
Ronald E. Davies

Robert Millar—an Eighteenth-Century Scottish Latourette

The encyclopaedic and magisterial work of the twentieth-century scholar K. S. Latourette on the history of the Christian church and its mission is a landmark in scholarship with its grasp of the picture as a whole as well as of the details. But Latourette's world-vision was anticipated in the work of Robert Millar which has been rediscovered by Dr. Davies, who teaches at All Nations Christian College.

The year 1992, in addition to its importance from the economic and political standpoint in Europe, will be a significant one from a Christian point of view. Among other things,¹ it marks the 200th anniversary of the publication of a book, modest in size but extremely significant in impact, namely William Carey's *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. The publication of this work, soon to be followed by the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, of which Carey himself was the first missionary, marks 1792 as the year in which the modern Protestant missionary movement was launched.

Popular Christian mythology has often given the impression that no significant Protestant missionary effort was in existence before Carey, which is clearly untrue; Carey himself makes reference to the work of John Eliot and others among the North American Indians, the Danish-Halle mission in Tranquebar and the world-wide spread of the Moravian missionaries, all of which provided him with inspiration and challenge.

The impression has also sometimes been given that no significant writing on the subject of missions had appeared before Carey's *Enquiry*, which is also contrary to the facts. It is the purpose of the present article to draw attention to a pioneer work,

¹ 1792 was the year in which August Gottlieb Spangenberg, the Jena professor who succeeded Count Zinzendorf as the chief leader of the Moravian Church, died.

which has received limited mention in modern times, but which was well-known and influential in the eighteenth century, namely *The History of the Propagation of Christianity, and the Overthrow of Paganism Wherein the Christian Religion is confirmed, the Rise and Progress of Heathenish Idolatry is considered, the Overthrow of Paganism, and the spreading of Christianity in the several Ages of the Church is Explained, the Present State of Heathens is inquired into; and Methods for their Conversion proposed* by Robert Millar, M.A. 'Minister of the Gospel at Paisley', published in Edinburgh in 1723, with second and third editions appearing in London in 1726 and 1731.²

Millar's Influence

Little is known about Millar's life; he was born in 1672, and died in 1752. However, there is no doubt about the influence of his missionary interest, especially in Scotland, where it was considerable. Two of his successors in Paisley, John Witherspoon and John Snodgrass, were strong supporters of the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, which had grown out of the Society for the Reformation of Manners established in 1701 to combat ignorance and Catholicism in the Highlands and Islands, and which eventually sponsored such missionaries as David Brainerd. Snodgrass was also a supporter of the London Missionary Society. Claudius Buchanan, also from the Paisley area, served as an East India Company chaplain in India, and

² A short article on Millar's book by the late Professor John Foster, who had himself been a missionary for a short time in China, appeared in the *International Review of Mission* Vol. XXXVII, 1948, 138-145. Its significance was also recognized in Olav Guttorm Myklebust, *The Study of Missions in Theological Education: An Historical Inquiry into the Place of World Evangelisation in Western Protestant Ministerial Training with particular reference to Alexander Duff's Chair of Evangelistic Theology*, Oslo 1955, in Johannes van den Berg, *Constrained by Jesus' Love: An Inquiry into the Motives of the Missionary Awakening in Great Britain in the Period between 1698 and 1815*, Kampen, 1956, and in J. A. De Jong, *As the Waters Cover the Sea; Millennial expectations in the rise of Anglo-American missions 1640-1810*, Kampen, 1970. However, all of these latter three were doctoral dissertations which, although published, had a limited circulation. Millar's importance, therefore, remains largely unrecognized.

Brief references to Millar also appear in a footnote to the English translation (by a Scotsman, George Robson, D.D.) of Gustav Warneck, *Outline of a History of Protestant Missions*, Edinburgh and London 1901, 73, and in George Smith, *Short History of Christian Missions*, Edinburgh, n.d., 157-158, also a Scot.

later wrote extensively on missions, particularly missions to the Jews. John Gillies, in his *Historical Collections relating to the Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel*, (Edinburgh 1754), makes considerable use of Millar's *History*, at times abstracting complete sections of Millar's narrative. As we shall see later, there is uncertainty concerning his influence on, and involvement in, the 'Concerts of Prayer', which were begun in Scotland in 1744, for the world-wide extension and prosperity of the kingdom of Christ, but his own interests were undoubtedly identical with those of the promoters of the prayer union.

