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EDITOR: The Revd Dr Robert Pope.

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EDITORIAL

In this issue of the *Journal*, the articles and, to some degree, the reviews, are all connected to each other by the word "mission". Two articles explore the way in which the home churches sought to take the Christian gospel to what was then described as the "heathen", terminology which would now cause us at least to balk. Stephen Orchard offers a portrait of Arnold Legg, a Congregationalist who became a bishop in the Church of South India, and who, on retirement, joined the United Reformed Church. Anthony Bradley writes of Arthur Bonsey, his grandfather, who was a missionary in China. Although both articles look at the lives of, and contribution made by, individuals, and both rely to some degree on private information held by the families concerned, they both throw light on the missionary endeavour, on its development from seeking conversion to providing education and health care, alongside the pressures on, and sacrifices made, by the missionaries themselves. Roger Ottewill turns our attention to mission at home, especially through the Men's Own Brotherhood Movement. Although the account is localized – it speaks of Hampshire – the story could be replicated in many places. We welcome Anthony Bradley, Emeritus Professor of Constitutional Law, Edinburgh University, Barrister and Research Fellow, Institute of European and Comparative Law, Oxford University, as contributor. We also welcome Derek Lindfield as reviewer. The *Journal* begins with a tribute to one of the History Society's doyens, the Revd Dr Stephen Mayor who died earlier this year.

The Society is developing a website. Part of its remit will be to publish book reviews for which space is not available in the *Journal*. It can be accessed through the following link https://urchistory.wordpress.com/reviews/

IMPORTANT NOTICE ON DATA PRIVACY

The meeting of the Society's Council in June 2018 agreed a data privacy policy for the Society. This can be viewed on our website at:

https://urchistory.files.wordpress.com/2018/07/urchs-data-privacy-policy.pdf

Anyone not having access to the internet, should contact the Secretary, who will be pleased to supply a copy.

STEPHEN HAROLD MAYOR
(24 July 1927 – 11 March 2018)

Stephen Harold Mayor, who died on 11 March 2018, was a member of the Society and its Council from its foundation in 1972 and Chairman of the Council from 1992 to 1996. He was born in 1927 and after gaining a First Class degree in history at Manchester University, and completing national service in the RAF, he studied at Lancashire College before holding two local pastorates, Handbridge, Chester (1954-1958) and Westminster Road, Liverpool (1958-1964).

In 1964, he was appointed Leverhulme Research Fellow in Ecumenical Theological History at Mansfield College, Oxford, and saw through the publication arising from his doctoral research in Manchester in his book, *The Churches and the Labour Movement* (1967), still regarded as an important text for those considering the subject. This was followed by *Paradise Defined: The Nature of a Christian Society* (1975). His research at Mansfield took him in a different direction, resulting in another book, *The Lord's Supper in Early English Dissent* (1972). By the time these latter books were published, he had accepted, in 1969, the post of Director of Field Studies and Lay Training at Westminster College. This post arose from the joining of Westminster and Cheshunt Colleges in Cambridge in 1967 and the new emphasis given to pastoral studies and lay training, which the shared resources made possible, and which were promoted enthusiastically by Jack Newport, the former President of Cheshunt, now Professor of Pastoral Studies and steering the fortunes of the Cheshunt Foundation within the college. When Jack Newport left to resume pastoral ministry, Stephen stepped into his shoes in 1976.

In 1985, in sympathy with the college policy of securing teachers of pastoral ministry with recent experience in a local church, (and coincidentally on the retirement of Buick Knox), he moved to become Professor of Church History, until his retirement in 1992. Over his twenty three years at the college he relished the company of his various colleagues, often recalling their characteristics and *bon mots* in his conversation. His stewardship of the Cheshunt Foundation was meticulous and he completed the task begun by Jack Newport of integrating its work with that of Westminster College, both through the support of pastoral studies and the sabbatical programme for ministers. Although he wrote little arising from this stewardship, he had a keen appreciation of the Countess of Huntingdon and her Connexion. Like many who have served at Westminster, he became absorbed in the day to day work with students and academic administration. He published only one article in the *Journal* during that period, a reflective piece on the differences between churches in England, where there was establishment, and America, where there was not. He saw clearly that issues of ethnicity would prove divisive on both sides of the Atlantic, regardless of ecclesiology. Retirement saw him free to write more, including articles and reviews in the *Journal* and to act as a volunteer in ordering some of the records of Westminster College.

Stephen was a genial companion and enjoyed drawing attention to life's ironies. Although still physically fit and mentally alert, (summers were spent walking in the Alps), he announced that he was withdrawing from committee work when he passed 70 and he indicated that, while he was prepared to help in emergencies, he preferred not to take services as he grew older. Nevertheless, he was fully involved in the programme of activities at Emmanuel Church, Cambridge, (where he also devoted a great deal of time to archival re-organisation). Within the Cambridge District of the URC he acted as an Interim Moderator. His last years were clouded by the incapacity of his wife, Janet, a physics teacher, to whom he was devoted. He is survived by two sons and a daughter; another daughter predeceased him.

STEPHEN ORCHARD

ARTHUR BONSEY (1858-1942) AND THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN CENTRAL CHINA[1]

This paper outlines the life of my mother's father, Revd Arthur Bonsey, who married Miss Marianne Ford, in the Holy Trinity cathedral, Shanghai, on 10 November 1884. In the same year, my father's parents were married in the Pentside Baptist church, Dover. I was born fifty years later.

Arthur and Marianne Bonsey were married in Shanghai because, in 1882, Arthur began work as a Christian missionary in Hankow, (now spelt Hankou and part of the city of Wuhan; the older spelling is used in this article), from which he retired in 1923. There have of course been immense changes in the world between 1923 and today. But there were equally remarkable changes between 1882 and 1923. That period saw the passing of the dynastic Chinese Empire and the creation of the Republic of China. It was a period of technological, social, educational and political change – change that was often turbulent, including internal uprisings, floods and other natural disasters and what has been called "the relentless encroachment of the West". It was in this period that the western countries and Japan discovered the opportunities for enterprise and advancement that China presented.[2]

One aspect of the impact of western imperialism on the old China was the missionary enterprise. The factors that made this bold enterprise possible then do not exist now. But, without attempting to make a judgment on that enterprise, some details of my grandfather's life and work may help to cast light on who the missionaries were, on what they were trying to do, and on why the enterprise had reached the peak of its growth in the early 1920s.[3]

I: The missionary setting in central China

Missionaries to China from the Protestant denominations of western Europe began their activity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These churches believed in evangelism – they wished to bring eternal salvation to the millions in Africa and Asia who lacked knowledge of Christian belief and were

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1 A short version of this paper was the basis of my talk in the School of History and Culture, in the Central China Normal University, Wuhan, on 12 May 2015. My warm thanks go to the University for their generous hospitality on that occasion, in particular to the Chancellor, Professor Ma Min; Professor Fu Haiyan; and Mr Wu Heilin, of the University's International Office. Among those present was Professor Zhang Kaiyuan, the distinguished historian. A note on my sources appears at the end of this paper. The author can be contacted by email, awbradley@aol.com

2 See Robert Bickers, *The Scramble for China: Foreign Devils in the Qing Empire, 1832-1914* (London: Penguin, 2012).

3 For a recent overview, see D. H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

referred to generically as "the heathen", without differentiation as to their existing culture or religious beliefs. The churches in the home countries gave funds to support those who became missionaries. David Livingstone (1813-73) was the best-known in Britain – he was a medical missionary who spent years in central Africa, exploring areas not previously known to westerners, and seeking to bring home to the British people the horrors of the slave trade. To central China, the first Protestant missionary was Robert Morrison, in 1807, but later there came a dynamic missionary from the industrial heartland of Wales, Griffith John (born 1831). From the age of 16 an eloquent preacher, he was sent by the London Missionary Society (LMS), arriving in Shanghai in 1855.[4] The middle years of the nineteenth century were marked by wars and uprisings, as foreign trading interests tried to penetrate China. Through international treaties, Hankow, strategically placed at the junction of two rivers, the Yangtse and the Han, six hundred miles to the west of Shanghai, was added in 1860 to the group of "treaty ports" that were open to international trade and to foreign missionaries, who enjoyed extraterritorial protection from China's imperial laws.

In 1861, Griffith John with his family settled in Hankow and began to preach and distribute tracts. His first convert was made in 1862; a chapel opened in 1863; a hospital started in 1866; the Hankow Religious Tract Society was founded in 1876; a women's hospital opened in 1889; a high school for boys in 1898; a medical school was established by two missionary doctors in the hospital in 1902; and in 1908, the Griffith John College opened on a new site five miles from the centre of Hankow (the building in part paid for by John). In 1911, John left China to return to Wales shortly before his death at the age of 81. This was the year in which the last imperial dynasty was overthrown and the provisional government of the Republic of China was formed. In 2012, a bust of John by the sculptor Xiang Jinguo was placed in Swansea Museum – a gift to Wales from the Union Hospital, Wuhan, which is directly descended from the hospital founded by Griffith John and today has a link with Swansea University's school of medicine.[5]

II: Arthur Bonsey's early life

Arthur was born in Isleworth, Middlesex, on 22 March 1858. His father, George Bonsey, was a baker, who later ran a small business in Southwark as a corn merchant. Arthur was the oldest of four children, having two brothers and one sister. Details of his schooling are not known, but when he was 14 or 15,

4 See R. Wardlaw Thompson, *Griffith John: The Story of Fifty Years in China* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1907).

5 See W. Gillison, *Wuhan Union Hospital: The First 84 Years, Survival from Floods, Bombs and Enemy Confiscation* (Dulverton: Walford Gillison, 2015).

he was apprenticed in a hosiery and outfitters shop in Brighton. In 1874, he wrote to the General Secretary of the LMS, seeking advice as to how to find time to prepare for university matriculation, and saying that he wished to study medicine and theology, with a view to being a missionary, but as an apprentice he did not get enough time to study. He was attending the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion church in North Street, Brighton, where he helped in the Sunday school and had joined a Lay Preachers' Association. His inquiry to the LMS went with a perceptive covering letter from the minister of the church the Revd J. B. Figgis,[6] who commended Arthur as "a young man of good presence, with excellent voice and the power of speaking briefly and to the point". But Figgis believed that his future lay in speaking rather than in the work of a medical missionary.

It appears that the advice Arthur received was to complete his apprenticeship and do as much studying as possible and, if he wished, to write again to the LMS at a later date. Less than two years later, he wrote to the LMS from Paris, saying that he had left his apprenticeship, was working as assistant in the McCall mission to Belleville, a working class area of Paris, where he had learned French, led children's services, played the harmonium and was preparing for matriculation in London University. He still wished to be a missionary and to go to college. The letter stated that he had become engaged to a young lady, Miss Marianne Ford, who was working in the same Paris mission; she supported his missionary hopes and would comply with all the regulations that applied to missionary wives. The letter suggests that the writer had exceptional focus and determination.

Arthur's inquiry was supported by the head of the Paris mission, Dr McAll, who had "entire confidence" in Miss Ford's suitability to be a missionary's wife, but advised that inquiry should be made into whether her health would be suited to a difficult climate. In writing again to the LMS, Arthur accepted that the future was unknown, "but I simply wish to reiterate that both Miss Ford and myself are willing to spend, and be spent, and if needs be to die, for the cause of Christ among the heathen". Eventually, after both Arthur and Marianne were examined by leading London doctors, the LMS accepted him for college but on condition, that if the "unsatisfactory state of Miss Ford's health" prevented Arthur from going abroad as a missionary, he must refund to the LMS all the costs of his education. His acceptance for college, stringent as the condition might seem, was welcomed by Arthur as it opened the way for him to make up for his lack of formal education, thus enabling him to study church history, the Bible, Latin and Greek, etc. In September 1877, he began studies

6 See J. W. Jones, *Figgis of Brighton: A Memoir of a Modern Saint* (London: Marshall Bros, 1917). At the Brighton church, Figgis gave much support to the missionary movement and "no fewer than five of the North Street church" offered themselves for missionary service (p. 109). These young men included Revd Charles G. Sparham, who served with Bonsey in Hankow.

at Cheshunt College in Hertfordshire. In 1881, in answering the LMS's Questions for Missionaries, he said that he had a "strong desire that a sphere of labour in the East" might be assigned to him. Subsequently, on 31 July 1882, he was ordained in the North Street church, Brighton, and on 26 September 1882 was one of a group of missionaries for whom a valedictory service was held in London, before they departed for China, India and Samoa. Arthur was one of three missionaries bound for central China; another of this group was a young Scottish doctor, Dr Thomas Gillison, who was to be one of Arthur's colleagues for some forty years. They arrived in Hong Kong by the steamer "Glenavon" on 1 December 1882, and Arthur proceeded without delay to the LMS Mission in Hankow.[7]

III: The mission station in Hankow

As noted, Griffith John had come to Hankow in 1861 with his family and one other missionary. In 1875 he reported to the LMS that had been the best year to date. In his report for 1883, he was distinctly less cheerful, reporting that there was much anti-foreign feeling, that Christians were often persecuted and some mission chapels had been destroyed, that some converts had reverted to smoking opium and that Christianity had a feeble hold on the children of some converts. On the positive side, John reported in 1884 that the small group of missionaries had been "considerably enlarged" by the accession of two young men, C. G. Sparham (who later married Mary, Griffith John's daughter) and Arthur Bonsey. Bonsey's arrival was followed at an interval by his fiancée, Marianne. In his first report to London in 1885, Arthur did not mention his marriage but he outlined the main ways in which he was occupied.

First, he had spent much time in studying Chinese, memorising long lists of characters which were required for the third missionary exam in the language; and this study had given him "greater freedom and fulness" in his use of Chinese. Secondly, responsibility for the building programme of the mission had been assigned to him. This included overseeing the enlargement and/or replacement of the hospital and the mission's chapels. It took up so much of his time that his third exam in Chinese had been postponed. The third item took him "from Architecture to Music". "Formerly [there had been] a terrible medley of noises that did duty for hearty Congregational singing", but he now took four practices each week with a men's choir, in order that they might lead singing at Sunday services; the choir "can now produce something near to the correct tune, and in nearly the right time". Finally, as his knowledge of the language improved,

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7 Absorbing information about Dr Gillison and his family's dedication to medical work in China may be found in F. Clemmow, *Days of Sorrow, Times of Joy: The Story of a Victorian Family and its Love Affair with China* (Leicester: Matador, 2012) and see also F. Clemmow and B. Bastable (eds), *The Gillison Letters, 1859-1939* (vols 1-3) deposited in the SOAS archives.

he had started to do some preaching in the street chapels and teaching at the Sunday School.

We learn from the series of annual reports that Arthur had care of a new chapel in Hankow (making it the second church in the city). "Daily preaching to the heathen" was a strong point with the mission (in 1888). The church was open four days or more each week, during the day or in the evening, and it was often crowded. The listeners would often stay for up to three hours with just a change of preachers. "Sunday School" was attended by up to 200 persons (many of whom were adults) and every quarter Griffith John examined the students. Arthur continued training the choir to sing hymns: by 1887, "some fifty tunes" were available for worship. He oversaw the boys' school, that provided basic education for around thirty or forty boys: occasionally the brightest pupils would proceed to high school. Periodically, he made visits into the country areas, usually with a colleague such as John or Sparham, to preach in villages that had not previously been visited, and to visit villages where converts had already been made. Reception of the foreigners inevitably varied and was sometimes very hostile. On one occasion Bonsey records (in his 1888 report) that he was "so hustled and mauled, as to leave me stiff from head to foot for several days". Years later, in retirement, he said that he had once been thrown into a pit, and escaped being buried alive only by joking with his assailants. He also recalled that he used to take a pair of forceps with him, and would extract the teeth of those suffering from acute tooth-ache. The annual mission reports at this time do not mention that any LMS missionaries were killed, but deaths of other western missionaries did occur at the hands of hostile crowds. Arthur was particularly concerned with distributing tracts, bible extracts and other Christian leaflets in the towns and villages. Several missions joined in organising this, and Bonsey became Secretary of the Central China Religious Tract Society. The work of distribution and preaching in the villages was largely undertaken by Chinese men, and this system of "colportage" was overseen by Bonsey, the items being given away or sold by the colporteurs. Like other missionary wives, Marianne Bonsey worked when she could with girls or with women outpatients in the hospital waiting room, and oversaw a small free school for girls. Reports from the medical missionaries, in particular from Dr Thomas Gillison, record the progress of the hospital – very large numbers of outpatients, smaller numbers of in-patients – as well as such events as the absence of a doctor (through ill-health or otherwise), flooding or the outbreak of a particularly infectious disease.

