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ECHOES OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION IN BAPTIST SERAMPORE, 1800-1855[1]

A. Christopher Smith

INTRODUCTION

John C. Marshman (1794-1877) stands out as one of the nineteenth century's most skilled mission historians. He drew high praise from Bishop Stephen Neill for his two-volume study of the Baptist mission based at Serampore, Bengal.[2]

In his 1859 *opus,* John Marshman recorded a dramatic assertion made by the *primus inter pares* in the renowned mission. We hear William Carey confiding to one of his mentors, in 1810, with characteristic humility:

> I often compare myself with my Brethren, particularly ... [Joshua] Marshman and Ward, with whose daily conduct I am best acquainted. The first of these is all eagerness for the work [of making Christ known]. Often I have seen him when we have been walking together, eye a group of persons, exactly as a hawk looks on his prey, and go up to them with a resolution to try the utmost strength of gospel reasons upon them. Often have I known him engage with such ardour in a dispute with men of lax

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[1] This is a slightly revised version of a paper presented at the "Carey Day" Anniversary at Serampore College, on 17 August 1994.

[2] The so-called "Serampore Trio" consisted of William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward. They worked together in a Danish enclave twelve miles upstream from Calcutta. Stephen C. Neill, the former dean of (Indian) mission history, wrote in 1970: "Almost all missionary biographies need to be rewritten. ... But the principal impression derived by one reader is that modern and careful work has added still further lustre to the reputation of *that best of all mission biographies* [emphasis mine], John Clark Marshman's *Life and Times of Carey,* Marshman and Ward (London, 1859). Filial piety did sometimes lead the younger Marshman a little to overestimate the merits of his distinguished father; otherwise he maintained an astonishing objectivity and impartiality in his handling of a crucial period in Christian history" ["The History of Missions: An Academic Discipline," in G. J. Cuming, ed., *The Mission of the Church and the Propagation of the Faith* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 158.] This was high praise for a Baptist layman to receive from the Anglican scholar, Bishop Neill.

> conduct or deistical sentiments, and labour the point with them for hours together without fatigue, nay more eager for the contest when he left off than when he begun [*sic*], as has filled me with shame. *In point of zeal he is a Luther and I am Erasmus.*[3]

The veteran continued with praise for William Ward's abilities in witnessing, and concluded about himself: "Reflections such as these have occasioned, and still do occasion me much distress."

The Erasmus-Luther formula is important because it typifies Carey's understanding of who he and Joshua Marshman were as personalities. It sheds important historical light on the Baptist leaders' work and relations as members of a close triumvirate. Such voluntary self-identification enables one to take a fresh, contextual look at the leaders of a prominent pre-Victorian mission. It is a useful tool by which to transcend stereotyped interpretations of the archetypal Serampore Trio.[4]

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[3] I have quoted from the original letter which was written by William Carey to John Ryland, of Bristol, England, and dated 24th May 1810 (emphasis mine). It is preserved in College Street Baptist Churchís (Northampton) BMS manuscripts [Letter no. 33]. A slightly edited version of this was quoted by John C. Marshman, *The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward, Embracing the History of the Serampore Mission* (London, 1859), I, 433-434 (henceforth cited as *Life & Times of CMW*). I refer to J. C. Marshman (or JCM) as the son, and "Marshman" as the father, Joshua. JCM's main editorial change was to make Carey say: "he is Luther and I am Erasmus." In other words, JCM dropped Carey's indefinite article "a" from the reference to Luther. The section of the letter that I have quoted was edited out (probably by Fuller) of the published version of the letter in the BMS' *Periodical Accounts,* 4, No. 21, 150f. The letter is also reproduced in Eustace Carey, Memoir of William Carey, D.D. (2d ed.; London, 1837), 469-471. In the letter, Carey, in a characteristically self-depracating, winsome manner, deplored his own lack of spirituality. A heavily edited version of the original is to be found in S. Pearce Carey, *William Carey, D.D. Fellow of Linnaean Society* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923), 266.

[4] One of the greatest missiologists of our time has declared repeatedly: "Historians are needed to help theologians [and missiologists] to be honest." For Christians, history is of huge importance, and not least in a Hindu envoronment, as my 1993 bicentennial "Carey Day Lecture" at Serampore emphasized: "Mythology and Missiology: Towards a Methodology for Understanding the Serampore Trio and Their Mission" in J. T. K. Daniel and R. E. Hedlund, eds., *Carey's Obligation and India's Renaissance* (Serampore, West Bengal: Council of Serampore College, 1993), 45-85. This reminds us of the major methodological need there is to view Carey and his colleagues as a trinity, rather than as a team of "one big man and two side-kicks." See the closing paragraph of the present essay.

This essay thus is not to be taken as a descent into conjecture; rather, it is a serious exploration into a remarkable, uncharted area. It is an attempt to discover the potential of one of the hermeneutical keys that unlock the door to further understanding of the leaders of "the Serampore Mission."[5]

By focussing on the bold declaration of 1810, we also gain new insight into the character of the principals' primary protégé, John C. Marshman (1794-1877).[6] We are thereby introduced to the matrix and the making of a fine Victorian mission historian. Such study has not been undertaken before, even though the second-generation scholar did more than almost anyone else to preserve the pioneers' memory for posterity. To get him in focus, we first take the measure of his father and his father's long-time partner, both of whom treated John as a colleague and were later immortalized by him. During our investigation, we also render the recognition due to Hannah Marshman, John's mother, who had a profound influence on her men-folk and was a pillar of strength that Carey's extended mission family relied on to a great extent.

To the younger Marshman, historians owe an incalculable debt for the careful reporting and analysis that he provided on the Baptist mission in Bengal. As a colleague of the pioneers for twenty years or more, he got closer to the veteran Trio than any of their biographers have ever done. Nevertheless, he managed to detach himself in a judicious manner from pressure to trivialize or to over-popularize their story. With his journalistic skill and his care for mission, he analyzed and preserved a wealth of unparalleled information and insight.[7] His two-volume *opus* is a fundamental

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[5] This is to be read in light of my essay, "Mythology and Missiology: A Methodological Approach to the Pre-Victorian Mission of the Serampore Trio," *International Review of Mission,* 83 (1994), 451-475. I hope that professional church historians will shed further light on the Erasmian-Lutheran-Seramporean formula and will refine this initial exploratory study further.

[6] John C. Marshman was much more their protégé than Felix Carey or any of his (i.e. Carey) brothers ever were.