In America, Millar's book became well-known soon after its publication. On May 28, 1725, Cotton Mather wrote to the author, expressing his appreciation of the book, and saying that he has shown it to a number of his friends.³ Similarly, Jonathan Edwards was well acquainted with it.⁴ Jedidiah Morse, who, at the turn of the century, was one of the strongest advocates for missions, both home and foreign, and whose advocacy of the latter was instrumental in the foundation of the first American society for foreign missions, was also influenced by Millar's work.⁵

In England, where the second and third editions were published, it was also well-known and used by those with an interest in missions. In all probability Philip Doddridge knew it, and drew on it for his own missionary interest and propaganda.⁶ Similarly, William Carey and his Baptist friends in the Midlands Association, possibly gained some of their knowledge of the state of world mission in their day from Millar's writing. It may be that a copy of his *History* was included in one of the parcels of books which John Erskine sent to Andrew Fuller and John Ryland Jr.,⁷ or they may have seen a copy of the London edition. Section II of Carey's *Enquiry* contains a survey of missionary endeavour

³ *Selected Letters of Cotton Mather* Compiled with Commentary by Kenneth Silverman, (Baton Rouge, 1971), 405.

⁴ Stephen J. Stein (ed.) *Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 5: Apocalyptic Writings* (New Haven and London, 1977), 436. In *Edwards' Catalogue*, (his commonplace book which he noted books he hoped to obtain), it appears on Page 3 (dated probably between 1726 and 1736, [Thomas H. Johnson, 'Jonathan Edwards' Background of Reading,' *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* 28 Transactions, 1931, 206]), with a vertical line through the entry, which normally means that he has either obtained, or at least read, the book.

⁵ De Jong *op. cit.*, 213.

⁶ See E. A. Payne, 'Doddridge and the Missionary Enterprise' in Geoffrey Nuttall (ed.), *Philip Doddridge* (London 1951), 79-101.

⁷ See De Jong *op. cit.*, 175.

from the days of the Apostles up to the eighteenth century which may have been derived from Millar.⁸

Millar's work was also known outside the English-speaking world, being translated into Dutch.⁹

Missionary interest in Scotland before Millar was not strong. The ill-fated Darien Scheme of 1698–1699 did nothing to increase missionary awareness among the Scottish churches.¹⁰ The S.S.P.C.K. did not venture into foreign missions until 1731, and even then only with reluctance.¹¹ The eschatological writings of Robert Fleming Sr. and his son Robert Fleming Jr. sought to place the conversion of the nations in the sequence of events leading up to the last days. The father's *The Fulfilling of the Scripture*, begun in the 1660s, and revised many times, was extremely well-known, and was often cited.¹² However, neither man directly urged missionary activity in order to bring in the latter day events. In Scotland, at least, Millar was a pioneer.

However it is also true of Protestantism in general that his work represents the first attempt in Protestant Christendom to present in a single narrative the history of Christian mission across the

⁸ See William Carey, *An Enquiry . . .* New facsimile edition with an introduction by Ernest A. Payne (London 1961), 14–37.

⁹ Myklebust *op. cit.*, 63, citing J. Wiggers, *Geschichte der evangelischen Mission* Vol. I, (1845), 14.

¹⁰ Jack Ramsey Jr., 'Scottish Presbyterian Foreign Missions—A Century Before Carey', *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, 1961, 201–218.

¹¹ In 1716, the Rev. Dr. Daniel Williams, a London clergyman and philanthropist, died, and left a bequest to the S.S.P.C.K., to extend its work further afield, on condition that the Society had already supported three missionaries for a year 'in foreign and infidel countries'. In 1731, after many attempts to obtain the bequest without fulfilling the conditions, the S.S.P.C.K. appointed three Correspondents in Boston, Governor Belcher and the Reverends Benjamin Coleman and Joseph Sewell. Three missionaries were chosen and sent out, Stephen Parker, Ebenezer Hinsdell, and Joseph Seccombe. After a year they were recalled to Boston and were ordained. The mission was not a success, but the Society, having begun to support work in the Colonies, continued to do so, first in Georgia and later in New York and New Jersey. David Brainerd and others were supported by them (Charles L. Chaney, *The Birth of Missions in America*, [South Pasadena 1976] 109–110).

