

The Tune Book of 1791.

WHILE Baptists were absolutely first in England to practise the singing of hymns in public worship, and to publish a book which was actually used for the purpose by many congregations, they balanced this achievement, exactly a century later, by issuing a large collection of tunes, drawn from many sources. It was the same Church that led the way; under Keach it had worshipped in Tooley Street, under Rippon it met in Carter Lane, Southwark. The first edition seems, by internal evidence, to have been compiled by the Precentor, Robert Keen, correspondent and executor of George Whitefield; the seventh edition, within nine years, was prefaced with an introduction by Thomas Walker, who, like many editors, contributed about thirty tunes. The enterprise, the risk, and the profits, accrued to Rippon, but the actual work is probably due to the two musicians, who should receive the credit. Their wisdom is evident in that, after 150 years, no fewer than ninety-seven out of their 320 hymns and odes are still in use. If in A.D. 2091, one-third of the tunes in any collection to-day shall still be sung, that may parallel the achievement of Keen and Walker.

The musical value of the book was estimated in detail five years ago in these pages by Dr. Orlando A. Mansfield, F.R.C.O. But it has two other values to a Historical Society; to show which parts of the world had Baptists interested keenly in songs of praise, and to show in which directions the denominational thought was trending.

Bristol was a great Baptist centre. The Broadmead Church chose as its first teacher Nathaniel Ingello, much given to music both at home and with the gentry of the city; in later days he became Bachelor of Music, and master of the band to Charles II. While he never brought the use of instruments into their worship, the church was accustomed to sing so lustily that a formal complaint was laid by an ex-sheriff that he could hear them from their meeting-place in Broadmead as far as his house in Hellier's Lane. Later on a hymn-book, compiled by Ash and Evans, had greatly promoted the worship of song; so it was fitting that in Rippon's book a hymn from it should be assigned the tune called *Broadmead*, while to balance it was another entitled *Pithay*. This latter was by Z. W. Vincent, who contributed three others; we should like to know the church whose praise he led; as one tune is called *Francis*, it may have been Shortwood. The tune *Horsley*, however, is due to Isaac Tucker,

from whom came also *Devizes*, *Westbury*, *Westbury Leigh*, besides one simply named *Tucker's*. In the area of the Western Association we are pointed also to *Painswick*, to *Bourton*, where Beddome had put forth many hymns, to *Bridgwater Cheriton* and *Horsington*, to *Calne*, where Andrew Gifford, senior, had preached, and where Isaac Taylor, from the Academy, was writing a history, to Chard, where the pastor *Rowles* was complimented with a tune bearing his name, composed by Z. Wyvill. Wiltshire, always a Baptist county, celebrated *Trowbridge*, where the pastors had conducted another academy, with *Salisbury* and *Bodenham*. *Southampton* was commemorated by Isaac Smith, who had published his own collection as early as 1770, before the Hampshire church had revived. Keen had taken pains to gather tunes actually favourite in many districts, as the introduction avows.

Other old churches were in the Thames Valley. Smith remembered *Henley*, besides a *Sprague* of the West Country. *Burford* was borne in mind, recently revived from Coate. So, too, with the old church at *Faringdon*; but as its composer, Wyvill, named another *Eaton*, where no Baptist had flourished since Paul Hobson had been a Fellow of the College, the name was evidently due to the fact that Wyvill, church organist, of Maidenhead, took pupils all over the district. Similarly the Surrey villages of *Ewell*, *Mitcham*, *Sydenham*, were not the homes of Baptist churches, but may have been homes of some pupils of Walker, who entitled three of his tunes after them. It is different with the Kentish *Eythorne*, which had housed Baptists ever since 1653; its name was given to a tune by Thomas Clark, Precentor of the still older church at *Canterbury*. (It may be added that this is in the florid style best known in Handel's works, with an ingenious bit of canon for four voices, and another for two; after which the melody bounds up from C below the line to the top F, to end with a run completely down the octave.) There is a name, *New Cranbrook*, which hints at the changes of Baptist life in Kent, where the old General Baptist churches were dying, and new churches were rising on a Calvinistic basis. In this tune, Walker fairly let himself go, writing for five parts; antiphonally, with repeats, semi-quaver phrases; as if he exulted in the new church which was replacing the old Cranbrook, where singing was never practised.