[7] An example of the unparalleled service he provided for scholars may be found in the case of the pre-mission career of William Ward. Without the small clues that JCM left for researchers who are prepared to engage in detective work, one could hardly have imagined that Ward was an outstanding radical social activist before 1797. The BMS and other historians have studiously neglected that data; thus the need for the pace-setting exposé by A. Christopher Smith: "William Ward, Radical Reform, and Missions in the 1790s," *American Baptist Quarterly,* 10 (1993), 218-244. By way of contrast, Ralph Winter's essay, "William Carey's Major Novelty" [*Missiology* 22 (1994), 203-222] unfortunately displays far too little evidence of having consulted primary sources or of having delved much at all into archives on the Serampore Trio. Especially see *ibid.,* 219, n.3.

source and reference work for study of one of the pivotal points of nineteenth century mission history.

With this in prospect, we turn now to peruse a Baptist Erasmus and Luther, for whom Britain, Bristol and Bengal functioned like magnets in mission. Such study will enable us to focus better on their prime protégé, to whose strenuous labors Serampore College owed its very existence for several decades. Thus the memory of Melanchthon will be awakened.

1. ERASMUS AND THE HEROIC IN PRE-VICTORIAN BENGAL

Time and space do not permit a comparative study of the lives of the Christian leaders from Northamptonshire and Rotterdam, who were separated from one another by a period of 300 years. Our task is simply to identify what the Dutch Cambridge don[8] and the Particular Baptist Orientalist had in common, as both served in the van of a wide-ranging, vernacular, Protestant movement.[9] Both were pivotal figures in the kingdom of God

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[8] Richard L. DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam. A Quincentennial Symposium* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1971). Although "Erasmus never considered himself to be a theologian in the technical sense of a professional qualified to teach in a theological faculty," he did —"as a Biblical scholar and student of historical theology" — become a Cambridge Professor of Divinity (*ibid.*, 53-56). Although ordained as a priest in 1492, Erasmus left his Augustinian order to pursue university studies in Paris. In the opinion of Franz Hildebrandt, the humanists were more popular in England than the Reformers. See his *Melanchthon: Alien Or Ally?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946), ix. Thus Cambridge once hoped to make Melanchthon Regius Professor in the Divinity Faculty, but certainly not Luther!

[9] According to Kenneth Scott Latourette, "the Renaissance and humanism showed distinctly Christian features" in Northern Europe. "Erasmus, the leading representative of humanistic studies" there was trained in his impressionable years in the Netherlands by the Brethren of the Common Life [*The Thousand Years of Uncertainty A.D. 500-A.D. 1500* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978 [=1938, 1966, 1970]), 393]. Again Latourette: "Humanism and the fructifying influences of the Renaissance had almost no effect on Luther, but Erasmus, who did so much to prepare the way for Protestantism, was an outstanding expression of them both" [*Three Centuries of Advance. A.D. 1500-A.D. 1800* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 13, 415f.] "For his irenic and rational faith," Erasmus was highly esteemed by Lucius Cary [no forebear of William Carey's?], second Viscount Falkland, according to James McConica [*Erasmus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1]. On Lucius Cary (1610?-1643), see the British *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1887), 9:246-247. Lucius was a legendary hero in the second century A.D., and was "called the first Christian king in Britain" [*DNB*, 34 (1893), *s.v.*].

who worked out of an old "Gospel and culture" paradigm while heralding a new one.[10]

1. Carey's Erasmian Sources

First for consideration is the question whether William Carey (1761-1834) read any of Desiderius Erasmus' works and, if so, which ones. Although we are still waiting for hard evidence on this particular point, it is most probable that the young missionary pondered over the following characterization of Erasmus (1469-1536) some time after 1800. Early in 1802 he wrote home that he had just read the recent work on church history written by Thomas Haweis (1734-1820). Haweis was a mission historian, an ecumenically-minded Anglican evangelical and a founding director of "the Missionary Society" [the LMS, of London].[11]

In his *An impartial and succinct history of the revival and progress of the Church of Christ,* Haweis briefly set Erasmus in the context of Europe's Protestant Reformation, thus:

> During these commotions, one great character, which all desired to draw over to their party, conscious of the weight of his influence, maintained a suspicious neutrality. ERASMUS, whom the keenness of wit, the acuteness of his genius, and the depth of his learning, raised to the pinnacle of universal admiration, had, before Luther arose, begun to sharpen the shafts of ridicule

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[10] Cf. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 186. Erasmus thus "remained within the medieval Roman Catholic paradigm yet at the same time heralded a new era." On Carey and his cohorts as transitional figures between Puritan and Victorian mission eras, see A. Christopher Smith, "The Legacy of William Carey," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research,* 16 (1992), 7. Both men may be said to have "lived and worked in a period of serious religious crisis and schism" in Western Christendom; cf. DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam,* 65.

[11] Letter from Carey to Andrew Fuller, dated 21 January 1802, p.7. For an important biography on Haweis (pronounced "Haws"), see Arthur Skevington Wood, *Thomas Haweis* (London: SPCK, 1957). Joseph Milner and his brother lived and worked in William Ward's home-town of Hull. However, their being "strong Tories" who swerved away from their Dissenting brothers in the Gospel during the Jacobin scare would have done nothing to enamor them to Carey's partner-to-be: Smith, "William Ward," *passim;* J. D. Walsh, "Joseph Milner's Evangelical Church History," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 10, No. 2 (1959), 183. I am indebted to Wilbert R. Shenk for bringing the Walsh essay to my notice.

against the monkish ignorance and abuses; by his writings he had greatly loosened the shackles of blind veneration for the mendicant tribes, and prepared men's minds for the reformation [*sic*]. To him, Luther, Melancthon [*sic*], and other reformers, warmly addressed themselves. He answered them with all civility, but with the most wary caution not to commit himself as a favourer of their cause; though he professed to admit the chief doctrines which they promulgated, and to acknowledge the necessity of a reform, to which no man had more contributed by their writings than himself. Yet he dreaded a rupture with the pontiff; and flattered himself the object would be accomplished by the necessity of the case, without violence. He would have been content with *some concessions,* and trembled at the rude hand of the hasty reform.[12]

Reflection on Erasmus of a more personal nature followed:

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[12] The 300-year period between the Reformation and Carey's day covered by Thomas Haweis' *An impartial and succinct History of the rise, declension, and revival of the Church of Christ; from the birth of our Saviour to the present time. With faithful characters of the principal personages, ancient and modern* (London, 1800) was re-published in the USA (Baltimore) in 1803 as *An impartial and succinct History of the revival and progress of the Church of Christ; from the reformation to the present time* (Worcester, Massachusetts). Presumably Carey read the 1800 version in Bengal. My quotation is from vol.2:82 of the "second American edition" (Baltimore, 1807), which was a virtual replica of the 1800 London edition. Haweis dedicated his two-volume work to "Joseph Hardcastle, Esq. Treasurer, and all the directors and governors of the MISSIONARY SOCIETY" [*sic*] on July 10, 1799. Comparative literary analysis suggests that it is highly unlikely that Haweis drew any insights on Erasmus from the historical writing of Joseph and Isaac Milner (see n.11 above). The earliest edition of the fourth volume (covering Erasmus' time) of the Milner brothers' *The History of the Church of Christ* was not published until some time between 1800 and 1809 (probably nearer 1809), in Cambridge, England. Cf. *The National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints,* vol. 385:189-190. Haweis finished writing his history in July 1797. Skevington Wood has surveyed Haweis' historiography in *Haweis,* 94-97, 221-239. On ecclesio-ideological grounds, Haweis' historiography would have been much more acceptable to the Serampore Trio than Milner's. Haweis was the Anglican incumbent at Aldwincle, near Carey's later preaching point at Olney, in Northamptonshire, while Carey was but a boy in Paulerspury, some twelve miles away, between 1764 and 1774.

> His study and books delighted him more than the activity of a labourer in the vineyard; and his temper indisposed him for the stormy ocean, which Luther dared to brave. He professed a high veneration for the bold Reformer; and though he shunned all intimacy that would have exposed him to reproach, he did not scruple to condemn the injustice and folly of the treatment which Luther had received from Leo; and plainly manifested his apprehensions, that the enmity of the sacerdotal tribe, more than any real errors of the monk, was the cause of his condemnation. He dreaded also, that the precipitation of Luther would bring him to an untimely end, as it had done so many preceding witnesses for the truth; and that the consequences would be fatal to the cause; and probably the cowardice of his own spirit made him fear to be involved in the dangers which he apprehended [*sic*].

This account gradually prepared the way for Haweis' thesis concerning Erasmus:

> He maintained a cautious reserve on the subject of Luther's writings, and though he condemned the man, because the Church had condemned him, and censured the violence of his proceedings, he declined answering the Reformer, to which he was greatly urged, and left that honor to the universities, the Dominicans, and Franciscans; pretending unwillingness to rob them of their glory. In fact, in all essential doctrines, Erasmus was with the reformers; and saw as clearly the necessity of correcting the abuses which prevailed in the Church of Rome. *But he was a man of a studious turn and timid spirit; and however much his mind inclined to one side, his dread of consequences bent him as much to the other, and kept him suspended between the attracting magnets. Thus, feared by both parties, cordially loved by neither, suspected by all,* [emphasis mine] he obtained not the favour of Rome, but was left to languish in indigence; and he shared none of the glory of the reformation, by meanly shrinking from the cross. A great man, a good man, an admired man; but not daring to take a decided part, he remained the victim of his own cautious timidity.[13]

In this exposition of Erasmus' *modus operandi,* one encounters stark insights that throw into bold relief some of the major contours of Carey's character as a missionary. They resonate with so much that one finds in

[13] Haweis, *An impartial and succinct History,* 2:83-84.

Carey's voluminous correspondence. However, there is no space here to dwell on the major points of convergence, or on the few points of possible divergence, suggested by a reading of Haweis' exposition. Instead, we will let Haweis' analysis function, *pro tem,* as a backdrop and proceed to look for other means whereby knowledge of Erasmus might have been transmitted to the Baptist mission leader.

Examination of Carey's 1792 *Enquiry* reveals a reference to Luther and other great Reformers, but not a word on Erasmus. Carey only had interest then for those who stood out strongly and openly against "heathendom." Thus he wrote tersely:

> In the following century Luther, Calvin, Melancton [*sic*], Bucer, Martyr, and many others, stood up against all the rest of the world; they preached, and prayed, and wrote; and nations agreed one after another to cast off the yoke of popery, and to embrace the doctrine of the gospel.[14]

As yet, Erasmus had not stood out for Carey. Nor does the young Baptist pastor appear to have had any idea that he might one day engage in Bible translation on a significant scale, in the wake of Erasmus. Undoubtedly, he had read books on church history by 1790, but which ones, we cannot tell. Investigations into some of the major works that he probably read before he left Britain have so far revealed nothing significant.[15] Not a mention was made of Erasmus in Andrew Fuller's writings. Only once did Jonathan Edwards refer tangentially to Erasmus in any of his major works,[16] while

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[14] William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (1792 ed.; repr. Leicester, 1934), 35.

[15] Cf. A. Christopher Smith, "A Tale of Many Models: The Missiological Significance of the Serampore Trio", *Missiology: An International Review,* 20 (1992), 479-480, 484-487, 499. For the library holdings of the Serampore Mission before 1819, and of Serampore College's Library after 1818 (posthumously named "the Carey Library"), see Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, *Mission in India. A Catalogue of the Carey Library* (Serampore, 1980), and *idem, The Carey Library Pamphlets (Religious Series). A Catalogue* (Serampore, 1982). These listing of works dating from 1569 do not yield insights on the question of the sources of Carey's knowledge of Erasmus.

[16] Thus see *The Works of Jonathan Edwards,* volumes 1-9, published by Yale University Press during the last decades. Nor is there any reference to Edwards in Bruce Mansfield's *Interpretations of Erasmus c.1550-1750* (Toronto: University Press, 1979), or in the sequel volume for c.1750-1920 (Toronto, 1992). According to Dr. Ken Minkema of the Jonathan Edwards' *Works* project at Yale University, there is no evidence that Edwards ever read anything by Erasmus (private phone conversation, June 9, 1994).