Millar, in his work, speaks warmly of the success of the Scottish society in the Highlands and Islands, and says that the Scottish churches have not yet had opportunities to send missionaries among the heathen (*History* II. 351–352).

¹² The elaborate fifth edition of 1726 bore the influential names of Isaac Watts and Daniel Neal in the list of subscribers. As with Millar's book, it is cited many times in Gillies' *Historical Collections*.

centuries and the continents';¹³ he is indeed 'this Latourette of [more than] two and a quarter centuries ago'.¹⁴

His Comprehensiveness

His work is of considerable length, extending to two volumes with around 900 pages in all; the first edition (not available to the present writer) was obviously extremely bulky (the first two chapters, which, in the third edition take up 260 pages, occupy over 400 pages in the first edition).¹⁵

The span of the work is broad. Chapters I and II deal with 'the Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion' (3rd edn. 1731: I. 1–50), and 'the Rise and Progress of Heathenish Idolatry' (*Ibid.* 151–263), Chapter V with 'the Vanity of Paganism' (II. 1–59), and Chapter VII describes 'the Present State of the Heathen in Asia, Africa, and America' (*Ibid.* 133–226). Millar justifies the inclusion of these chapters in his Preface. Regarding Chapter I, he says that 'if Men be not firmly persuaded of this point, 'tis impossible they can be truly thankful for the Gospel of Christ, or that they can be fervent and zealous for the Propagation of it throughout the World' (I. iii). He deals with such topics as the existence and character of God (I. 3–19), the immortality of the soul (*Ibid.* 26–32), the origin and nature of sin (*Ibid.* 46–50), the divine authority of the Scriptures of both Old and New Testaments (*Ibid.* 65–140), and the 'superior Excellency [of Christianity] to all other Religions' (*Ibid.* 142–150). Something of the temper of the eighteenth century apologists for the rationality of Christianity appears here, although Millar is thoroughly Calvinistic and Evangelical in his theology. He is at pains to distance himself from 'the writings of Blount, Gildon, Toland, and other Anti-scripturists' (*Ibid.* iv).

The second and the fifth chapters are also

necessary to my main design: for serious thoughts upon the dismal State of the world before the Coming of Christ may make us more truly thankful for the Redemption he has purchased, and for the errand on which he came . . . to make us value our delivery from Pagan darkness . . . [it] may also discover to Youth the Vanity of Pagan Superstition, when reading their Classic Authors, which are full of it (*Ibid.* ix).

¹³ Myklebust *op. cit.*, I. 63.

¹⁴ Foster *op. cit.*, 139.

¹⁵ Foster *op. cit.*, 138.

Similarly, Chapter Seven, describing 'The Present State of the Heathen,'

may also quicken our Sympathy, and enliven our Prayers for those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, in the Habitations of Cruelty, and inspire us with a pious concern for their being brought to the Knowledge of the Truth (*Ibid.*).

Regarding 'the Historical Part' of his work, namely Chapters Three, Four, Six and Eight, Millar notes that most books on church history give only brief mention of the spread of the Gospel, and, even when they do mention it, they often go no further than the late Medieval Period (*Ibid.* v). His work, by contrast, gives a much more full and satisfactory treatment, and brings the whole matter up to the present time.

Chapter III covers the spread of Christianity up to the end of the third century I. 264–378), Chapter IV deals with the fourth century (*Ibid.* 378–447), and Chapter VI reviews the spread of the Church from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries (II. 60–132). In these chapters he covers the providential preparation of the world for the initial spread of the Gospel, mentioning the widespread use of Greek and Latin, the *Pax Romana*, the Jewish *Diaspora*, the large number of Proselytes and God-fearers, the current Schools of Greek philosophy, and the bankruptcy of the religions of the first century. He describes the spread of Christianity across the Roman Empire and beyond, the evidence for the faith among the Mongols of Central and Eastern Asia (II. 127, 129, 130), the Syrian Christians in India (*Ibid.* 148, 149), and the coming Christianity to the British Isles and Northern and Central Europe, including Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, Muscovy, Pomerania and Lithuania (*Ibid.* 99, 106–126, 128, 129). He is concerned to note the 'Antiquity' of Christianity in Scotland (II. 63), and the influence of Scots 'in restoring Learning in several Parts of Europe' (*Ibid.* 95, 96). Indeed, he believes that Boniface, the missionary to Germany, was a Scot (*Ibid.* 93), as also Patrick before him (*Ibid.* 64)!

