiet recess of the soul to flourish when the quickening power of the Holy Spirit shall have united them to the Lord Jesus. And, finally, and this we hold especially important to promote and cultivate, praise for the specific blessings now heard ascends to Him who delighteth in mercy, and prayer is made with a more intelligent state of mind, and a more considerate and feeling heart.

Towards Cessation

'All good things come to an end', and our story is drawing to its close. When Van Sommer was residing at Hackney he would have had fellowship with brethren mentioned above. And when at Philip Lane (High Cross end), Tottenham, he would have met at Brook Street (still in use). But what his Eastbourne, and concurrently, for a while it seems, Reigate too, addresses and church connections were we may never know, for when he removed to Eastbourne in December 1857 he used his business address for all correspondence in connection with the magazine according to the last

four available issues. What finally decided him to discontinue publication apparently at the close of 1861, when he was only about forty, we shall probably never know unless the final issues are yet discovered. But we know that, like another, 'he served his own generation well', and particularly during the apparent eight-and-a-half years of *The Missionary Reporter's* life. As already stated, ten years later *The Missionary Echo* commenced publication in January 1872 at Bath (later to be renamed *Echoes of Service*—its present name), but that is another story—and now nearing its centenary.

'Finally, brethren, . . . whatsoever things are of good report . . . think on these things'. That is why the writer wrote it.²³

REFERENCES

- 1 T. F. C. Stunt, No. 16, August 1967.
- 2 Volume 9, No. 4, October-December 1957.
- 3 Other generally English names mentioned were: (British Guiana) C. H. Aveline Herbert Bennett, Robert Kingsland, Lucy Kingsley, Thomas Towers, F. Harrison Wm. Popplewell, John Blyden, Henry Collier; (Cape Breton) S. F. Kendall; (Honduras) Alexander Henderson, Frederick Crowe; (Mauritius) Louis Favez; (West Indies) Tidyman, B. T. Slim; (?) D. French, Mrs. Huntley, J. Jones—and unconnected with societies.
- 4 F. R. Coad. *A History of the Brethren Movement*. (Paternoster Press) 1968, 69, 70.
- 5 The bound volume is prefaced by four preliminary pages comprising title page and two pages of contents covering Volume I. In this way the first eighteen issues were established as that Volume ('Price Two Shillings' as a bound volume). But no such preliminaries precede Volume II.
- 6 In view of the typographical information frequently found today on the imprint page of many books, and the increasing number of Christians concerned with printing, the writer considers it not inappropriate to mention that the typeface used was the so-called 'Modern' (lacking the freehand effect of 'Old Styles'), but size for size it lacks the clarity of the typeface (Times Roman) in which you are now reading. The nearest equivalent point sizes to those mentioned would be: 6 (nonpareil 8 (brevier), 9 (bourgeois), and 10 (long primer); 7 point (minion) was not detected. Incidentally, the introductory article of the first four issues were set in small pica (11 point) in one column to the page. But even these well-established British-American designations of type-sizes may also be superseded when international agreement is reached in this metricated and computerised age in which we live.
- 6a The latter table would be more accurately described, up to that time, as 'a brief summary of particulars of missionaries and others noticed in this magazine'. It included such items as to whether or not they were connected with a society. Strangely enough, no wives of workers are mentioned—or sisters at all—and of the thirty-four names, ten are German, two are Italians, and two are only known as 'A' and 'D', probably for safety reasons in Italy.
- 7 Discovered in the middle fifties by some young people evidently with access to the shelves of the British Museum, as presented by an unknown donor, after the Museum authorities had always denied all knowledge of it; due, an attendant suggested, to it being satisfactorily bound when presented. (See note 2.) The writer finds it difficult to believe that the book could have been found on 'the open shelves' (accessible to readers) and remain uncatalogued for such a long time.
- 8 *A Modern Experiment in Apostolic Missions (Links of Help)*, W. S. Harris, Bristol, 1921, pages 88-9. Recent abridged edition by *Echoes of Service* (undated), pages 14-5. It should be mentioned that the author refers to '1855' as the commencing date of *The Missionary Reporter*. It is impossible to explain the origin of this error except to suggest that it could have arisen from such causes as a mistaken tradition,

- confused reading, a misprint, or an indistinct print, either in the issues he saw or in some other paper's reference to the subject.
- 9 All available issues after January, 1856 included '1st' in the date. It is rather fortunate that the Professor mentioned the full dating of the issues he saw. A late date is what one could expect for the final issue it probably was, and this seems to be further evidence that the periodical ceased with that issue.
 - 10 It seems a great pity that the owner—who need not necessarily have been Rendle Short (he may merely have borrowed them and subsequently returned them)—did not present these issues to *Echoes of Service* or to some such body as the British Museum as did his predecessor in this respect.
 - 10a A recent visit to the Museum revealed that the book in question, although clearly showing signs of its age, was substantially bound and with a royal crown at head and foot of its spine title; all suggestive of an official binding; and, from appearances, probably the first.
 - 11 Other quantities would not have been pro rata: the substantial preliminary costs remain constant, and only the repetitive costs vary.
 - 12 Wire stitching machines suitable for pamphlets, etc. (stitches staggered to facilitate bulk trimming), were not in use until about the beginning of the century, although a coarse type of wire had been used for bound books well into the last century; but that method, of German origin it is believed, is no longer used. Eventually, stitching wire was galvanized to delay the almost inevitable rust usually caused by damp and the acidity of some papers.
 - 13 One wonders whether Van Sommer was thinking here of the common eight-page issues and overlooking the fact that occasionally that size was still exceeded. In the paragraph under the same heading he implies that any quantity up to four ounces cost one penny, and similarly up to eight ounces, twopence. It would appear that ten copies of an eight-page issue of the weight of paper generally used plus the wrapper or envelope would weigh no more than four ounces—the inferior paper so much less. But perhaps that was the reason for the lighter-weight paper.
 - 14 A photocopy of the title-page of an 1888 edition reads: 'Longman, Green and Co.', and the sub-title terminates at 'Nature'. Before the days of limited companies, the names of firms changed with the partners as is frequently so today in the case of professional firms such as chartered accountants and solicitors.
 - 15 Other publishers mentioned were: Brendon, Plymouth; Binns & Goodwin, Bath; Gregg, 24 Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row; Werthiem & Macintosh, Paternoster Row; Whereat, Weston-super-Mare; J. Robertson & Co., Dublin; S. B. Oldham, Dublin; Tract Depository, Dublin; and the Church Missions to the Jews, who are still at 16 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London (W.C.2). The Publishers' Association stated that they were unable to help owing to all their records having been destroyed during the 1939-45 War.
 - 16 E. B. Bromley, *They were men sent from God*, Scripture Literature Press, Bangalore (1937), 123.
 - 17 Renamed 'Northchurch Road' (N.1) under the L.C.C. renaming scheme of the early thirties. It is understood that the original 'Church Road, Kingsland' was so named at its eastern end so far as Kingsland Road. The house numbering was probably unaffected. In the two earlier references to 'Church Road' the house number is given as '33', but later references all read '35'.
 - 18 Remembering that Signor Ferretti was, it seems, an authority on Italian literature, it is not difficult to understand why his periodical was named, when translated, *The Echo of Savonarola*, when one reads the following extract from *Pears Cyclopaedia*: Savonarola, Girolamo (1452-98), Florentine preacher and reformer, a Dominican friar, who denounced vice and corruption not only in society but also in the Church itself, especially attacking Pope Alexander VI. He was excommunicated, imprisoned, and with two of his companions hanged in public. His passion for reform made him impatient of opposition and incapable of compromise. He understood men's hearts but not their limitations. Yet he was a noble figure rightly commanding the respect of later ages. George Eliot's historical romance *Romola* gives a fine portrait of Savonarola.

