

Some Baptist Hymnists.

PART III.

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

1. JOHN HOWARD HINTON AND EDWARD MOTE.

(a) **A**MONG the writers belonging to the first half of this century was Rev. John Howard Hinton, born 1791, died 1873. A learned and able man, he became a power in the denomination, for many years being Secretary of the Union. His published works, gathered together in seven volumes, prove him to have been a theologian, historian, expositor and biographer.

In the Library at The Baptist Church House is a MS. collection of 600 hymns he composed. They are mostly in his handwriting, and the Preface shows that he intended them to be published in book form. Unfortunately, they are quite ordinary, and none have found their way into general use.

(b) By way of contrast, we turn to a humble lay-pastor, unknown in Howard Hinton's day, who wrote one hymn that has appeared in scores of Collections in Britain, America and Australia. To-day, strangely enough, it is still included in two books so widely apart in doctrine as the extreme Calvinistic Selection of William Gadsby and the Evangelistic *Sacred Songs and Solos* of Ira D. Sankey (No. 902). The author of this hymn is Edward Mote, who was minister of a Strict Baptist Church at Horsham, Sussex.

In its present form the hymn begins,

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness,

each verse ending with the refrain,

On Christ, the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

Originally it began,

Nor earth, nor hell my soul can move,
I rest upon unchanging love;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name;
On Christ, etc.

Usually, it consists of four stanzas, although Mr. Mote wrote six, with a headline—

The immutable basis of a sinner's hope.

The author (born 1797, died 1874) was held in high regard as a man of blameless Christian character.

2. BAPTIST WRIOTHESLEY NOEL.

Between the hymnist just named and the next to be considered there is also a contrast. But it is one in social position and educational advantage. Mr. Mote was the son of a publican and acknowledged with sorrow that his youth was spent in ignorance even of God. The Hon. and Rev. Baptist Wriothesley Noel was of noble birth, Christian parentage, and enjoyed the privilege of a University education. Yet, both were one in Christ, and alike shared a devotion to their common Lord and Saviour.

A long obituary sketch of Mr. Noel appeared in *The Baptist Handbook* for 1874. From this, and other sources, we learn that he was the son of Sir Gerard Noel Noel, Bart., and Lady Noel, Baroness Barham. Born in 1799, he graduated at Trinity College, Cambridge. After ordination in 1826 he became Incumbent of St. John's Episcopal Chapel, Bedford Row, London; subsequently receiving appointment as a Chaplain to the Queen. He was soon regarded as an evangelical leader, and one of London's most eminent preachers.

In 1848 he became convinced of the truth of New Testament baptism, and at a great sacrifice followed the dictates of conscience, resigning his living and accepting the pastorate of John Street Baptist Chapel, London, a position he held for twenty years.

His noble personality combined with great preaching gifts soon gathered round him a large and influential congregation. He published volumes of Sermons, Essays on Church and State, Travels, and works on Baptist subjects, besides editing two Hymnals. A contemporary Congregational minister, Rev. Josiah Miller, M.A., paid this tribute to Mr. Noel:

"He is generally beloved for his amiability and holy zeal . . . and followed because of his simplicity and sincerity as a servant of Jesus Christ."

After leaving John Street, he engaged in evangelistic work in seaside and other towns, attracting crowds of hearers. In 1867 he was elected to the Chair of the Baptist Union. Mr. Noel was a total abstainer from alcohol and took a prominent part in the Temperance Movement at a time when real courage was needed to advocate principles not then popular. He enjoyed wondrous health, and never had a day's illness.

Two of his hymns are in the *B.C.H. (Rev.)*. One on the Divine omnipresence is No. 65—

There's not a bird with lowly nest.

The other on Baptism is No. 476—

Glory to God, whose Spirit draws.

Both are marked by a devout spirit, and grace of expression.

3. JOHN EUSTACE GILES, AND JOSEPH TRITTON.

(a) A preacher of reputation and a powerful platform speaker was John Eustace Giles (1815-1875). A son of the Manse, he joined his father's Church at Chatham.¹ After a course of study at Bristol College he held pastorates at Haverfordwest; Salters Hall, London; South Parade, Leeds; Bristol; Rathmines; Sheffield; and Clapham Common. He was a strong Free Churchman, a lover of Foreign Missions, and an advocate of Free Trade principles.