Millar proceeds in Chapter VIII to cover 'the Propagation of the Christian Religion and the Overthrow of Paganism since the Renaissance to the Present' (*Ibid.* 227–354). He spends a considerable amount of space describing the work of Catholic missionaries, especially in India and China. He mentions the Jesuits, including the 'Apostolical Labours' of Francis Xavier in India and Japan, but he also exposes what he sees as the deficiencies in their methods, and reports the controversies between the Jesuits and the Papacy, and the alleged poisoning of the Papal envoy Cardinal Tournon by the Jesuits (*Ibid.* 234–294).

He is obviously much happier in describing the work of Protestant missionaries, such as that of John Eliot and others among the North American Indians (*Ibid.* 297–305), and he compares the success among the Indians of the Catholic and Protestant missionaries. He cites almost *verbatim* from Cotton Mather's account of Eliot's work, but also has access to other material on Eliot, referring (favourably) to Eliot's speculation that the aborigines might be remnants of the lost tribes of Israel. He mentions the work of Dutch missionaries in the East Indies (*Ibid.* 316, 317), and then spends considerable space describing the work of the Pietist missionaries in Tranquebar in the mission initiated by the Danish king (*Ibid.* 322–341).

His Sources

The work obviously occupied a considerable period of his time in composition, the more so as 'it was not my main business, I rather looked on it as a Relaxation', being 'written by starts, amidst the hurry of a multiplicity of affairs that lie upon me in the Pastoral Charge of a Great Congregation, besides many other lesser avocations' ('The Preface' Vol. I. xi, xii).

His reading was wide, and he 'endeavoured . . . to see . . . with [his] own eyes' all the authorities he quotes (*Ibid.*). His own library was not always adequate, but 'friends and good neighbours' also helped (*Ibid.*). Foster speculates that 'he must often have ridden over from Paisley to Glasgow for books'; it was there that he saw a copy of John Eliot's translation of the Bible into the Indian language (II. 300). In Foster's words

He is familiar with the Fathers, both Greek and Latin, in greatest detail, and is not without reference to Bardaisan and Ephrem. He quotes Latin medieval histories, and has read the travels of William of Rubruk, though he mistakes the Dutch friar for a Frenchman. He is familiar with Jesuit and other Roman Catholic missions, and has details of the Rites Controversy with regard to both Malabar and China . . .¹⁶

¹⁶ Foster *op. cit.*, 139, 140. Millar cites Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana*, and many other histories, both religious and secular. For events of his own time, he cites 'Cruell's *Present State of Muscovy*' Vol. I. 1698, and Vol. II. 1723, the latter citing 'A Description of the Manners and Customs of the Ostiaks, a nation that extends to the Frigid Zone in the Russian Dominions by John Barnard Muller', where Orthodox missionaries had been sent (Vol. II. 342–348). He scours the newspapers also for information, citing a 'letter from Petersburg' in the 'Evening Post' for 1721 on the current religious situation in 'Muscovy' (*Ibid.*).

As Foster shows, Millar is a critical and discriminating reader, seeking to assess the reliability of his sources. He expresses scepticism regarding a number of accounts which he finds in his sources, his comment on Bede being typical:—

I frankly own, tho' Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* be very valuable, for preserving to us the most accurate account we have of the conversion of the heathen English Saxons, yet he has such a heap of uncouth miracles, said to be performed by monks and saints, as do surpass my belief (II. 91).

There is an excitement and immediacy about his reporting of the contemporary religious scene, as he summarizes for his readers the various reports of the work of the Pietist missionaries in Tranquebar, the work of the S.P.C.K. and other activities (*Ibid.* 322–341, 349). He cites various pamphlets 'entitled *The Propagation of the Gospel in the East*, translated from the Dutch, and printed in London'. He summarizes the contents of the pamphlets as they describe the progress of the mission, and transcribes letters written by the missionaries to 'our present Sovereign King George', together with the king's reply.