John Gillies' *Historical Collections* (1754) and Robert Millar's 1723 *The history of the propagation of Christianity, and overthrow of paganism* had virtually nothing to say about Erasmus.[17]

However, the confident reference that Carey made to Erasmus in 1810 reveals more than superficial familiarity with his life and work, and suggests that Carey may have become acquainted with some of the Erasmian corpus before 1810.[18] The Serampore pioneer's *ipsissima verba* are remarkably pregnant with meaning. Their internal implications must be unravelled, even if further research remains to be done for more specific circumstantial evidence. If only we could tell what reference Carey made to Erasmus during the "short course ... on the history of the Christian Church" that he provided at Serampore College twenty years later![19]

2. Personality, Piety and 'the Heroic'

In spite of the lack of more precise external evidence, one needs to take cognizance of the comparisons that have been drawn between the two leaders. An early stab at this was taken by George Smith, a Victorian biographer twenty-five years after John Marshman, who viewed Erasmus as one of Carey's predecessors, though without availing himself of the 1810 dictum. He wrote for a popular audience:

> Erasmus comes first, the bright scholar of compromise who in 1516 gave the New Testament again to Europe, as three centuries after Carey gave it to all Southern Asia, and whose missionary treatise, *Ecclesiastes,* in 1535 anticipated, theoretically

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[17] John Gillies, *Historical Collections Relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel* (Edinburgh, 1754, revised in 1845 and re-published in 1981) contained no more than one small quotation. Millar's work was published in Edinburgh in 2 volumes in 1723; 1 volume in Edinburgh in 1730; and 2 volumes in London in 1731 (and 1726). Millar's *Whole Works* were published in 8 volumes in Paisley, Scotland, in 1789. Millar died in 1752.

[18] It is even more difficult to specify which of Erasmus' volumes Carey may have read. Erasmus' *Collected Works* run to 86 volumes and more than 2,000 items by him are cited in *The National Union Catalog pre-1956 Imprints.* However, this extensive literary deposit reflects the fact that Erasmus had a huge and broad influence in European thinking until the mid-nineteenth century. Erasmus was by no means an inconsequential figure and, humanist though he was, he could not have been easily missed by Carey and his British mentors.

[19] Smith, "Mythology and Missiology", 460. Apart from this pedagogical intervention by Carey, Marshman (after 1819) normally lectured there on "Ecclesiastical History."

> at least, Carey's *Enquiry* by two centuries and a half. The missionary dream of this escaped monk of Rotterdam and Basel, who taught women and weavers and cobblers to read the Scriptures, and prayed that these might be translated into all languages, was realised .....[20]

More recently, Timothy George, a historian of the European Protestant Reformation, judged that Serampore's translation achievements placed Carey "in the front ranks of Bible translators in Christian history alongside Jerome, Wycliffe, Luther, Tyndale, and Erasmus."[21] However, it is not in

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[20] George Smith, *The Life of William Carey, D.D., Shoemaker and Missionary* (London, 1885), 42; cf. *ibid.*, 236-237. Erasmus was no stranger to England. In 1511 he was appointed Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity and a lecturer of Greek at Cambridge; between 1509 and 1514 he stayed there for several years and paid repeated visits. His *Ecclesiastes* (Basel, 1535) included "a moving testimony of his love for the missionary cause" and was greatly admired, and re-published, by Thomas Bray, who played an important part in founding the SPG and SPCK, one hundred years before the BMS. In this work, J. Van Den Berg opines, we hear "more the voice of the catholic Christian than that of the humanist: Erasmus is impelled by a pure desire to see many souls freed from Satan's tyranny and won for the Redeemer" [*Constrained By Jesus' Love* (Kampen: Kok, 1956), 12f., 40f.]. Cf. Erasmus' *Enchiridion:* Anne M. O'Donnell, ed., *ERASMUS. Enchiridion Militis Christiani. An English Version* (Oxford University Press, 1981), 7, lines 32-35; and, to "wyn the turkes," 9, lines 20-36.

[21] Timothy George, *Faithful Witness, The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, Alabama: New Hope, 1991), 141. However, George notes that "Marshman was a better Greek and Hebrew scholar" than Carey, who "often ran doubtful renderings by him." George refers to Carey as the "Wycliffe of the East" (137-143), but also helpfully reminds historians: "In the sixteenth century Erasmus had set forth his *Paraphrases of the New Testament* for, as he said, he desired to see the sacred Word in the hands of 'women and cobblers, clowns, mechanics, and even the Turks'" (138). George compared Carey's translation work with that of both Erasmus and Luther. According to the *New Dictionary of Theology,* Sinclair B. Ferguson and David F. Wright, eds. (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988): "With one book [his 1516 *New Instrument*], Erasmus put the Greek New Testament within reach of preachers and scholars" [226; cf. James McConica, *Erasmus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 43]. It had a revolutionary effect on biblical exegesis and "contributed to a general movement espousing Church reform and a return to early Christianity" (O'Donnell, *ERASMUS. Enchiridion,* 22). On the quality of Carey's translations, see William A. Smalley, *Translation As Mission. Bible Translation in the Modern Missionary Movement* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1992), 48f.

the area of Bible translation, nor in their work as grammarians — or as revivers of classical literature — that the most illuminating comparisons may be discerned between the principals of this study. Rather, it was in the broad sphere of pro-active witness, or "zeal," that Carey made his point.

None of Carey's biographers have considered what he may have found in Erasmus' *Enchiridion Militis Christiani,* or *Handbook of the Christian Knight.*[22] The more personal allusions in the 1810 dictum have not yet been explored. Yet these deserve to be taken seriously because there are aspects of piety and elements of "the heroic" in the *Enchiridion* that mirror Carey's personal make-up and mission legacy.[23] This is not unimportant if one takes

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[22] Tyndale was first to translate Erasmus' *Enchiridion* into English between 1521 and 1523: see O'Donnell, *ERASMUS. Enchiridion,* xlix, liii. Another Englishman, Miles Coverdale, produced *A Shorte Recapitulation or Abrigement of Erasmus Enchiridion brefely comprehendinge the summe and contentes thereof very profitable and necessary to be rede of all trew Christen men* [*sic*] in 1545. See *Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter* (1844 ed.; repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968). Erasmus' work contained 22 rules for Christian living and identified the "means" to be used by Christians in chapter 2.