At first sight the country north of the Thames had not yielded much to the compilers. *Abridge* had been commemorated in a single tune by Isaac Smith, though no church took that village as headquarters. But an elaborate ode by Walker, beginning for three parts and differentiating for four, sometimes Larghetto, then Vivace, with strains to illustrate "dew" and

"early dew," and repeats which indeed set forth "perpetual" blessings, is named *Harlow*. That little town was centre for an old church, where, at this time, two sisters were born, one of whom went on the stage, then wrote an opera, but is known in religious circles as author of "Nearer, my God, to Thee," while her sister edited books of hymns and anthems for a London church; both are buried in the Baptist ground at Harlow. Across country is Hitchin, whose pastor, *Geard*, was commemorated in a tune by Keen, wedded to his famous hymn, "How firm a foundation." Geard's church had been used to very few tunes, but was led to "pucker in" a long metre to fit a short metre tune. It was time Keen came to the rescue.

In the midlands was Coseley, and Job Turner contributed a tune, *Darkhouse*, in memory of the church there. Why Grigg, of Launceston, entitled one *Stamford*, is still unknown; Philpot had not yet risen. At Clipstone, Thomas Jarman had not yet begun to spawn his 1,500 tunes. There were special reasons for the titles *Bradford* and *Fawcett*, to be noted directly; they do not connote musical practice there; indeed, the intense love of music in the hills and dales of the north seems to have been unknown even to Walker. And the only two tunes with Welsh names are clearly due to non-Baptist associations.

The reflections of Baptist life in London are many, as is but natural. There is a *Carter Lane*, for there Rippon presided every Sunday, while Keen led the praise. There is a *Tooley Street*, where Keach had won his people to be the earliest congregation which sang hymns. There is a *Maze Pond*, where Abraham West had bargained that they should sing before he accepted their call to the pastorate. *Limehouse* recalls another of Keach's foundations, near his home and his book-shop. The most famous preacher of the eighteenth century was James *Foster*, who had come from *Milbourne Port* in the west; man and place are both commemorated. Next to him ranked Gifford, and there is an *Eagle Street*, while the rebuilding of the meeting-house is reflected in *New Eagle Street*. The church at *Little Alie Street* had a famous Precentor, and Isaac Smith had actually taken a fine tune, which he credited to Handel, naming it for his church; we, however, know it as *Hanover*, and know it is by Croft. The senior church of all was at *Prescot Street*, whose pastor indeed had been earlier than Keach to advocate hymns; the tune named after this church was so old that no tradition remained as to its composer.

Rippon had opened up communication with *New York*, where his books were selling capitably, as was shown in the first volume of our *Transactions* in 1908; it was natural to remember this and help his salesman by a tune with that name. *Vermont* had

wavered for a short time whether it should continue part of the British Empire, or should throw in its lot with the new United States; it had been politic to remember her. *Boston* had had a famous tea-party, but had seen also the British victory at Bunker Hill; in these happier days it had a great preacher in *Stillman*; place and name are both here. *Providence College* celebrates the enterprise which, in emulation, produced the Bristol Academy, which trained Rippon; its president now was Manning, to whom is assigned a tune professedly from Handel. *Baltimore* is not neglected, where emigrants from Leicester recently founded a new church. *Kentucky* was already marked out as a Baptist area, and is complimented here. There are many other tunes bearing American titles, but they are all due to the work of George Whitefield, the close friend of Precentor Keen. We have to consider the revival he had accomplished of the old Baptist passion for missionary enterprise.

In Keach's time the most active of evangelists were Baptists and Quakers. Keach dotted East London with churches, as Bunyan did in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, Mitchell in Yorkshire and Lancashire. But early fervour had languished, till Gill killed it outright. It was left for a young clergyman from Oxford, George *Whitefield*, to revive that tradition, and extend it across the ocean. Close by Kiffin's church, he drew thousands, till a wooden *Tabernacle* was erected for winter use; at the West End, just beyond Eagle Street, a place was built on the road to *Tottenham Court*. The Countess of Huntingdon gave him a scarf as her chaplain, and found new openings at *Bath*, *Brighthelmstone*, *Tunbridge Wells*, with other fashionable watering-places, then founded a college at *Trefecca*. All these places gave names to tunes in Keen's collection. Whitefield went overseas as chaplain in the new colony of *Georgia*, and after starting an orphanage in its capital of *Savannah*, he rode repeatedly all along the coast preaching, in Baptist meeting-houses sometimes, as at *Charleston* in *Carolina*, in towns like *Richmond* of *Virginia*, *Baltimore*, *New Haven*, as far as *Newbury Port*, where he ended his career five days after writing his last letter, which was to his constant correspondent, his executor, Robert Keen, first editor of our tune-book. Is it any wonder that all these places, and others in *America* less known to us, gave names to new tunes? or that the whole movement was summed up in the title of another, *Missionary*? Surely this book of tunes was no mean factor in stirring the spirit of Whitefield afresh in Baptist circles.