In the third edition, he concludes his penultimate chapter 'I . . . shall now conclude this chapter by observing some other good things a doing in other parts of the world and at home for propagating and advancing our Religion' (*Ibid.* 342), where he refers, among other things, to the situation in the Russian Empire mentioned above, and ends the chapter with the words

May our gracious God bless and crown these and other good things that are a doing, not only in Europe, but in any other part of the known world, for the advancing of our Redeemer's Kingdom, and the ruin of ignorance and infidelity with great success, and may his name have the glory! (*Ibid.* 354).

His Purpose in Writing

Millar's general tone is one of warmth and concern for the glory of Jesus Christ, the extension of his kingdom, and the salvation of those who, as yet, have not heard the good news of the Gospel. He has a great desire for a genuine ecumenical spirit of love among Christians which will assist towards this end. In speaking of 'the Conversion of the Heathens', he says

This is a work that my soul does earnestly wish for. If Christians would serve God in Spirit and Truth at home; if they would lay aside their Divisions, Parties, and unchristian Humours . . . what a glorious addition to the Church of Christ might we justly expect? And

what Christian can refuse to give his helping hand to so good a work? Surely if he hath love to our Redeemer, or real Desire to see the Honour of our God promoted, he cannot decline it (I. x).

And again,

May a holy warmth, through the blessing of God, diffuse itself far and near, for the Salvation of perishing Souls, and may a great Harvest be reaped in every corner of the world (*ibid.* xii).

Millar's eschatological hope may be broadly characterized as 'positive amillennial' or 'nascent post-millennial'. The 'hope of better times', found to a degree in the Magisterial Reformers, and developed further in the English-speaking writers of the Puritan period, became in the writings of William Lowth, Charles Daubuz and Daniel Whitby a fully-fledged post-millennialism, which became very wide-spread in the eighteenth century.¹⁷ Millar does not engage in eschatological speculation, but contents himself with the general statement that

The time is coming, when the Fulness of the Gentiles shall come, and all Israel shall be saved . . . The time is coming, and I hope near at hand, when God will do great things for the Advancement of our Redeemer's Kingdom (*Ibid.* x.xii).

His hope is that his own work will contribute to this great end.

His Proposals

His nine proposals, in the final chapter (*Ibid.* 354–404), 'of further Means to be used for converting the Heathens, and propagating Christianity, with Arguments to promote the same' are intended to give teeth to this hope.

The first is prayer:

We ought fervently to pray for the conversion of the Heathen World to the Kingdom of Christ . . . The promises of the enlargement of the New Testament Church are many, and the time is near when they shall be fully accomplished: we ought then every one of us, in our station, to throw in our mite for the conversion of the Heathen world, not only by frequent prayers to the Throne of Grace upon ordinary occasions, but also by joining in solemn days of humiliation and prayer for that end (*Ibid.* 355).

This proposal is interesting, having affinities with the suggestions

¹⁷ See De Jong *op. cit.*, 159–198.

which were made some twenty years later, both in Scotland and elsewhere, for 'Concerts of Prayer' for the reviving of the Church and for the spread of the kingdom of Christ in the world.

In England in 1741, Philip Doddridge proposed to two meetings of ministers, first in Norfolk and then in Northamptonshire, certain means for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and in the following year he published them in connection with the printed edition of the sermon he had preached on both occasions. He summarized the suggestions as follows:—

That pious people unite as members of a society; that they daily offer up some earnest prayer for the propagation the gospel in the world, especially among the heathen nations; that they attend four times a year for solemn prayer; that some time be then spent in reviewing the promises relating to the establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world; that any important information of the progress of the gospel from foreign lands be communicated at these quarterly meetings; that each member contribute something towards supporting the expense of sending missionaries abroad, printing Bibles and other useful books in foreign languages; establishing schools for the instruction of the ignorant, and the like.¹⁸

In a footnote to the sermon he set out the rules of the missionary society which he was trying to establish within his own church; these expand the suggestions as set out above.¹⁹

It is not known whether Doddridge was acquainted with Millar's work. At some point he did become a corresponding member of the S.S.P.C.K., but in 1741 he was also made a corresponding member of the Moravian 'Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel'. His interest in Moravian missionary work had begun in 1737, and in 1740 had begun a correspondence with Count Zinzendorf.²⁰ It is possible that his ideas and suggestions grew out of this contact, although the possibility remains that he was also influenced by Millar's work. The possibility also exists of Doddridge's sermon being known north of the border and of its playing a part in the subsequent developments in the 'Concerts of Prayer' in Scotland.²¹

In Scotland in January 1743, a number of prayer societies

¹⁸ Cited in C. Stanford, *Philip Doddridge*, (London 1880), 97, 98.

