

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

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

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



Buy me a coffee

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



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](https://paypal.me/robbradshaw)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

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

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

all. He thought time spent on Rabbinical Hebrew as good as lost; but he attached immense importance to a study of the languages cognate to Hebrew. The present writer heard Dillmann lecture on the *Psalms* (he denied the existence of Maccabean *Psalms*), on the Book of Lamentations, and also on Biblical Archaeology and Old Testament Theology. Of these, the lectures on *Old Testament Theology* have alone been published, edited by Rudolf Kittel, 1895. Had he lived long enough he would probably have published the other lectures too. His lectures on the *Psalms* were remarkable for their learning and sane as well as devout criticism. In a letter to an American Baptist pupil Dillmann wrote (I translate): "It stirs in me feelings of deep gratitude that you have learnt to appreciate my earnest endeavour to maintain together fulness of faith and strict scientific method." That states in the briefest form the great merit of Dillmann's teaching in the classroom and in his books.

J. WITTON DAVIES.

New Light on Dr. Carey.

THE Editors have asked me to indicate something of what fresh representation of Carey may be expected in my Biography of him, which in September will be published by Hodder & Stoughton. Though it is dressing my own window, I yield.

I have been out for all the human touches. In the days when Eustace wrote his uncle's *Life*, Christian biographers stressed their heroes' pieties and slurred their humanities. The modern method is almost the reverse. We take the pieties more for granted: our *interest* is in the humanities. My steadfast aim has been to recover and display *the man*,—to make *him* intimate.

Spurgeon thanked Smith for having rescued Carey from the lumber, which had so long overlain him,—for making him more knowable than Eustace had left him. But even Smith frequently lost the man in the movement. His pages disclosed the movement's magnitude and might, and the force of Carey's contribution, yet the man himself kept disappearing. This was in great part due to Smith's unfortunate abandonment of chronological order in more than half his story, so that we found ourselves thrust to and fro, back and forth,

hither and thither, through most of the Indian chapters, to our inevitable confusion. When we put the book down, the man did not stand forth. My chief solicitude has been to trace in due sequence throughout the development of the man's soul, believing with Browning that "little else is worth study." I have striven to reveal the progressive unfolding of his vision and faith, his endeavour and achievement.

Readers of *Samuel Pearce* oftenest thanked me for *The Preacher's Period*. I have attempted a similar preliminary study again, to show Carey as the product of his Times' converging forces, yet as giving them their new direction or momentum. Specially have I been keen to trace what British missionary forces were current, and to claim for him only that measure of primacy and pioneership consonant with these. He was distinctly *not* the first British missionary of modern times, though he did exert the most quickening influence.

From first to last I have indulged in no appraisal of him of my own; but, in several "Forewords" to chapters, I have set appraisements by others, of acknowledged name.

The prevailing impression that he was "a root out of a dry ground," and that his career contradicted his heredity and the conditions of his early environment, needs, I think, some correction. For his father and grandfather were above the mental calibre of their class and their neighbours, and were, with his mother and grandmother, especially strong in the affections, endowing him with a nature, which *love* could readily constrain. I make much, too, of an uncle, of whom little has yet been heard, who in Carey's earliest childhood was back from long Canadian pioneering, and who cast on the lad the double spell of flowers, and of lands and peoples overseas.

Everybody has heard that he owed his conversion to the spiritual solicitude of a fellow-shoemaking apprentice; but this one's name and story have remained unknown. That it was William Manning,—the shopmate, who preserved Carey's signboard,—was the best guess; but, was, as it proves, mistaken. "What would we not give," once wrote Principal Price of Calabar College, Jamaica, "to get the name of this apprentice?" To my joy, in a bundle of Carey-documents given to Dr. Shakespeare during the war, I found it in a letter of Carey's to Ryland, and soon, by best fortune, this co-apprentice's whole ancestry and story. To him I dedicate my book. I predict that his name will be heard in hundreds of pulpits and of Sunday schools, and this Andrew, who led this Peter to Christ, will go to work again in the world, inspiring others to like fidelity and zeal.

By the industrious aid of my friend, Frank Bates, of

Northampton, I have learned things of the quickest interest about the master of these apprentices.