During Arthur's first period in China, three children were born to the Bonseys, in 1885 (Wilford), 1888 (Ethelwyn) and 1890 (Kenneth), but these events were not mentioned in the reports to London. By 1891, he had completed eight years in Hankow and was due for home-leave. He reflected that while there was still much hostility and anti-foreign feeling, there was at least a greater knowledge of what Christianity was: "A spirit of inquiry has been awakened". Bonsey's own faith in Christ in this region was "deepening in every year". The telegraph arrived in central China in this period, and despite many gloomy predictions about its effect on traditional life, Bonsey recorded that the telegraph

"swiftly and silently" was extended to the borders of China.

The maintenance of their health was a constant concern to all the missionaries and their families. In 1891 Bonsey and the eldest child, Wilford, left Hankow to spend two months in the healthier climate of Japan. Griffith John wrote to Gillison, on furlough in Britain, that Arthur had left "thoroughly collapsed in spirit. I never saw a man so". Then in 1892, the Bonsey family returned to England via Marseilles and a holiday in France. While on furlough, they rented a house in Thornton Heath and Arthur preached and took part in LMS deputations to churches near London. There is evidence, in the form of a remarkable quilt, embroidered and stitched together by ladies from several churches, that the family had aroused the deep affection and interest of those churches. The quilt is headed: "A and M Bonsey: a mosaic of memories from friends in England", the places named on the quilt being Blackheath, Lee, Bexley Heath, Cheshunt, Norwood, and Lewisham.

One matter of concern to Arthur and Marianne must have been the future education and upbringing of their three children. In 1860, Griffith John had sent his oldest son back to Wales to the care of friends when the boy was scarcely five years old. After much consideration, John had concluded, "It is impossible to bring up children, especially boys, as they should be brought up in China". This was both a question of moral upbringing, ("some of the most ungodly young men in China are missionaries' children"), and of health. In the case of John's son in 1860, "every summer tells more and more on his constitution. The last brought him very low". Doubtless with financial help from the LMS, it became common practice for missionaries to send their children to boarding school in England. Yet separation of the Bonsey children from their parents did not occur until ten years later. Arthur himself returned to China in 1893, keeping an illustrated record of his journey by steamer for the "three bairnies". Marianne returned in 1894, travelling back with her children on the "Preussen" from Southampton.

On his return to China after nearly two years away, Arthur was much refreshed. Initially he had to spend time and effort in revising his memory of Chinese characters. "My first whiff of Chinese territory reminded me that I was once more in the land of overwhelming odours – and was soon in contact with forms of evil as pestiferous morally as the sickening smells". However, he said that he had never enjoyed the work more than in his first year back. The work of preaching to crowded churches continued and he was sure that the lives of Chinese Christians were being broadened by Christianity. He noted the arrival of a fine harmonium, from friends in England, and began preparing for a hymn book containing tunes, to accompany the words of hymns.

The year 1894 was one of terrible heat in the city, when ten days in August were the hottest on record, and many deaths occurred among the people (and some among the missionaries). Arthur's determination was maintained, since preaching, healing, colportage, teaching and visiting taken together formed a "splendid aggressive force against idolatry and all forms of sin".[8] In 1897 he spent four months visiting the Mission's out-stations. He was now used to having

a mixed reception, but this time he noted the varied motives that some converts had in adopting Christianity (such as reasons of self-interest). Following the lead set by Griffith John, Bonsey became involved in several disputes that arose outside Hankow, seeking to influence local magistrates to decide in favour of Protestant converts. By 1898, he had assumed a key administrative role in the work of the Mission, especially in dealing with all Mission buildings, overseeing contractors and the like, but said (in what must have been a joking reference to Griffith John's own reputation): "Although not a Welshman I always feel happier and healthier if I can manage to preach for an hour or so every day". In January 1898, his detailed review of Mission property in the region as well as in Hankow showed an impressive knowledge of these numerous structures. His annual reports in these years often referred to co-operation with his friend from Brighton and Cheshunt days, Revd Charles Sparham, with whom he shared much of the evangelistic work of the Mission. But we are left to surmise at what lay behind his comment: "The superintendence of the Sunday school is a joint affair between Mr Sparham and myself, and we never disagree because one or the other is always absent".

IV: The years from 1900 to 1910

In 1899-1900 the Boxer uprising was the most extreme manifestation of anti-foreign and anti-Christian violence. During the uprising, apart from Roman Catholic losses, over 130 Protestant missionaries and nearly 2,000 Protestant Christians were killed. Most of this violence took place in northern China, where military action was taken by eight countries against the imperial regime, and they eventually forced the payment of compensation. For a period missionary work stopped in Hankow, and chapels were ordered to close, but later this was rescinded, the authorities feeling that Christian preaching could resume and that this could help to reduce antagonism and suspicion of the missionary motives. The Bonseys' fourth child (Olive, my mother) was born in March 1900. The British Consulate arranged for the mother and infant, only a few weeks old, to be taken to safety aboard a British naval boat on the river. Later, Mrs Bonsey and all four children embarked for England, arriving in Southampton in July; they were

8 The Bonsey papers include a vivid account of a journey in 1894 that he made with Griffith John up the river Han to visit a small community 120 miles away. We read that, as the boat rested overnight in a moonlit landscape, the peace was dispelled by the noise of cymbals, gongs, and drums; and the nearby village "suddenly became a pandemonium" at the centre of which was "a monstrous, hideous looking dragon, illuminated from head to tail". This lantern festival, "wan teng", "is chiefly an opportunity for social merriment and revelry though it is essentially **idolatrous**". Later in the journey, the missionaries were welcomed by the small Christian community and John took the opportunity of purchasing land for them, and was helped by a magistrate to defeat a claim to the land by a dishonest rival.

accompanied by an un-named Chinese nurse ("amah"). After arriving in England, Marianne arranged for the two sons (Wilford and Kenneth) to attend Bishop's Stortford College and for daughter (Ethelwyn) to begin boarding at Walthamstow Hall, near Sevenoaks, which catered for the daughters of missionaries.

Some missionaries went to Japan as their work was interrupted. Although Bonsey stayed with Griffith John in Hankow, his reports to the LMS say little about the Boxer rising and its causes. Missionary activities resumed. In 1901, he commented that he had served as headmaster of the boys' school during the long illness of a colleague, he had been teaching various subjects in the school, had lectured on church history at the developing Divinity School and had been supervising colportage in the region. A year later, as secretary of the LMS District Committee (formed of all the LMS missionaries in central China) he produced detailed minutes (49 typed pages) of the Committee's proceedings; they dealt with such subjects as the urgent need for a woman doctor (the health of the incumbent having broken down); the creation of a Medical School, and whether entry should be confined to Christians (it was decided after a vote that non-Christians might be admitted to study medicine, but that there must be a majority of Christian students); the creation of a Normal School (for future teachers) and a Divinity School (for future pastors); and the need for uniformity within the district over the length of probation that applicants for baptism as Christians must serve in church attendance. These decisions influenced the foundation of the Griffith John College in 1908. The Committee granted leave to Bonsey to take his second furlough to England in August 1902, where he re-joined his wife and children.

Arthur returned two years later in December 1904. But it was not until October 1906 that Mrs Bonsey and Olive went back to Hankow, having been away for four years. Arthur's report for 1906 indicates that since his return he had resumed the tasks mentioned previously, and specifically, oversight of one of the Hankow chapels, especially its fabric; continuation of the Friday evening Bible class that he had taken over years before from Griffith John; superintending the country work; care for the main church in Hankow; and involvement with education at the boys' High School, Divinity School and Normal School. By now it was recognised that the primary need was to provide the Chinese with education. Bonsey commented, "The Chinese aim to obtain military and naval efficiency. The aim in a frantic demand for western education is to get political power". And he mentioned the menace to the peace of the world if China became a military power "without the restraining and guiding force of Christianity".

The LMS reports for 1907 contain nothing by Bonsey. In a letter to England late in 1906, he mentioned a serious foot infection, which had caused him to be taken by sedan chair to his duties in the High School. It appears that he experienced a more serious breakdown in health that began in 1907 and continued into 1908. However, reports by his colleagues for 1907 referred to the purchase of a site at Hwang Pi for a new hospital and school. They noted Bonsey's "persuasive eloquence" in helping to secure the purchase: there had been "a good

deal of wrangling, in which Mr Bonsey played the cards with considerable skill". Some of the Mission referred to the extra burdens they had to bear (presumably because of Bonsey's health); and the building of the Griffith John College (in 1907-8) was supervised not by Bonsey but by Revd Bernard Upward, whose own health suffered through having to cycle out to the building site each day. The College itself was planned by an English architect, to standards which conformed with those laid down by the English Board of Education. The main building was completed in 1908, and it was then said by the Mission to be "the only large public boarding-school under mission auspices in Hankow".

During this period, Bonsey spent some time recuperating at the mountain resort of Kuling (now Guling, in the Mount Loshan area) which had been developed by an entrepreneur as a summer retreat, especially for European families who needed to escape from the overpowering heat of Hankow and other river-side towns. At that time, and until the mid-1930s, the only access to Kuling was by a steep pathway containing "1000 steps", and Europeans would be carried up by chair. In the 1890s, a large area was laid out for housing, with the active involvement of Griffith John who saw its use as a sanatorium for missionaries. Bonsey bought one of the plots (no. 279) and by 1910 a stone bungalow had been built there. As young Olive grew up, her happiest times in China were spent in this hill resort, where she could play freely with other children (especially the Gillison children) and collect mountain flowers.

Much information about these years may be found in the numerous letters (especially from Marianne) that were sent to England. Both parents wished to keep as closely in touch as possible with their older children, despite the inevitable postal delays in the correspondence. The two Bonsey sons completed their schooling at Bishop's Stortford and, after much anxious deliberation, became non-collegiate students at Oxford University. They never returned to China. Their sister, Ethelwyn, spent seven years at Walthamstow Hall. She returned to China in the autumn of 1907 (aged 19) and wrote to England to say that her father's health had improved and that new medication seemed to be helping. When the family returned from Kuling, she records that their house in Hankow had been neglected, and that one of her father's first tasks was to tune the family piano. In Hankow and in Kuling, Ethelwyn taught a small group of missionary children (including her sister Olive) as an informal school, and she assisted in her mother's work for the Mission. Arthur's report for 1909 places the missionary cause in the context of the prevailing desire in China for modern education, commenting that Western learning did not necessarily mean the Christianisation of China. But he welcomed the rapid progress being made in such areas as engineering and ship-building, a new company for which was being managed by a church member, the son of a former pastor in Hong Kong. Ethelwyn was asked to name and launch one of the company's new boats, and she recorded that the bottle of champagne did not break until a workman applied a hammer. Bonsey recounts an informed and friendly meeting he had with workers in the ship-building company, in an upper workshop lit only by candles, that he hoped would lead to a mission station near the workshop.

Arthur's work for the Mission continued. His activities included teaching in the Divinity School; in the Normal School, he had taught Higher English and Geometry and lectured on the Art and Method of Teaching, basing this on a well-known English book for future teachers that had been translated into Chinese. He was giving three classes weekly in Tonic Sol-fa and Staff notation, so that "a fair number" could read simple Sol-fa at sight; a nucleus of a "good fife and drum band" had been assembled, which he required to practise each day "until the soul of music began to breathe".[9] And, he was overseeing the work in Mienyang (100 miles away), where there was no resident missionary.

In the summer of 1910, Ethelwyn stayed on in Hankow to keep house for her father while her mother and sister went ahead to the mountains. Her letters during July gave vivid accounts of two serious fires at night in central Hankow that threatened the hospital and other buildings in the British concession. In contrast, Marianne's letters from Kuling describe the pleasures of a summer in the mountains, linked with her hopes of returning to Britain in the spring of 1911.

Throughout the years from Arthur's arrival in 1882, the missionary reports to London frequently refer to the difficulties and sorrows caused by the health problems. He had recovered from his breakdown in 1907-8, but in October 1910, days after their return from Kuling, both Arthur and Marianne were struck down with cholera. After a few days, Marianne died. During Arthur's long convalescence, Ethelwyn managed the house and took care of her father and Olive. Marianne was buried in the New International Cemetery in Hankow, and an inscribed grave-stone was paid for by a former pupil of the Mission High School. He was not a Christian, but said he wished to do this in appreciation of the love that Marianne had shown to his mother years before when she had been a nurse in the Bonsey family and had gone with them to England in 1900. Early in 1911, Arthur wrote a report for the LMS covering the ten years from 1901 to 1910, that he described as a period of both joys and sorrows. His first thoughts were of riots, famines, pestilences, and great catastrophes by flooding and by fires which had burned almost half the city. He recalled the dark hours when loved ones were ill and he named colleagues who had died. "We met these sorrows one by one as they came".

Nevertheless, after twenty-eight years of mission work, he was in no doubt that he was right to give himself to the task and he proclaimed "with his whole heart" that "THE BEST HAS YET TO COME". This optimism was in part based on "wonderful" changes that had come about since the Boxer rising. Some changes were "material", including Western methods of manufacture, lighting,

9 "I can conceive no higher ideal," Bonsey wrote, "than to seek to lead the Chinese church to inherit the wealth of hymns, psalms, and chants which already exist with all the treasures of music which the West possesses". From a short article "Chinese Hymnology and Church Music", in *Chinese Recorder* (1909), vol. 40, no 5, p. 283. Bonsey recognised the many difficulties that stood in the way of achieving this ideal.

transportation, the style of building, the spread of education on western lines, the passing of some "hoary superstitions", and some gradual changes in the form of government. There had also been changes in the attitude of the people: some unrest and dissatisfaction remained, but there was also a greater willingness to "weigh carefully" the claims of Christianity. Large congregations continued and displayed a more intelligent interest in what they heard. A week-long evangelistic campaign in 1910 organised by several churches had reached an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 people. But at this time, the Mission had no-one to commit fully to preaching, and the two missionaries in Hankow gave most of their time to educational and administrative matters. Education had initially been neglected by the Mission, but a Divinity School and a Normal School had opened in 1902. The central church in the British concession had been enlarged in 1901. In 1908, the move of the High School to the new site in Hankiateng (to accommodate the various activities of the Griffith John College) took away some of the congregation in the central church, but there was a problem of where the increasing number of women could sit. Public opinion would be "scandalised" if they were to sit with the men, even on the same side as the men: if they sat in the gallery, no man would sit beneath them.

Friends from Bournemouth and Peckham supported the work of Chinese evangelists in six stations in Mienyang, a populous area far from Hankow. Fine service there had been rendered by the late Mr Wei Ch'ang Yang, and it was hoped that his son would follow his "honoured & sainted father". But Mienyang had been struck by floods and famine. With the help of many friends, seed-rice had been distributed to more than 160 families (comprising over 800 persons), all in the last stages of destitution.

Aged 52, Arthur Bonsey maintained his share of preaching, Sunday School, Bible Class, lectures, administration, teaching and innumerable other tasks in the Mission. He had superintended the boys' day school for many years, and said that some former pupils were now in good positions. The Central China Tract Society had progressed from distributing a "modest million" items in 1900 to nearly 4.5 million in 1910 and was hoping for new premises and its own press. Nonetheless, there was a "tremendous danger" of China being Westernised without being Christianised. "The Chinaman was crying out for light", looking to governments, politicians, soldiers and sailors, commercial leaders, money lenders and many others for the light that they could offer.

The decade had seen the creation of the Medical School, opened in 1902 by Drs Gillison and McAll. By 1910, this had become the Union Medical School, (Bonsey had been one of the LMS representatives who negotiated its creation), and the Medical School had 31 students; the standard for entrance had risen, and new students would be required to have a High School base. In the Griffith John College's new buildings at Hankiateng, five miles from the centre of Hankow, there were facilities for studying science and ample provision was made for the "leisure hours", with space for athletics, cricket, football, tennis and gym. But "first and foremost" it was a Christian school. Since 1899, more than 400 boys had passed through the school, and there had been many successes in the Imperial Customs exams.