¹⁹ They are cited in full in Ernest A. Payne, 'Doddridge and the Missionary Enterprise' in Geoffrey Nuttall (ed.), *Philip Doddridge, His Contribution to English Religion* (London 1951), 88–90.

²⁰ Stanford *op. cit.*, 96, 97.

²¹ De Jong *op. cit.*, 118.

published their intention of holding a day of thanksgiving for the 'Outpourings of the Spirit from on high on several Corners of this wither'd Church' with petitions to God 'that he would carry on this good and unexpected Work . . . that all Opposers . . . may be at last obliged to own that it is the Doing of the Lord'.²² In the previous year revivals had broken out at Cambuslang and Kilsyth, and the hope was being expressed that these would continue and spread, and that some who were uneasy regarding the phenomena would be persuaded that they were to be encouraged and not opposed.

In October of the following year, 1744, a group of Scottish ministers, headed by the Rev. John M'Laurin of Glasgow, agreed to unite in prayer regularly at certain times each week, and also in quarterly meetings, initially for a two-year period, that God would revive his church throughout the world. In 1746, when the initial period had elapsed, they published a 'Memorial' in which they argued for the continuance and extension of the practice. In New England, Jonathan Edwards, who was already thinking along similar lines,²³ heard of the original proposal in 1745 from his Scottish correspondents, and wrote asking for further details. In his *An Humble Attempt to promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer*, published in 1747, he printed the Memorial in full, and argued strongly for the adoption of the plan by the churches in America.

Jonathan Edwards' summary of the 1744 Scottish proposal²⁴ indicates that the Scottish ministers had a vision for the world and the world-wide church, and not only for revival in Scotland. If this is an accurate statement of their plans, it indicates that the

²² Cited from *The Christian History* (1743) I. 87, in Stephen J. Stein (ed.), *Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 5: Apocalyptic Works*, (New Haven and London), 36, 37.

²³ In *Some Thoughts Concerning the present Revival of Religion in New-England*, completed in 1742 and published in 1743, he says

'I have often thought that it would be a thing very desirable, and very likely to be followed with a great blessing, if there could be some contrivance that there should be an agreement of all God's people in America, that are well affected to this work, to keep a day of fasting and prayer to God; wherein we should all unite on the same day . . . to address the Father of mercies . . . that he would continue and still carry on this work, and more abundantly and extensively pour out his Spirit; . . . and erect his glorious kingdom throughout the earth' (in C. C. Goen [ed.], *Works of Jonathan Edwards. Volume 5: The Great Awakening* [New Haven and London, 1972], 520).

²⁴ In Stein ed. *op. cit.*, 321.

original proposals of 1743 had been considerably broadened, and now included a missionary dimension. While proof is lacking, it seems possible that we may detect the influence of Millar's ideas here; it is also probable that, with such a stated purpose, Millar was included in the group of ministers who sponsored the proposals in 1744 and 1746.

The subsequent history of Edwards' *Humble Attempt* is well-known. A copy was sent in 1784 by John Erskine to the Northamptonshire Baptist John Ryland Jr., who passed it on to John Sutcliff. At the latter's suggestion, the Northamptonshire Association resolved to devote the first Monday of each month to prayer for revival and the spread of God's kingdom. In 1786 a new edition of the *Humble Attempt* was published with a preface by Sutcliff. Sermons and tracts by Sutcliff, Ryland, Andrew Fuller and William Carey loosened the stranglehold which Hyper-Calvinism had on the thinking and activity of the Baptists, and also injected a missionary dimension. Carey's *Enquiry*, and the subsequent formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, were the result of this train of events. It is not too much to say that Millar's work played a part in such events.