- 19 Clarence and Pembury Roads are still known by those names (but as Clapton, E.5). As regards the others it is understood from the Archivist Department of the London Borough of Hackney that 'Dalston Rise' went from the Hackney Downs Station area to the St. Marks Rise area; and from the clue of 'Maitland House', 'Maitland Road' was in the Median Road, E.5 area; but 'Barum Cottage' might have been anywhere off Dalston Lane as no help could be given. None of the brethren mentioned would have been more than half-an-hour's walk from the meeting place, and most of them rather less.
- 20 The address of the Hackney meeting in 1847 appears to have been 'Ellis's Rooms', Well Street and, according to the aforementioned authority's 1872 records, 'probably the "preaching and school rooms" situated between numbers 183 and 185, and on the south side well towards Mare Street—unless there has been drastic renumbering since, but this seems unlikely'. By 1854 the assembly had moved to St. Thomas' Square; and later to its other venues to which reference has been made. In this connection the following is of interest: 'Waterloo Rooms, Clapton. This building in Prout Road, Clapton, is one of the oldest in the borough, though authentic information regarding its early history is lacking. It is stated to have been used at one time by the Plymouth Brethren, and as a lad Edmund Gosse, the great essayist, who wrote 'Father and Son', is said to have attended there with his father, Philip Henry Gosse. The premises are now Mission Rooms, and have been for many years'. (They have since been demolished.) *Hackney and its Environs Changes within living memory*, The Editor of *Hackney Gazette*, 1932, page 16. But the writer has been reliably informed that this place was never connected with 'open brethren'. And if ever it were the 'meeting room' of some 'exclusive brethren,' to suit the above statement, it would have to have been so after 1848 (the year of final division) and before 27 January 1852 when Philip Gosse removed to south Devon. And that assuming that he would have walked (as he probably would have had to have done in those days) about two-and-a-half miles each way from the southern end of Mortimer Road (N.1) to Prout Road which is just north of Lea Bridge Road (E.5). As Edmund was not born until 1849 he could not have been 'a lad' during that period. Incidentally the journey to Well Street would not have been much more than half of the above distance to reach Waterloo Rooms.
- 21 Like any other book still in copyright (or an original typesetting when out of copyright), no one without a licence, is permitted to print a copyright edition of the Bible (and this particularly applies to the Authorised Version which is subject to a permanent copyright), but it is certain that this restriction has never applied to the binding, and this seems to explain the origin of the 'yapp edge'. Incidentally, high-class bookbinders (among whom Yapp undoubtedly ranked) were, traditionally, situated in the West-End; hence the expression (now almost extinct): 'West-End work'.
- 22 Presumably this is the Orchard Street that today forms the western end of Selfridges on its eastern side. How times have changed! Incidentally it is understood that after Welbeck Street the assembly met at Great Portland Street, W.1, until 1934 when it had to move. It was then invited to Rossmore Road, N.W.1, where a mild form of 'exclusive' meeting was in a very weak state. Formerly an architect's studio, as the architecture suggests, this hall, like the previous one, was named 'Welbeck Hall', But several years ago it was renamed after the road in which it is situated owing to overseas visitors residing in the West End looking for it in vain in Welbeck Street.
- 23 The writer is sure that he has not given any major false impressions, but he would ask readers to remember that it has been written under the inhibitions of a temporary reader's ticket, which meant that half the mornings had gone before he could start; and while earning his living, but with the help of photocopies of seventeen selected openings of the book being studied. On one occasion his brief case containing his notes was stolen, but returned intact the same day by the finder as abandoned by the 'kind' thief. In that way discouragement was turned to 'strong encouragement' (r.v.). And the result is what, it is hoped, you have patiently read.

WILSON CARLILE (1847-1942), FOUNDER OF THE CHURCH ARMY

JOHN S. ANDREWS

THE human agent immediately responsible for Wilson Carlile's conversion was an aunt, a devout member of the Brethren, who in the early 1870's used to send him a copy of *The Christian* every Thursday. (He always burnt it, he said later, for fear he or his wife should be 'contaminated'.) After he had suffered a severe business reverse his aunt began urging him by letters, and in person, to find happiness in a surrender of his life to Christ. Eventually she gave him Mackay's tract, *Grace and Truth*. 'At the beginning of the chapter', Carlile confessed, 'I was a rank outsider. Before I got to the end, I had thrown myself at the feet of Christ, and cried, "My Lord, and my God" '.

Soon afterwards he sought out a small company of Brethren who worshipped at Blackfriars. He was led to them partly out of admiration for his aunt's life and character, developed among the Brethren, and partly through reading of some practical work they were carrying on among local lads.

One evening he asked the leader of this work whether he could help. The good people were at first suspicious of this smartly dressed young man with a glossy silk hat, a flower in his frock coat, and rather unorthodox religious phraseology. Since he seemed in earnest, and begged to be allowed to help with the worst people they came into contact with, they encouraged him. He was therefore put in charge of the 'hooligan class'. On the first night he plunged into the story of the prodigal son, the only Bible story he then knew. They were so moved that they stole his Bible as a memento. But he did make contact and did win his hearers. For some time both he and his wife worked with the Brethren at Blackfriars, attending several evenings in the week and most of Sunday.

'Wilson Carlile owed to the Brethren his introduction to Christian work; and, curiously enough, he also owed to them views which made him an upholder of the position of the strictest school in the Anglican Church on the question of the Holy Communion'. Thus A. E. Reffold who went on to explain: Carlile found the 'Breaking of the [*sic*] Bread' the great service of praise. When he became a churchman, he longed to see the Lord's Supper given more prominence. 'The ordinary eleven o'clock Sunday service, consisting of Matins and Litany or Communion Service, he frankly recognised as a weariness of the flesh. His ideal for most churches was a choral celebration of the Holy Communion at about 9 a.m. as the chief service of the day, leaving the rest of the time clear for something short, bright, and more aggressive to attract the bulk of the people'.

He did not remain long with Brethren. His father attended Holy Trinity Church, Richmond, where the Rev. Evan Hopkins was then vicar. Delighted at his son's interest in religious matters, his father asked him to accompany him to Holy Communion. Wilson gladly went. This came to the ears of the elders at Blackfriars, who sadly denounced him as a

'disorderly brother', and forbade him to break bread with them again. For a time he continued some of the work he had been doing in connection with the assembly; but gradually he drifted away. Soon afterwards he and his wife were confirmed at Clapham Parish Church, and devoted their spare time to youth work at Holy Trinity, Richmond.

At a night school at Richmond his chief helper was a Miss Elmslie, who did wonders in handling the lads until an unknown medical man, just starting similar work, came along and carried her off as his wife. That man, too, had also 'began with Brethren': Thomas John Barnardo.¹

¹Source: A. E. Reffold, *Wilson Carlile and the Church Army* (Church Army Bookshop) 1956, 5th ed. The whole book is worth reading; only pp. 26-39 are specifically relevant to Brethrenism. Carlile entered the London College of Divinity in 1878, aged 31, became ordained in 1880, and served an assistant curacy in Kensington. In 1882 he founded the Church Army in the slums of Westminster on the model of the Salvation Army and against similar mob opposition. He took part in its administration until a few weeks before his death in 1942.

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OUR EVANGELISM?

DEDUCTIONS FROM A SURVEY OF ASSEMBLIES

GRAHAM D. BROWN*

I—INTRODUCTION

THE survey asked church leaders to assess which of their evangelistic activities had been effective and which were for the most part ineffective.

One of the objectives of the survey was to locate those churches which were having more success than the average in evangelism. Having done this, their evangelistic activities were examined to see if particularly fruitful areas of opportunity could be isolated.

The only common thread in the more successful assemblies was the enthusiastic concern on the part of those responsible for the effective activities. In some cases it might be difficult to separate cause and effect, but this cannot be true of all churches. On the other hand success will not come if enthusiasm is the only asset we bring to revitalise our evangelism. It will not necessarily bring in new contacts nor make our message relevant of itself.

II—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON REPLIES

There are two extremes in the spectrum of response to the question 'What should we do to become more effective'. The first is to rely entirely on prayer. Several assembly leaders said 'more prayer is required', another said:

'Unless the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of both saved and sinner alike the work will not prosper!'

*Mr. Graham D. Brown is a Marketing Manager in the Communications Industry and conducted a survey of a selection of British assemblies in 1966, on which this article is founded.

But both of these answers prove of little help to those who want to know what to do about their situation, since often they have been praying hard for the guidance and action of the Holy Spirit for years.