[23] David Heim's essay, "The Death of Heroes, the Recovery of the Heroic" [*Christian Century* (December 22-29, 1993), 1297-1303] evokes many aspects of Carey's memory. Heim quotes the mystically-minded Evelyn Underhill, "To choose Christ means to choose an heroic course," adding: "The way of the pilgrim means having 'to *plod on and on' with the hard and unpromising job, with helping other souls, with forgiving and forgetting, even when [the individual's] own life feels dead and dark"* (1303, emphasis mine). What an apposite characterization of Carey's life that could be! Again, Heim quotes Joseph Campbell: "the hero of myth is a being who does what no one else can or will do" (*ibid.*). Campbell is an authority on ancient hero myths and human beings' "eternal struggle for identity." See his *The Hero With A Thousand Faces* (2nd. ed.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968). James McConica points out that "the *Enchiridion* ... was meant to supply an epitome of doctrine and exhortation combined, to instruct and inspire its reader in the life of true piety" (*Erasmus,* 51). According to Léon-E. Halkin, "Christocentrism was the golden rule of Erasmus' spirituality as well as of his theology" [*Erasmus. A Critical Biography,* trans. by John Tonkin (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 285f.]. However, Erasmus focused more on Jesus the moral teacher than on Christ the Redeemer (thus DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam,* 40]. For Erasmus' critical challenges to the contemporary status quo of Christianity, see Halkin, *Erasmus,* 289-295. Erasmus believed that the New Testament had "power to heal the moral blindness of European society" (DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam,* 42), as did Carey.

into account the debt that Europe's Anabaptists owed to Erasmus.[24]

A particularly suggestive cameo has come from the pen of the historian, David Heim. In words evocative of figures like Carey, he wrote:

> The patron saint of the heroic might be Erasmus of Rotterdam, whose *Enchiridion militis Christiani,* published in 1503, was a manual for a new kind of Christian knight. This kind of hero displays no spectacular powers but does teach the ignorant, lift up the fallen and comfort the unhappy; he rescues no beleaguered maidens but remains loyal to spouse and children. The Christian soldier engages in an inner struggle to control envy, greed, lust and wrath.... [Erasmus'] valiant knight — humble, loving, practical, studious, peaceful — looked more like an antihero to Erasmus' contemporaries than a hero. But the portrait limned in the *Enchiridion* provides us today with the sort of preliminary sketch we need as we begin to consider the meaning of the heroic in this age of the death of heroes.[25]

So who was Erasmus?

Scholars have depicted him as "the archetype of the sixteenth century intellectual" — one born in obscurity who rose to undisputed heights by means of his publications. But can something similar not be applied to Carey also, even if on a more modest scale?[26] The former shone in

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[24] Edward Kilian Burger has argued in a doctoral thesis ["Erasmus and the Anabaptists" (Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1977)] that the early Anabaptists in Europe "turned to Erasmus for guidance and support in their efforts to restore primitive Christianity," and that "the clearest connection" between them, over against Luther, "was their common approach to human freedom and responsibility" (150-154, v-vii, 1-6).

[25] Heim, "The Death of Heroes, the Recovery of the Heroic", 1303. On the heroic in Carey, see my "Mythology and Missiology", 452, 456-457, 465.

[26] Of course, Carey did not operate at the same intellectual level as Erasmus did in the Western world. By 1508, Erasmus was regarded as "the most celebrated teacher and promoter of humanism in Renaissance Europe" (DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam,* 19). Carey, as an evangelically-oriented Baptist pastor was much more than a humanist, even though he held an appointment as professor in the British colonial (quasi Civil Service) Fort William College in Calcutta for some thirty years and cherished that position with remarkable dedication. Carey appreciated humanistic reasons for challenging the rule of ecclesiastical establishments, though it must be admitted that he was more passionate as a Dissenter in Britain than he ever was in the politically-volatile scene of British-occupied Bengal.

Renaissance Europe while the other contributed to the renaissance of Bengali culture. Both were committed to Christendom, both lived in a period of crisis in Europe, both benefited from English patronage, both were "preoccupied with the humanist dream of a new and better education" based on classical texts, both experimented with educational methods, both became professors, both produced textbooks for their students, both wrote *Colloquies* (popular collections of dialogues), both challenged the low level of Christian morals in their day, both contributed to social reform, both were hopeful for the future and both died in very discouraging circumstances (1536 and 1834).[27]

Studies of Erasmus, the great European, are far more advanced than those on Carey, the missionary professor. The former has often been celebrated as the leading moderate of Europe's Reformation who "generally preferred compromise and scholarly dialogue to revolt and public debate."[28] He was a scholar who "lacked robustness and preferred to avoid conflict ...," so unlike the German Luther.[29] In terms of *modus vivendi,* the friendly, eirenic Dutchman and Englishman had so much in common, regardless of the differences in their circumstances,[30] and it is with them as counterpoint that we

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[27] Cf. DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam,* 18-66; Cornelius Augustijn, *Erasmus. His Life, Works, and Influence,* trans. J. C. Grayson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 192-200. Erasmus' passion for Graeco-Roman classical culture was reflected in Fort William College, Calcutta, which was the grand creation and joy of Marquis Wellesley, the Governor-General of Bengal, who appointed Carey as a lecturer and later as Professor of Sanskrit. But for Wellesley's grand munificence and patronage of Carey, the Baptist missionary could scarcely have launched onto his prestigious linguistic career which gave so much attention to the Hindu classics.

[28] Cf. DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam,* 23, and McConica, *Erasmus,* back cover.

[29] Cf. Carey, *Enquiry,* 35, and Lewis W. Spitz, "Erasmus as Reformer" in DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam,* 49. Erasmus was such a complex personality that "his biographers and ... historians have seen him in ... very contradictory ways" (*ibid.,* 50). By analogy, this should warn missiologists to avoid treating William Carey as a simple and straightforward personality. Both "men of the cloth" may be seen as transitional figures or as salutary anomalies "in an age of feverish polarization" (cf. DeMolen, ed., *Erasmus of Rotterdam,* 66).

[30] As a social being, Erasmus was eirenic; but as a litérateur he could appear as a scathing critic. In this, he was more forceful than the humble Carey, who refused to write or print "anything of a specifically religious or devotional kind ... lest his life or character might suddenly belie the things he dared to write" [J. B. Middlebrook, *William Carey* (London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1961), 103]. Cf Carey's letter to Fuller, dated 14 August 1804, in Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey,* 21.

are well placed to understand Serampore's Luther — Joshua Marshman[31].