The report by the LMS for 1910 referred to "the great sadness" caused to the missionary community with the death of Mrs Bonsey. "She was so keen & enthusiastic in mission work and so brought a presence in the missionary community that her loss is very keenly felt. Everyone rejoiced at Mr Bonsey's recovery, & it is hoped that after his furlough he and his daughter will return able to undertake with fresh vigour their service to the missionary cause". Two small girls' day schools in Hankow had been superintended by Mrs Bonsey. Ethelwyn had taken on the work after her mother's death: she reported that there was a great need for a lady to superintend all women's work in Hankow and to oversee the schools.

Having decided not to bring forward the date for his next furlough in England, in April 1911, Arthur travelled with his two daughters by boat to Vancouver, and thence by railway to Montreal before sailing to Liverpool. While he was in Britain, the long threatening political instability in China exploded, with the first acts of the republican uprising against the imperial government taking place in Hankow. The violence spread rapidly. Cruel fighting took place in and around the city, and missionaries and their families were evacuated. Several colleagues of Bonsey remained, including Dr Gillison and Revd Bernard Upward, who in the name of the Red Cross escaped innumerable bullets in bringing casualties to medical care and in burying the many who had died.[10]

In 1912, Bonsey met with a committee of LMS directors in London, giving them his views on the future of mission work in China. In the same year, he spoke at the funeral of Griffith John in south Wales. He must have been deeply affected by the prospect of separation from his family in Britain, but left to return to China in October 1913. After carefully calculating the likely cost compared with going by steamer, he returned overland, travelling by rail across Europe to Berlin, Moscow and through Siberia to Vladivostok. He arrived in China in December, and was soon appointed Principal of the Griffith John College at Hankiateng.

V: The last ten years, 1913-1923

In his first years in China, Bonsey's work had included much preaching, whether in country villages or in town centres; this pioneering work involved much discomfort and a frequent expectation of being exposed to hostility, abuse and sometimes danger. By 1913, the emphasis on preaching that Griffith John had maintained had largely given way in priority to education. Bonsey frequently spoke of the need for China in coming years to have educated leaders who had

10 See Jennifer Childs (ed.), *Like Lions after Slumber: A Personal Account of the Chinese Revolution of 1911, The Diary of Bernard Upward of Hankow* (Penarth: Jennifer Childs, 2016). In 1924, Upward was appointed Principal of the Griffith John College after Bonsey's retirement. He left China in 1927 and became minister of Castle Street Congregational Church, Reading.

been exposed to the influence of Christianity, even if they did not convert to that religion. As Principal of the Griffith John College, Bonsey for ten years oversaw growth in the numbers of students at the College and improvement in the College buildings. Funds were raised from supporters and friends of the College to pay for enlargement of the chapel, maintenance of the spacious estate, more dormitory accommodation, a new hall and library (the Wu-Han Hall, opened in 1919) and (by a private donation from a British company) the Ho-Chi Science building, opened in 1922. The College had its own electric light plant. Within the College were four departments, the Middle School Department (teaching younger boys in Chinese), the Anglo-Chinese Department (which replaced the former High School, and aimed to provide the equivalent of a good English public school education, with teaching in English and Chinese), the Higher Normal Department, which trained future teachers, and the Divinity School, which provided teaching in the Christian faith for those who would become preachers and pastors. Each department was headed by one of the British staff, supported by trained Chinese teachers.

Bonsey headed the Divinity School, to which he gave a great deal of his time, but he also taught in other sections of the College, for example, the scripture class and English composition with the Anglo-Chinese Department, and gave lectures on the theory of teaching to the Higher Normal Department. He also gave a daily bible-class (in 1920 to an average of fifty students), and prepared students as needed for baptism. The number and quality of entrants to the Divinity School were always uncertain: they had difficulty in grasping theological concepts and had poor material prospects since salaries paid to Chinese pastors were very low; but they received instruction in pastoral affairs and had opportunities to conduct services and preach in the College and elsewhere. While the Divinity School remained a problem, the other three parts of the College grew in numbers and the income from the fees charged just about kept pace with the expenses of the College (apart from the salaries of the Europeans, which were paid from London). As Principal, Bonsey worked himself hard. He directed two singing practices a week for the students, and he took part regularly with the students in Swedish drill and other physical exercises. His health suffered from time to time, but his annual reports show increasing confidence in the effectiveness of the educational programme and satisfaction with the discipline of the students, though he often commented that more European staff members were needed, and that the College depended on the loyalty of the Chinese teachers. While in 1921 he told his family in England that the College had been "successful beyond our hopes" and was continuing to grow, his report for 1922 accepted that "we have been working on the utmost edge of our powers".

One emphasis was the provision of leisure and other facilities outside the class room. Some form of athletics was compulsory for all students, except when an individual could show reason to be exempted. The College grounds could accommodate many forms of sport, and a swimming pool was built with student labour in 1918. Two scout troops were formed, the first in 1914, and camping became popular both for weekends in the College grounds and further afield. The

Scouts began taking regular meteorological readings and their findings were published. The Scout troops formed a brass band and instruments were obtained from England. In 1922, the College introduced a house system for sports, cups were presented for competition between the three houses, and this increased student interest in relay races and long-distance running. The students were expected to attend College chapel every Sunday, and there were classes for those wishing to become Christians, but Bonsey did not pressurise boys in this direction. Once a month, he hosted a social evening for both European and Chinese staff in the Principal's house. The class that left in 1918 was an outstanding group of students, who prepared and published an illustrated volume to commemorate their years in the College. Bonsey records that there were few problems of discipline, and was delighted when the Chinese staff's register of student conduct showed more entries for "Excellent" than ever before. In later years, when students in other colleges were being politicised and urged to come out in protest at current events, harmony was maintained and student strikes did not occur.

Outside the College, Arthur gave support to the Central China Religious Tract Society (to attend meetings in Hankow, he had to cycle five miles into the city) and took forward to completion the long-standing project of a new tune book.[11] He occupied a senior place in the LMS Committee for central China. In the interests of the College, he sought to maintain good relations with prominent Chinese, in commerce and industry, and with the British Consul; and financial support for the College was given by the British Association of Chambers of Commerce. In his reports to London, Bonsey defended the attention being given to education, wishing to see that China's future leaders had the benefits of a Christian education, and he rejected the view that the College did not give enough emphasis to evangelism. He summarised his position in a report in 1922: the College's aim was to impart to the students all that was best and most uplifting in Western education, while encouraging and developing all that was worthy and useful in Chinese learning and tradition. "Those truths which have made our own country great are the truths for which we stand, believing with all our hearts that 'all under heaven are one family' and that whatever makes for good of one part is equally potent and necessary for the good of the whole".

These activities appear to have been all-consuming, and only rarely did the annual reports refer expressly to events elsewhere in the world. But his first year as Principal saw the outbreak of the Great War. And upheavals within China affected Hankow, where, as we have seen, the Revolution against the imperial dynasty had begun in 1911. Bonsey had lost his wife in 1910, and after his return to China it is clear from surviving letters that he was conscious of being a very long way from his sons and daughters. In 1915, his daughter Ethelwyn (who had

11 The Religious Tract Society of China's *Hymnal with Tunes* was eventually published in 1922, containing 560 hymns in Chinese with music on the lines of a western hymn book, including six composed by Bonsey. An earlier edition had appeared in 1905.

been his "little Epsy") qualified as a teacher and married Wilfred Bradley, a close college friend of Arthur's older son, Wilford.[12] Wilford Bonsey, completed his studies at Mansfield College, Oxford, and became a Congregational minister, but he was often uncertain of his vocation. In a long letter dated 6 May 1914, Arthur gave him detailed advice on how to prepare to preach. In 1917 Wilford married Hilda Jefferies, an artist from Bristol, whom Arthur had never seen. In the same year, Arthur's father, George Bonsey, died, having been cared for in old age by Arthur's sister, Emma Bonsey. After causing his father much concern about a possible career, Arthur's younger son, Kenneth, had begun training in Liverpool to be a solicitor, but he joined the army in 1917, and became a second lieutenant in the Royal Garrison Artillery. Arthur became a grandparent in June 1918, when a daughter was born in Oxford to Ethelwyn and Wilfred Bradley, but sadness followed a month later when Kenneth died in action in France. More tragedy followed. In October 1918, Arthur's son-in-law, Wilfred Bradley, a much loved tutor at Mansfield College, died in the 'flu epidemic. Within three months, his widow Ethelwyn suffered a serious break down of health, such that given the medical knowledge of the day she spent the rest of her long life (until she died in 1976) in psychiatric hospitals, unable to care for her daughter. Ethelwyn's sister, Olive, began to study at Oxford in 1919 but withdrew after two years, in order that she might marry Wilfred's brother, David Bradley, in 1922. All three of these family marriages took place while Arthur was in Hankow.

He must have learned of all these events by post (or possibly by telegraph), the quickest route for letters between Hankow and England being by rail across Siberia. He frequently asked for more news of what was occurring at home, and in 1922 wrote that he felt foolish when he was asked by colleagues how Olive's wedding had gone, and had to confess "that he knew nothing". His sons did not always write as frequently as Arthur would have liked, and he once expressed the wish that someone might help his daughter, Olive, write more informative letters. The longer he continued as Principal, the more difficult it must have been for him to go on furlough from his duties in the College.

VI: An unplanned farewell

In December 1922, Arthur's colleagues and friends met to congratulate him on the forty years that had elapsed since he first came to China. In March 1923, he would turn 65, which was normally the retiring age for LMS missionaries. Overdue arrangements for him to go on furlough were made, and he left Hankow hoping to travel back to England via Australia, where his brother, Edwin, had settled in Queensland. But taken ill at Hong Kong, Arthur recovered there before travelling

12 In 1913, Arthur stayed overnight in the home of Wilfred Bradley's parents in Dover, before crossing the English channel to take the train for Vladivostok. He was seen off at Folkestone harbour by the "young lovers", Wilfred and Ethelwyn.

directly to England. It is certain that when he went on leave from Hankow, he was expecting to return to China for a further period as Principal of the College. But in July 1923, the European missionaries received a letter from four Chinese members of the College staff. Written in very respectful terms, this said:

> ... you know only too well that [Mr Bonsey] is a gentleman who loves us all and whom we all deeply love. If for our own good and that of the College, we should like to have him as our Principal for another ten years or so, but we find that the work of the College is too heavy for him owing to his difficulty in remembering things that are important. He is an old man; and as he is growing older all the time we cannot expect him to improve in some of these things. Should he be forced to carry on the heavy burden still his health and comfort would suffer ... We are indeed sorry as it is beyond our power to yield help to our beloved friend and Principal, Mr Bonsey, in any way except begging you most humbly whether you can deal with the L.M.S. Board by rendering him to have a happy time during the remaining years of his life. We sincerely expect that he may come back early to China and that he may do some nobler work to help us though in quite different a way since he is to be favourably given a position of honour and ease.

Writing from Kuling later in July, the European missionaries, led by the senior medical missionary, Dr Thomas Gillison (who had travelled with Bonsey to China in 1882), decided to forward the letter to their colleague, though they did so "with a heavy heart". The letter had come to them "as a complete and painful surprise", since they took it as a plain statement that the Chinese staff did not have confidence in Bonsey as their leader, and would be unable to remain at the College should he return. His colleagues hoped to find a means of negotiating an outcome "with a minimum of pain" to him and suggested that he should take advantage of the age-limit rule and retire, without any formal discussion of the Chinese staff's letter being needed in the District Committee of the LMS. If that discussion were to happen, "Your state of health and age would of course come into consideration as part of the problem". If Bonsey were to accept their first suggestion, "the matter would not pass beyond ourselves, and arrangements could be made whereby your things could be packed for forwarding, or otherwise dealt with as you might desire". They expressed their "true sympathy" with Bonsey "in this your time of trial". They could not forget his many years

> of devoted service and loving work for the Master and for the Chinese. We have noticed, however, that you have aged during the last two or three years. We know part of the cause and feel warm brotherly sympathy with you in your home trials and loneliness on the field. That God himself may give you guidance and peace is the prayer of us all.

One copy of this letter and enclosures was sent to London, the second to

Hong Kong and thence forwarded via Australia. When the envelopes were found among Bonsey's papers in 2014, there was no mark on them to show that they had been opened (though one at least must have been), and the enclosures contained no marginal comments. Whenever it was that Arthur heard of the invitation to retire, he accepted that his health was not good and that he was suffering from overstrain. Yet he was unwilling to accept a forced retirement, and in one letter to a friend in December 1923 he wrote of his acute frustration at being "tied by the leg to Oxford and to the life of a CABBAGE". Thereafter, his health having improved, he decided to apply to return.

Under the Society's rules, the view of the District Committee in Central China was obtained. On 24 June 1924, a Committee of the LMS in London decided regretfully to accept the judgment of the District Committee [in China] "that on the ground of the need of younger men" they could not recommend the re-appointment of Revd Arthur Bonsey, "who has passed his age of retirement". They agreed that he should be paid his full salary until 31 October 1924. The Committee then adopted a minute that recorded their "heartfelt gratitude" for his 42 years of service, in which he had showed distinction in nearly every department of evangelistic and educational service. He had been a pioneer at a time when pioneering entailed grave personal risk. As Principal of the College, his experience and wisdom had been of "conspicuous value in all departments". Christian literature had gained much from his activity on behalf of the Central China Tract Society. The Committee remembered "with affection and gratitude all that they had lost when in 1910 Mrs Bonsey passed away".

VII: Remaining years in Oxford

Bonsey's remaining years were spent in Oxford. For a period he was pastor at the St John's Free Church (of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion) in north Oxford.[13] On the evidence of the papers that he left behind, he spent time reading about the history, civilisation and religions of China, and doubtless continued to preach and reflect on events in China during the 1920s and 1930s. His papers included what appear to be the tables of contents for two books that he may have thought of writing, but only a few draft chapters of these books survive. He retained his bungalow in Kuling for several years, presumably receiving rent whenever the estate managers could find a tenant for it, but the ravages of war within China must have deprived the bungalow of any value and in 1935 or soon after, the Kuling estate was taken over by the Chinese government. (Chang Kai Shek made his summer home there and caused a road into the mountains to be built in 1937). In Oxford, Arthur had initially made several visits to his daughter Ethelwyn in hospital in the hope that her health would improve, but in 1925 she was moved from hospital in Oxford to the Quaker Retreat in York. Ethelwyn's

13 This church ceased to exist some time after 1945.

daughter (my cousin Alison) was brought up in Oxford by Arthur's unmarried sister, Emma. Arthur initially lived with Emma and Alison in Ethelwyn's former home in Oxford, but this arrangement did not last. Twice a year, at Christmas and in the summer, together with Emma and Alison, Arthur went to visit his younger daughter (Olive) and her family in Dover.

When the fall of Dunkirk in 1940 caused Dover to be evacuated, Olive, my younger sister and I went to stay in the Bonsey home in Oxford. Arthur was in rented rooms nearby and he occasionally had a meal with us. Sometimes my mother would cook a meal for him and take it to his lodgings. He was a short, stocky man, always wearing a clerical suit. He was a loquacious talker, with a strong sense of what we would today regard as Victorian humour. Sometimes he reminisced about his early missionary days. He regularly met with other Christian ministers in Oxford, and he took me with him on their summer outing, an all-day steamer trip down the Thames. Arthur had earlier suffered cataract operations, (the grisly details of which he enjoyed describing), and in 1941 his sight caused him great pain. He died in hospital on 2 December 1942. I was considered too young to attend the funeral in the Cowley Road Congregational Church, Oxford, where the address was given by Revd T. Cocker Brown, of the LMS, but I was at the post-funeral gathering for tea that took place in the family home.

