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News items, notes and queries, advertisements and contributions to the Chairman
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Association news

Grant for catalogue of MSS at Bible Society

Reference Section

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This New Series of the Bulletin of ABTAPL has been published three times a year since 1974, in succession to the earlier series of 1956 — 1966.

At present, all issues of the New Series are still available, but stocks of some are very low, due to the recent demand for full sets of back numbers from new members. All available copies are still priced at £1.00

No. 10 included cumulated index to nos. 1-10. It is hoped that a further cumulated index can be compiled for inclusion in no. 20.
New College Library, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LU. Tel: 031-225-8400

John V. Howard, M.A., F.L.A.

The Library was founded in the autumn of 1843 when training for the ministry of the newly formed Free Church of Scotland began. By the time the foundation stone was laid in June 1846, 13,000 volumes had been collected by supporters in Scotland and many parts of England. (Gifts were not accepted from ministers who had themselves left the establishment to join the Free Church.) That the collections were broadly based is shown in the very accurate 1868 catalogue compiled by the Rev. John Laing (collaborator of Samuel Halkett in the Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous English Literature).

The Library has been greatly enlarged by mergers after the church reunions of 1900 with the United Presbyterians and of 1929 with the Church of Scotland. From the latter came Edinburgh Theological Library (the library of the University Divinity Faculty) 1936, the General Assembly Library, 1958, and the Church of Scotland Lending Library, 1970.

In 1963 the Library and buildings of New College were placed on permanent deposit with the University for the use of the Faculty of Divinity.

(a) As the theology section of Edinburgh University Library (though housed in the centre of Edinburgh a mile north of the main University buildings) it serves (i) the Faculty of Divinity in its teaching for the B.D., B.A. and M.A. in Religious Studies, and Certificates in Christian Education and Pastoral Studies; and (ii) 60 researchers for Ph.D. or M. Phil. degrees in a very wide range of subjects (see Coverage and Special Collections).

(b) As the principal theological library in Scotland it serves the general public (i) through inter-library loans to academic and public libraries and in a general information service; and (ii) by personal or postal loans to 200 subscribing members of the Library. (Registered readers total about 650).

In its Free Church days the subject range was very wide, but its integral relationship to the University Library now limits it to Christianity and Church history. It is strong in Biblical studies, Semitic languages, Theology (of all traditions), Philosophy and Psychology of religion, Patristics, Missions, Non-Christian religions in relation to Christianity, Judaism, Liturgy, Hymnology.
Stock 188,000 bound volumes; 40,000 unbound pamphlets; ca.2,300 vols. manuscripts; 400 current periodicals.

Special collections There are large collections of 16th, 17th and 18th century printed books. The MSS Collections are mainly on Scottish church history, and include the archive of Thomas Chalmers (1780-1848) which has about 20,000 letters, etc.

The two main special collections currently added to are the Ecumenical Collection, which aims to include all World Council of Churches and British Council of Churches' publications, together with papers on inter-church negotiations; and the James Thin Hymnology Collection of more than 7,000 volumes.

Classification The majority of the Library is arranged by fixed location in broad subject groups (established as late as 1936!). Since 1967 about 30,000 volumes have been classified by the special scheme developed at Union Theological Seminary, New York, and now known as the Pettee Classification. A classified catalogue is maintained with a subject index constructed on the chain indexing principle.

Catalogues The main author catalogue (on slips in looseleaf binders) has been partly revised in the last decade, and has had other sequences filed into it. New and revised entries are also incorporated into the main University Library catalogue, and the Scottish Union Catalogue. The printed catalogue of 1868 is still valuable, and an Abridged Catalogue of 1893 is still on sale.

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Guide to New College Library (University of Edinburgh Library Guides, 29).

(Section in forthcoming quatercentenary history of Edinburgh University Library.)

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The Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society has been awarded a grant of £6,000 to identify and catalogue the manuscripts in its collection.

Since the foundation of the Society in 1804 it has received gifts of over a hundred manuscripts. These range from a fourth century Coptic papyrus of St. John's Gospel to twentieth century unpublished missionary translations.

Only limited work has been done in making these known up to now, because the Library has had to concentrate on its main role of collecting and cataloguing the printed Scriptures in languages of the world. This grant will make possible the publication of a catalogue of the manuscripts which will be an aid to international scholarships, and will add to public awareness of the resources of the Bible Society and the work it does at the present time.

The grant is payable over one to three years, and will be used to engage a project co-ordinator who will work under the direction of the Librarian, Alan Jesson. Further details may be obtained from him at the British and Foreign Bible Society, 146 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V, 4BX.


The autumn meeting of ABTAPL will be held at the Bible Society's Library in November. Further information about this will be published in Bulletin no. 18.
CARE OF THE DYING AND THE BEREAVED
Antonia J. Bunch

The literature on the care of the dying has increased enormously in the last six years. The first edition of this bibliography, issued in June 1973 on the occasion of the Scottish Hospital Centre conference, Preparing the way, contained only 67 items.

To facilitate reference a certain amount of subject division has been carried out, but users are reminded that aspects such as RELIEF OF PAIN, BEREAVEMENT, etc., are often discussed in the more general articles listed in the second section. The following topics have been specifically excluded in order not to make this bibliography too unwieldy: Cot deaths, Determination of the moment of death, Euthanasia, and Termination of life-support systems.

The bibliography is divided into ten sections as follows:
1. BIBLIOGRAPHY, 2. GENERAL, 3. ATTITUDES, 4. SPIRITUAL CARE, 5. RELIEF OF PAIN, 6. HOSPICE CARE, 7. COMMUNITY CARE, 8. CARE OF CHILDREN, 9. BEREAVEMENT, 10. STILL BIRTH.

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