Four hymns from his pen appeared in B.M.S. selections. In the *B.C.H. (Rvd.)* he is represented by a Baptismal hymn. He told Mr. Miller that this was composed during his ministry at Salters Hall, at a time when he was seriously ill, and anticipating having to baptise several converts. The No. is 472—

Hast Thou said, exalted Jesus?

(b) We naturally pass from the minister who, as a lover of the Missionary cause, wrote hymns for the Jubilee Celebrations of the Missionary Society, to one who was for twenty years Treasurer of the B.M.S. and who will live as the author of the fine Missionary hymn,

Lord God of our salvation (No. 522 in *B.C.H. Rvd.*)
and of

Head of the Church, and Lord of all. (No. 461).

We gain some conception of the man's personality from *The Missionary Herald* for June, 1887, containing Dr. Fredc. Trestrail's appreciation of Mr. Tritton's life and labours, with the Memorial Sermon by his minister, Rev. W. Fuller Gooch.

The biographical details are few. Joseph Tritton (born 1819, died 1887) was of Nonconformist ancestry, descending from Robert Barclay, the great Quaker Apologist. His father, a member of The Society of Friends, died in middle life. His mother was a member of the Church connected with Battersea Chapel, where Rev. Joseph Hughes—a founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society—was then minister. Mr. Tritton was brought to Christ through the appeals of a godly aunt, being baptised in 1841. As a youth he entered his father's bank of Barclay, Bevan, Tritton, & Co., and lived to become a partner in the firm.

¹ William, his elder brother, was a schoolmaster of Charles Dickens.

As to the man himself, Dr. Trestrail spoke of him as "a wise counsellor, a constant helper, and a sympathising and courteous friend, whose Addresses were always marked by exquisite taste and tenderness."

Always a generous supporter of good causes, he built a day school in his own neighbourhood, founded a Baptist church, and opened his grounds to City Missionaries, Sunday Schools, and kindred organisations.

Of his verse-writing, Dr. Trestrail said, "A heart so tender, a mind so cultivated, could not fail to express both feeling and thought in poetic utterance." Yet, his was a lively temperament, homely and friendly, that manifested itself at times in quick repartee and innocent satire.

The hymns he wrote for the Opening Services of the Metropolitan Tabernacle are found in Mr. Spurgeon's *Our Own Hymn-Book*, Nos. 1018 and 1021. Mr. Gooch quoted two stanzas from a poem not generally known. The first of these setting forth Mr. Tritton's personal faith is here given as typical of his spirit and style of writing.

Complete in Him! Burst are the bonds that bound me;
The strength and hopelessness of sin are gone;
Beneath His cross, a living stream I found me,
There washed, and put the glorious garments on;
And if these feet again be soiled and sore,
His life of perfect love renews me evermore.

Coming to the second half of the century, we find names that will be familiar to readers of these articles. Among them are:—

4. DR. THOMAS VINCENT TYMMS (1842-1921),
AND SIR NATHANIEL BARNABY (1829-1915).

(a) To many, Dr. Tymms will be known as an able Apologetic writer, author of *The Mystery of God*, and a book on The Atonement, or by his works on Baptism, and *The Private Relationships of Jesus Christ*. Other readers may have been connected with Churches at Berwick or Accrington, the scenes of his early pastorates; or with Downs Chapel, Clapton, during his remarkable ministry there, lasting twenty-two years, where under his leadership the Church became a Missionary and Educational Centre from which Holman Bentley, Oram, Teichmann, and others were inspired to go forth into the mission field. Again, many ministers trained by him to think and study while at Rawdon College under his principalship in periods from 1891-1904, hold his memory in reverential regard.

For services to the denomination he was elected President, first of the L.B.A. in 1881, then of The Baptist Union in 1896.

He was a born leader of men, a thinker, a man of cultured mind and of a devout spirit. Possessing poetic gifts, he composed hymns of more than ordinary merit. One, included in various books, is an ideal closing hymn on the Lord's Day. It opens thus—

Another Sabbath ended,
Its peaceful hours all flown. (No. 561, *B.C.H. Rev.*)

Others, in *Psalms and Hymns for School and Home*, are—

In Shiloh, where Thine ark was stored (No. 220).

Lord, I read of tender mercy (No. 320).

O Lord of glory, be my Light (No. 251).

all three worthy of more general use.