VIII: Conclusions

Some brief reflections on this history must now be attempted. First, there is a strong theme of personal achievement in Bonsey's life that began as a young man desiring education, keen to equip himself for a career that would fulfil his religious beliefs and bring enlightenment to unknown strangers in a distant land, with a wholly foreign culture and social environment. He was fortunate that his wife shared his commitment to the Christian gospel. Together they shared the trials and tribulations that inevitably came with the venture that they undertook as young people, and despite the difficulties, they established a family life. But any sense of achievement for Arthur was tempered by the recurrence of ill-health, the loss of Marianne, and long separation from his close family. At the end came a personal blow in the form of his forced retirement from the demanding position that he had occupied for ten years.

Secondly, Bonsey's determination and ability are seen in many aspects of his life. These included, as a legacy of his apprenticeship with Griffith John, the power to hold an audience, whether speaking in English or Chinese, and to write vividly about his experiences. His administrative skills served the missionary enterprise in many ways, especially as college Principal, when earlier evangelistic work had changed into a role for providing students with an education on western lines, with a broad curriculum that stressed physical activity as well as academic achievement, and introduced them to western culture, against a continuing background of religious commitment.

Thirdly, this record[14] must, nevertheless, be seen in perspective for two reasons. The first is that Bonsey's career coincided exactly with an explosion in the scale of the missionary enterprise in China.[15] This account of his life could surely be matched by the lives of countless other missionaries.[16] The period of 1902-1927 has been called the "golden age" of mission,[17] a term that leads into the second reason, namely, that the China to which Bonsey gave so many years was in the 1920s on the point of great upheaval. The missionary enterprise in the decades from 1860 to 1920 was of course deeply challenging to Chinese tradition and was a key factor, as Robert Bickers has suggested, in bringing to an end the "scramble for China" by western powers and the freeing of China from western domination.[18]

Again, to reinforce this point, we now know that the elaborate structure of the Griffith John College barely survived Bonsey's forced departure. The anti-foreign and anti-Christian movement in the 1920s was strongly expressed in nationalist politics and the protests of students disrupted much education: demands were made for foreign schools and colleges to be placed under Chinese control. In 1927, the system of foreign concessions in Hankow was ended and a year later, all foreign schools and colleges in China were brought within national management.[19] The Griffith John College had earlier joined with the (American) Boone University and other colleges in creating the Huachung University at Wuchang, which eventually opened in 1929.[20] But already in 1927, Revd Bernard Upward, Bonsey's successor as Principal of the college, had left for home, as had many other Protestant missionaries.[21]

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14 According to N Goodall, *A History of the London Missionary Society 1895-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 164, Bonsey himself never claimed to be "more than a missionary jack-of-all-trades".

15 See P. A. Cohen, "Christian Missions and their impact to 1900", being chapter 11 in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *Cambridge History of China,* vol 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). In 1860 there were barely 100 Protestant missionaries in China; by 1905 there were almost 3,500: Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China,* p. 68.

16 For one outstanding example, see Dr Thomas Gillison, a friend and colleague of Bonsey, whose life is portrayed in Clemmow, *Days of Sorrow, Days of Joy*.

17 Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, chapter 5.

18 R. Bickers, *The Scramble for China.* Also, R. Bickers, *Out of China: How the Chinese Ended the Era of Western Domination* (London: Allen Lane, 2017). P. Bailey, *Reform the People: Changing Attitudes Towards Popular Education in Early Twentieth Century China* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988) is a detailed study of the reform of national education; it concludes that the reform movement "did not stem from an urge to combat the challenge of missionary schools" (p. 119) and suggests that renewed interest in education among missionaries came from a fear that otherwise mission schools would be left behind.

19 Bickers, *Out of China,* p. 102.

20 J. G. Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges, 1850-1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971), pp. 127-8.

21 Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges, 1850-1950*, p. 260. The Huachung University was superseded by the Central China Normal University, Wuhan

Finally, it would be well outside my competence to attempt an overall assessment of the effects of the missionary period on the history of China since the 1920s. But apart from the continued existence of the Christian church, a few visible marks remain of that earlier era. The handsome building that was opened in 1908 for the Griffith John College now stands next to a large middle school, and with its iconic bell tower and former chapel is described as part of the architectural heritage of Wuhan. Nearby, in the former grounds of the college, a splendid athletics stadium exists, that in 2015 hosted international student games, attended by some two thousand participants from the Pacific region: they would not have known that a hundred years previously Bonsey encouraged his students to take part in all manner of sporting activities. And, on a more personal note, there may be seen in the Lushan mountains, high above the Yangtse valley, the stone bungalow that had been the Bonsey summer home on the Kuling estate, and is now, with some extension, occupied by three families.[22]

ANTHONY BRADLEY

22 Apart from the books mentioned in the footnotes, an essential source has been the Council for World Mission Archives, in SOAS, University of London, where the reports to the LMS from serving missionaries are available, arranged by mission field, year and individual missionary, along with the formal reports of LMS meetings, and missionary publications. I have also drawn on some printed reports brought to Oxford by Bonsey in 1923 and on numerous family letters that survive. Many of these letters have already been transcribed, and I hope that they may in time be made available for others to read on line. I have consulted the Cheshunt College archives in Westminster College, Cambridge and these include the papers, diaries and letters of Bonsey's colleague, Revd C. G. Sparham. My thanks are due to the archivists in the Special Collection library at SOAS and at Westminster College, and to the Librarian, Mansfield College, Oxford.

OUR OTHER BISHOP: ARNOLD HENRY LEGG (1899-1980)

An influential figure in the United Reformed Church, the late Lesslie Newbigin, was a distinguished missiologist and former bishop in the Church of South India. By contrast, the other United Reformed minister who was a retired bishop from that church, Arnold Legg, lived in comparative obscurity once he returned to England, even though he served as Moderator, or Archbishop, no mean achievement for a Congregationalist. This is the story of "our other bishop", a man so self-effacing that it can never be expanded into a full biography for lack of source material, unless the necessary documentation is hidden in some remote archive in South Kerala.

Arnold Henry Legg was born in Derby on 5 August 1899, the son of a railway clerk, John Legg, and his wife, Elizabeth Ann Brown. Arnold's great-grandfather, John Legg, was a lace worker from Dorset who moved to Derby around the year 1840 as its prosperity took off with the expansion of the Midland Railway. His grandfather was a railway labourer but his father, a railway clerk when Arnold was born, progressed up the management ladder of the Midland Railway and eventually retired to Duffield, a desirable village north of Derby. The Leggs were members of Victoria Street Congregational Church, founded in 1788 and critical to the extension of Congregationalism around Derbyshire. It was there that Arnold's parents met. The Brown family had originated in Sutton Coldfield and Elizabeth's father had come to Derby to run his own iron foundry around 1870. The business prospered and supplied Derby's manhole and drain covers by the hundred. The Browns and the Leggs were, in the modern idiom, upwardly mobile. Arnold's uncle, Albert Legg, had already begun service in the royal stables at Hampton Court, where he went on to become Secretary to the King's stud for forty years. (He was made a Member of the Victorian Order in 1934). Arnold went to the local council school in Gerard Street, near the family home, and was one of a handful of boys to be awarded a scholarship to Derby School, the town's ancient grammar school, with only about 130 pupils on the roll. He was a keen swimmer and took art lessons when he was fourteen, which made him a competent landscape painter. When he left school aged seventeen, to take up clerical work with the Midland Railway, Arnold had received a good enough education to form a basis for all his subsequent studies.

In 1911 Jabez Ackroyd became minister at Victoria Street, moving from his first pastorate at Northampton. On 20 September 1911, Dr W. E. Orchard preached at Ackroyd's induction and took as his theme the crisis facing the Church, a sermon the young Arnold would probably have heard. Congregationalism at the time was exercised over liberal theology and the ministry of R. J. Campbell at London's City Temple. Towards the end of a sermon replete with purple passages Orchard proclaimed:

> The issues stand clear at last. We now know what is meant by faith in Christ. All the arguments, philosophical, prophetic, evidential, for believing

> in Christ are no longer available. A man must choose Jesus Christ simply because his deepest soul hails him as Master and Kinsman. While theologians are defining the Divine, and metaphysicians are disputing what is the Real, we affirm that the spirit of Jesus is what we worship as Divine and his life is what we mean by Reality.[1]

In inviting Orchard, Ackroyd was identifying himself with progressive forces in religion. Taking a railway metaphor, Ackroyd later reflected on his ministry in Derby saying that he had hoped to be on the main line of theological advance, but found himself in a siding. Part of that feeling was triggered by John Legg, Arnold's father. Writing later of his time in Derby, Ackroyd said:

> My preaching & teaching attracted attention, in some quarters concern. One man in the Church withdrew his family and transferred his membership to our branch Church. Many in the Church were relieved at his departure. Years after his son asked me to give him a recommendation for entrance to Cheshunt College. He later became one of the first Bishops of the Church of South India, a position he filled with considerable distinction. I often wondered what his father thought of my being asked for a recommendation, which I readily gave, perhaps with a touch of caustic glee.[2]

The reference is clearly to Arnold Legg and the family's membership at Ashbourne Road, which was begun as a branch of Victoria Street. It was situated at a greater distance from the Legg family home in Empress Road and had the aspect of a mission. Its leaders avoided theological niceties, which clearly suited John Legg. Whether at Victoria Street or Ashbourne Road, Arnold had been captivated by the idea of service with the London Missionary Society (LMS). His young cousin, still at Victoria Street, Frank Brown, was similarly minded and went on to serve with the LMS in India from 1932. The example of his mother's sister, Mary Peake Brown, known in the family as Aunt Polly, stood before them both. Another sister, Aunt Hilda, who had married Ernest Legg, his father's brother, enthusiastically supported the South Africa General Mission, for which Aunt Polly worked in Swaziland. Arnold was therefore not short of exemplars and he began to make enquiries to the LMS when he left school and applied to be a candidate at Cheshunt College, on their recommendation, as soon as the war had ended. Cheshunt College, recently relocated to Cambridge, was an institution which claimed a special relationship with the LMS although, in fact, all Congregational colleges were represented on its Board of Directors.

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1 "The Judgment of the Church", sermon by Rev. W. E. Orchard, D.D.: No. 44, 11 October 1911, The Christian Commonwealth Company Ltd. The sermon had been preached in Enfield and in Derby.

2 J. R. Ackroyd, "What I Remember", unpublished typescript (1972), p. 36. Copy deposited in the Cheshunt College Archives, Westminster College, Cambridge.

The report on Arnold to the college Education Committee in October 1919 showed that he met the entrance requirements in terms of both his piety and his education. His health was good. He had been a member of Ashbourne Road Church, Derby, since 1914. In his six years at Derby School he had reached the sixth form and taken the London Matriculation examinations. He had read standard literary works, such as Ruskin and Carlyle, and missionary biography. The missionary biography was presumably in the kind of volumes handed out as Sunday School prizes, such as *James Gilmour and the Mongol Mission* by Mrs Bryson, published by the National Sunday School Union. Gilmour had trained at Cheshunt College and had originally intended to work for the London Missionary Society. Arnold's statement of religious experience was satisfactory and it was noted that he had trained as a cadet for a Commission during the last year of the war, in addition to his railway work. A photograph exists of him exchanging his Second Lieutenant's uniform with his older brother, Harold, who served in the Royal Navy. The Legg brothers were known in the wider family for their good humour and practical jokes, though these did not feature in the Cheshunt interview. Instead, Arnold won commendation for being engaged in Sunday School work and the Young People's Missionary League. (Interestingly, the Young People's Missionary League in Derby met at Victoria Street Church under the leadership of Miss Butterworth. The Butterworths were a family long-associated with that church and part of the complex inter-marrying which linked all its leading families). Arnold had financial backing to the tune of £25 a year, or more, if a government grant could be procured, reference to his hopes of a resettlement grant from his brief time in the forces. E. W. Johnson, who was tutor in charge of Cheshunt in 1919, told the LMS that he had "stirred up Legg to apply for a government grant" because "he had not understood enough about it to make a serious application". If Arnold could secure the government grant he would be better off than most students and also release the missionary bursary for another entrant.[3] Arnold brought the necessary recommendations. The church at Ashbourne Road, of course, and, as we have seen, Revd J. R. Ackroyd, BD, late of Derby. Local ministers, Revd J. K. Kirby, who had been his minister at Ashbourne Road, but was now at Farley Hill, Matlock, and Revd E. Bristow, also supported him. He had definitely decided to offer himself for Missionary work. After an interview the Committee unanimously recommended him for admission. In 1920, just as Arnold was admitted to Cheshunt College, a new President arrived, Sydney Cave, who had served the LMS at Nagercoil in Travancore as a theological teacher until 1916.

Arnold's college career was wholly successful in terms of the prizes and scholarships he was awarded. He was popular with other students. He carried out a round of village preaching in Cambridgeshire and nearby counties, just as he had done in Derbyshire before coming to college. In the summer of 1921 he undertook a student pastorate at Wirksworth in Derbyshire, where he was a particular

3 CWM/LMS/Home/ Candidates Papers, Second Series 1900-1940: Box 21. CWM papers are held in the Archives at SOAS, University of London.

favourite. That Christmas he had to write a tactful letter to the church, declining an invitation to preach. They were proposing to cancel a visit by the Revd H. H. Carlisle, the East Midlands Moderator, in favour of Arnold.[4] In the summer of 1922 he worked at the Triangle Club in Plaistow, East London, and returned to the Congregational Church there for a student pastorate of two terms in his final year, 1923-4, having already secured his degree. In the summer of 1924 he deputised on Sundays for ministers in quite large churches. He travelled to his preaching appointments on a motor-cycle, allowing him a wider range than those students who pedalled. He became SCM secretary for the college and attended national conferences to represent his fellow students. In 1923 he was elected Senior Student.

In his LMS application papers of 1922 Arnold set out his faith and vocation in the terms one might expect from a young man with his background. He spoke of a growth in faith within a Christian family and made no claim to a sudden conversion. He regarded the Lord's Supper as a memorial service, emphasising the aspect of fellowship and not risking any speculation as to the nature of Christ's presence. He regarded infant baptism as the norm, being a recognition of the child's place within the Christian family, although he had no objection to believer's baptism. On the other hand, he did not regard baptism as essential for church membership, preferring the simple Congregational practice, as he called it, of offering the right hand of fellowship. As Arnold grew up he would have seen members who had grown up in Baptist families admitted to Victoria Street Congregational Church on precisely this basis. The formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972 made pastoral provision for unbaptised Congregationalists for precisely this reason.

In June 1924 Arnold Legg was ordained at his home church, Ashbourne Road, Derby, for service with the LMS. Revd Thomas Rook of Victoria Street, whose daughter, Daphne, was to marry Frank Brown, presided; Frank Lenwood represented the LMS and the charge was preached by Sydney Cave. In September there were farewell meetings before Arnold set sail on the "Gloucestershire", which was bound for Rangoon. He transferred ship in Ceylon and made his way to the LMS station at Trivandrum, now Thiruvananthapuram, the capital of the Indian state of Kerala, in South India, which has absorbed Travancore where Arnold was appointed to serve. In his history of the LMS from 1895 to 1950 Norman Goodall wrote: "As regards the more measurable successes of the Christian enterprise, pride of achievement in the Society's India work belongs to South India, with Travancore leading the way".[5]

In Travancore the jewel in the LMS crown was Nagercoil, where there was a crowded church building which accommodated 2,000 worshippers, a Christian college, a printing house and a flourishing embroidery and lace industry, which raised funds for the mission. As Goodall pointed out, there was a long Christian

4 Church Meeting Minutes, Wirksworth Congregational Church.

5 Norman Goodall, *A History of the London Missionary Society, 1895-1945* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 42.

tradition in this part of India, sympathetic local leaders and a relatively small Muslim population. This meant that LMS work in Travancore was statistically far more successful than in Bengal in the north-east. Credit for this success was also given to James Duthie, who died there in 1908 after giving fifty-two years of his life to India. The Wills Memorial Hostel for students in Trivandrum was the gift of H. T. Wills who had worked there in an honorary capacity for twenty-three years to 1915 and which he had given in memory of his father, S. D. Wills. Also at Trivandrum was a Government College which the LMS had helped bring into being. District missionary work in the villages around Trivandrum involved open-air evangelism, creation and oversight of schools and churches, care for teachers and pastors, all this traditionally falling to European missionaries.