On the other hand a mere change in activities will not prove effective unless the whole spirit behind the change is motivated by a genuine concern for others. As one leader put it:

‘In our assembly we blamed our lack of effectiveness on a rather reactionary and tight “oversight”. Since then the “stick-in-the-mud” elders have moved or died and two young brethren have recently been recognised as elders. We have therefore in the last eighteen months been able to reconsider our methods, plan and organise different activities, but I don’t think planning and organisation of special meetings with titled talks and named speakers are the answer to the problem; as ten years ago we imagined they would be. Much as some of us have liked to use our minds and thinking in God’s work, we were not really prepared to be led by the Lord into His will for our assembly’.

Accepting that mere changes in organisation will not achieve the necessary results does not mean that the present evangelistic methods being used by assemblies are perfect. Leaders had a wide range of comments, opinions and ideas for improving their evangelism and the following notes are a synthesis of the difficulties and problems facing assemblies today, together with suggestions on tackling these. They cover all the range of evangelistic activities of the assemblies concerned and all the groups of peoples who are targets for their evangelism.

The topic drawing the largest number of suggestions was the Sunday evening gospel service. The wealth of comment on this make it a suitable subject for a separate article to be published in a later issue.

The remaining comments could have been dealt with in many different ways. Part of our failure in the past has been to adopt means of evangelism and then look round for an audience, rather than seeing who are the people we are trying to reach and then devising a method most suitable for that category. The comments, therefore, are first segregated into activities, aiming at various age groups.

III—THE YOUNG (pre-teenage)

The statistical survey highlighted the fact that most recognised the importance of this age-group in their evangelism. Practically all assemblies ran a Sunday School and a few had weeknight clubs. Certainly these activities absorb a fair proportion of the energy and work force of most assemblies.

Young people are regarded as being susceptible to teaching, are easily induced to attend Sunday school, and are described as being without most of the restraints which inhibit adults from accepting what is put to them.

‘Evangelism is more effective amongst children because they are more responsive (than adults) to the gospel’.

‘Far more children reached than adults’.

When asked in what terms they rated success in Sunday school work, most elders said: 'conversions'. Others looked upon it as a means of planting the 'seed of life' to be harvested later in the child's life. This latter view seems to be more realistic according to other evidence†. This survey pointed out that only one in six conversions occurred before the age of twelve and that of this group, four out of every five are from Christian homes, which are presumably the prime influence in the conversion. The remaining one in five amount to a total of 3% of all conversions of all age groups. It is unwise therefore, to regard Sunday Schools as the main means of evangelism if the majority of pupils leave at the age of twelve or soon after. The corollary of this is that the maintenance of contact with ex-Sunday school pupils through groups like Covenanters, Pathfinders and Bible Classes is essential if the full benefit is to be gained from the sowing and husbandry carried on in the Sunday school.

Why do leaders regard their Sunday schools as a successful means of evangelism? Partly because no doubt they unconsciously attribute to the Sunday school system the conversions of members' children, rather than the home background. It may be too that it is the one area where they are dealing with large numbers of 'outsiders' who attend regularly, in contrast to the often small numbers contacted in adult work. To the extent that it is successful, there are lessons to be learnt from Sunday schools which could help considerably in the conduct of other evangelistic activities. One respondent put it thus in three comments:

'Contact (with the target group) is sustained and personal'.

'The lessons are prepared with the limited and special interests of the classes in mind'.

'Only in the Sunday school is there discussion about methods and techniques among the workers'.

He might well have added that teachers are probably allowed a good deal of freedom and flexibility in approach and that by discussion and consequent feedback teachers can monitor the progress in understanding of their pupils. Then too as another respondent put it:

'The Sunday school evangelism is most effective—it had the most effort put into it'.

If these principles were adopted in other activities there is little doubt that evangelistic effectiveness would increase substantially.

IV—TEENAGERS

The teenage years have in the past been the period when the majority of Christians were converted. Certainly the number of comments on this age group by respondents indicate that this is a fruitful area of contact:

'Covenanters effective—personal dealing with young people at the age of decision'.

†The evidence is contained in a survey carried out for the Evangelical Alliance's Commission on Evangelism. It is reported in the findings published under the title 'On the other side'. The evidence referred to in this article appears as an Appendix.

‘Covenanters—though our numbers are small, some have been converted over the years and come into the church’.

‘Evangelism tolerably effective among young . . . Reason for [any] success among young people is thriving young people’s work which has an encouraging effect on other interested young people’.

‘Youth work . . . a sizeable nucleus regularly attending youth activities. Most of those counselled over the last three years have been youth’.

As with Sunday schools an important factor in these activities seems to be a readiness to suit evangelistic method and message to the target group. A quarter of the assemblies questioned had a Covenanter group and the same proportion a youth club. Naturally in some cases there is an overlap between these two, and in others the Sunday school is able to cater successfully for teenagers. It does seem likely that unless some special arrangements are made to deal with teenagers in separate activities from younger children most will sooner or later leave. It can be confidently stated that any church which does not provide comprehensive facilities for this group is neglecting to make the maximum opportunity of the openness and receptivity of teenagers.

What elements are common amongst successful teenage groups:

‘Good leadership’.

‘A keen nucleus of teenagers and young married couples who are active not only in the assembly but also in opening their homes’.

‘Dedicated leadership’.

‘Occupational activities to attract the young’.

Certainly the evangelistic opportunities offered by church youth activities are immense, but equally they demand a dedication on the part of leaders and workers in time given, in making themselves open to the demands of youth, and often in incurring the displeasure of those who do not understand the needs of contemporary youth work.

Some assemblies felt the lack of suitable premises for youth work, but many had discovered the value of Christian homes in providing an informal meeting point for and with the young.

V—ADULTS

Virtually no assembly claimed success in evangelising adults. Large numbers of respondents mentioned the difficulty of communication. Apathy on the part of this age group is also a comment which is echoed time and again:

‘Since the war there seems growing apathy’.

‘The adult population in the district is apathetic’.

‘Gospel work is difficult—few outsiders attend the gospel meeting because of local apathy’.

‘General population don’t care and won’t come and listen’.

‘Adult evangelism meets much apathy’.

Other churches found that adults were not only apathetic about the gospel but contact with them in earlier life had deadened their response:

‘Evangelism is not effective amongst those who have attended the preaching of the gospel for years and who have become ‘gospel-hardened’.

‘Evangelism is not effective . . . a lot of older people have become hardened to it over the years’.

On the other hand some churches were ready to admit that failure of evangelism amongst adults was not only due to their intractability, but that there were faults too in the church’s handling of the situation.

Many of these are dealt with in the pending separate article on gospel services. The comments below sum up the shortcomings of the current approach used by many.

First, outsiders—or the world at large—are poorly informed as to who we are and what we believe and so are inclined not to want to join with us:

‘It is thought that many adults in the neighbourhood believe us to be an odd sect and are reluctant to make contact’.

‘What little the unconverted know of the teaching of the Bible convinces them that by and large Christians are hypocrites’.

Secondly, when we seek to reach others we do not utilise those methods most appropriate to our target group, but rather those most suitable to us:

‘Evangelism could be more effective if there were more special activities designed for this age group’.

‘We do not attempt to meet adults on their own or mutual ground . . . or in an atmosphere suited to the twentieth century’.

Third, when contact has been made we are unwilling to meet them on their own level or to discuss the problems which worry them:

‘We rarely make contact with the unconverted on points about which they care . . . the gospel seems irrelevant to them’.

All this is true of the main method used for reaching adults—the gospel service—which is to be dealt with separately. However, there are special activities for adults which are traditional to the assemblies. One of these is the women’s meeting. This is an activity aimed at one particular group—the housewife without outside employment. The entire service is designed around her and generally the speakers understand the problems and difficulties encountered by the audience. Any preaching is usually at their level, although at least one elder thought that it went over the heads of the majority. Few of these women’s meetings were thought to be successful.

Partly this may be due to the fact that although speakers understand their congregation’s problems, few deal with them, preferring to serve up ‘gospel pap’. But part of the answer must also be due to the fact that generally it is older housewives who are attracted to this activity, which tends to take on the nature of a club, and that in this atmosphere a challenge to the unconverted is somehow deadened. The impression is given by

respondents of a number of elderly women who go along with all that is said and yet who make no open declaration of faith in Christ.