Since none can preach Christ's Gospel with passion who have not fought their way into their faith, I have loved to tell of Carey's four years' struggle with his spiritual and biblical questionings, till he reached a full assurance of Christian doctrine. Meanwhile, he was distrusted, of course, as a heretic, though he was really just a courageous explorer in the kingdom of God. I was startled to 'discover that the very preacher, who at that lonely time best rooted and grounded him in Christian wisdom, in far later years led undergraduate John Henry Newman to his lifelong apprehension of Trinitarian truth. It was an unexpected linking of the generations, and of contrary careers.

I trust I have laid to sleep the persistently-recurring notion of Carey's industrial incompetence.

I have most rejoiced to rescue the name of the mother of all his children from the cruel wrongs which have been done her. Biographers without exception have echoed her dispraise. Now that the facts will be known, feeling will rebound in her favour. She will be unanimously defended in her first-felt inability to accompany Carey to Bengal, and will be acclaimed for her eventual going *at one day's notice*. She will be deeply compassionated, too, for the price she tragically paid. Carey would wish me to lay this wreath upon her grave.

At the dedication of the Leicester Carey-cottage, I hinted the activeness of his *Nonconformist* witness in that mid-England town. But I have since learned much of the insistence and prominence of his Free Church challenge. He was passionate for the unfettering of all intellectual and religious inquiry, and keen to break the State's control over every realm of the spirit.

Will it distress my readers to learn that, like other hot-bloods in those stirring days in Leicester and Northampton,—the towns he knew the best—he was for some years openly *republican*?

I have traced more fully than any before how God laid on him and through him on modern Christendom the constraint of world-missions, agreeing strongly, as I do, with S. K. Datta that this is almost as inspiring as Carey's Indian achievement. But many a legend has needed resetting and revision, especially as to that Nottingham-day, when his colleagues made their second "great refusal," and Carey's anguish stabbed the soul of Fuller awake.

Not even in Kettering's Feast of Remembrance last October, when the past was glowingly rehearsed, did any

speaker seem to know that Christ had in vain called His Church through Doddridge in that very town, half a century earlier than the B.M.S. founding, to be the cradle of modern missions; nor that, despite the Nottingham Resolution, Carey's proposal, even at that twelfth hour in Kettering, was nearly negated and dismissed. Much else concerning that historic "Oct. 2nd" needed exacter recounting.

To most—even to students of Missions—the figure of John Thomas, Carey's pathbreaker and senior, is very vague. That he was eccentric and hopelessly involved in debt is nearly all that is remembered, notwithstanding his considerable Biography by the late C. B. Lewis of Calcutta. For, honest though this always is, and not seldom vivid, it has been long out of print, and lacks modern attractiveness. Yet the facts are there,—of a man who was an extraordinary complex of force and of fickleness, of the apostolic and the human, of the saint, the genius and the fool. As the first Englishman to greatly care for the souls of Bengalis, God honoured and used him for high ends, and he must not be forgotten. I have therefore painted his portrait.

A chairman's speech at the Centenary Meetings in Leicester seemed to *prove* that "Harvey Lane" had been stupidly blind to the significance of Carey's mission to Bengal, and coldly indifferent to his going from their midst. This judgment has since passed into an accepted tradition. But the full facts point in the opposite direction. "Harvey Lane" letters, hidden in "College Lane" vestry, first put me on the true track; and now, since my return from Calcutta, the accumulating proof has been crowned by a merchant's letter from Salendine Nook, written immediately after attendance at Carey's last two Leicester services—such a letter as would have rejoiced the heart of a Carlyle.

The story of Carey's planned voyage by the *Oxford*, then of his ejection therefrom with Thomas, and of their subsequent sailing with Carey's whole family in the Danish *Krön Princessa*, is at once one of the most distressing and romantic chapters of his life,—than which nothing so reveals him. Yet it has been given scant record.

My recent two years' Indian sojourn has been the crowning mercy of my life, vastly enriching my Carey-treasure, and delivering me from what would have been an unspeakable disaster. For, notwithstanding a meticulous care, I had in a hundred and one ways misapprehended much, which only life on the spot could reveal to me and rectify. Indian readers would inevitably have caught me out as having written from a distance. Now I trust they will feel that the Indian chapters are redolent of their soil and reflective of their sky.