In his first year at Trivandrum, Arnold met Mary Hewitt, or May as she was always known. May had been born in 1904 in a house called Kerala, at Kodaikanal in South India, the daughter of LMS missionaries, James and Gertrude Hewitt. Kodaikanal was at the Kodai hill station used for holidays, but also for maternity cases. Until 1917 the only access to Kodai was on foot and the expectant mothers were carried up in a litter by bearers. All supplies had to be carried up the hill as well, until the motor road opened. The Hewitts were stationed at Attingal and later often moved between Trivandrum and Quilon. Hewitt had begun work as a lay evangelist in 1893 and was ordained ten years later, after a theology course in England. He preferred the name "James" but is shown in LMS records by his given name of "Henry". The work at Quilon and Attingal, in the north of Travancore, was much more taxing than that at Nagercoil or Trivandrum. Converts were fewer and money was always tight. For ten years Hewitt tried to create an industrial school on the edge of Trivandrum but the venture was not a success and in 1921 he was posted to Attingal. May was educated largely in India because of the war, but eventually was sent to England for the last few years of her schooling at Walthamstow Hall. From there she returned to Attingal with her mother to help her father. Arnold had already struck up a friendship with a young Baptist woman but their failure to agree theologically had led them to agree a cooling-off period. May could see that Arnold was attracted to her, but that something held him back. She went off to Australia for a year to help out in a family and then returned to England with her parents on their retirement furlough. She was thinking of training as a nurse, as her mother had done, when a letter came from Arnold proposing marriage. At this time she was a member of Ealing Congregational Church, whose minister was Wilton Rix, so it fell to them to commend May to the LMS, who already knew her as a child of missionaries. This meant that clearing the hurdle of the LMS Board on the way to marriage was easy. However, the etiquette of the time meant that Arnold's letter of proposal was first opened and read by her father. He evidently approved; the permission of the LMS was readily given on the basis of her missionary upbringing and she set out for India. Arnold met her in Colombo, where they were married and honeymooned before making their way to Trivandrum. The parts of bridesmaid and best man were played by Katherine and Fred Hacker, from another LMS missionary family. There were very few other guests.

His daughter Gillian described Arnold as she knew him, growing up. "He

was a handsome man, almost six feet tall, black hair, blue eyes and a slight Derby accent. He was a good speaker and his sermons were thoughtful, pithy and cogent. He had a keen and mischievous sense of humour and could be very good company. He was a hard worker and an excellent administrator".[6] Allowing for family bias, this description matches everything else that we know about him and why his proposal was favourably received by May Hewitt. Michael, the eldest child, and Gillian were born in India at the LMS hospital at Neyyoor. A third Legg child, Geoffrey, was born while they were stationed at Quilon on their second tour of duty.

The hospital at Neyyoor was one more star institution of the LMS in Travancore. The mountaineer Howard Somervell had visited the hospital in 1920 while in India and felt called to return and work there. From 1922 Somervell took over the leadership and during the years to his official retirement in 1945 developed all aspects of the work. Somervell's account of medical missionary service in Travancore is found in his classic book, *After Everest*.[7] In the absence of a continuous account by Legg himself, Somervell's book offers us the best picture of the context of LMS work in Travancore. At the start of this period the missionary was still a patrician figure, a "sahib" with influence and control of resources. Somervell was motivated by the deep needs of the local population in a humanitarian spirit. He believed that Christian service, especially medical help, was a potent witness in its own right and did not believe in challenging the prevailing Hinduism in the way that more conservative Christians were doing. If village people believed that evil spirits caused acute stomach pains then Somervell's answer was to create a viewing booth in his operating theatre to enable them to see the removal of duodenal ulcers in progress. His hospital offered effective treatment for fractured limbs, many of which were caused in the prevailing industry of coconut growing as the pickers climbed the trees and fell. Local medicine failed these patients. Somervell chided himself from time to time that he did not have the patience of Indians, even though he did not regard that patience as necessarily a virtue. Legg, from what little we know of him, shared many of Somervell's attitudes. He learned the local Malayalam language in his first year and, once May had joined him, had the benefit of her Indian experience to add to his own. In 1932 the Legg family took their first furlough in England. There they spent three months with May's parents and a year in a flat in Cambridge. Arnold also visited his own family in Derby in July 1932 and spoke at a function at Ashbourne Road.[8] They returned in 1933 on the P & O liner, "Conorin", bound for Yokahama, once more leaving the ship at Colombo.

In 1936 the LMS sent a special deputation to Travancore to deal with a

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6 Much of the information on which this article is based has come from the Legg family and was supplied to the author by the late Miss Beryl Orchard.

7 T. Howard Somervell, *After Everest: The Experiences of a Mountaineer and Medical Missionary* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936).

8 Information supplied by the Legg family.

financial crisis. Up to this point the embroidery and lace industries, which had expanded from Nagercoil to other areas, had generated income for the mission as well as advancing the status of the women who worked in them. There was a long term plan to withdraw LMS subsidies in the expectation that these industries would prosper enough to pay their own way and make a surplus for the local churches. The LMS was having its own problems in raising funds during the Depression and the Indian industries were also suffering. Legg, who had some experience of book-keeping on leaving school, accompanied the delegation on their tour of the mission stations, though they were at pains to say he did not contribute to their findings. It is difficult to see how he could not have influenced them but, presumably, they needed to protect him from local comeback. In addition to the problems with the industries there was a perpetual irritant to local school work, which depended on government grants for much of its income. Teachers' pay was often in arrears and the LMS was lobbied to provide loans to cover the shortfall. The expansion of school work, which was to be welcomed as beneficial, was also a problem for the LMS, which had limited funds allocated to Travancore. The delegation toured and gathered evidence from 19 September to 4 October 1936 and then considered its report and called a conference of local church leadership to discuss a way forward. The period of LMS subsidy was extended in return for a promise of economies and increased local fund-raising.[9]

From September 1937 to April 1938 Norman Goodall, as newly appointed Foreign Secretary of the LMS, made an extended visit to India to see the missionary situation for himself. His confidential report to the LMS Board sounded warning notes about the situation in Travancore.[10] In spite of the vast congregations at Nagercoil, which fuelled the "success story" account of the work there, morale was low. Half the income for the work came from government grants, one sixth from the LMS and the rest (one third) was generated locally. To the normal pressures of poverty had been added drought and epidemic, making the generation of local income even more difficult. This led to resistance to the agreement reached in 1936. The increase in giving had not materialised and there was continuous wrangling over the economies needed. The church had been organised in Districts chaired by Indians, in a bid to move it to self-sufficiency. These chairmen were the targets of complaints about the situation. Goodall had appealed for an end to what he called "fruitless discussion and profitless contention". There was also frustration that possible expansion of the evangelistic work was hampered for lack of funds. A group of people known as the Ezhavas were a particular target and Goodall acknowledged that Arnold Legg had briefed him on this situation following a careful study of the facts. It would seem that Legg was regarded as a reliable source of

9 CWM/LMS/Home/ Deputation Reports, Box 1: Report of Delegation to Travancore October 1936.

10 CWM/LMS/Home/ Deputation Reports, Box 1: Report by Revd Norman Goodall after a secretarial visit to India, September 1937 to April 1938, pp. 29f.

information by visiting LMS representatives.

The Legg family came to England on furlough in 1938, this time occupying the LMS house at Sevenoaks. At the outbreak of war Arnold served in the Fire Brigade until the family were able to travel back to India in 1940 on the P & O liner "Orion", by way of the Cape of Good Hope. This provided them with a brief holiday in Cape Town. Back in Quilon Michael contracted a severe sinus infection which eventually led to his being rushed to Neyymoor where Somervell operated on him on Christmas Day. Arnold and May were now separated for a time while Michael went back to school at Highclere in Kodai and his mother accompanied him, to look after his dressings. May had always enjoyed her own schooling at Highclere, which was an American co-educational school. At the end of the war May returned to England with the children to look after her father, her mother having died. May struggled with rationing, which her father had never understood and could not explain, and also with his old-fashioned attitudes, such as shock that May and Gillian had no hats to wear to church. The children went to board in the missionary schools and Michael had further surgery on his sinuses. Arnold joined them at Sevenoaks for six months during 1947 but his furlough was cut short by the need to return to take up his new post as one of the first bishops of the Church of South India, the only LMS missionary to hold such an office. May was not to return to India until Arnold came home again in 1950 on furlough. Their children remained in England.

On this 1950 furlough the newly created bishop toured all his old Derbyshire stamping grounds, including small rural churches, and spoke at Derby Rotary Club. A report of his speaking at a similar function in Bristol shows the nervousness felt about India at the time, following the Communist take-over in China. Arnold said he recognised some totalitarian symptoms in India, but felt that the political situation was not comparable with that in China. His view was coloured by his situation in Travancore. The growth of Indian nationalism never provoked such violent incidents in the south as in the north. However, the struggle for independence was clearly the background to LMS policy, as the country moved towards the end of the Raj. Leonard Hurst had made a visit and reported to the Board in 1947.[11] His overall view was that the Church was too dependent on Western missionaries. Some Indians still wanted traditional "patriarchal" missionaries while others wanted missionaries with technical and specialist roles, subject to Indian control. The shadow of imperialism still hung over Christian missions. This led to frustration among the Western missionaries themselves, unsure of their role. One practical thing Hurst recommended was that missionaries moved to modest houses, turning over any pretentious mission bungalows to other purposes. On the other hand, while missionaries were still there, they needed better transport if their use was to be maximised and Hurst

11 CWM/LMS/Home/ Deputation Reports, Box 1: Report by Revd H. Leonard Hurst after a secretarial visit to India July 1946 to March 1947, p. 23 and pp. 66f.

recommended a provision of cars or car expenses. Independence was accompanied by the creation of the Church of South India. All these changes led to local fears that the LMS would withdraw entirely from work in South Travancore.[12] The tide of history was running against the old missionary relationships, whatever the traditionalists longed to retain. Partnership in mission was to be the new fashion and the mission agencies placed a good deal of hope in the newly created Church of South India.

The Leggs again spent the 1955-56 furlough in Sevenoaks and saw their family. Arnold was now Bishop of South Travancore, and subsequently that part which constituted the South Kerala Diocese from 1959. On his election as Moderator of the Church of South India by his fellow bishops in 1962 he received an illuminated address on 18 January from the Mateer Memorial Church in Trivandrum, one of the oldest in the district and centre of the South Kerala Diocese. This gives a review of Arnold Legg's missionary service. Even allowing for the nature of such accounts, we can form some impression of his interests and the respect in which he was held from this text.

> Revered Sir, it gives us, members and friends, of the Mateer Memorial Church, Trivandrum, immense joy to learn that you have been elected by the Synod of the Church of South India as Moderator and have thereby been appointed to the highest office to which a bishop may rise in the C.S.I., and we have assembled here to submit to you our most hearty felicitations and best wishes on this occasion.
>
> You have Sir, been missionary in our midst for 38 years and we still cherish the memories of your arrival here in 1924 on the eve of the retirement of our veteran missionary, the Rev. Arthur Parker. We were happy to find that though you were quite young, yet with your thoughtful words, prompt, effective action and devoted life you made a fitting successor to that great missionary. We were highly pleased also that you chose as your partner the worthy daughter of the Rev. Henry W. Hewett, another capable missionary in our midst and efficient pioneer in Christian industrial training in the State.
>
> Mrs Legg and yourself have greatly endeared yourselves to us, and your intelligent understanding of the life and problems of the church and contribution to the progress of our congregations led to your election as Chairman of the South Travancore Church Council, and later as the President of the General Assembly of the S.I.U.C. [South India United Church]. In 1947 when the Church of South India was formed as a united church after the prayer of our Lord "*ut omnes unim sint*" you were rightly chosen as the Bishop of the South Travancore Diocese extending from

12 CWM/LMS/Home/ Deputation Reports, Box 1: Report by the Revd C. S. Craig of a brief secretarial visit to India, 4 March to 5 April 1953.

Cape Comorin in the South to the River Kallada in the North. Two years ago, when this diocese, which had grown and flourished beyond measure, was divided into two dioceses, viz. Kanyakumari and South Kerala, it was our good fortune to have you appointed as our Bishop.

Your steady and constant support for congregational evangelism, and, at the same time, staunch and unswerving adherence to the ecumenic tenets of the C.S.I. have attracted us to your leadership as an elder brother and Father in God, worthy of all honour. Your interest in evangelistic, educational and medical work, your sympathetic approach to the problems of backward sections, and your keen participation in the whole life of the Church have been of vital consequence to our congregations. Your interest in and cooperation with inter-denominational organisations like the S.C.M., Christian Endeavour, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., the United Evangelistic Campaign, the United celebration of Christmas, the Kerala Christian Council, the National Christian Council and the World Christian Council, with other benevolent organisations like flood relief, the relief of the physically handicapped, etc., and with social functions and associations have added in no small measure to our extending influence.

You have been with us at a time of vast changes – political, scientific, social and economic, and side by side there is also great change in the religious outlook, particularly the accentuated interest in the ecumenical movement. It looks as if the world is either heading for a great disaster or speeding forward into a new age of peace and plenty. In the midst of all these years you have prayed for us and we have prayed with and for you.

The Synod of the C.S.I. has been functioning in this world context and many there be in the East and the West, who are looking forward with profound interest at the progress of the C.S.I. In the Synod you have expressed your opinions with convincing definiteness and on occasions of momentous decisions you have been a tower of strength. In the negotiations with the Lutherans, the Marthomites and the Church in North India you are playing a prominent part. It is not surprising therefore that you have now been elected to the most responsible position of Moderator, of which we are really proud and of which the Home Board of the London Missionary Society will be happy to hear.

Mrs Legg has been closely associated with you in all your activities. Her attention has been specially given to the Sunday Schools, Industries, Boarding Home and Women's work. Her interest in the fine arts, particularly music and gardening, and in all-round orderliness and neatness have set an excellent example. Above all her trust in the Lord and cheerful outlook have stood by you and the Diocese at all times. We would also felicitate her on this occasion as we are sure that she would be a fitting helpmate to you in the taxing duties of Moderator.

We feel confident that your role as Moderator will prove eminently successful and we pray God Almighty to grant you and your family His choicest blessings. Patient and strong as you are, we pray Him to vouchsafe

to you in abundant measure the greater patience, deeper insight and larger vision that this exalted office may require and to endue you richly with power from on High.[13]

One of Arnold's first responsibilities was to take up an invitation to the Second Vatican Council, which he attended in 1962, 1963 and 1964 as an official Observer representative of the Church of South India. His old sense of mischief remained and he wrote to the LMS saying, "I have to inform you that I am going over to Rome". For the first meetings he wore a suit, with purple bib and dog collar, as befitted a Congregational minister finding himself to be a bishop. However, he felt rather under-dressed at the ceremonies in St Peter's, and feeling that his South India white cassock was too flimsy for the climate in Rome, commissioned a purple one. There are photographs of him in both these guises, including him, in purple, walking alongside George Caird in black cassock and full academicals. This may not have been one of the vast changes which the Mateer Memorial Church singled out, but it was a long way from the understated Congregationalism of Ashbourne Road, Derby, in 1919.

The tribute paid to Arnold and May Legg found in the minutes of the South India LMS Missionaries' Fellowship for May 1966 when they finally left India is clearly heart-felt and tells us a little more about them.

To the Most Rev. A. H. and Mrs Legg.

It is with hearts full of gratitude to God that we recall the long and loyal service of Arnold and May Legg, who left India in March 1966 for furlough prior to retirement, visiting Nairobi and Rome on their journey to England.

Appreciation of their outstanding and varied services to the Church will be found elsewhere; here we wish to put on record our appreciation of them as colleagues, fellow members of the L.M.S.

The Rev. Arnold H. Legg, appointed to Travancore in 1924, married May Hewett, (daughter of the Rev. H. and Mrs Hewett, themselves missionaries in Travancore) in 1928 and while none of us in service at present was here to witness the marriage, all who have come in contact with them since that time, have had cause to thank God for this partnership. Together, they have been a tower of strength, their gifts and graces complementing each other. Arnold was in charge of the Trivandrum District from 1924-34, then moved to Quilon as evangelistic missionary in the Northern District. He was President of the Travancore Church Council 1936-39 and then 1942-47; and at different times was Chairman of the Travancore Mission Council of the L.M.S., and Treasurer of both Councils. He was President of the S.I.U.C. General Assembly 1937-39, and Convener of the S.I.U.C Union Committee in 1946, when the Assembly accepted the scheme of Union.

