

IN MEMORIAM

HENRY JOEL CADBURY, 1883-1974

Henry Cadbury's name first appears in the records of S.N.T.S. as one of those elected to membership at the Tenth Meeting in 1955. He had, however, been involved in the earliest developments of the Society, especially through his associations with the small group of New Testament scholars who were its original movers, J. De Zwaan, G. S. Duncan, Henri Clavier, T. W. Manson and H. G. Wood. He was resident in Woodbrooke for a short spell shortly before the foundation meeting in Birmingham 1938, at which H. G. Wood was present, and it is probably safe to assume that there had been consultation between them about the foundation of the Society. As secretary of the Society of Biblical Literature from 1916 to 1933 and of the American Schools of Oriental Research from 1934 to 1954 he had had continuing contacts with workers in our field abroad as well as at home.

In 1956 he was appointed Deputy President-Elect of SNTS. At this Meeting he read a paper, '“We” and “I” Passages in Luke-Acts', published in *N.T.S.*, volume 3. The following year he was appointed President-Elect and from that time until his death he was a member of the Editorial Board of our journal. He became President of the Society in 1958, chairing the Meeting that year at Strasbourg, and devoting his presidential address to 'The Dilemma of Ephesians', published in *N.T.S.*, volume 5.

Those who were present will recall another kind of dilemma he faced as our spokesman at the ceremonial dinner with our French hosts. The guests included official representatives of the city and university of Strasbourg, and also colourfully garbed and decorated members of the Alsatian hierarchy and even of the French Army of eastern France. It would have taken a master of protocol and of the *Almanach de Gotha* to toast each with his appropriate title. With Quaker simplicity our president was able to solve the problem easily by addressing each as 'Mr' or 'Monsieur'.

Cadbury was born in Philadelphia in 1883 into a family with long Quaker antecedents. In an address at Oslo in 1947 acknowledging the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Service Council of Great Britain he cited the testimony for peace of an English great-grandfather in the Napoleonic wars. One of his sisters married Rufus Jones, one of the most revered Quaker figures of the period. Throughout his life our late colleague combined his scholarly work in the New Testament with humane activities, serving as chairman of the American Friends Service Committee from 1928 to 1934 and again from 1944 to 1960. He had been

involved in its beginnings in 1917 and as early as 1920 was in Germany inspecting child-feeding centres of the Committee. His writings show him returning to such topics as ‘The Basis of Early Christian Antimilitarism’ (*J.B.L.*, 1918), and ‘Quakerism and Early Christianity’ (Swarthmore Lecture, London, 1957).

When once asked about the relation of his extensive humanitarian activities to his scholarly calling, especially his many years on the RSV translation committee, he replied that there also he was trying to translate the New Testament. At his retirement from Harvard in 1954 a history of its Divinity School then published was dedicated to him with the following tribute: ‘During a half-century of instruction he has known how to balance the scholarly claims of the past and the urgent necessities of the hour.’ To this was added the further characterization: ‘Unofficial Quaker Pastor to Colleague and Student Alike.’

After taking honours in Greek and Philosophy as an undergraduate at Haverford College he went to Harvard for his doctorate, receiving the degree in 1914. Among his teachers were George Foot Moore and James Hardy Ropes. It is not surprising that the candidate should have had his attention directed to Luke–Acts since both these scholars were then being drawn into the great collaborative effort first broached at Leyden about 1910 by F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake which was to eventuate in *The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I: The Acts of the Apostles*. Cadbury’s dissertation, *The Style and Literary Method of Luke*, was published in two parts in 1919 and 1920. In his Preface the author urges that ‘the linguistic study should precede rather than follow the theological and historical study’. Already his later caveats against either ‘modernizing’ or ‘archaizing’ appear in his observation that ‘philological inquiries should avoid as far as possible all presuppositions of a theological or historical kind’. By his early mastery of Hellenistic Greek and its relevant exemplars Cadbury shows that we have in ‘Luke’ an individual writer of his epoch, and that it is inappropriate in his case or any other to speak of ‘Biblical Greek’ (or of ‘the special language of the Holy Ghost’), or of ‘the language of the New Testament’ as though it were all of a kind.

The section on ‘The Alleged Medical Language of Luke’ offers only one of the more striking examples of his demonstrations and resources. His students at Harvard used to say that Cadbury won his doctorate by taking Luke’s away from him. The topic recurs in a later article, ‘Luke Among the Horse Doctors’, in which with his customary pungency our author correlates Luke’s usages with those of an ancient veterinary manual.

Kirsopp Lake joined the Harvard Faculty the same year that Cadbury finished his degree. When the latter was called back to teach at Harvard in 1919 – after a period at Haverford College – he was to find himself enlisted in the further labours on *The Beginnings of Christianity*. He discussed the Preface

of Luke in volume II (1922), and Ropes expresses his appreciation to him for 'the laborious task of collating the Vulgate and the Peshitto' for volume III (1926), devoted to the text of Acts. He then served as joint editor with Lake of the two concluding volumes of commentary and notes. One has only to look again at some of the many long notes by Cadbury in the last volume to be astonished at the innumerable special areas of knowledge at his command.

