

¹⁵⁵ Payne, *Baptist Union*, p. 100.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 96.

¹⁶⁰ Joseph Angus, *Baptists: their existence a present necessity, a conscientious conviction, a representative, and a defence of important spiritual truth*, London, 1866, p. 3.

¹⁶¹ Landels, *William Landels*, p. 223.

¹⁶² Payne, *Baptist Union*, p. 101.

¹⁶³ *The Baptist Handbook*, 1870, p. 16.

¹⁶⁴ Buckland, *D.N.B.*, Vol. XLI, p. 89.

¹⁶⁵ The only exception, a recent one, is K. R. M. Short, "Baptist Wriothesley Noel", *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. XX, No. 2, Apr. 1963.

¹⁶⁶ H. S. Skeats and C. S. Miall, *History of the Free Churches of England*, p. 510f.

¹⁶⁷ *Sunday at Home*, Jun. 1868, p. 409.

¹⁶⁸ G. R. Balleine, *A History of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England*, p. 185. W. H. B. Proby, *Annals of the Low-Church Party in England*, London, 1888, Vol. I, pp. 336, 448, 508.

¹⁶⁹ B. W. Noel, *Letter to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon*, p. 10.

D. W. BEBBINGTON.

Samuel Morton Peto: A Note

SAMUEL MORTON PETO, in his heyday one of the wealthiest of Baptists, was considered an embarrassment by many within the denomination after his firm became bankrupt during the general financial difficulties of the mid 1860s. None of our present day members has been more jealous of the reputation of Peto than the Rev. J. L. Chown of Wolverhampton.

Peto, born 4th August, 1809, at Whitmore House, Sutton, became in his youth a draughtsman of some distinction, showing in addition an ability in design. He and a cousin, Thomas Grissell, inherited their uncle's building business in 1830. In partnership they built Hungerford Market (1832/3), the Reform (1836), the Conservative (1840), and the Oxford & Cambridge (1830) club houses, the Lyceum (1834), St. James's (1835) and Olympic (1849) theatres, and Nelson's column (1843). Under Isambard Brunel they built the G.W.R. line from Hanwell to Langley and that from Reading to Goring. The foundations of the Houses of Parliament were laid in 1839 but Grissell sought the dissolution of their partnership in 1846 — before that contract was completed — because, although railway contracts brought good returns, he was uneasy about the heavy initial capital investment. In the division of their company's interests Peto kept the railway contracts — the Hythe to Folkestone section, the Ely, Peterborough and Norfolk section and the Southampton to Dorchester line.

Edward Ladd Betts was also in this line of business, having ballasted for the Reigate to Folkestone line. He married Peto's sister, Ann, in 1843 and the two contractors formed a partnership in the year that the one with Grissell was dissolved. The new association continued until Betts' death in 1872.

The years 1847 and '48 were busy ones. They built the G.N.R.

loop of Peterborough to Doncaster via Lincolnshire and, in partnership with Thomas Brassey, the Norwegian Grand Trunk line from Christiania to Eidswoold. The Lowestoft Harbour works were also begun then. Debtors forced some financial crisis on the firm in 1847 by owing £200,000, which next year had risen to between £300,000 and £350,000, so that the firm had to borrow £140,000. In that year, 1848, Peto built at his own expense the Bloomsbury church which prospered so well that it repaid the £18,000 to Peto, who used the money to purchase the lease of the Diorama at Regents Park, reconditioned it and saw William Landels installed as minister.

In following years there were many overseas contracts — Buenos Aires, Dunaburg and Witepsk, Algiers to Blidah, Montreal and Denmark. At home the firm built the Victoria London docks for a contract figure of £870,000. Peto had sat as the Liberal M.P. for Norwich 1847-1854 but had to resign his seat when he undertook to build for the government a 39 mile stretch of railway in the Crimea to assist in the deployment of the troops engaged in the war there. Peto completed the work at cost but received his baronetcy in recognition. In 1859 he returned to Parliament as Member for Finsbury and remained so till 1865 when for the next three years he sat for Bristol.

The firm had to suspend operations on the 11th May, 1866, because they could not meet their liabilities. The following extract is taken from *The Kentish Gazette* for Tuesday, 3rd September, 1867:

THE FAILURE OF SIR S. M. PETO AND Co.

The following is a copy of the claim presented by Mr. John Linklater against the above bankrupts, at the first sitting for the choice of assignees, viz.: —

In the Court of Bankruptcy, London.