13 Information supplied by the Legg family.

Selected as the first Bishop in South Travancore, Arnold served in the undivided Diocese from his consecration in 1947 to 1959, continuing as Bishop in S. Kerala when the Diocese was bifurcated in 1959. The 1962 Synod appointed him Moderator and the 1964 Synod re-elected him. At the 1966 Synod he announced that his decision to retire was irrevocable.

"Arnold our Bishop" proved himself a scholar, a wise counsellor, a notable preacher, a wise and efficient administrator, and a true friend and Pastor. He has a wide knowledge of Malayalam and speaks it fluently. One of the few people whose judgement everyone trusted, and came to rely on, known to be absolutely just in all his dealings, respected and loved by all, he is truly a man of God.

He has been truly supported at all times by May, his wife, indeed a "help meet for him." May is acknowledged by all who know her as a gracious hostess, a generous and affectionate colleague, a sympathetic friend. Which of the Kerala or Kanyakumari missionaries has not gone to her when troubled, and been strengthened by bracing and loving understanding? Her interests are wide. Many of us have taken a livelier interest in flowers, trees or birds, beginning perhaps with gifts from her garden in Trivandrum, walks with her in Kodai, or a loan of her Binoculars, or bird book. And many, whether cat lovers or not have found themselves cherishing a Siamese kitten; truly her enthusiasms were contagious.

The Church industries benefited greatly by her excellence as a designer and needlewoman, and a leader among women. In recent years, she has served as Convener of the South Kerala Women's work Committee, and as Diocesan President of the Women's Fellowship. Both Arnold and May painted, and we expect their home, wherever they may make it, will have walls adorned with Arnold's pictures of Kovilam and Kodai, and May's flower studies.

They always took a keen interest in all that their colleagues, both Indian and missionary, were doing; rejoicing in their achievements, and sharing in joys and hopes of others, giving generously of their time and wisdom whenever help was sought. Their verandah and sitting room were scarcely ever free from folk waiting to see the Bishop, and work at his desk was often relegated to the night hours.

Neither Arnold nor May has been 100% fit in recent years, yet Arnold maintained to the glory of God, and the benefit of the Church, what was often called a killing job. (A member of the 1964 Synod was heard to say "You are killing our Moderator.") And few know how much May suffered uncomplainingly. She kept herself going with prayer, will-power and a pill or two, and kept Arnold fit for the work he had to do, travelling with him whenever possible, both in the Diocese and, more recently, in the more distant areas of the C.S.I.

They were admirable "senior colleagues". We shall miss them in so many different ways but they have run a good course, Arnold nearly 42 years and May practically the whole of her life in India, (and each still has a distinctive sense of humour) and we cannot grudge them their retirement.

> We wish them all joy, and blessings more than we can conceive, as they return to England. Our love and prayers go with them.[14]

It is a matter of regret that so little of Legg's wisdom is to be found in print. I have traced a paper he wrote while in retirement in England for an American publication called *The Diaconate Now*, published in 1968. In it, he gives a cogent account of the difficulties of merging a Congregational and an Episcopalian view of the diaconate and how agreement was reached in the Church of South India, albeit with continuing problems. He is particularly wedded to the idea of the diaconate as a life-long ministry of service, rather than as a preliminary to priestly ordination. He gives his own take on the idea of a three-fold ministry, taken from the writings of Lukas Vischer of the World Council of Churches (WCC), which are based on his reading of the Gospels rather than the Epistles. The incarnate Lord, he writes, had a unified ministry with three distinctive strands. First it was a preaching ministry, proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom. Secondly, it was a pastoral ministry, caring for his disciples and appointing them as under-shepherds. Thirdly it was a ministry of healing and compassion which made up the signs of the Kingdom he was announcing. Vischer believed that the relationship between the compassionate programmes of the Church and its liturgical life and ordained ministry was not clear. Legg believed that a fundamental re-thinking of the diaconate was the only answer to the continuing problems of reconciling ministries within the Church of South India and accommodating the different understandings of ordination represented in European missionaries coming to serve within it.[15]

After his return to England, Arnold served as minister at Beacon Hill Church, Hindhead, until finally retiring in in 1973, telling his family that there were no more sermons left in him. He and May lived two more years on their own at Milford before joining Gillian in Hemel Hempstead, where he died in 1980. He attended meetings of the friends of the Church of South India but had no high profile in the national life of the United Reformed Church as Newbigin did, let alone a role at the WCC, and a stream of publications. Perhaps he underestimated how much he could offer. A bigger factor may have been his health and the series of heart attacks which he suffered. Arnold Legg served the Church Catholic with distinction. The United Reformed Church can celebrate the gifts which he did have and remember him with thanksgiving.

STEPHEN ORCHARD

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14 Information supplied by the Legg family.

15 Richard T. Nolan (ed.), *The Diaconate Now* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1968). This collection of papers was published by the Diaconal Association of the Church of England. Legg's paper forming chapter 6.

"BRIEF, BRIGHT AND BROTHERLY": ASSESSING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MEN'S OWN BROTHERHOOD MOVEMENT AND CONGREGATIONALISM IN EDWARDIAN HAMPSHIRE

One of the most notable features of a considerable number of Congregational churches in Edwardian Hampshire was their sponsorship of a Men's Own Brotherhood or Pleasant Sunday Afternoon (P.S.A.) society.[1] Such societies were to be found in many of the market towns of the county, including Alton, Basingstoke, Lymington, Petersfield, Ringwood and Romsey, as well as the suburbs of Bournemouth, such as Boscombe, Westbourne and Winton. Moreover, this was not solely an urban and suburban phenomenon since examples can also be found of the influence of the Brotherhood Movement in rural areas. For example, in the north-east Hampshire village of Crondall, P.S.A. meetings were started by the Revd Robert Dobbie, who was the Congregational minister from 1903 to 1907, and in 1904 it was reported that these were proving to be "very successful, a good company having been present every Sunday afternoon since the meetings began."[2] There are also newspaper accounts from 1906 of monthly P.S.A. meetings being held in Cranemoor Congregational Chapel (a Mission Station of Christchurch Congregational Church situated in the south-west of the county), one of which was described as a "decided success" and another "the most successful and interesting which has yet taken place."[3] Similarly, in 1907 reports indicated that in the large, north Hampshire, village of Overton the enterprising Congregational pastor, the Revd James Richards, had replaced open air services with "Sunday afternoon meetings in the Chapel after the style of a P.S.A."[4] In other words, they were to be "Brief, Bright & Brotherly", a well-known feature of the Men's Own Brotherhood Movement.[5]

Originating in the West Midlands, the Brotherhood Movement was founded in 1875 by John Blackham, a Sunday school teacher and deacon of Ebenezer Congregational Church, West Bromwich. By the early years of the twentieth century, however, it had spread to many other parts of the country including the south coast. As expressed in a work published at the height of the Movement in 1912, "the attempt ... [was] nothing less than to teach a 'democratic religion' leading to a 'practical Christianity' full of love and good works".[6] Although societies were attached to Free Churches of all denominations and a number

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1 Throughout this article these terms are used interchangeably.

2 *Hants and Berks Gazette* (20 February 1904), p. 8.

3 *Christchurch Times* (31 March 1906), p. 5; (6 June 1906), p. 5.

4 *Annual Report of HCU*, 1907, Hampshire Record Office [hereafter HRO]: 127/M94/62/52, pp. 26-7.

5 Overton Congregational Church Minute Book, HRO: 159/M85/1 (2 September 1907).

6 Frederick DeLand Leete, *Christian Brotherhoods* (Cincinnati, OH: Jennings and Graham, 1912), p. 272.

were non-denominational, and were intended to appeal to "all men of all creeds or with no creed", arguably there were certain features of the Movement that made it especially appealing to Congregationalists. Indeed, in towns with a non-denominational society, a Congregational presence was still strongly felt. Thus, in the railway town of Eastleigh one of the Vice-Presidents of a United P.S.A., which was started in 1912, was the Congregational minister, the Revd David Tran[7] and when the Fareham Brotherhood was inaugurated in the autumn of 1913, its first meeting was held in the Congregational Church.[8] Moreover, in both towns, many of the leading members were Congregationalists.

Drawing upon evidence from "mainland" Hampshire, this article will highlight some of the reasons why there was what could be described as a symbiotic relationship between the Brotherhood Movement and Congregationalism. Attention is also given to one particular issue concerning the future direction of Congregationalism, which the Brotherhood Movement can be said to have accentuated, namely gender relations. Notwithstanding the fact that the Movement targeted men, as indicated by its title, the success which it enjoyed, had implications for women.

Underlying these concerns are two main considerations. The first is a growing appreciation of the contribution which the existence of a Men's Own society made to the self-esteem and indeed standing within the community of Congregational churches. The second is a desire to make a modest contribution to what remains a relatively neglected sphere of church history. As David Killingray has observed, given the Movement's success, both in numerical terms and with respect to its geographical spread, one wonders why "there is no detailed study of the movement" from a contemporary academic perspective.[9] Such a study can only be enhanced by taking account of the experiences of those active in the Brotherhood Movement at the local level.

To prepare the ground and highlight some of the themes developed in the next section of the article, the following account of the P.S.A. attached to London Street Congregational Church in Basingstoke and taken from the first edition of the church magazine re-launched in 1908, provides some revealing insights into its early years:

> Nine years ago when our little town was placarded with these significant letters [P.S.A.], almost to the length of goalposts, everybody was asking what it all meant. To-day everybody knows they stand for very much more than they did 8 or 9 years ago. So many men have knocked up against the P.S.A.,

7 *Eastleigh Weekly News* (6 June 1913), p. 5.

8 *Hampshire Telegraph* (17 October 1913), p. 5.

9 David Killingray, "The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Movement: Revival in the West Midlands, 1875-90?", in Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory (eds), *Revival and Resurgence in Christian History: Studies in Church History*, Vol. 44 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), p. 263.

> become members, joining Sunday by Sunday in the peculiarly pleasant masculine singing, and listening to the telling addresses given. Hundreds of men have come and gone, others remain, many would testify to the value and help the P.S.A. has been and is to them. The writer knows of many men who have been toned into a better mode of living – in their homes and in their work; others who have been brought into new spheres of work in connection with their Church, to which many of them were almost, if not altogether, strangers. And better still, some, through attending the P.S.A. have been brought into contact with their Lord and Master and Redeemer.[10]

This positive assessment possibly overstates the reach and impact of the P.S.A., but it does reflect something of the optimism surrounding the Brotherhood Movement during the early years of the twentieth century. Moreover, at the time this assessment was made, there was also a Wesleyan Methodist Brotherhood in the town, while the Primitive Methodists had a People's Pleasant Hour modelled on the P.S.A. – an indication of the pervasive influence of the Movement.

I: The Brotherhood Movement and Congregationalism

Organisationally, each local Men's Own or P.S.A. society was autonomous. This meant that the Brotherhood Movement incorporated a principle that was dear to the heart of Congregationalists, namely independency and self-governance. Independency, however, did not necessarily mean isolation and within the Movement a developing sense of solidarity between societies resulted in the establishment of regional federations and a national body. To some extent, this mirrored the earlier moves within Congregationalism to set up county unions and a national union to which the majority of churches belonged. In keeping with the principle of collegiality, most, if not all, of the Men's Own and P.S.A. societies in Hampshire belonged to the Wilts, Hants, Dorset and Isle of Wight Federation of Brotherhoods and Kindred Societies. In 1913, the Federation handbook listed 27 societies in Hampshire.[11] As it was put at the 1910 annual meeting of the Federation, which was held in Eastleigh:

> The key note of their meetings was "Brotherhood," the basis of their work democratic, and where the true ideal was reached, the character, teaching, and ministry of Jesus Christ was the all satisfying theme. Their motto was "All for each, and each for, all" and their desire was to act *unitedly*, so as to exert a powerful influence on the making of a new order of society – one in which war, excessive drinking, gambling, overcrowding ... and the

10 *Basingstoke Congregational Magazine*, Vol 1 (1), New Series (January 1908), unpaginated.

11 *Eastleigh Weekly News* (6 June 1913), p. 5.

> accumulation of wealth in the hands of the favoured few would be impossible [emphasis added].[12]

Thus, the Federation can be said to have had a campaigning as well as a purely spiritual role.

Another distinguishing feature of the Movement was, as pointed out by Killingray, "its informality" [13] or as Ken Inglis puts it, "consecrated pleasure".[14] Thus, gatherings were often lively affairs incorporating music, both vocal and instrumental, accompanied by what was often described as "hearty singing"; recitations; short inspiring addresses on uplifting subjects; and what was referred to, in the context of a meeting of Petersfield's P.S.A., as a "customary cheeriness".[15] Indeed, critics of P.S.A. meetings sometimes considered them as having more in common with the music hall than an act of worship. As the following report of a meeting of Lymington's Congregational P.S.A. illustrates, for some the overly emotional atmosphere could seem out of place and be a cause for complaint:

> ... the programme included music by the string band and organ, sacred songs and a short address ... the vocal and instrumental items were greeted with bursts of hearty applause – spontaneous and expressive of the audience's appreciation of the efforts of musicians and vocalists, but to some this outburst of feeling seemed altogether out of place in a place of worship on the Sabbath Day – but nowadays many old notions of proper and decorous service get rude awaking, and have to give place to newer ideas.[16]

Notwithstanding concerns over the lack of decorum, many Congregationalists were far more relaxed about this than members of some other denominations might have been. They prided themselves on their informal, non-liturgical approach to worship and a willingness to experiment with simpler and what were considered to be more engaging and effective modes of outreach than, for example, the formality inherent in the Book of Common Prayer. This was evident in the extent to which Congregational churches held regular "popular services" and "services of song", intended to appeal to the "unchurched"; their extensive use of musical embellishments which, as indicated, were a notable feature of P.S.A. meetings; and their willingness to adopt innovations, such as the use of lantern slides. The character of the last of these can be gleaned from the following account of lantern services held at the May Street Congregational Hall in Basingstoke:

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12 *Eastleigh Weekly News* (1 April 1910), p. 4.

13 Killingray, "The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Movement: Revival in the West Midlands, 1875-90?", p. 274.

14 K. S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1963), p. 79.

15 *Hants and Sussex News* (15 November 1911), unpaginated.

16 *Lymington Chronicle* (3 October 1901), p. 3.

> The Pastor ... [The Revd J. Gamble] is now conducting special services ... using his powerful lime-light lantern for illustrating his subjects, taken from real life. The illustrated songs are the very latest published, and are superb in design and colouring. It is difficult to say which give the most effective impression, the illustrated hymns or the subject views, but the two combined make a very interesting and instructive service, and cannot fail to produce good. Last Sunday the Hall was crowded, many having to stand.[17]

On Sunday 29 March 1914 the theme of the lantern service was "Christ's Journey to Calvary, Resurrection and Ascension". This consisted of fifty fully coloured slides featuring paintings by "Hoffman, Tissot, Rubens, Copping, Raphael and others."[18] Overall, in a similar manner to P.S.A. meetings, the aim was to make such occasions "very pleasant and profitable", as well as memorable, ones for all concerned.[19] Such an innovation was very much in accord with the desire of the Brotherhood Movement to make their meetings as appealing and attractive as possible.

That said, there was still an underlying seriousness evident at many Brotherhood gatherings. As an illustration of this, in November 1910, at a meeting of Petersfield's P.S.A. the principal speaker the Revd F. S. Neal, a United Methodist minister and President of Shanklin's P.S.A.:

> ... in a most rousing and eloquent address ... [set] forth, in a very able manner, the teaching of Christ in His high valuation of man – that man was God's noblest creature; and declared that the greatest need of the present time was that man should be valued not by his so-called respectability, but by his true worth of character.