One of his most distinctive and beautiful compositions is found in *The Sunday School Hymnary*, Senior Section, No. 465. When editing that book, the present writer visited Dr. Tymms at his home in Bexhill, and was privileged to have the loan of a MS. book containing many sets of original verses; one that greatly impressed him was a poem of eleven verses that had appeared in *Good Words*, 1892, under the title, "Light from Emmaus." Its first stanza began,

How oft an absent Lord we mourn.

The author told how the poem came to be written. While minister at Clapton, he had occasion to call upon his friend Dr. Joseph Parker. On entering his study he was saluted with the words, "The very man I want! Here's a new sermon on words from Luke xxiv. 15—'Jesus Himself drew near.' I've searched hymnbooks, but can find nothing on the passage. Now, go home, and write something suitable!"

Pondering the request while walking homeward, Dr. Tymms was gripped by the inspired sentence, and on reaching home the poem came to birth.

By his consent the following verses were chosen (with a few changes he made from the original) to appear as a hymn.

Jesus Himself drew near.—

Luke xxiv. 15.

- 1 Let evening twilight turn to dawn,
For all who love Thee, Saviour dear;
Like twain of old, to whom, we read,
"Jesus Himself drew near."
- 2 Yet we remember how 'tis writ,
That while He sought their doubt to clear,
Their eyes were held, and told them not,
Jesus Himself drew near.
- 3 With burning hearts they heard His words,
Unfolding how each ancient seer
Said, "Christ must suffer." So in Light,
Jesus Himself drew near.

- 4 Drew near, was near, yet still seemed far,
While sitting down their meal to cheer!
Then closer still, in vanished Form,
Jesus Himself drew near.
- 5 Not now a Figure by their side,
But in their hearts, Indweller dear!
His present Spirit bade them say,—
Jesus Himself is here!
- 6 So dwell in us by faith, dear Lord!
In us by grace Thy throne uprear,
Then of our darkest hours we'll say,
Jesus Himself drew near.
- 7 Be near us, Lord, till sense no more
Divides from Him our souls revere;
Be with us, Lord, till through the tomb,
To Jesus we draw near.

(b) The facts of Sir Nathaniel Barnaby's career are soon set forth. He sprang from a Kentish family, being born in Chatham on February 25th, 1829. Brought up in naval surroundings, after a course of training, he entered the dockyard. Possessed of mechanical genius perfected by scientific knowledge, he rose in his profession until he attained the high position of Director of Naval Construction. For his valuable national services he was created a K.C.B.

Those who were his friends, however, knew that he, as a servant of Jesus Christ, desired to be known as a Sunday School man. When a boy he attended the Brook Sunday School in his native town. Later in life he married, and settled at Lee, Kent, joining the Church worshipping in the High Road Baptist Chapel. Here, for half-a-century, he was the greatly beloved Superintendent of the Sunday School. He was passionately devoted to children and young people, and took deep interest in all that concerned their spiritual and moral welfare. His hymns were mostly written for Anniversary Services. Two or three appeared in *The School Hymnal* edited by Rev. W. R. Stevenson. Six in *The Sunday School Hymnary* are—

1. No. 399. God bless our Motherland (National Hymn).
2. No. 98. I've a Father in heaven.
3. No. 445. Lord, I repent, with grief and shame,
4. No. 83. Stay, gentle dove,
5. No. 387. The soldier keeps his wakeful watch.
6. No. 410. We, the children of the day.

Nos. 1 and 3 of these are in the *B.C.H. (Rev.)*, Nos. 698 and 227.

A fine hymn of his is No. 31 in *The Congregational Hymnary*—

We sing of life, God's glorious gift to man.

5. OTHERS OF THE SINGING HOST.

Limited space allows only brief notes on a few other Christian singers of this period, whose names are taken in chronological order.

(a) Joseph Harbottle (1798-1864). Classical Teacher at Horton College, Bradford. Afterwards, Pastor in Accrington, where Joseph Angus studied Hebrew under his guidance. His hymn beginning,

Farewell, my friends beloved,
was written for the Traditional Melody of Bunyan's

Who would true valour see.

Hymn and tune are in *B.C.H. (Rvd.)* No. 786.

(b) Amos Sutton (1802-54), missionary in Orissa, was author of

Hail, sweetest, dearest tie that binds.

(c) Wm. Poole Balfern (1818-87), Pastor in London and Brighton; wrote,

Come unto Me, the Saviour said,
O gentle Teacher, ever near,
Shepherd of the sunlit mountains,

and other hymns.