One assembly which had a successful women's meeting observed that much was due to the efforts of:

'one godly woman who gives herself to the work of a deaconess and to prayer'.

Doubtless it is this follow-up pastoral activity which is lacking in many women's meetings.

Because of the tendency for these groups to cater for older women, young wives' groups have been started in many churches. These tend to be well supported and there is a high proportion of friends and neighbours of church members in these groups. The impression remains, however, that although many are reached through these groups, there has been little response so far in numbers of conversions.

VI—OLD PEOPLE

One other group specifically catered for in some churches is the elderly. Old people's homes are visited regularly by some, in order that evangelistic services can be conducted. Others encourage their older members to evangelise their friends and to visit old age pensioners. One organises special holiday months for the old. One impression received from answers and from observation is that many elderly people in the churches have no real contact with non-members. Their world centres around the church which takes on the role of a club for them. The church too functions adequately without their active participation and so they seem to be regarded by many members, and perhaps themselves, as past their usefulness as far as evangelism is concerned.

This is despite the fact that of all the church members the elderly have the time to devote to personal evangelism of their elderly neighbours through visitation.

VII—TOWARDS A SOLUTION

It will have been noticed that opportunities for successful evangelism exist in abundance. The problem is that in many churches a few members have been carrying an almost intolerable burden for so long. The upshot is that they have been unable effectively to canalize their efforts and enthusiasm into the areas where they could achieve real and lasting results. While this has been going on, a large number of church members have been rather like the unemployed labourers in the market place—wanting to be asked yet not really daring to offer their services.

It will not really help to solve the problem by seeking scapegoats amongst the church leaders or the membership. How on the other hand can the situation be changed and what needs to be done?

(a) *Leadership Responsibility*

Obviously the situation would best be tackled if, working together, the leaders and members first carefully and prayerfully draw up their objectives

as a church, appraise the evangelistic position, determine those areas which offer the most profitable openings, and for which the necessary manpower existed. Then by experimenting with activities and methods the assembly should implement a plan whose chief aim is to make the maximum sustained impact on the area served by the church and which draws upon the whole of the talents given to that church.

In this situation the leadership has to lead from the front, not as so often happens from the rear. It might help if there is not the usual sought after unanimity (which results often in the lowest common denominator being accepted). If the leadership could live with creative tension which brings new ideas, approaches and methods to the surface they might gain immeasurably. This demands a flexibility of approach, a readiness not only to tolerate but even welcome ideas which normally might be frowned upon by more conservative members, and a willingness to break-away from the inhibiting traditions we have inherited. Some elders drew attention to the low standard of leadership in some churches:

‘There is no dynamic personality among the leadership or anywhere else. Some in the past have been frustrated when old folk ran the assembly without young ideas being given a chance. The people who would now normally be the leaders are not able to take responsibility because they were not allowed lesser responsibilities in their earlier years’.

‘As we do not have full-time elders, we tend to jog along without vision, foresight or planning. Perhaps some elders should give themselves to this leadership in evangelism. Surely Paul was always out in front—other had to keep up with him. Only as elders are out in evangelism will other believers catch the vision’.

(b) Member's Participation

In many churches in the past the members have been inactive, partly because instruction in church responsibilities has been ineffective. This is reflected in inferior bible study/prayer meeting attendances. On the other hand the biblical imperative for each to evangelise is quite as clear as the more esoteric truths of New Testament church life upheld so vigorously by the majority of members. The man who laid the foundations for the successful Evangelism-In-Depth movement in South America, Kenneth Strachan, propounded the theorem that ‘a movement expands in direct proportion to its success in mobilizing its total membership for the propagation of its beliefs’. This seems adequately borne out by the example of New Testament church life, and by current practice amongst sects such as Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons. This truth was clear to at least some elders:

‘The membership needs to realise that their personal contribution means something. It seems that a large number attend more from habit than conviction’.

‘A spirit of active evangelism should be created in the assembly’.

What methods are appropriate then for mass participation?

Many elders saw that the home was an important centre for evangelism, and that utilising this was a most effective method of reaching friends and neighbours:

'I feel that there is more to be done by groups in homes than in connection with meetings in halls'.

'(There should be) greater readiness to use homes as a bridge between church and neighbours'.

'Members should be aware of immediate mission field—e.g. small groups meeting informally in homes, possibly with TV religious programmes, as a talking point'.

'(We should) invite people to cottage meetings in the home where spiritual things can be discussed in an informal atmosphere'.

(c) *Visitation Work*

Sometimes house meetings are not appropriate as a first point in contact. Another method of reaching people, is that of visiting them of their own homes. This was suggested by many elders. The objectives of visitation work varied. The chief method utilized, was a house-to-house canvass of the dwellings in the area of the church, inviting outsiders to various activities such as the gospel service, special services, the Sunday school etc. This had met with some success:

'Women's meeting greatly benefitted through visitation work'.

'Initial interest in women's meeting aroused by personal visitation'.

'Visitation with our own teams has proved worthwhile'.

'Door-to-door visitation, principally to attract to the gospel meeting, is ineffective'.

Others look upon visitation as a method of evangelism in its own right. This was partly a reaction to the fact that few were coming into the assembly services, but also a realisation that it was a New Testament activity:

'The sower should go to the field and not expect the field to come to the sower.

There should be house-to-house visitation . . . and we should all 'gossip' the gospel'.

'Door-to-door visitation has been effective because of the opportunity to discuss personal views'.

Many were convinced that visitation seemed to offer opportunities for evangelism, but seemed uncertain how to set about it.

(d) *Full-Time Workers*

One avenue of approach to evangelism, which has been neglected by many assemblies in the past, has been 'the full-time worker attached to the church'. Two churches questioned had persons working for them in a more or less full-time capacity. Both these churches spoke very highly of the work in evangelism carried on by these workers and the help each had rendered to the church:

'The presence of and help given by a full-time worker in the assembly has been an immense asset in evangelism, Bible teaching, follow-up, training and visitation work. Undoubtedly this alone has contributed greatly to the blessing indicated earlier'.

'Evangelism amongst women is successful because we have a godly woman (not brought up in 'Brethrenism') who gives herself to the work of a deaconess and to prayer. She does the work a full-time pastor should do. The elders acknowledge her work by making a 'money gift' '.

Other assemblies suggested that a full-time pastor might be a considerable asset to their outreach. There was quite an amount of comment to the effect that there is insufficient time for most men to prepare sermons, join in numerous church activities and maintain a happy home life. Clearly a full-time worker is an asset to the two assemblies mentioned above, and other churches suggested that full-time help in rural evangelism would be a help. The fact remains that many assemblies just could not afford the services of a full-time worker, and so the suggestion by another that elders should retire early to give themselves to church work, pastoral care, and visitation work might relieve cost. This itself cannot be the solution as is evidenced by the lack of success in evangelism in churches of other denominations with ministers. Indeed, if as seems likely the advent of a full-time worker to a church merely results in the members 'free wheeling', then it may be a positive dis-service to the church's evangelism.

VIII—CONCLUSION

The problem can be summarised as follows:

We are failing in the task of evangelism because we meet few of those we are trying to reach, and we communicate to these mainly in terms which they do not understand.

For too long churches have been too 'production-orientated' and not enough 'consumer-orientated'. Leaders must think clearly who we are trying to reach and how best to set about it. When questioned elders made all manner of suggestions about changing the programmes round, organising new groups, modernising methods, using new translations, importing evangelistic teams, rebuilding, changing the church's name, etc. This readiness to suggest new ideas indicates that there is a willingness to experiment coupled with a flexibility of approach. If this can be allied to a clear-sighted approach to the problem of evangelism and a determination to lead and harness the whole energy of the assembly's manpower, then an assembly is well on the road to improving matters. It might well be objected that this is far beyond the capacities of the majority of leaders and that ambitious schemes are just not possible. In the past it is true that too often we have moved at the speed of the slowest. New ideas and initiatives have been dulled and deadened by the heavy hand of tradition. 'It wouldn't work here' has been the cry and so it was never tried. The leadership have blamed the members for lack of interest and the latter blame the former for lack of initiative. One of the ways out of this impasse

is to follow the example of one church which called a church meeting on evangelism. From this sprang the idea of guest night services which proved successful in changing the direction of evangelism in the church. In other cases the leadership will have to set to work to generate concern amongst the members. Presumably where leadership is lacking then others must start the work themselves. The prime essentials for evangelism are a God-given and guided concern for others, enthusiasm and a readiness to use the gifts He has given us. Also required is a willingness to use methods appropriate to those being reached rather than some traditional system. This could be implemented to a degree with or without church backing.