However, unlike a conventional sermon, appreciation of the address was shown by "the applause which it evoked".[20]

From an organisational perspective, P.S.A. societies fitted well with the enthusiastic embrace by Congregationalists of the influential doctrine of the "Institutional Church". This involved their churches adopting what can best be characterised as a holistic approach to their mission. In practical terms it meant establishing and maintaining a plethora of satellite organisations focusing on educational, social and recreational provision. These were intended to cement the loyalty of members by meeting most, if not all, of their needs within the confines of the church community, and to draw in outsiders thereby contributing to the church's role as an evangelising agency. Indeed, a P.S.A. society was itself

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17 *Hants and Berks Gazette* (31 January 1914), p. 5.
18 *Hants and Berks Gazette* (28 March 1914), p. 5.
19 *Hants and Sussex News* (15 November 1911), unpaginated.
20 *Hants and Sussex News* (30 November 1910), unpaginated.

a very tangible manifestation of the application of the institutional principle.

Moreover, this principle was also evident in the extent to which some Men's Own societies sponsored a wide variety of activities of their own intended to address many different kinds of material and social need and to contribute to the self-improvement and, what today would be called, the "lifelong learning" of members. Thus, in his report for 1907/8 the Secretary of Charminster Road Congregational P.S.A., situated in the suburbs of Bournemouth, was able to make reference to its book fund, slate club, penny bank, debating society, poor man's lawyer and, what he considered to be "the most important work of the PSA", home visits.[21] Likewise, in addition to its meetings and social events, Basingstoke's Congregational P.S.A. sponsored a coal club, which served as a means of obtaining cheaper coal for its members; a slate club; and a men's choir that was often invited to sing at P.S.A. meetings in neighbouring towns.[22] The slate club was set up in 1900 and was essentially a savings scheme, with the payment of a dividend at Christmas time and providing sick pay as and when required. In its first year it had 198 members; second year, 295; and third year, 366.[23] Figures for subsequent years were 1904, 461 members; 1907, 432 members; 1908, 390 members; and 1912, 388 members.[24] The numbers involved clearly reflected the value of such a facility during the Edwardian era. In addition, a number of societies, such as the one in Eastleigh, raised funds to enable them to engage in philanthropic enterprises.[25]

With respect to their potential for outreach, organisations such as the P.S.A. were seen as being especially appealing to members of the working class. Indeed, in the words of Hugh McLeod, "in its heyday, between about 1890 and 1914, it [the Brotherhood Movement] was the most representative, and one of the largest bodies of working-class Christians in London", an observation which could have been applied to many other parts of the country. In other words, "it largely existed for a population that was in some degree repelled by certain features of most chapels".[26] Conscious of their bias towards the middle class, Congregationalists were anxious to demonstrate their concern for the spiritual well-being of working men and Men's Own societies afforded them with a means of doing so, without being overly patronising. This meant endeavouring to show that Christianity was relevant to all sections of the community and to every aspect of life. Thus, at the eleventh anniversary celebration of Basingstoke's Congregational P.S.A. in 1910 the minister, the Revd Reginald Thompson, in his capacity as President could claim that:

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21 *Bournemouth Guardian* (29 February 1908), p. 6.

22 For example, in July 1908, the choir "sang several pieces" at Newbury Congregational Church "which were highly appreciated". *Hants and Berks Gazette* (4 July 1908), p. 5.

23 *Hants and Berks Gazette* (26 December 1903), p. 5.

24 *Hants and Berks Gazette*, various editions.

25 *Eastleigh Weekly News* (6 June 1913), p. 5.

26 Hugh McLeod, *Class and Religion in the late Victorian City* (London: Croom Helm 1974), pp. 65-6.

> ... [it] had thoroughly justified its position in the town. They had striven to show that religion was not unmanly, but that with religion a man's life was crowned. They had tried to show that a religious service was not unattractive to men if it was kept away from all that was namby-pamby and sensational. They had striven to put their religion into their daily life, and to redeem it from the taint of being hypocritical.[27]

A few months later, Mr Jeffs, President of the London P.S.A. Federation, spoke on the "Logic of Brotherhood" and emphasised the need for brotherliness in religion and politics and for setting an example "at home".[28] Basingstoke's Congregational P.S.A., with its appeal to "any and every man", was still going strong in June 1914.[29]

Elsewhere, in February 1908, at "a great PSA demonstration in connection with Charminster Road Congregational Church", the minister, the Revd Alexander Gibson, as President, made some perceptive remarks about "the position of the working classes" in relation to the churches:

> ... any one with half an eye could not help seeing that the working men were interested in religious matters. Where they had the true spiritual brotherhood they would discover that the working men shared in the success of the churches. If they were going to lift up their brothers and help them they must show genuine love and real interest in their welfare. He urged them to use their brains, hearts and hands more than they had done in the past ... he believed that if the working people would only give up the drink and use their brains more then the great difficulties and problems existing would be settled within a month (applause).[30]

Thus, while the P.S.A. might be seen as the principal vehicle for engaging with the working class and the application of the principle of brotherhood as a means of bridging the class divide, there was also a real desire to make it an effective vehicle for tackling what was regarded as the evil of strong drink and advancing the cause of temperance. For many Congregationalists, total abstinence was seen as the *sine qua non* of a virtuous life as it was for most of those in leadership positions within the Brotherhood Movement. Indeed Brotherhood meetings were intended to be an antidote to the pub and opposition to the drink trade and to gambling were embedded within the Movement's psyche.

With respect to the potential of using the P.S.A. as a recruiting ground for new church members, reference was made to this at the fifth anniversary meeting of

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27 *Hants and Berks Gazette* (16 July 1910), p. 5.
28 *Hants and Berks Gazette* (10 December 1910), p. 5.
29 *Hants and Berks Gazette* (13 June 1914), p. 5. It continued until well into the late 1920s.
30 *Bournemouth Guardian* (29 February 1908), p. 6.

Petersfield's P.S.A., which coincided with the launch of a new feature the "Pleasant Thursday Evening". The guest speaker was the Revd John Kemp, who "was experienced in P.S.A. work, being president of a large society in Southsea".[31] During the course of his address he remarked that:

> ... the great object of the P.S.A. movement ... was to help the churches. It was not a meeting to take the place of the regular church services, but one that should help "feed" the church ... some of his P.S.A. men formed themselves into a "Look out" Committee, who would go into the streets and "buttonhole" young men and bring them in to the evening service.

He concluded by expressing the hope "that the P.S.A. would prosper and be a great power for good in the town".[32] A few years later in 1911, the Secretary, in keeping with what was happening elsewhere, suggested that the initials P.S.A. could mean "Pull Somebody Along"[33] and, in a similar vein, at the AGM of that year a contributor suggested that P.S.A. should stand for "Please Speak Aloud" in proclaiming the Gospel. Thus, there was an evangelistic edge to the Brotherhood Movement as it sought to engage with a segment of the population that proved difficult, if not impossible, to reach by other means. However, while a laudable objective, it is questionable how many P.S.A. members "crossed over" to become fully involved with the life of the church, to which their society was attached.

Moreover, in certain instances efforts to sustain a P.S.A. society, on a long term basis, were unsuccessful. One example of this was the society attached to the Congregational Church in the Bournemouth suburb of Pokesdown. It is not known when this was established, but in 1901 it was reported that:

> There seems to be a brightening prospect in connection with our [P.S.A.] work. We are now having over 30 men to our services, and the earnest spirit with which they enter into the service must be a means of uplifting our members lives and result in good to the world and the church. Mr Harrison renders good service by looking after singers and speakers for each meeting.[34]

A year later, the outlook was still promising: "there are pleasing signs of awakened interest by the men in their own society. As before thanks are due to Mr Harrison for his continued services in getting singers and speakers".[35] However, in the report for 1903, the tone was far more pessimistic:

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31 Kemp was pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Southsea.

32 *Hants and Sussex News* (18 November 1908), unpaginated.

33 *Hants and Sussex News* (4 October 1911), unpaginated.

34 Pokesdown Congregational Church Meetings 1893-1908, Dorset History Centre [hereafter DHC]: NP14/CM/1/2 (29 January 1902).

35 Pokesdown Congregational Church Meetings 1893-1908, DHC: NP14/CM/1/2, (22 January 1903).

> The Society does not seem to gather the class for whom it is attended (*sic*) being mostly made up of members of the church or attendants and unless we can secure a better attendance of non-churchgoers it would seem wise to consider the advisability of closing it, but this rests with the members.[36]

Since there is no further mention of the P.S.A., it is assumed that the members did decide to close the society. The reasons for the failure of the P.S.A. in Pokesdown are not entirely clear, especially given the success of societies elsewhere in the Bournemouth area, such as the one at Boscombe. Perhaps it was due to the demographic make up of the area or the lure of counter attractions. Clearly it does not appear to have been the result of any lack of enthusiasm on the part of the organisers. Thus, the Movement was by no means a panacea and as with all innovations there were failures as well as successes.

Doctrinally many associated with the Brotherhood Movement can be said to have sought a blending of the evangelical commitment to the individualism of the personal gospel with the more collectivist and ethical stance of the social gospel. This again resonated with trends evident in the thinking of such Congregational luminaries as the Revd John Daniel Jones, minister of the renowned Richmond Hill Congregational Church in Bournemouth. In this regard, among other things, both were wrestling with the tricky question of the relationship between Christianity and politics. When speaking to the Romsey Brotherhood in 1908, William Ward, "of London, a great supporter and promoter of the movement" and its National Secretary, who had been escorted from the station to the Congregational Church by the Test Valley Brass and Reed Band, which "drew a great crowd together", put it like this:

> ... he was going to skate on thin ice. He was going to use the word political, but they were not a party political body (hear). If they were to hear him speak for twelve months they would not know what he was in politics (applause). He meant political in the New Testament sense ... they stood for a Christianised democracy. They would never settle the housing and other questions till thy brought into it the teaching of Jesus Christ (applause).[37]

A similar point was made two years later by Romsey's new Congregational minister, the Revd Albert Bage, at the Brotherhood's fifth anniversary gathering:

> ... [The Movement] existed primarily ... for the spiritual welfare of the men. They were not a social club or a political society, and they certainly

36 Pokesdown Congregational Church Meetings 1893-1908, DHC: NP14/CM/1/2 (27 January 1904).

37 *Hampshire Independent* (14 March 1908), p. 11.

> did not exist, as some people thought, for the purpose of advancing political partisanship or for the sake of teaching political principles. If occasionally they did see the necessity of emphasising some political principle it was only because they were driven to the one single purpose of accomplishing the best for every man in the best way which was at hand.[38]

Not surprisingly, politics was also to the fore at a meeting of Westbourne Congregational P.S.A. in 1912 when the speaker was Joseph Pointer, Labour MP for Sheffield Attercliffe from 1909 to 1914, who "was filling week-end engagements in the borough". In the course of his address, based on words from Revelation 21:16, he argued that:

> Two things must constantly proceed together – the improvement of the individual and the improvement of the conditions amidst which the individual had to live. The condition of things often now obtaining – the Church aiming only at reforming the individual and – Socialists, of a certain order, aiming only at the improvement of surroundings or environment – was not wise. There must be a combination of methods and of forces to ensure full success.[39]

As these examples indicate, many associated with the Brotherhood Movement claimed, in a similar manner to Congregationalists, that the moral imperatives within Christianity inevitably led them into the realm of politics defined broadly as pertaining to matters of public concern, debate and policy, while at the same time seeking to distance themselves from any stance that might be regarded as partisan. Although this could be seen as a little disingenuous, since during the Edwardian era the vast majority of Congregationalists were members of or, at least, supported the Liberal Party, it did indicate an awareness of the need to rise above the fray of party politics.

Notwithstanding the organisational and doctrinal attractions of the Movement for many Hampshire Congregationalists, as well as its evangelistic potential, it is unlikely that it would have become so widespread within the county without the drive and enthusiasm of individual pastors. One of the most zealous in this respect was the Revd Walter Vine, minister of Lymington Congregational Church from 1910 to 1917 and President of the Wilts, Hants, Dorset and Isle of Wight Federation of Brotherhoods and Kindred Societies for the year 1913/4. Something of his commitment can be seen in the following extract from a valedictory statement which appeared in the Federation's Year Book:

> In 1910 he accepted the pastorate of Lymington and a year later founded the Lymington Brotherhood in a town where it was universally felt such a meeting could never be successfully formed. In this Brotherhood Mr Vine

38 *Romsey Advertiser* (11 November 1910), unpaginated.
39 *Bournemouth Guardian* (24 February 1912), p. 12.

> has had the assistance of leading members of the municipality of both shades of political opinion, which has done a great deal towards advancing the true ideals of the movement. He is a brother who enjoys life to the full. He is no pessimist, he finds the world a lively place to live in, and full of delightful company, and he only wants to do his full share towards making it more lovely and delightful still. He feels himself, at times, a very poor worker, but is trying to win some small portion of it, for his Saviour, brother and friend, the Lord Jesus Christ.[40]

The references to the municipality reflected the desire in some communities to use the Movement to enhance the moral tone of their populace, in particular the male members. In this respect, the temperance ethos of the Movement was particularly appealing. It is therefore noteworthy that at the launch of the Lymington society Vine was able to thank the "landlords of licensed houses for their splendid help. Every licensed house in the town had shown the Brotherhood card, and several licensed victuallers were with them that day".[41]

In his role as President, Vine addressed societies elsewhere in the counties covered by the Federation and not solely those attached to Congregational churches. Thus, in 1914 he spoke at the fourth anniversary of the Stoke-Road Baptist Brotherhood in Gosport. In what he had to say he conveyed both his commitment to, and his belief in, the worth and timeliness of, the Movement:

> ... [it] existed for the betterment of the manhood and womanhood of the country. The present time was fraught with great opportunities for ... [the Movement]. In the social world there were upheavals which could not be ignored. The spiritual force was at the bottom of the Movement. Democracy was feeling the awakening of its soul; it had become conscious of a higher nature. The Brotherhood movement more than any other was the spiritual expression of the democracy of the day.

Although somewhat idealistic, as Vine observed, "eighty per cent of the people were outside and untouched by the churches" and it was to this segment of the population that the Movement sought to especially appeal. In his words, "Democracy was expressing itself at a simpler meeting, where they could get straighter perhaps to men's souls than in the ordinary services".[42]

Other Congregational ministers who closely identified themselves with the Movement to the extent of establishing and sustaining a P.S.A. branch included the Revd Capes Tarbolton, Basingstoke's Congregational minister from 1887 to 1907; the Revd Ernest Thompson, Petersfield's Congregational minister from

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40 *Lymington Chronicle* (12 March 1914), p. 5.
41 *Hampshire Independent* (9 December 1911), p. 11.
42 *Hampshire Telegraph* (10 April 1914), p. 6.

1903 to 1909; and the Revd John Milnes, minister of Westbourne Congregational Church from 1911 to 1917. They clearly felt that the values underpinning the Brotherhood Movement, such as simplicity, fervour and fraternity, were compatible with and, in some ways, enhanced and embellished those with which Congregationalism was traditionally associated. It was also a Movement within which ministers and lay people could collaborate on equal terms.

II: The implications of the Movement for women

Although, as indicated, the Brotherhood Movement was targeted at men, the implications of its growth and development for Congregational women are also worthy of note. Apart from encouraging their husbands and sons to attend, it was perhaps inevitable that the brevity, brightness and brotherliness or fellowship associated with the Movement would also appeal to women. One response to this was the holding by many societies of "open meetings" to which women were invited. For example, at the first open meeting in 1906 of Romsey's newly formed society it was reported that "there were 150 women in addition to 300 men in attendance".[43] Such meetings could be said to have symbolised a more relaxed approach to gender relations.