In the matter of Sir Samuel Morton Peto, Baronet, Edward Ladd Betts, and Thomas Russell Crampton, all of Great George Street, Westminster, in the County of Middlesex, being traders, and carrying on business in co-partnership, as contractors for constructing public works, and builders, under the style or firm of Peto, Betts, and Crampton, bankrupts.

We, William Edward Hilliard of Cowley House, near Uxbridge, in the County of Middlesex, Esquire, and Henry De Grey Warter, of Langdon Manor, in the County of Salop, Esquire, agents of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company, being a public company incorporated and carrying on business at Victoria Station in the County of Middlesex, do solemnly declare that we are such agents, and duly authorised to make this proof, and that the statement of accounts between the company and the said bankrupts annexed is a full, true, and complete statement of accounts between the said Company and the said bankrupts, so far as the bankrupts are sought by the Company to be charged therewith, being a copy of the statement of account already delivered by the Company to the said bankrupts except that in the annexed account, the date October 31st 1860 is inserted

instead of October 15th 1860, which appears by error in the account rendered to the bankrupts under the head of "Cash from the Contractors", and that it is within our own knowledge that the balance thereby claimed to be due from the estate of the said bankrupts to the said company arose on or before the 3rd day of July 1867, and upon the consideration therein appearing; but the said account does not take into consideration items of allowance and discharge, which, as we are advised, cannot be substantiated, and subject thereto to the best of our knowledge and belief the said balance still remains unpaid and unsatisfied.

(Signed) Wm. Edward Hilliard.
H. DE GREY WARTER.

Declared by the above named Henry De Grey Warter, at my Office, No. 6, Frederick's place, in the city of London, this 23rd day of July 1867, before me, John P. Maples, a London Commissioner.

Declared by the above named William Hilliard at Uxbridge, in the county of Middlesex, this 23rd day of July 1867, &c., &c.

Attached to the above document is the voluminous Dr. and Cr. account occupying 13 or 14 large folio sheets and which is thus summed up:—

ABSTRACT OF THE ANNEXED ACCOUNT

Dr. The London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company in account with Messrs. Peto, Betts and Crampton.

	£	s.	d.
1st Cash from the Contractors to the Company and payments made by Contractors on account of the Company	2,171,336	18	7
2nd Works for certificates of the Company's Engineers	2,993,264	14	3
3rd Cash received from the Public for Metropolitan Extension Stock, and Debentures taken by the Contractors	4,171,450	0	0
4th Balance due to the Creditors, exclusive of interest	6,661,941	19	1
Total ...	£15,997,993	11	11
Cr.			
	£	s.	d.
1st Cash from the Company to the Contractors and payments made by the Company on account of the Contractors	4,403,442	11	11
2nd Stock and Debentures taken or realised by the Contractors	11,594,551	0	0
Total ...	£15,997,993	11	11

The above gigantic account, as already published, stands adjourned for consideration by Mr. Edwards, the official assignee, until the next sitting, fixed to be held before the Senior Commissioner of Bankruptcy, Edwd Holroyd, Esq., in November next.

It is time for a new assessment of the life and work of Peto to be made. To any willing to undertake the task it promises to be absorbing and rewarding.

DOUGLAS C. SPARKES.

Reviews

Augustus to Constantine, Robert M. Grant, Collins, 415 pp. £3.15.

Students of early Church history will certainly welcome the appearance of a new book by Robert M. Grant, who has placed us greatly in his debt by his earlier studies in second century Christianity, Gnosticism, the work of the Apologists, and so on. His new work is a careful study of what he describes as "the thrust of the Christian movement into the Roman world." Professor Grant gives us 400 pages of superbly documented Church history and his work will surely become an important text-book for serious students of this period. His twenty-one chapters lead us through the various crises and opportunities which faced the early Christian people and we are brought to the place where we can see the triumph of the Christian movement in the reign of Constantine.

The author divides his book into five parts. The five chapters which form Part One provide us with a brilliant portrait of the Roman world and here is information of a kind which rarely finds its way into the more popular accounts of early Church history, probably because of the normal limitations on space. It is important, however, for the student of the period to know about Roman cities and their social structure, about education, cultural and military life as well as religious ideas. It is obviously necessary to be informed about the relationship between Rome and the Jewish people at this time and this is given careful treatment, so that the reader can understand the Palestinian scene before going on to a survey of Christian origins with special attention to the teaching and impact of Jesus and Paul. The organisation of Christian groups forms a further chapter in which the author outlines the beginnings of the doctrine of the Ministry. Part Two begins by tracing the Church's periods of testing under persecution, after which Professor Grant summarizes the teaching of the Apologists. Two crises in second century Church life, Gnosticism and Montanism, the author believes to be due to the problems raised by