APPENDIX

SURVEY OF EVANGELISM IN ASSEMBLIES

I—INTRODUCTION

In most cases interviews were conducted by volunteers. The objects of the study were primarily to discover the place of evangelism in the church's aims, its evangelistic endeavours, their results and areas of success or otherwise. In the end seventy-five assemblies in England and Wales were contacted. It was not by any means a random sample but every effort was made to cover all sizes and types of 'open' assembly in each part of England and Wales, rural as well as urban. The following note is a summary of the main findings of the survey. In the statistical tables figures are given in numerical and percentage terms. It should be clearly understood that the base is a small one and that it is unwise to draw sweeping generalisations from sections of an already small sample.

II—BACKGROUND DATA ABOUT THE ASSEMBLIES QUESTIONED

(a) *Size*

The table below shows the membership of assemblies.

TABLE 1

<i>Number of Adults in Assembly</i>	<i>Assemblies</i>		<i>Children attached to Assembly</i>	<i>Assemblies</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>		<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
0 - 19	7	9	0 - 19	62	82
20 - 39	22	29	20 - 39	8	11
40 - 59	17	23	40+	5	7
60 - 79	8	11			
80 - 99	9	12			
100 +	12	16			
	—	—		—	—
	75	100		75	100
	—	—		—	—

About two fifths of assemblies contacted had less than 40 adult members and the same proportion more than 60. The most common group was between 20-39 in size; less than one-fifth of the assemblies contacted had more than twenty children attached to them.

(b) *Growth*

Table 2 below shows that more leaders thought their churches were growing in size than declining.

TABLE 2 *Increasing or Declining in last 5 years*

	Number	%
Greatly Increased	10	13
Slightly Increased	24	32
No Change	17	23
Slightly Decreased	21	28
Greatly Decreased	2	3
Don't Know	1	1
	—	—
	75	100
	—	—

Only one third of the leaders thought that there had been a decline in membership, while one-eighth had seen a dramatic increase. In only half of these latter cases was it due to a large increase in membership due to conversions.

(c) *Demographic Details*

(i) *Age:*

Answers suggested that only half of the assemblies had a good balance of age groups and that the remainder tended to be old rather than young.

(ii) *Sex:*

Half of the assemblies were thought to have a roughly equal number of men and women, but all the remainder had a majority of women.

(iii) *Social Class:*

While one-fifth of assemblies were described as having a cross-section of all classes nearly three-quarters were predominantly middle class. Only 5% had mainly working class members.

III—AIMS OF THE ASSEMBLIES

Elders were asked to state in their own words the three main aims of the church and then to list these in order of importance*

Table 3 below has categorised their answers.

TABLE 3 *Importance of Aim*

<i>Description of Aim</i>	First		Second		Third	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preach the Gospel/Witness	34	46	20	27	20	26
Corporate Worship/Breaking of Bread	23	31	5	7	2	3
Fellowship	12	16	7	9	5	7
Teaching Members	5	7	26	35	15	20
New Testament Pattern	10	13	1	1	1	1
Young People's Work	2	3	10	13	7	9
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	75	100	75	100	75	100
	—	—	—	—	—	—

* Some respondents have equal priority to their aims.

All assemblies included evangelism in their aims and nearly half quoted it as being their church's primary aim. The remaining assemblies were divided between those who chose the aim of corporate worship, and the rest who saw their church's main task in terms of fellowship or exemplifying the New Testament pattern of church gathering. Secondary aims included evangelism amongst young people and a teaching ministry designed to build up Christians.

IV—MAIN FORMS OF EVANGELISM

Table 4 below lists the main forms of evangelism employed by assemblies in order of popularity.

TABLE 4

<i>Evangelistic Medium</i>	No.	%
Gospel Meeting	73	98
Sunday School	70	93
Mid-week Women's Meeting	39	52
Young People's Fellowship	37	49
Youth Club	22	29
Covenanter Group	21	28
Young Wives' Group	20	27
Other	9	12

Practically every assembly had a weekly service primarily to proclaim the gospel, while nearly all had a Sunday school.

About half had activities which were aimed at Young people belonging to the Church, while the same proportion had regular meetings aimed at women.

Just over a quarter had a mid-week activity they called a Youth Club but few of these clubs had as extensive a range of activities as most secular youth clubs.

Just over a quarter had a Covenanter group—an activity which is for boys (and sometimes girls) in the lower teens. This seems to be a method used by many assemblies to attract those youngsters who consider themselves too old for Sunday school and to whom membership of a group has big attractions.

About a quarter of assemblies had a Young Wives' group—usually aimed at (as its name suggests) a younger age group than the normal women's meeting and often held in the evening rather than the afternoon.

V—THE CHIEF FORMS OF ACTIVITY EXAMINED

(a) *'Gospel Meeting'*

Nearly all assemblies had a weekly 'gospel meeting' the chief task of which was to convey an evangelistic message to non-members.

It is safe to say that the form of these meetings is basically the same all over the country and follows the traditional pattern of introductory hymns, a prayer and a reading from the bible, followed by a sermon which is predominantly evangelistic in content.

The service is attended primarily by Church members rather than the outsiders it is designed to attract and at whom the message is aimed.

The Speaker is almost sure to be a visitor from another assembly. It is unlikely that he will belong to another denomination and is almost certain to be a layman.

Although the most popular evangelistic effort, the gospel meeting is also the most criticised. When asked to comment on the ineffective areas of their evangelism, the gospel meeting was suggested by over a quarter of assemblies. Criticisms ranged over form, timing, concept and the inability to reach effectively those for whom it is designed.

However, it also seems highly resistant to change. Even those churches which have been highly successful in other areas of evangelism, feel obliged to maintain a regular weekly Sunday gospel meeting although they are dissatisfied with it.

The inability of assemblies to attract the surrounding populace regularly to gospel services is realised by many churches and attempts are made to overcome this by featuring special anniversary services. About three quarters of the assemblies contacted adopted this practice but it is rare for these to be more than half a dozen special services a year.

Six assemblies contacted had family services on Sunday morning, but there was no evidence that these were any more effective at contacting outsiders. Two-thirds of the churches questioned used door-to-door visitation to advertise their gospel service but it was clear to many that this might well be a more effective medium of evangelism in its own right than the gospel service. Most rely on personal visitation or their notice board to attract visitors.

(b) *The Sunday School*

All except five assemblies ran Sunday schools. One quarter of these were in the morning but three-quarters in the afternoon. About one quarter of assemblies had special premises which formed part of the church building but the remaining three-quarters used the main hall.

One-fifth of the schools had less than twenty-five children, while 40% had over 50. In nearly all assemblies, the bulk of the Sunday school had no family connection with the church.

When assemblies were asked how many scholars had joined the church from the school in the last five years, only 15% had more than 10. If we consider that many assemblies must have enough children of members to provide this number, it is clear that most Sunday schools are not providing a very efficient recruiting mechanism for the church.

Most elders saw success for the Sunday school in terms of achieving conversions. Others looked upon it as an opportunity to teach the truths of scripture, while some sought to use the Sunday school to gain contact with the scholars' parents.

VI—EVANGELISTIC SUCCESS

While conversions must be regarded as the chief criterion of success in evangelism, problems inevitably arise when any attempt is made to relate visible results to evangelistic effort. The reasons for this are many and varied. For example, some people who may make a commitment may remain outside the sphere of the church which was the prime influence. Others who may have undergone a conversion experience may have been influenced mainly by factors unconnected with an assembly with which they have been in contact. Nevertheless, some attempt should be made to evaluate if certain activities are more rewarding than others.