2. A VALIANT 'LUTHERAN' IN PRE-VICTORIAN BENGAL

It is true that William Carey and his Baptist colleagues hoped that the Protestant missionary awakening of their day would prove to be "the first wave of a new Reformation."[32] As regular preachers in the Danish colony's Lutheran Church, courtesy of Serampore's Danish governor, they appealed repeatedly to the example of Luther and the Reformers as a model for their own Christian work. As Timothy George has noted, they understood their work in "exposing the errors of the Hindu system with its exalted priestly caste of Brahmins" as something akin to Luther's "thundering addresses against the idle, corrupt, and ignorant clergy of the church of Rome at the commencement of the Reformation." Their continued presence in Bengal evoked memories of the protection that the territorial prince, Frederick the Wise of Saxony, afforded Luther in the face of the German Emperor Charles V and the so-called Holy Roman Empire. For was not the Dissenters' survival in British-occupied India primarily due to special favor from Danish

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[31] Joshua Marshman (1768-1837) was a zealous English pioneer of education and evangelism in Bengal. Born in Wiltshire, his passion for books took him to London where he worked as a bookseller's porter. He returned home and took up weaving until he was appointed as an elementary teacher in a church school in Bristol. After five years of part-time study at the city's Baptist academy, he applied to the BMS and was accepted for service in India. He and his family arrived at the Danish entrepôt of Serampore in October 1799. He managed the Serampore Mission during William Carey's prolonged spells of duty in Calcutta. With an iron constitution and formidable drive, Marshman outlived his peers and challenged young missionary recruits to exert themselves in evangelizing India. Unfortunately, nothing more than John Fenwick's rudimentary *Biographical Sketches of Joshua Marshman D.D.,* 1843 (privately printed) has been written on Marshman's life. The *Dictionary of National Biography* contains a summary of his life and work: 36 (1893), 255-256. Both Marshman and Luther may be said to have never lost their "conservative sense of an order embodied in institutions." Thus Marshman could be surprisingly affirmative of British rule in India while Luther "proved in many ways a most reluctant revolutionary who never wished to abandon tradition, unless his reading of scripture compelled him to it." Cf. G. R. Elton, *Reformation Europe 1517-1559* (London: Collins/Fontana, 1971), 17.

[32] George, *Faithful Witness,* 136.

authorities who held out in their tiny enclave against imperialist Anglo pressure?

More specifically, Carey saw much of Martin Luther — at least a Luther-like personality — in Joshua Marshman. This became particularly evident whenever the Serampore Mission was challenged to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Marshman was ever ready to contend in theological, institutional and political defense of Christianity and Baptist mission work in Bengal. Thus the 1810 dictum typified Carey as the dove and Joshua Marshman as the hawk of the Serampore band.[33] It conjured up the picture of a scholarly Erasmus over against a blunt and dogmatic Luther — of a detached, eirenic scholar over against a combative and aggressive reformer — of a conciliatory evangelical over against a fiery theological debater.[34] Never was that clearer than when the Serampore Baptists felt

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[33] Carey and his two closest British Baptist colleagues labored at Serampore between 1800 and 1837. Initially under the aegis of the Baptist Missionary Society, this missionary team in Bengal began to assert its independence from the BMS after Andrew Fuller's death in 1815. From 1807, the triumvirate referred to their mission team in Serampore as "The Serampore Union." In June 1818, the BMS committee in London wrote to the Trio: "You speak, brethren, of the Baptist Mission at Serampore; but when did this Society, as a distinct body, commence its operations? Where are its records?" See Joseph Ivimey, ed., *Letters on the Serampore Controversy,* (1831), 140. Notice that the journal, *Periodical Accounts of the Serampore Mission* began before 1820. I use the term "the Serampore Mission" as shorthand for the mission venture established by the Trio in Serampore in 1800 and which lasted until all three had passed away by 1837.

[34] E.g., Cornelius J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History* (3rd ed.; Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1993), 28. Dyck concludes: "Luther held all people to be miserable sinners, while Erasmus [who represented the best in humanism] ... stressed their fundamental goodness. Luther might be described as crying, 'Back to the Bible,' while Erasmus might have asked, 'What is the Bible?' (Bainton)." Dyck posits that: "The Reformation would not have been possible without the humanists' recovery of the Scriptures and of biblical scholarship." They thus may be said to have "added spiritual depth to the church by stressing the inward and personal dimension of faith, where[as] the reformers were often forced to quarrel over doctrine or external church issues" (*ibid.*, 29). But the contrasts should not be drawn too starkly, because (*pace* Dyck) the major Protestant Reformers in Europe had a humanist education and were scholars in their own right. Notice how Marshman referred to Luther during his funeral sermon for the first member of the Trio to die, William Ward; see George, *Faithful Witness,* 137.

threatened by Raja Ram Mohun Roy and the Abbé J. A. Dubois in India.[35] Thus it was not for nothing that Marshman, rather than Carey, became the lightning rod for clashes between the senior and junior missionaries in the 1810s, and between the BMS and the Serampore Mission in the 1820s.[36] Indeed, his bosom friend, William Ward, was so bold as to observe as early as 1805: "Bro. Marshman is a most important acquisition and a good help to the Mission ...*in his ardent zeal.* But he is too volatile, & has too much quicksilver in him."[37]

In all probability, Marshman took to heavy-duty literary skirmishing by default: in view of his fear that Carey could not be counted on to take the lead — and perhaps could not afford to do so.[38] Thus it looked at times as if the very future of God's work depended on Serampore's champion. Thus Carey observed in 1810: Marshman would "try the utmost strength of Gospel reasons" upon non-believers, engaging "with ... ardour in a dispute with men of lax conduct or deistical sentiment," laboring the point with them "for hours together without fatigue." Clearly, this was not something that a quiet plodder was cut out for. Only a rugged individual with an iron constitution could be so insistant, yea, "instant in season and out of season."

But how effective was such righteous contention? Did Marshman not need to pause for thought and imbibe some of the spirit of Carey, the peace-loving, principled, ecumenical pragmatist, who resonated with Erasmus' words — *"Let it not be profytable or helping for ye disputacyon in diuynite [i.e., divinity] so it make for a diuyne lyfe"* — which might be paraphrased thus: "Rather than promoting theological disputation, let our work contribute to holy living."[39]

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[35] Marshman engaged in substantial pamphlet skirmishing with Raja Ram Mohun Roy as well as with British opponents of the Serampore Trio. See Joshua Marshman's privately-printed *A Defence of the Deity and Atonement of Jesus Christ, in Reply to Ram-mohun Roy of Calcutta* (London, 1822), and *Reply to Abbé J. A. Dubois's Letters on the State of Christianity in India* (Serampore, 1824).

[36] Especially cf. Carey's letter to John Dyer (BMS Secretary), dated 15 July 1819, and his letter of May 30, 1816, to John Ryland in Joshua Marshman ed., *Letters from the Rev. Dr. Carey* (London, 1828), 4-5,7-8.

[37] See Ward's letter to Fuller of 7 October 1805, p.4 (emphasis mine).