John Thomas, a surgeon employed aboard ships of the East India Company's vessels, baptised at Eagle Street, began preaching in Bengal, translating a gospel, advertising for helpers.

When he came back he found that others had been thinking on the lines of Keach a century earlier :

Nay, precious God, let Light extend
 To China and East India ;
 To Thee let all the people bend
 Who live in Wild America ;
 O let Thy Blessed Gospel shine
 That the blind heathen may be Thine.

A few men in the Midlands had formed a Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathens ; the youngest of these enthusiasts being a student at Bristol, William *Staughton*. On the advice of Booth, pastor at Prescott Street, Thomas applied, and was accepted, as the first missionary of the Society. Resigning his post with the East India Company, he went out with a minister from Leicester—not the Henry *Carey* whose well-known tune figures here. The Society at once rallied many other supporters, notably young Samuel *Pearce* of Birmingham, and old William *Crabtree*, of *Bradford* ; the former soon gathered £70, far outshone by Bradford's £200. This excited Thomas Walker, who wrote an ode more than nine times the usual length, far the longest in this book, and gave it the title of the Yorkshire town.

Before long an offer came from a fellow-member of Thomas at Eagle Street, John *Fountain* ; he had been a chorister, and was an enthusiast about music, so he soon sent back a *Hindoo Tune*, which was not only put on a large frontispiece to the second number of the Periodical Accounts of the B.M.S., but was incorporated in Walker's collection for English Baptists to sing. Except for the old Hebrew Yigdal, known as *Leoni*, it is the first case of Asia enriching European song ; the precedent has been almost neglected. Then a young printer of *Derby*, who had been to hear *Carey* preach in Rippon's pulpit, and had been told to prepare himself for consecrating his trade by printing the Bible in Bengali, wrote from *Halifax*, where, at Ewood Hall, he had put himself under the tuition of *Fawcett*, that he was ready, and was starting in 1798. Thus our foundation of modern missions is enshrined in Rippon's book.

The B.M.S. did not limit itself to Bengal. There is a little-known chapter in its early history which is illustrated by Rippon, for three tunes here, named *Stamford*, *Elim*, *Tiverton*, are derived from Grigg. Who he was has puzzled many enquirers, who only agree that he was not the Rev. Joseph Grigg, a pedit-baptist who had died at Walthamstow in 1768 ; that minister had indeed written hymns, but there is no word of his composing tunes. We call attention to Jacob Grigg, student at Bristol,

pioneer missionary to Sierra Leone in 1795, and hope thus to solve the puzzle. His story deserves telling at full length, so that at this point we leave awhile the tune-book, with its crystallised history, to concentrate on the enterprise of one of its contributors. He was deeply wronged in his life, and it is time to rescue from oblivion the first musical missionary, victim of the Slave Trade. Many of the facts were discovered on the spot by a member of our Historical Society, Captain F. W. Butt-Thompson, and were published in his elaborate volume on Sierra Leone.

A sermon on the Slave Trade was preached in 1788 by James Dore, of Southwark, from the Baptist Academy of Bristol, which had also trained Rippon. It attracted much attention, and was reprinted the same year, also in 1790. Great interest was excited, and the news that many slaves in America had been freed during the Revolutionary war, and were not happy in Nova Scotia, gave a practical problem which was soon attacked. One of the chief centres of the trade in Africa was at Sierra Leone, where a mulatto, educated in England, had built up a huge business. He bought and sold on what Americans are teaching us to call the cash and carry basis, giving £10 each for every man delivered at his barracoons, so that the largest of these was presently worth £30,000. One of his lieutenants, Signor Dominguez, started for himself at the head of a narrow gulf, in Port Lokko.

Now many of the Nova Scotia freedmen had been kidnapped from this very district, and Englishmen decided to make a brave gesture and repatriate them in their old homes, with protection. Colonists were sent from England, land was bought at the mouth of the gulf, and a town was built, called Freetown. Not only the Nova Scotians were convoyed hither, but another band from America. They included many Baptists, who left in the Maritime Province a regular Baptist church; while the main body in Africa, before the end of 1792, built on Rawdon Street in Freetown, the first place for Christian worship. Their pastor was David George, so capable that he soon won his way to a seat on the Council of the Governor; while the church had also two elders and three deacons. Within two years they had built canoes and even schooners, were farming, fishing, dealing in rice and camwood and livestock, or proving good mechanics. Thomas Peters, who found his family still in the district, erected a stone house, and was chosen Headman for the town.