The remainder of Millar's proposals may be dealt with more briefly. His second proposal is for the shunning of both a worldly life and the use of worldly means: 'No methods of force or cruelty ought to be used but rather all proper means to convince them of the excellency of the Christian religion'. He describes, in some detail, 'the Spanish cruelties at the conquest of America and the West Indies' as examples of methods to be avoided (II. 355-362).

Thirdly, he warns that when Protestants take up missionary work, they should 'beware of these Popish ways':- baptizing adults without previous instruction, not learning the language of the people and teaching them in Latin, allowing the converts to continue idolatrous practices, such as the Jesuits did in China and elsewhere, and using compulsion to force people to convert. 'These methods are none of them to be recommended by our Redeemer, nor by His Apostles, but are forged in Anti-Christ's shop' (*Ibid.* 362-364). However, he does praise the good in Roman Catholic missions. Human sacrifice has been abolished in Mexico and Peru, 'and any sort of Christians are, or at least should be, better than blinded Heathens' (*Ibid.* 365).

Fourth, he recommends the 'excellent patterns' of John Eliot and the Danish-Halle missionaries, who

carefully studied the language . . . gained their affections, preached frequently, catechized carefully . . . translated the Bible and other useful books (*Ibid.* 365, 366).

Fifth, Indians dispersed among the Christians in America, and also Negro slaves, should be instructed in the faith (*Ibid.* 366–368).

Sixth, young men from pagan lands should be brought over and trained in the universities for the ministry of the Gospel. Millar warmly recommends the Pietist work at Halle with its orphan house, schools, seminaries, printing presses *etc.*, and the widespread influence being exerted from Halle in such diverse places as Siberia and Malabar. He quotes at length from a letter from August Herman Francke to the secretary of the S.P.C.K. in London, describing various aspects of the work (*Ibid.* 368–376).

In the seventh proposal, he describes the kind of missionaries needed:

Men of sufficient abilities, endowed with knowledge of the truths of God, capable to speak the language of the people . . . of a holy and blameless conversation, moved by a pious zeal for the glory of God and the good of His Church, patient to endure hardship and difficulties, prudent to deal with the humours of the people, serious in practical Godliness, and furnished with fortitude of body and mind for so great a work (*Ibid.* 376, 377).

Eighth,

If we would propagate Religion in Foreign Parts, we ought to reform ourselves at home, that a holy warmth of sincere piety may so burn in our hearts, as would prompt us to spend and be spent for promoting the Kingdom of Christ in every part of the world (*Ibid.* 377, 378).

Finally,

Kings, Princes, and States ought to promote this work of propagating Religion among the Heathen. . . . support and encourage missionaries, protect their persons, defray their necessary expenses, and reward their pious endeavours. . . . If everyone in their station did use their best endeavours to advance the kingdom of Christ, then should converts to the Gospel Church be as the sand on the shore, peace should flow as a river, and righteousness as the waves of the sea (*Ibid.* 378, 379).

Foster describes this as a 'somewhat Erastian Conclusion',²⁵ and Robson, the translator of Harnack, says that the book is 'without preception as to the missionary character of the church itself'.²⁶ However, as Foster mentions, the lengthy quotation from a letter

²⁵ Foster *op. cit.*, 145.

²⁶ Harnack *op. cit.*, 72.

by William Stevenson to the S.P.C.K. in London, included by Millar at this point, slightly mitigates this judgment. Stevenson, who was an East India Company chaplain at Fort St. George, near Madras, proposes a united, international missionary society, especially to raise funds, and Millar is in hearty agreement with the proposal (*Ibid.* 379–389).

After giving a number of ‘arguments to excite us to act with holy zeal and concern in promoting the conversion of the heathen’ (*Ibid.* 389–404), Millar ends his work with the following conclusion:

Can any momentary hardships we can endure for propagating his name over the world be compared with what He did and suffered for us? . . . Should not zeal for the glory of our God, desire for the salvation of precious and immortal souls, perishing under darkness and infidelity, and a pious concern for our Saviour’s Kingdom, animate us with a holy warmth in this matter? That there may be one fold and one shepherd; that God even our God, may bless us, and all the ends of the earth may fear Him, Amen (*Ibid.* 404).

This prophetic call, not immediately answered as we have seen, but later to be joined by others, eventually produced an army of witnesses whose task even today remains unfinished. Millar surely has an honoured place among the forerunners of the modern missionary movement.