[38] Carey majored on conciliation and so was acceptable as a professor of the East India Company's (Civil Service) Fort William College, while Marshman majored on advocacy and got into hot water. See n.26 above. Cf. Haweis on Erasmus in his *An impartial and succinct history,* 2:83-84.

[39] Erasmus, *Enchiridion,* (1981 ed. of the 1534 English translation), 6, lines 29-30. Although Carey was a peace-loving, ecumenical pragmatist in relationships, he ever sought to act according to the highest principles with utmost consistency. See his letter to Burls (BMS, London), dated 5 October, 1821, p.4, and E. Glenn Hinson, "Carey and Ecumenical Pragmatism," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies,* 17, No. 2 (1980), 73-83.

In light of that, it may be said that William Ward resembled Carey more than Marshman. We find Ward writing to Fuller in 1803: "I dislike defending the truth in a controversial way."[40] Fuller replied in a similar vein in 1804. Referring to John Ryland (Jr.), the Principal of the Bristol Baptist Academy, as "one of the most pacific of men," Fuller observed that he himself sometimes came over as "a man with a sledge-hammer in my hand."[41] From what we know of Marshman's clashes with Ryland after 1816, all this would suggest that Fuller was, by nature, temperamentally more like Marshman while Ryland and Ward were more like Carey, though it should be added that Fuller had more of Ward's judicious nature than Marshman did.[42]

In the ways of Providence, however, Christian pugilists, or defenders of the faith, sometimes are obliged to retreat from the public fray for extended periods of time. Thus we find that both Marshman and Luther, spent a significant period of their lives in seclusion — translating the Word of God into the vernacular[43]. Luther produced his Bible while secluded in the Wartburg (1521-1522), while Marshman did his in the sanctuary of Serampore, albeit thousands of miles away from his target in China!

Ever eager to "take all Asia for Christ," Marshman undertook the huge task of Bible translation into the language of a country that he never visited. Fourteen years were devoted to translating the Bible into Chinese, translating the Works of Confucius (1809), producing "a dissertation" on Chinese phonology (1809) and a Chinese grammar, *Clavis Sinica* (1814). But this work unfortunately turned out to have been rather futile, for a variety of reasons that none less than his devoted son, John, Andrew Fuller, and his close colleague, William Ward, admitted quite openly.[44] In Marshman's case,

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[40] Ward to Fuller, 31 December 1803, p.1 (BMS microfilm reel 44, Archives Box IN 18, Angus Library, Regent's Park College).

[41] Fuller to Ward, 27 October 1804, p. 8.

[42] Andrew Fuller also needed two close colleagues to help him maintain his poise. Thus his biographer, Andrew Gunton Fuller wrote: "The singular wisdom of Sutcliff, and the scrupulous integrity of Ryland, served not only to strengthen and develope [*sic*] those qualities already so conspicuous in Mr. Fuller, but happily to *temper that constitutional ardour which might otherwise have betrayed him into indiscretions" [Memoir of Andrew Fuller,* in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller,* ed. Joseph Belcher (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1845 [= 1837, based on other works published in 1818 and 1824]), I, 63 (emphasis mine)].

[43] Cf. George, *Faithful Witness,* p. 38.

[44] See Andrew Fuller's annotation of 25 August 1807 to "'Marshman's Plan for Taking All Asia' by a Coup de Main" (Unpublished document, dated 18 November 1806, in BMS Archives Box H6, Angus Libray, Regent's Park College); William Ward's Journal, entry for 27 April 1806. Cf. JCM, *Life & Times of CMW,* I, *passim,* and Smalley, *Translation As Mission,* 48.

enthusiasm, dogged determination and hard work very much needed to be tempered by judicious, collective decision-making. He should not have expected to achieve much by translating the Bible into a language in which he had never been immersed — in contrast to the experience of his contemporary, Robert Morrison.[45] Thus he never achieved anything like the success that Luther did in his own European mother tongue. Marshman aimed high, but his translation was of a different order from Luther's, which, Thomas Haweis recorded, "circulated like the sun, through Germany, and cast a flood of light upon the benighted minds of men."[46] Perhaps it was left to Carey to do for an Asian language something similar to what Luther did for German.

But Marshman *was* valuable. Carey could not have done without him. Even though they had "widely differing temperaments and priorities," they never fell out together as Erasmus and Luther did.[47] The Serampore veter-

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[45] Cf. the Trio's letter to the BMS Committee, dated 10 February 1818, p.6. Not for nothing has Andrew F. Walls called Marshman's Chinese translation "one of the greatest white elephants of the modern missionary movement" [Oral presentation at the International Missiological Colloquium held in Nashville, Tennessee, June 2, 1994]. Walls focussed on Robert Morrison's China-based expertise in Chinese language, lore, law and culture by way of contrast. On the unhealthy competition between Marshman and Morrison in Chinese Bible translation, see Carey to Sutcliffe, 5 August 1812, p. 1; Marshman to Ryland, 13 December 1816; Carey to Burls, 19 August 1818, p.3. Comparison of Marshman's and Morrison's Chinese Bible translation efforts should take into account the range of initiatives taken by Anglican and Catholic Europeans in this area before either Marshman or Morrison put pen to paper in the work.

[46] Haweis, *An Impartial and Succinct History,* 2:84.

[47] Cf. McConica, *Erasmus, 66-67,* for the contrast between Erasmus and Luther. "As Luther became more strident ... the irenic Erasmus began to distance himself from the controversial Reformer. Correspondence between the two churchmen became increasingly bitter. ... The differences between the two men, however, were by no means solely theological. Erasmus sincerely wanted reform, but not at the expense of unity [within the Roman Catholic Church]" [*New Dictionary of Theology,* eds. Ferguson and Wright, 226f.; cf. Clyde Manschreck, *Melanchthon. The Quiet Reformer* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), 98, 113-120]. According to N. P. Feldmeth, Erasmus the humanist was a "frail intellectual" who "... defended Luther's freedom to criticize abuses, but he could never condone an ecclesiastical rebellion against authority." The Reformers faulted him "for vacillation and timidity." Many scholars believe that he felt that "his consuming passion for piety and unity was best served ... through the power of his pen" (*ibid.*). For an indication of the doctrinal debate between Erasmus and Luther, see Haweis, *An impartial and succinct History,* 2:100-101.

ans held so much in common in terms of mission goals, and needed each other so much in the face of mountains of work and severe opposition, that they remained true to each other, regardless of their personal differences. Thus Carey could confess to his British brethren on several occasions between 1811 and 1818, *against* the junior missionaries' charicaturing of Marshman: "he is naturally a little tortuous, but ... a more excellent and holy man does not exist in the Mission." And again, although

> I believe a certain kind of crooked policy is natural to him, ... Bro. M's excellencies are such that his defects are almost concealed by them, and I believe him to be one of the finest friends that the Mission ever had ....