Table 5 compares the numbers of conversions claimed by each church in the last two years with the numbers undergoing baptism in the same period.

TABLE 5

<i>Numbers of Conversions or Baptisms in the last 2 years</i>	<i>Conversions</i>		<i>Baptisms</i>	
	No.	%	No.	%
0 - 4	44	58	41	54
5 - 9	15	21	14	19
10 - 19	10	13	5	7
Don't Know	3	4	10	13
	—	—	—	—
	75	100	75	100
	—	—	—	—

While one must be careful about drawing sweeping conclusions from such data as to the success or failure of churches in evangelism, it is clear that in at least one-third of the churches questioned there had been at least five conversions in the last two years. In many others although they were not specifically asked, it is also clear that there were none. At least one-half of the churches questioned had less than four—or two or less a year.

Only one thing is common to those churches which recorded ten or more conversions, that is an enthusiastic concern on the part of a group or even one person within the church for the task of evangelism.

ARTICLE REVIEW

A NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

G. C. D. Howley, (*General Editor*). Pickering & Inglis 1969, 666 pp., £2.50.

CARL E. ARMERDING*

A New Testament Commentary, edited by G. C. D. Howley, with assistance from F. F. Bruce and H. L. Ellison, needs no introduction to CBRF readers at this point. Nevertheless, some comments and reaction from the other side of the Atlantic may prove to be helpful to our membership.

That the commentary is based on the RSV seems most appropriate. This version, despite lingering deficiencies, is gaining a more general acceptance, though it is neither advanced enough for the newer breed of NEB readers nor conservative enough for the older churchman clinging to his AV. A working knowledge of the Greek text may be assumed throughout this commentary, despite the inconsistent usage of citations from same. This fact, together with employment of a conservative English text such as the RSV, ensures a moderate approach to textual variety.

The layout is traditional for such a book: dual columns in Biblical style. For the introductory articles a straight single-column page might have been better, but the editors seem to have been taking their cue from the *New Bible Commentary*. We appreciate the bold-face type in citations

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of Scripture, in contrast to the latter volume, and also having the author of each section identified clearly at the head of his section. This is a refreshing contrast to a work like the *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Atlas*, edited by E. M. Blaiklock, where only a protracted searching of individual pages leads the reader to the conclusion that half the book is by one author (not the editor) while other contributors have written scarcely a paragraph.

The Commentary represents twenty-five contributors, all Christian Brethren, but most obviously eschewing any denominational parochialism. Compared to the old NBC, there are more so-called 'laymen' (at least six of whom do not have theological degrees), about the same number of professional scripture teachers (twelve out of twenty-five in the NTC vs. twenty-three of forty-seven in NBC), and, naturally, fewer professional pastors. The prominence of the 'teaching brother' in the NTC and his counterpart, the parish minister, in NBC, shows up in marked contrast to the largely American *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, where only two out of forty-eight contributors come from the parish rather than the schools. Such continued vitality in the pulpit, both in Brethren and non-Brethren circles throughout the United Kingdom, cannot fail to make a difference in the life of the respective churches.

By nationality, NTC includes two Americans, some Commonwealth men, but no contributors from the Continent. NBC has the same proportion of Americans (the revised NBC includes a number of Canadians), and representation from the Netherlands and Greece (though both are missing from the revision).

With reference to critical matters, especially those of authorship, the NTC is firmly traditional, but without the dogmatism of spirit which has marked many conservative works in the past. Even such touchy problems as the authorship of 2 Peter and the 'Pastorals', the provenance of the 'Fourth Gospel', and the possible dis-unity of 2 Corinthians, are given only minimal discussion, although the issue is never entirely passed over.

Bibliographies show a good variety in theological viewpoint, but are largely limited to works in English (or in English translation). Apparently the audience envisaged is one that does not interact with German scholarship; on the other hand, its reading is not limited to the kind of 'safe' book found in the typical evangelical bookstore. A slight denominational flavour is added by the citation of William Kelly, W. E. Vine, C. F. Hogg, G. H. Lang, H. Craik, and even B. W. Newton and J. N. Darby (once each, I think). Other evangelicals, especially American, are ignored, sometimes to the detriment of the overall work (e.g., Longenecker's useful work *Paul, Apostle of Liberty* is missing on page 123—a serious oversight). The reader will be thankful, however, for a good, standard summary of the best of British scholarship in each area covered.

PART I—GENERAL ARTICLES

The tone is set by the General Editor in his opening article on the authority of the New Testament, an authority based not so much on rationalistic proofs or Scriptural proof-texts, but on the living authority of the apostolic

witness to the presence of the divine word in Christ. Although Howley comes down hard on the side of a traditional evangelical view of inspiration ('the standpoint of this volume is that both form and content are important' page 18), he spends little time either 'recapping' traditional fundamentalist arguments or refuting contemporary theological options. Authority is, in the best reformed tradition, tied to the Scriptures rather than Church or 'Reason', and its authentication is attributed to the Holy Spirit. A necessary corrective to the individualism of twentieth-century evangelism is the insistence that this inner spiritual testimony comes both individually and in the fellowship of the Church, although the writer does not explain just how the Church is the recipient of this enlightenment.

'Text and Canon' by D. F. Payne takes a traditional view, claiming original authority for each book, but recognising that the formation of the canon and acceptance of the books as we have them was a process which occupied about 350 years. In recent years R. L. Harris (*Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*) has questioned whether this process-theory of canonisation, as almost universally accepted among Protestants, can be squared with the objective criterion of apostolic authorship; but most evangelicals remain unconvinced. Payne's section on canon is followed by a helpful review of the textual questions inherent in New Testament studies, including some examples of why RSV has departed from AV readings and a listing of major manuscripts.

David Clines' scholarly treatment of 'The Language of the New Testament', is marked by the writer's obvious interest in Semitisms behind the text, an interest which does not detract from his ability to interact with the Greek text itself. There could have been a fuller treatment of the perplexing problem of the language of 2 Peter, and the bibliography might well have included reference to Deissmann's *Light from the Ancient East*.

'Archaeological Discoveries' are treated by A. R. Millard, newly appointed Lecturer in Semitic Languages in the University of Liverpool. His section on the papyri overlaps a bit with Clines's article, and in general the material on sites and people keeps to standard paths. That the Garden Tomb is suspect and the Antonia questioned as the actual site of Pilate's praetorium should not surprise anyone. A closing section deals with Dead Sea and Nag Hammadi material, both of which are adduced as support for increased faith in the reliability of the gospels. Bibliography is popular, slanted toward the literary side of things, and might well have included both Kenyon's important study *Jerusalem* and W. Gasque's much more modest work on Sir William Ramsay in the Baker Biblical Archaeology series.

J. M. Houston's 'Environmental Background' might better have been designed to consider solely physical features, for the opening sections on sociological and religious environment seem properly to belong in Rowdon's subsequent essay. (As an example of what might have been more helpful, readers should consult Dr. Houston's own article on 'Geographical Background' in the *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Atlas*.) Footnoting is extensive throughout (*vis a vis* Rowdon), but the bibliography could have included more specifically geographical works, particularly the

new *MacMillan Bible Atlas* (which, however, may have arrived too late for inclusion).

In two detailed chapters, H. H. Rowdon deals with 'Historical and Pagan Religious Backgrounds'. Rowdon's authoritative survey suffers from a complete lack of footnoting, an omission which is most disconcerting when the discussion reflects an argument, such as that of Stauffer concerning the date of the birth of Christ (page 63), which gives no indication, either in text or bibliography, as to its source. In the section on chronology (again duplicated in part by Houston), Rowdon affirms the identification of the Council in Jerusalem (Ac. 15) with that described in Galatians (2:10); an identification rejected both by the General Editor (page 119) and F. R. Coad (page 444), whose acceptance of Ramsay's later view, which put Galatians before the Jerusalem Council, seems to this reviewer to be the only satisfactory harmonisation of details of both passages. The conversion of Paul is then pushed back to AD 33, but this leads to the difficulties which Coad discusses on pages 446ff.