I have not rushed Carey to Serampore. For a man is best worth watching, when he is tackling his first tough problems, making his first prentice-efforts, learning "tricks of his tools' true play." So I have taken time to tell his early settling in the Sundarbans, and his five and a half years as a planter-padre in N. Bengal. There he was winning his first-hand knowledge of rural, i.e. of real, India, was mastering the Vernaculars and Sanskrit, was growing his first great Botanic Garden, and was taking the due measure of his tasks. It thrilled me to realize that in those Mudnabati years he translated practically the whole Bible into Bengali, before he ever set foot in Serampore.

Years ago, Alfred North of New Zealand wrote and entreated me in my story to do justice to *John Fountain*. I was happy to have already forestalled his request. For it is a pity that such an one is so completely forgotten, or that, if recollected, it is as just a warning against political indiscreetness. He merits a better remembrance for his own sake, and as Carey's first British recruit. His career was brief, but his spirit valiant. I have rubbed off the moss from his stone.

Is it at all generally known that more than twenty years ere *the three* established themselves in Serampore, the Moravians had wrought there, till, after bitter disappointment, they abandoned the post in despair?

The difficulty of writing Carey's life after his joining Marshman and Ward in Serampore is its embarrassment of riches. For the three strands became so plaited, that they cannot be written of apart. The story is triple. No three men ever had a soul so single. Although Carey preceded them seven years, they seemed to catch him up, and made his labours theirs, to the winning of our equal reverence, wonder and love. It has to be three biographies in one, yet with Carey as still the central, the kindling and directive soul.

Have the *numbers* in the Serampore Settlement been realized? It startled me to learn that more than a hundred sat down regularly daily there together for meals—to say nothing of the incessant visitors. The hive was much bigger than I knew.

Mr. Wilson told me recently how keen he was to get a *full* account of Krishna Pal. I was glad I had already made his story a chief feature. For nothing can exaggerate his baptism's momentousness, nor the influence of all that happened in his home. One of my most valuable discoveries is the rush of converts that followed his heroic confession. As soon as he was blessedly taken captive as the first Bengali prisoner of Christ Jesus, a whole company of others began to yield.

The Mission had—oh, so long—been kept waiting for this one: events swiftly proved how well worth was the waiting.

I have fortunately come on many samples of Carey's preaching in the bazaars: preaching always pointed and direct, and abounding; as befitted the East, in parable: at times, caustic with satire. My heart has burned to find how even through all his academic career this vernacular preaching was his sustained practice and passion. From first to last he travailed for men's souls.

That was an exciting week when in the Library of the Board of Examiners, Calcutta, I unearthed the eighteen thick folios of the minutes and correspondence of the old "Fort William College," through the whole three decades of Carey's professorial service and of "Fort William's" teaching-career. The Librarian told me that they had almost been minded to destroy them as lumber! These folios set me in the living midst of Carey's tutorial conditions. I found scores of his memoranda and letters. I lived in his Government College world. His students and pundits grew familiar. His live and modern methods with his classes lay disclosed.

India's quickened self-consciousness has constrained her scholars to make fresh study of the development of their Vernaculars. The most approved such study in Calcutta is Prof. Susil Kumar De's *History of the Bengali Language and Literature from 1800-1825*. To the work and influence of Carey and of Serampore he devotes three chapters, and represents Carey as the most potent literary force in the Government College. He has much to tell of the educational output of his Pundits, under Carey's inspiration. I found the keenest interest being taken in all this in Indian literary circles, Rabindranath Tagore himself saying to me, "Why, Carey was the pioneer of all this revived interest in the Vernaculars!"

Before I left England, I had caught flashings of Carey's humour. But in the Imperial Library, Calcutta, I found a whole Bengali book of his, which gleamed with its playfulness,—a book of 150 Indian stories, which he gathered and edited, as a text-book for his Government students, to enliven his classes,—a book of Indian wisdom and humour. It has never been translated into English, and has long been out of print. I had to deposit Rs. 100 for its brief loan. I have told its forty best stories.

Before Carey had been six years Government Professor of Sanskrit, Bengali and Marathi, he was thrilled by a far greater missionary vision than before, which swept all his plannings into a vastly wider orbit. Thenceforth, he and his colleagues *expected and attempted God's greater things,—for*

all India, and even Asia and not simply for Bengal. It is a sublime story, and has not been made vivid before. What they set themselves to dare for China takes one's breath.