Meanwhile a Sierra Leone Company had been chartered in England, at the instigation of Granville Sharp; it sent out 119 officials by the end of 1792, with a Governor, William Dawes. He had been a Royal Marine, and so far had some qualifications,

for there were the slavers to deal with, and the coast to the north was French, so that war was quite likely. But the only other experience of Dawes had been at the convict colony recently started in Australia. From the very start he was a misfit, trying to govern as though these free negroes were convicts or under martial law. Fortunately a capable man named Zachary Macaulay came from Jamaica, where he had managed an estate, and had seen both actual slavery and a flourishing church of negroes under another Baptist pastor. But at first he had not the supreme authority. The white men, moreover, were at cross-purposes with the aborigines; they had "sold" land for the settlement, but had not at all meant to abdicate all their rights and go away; whereas the colonists thought they had acquired absolute rights in the whole district. Thus trouble was due not only from the French Republic, from the slavers close at hand, but even from the very natives whom the colony was meant to protect.

The Baptist church in Jamaica opened communication with the nascent B.M.S. in England, and though no white man went thither as yet, the committee at Arnsby on April 7th, 1795, heard two pieces of news which dovetailed wonderfully. The only two missionaries of the Society had been sent to Bengal, John Thomas and William Carey. Enquiry was being made as to openings in other parts of the world, and Carey had expressly pointed to the "free settlement at Sierra Leone," as to which the new Company was now publishing reports. Also Jacob Grigg, student at Bristol, who had already written to ask for an appointment, had been commended by the authorities of his Academy; he was therefore appointed the third missionary of the Society. It was felt as desirable as it was scriptural that he should have a companion, and at the next meeting, in Kettering on June 11th, his fellow-student, James Rodway, who had had a short experience at Burton-on-Trent, offered and was accepted. At Birmingham, on September 16th, it was recited how a letter had been sent to the Sierra Leone Company about the intentions of the Society, and of these two men. Credentials were drawn up to the Baptist church under David George, then the young men were ordained, with the laying on of hands, by Andrew Fuller and John Ryland; and in the afternoon they both left for London, to embark forthwith. Is it an accident that Rippon's tune-book contains *George's* and *Ryland*.

Grigg and Rodway landed at Freetown on December 1st, and met Governor Dawes. Within three weeks he introduced them to the Headman at Port Lokko—the very centre of that Trade he was there to oppose! Grigg was heroic enough to think of settling where Satan's throne was. On the short trip Rodway

had been horrified to pass a Slave Factory run by Englishmen, where hundreds of poor Africans were condemned every year into perpetual slavery. They did arrange with the Headman for one white man to come and keep a school at Port Lokko, another man to keep a factory. So Grigg took up with him a Nova Scotian to run this store; and began to understand the astute measures of the slavers, for they steadily undersold the free Baptist, who could make no headway; and they stirred up such misunderstandings that Grigg's work was grievously hindered. Yet he learned enough of the language to converse, and he wrote home that he hoped soon to be able to preach to the Timmanies. He asked for more men to be sent; and indeed, the mortality was frightful, so that the place was already nicknamed at the head of letters, "White Man's Grave." He declared that they would be welcomed by the natives, who wished to be taught reading and writing, and promised to send their children to school. Even the local Headman, a Mahometan, who would not change his religion, would send his children, with leave to pray in the white man's fashion.

Grigg, however, found that there was some peculiar double-dealing as to the old-established Slave Trade, even involving the servants and friends of the very Company chartered to break it up. Details are perhaps entombed in the archives of the B.M.S., but the committee had to report to the Society that not only had Rodway been invalidated home, but that Grigg had imbibed some prejudice against a principal person in the colony, and was embroiled in unhappy disputes. He was actually expelled, and the Governor gave him three options as to his destination. He took the first ship for America, and was thus lost both to the mission-field in Africa and to English life generally. It is a grave pity that Zachary Macaulay had not replaced Dawes a few weeks earlier. Details as to some of the scandals at Freetown are in a letter from Grigg to John Sutcliff at Olney, written on April 25th, 1796, and now preserved at the National Library of Wales, where it was summarised and the précis published in the *Baptist Quarterly*, VI., 220.