A wealth of information is given by H. L. Ellison in his essay on 'Jewish Backgrounds'. A stimulating history of ideas from Ezra (dated traditionally at 440 BC) to New Testament times demonstrates the writer's own grasp of the material. Dangers inherent in any history of ideas built on documents, the dating of which is in dispute, are evident, however; and one wonders whether the 'lateness' of the 'intellectual rationalism' attributed to Hellenistic influence is really demonstrable in Ecclesiastes: and, if so, whether that fact is not his proof of the late date of the book (c. 200 BC) rather than an independent testimony to a development of thought.

In a section on religious parties in Judaism, an Essene background for Hebrews seems to be in mind (page 75); although this is not explicitly stated. Ellison's usual iconoclastic bent is more evident in the section on Synagogue and Law, where the oft-quoted Talmudic taboos concerning the trial of Jesus are put out of court as anachronistic.

In one of the most important articles, W. L. Liefeld traces the development of doctrine in the New Testament. The treatment is cautious, scholarly, and Biblical throughout. Although mildly indebted to form-criticism, Liefeld clearly avoids making the church the creator of doctrine. Rather, he sees forms such as *kerygma* and confession, hymn and exhortation, as part of the original tradition. The section on the 'new people of God' (page 85ff.) leaves open the possibility of a later return to concern with national Israel, but clearly equates the present people of God with the Church. A 'connection (but not identification)' is seen between the Kingdom and the Church. In general, Liefeld has written an excellent introduction to a historically-based theology of the New Testament; something conservatives have long been without.

In 'The Fourfold Gospel', F. F. Bruce duplicates some of Liefeld's material on primitive Christian sayings, tracing helpfully the progress of the material through the apostolic tradition, the missionary *kerygma* (Peter and Paul are seen as being in agreement on essentials), and early Christian worship and teaching, coming finally to 'the written gospels'. A cautious approach to source criticism affirms Markan priority and a primitive 'Q' for the sayings of Jesus, but Bruce emphasises (page 99) that

the 'gospels themselves are much more important than their putative sources'. Closing statements on 'The Fourth Gospel' and the 'The Gospel Collection' wax devotionally eloquent, achieving the tone of reverent scholarship that should mark a work like this Commentary.

An essay which, understandably enough, is more distinctively 'Brethren' than the other articles and commentaries is F. R. Coad's 'The Apostolic Church'. Opening with a section on Church and Kingdom (cf. Liefeld), the author launches into a study of church 'pattern', the results of which are sure to provoke varied responses. If there is any 'sacred cow' among Brethren, it is the conviction that they are following New Testament church order, an idea challenged by Coad's (and incidentally, Henry Craik's) argument that the Church from Jerusalem to the towns evidenced considerable diversity. Indeed, growth and diversity of expression are taken as positive qualities. The author does not go on to suggest that the presbyterianism of Jerusalem and the congregationalism of Paul's missionary churches might both be valid in 1970, but the suggestion is implicit.

On the unity of the Church, however, the author comes down hard; and in such a way that one is left asking whether some visible form of unity might not be preferable to our current intensely congregational loyalties. By stressing that visible unity is the result of spiritual union cemented by love, the essay stops far short of modern ecumenicism's tendency toward mere organisational connection; but only a final plea for sympathetic understanding of separatist movements within Church history keeps Mr. Coad from a place back in the Darbyist camp with its visible 'circle' of fellowship. Perhaps the actual distance between Darby and Coad is best explained in pragmatic terms. Coad, although favourably disposed toward Darby's ideal, never loses sight of its idealistic character; Darby, on the other hand, pressed the concept of visible unity to an extreme which, as Mr. Groves once prophesied, would lead to innumerable divisions and hopeless fragmentation. Not only in the above, but also in its re-examination of other questions with which Brethren have been continually concerned, this stimulating article merits further consideration. (Ellison's *The Household Church* would seem to merit inclusion bibliographically.)

From the pen of the general editor comes a second article, 'The Letters of Paul'. Departing from tradition (cf. Guthrie's 'Pauline Epistles' in the *New Bible Commentary: Revised*), Howley suggests a three-fold rather than a four-fold division of the epistles. The problem of 2 Corinthians, like the question of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals, is simply introduced, with strong affirmation of the traditional position in each case. Discussion of Pauline theology is linked to C. A. A. Scott's contention that the whole may be subsumed under the term 'salvation'; a judgment with which we can certainly concur.

Howley's comment about a 'noticeable development' in Paul's teaching concerning the Body of Christ (page 121) leads us to wonder whether such a metaphorical switch (in 1 Corinthians, the head is not distinguished; in Colossians, Christ is the head) is really to be seen as a development, or just two sides of the same metaphor shaped to suit the purpose of the moment. Perhaps a more fruitful investigation of development might have taken as its foundation the eschatological questions probed by both A.

Schweitzer, C. H. Dodd and (more recently) C. F. D. Moule, or the question of Jewish responsibility, raised more recently by R. Longenecker (*Paul, Apostle of Liberty*). Schweitzer's thesis on Pauline mysticism is indeed mentioned (page 117), but nothing of that scholar's argument as to its development is included. I am not sure this is necessarily a genuine weakness of the Commentary, but in certain places there seems to be a tendency to quote widely from various scholars without going into the real point being made by the scholar in question. Perhaps an introduction to names like Schweitzer, Dodd, Barrett, and Scott is all the general reader needs; if so, the Commentary has done the community a service. One might wish, however, that there were some better way to apprise the general reader of some of the further issues raised.

Professor Bruce's essay on The 'General Letters', reflects his usual grasp of scholarly data. Discussions of authorship are put aside in favour of a history of the canonicity of these 'catholic' epistles. Thus we are left without critical discussion of questions such as the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter (let the reader understand), but the lacunae are filled in the introductions to the books themselves. Bruce argues briefly, but forcefully, for a common fund of primitive preaching on which both Paul and the Twelve drew, thus negating the claim for divergence or even an excessive Pauline influence in the general epistles. Finally, there are brief summaries of each book with an especially good outline of James.

A useful article by D. J. Ellis, 'The New Testament Use of the Old Testament', closes out the first section of the Commentary. In an essay concerned chiefly with hermeneutical considerations, Ellis sees the New Testament use of the Old Testament as controlled by historical and then-current exegetical principles, but free to see a new element in a complete and final revelation. It is this new element, the concept of fulfilment or completion, which (following Bruce et al) becomes the basis of a New Testament theology of the Old Testament. In a concise treatment of the suggested use of 'testimonies' as a basis for quotations concerning Jesus' Messianic role, no decisive answer is given. The problem of allegory and type is fully considered, with discussion reflecting current debate, some of which may be followed by the average reader only by reference to the original literature on the question (e.g., D. J. Ellis' disagreement with E. Earle Ellis on the use of *typos*). Because of the importance of these hermeneutical questions this final article is important to the reader wishing to keep abreast.

PART II—COMMENTARY

In this section we can only consider certain pivotal passages, in order to gain some general idea of the directions of thought. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 - 7) provides an immediate touchstone for the discussion. Ellison views the sermon as thoroughly Jewish, but (*contra* dispensationalists) argues that its intended audience is those who 'by grace have passed beyond the law'. In his handling of the parables of Matthew 13, Ellison is again difficult to label. Both the Scofieldian 'minute allegorisation' of the parabolic material and Dodd's rejection of any independent significance to the details are set aside. The Kingdom itself

transcends, but includes, the Church (cf. previous discussion by Liefeld, et al, and Ellison's own note on 'The Kingdom of Heaven', page 143), and the parables are applied as cutting across rabbinic teaching, but also as directed to the church.

David Ellis' 'John' is sober, refusing even to speculate on some of the suggested symbolism in John's handling of such events as the marriage in Cana. In chapter 3 there could have been further discussion of background to the 'new birth' figure, and also a word or two on the meaning of *monogenes* in the light of differences in translation from AV to RSV in verse 16. The figure of 'bread/body' in chapter 6 is treated in traditional low-church form, while the suggested Messianic implication in Jesus' use of *ego eimi* (I am) as a reflection of a prophetic passage (John 8:58) is given most cautious acceptance. Traditional arguments about eternal security are passed over in both chapters 10 and 15, but the implications of John 17 for ecumenical thinking are made explicit. On 17:21, we read: 'Nothing less than organic unity will satisfy the prayer of the Saviour', a statement that must be taken in light of that comment on 10:16, 'It is Christ himself who gathers . . .'