Two men who ministered chiefly in the North were (d) Henry John Betts, born in 1825, author of

Beautiful Star, whose heavenly light,

and a Bible hymn—

There is a lamp whose steady light;

and (e) John Compston, born in 1828, a pioneer compiler of Sunday School and Temperance Song Books, who contributed original verses to these books.

Two others belonging to a race of gifted preachers were (f) Thomas Goadby, born 1829, author of

A band of maiden pilgrims,
Morn awake, and woodlands ring,
Prince of Life, enthroned in glory;

and (g) Fredc. Wm. Goadby, his younger brother, born 1845, minister in Bluntisham and Watford, whose career, bright with promise, was cut off when he was thirty-five years of age. His hymns, all good in quality, include—

A crowd fills the court of the Temple (*S.S.H.* No. 227).
O Lord, the children come to Thee,
O Thou, whose hand has brought us (*B.C.H. Rvd.* No. 655).

and

Our fathers' Friend and God.

(h) The Prince of Preachers, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, (1834-92), included original compositions in *Our Own Hymn Book*. His favourite,

The Holy Ghost is here,
is No. 451. Still more generally known is,

Sweetly the holy hymn,
No. 974, also in *B.C.H. (Rvd.)*, No. 594.

(i) Marianne Hearn, who adopted the name of her birth-place—Farningham in Kent—as her *nom-de-plume*, was born in 1834, died 1909. A woman of simple, sweet nature, she exercised a wonderful ministry of love through her large Bible Class for women, conducted in Northampton. She was also a Journalist and Editor. Her most popular hymns are—

Just as I am, Thine own to be (*B.C.H. Rvd.* No. 766).
Waiting and watching for me,
Hail the children's festal day (*S.S.H.* No. 360),

and

Let the children come, Christ said (*S.S.H.* No. 220).

(j) John Murch Wigner, born in Kings Lynn, 1844, was a son of Rev. J. T. Wigner. Of his hymns, two have gained general acceptance. These are,

Come to the Saviour now (*B.C.H. Rvd.* No. 207),

and

Lo, a loving Friend is waiting.

(k) Wm. Edward Winks (1842-1926) held pastorates in Allerton and Wisbech, and then, from 1876 to 1914, was Minister of Bethany, Cardiff. Author of prose books, he also issued *Christian Hymns and Songs*, seventy-two of his original pieces. Two are in the *B.C.H. (Rvd.)*.

Be still my heart, be still my mind (No. 366).
Lord, Thy servants forth are going.

(No. 527, A Farewell to Missionaries.)

A third—

In the night our toil is fruitless,
is in the *B.C.H.* 1900 edition, No. 408.

6. SINGERS IN FOREIGN LANDS.

Dr. Burrage gives names of Hymnists in America, Scandinavia, Denmark, France, Germany, Spain, Greece; as well as in Eastern lands such as India, Burma, China, Japan, and on the African continent. Generally, the writers are unknown in Britain, and in many instances the hymns are translations from English authors. As his book was published forty-eight years ago, a long added list would have to be supplied. But we must

rest content to realise that Baptists, with eleven million members all over the world, still hymn the praises of God, and delight in producing "*psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord.*"

It yet remains for us to consider some modern Hymnists. This will be the subject of the next and final article.

CAREY BONNER.

Down on the Kond Hills, by S. Pearce Carey, M.A. (Carey Press, 2/6 net.)

Missionary heroism did not die with the pioneers. Modern missions are thrilling, their stories fascinating. Mr. Pearce Carey knows how to put the thrill and fascination on paper; moreover, he has the historian's passion for research and accurate recital of his discoveries. In this volume he takes us to the wild people of the Kond Hills in their habitations of cruelty, and reveals their customs and beliefs, and the inhuman rites by which for long years they attempted to propitiate their gods. Officers of the British Army, administrators of the Indian Government, asked for "the uplifting arm of Christ for the people of the Hill Tracts," and the General Baptists of the Midlands responded nobly. There is much of mystery and tragedy in the subsequent story, for, as on the Congo, so in these Hill Tracts, disease laid its dread hand on the workers. Not until 1914 did the first baptisms take place, by 1924 the number of those baptised was only 82, but, during the next decade, the increase was tenfold, to 829. And now the Kond Hills are to be the scene of the Fletcher Moorshead Memorial Hospital. Truly an epic story!