Grigg found a welcome in Virginia, and Rippon's last news was that on May 23rd, 1801, he preached at Nottoway in Dinwiddie County for the Portsmouth Association; Register IV., 787. Portsmouth had been a naval centre for a generation, and to-day is the second largest such port in U.S.A., quite matching our own Portsmouth or Grigg's Plymouth. From a Baptist standpoint, the district had been leavened by Robert Norden and other settlers since 1714. In the great Revival due to Whitefield, Methodists established themselves at the town, while Baptists formed a church of sixty-eight members in 1798. Its second

pastor was a negro, and by 1809 it had a membership of over two thousand, having enrolled all the negroes of the neighbourhood. This was just the sphere for Jacob Grigg, who became the fourth pastor. It is delightful to see that our pioneer in Africa, the third missionary of the B.M.S., when expelled from Freetown because of his opposition to the slavers, chose to go with and to the slaves in America. His love of music would be a bond with them, and the meeting-house may have rung with his sturdy English tunes, alternating with their plaintive African spirituals.

Immediately above the summary of his last letter home is one concerning Robert Keen, the Precentor. Singing had been put on a new footing by Whitefield. As early as 1739 he had preached on the mount near Bristol to thousands; "Last Sunday evening we sang the hundredth Psalm and all could hear; it is much like singing at a scaffold or stake with multitudes around." When being piloted across the New Passage, he and Seward sang hymns most of the way. Within a year he changed the colliers of Kingswood so that their usual evening diversion was singing praise to God. He headed scores of men riding from Evesham to Tewkesbury, who cheered the way with Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. When he laid the first stone of a new Tabernacle at Plymouth, it was with prayer and song, and this was repeated at an early service there. On his last voyage he wrote that, if he died, the hymn-book was not to be cashiered, and that he was glad to hear of the Amens at Tottenham Court. That letter was to Robert Keen.

John Wesley, too, illustrates this musical temper. He mentions in his *Diary* thirty visits to Launceston, the home of Jacob Grigg; many of them show that while the next stage westwards was Tiverton, eastwards the next was Gwennap. There they poured out their souls together in praises and thanksgiving; and he rejoices in the sound of many thousand voices when they were all harmoniously joined together in singing praises to God and the Lamb. Wesley was a great organiser, and the Discipline ordered, "In every large Society let them learn to sing, and let them learn our tunes first." Every person in the congregation was to sing, not only one in ten. So Jacob Grigg knew well the value of song, and the value of writing good tunes for his own denomination.

The tune *Tiverton*, published by Rippon of Tiverton, recalls that the town had, in 1657, entertained the Western Association, which then discussed "whether a beleeven man or woman being head of a family in this day of the gospell, may keep in his or her house an instrument or instruments of musicke, playing on them, or admitting others to play thereon?" A long minute contains the sensible clause, "We cannot conclude the

use of such instruments to be unlawful." Next year two western leaders put forth a pamphlet concerned with Tiverton, which declared that men of God should be "merry in the Lord with melody in their hearts, and a distinct and cheerful voice expressed either in the songs of Moses, David, or otherwise as the Spirit bringeth things to their remembrance and gives them utterance." The scruples of a few were borne with at Tiverton, till in 1732, on June 25th, "First began to sing the praise of God in the Publicke assemblys of this Church." In January, 1761, after debate as to the "decency of ye posture," it was decided to stand during singing of hymns. These minutes were published by H. B. Case, in his *History of the Baptist Church in Tiverton, 1607-1907*.

John Rippon was a loyal son of this church, and it must have been with joy that when his Precentor, Keen, recognised the merits, the strength, of this tune, and he heard it was by a student of his own Academy, the pioneer missionary to Africa, he gave it the name of his old musical church. The ore mined in the stannaries was recognised in the Minories as true metal, and with the mint-mark of Carter Lane, it soon became current coin in the world of music. Indeed, it is the only composition of that age that has worn till this day.

The strains that Jacob Grigg first sung,
Approval gained from Keen,
Who placed them Rippon's tunes among,
To liven many a scene.

So when from Freetown Grigg was hurled,
And Slavers thought to boast,
He found his way in western world
To Portsmouth on the coast.

And thus he spent his riper years
Across Atlantic waves,
In wiping the indignant tears
From kidnapped negro slaves.

Though purchased, and no more their own,
He taught them Moses' song;
For God who sits upon the throne,
To Him they now belong.

W. T. WHITLEY.