The private Diary of Mrs. Marshman—hitherto unused—lets us into many a privacy of the home-circles at Serampore,—aye, and into all the tremors of their hearts under the Government's threats and forbiddances.

The bundles of letters and documents found in the B.M.S. catacombs by Lawson Forfeitt during my absence, and a later packet still, which Principal Robinson unearthed for me at "Regent's Park," have been Godsend. Two-thirds of the former were domestic—letters to Carey from his sons, his invalid sister, his nephews and nieces and personal friends. The latter was his answering letters to his youngest missionary-son. Scarcely any of these had been used in the earlier Biographies. They have been priceless illustrations of the constancies and chivalries of his family-life—gold and crimson threads to stitch into my carpet. They enable me to tell much worth knowing about his three missionary sons. I should have gnashed my teeth, had they been found too late.

Since Smith's *Carey*, evidence has increased of America's very early and active co-operation with him and with Serampore. It has been a particular pleasure to set this forth.

I prophesy that the contemporary snapshot accounts of Carey, which I have set, according to their dates, as "Fore-words" to my later chapters, will be hailed as some of my best treasure. They make him stereoscopic. The writers were warm from the events. Their minds were glowing.

May my chapters *The Threatened Woe, The Schism The Woe*, which have "made me lean," reveal to all the tragedy of the present-day challenge, which is wearing down the strength and breaking the hearts of noble leaders in India and in England, as Carey's, Ward's and Marshman's were broken a century ago! Sentences of Carey's letters were shamefully torn from their clear contexts by the adversaries, and were published for the hurt of Serampore. His simple and overwhelming answer was the reprinting of these complete, and without comment. Surely, history repeats itself!

I trust, too, that *The Master Builders* will reveal to those most conversant with *modern* India how amazingly attuned to its highest aspirations were Carey's ideals in founding Serampore College, and how imperative it is (by the equitable aid of all the benefitting Societies) to sustain that College in full strength.

T. R. Glover, in his considerable reference to Carey in his

Daily News article on 21 May, says that my Life of him "will contain new evidence of the botanical distinction of the cobbler, whose letters are preserved at the headquarters of the great Botanical Gardens that he planned outside Calcutta." Doubtless, he meant the Horticultural Society's Garden, which Carey founded and laid out. And I *did* get rich treasure in its office. But even more in the Library of Calcutta's "Botanic" itself, where, after many days of fossicking, I discovered invaluable botanic letters of his, and the proof of his Indian life-long correspondence and co-operation with the Garden's illustrious successive superintendents, Drs. Roxburgh and Wallich. He wrote to the latter, I learned, more than 200 letters. Wallich's tribute to him was, perhaps, my most exciting Indian find.

It has not been seen nor shown before how—after months of appalling tempest—Carey's sun went down in an evening sky of serenest promise—his every chief hope realised.

And now, though I have thus raised expectation, I am more than ever conscious that he was greater than I have had power to tell. But at least I have spared no time, effort, nor money to ascertain the reliable facts and present their story. My one ambition has been to grow others of his outlook and spirit.

S. PEARCE CAREY.

26:5:23.

The Baptist Board.

THE Records of the Baptist Board carry us back to other men, ways, times, and places. The Minutes date back to January 20, 1723.* Dr. Whitley reminds us that "many Elders and Ministers of the Baptist Churches met weekly at the Hanover

*The dates in these Minutes are recorded successively: Jan. 20th, 1723, Feb. 17, 1723/4, Feb. 29th, 1723/4, March 16th, 1724, March 23rd, 1724, March 30th, 1724, April 13, 1724. This peculiar dating is due to the fact that there were two methods in use. The older made the year begin on 25 March, so that March was the first month, September the seventh, October the eighth, November the ninth, December the tenth, January the eleventh, February the twelfth. The newer system started the year with 1 January. Therefore between 1 January and 24 March, till the year 1753, when the old style was abolished, it is always needful to read with care. The sequence of dates here, where Wilson has carefully specified that February was the ambiguous date, 1723/4, makes it certain that the date is what we should call 1724 throughout, even for the January. A reference to a calendar will show that the 20 January was Monday in 1724, not in 1723.—EDITOR.