

43. *Gospel Advocate*, Dec. 1833.
44. G.B.A., Vol. 3, 1f., 49, 96f.
45. G.B.A., Vol. 4, 66f, 81f.
46. U.B.A., Vol. 1, 37f.
47. This was an inevitable development when so much hung on a single proof-text, Matthew 28, 19, the favourite resort of the General Baptists and at the same time the most obviously trinitarian reference in the whole New Testament!
48. U.B.A., Vol. 3. *The Advocate*, though reduced in both size and price, perished in September of this same year, 1839.
49. The sort of thing that was happening is made clear in a pathetic letter written by Pastor John Shearman of Billingshurst to the Tavistock Unitarian church in 1851. He applies for the pastoral office. He is self-taught and of no great intellectual capacity, and "of plain, mediocre appearance and address". His congregation, all farmers, and all affected by the abolition of the Corn Laws, can no longer support him, even on the meagre stipend of £60 p.a. In the event the application was unsuccessful—T.U.H.S., Vol. 6, 171.
50. For the Seventh Day General Baptists see *The Seventh Day Baptists In Europe and America: Historical Papers*, 2 Vols. (1910); E. A. Payne and A. Micklewright in *Notes and Queries*, Vols. 191-193 (1946-48). The Joseph Davis Charity is explained most fully in letters to the *Saffron Walden Weekly News*, August 1905. The Mill Yard cause was of course later revived and continues to flourish.

IAN SELLERS.

(Dr. Sellers' study of the old General Baptists, which he gave as a paper to the Summer School in July last, will be completed with a further article in the next issue. Ed.)

THE BAPTISM OF THOMAS COOPER

THE baptism of Thomas Cooper is referred to by Douglas Ashby in his history *Friar Lane — The Story of Three Hundred Years*. Cooper had been a Methodist lay preacher and one of the leaders of the Chartist Movement. It was through a conversation with the wife of a Baptist minister that he became "a Baptist in conviction, and on Whit Sunday 1859, my old and dear friend Joseph Foulkes Winks immersed me in Baptism in Friar Lane Chapel, Leicester . . . I forthwith joined the General Baptists." This is a quotation from Cooper's autobiography and it is only natural to jump to the conclusion that he became a member of Friar Lane: the puzzle is that Cooper's name does not appear on the membership roll of that church!

Joseph F. Winks was established in Leicester as printer and book publisher, he was the publisher for the New Connexion of General Baptists, as well as the unpaid minister of Carley Street, and this for twenty years. Why did he baptise Thomas Cooper, when Friar Lane had two ministers? There was the new man from Quorndon, the Rev. James Carey Pike, as well as the elderly Rev. S. Wigg, whose health was failing. Let me again quote Douglas Ashby, who is proud to be the great grandson of Winks: "Mr. Wigg's health was only in part the reason for the Pastor of Carley Street performing one of the most interesting baptisms that took place in the chapel.

'This Lord's Day Morning June 12th/59 Thomas Cooper the late Chartist Leader and Author of "Purgatory of Suicides" —was baptized at 7 o'clock by Mr. Winks in this Chapel. Mr. Price a Welch Minister read and prayed and gave an address—May he be faithful unto death'."

Ashby goes on to contend that the real reason was the personal friendship that existed between Winks and Cooper right from their early days in Gainsborough. Certainly, it was the friendship that brought them together, and Friar Lane is only incidental in the story. I have perused the minutes of the Carley Street Church covering this period and found this entry:

"Church Meeting April 11 1859

... Thomas Cooper, formerly a Teacher in the Gainsborough Adult Schools, then a Wesleyan local preacher—Editor of Newspapers—Chartist Orator and Poet—expounder and advocate of German Neology—now lecturer on the Truth of Xtianity was proposed by the minister for baptism and fellowship, and on the motion of the deacons accepted unanimously. Baptism to be on June 12th at 7 a.m. Prayer Meeting at 6. To be received at Lord's Supper same evening. Oh the riches of Divine Mercy and Grace!"

The above extract is in Winks' own handwriting. The membership roll of Carley Street shows that Cooper was in membership for five years. A most interesting baptism being recorded in the minutes of two different Baptist churches. It seems plain that Carley Street had no baptistry of its own.

Another person who was baptised by Joseph Winks when he was minister at Melbourne was the young Thomas Cook, who later became famous as a tourist agent.

THOMAS J. BUDGE