During his first period at Harvard, 1919–26, Cadbury's appointment was to the Andover Seminary side of the joint arrangement in the Divinity School. When this collaboration came to an end as a result of court action his appointment lapsed and he taught at Bryn Mawr College for eight years. At the death of Ropes in 1934 he was called back to Harvard to succeed him as Hollis Professor of Divinity, a chair founded in 1721 and therefore the oldest endowed chair in any field in the United States.

In locating Cadbury's special interests and approach in this period it is instructive to recall the general picture of early Christian studies in the American scene. We confine ourselves to four centres. Moffatt, Frame and later F. C. Grant were teaching at Union Theological Seminary; Bacon, Torrey and later Burrows, Goodenough and Kraeling at Yale; Goodspeed, Case and Riddle at Chicago. The Harvard focus with Ropes, E. C. Moore, Lake and later Nock was more directly related to Greco-Roman studies, philological and historical, than the other three centres. At Chicago a sociological emphasis was marked. At the other two institutions a somewhat more traditionally biblical and churchly orientation was pervasive.

One could perhaps illustrate some of the differences by Cadbury's *The Book of Acts in History* (1955). The book conveys an inexhaustible documentation on the relation of the Christian movement to its ancient theatre. That very focus on concreteness which is its strength distinguishes its method and goal from the kind of sociology of religion of the period aimed at by scholars like Riddle at Chicago. Similarly the understandable distinction between fundamental data and 'theology' yields a different kind of reading of the texts and their import than that of a Bacon or an F. C. Grant.

It is of interest to observe how the ethos of these different centres responded to new developments in the field. In any case it was Cadbury who wrote the first full account of form-criticism for English readers in his article, 'Between Jesus and the Gospels' in *H.T.R.* in 1923. His volume, *The Making of Luke-Acts* (1927) was similarly very early in presenting the method at greater length, and in its elaborate application of form-criticism, tradition-criticism and composition-criticism to the Gospel of Luke.

In none of these centres on the other hand did the advent of 'biblical theology' or kerygmatic interpretation find a ready acceptance, and least so at Harvard. Recurrently in his papers and in his two books on Jesus Cadbury warned against undue pressures on our studies of theological factors related

to the modern *Zeitgeist* or the pragmatic concerns of Christian unity. He urged the diversity of the early Christian communities and of their formulations. He saw anachronism at work in attempted repossession of first-century categories.

More generally one can say that the principle of parsimony – as scientists use the phrase – runs through Cadbury's work. In dealing with the historical Jesus he attends to 'the manner rather than to the matter of his thinking', and he makes fundamental observations about what today one would call structural aspects of his mind: his appeal to analogy, to a *fortiori* logic, to considerations of proportion, paradoxes of size and other traits of 'a kind of quantitative mentality'. Beyond this Cadbury is constantly pointing to the limits of our knowledge, the scantiness of our sources, the 'inscrutable psychology' and alien presuppositions of ancient writers. He is constantly warning against over-confidence and facile combinations. As he says in his address on Ephesians: 'We continue to conjecture and are restless with the agnostic answer, "Ignoramus". We grasp at straws where acknowledgment of ignorance would better befit us... Anonymity is deprecated much as nature abhors a vacuum.'

All such caveats represent a negative index of his own rigour and help us to account for the selective focus of his own labours and contributions. We recognize here the motivation of this book, *The Peril of Modernizing Jesus*, and of his later paper, 'The Peril of Archaizing Ourselves'. In dealing with the Jesus of history, as in his book, *Jesus: What Manner of Man*, he tells us again that he is 'more concerned with how Jesus thought than what he thought', no doubt in consequence of the nature of the sources. Sharing much of Bultmann's scepticism he did not, however, agree that the later community's confession was the important thing. He held that the famous conclusion of Schweitzer's *Quest* ('He comes to us as One unknown...') was in contradiction to the book's whole thrust. If this may seem an excess of sobriety yet Cadbury did find in the records of Jesus a kind of deportment and a kind of outlook which illuminate the great sequel at the same time that they illuminate our common humanity. In his paper on 'The Eclipse of the Historical Jesus' (1963), in a characteristic by-play, he remarks that eclipses of the sun yet have their penumbra or corona, while eclipses of the moon are 'due to our own planet's being in the way – getting in our light, as we say'.

We have not here listed by any means all the offices and honours of our colleague. His British friends will recall the honorary Doctorate in Divinity awarded to him by the University of Glasgow in 1937. Neither have we spoken of his very extensive research and publication in the field of Quaker history. On his retirement as chairman of the Friends Service Committee a volume in his honour was published: *Then and Now: Quaker Essays...* by Friends of Henry Joel Cadbury, edited by Anna Brinton (1960). The book is introduced by a moving and detailed biographical sketch of sixty pages by

Mary Hoxie Jones. In the Preface he is addressed as: 'congenial comrade; wise and witty presider; accomplished scholar in Biblical and Quaker history: above all, as favored minister and translator of the Gospel in terms of life'. The terms of this homage we of a different Society can attest and we take leave of him remembering him as a masterful labourer at the foundations of our discipline, a faithful and wise officer in our various guilds and an inimitable and delightful colleague and friend.

AMOS N. WILDER