In addition to attendance, also of interest was the degree to which women participated in meetings. It is noticeable that at many society gatherings to which only men were invited, there were, nonetheless, contributions from women in the form of musical offerings and recitations. As an example, in February 1911, at a meeting of Petersfield's P.S.A., "Miss May was the soloist, and very nicely rendered 'Jesu, Lover of my soul' and 'Oh, rest in the Lord'".[44] Moreover, at a time when it was extremely rare for women to occupy Congregational pulpits, it was not unknown for them to give addresses at Brotherhood meetings. By way of illustration, in April 1908, "Mrs. Tasker gave an able address on 'Sin, Transgression and Iniquity' at a P.S.A. meeting in Ringwood".[45] Likewise, in the summer of 1913 a meeting of Petersfield's P.S.A. described as being "of an extremely interesting character ... was conducted by Mrs. Stapley and Miss Hector, two lady missioners from Somerset":

> The lesson, Psalm xcvi., was read by Mrs Stapley and the address by Miss Hector, a very eloquent and impressive one, the subject being "Behold I make all things new." In the course of her remarks she gave some very interesting incidents connected with their mission work in Bristol and district. Miss Hector also sang several songs with auto-harp accompaniment very sweetly. There was a crowded audience, one of largest, in fact, that has gathered in the Clarendon Hall.[46]

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43 *Hampshire Independent* (3 February 1906), p. 8.
44 *Hants and Sussex News* (25 February 1911), unpaginated.
45 *Lymington Chronicle* (9 April 1908), p. 5.
46 *Hants and Sussex News* (12 March 1913), unpaginated.

In October 1913, at a meeting of the Lymington Brotherhood, "an inspiring Gospel address was delivered by Mrs Mary Lewis of Dorchester (Organizing Secretary of the Sisterhood branch of the Hants, Wilts and Dorset Federation)".[47] At Basingstoke on 26 July 1914, Mrs Harris of Guildford gave "a straight common sense talk on the types of people she had met". These she classified as shirkers, "jerkers", "quirkers" and workers.[48] Thus, it could be argued that the Brotherhood was helping to secure, using the language of today, a hairline fracture in the "glass ceiling" women traditionally faced within Congregationalism.

Paradoxically, however, many Brotherhood societies could also have been said to have reinforced the traditional divide between the genders by either holding separate meetings for women or spawning P.S.A. societies and Sisterhoods specifically for women. At Boscombe Congregational Church, for example, a Women's P.S.A. was formed during the second half of the first decade of the twentieth century and in January 1912 at a social gathering for members of the Women's P.S.A. and the Men's Own Brotherhood, it was announced that the former would shortly be formed "into a 'Sisterhood'".[49] A second example comes from Winton Congregational Church, where, in 1911, a Sisterhood was started with the minister's wife, Mrs Page James, serving as President.[50] At its first anniversary meeting in February 1912, it was reported that membership had increased from 20 to 133.[51] A year later it "had 200 members and an average weekly attendance of 130".[52] In this context, it is interesting to note that, when addressing the Albert Hall conference of the London Federation in 1912, the Revd Frederick B. Meyer, the President and eminent Baptist, began with the words "Sisters and Brothers", and most other speakers followed suit.[53]

III: Conclusions

The Men's Own Brotherhood Movement was an undoubted success story of the Edwardian era, notwithstanding some of the difficulties that a number of societies encountered. At a time when Congregationalists and members of other denominations were struggling to hold their own, it provided grounds for

47 *Lymington Chronicle* (30 October 1913), p. 5.
48 *Basingstoke and District Congregational Magazine*, Vol 7 (8), New Series (August 1914), p.2.
49 *Bournemouth Guardian* (27 January 1912), p. 12.
50 *Bournemouth Guardian* (6 January 1912), p. 2. The minister was the Revd Howard Page James who had turned around the fortunes of the Church.
51 *Bournemouth Guardian* (2 March 1912), p. 5.
52 *Bournemouth Guardian* (15 February 1913), p. 5.
53 W.Y. Fullerton, *F. B. Meyer: A Biography* (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1929), p. 114.

optimism and a means of raising spirits. It also offered Congregationalists a means of engaging with sections of the population that would otherwise have been beyond their reach. In so doing, however, there was a recognition that the pursuit of "brightness" should not be at the expense of "earnestness". As it was put by Andrew Gammon, the President of Petersfield's P.S.A., at the 1911 AGM:

> It seemed ... that the letters "P.S.A" were made to stand for much, the latest being "Petersfield Sinners Amused," but if they came there on Sundays simply for amusement they had better close their doors – they came to hear the Gospel, to help one another and to get strength and encouragement for everyday life.[54]

The challenge was, of course, to get the balance right.

Moreover, with the outbreak of the First World War, the "brightness" associated with the Movement was inevitably replaced by a far more sombre mood. For example, at the 1914 anniversary of Lymington's P.S.A., celebrated in December of that year:

> The President [the Revd Walter Vine] ... spoke of the many changes which had taken place since the inauguration of the Brotherhood ... and the difficulties in keeping it going, especially now that when so many of the men were away at the Front; therefore they wanted all who could to rally round and help them in this hour of National Crisis. Speaking of the objects of the Brotherhood movement, he showed how many of its members had responded to the call of duty, while of those left behind many were helping in various ways ...[55]

The Brotherhood Movement, however, did survive the First World War and in some communities it thrived during the inter-war years, but more as a social and philanthropic organisation than as an overtly religious one. That said, many Congregationalists continued to play an important part in its activities.

ROGER OTTEWILL

54 *Hants and Sussex News* (15 November 1911), unpaginated.

55 *Lymington Chronicle* (17 December 1914), p. 2.

REVIEWS

***Protestant Nonconformity and Christian Missions.* Edited by Martin Wellings. Studies in Christian History and Thought. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2014. Pp. 164. £19.99. ISBN 978-1-84227-748-0.**

One of the foremost Catholic theologians of the past few decades is Professor Emeritus at New York University, Gabriel Moran. His theology has been helpful to religious educators striving to develop meaningful Christian religious education. He once wrote that "we cannot approach the non-believer with the assumption that he has not been touched by God's grace. [We] cannot assume that our task is to fill an empty vessel or that [we] possess something with which the vessel is to be filled. [We] can only approach the other with an attitude of invitation that we take up the quest together, for the God who is active in our lives".

I first came across Moran's writings when serving as a CWM missionary in Botswana. With Catholic colleagues I had been charged with developing a programme of Christian religious education for the secondary schools of Botswana. For me, Moran's thought was the key to developing an exciting and relevant theological underpinning to the programme. Until quite recently I had assumed that his thinking had been quite new and ground breaking. Imagine my surprise then, when reading one of the chapters in this excellent book, to find similar sentiments to Moran's coming from the pen of a mid-nineteenth century Congregationalist, Henry Robert Reynolds (1825-96). These were expressed in a sermon "preached at the dedication of a friend to foreign missionary service at Shanghai". Robert Dawson was that friend.

In his fascinating chapter "Christian Mission, Common Sense and Changing Attitudes", Clyde Binfield tells Dawson's story, illustrating the missionary challenge to him through a sermon in which Reynolds challenged Dawson to "be faithful ... to what your heart teaches you ... and ... the common ground that you and they (the Chinese) occupy together". He continued, "Do not suppose that *you* take with you the Divine Being. He is there before you, in every heathen's soul, in every throb of conscience, in every laudable emotion, in every glimpse of truth, in every predisposition and susceptibility for the revelation of heaven, in all the structure and facilities of that marvellous language which He has fashioned for their thinking powers ... Christ is there ... is there now, in China".

While the language is Victorian, the sentiment is that of Gabriel Moran, but one hundred years before him. Clyde Binfield has performed a real service in helping us to understand that people like Reynolds, while expressing themselves in the language of their age, nevertheless uttered sentiments that were most enlightened and would not be out of place at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The opposite "stance" is explored in the chapter written by John Darch, "Turning the other cheek? The use of Violence by Victorian Missionaries in the Tropics". He suggests that far from being passive victims of violence, missionaries were at times prepared to use targeted violence against indigenous

peoples for their own ends. And, although these cases were small in number, they are significant in displaying a very different view of missionaries from that which is popularly held. He cites an example in Vanuatu where a Scottish missionary persuaded a visiting Royal Naval officer to teach the locals a lesson. In the subsequent scuffle a chief was killed. The missionary at the centre of this denied responsibility, but was forced "to defend himself at the presbytery in Sydney". Sadly his sending missionary body, a few years later, approved the use of military force.

For me, the most interesting chapter in the book was Geoffrey Roper's masterly chapter "Empire into Commonwealth: the transformation of four British-based Mission bodies into Council for World Mission". He carefully explains how, for example, the London Missionary Society, founded as an independent organization became part of the Congregational tradition and the tortuous, complicated church politics which informed its development particularly during the time when the Congregational Union of England and Wales was transforming itself into the Congregational Church. He rightly reminds us that the CUEW was not the only union of Congregational Churches associated with the LMS but that it saw itself as the dominant one. The formation of the Council for World Mission was ground-breaking and heralded a very clear departure from one British Church having control and direction of missionary endeavour. Roper's chapter is an excellent one.

I was unaware that the Brethren had a long moderately fruitful mission in Spain. Their missionaries laboured there until the Civil War. Congregations were established which still exist today. Control of them was not ceded to the local people until after the Second World War.

The book, however, is not only concerned with overseas missions. There is an insightful chapter on the English Baptists and Home Missions in which the inevitable problem of a Christian denomination seeking to grow and prosper is contrasted with the Gospel imperative of Christian conversion. John Handby Thompson, interestingly in the centenary year of the start of the First World War, traces the contribution of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission to religious freedom in the armed forces and the development of Chaplains, other than established church personnel.

Protestant Nonconformity and Christian Missions is a wide-reaching book which deserves to be read. For me, as a former CWM missionary, its "jewel in the crown" is Geoffrey Roper's superb chapter on the development of the Council for World Mission. That is not to say the other chapters are not worth reading – they are.

DEREK LINDFIELD

Training Laborers for His Harvest: A Historical Study of William Milne's Mentorship of Liang Fa. **By Baiyu Andrew Song. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015. Pp. xxii + 122. £14.00. ISBN 978-1-4982-0707-2.**

There is a tremendous contrast between the present dynamic expansion of Christianity in China, enabled by the activity of Chinese Christians themselves, and the painfully slow progress made when foreign missionaries were in charge and it was generally regarded as a foreign religion. It was not, however, the intention of the earliest Protestant missionaries to China to establish a church in leading-strings. They envisaged what is today known as a "three-self" church: self-propagating, self-governing and self-supporting; and this is demonstrated by the hopes invested, and indeed fulfilled, in Liang Fa, one of the earliest converts, as an apologist and evangelist for the faith. This is what gives importance to the present work, slight as it is. The author was converted to Christianity as a student in Canada, and was guided to study Chinese church history by Michael Haykin, a professor at Toronto Baptist Seminary, (and now at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville), who provides a foreword.

William Milne (1785-1822) was the second missionary to be sent by the LMS to China. This was in 1813, six years after Robert Morrison and at his request. His ministry, however, was spent largely among the Chinese community at Malacca on the Malay peninsula, owing to the opposition of the Catholic and Portuguese authorities in Macao. Liang Fa (1789-1855) was one of only two persons whom Milne converted and baptized in a ministry marked by tireless activity in evangelizing and preaching as well as in translating, teaching and writing. Milne identified him as a person marked out to serve the gospel among his people in China, where he had been recruited by Morrison to print his New Testament translation, and he was ordained by Morrison after Milne's death. Liang is important historically in that his work *Good Words Exhorting the Age* was an influence on Hong Xiuquan, the heterodox Christian who led the Taiping Rebellion (1850-64).

Song's interest is in the mentoring process whereby Milne prepared Liang for his Christian work, defining it after Edward Smither's work on Augustine as the impartation by a master of "knowledge and skill to a novice in an atmosphere of discipline, commitment and accountability" (p. xix). The ample materials in the LMS archive enable Song to show how Milne met continuously with Liang for prayer, Bible study and theological education; invited him to help in editing the mission's magazine; offered a model for ministry and involved Liang in practical ministry, while remaining himself a disciple. There is nothing here very remarkable in a programme for the development of a person for practical ministry, but it is significant in that a convert was marked out and trained for ministry right from the very start of the mission.

This, the theological core of the work, is preceded by three short chapters placing it in context, on the history of Christianity in China before the nineteenth century; Milne's Christian development under the ministry of George Cowie at Huntly Congregational Church in Aberdeenshire and his preparation for

ministry; and his theology, which Song identifies as "Edwardsean" Calvinism. The Chinese background is inevitably, in so short a work, sketched rather superficially. But Song interestingly comments that by 1850 Christianity could be considered a serious intellectual alternative to Confucianism and Buddhism, which the earlier Nestorian and Catholic missions had not achieved.

The book is completed with a number of appendices presenting contemporary materials and lists of Milne's and Liang's works, and a bibliography. There is no index.

WALTER J. HOUSTON

***The Angels' Voice: A Magazine for Young Men in Brixton, London, 1910-1913.* Edited by Alan Argent. London, The London Record Society, vol LI, The Boydell Press, 2016. Pp xiv + 328. £40.00. ISBN 978-0-900952-57-9.**

These young men were the twenty-five or so members of the Bible Class of Trinity Congregational Church, Brixton. *The Angels' Voice* was their magazine, though the reason for the name is unknown. They wrote the magazine themselves and read a typed copy on circulation for a subscription of 3d. Their contributions to the magazine show their interests and hopes, their pastimes and ambitions, their evangelicalism, their sense of humour and their political loyalties. It catches them before the War which would kill some of them and affect the lives of the rest. It forms a valuable social record, as evidenced by the readiness of the London Record Society to publish it. To those familiar with Cox and McLeod, and other studies of religious decline, it offers, in a small particular way, another view from the edge.

Dr Argent, the present minister of Trinity, has edited the magazine contributions and written an introduction which contextualises them. Trinity in 1913 was a small, out of the way, lower middle class Congregational church of 150 members, settled with a mainstream minister who was to see them through the War. It looked up to Brixton Independent Chapel with its better-off congregation, its spire and its minister destined for the chair of the Congregational Union in 1917. Trinity's attraction to evangelical young men – the average age of the magazine's subscribers was 22 – was not unusual locally. St Matthew's Church of England, two hundred yards away, had many more. Nationally, English Congregationalism at the time was near its prime in terms of members, ministers and political and public influence. Trinity may have offered little here and shared in the decline which was to follow, but it has survived, as Brixton has changed and is still changing around it.

The fifteen issues of *The Angels' Voice* here published are all that were produced, perhaps because the enterprise depended overmuch on the enthusiasm and persistence of its eighteen year-old editor and founder. He had received a decent education. The rest had mainly left school at fourteen and were now shop assistants

and clerks. Dr Argent has added considerably to the value and interest of the book by compiling an appendix listing the names of the subscribers and others mentioned in the magazine, showing where they lived, what jobs they had (using the 1911 census) and their war service and subsequent life where known. This brings in a number of women who figure in the contributions or marry or are related to the contributors.

The contributions to *The Angels' Voice* are both serious and light-hearted. Most political argument is down to a persistent socialist challenging the Liberal consensus. (One is reminded that 1915 was the general election that never was, and that when it came in 1919 Lloyd George's "coupon" destroyed old loyalties.) Women's suffrage (opposed), the place of women (the home) and conscription (common on the continent) have brief mentions. There are many reports of local cricket and football matches involving Trinity. "Our long-haired chums", the Trinity Bible Class women, play hockey and their successes are reported. Rambling and cycling were enjoyed plus Class outings. Early on, a subscriber dies of typhoid. The cortege pauses at Trinity Chapel gates on its way to the cemetery. There are accounts of travel to the near continent and Jersey. Three contributors tell of their moves to work abroad, and a fourth is working on board ship on the India run. It is evident that the Bible Class members do not go to the theatre or music hall, but they do smoke. Alcohol is rarely mentioned except as a tease and (out of character at the time) there is no advocacy of temperance. The fact that this is a Bible group with a concern for religion is never far from the surface but religious issues are raised, and discussed, not debated. There are monthly prayer meetings, some open-air evangelism and financial support for the China Inland Mission. Inevitably there is much rhyming verse in the magazine, jokes and at least one contributor who draws the occasional funny illustration.

One imagines that a desire to commemorate the centenary of the Great War, and the chance discovery of these magazines in a cupboard at Trinity prompted the research which led to publication. (A rare illustration is of the names on Trinity's war memorial). But these copies of *The Angels' Voice* are not about the unenvisaged war around the corner, nor about the impending decline of the religion practised by these young men, equally unforeseen. *The Angels' Voice* simply offers a picture of a group of young men's social and chapel life nearly at the end of a hundred years of European peace, and so is something of a time capsule.

JOHN HANDBY THOMPSON

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