Trenchard's treatment of Acts is marked by a distinctly devotional concern. The Christian Church is seen as beginning at Pentecost, although no attempt is made to sort out reformed and dispensational views of the exact nature of its newness. (Trenchard, like most other contributors, would seem happy with G. E. Ladd's work on the Kingdom, thus assuming a much less radical break between Israel and the Church, but not going so far as to blur the distinction.) Pentecostal *glossolalia* are considered to be of a different order from those of 1 Corinthians 14, and no attempt is made to evaluate the question as it applies to present-day manifestations. A consistent bias toward immersion-baptism is evident in the section on Acts as well: witness the comment on 8:38, 39 to the effect that, 'the joint descent into the water certainly suggests immersion'.

Leslie Allen, writing on Romans, offers considerable help from the original languages, but tends to quote much more extensively from other writers than some. His treatment generally exhibits the same caution found in each section of the book. Although no attempt is made to duplicate traditional theological arguments, the mildly representative position taken with respect to Adam's sin in Romans 5 is consistent with recent reformed dogmatic thought. There is, however, no uncertain sound in the discussion of chapter 6, where baptism by immersion is enthusiastically pictured as a 'dramatic mime of what God has done with a man (in the new life)'. The original missionary situation of Romans 9-11 comes to the fore, with the conclusion that, although the unity of the people of God is stressed in the figure of the olive tree, Paul makes no attempt to assert that Old Testament promises to Israel had 'automatically passed *en bloc* to the largely Gentile Church . . .' In fact, Israel as a whole is still to be saved, but only by faith, and following the Gentile Church's ingathering. The position taken here, like that of the Commentary generally, hardly reflects the charge of traditional amillennialism affirmed by some of its dispensational critics.

A few references to articles on the other epistles will have to suffice.

P. W. Marsh takes a rather strong position on 1 Corinthians 7 (consistent, it would seem, with the text), ruling out the possibility of divorce when both parties are Christians, but allowing for the possibility of remarriage when the original marriage, consummated before belief came to one of the partners, has fallen finally apart. The difficult passage in 7:14 is referred to ceremonial cleanness, by analogy with Exodus 29:37, etc., and no thought of the personal conversion of the unbelieving partner is permitted. Typical of the way in which a problem verse is handled throughout the commentary is the treatment of 1 Corinthians 15:29, where various options are given (but unfortunately only Grosheide's view is identified by author) but no conclusion is given.

F. R. Coad's comments on Galatians again show the direction of thought in contemporary Brethren circles, where law (5:18) is no longer seen in the simplistic and negative framework set by earlier teachers, but rather with a dual role, on the one hand condemning the guilty, but on the other hand providing direction for life.

H. C. Hewlett, in his discussion of Philippians 2:1-11, comes down hard against any kind of kenosis theory, but might be accused of evasion by his failure to explain why the expression 'in the likeness of men' does not detract from His (Jesus') true manhood. Again, a basic tendency of the commentary is evident: not every exegetical problem is raised, but when one is, no attempt at glossing or even choosing a simple answer is made.

Gerald Hawthorne's treatment of Hebrews will doubtless prove controversial. A constant in the handling of the warning passages is that the true Christian will be proven such by his endurance, a note certainly consistent with the emphasis in the epistle. The difficulties of chapter 6 are not passed over, but allowance is made for either true Christian experience (in which case, by implication, there must have been some kind of practically experienced loss of same) or simply a profession. Hawthorne seems more at home with the former view, but again emphasises that the real question is the practical one: does the kind of Christianity we profess endure the test of faithfulness? If so, it is genuine; if not, it is false, whether the conversion appeared to be valid or not. His treatment of 4:14-16 is even more controversial. Here Mark 13:32 is cited in support of the possibility that Jesus, though, in the nature of the case, unable to sin, might not have *known* that this was so. A particular sensitivity to any realistic appraisal of that humanity of Christ has marked some Brethren as well as others through the years, and we may expect some reaction again. It should, however, be noted that Hawthorne makes no attempt to solve traditional systematic questions on the impeccability of Christ, but simply tries to do justice to an emphasis clearly and consistently made by the author of Hebrews. Whatever one may think of his suggestion concerning Jesus' omniscience, there can be no question from his own discussion but that his Christology is fundamental to the core.†

†Few critics of Hawthorne's comment have realised that it is not original, but in fact is highly commended by such an evangelical stalwart as the late Dr. Griffith Thomas in his *Principles of Theology*. It is thus apparent that allegations of unorthodoxy in respect of this comment are unfounded. An indication of the dangers of controversy in this difficult area of theology is to be gained by the fact that some criticisms of Hawthorne have themselves not kept free of near-heretical expressions—*Ed.*

Further room for discussion is provided with the interpretation of chapters 8-10, in which the New Covenant is seen as fulfilled in the present rather than future; whether the commentator holds to a future for national Israel is not clear. All he is saying is that, in Hebrews' use of Jeremiah 31, there is no application to future Israel, a conclusion which only a distortion of the obvious context could dispute. Hawthorne's opting for the Old Testament concept of 'covenant' or 'agreement' as the meaning of *diatheke* (instead of 'will' or 'testament') except possibly in 9:15f. is held also by Coad (cf. comment on Galatians 3:15-18) and, though not entirely without problems, seems to satisfy the context in most passages.

Bruce's commentary on Revelation may confirm the fears of those looking for 'heretical' prophetic positions. If the still future aspect of chapters 4-22 is considered axiomatic, Professor Bruce's argument from 1:1, that the book is concerned with the near future, will be rejected. For one accustomed to a futuristic evaluation of the Apocalypse, this is a hard pill to swallow, but it must be remembered that neither Brethren nor this Commentary have any official position in eschatological matters. The keynote of the treatment is struck repeatedly: Revelation is the book of the triumph of Christ. The millennial period of chapter 20 is seen as commencing with the resurrection of the martyrs to share Christ's throne, and the attack of Satan is seen between this messianic age and the establishment of the new Jerusalem. Whether these events of the apocalyptic age are to be taken literally and placed into some chronological scheme is not, to our knowledge, discussed. A much needed exhortation is given, however, at the close of the treatment (page 665) and with that any charge that the commentary is negative toward the Lord's coming may be stopped: 'In the Christian doctrine of the Last Things, however, the imminence of the end is moral rather than chronological; each successive Christian generation . . . may be the last generation. In that sense the time is always near; it is therefore the path of wisdom for believers to be ready to meet their Lord . . .'.

CONCLUSIONS

The New Testament Commentary is certain to be compared with the *New Bible Commentary: Revised*, with which book its contributors and its purpose obviously overlap. Apart from more concern with traditionally Brethren problems, one might say that the NTC demonstrates a slightly more modified reformed position, is consistently Baptist in tone, and represents a developing 'school' of Brethren thought in the British Isles. The scholarship of this group is based on a wide appeal to standard British writings, but in some cases one wonders whether the acquaintance is first- or second-hand.

In summary, we may say that this book certainly stands worthy of full consideration alongside the NBC (Revised), stronger in its introductory material, but perhaps a bit less consistent in the quality of its exposition. Perhaps the most noteworthy fact of the entire proceeding is one just barely alluded to in the preface: i.e., that the Commentary represents an

effort of contributors all of whom are associated with churches of the 'Christian Brethren'. That such a work could have been done so well is testimony to the continued vitality of the movement. That the influence of their Brethren heritage is so quietly and unobtrusively introduced is evidence of a strong departure from traditional 'denominational' patterns of Brethren thought. That such a book could have been completed without a single strongly dispensational article (though dispensationalists have, one feels, less reason to complain than they might have imagined) may prevent its making claim for representative status in the 'Christian Brethren' movement, but it does demonstrate how false any claims for a monolithic theological structure among these churches must be.

Hearty congratulations must go to the editorial staff and the many contributors as we join in their prayer that the blessing of God may rest upon the work!

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