That is why Carey prayed that "the Mission may never stand in want of one like him."[48]

3. THE MARSHMAN FAMILY

Thirty-four years at Serampore demonstrated that Marshman could not have asked for a truer friend. Nor could he have prayed for a wife more dedicated and indefatigable in mission than Hannah, née Shepherd, who was

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[48] Letters from Carey to Ryland, dated 11 April 1818, and to Fuller, 2 August 1811, p.3. By the term "tortuous," Carey referred to Marshman's style of self expression and communication which was less than straightforward; see his exposition of Marshman's "tortuosities" in the letter that Carey wrote to Ryland on 11 April 1818. Marshman's theology, writing and workstyle had a particularly Puritan slant. His daughter-in-law, Rachel Voigt, wrote that he inherited from his mother "the strain of Calvinism, together with a certain Puritan austerity, which distinguished him through life" ["Memoir of Mrs. Hannah Marshman's Earlier Years" (Unpublished manuscript, n.d.), 23]. His turgid writing in English contrasts with Luther's powerful and eloquent mode of expression in German. For a characteristic and uninhibited example of Marshman's writing, see Marshman's letter to Ryland, dated 25 May 1805. Other than polemical pamphlets, Marshman wrote *Hints Relative to Native Schools* (1816), *Thoughts on Propagating Christianity More Effectually Among the Heathen* (1827), and a *Brief Memoir Relative to the Operations of the Serampore Missionaries, Bengal* (1827). He also produced an edited version of thirty-two of William Carey's letters from the turbulent period of 1815 to 1828 under the title of *Letters from the Rev. Dr. Carey* (1828).

born in South West England in 1767. Of her it was reported in 1826 by a Serampore missioner, perhaps her son John: "It grieves us to the heart to see that Mrs. Marshman, now approaching sixty, should be required [by the mission's "pecuniary embarrassments"] to toil as severely as ever, to contribute to the support of the mission."[49]

During the 1830s, William Carey was referred to as "the father of the Serampore Mission." But it would be churlish to forget that there were also grandfathers and uncles, and faithful children. Yea more. For honor is due to the memory of "the mother of the Serampore mission," Hannah Marshman.

Born in Bristol, England, she became a Baptist, married Joshua Marshman and then took her husband in hand. She urged him to develop proficiency as a school teacher and preacher, instead of emigrating to America. Under the auspices of the BMS, they arrived in Bengal in 1799 with their young son, John. Ever resourceful, she promptly set up a residential school for Anglo-Indians to contribute to the financial welfare for the extended Serampore missionary family. A sturdy pillar of support to her family of six, to William Carey's turbulent family, to a series of missionary widows and to many orphans (both native and missionary), she managed scores of domestic servants from many castes, organised elementary schools for native girls and ran a girls' boarding school. She served for forty-seven years in Bengal and outlasted the first generation of Baptist missionaries to India, dying at the age of eighty.[50] An unsung heroine, she never was appointed or formally recognised by the BMS as one of its missionaries.[51] Yet it is almost inconceivable that the Serampore mission could have survived during Carey's lifetime without her ministry and herculean contributions.

Without a doubt, Hannah Marshman had a profound influence on her

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[49] Letter of 16 April 1826 from someone at Serampore to Joshua Marshman, who was then on furlough in England. Serampore's acute "pecuniary embarrassments" were occasioned by the huge costs that attended the building and running of Serampore College, in the face of powerful reluctance by the BMS to fund that school and other projects initiated independently by the Serampore Trio.

[50] Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, *Hannah Marshman. The First Woman Missionary in India* (Sheoraphuli, Hoogly, 1987); Rachel Voigt, "Memoir of Hannah Marshman" (Voigt was her daughter). Among all her other work, Hannah gave birth to twelve children, six of whom died in infancy: JCM, *Life & Times of CMW,* II, 520.

[51] Chatterjee, *Hannah Marshman,* 65-72, 89, 95-98. However, in view of the remarkable contributions she made to the Serampore Mission, at her own family's expense, the Trio voted her a personal allowance. See Ward's letter to Ryland, 30 April 1817, p.25.

men-folk, spurring them on to be achievers. Yet she also did something to restrain Joshua from his tendency to go to extremes. John owed his scholarly formation to her. As her husband's bosom friend, William Ward the observant journalist recorded in 1805: "in most family things [Joshua Marshman] is ruled by his wife."[52] This we must take into account as we reflect further on the nature of Marshman senior's "zeal."

Carey once tried to explain how Joshua's conduct of day-to-day business resulted in strained relationships at Serampore, particularly involving the "junior" BMS mission personnel. In a letter to Ryland, Fuller's part-time successor as BMS secretary, he identified the *pièce de resistance:*

> I believe his natural make is the occasion of it. He is a man whose whole heart is in the mission, and who may be considered as *the soul and life of it* [emphasis mine]. He is ardent, nay sanguine, exceedingly tenacious of any idea which strikes him as right or important. His labours are excessive, his body scarcely susceptible of fatigue, his religious feelings strong, *his jealousy for God great;* his regard for the feelings of others very little when the cause of God is in question. His memory is uncommonly retentive; ... in short, his activity reproaches the indolence of some, his acquirements reproach their ignorance, and his unaccomodating mind frequently excites sentiments of resentment and dislike. He has also, perhaps, the *foible of dragging himself and his children more into public conversation than is desirable.*[53]

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[52] Ward to Fuller, 7 October 1805, p. 4. E. Daniel Potts called her a "domineering wife" [*British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793-1837* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 17, 21]. In his personal daily journal, Ward made other less-than-flattering remarks about the redoubtable lady.

[53] As quoted by JCM, *Life & Times of CMW,* I, 464. Although I have not located the original 1816 letter so far, most of Carey's observations here track with Gerhard Ebeling's characterization of Martin Luther in his *Luther. An Introduction to His Thought* (London: Collins/Fontana, 1975), 29: "in almost all his writings we find ourselves face to face with his great inward struggle. It is as though within this human soul, so powerful and so richly endowed by God and by nature, two worlds were in conflict." Ryland censured Marshman for demanding of younger (British) missionaries the frugality and self-denial that he and his wife, Hannah, exercised. See Andrew Fuller to Carey, 15 May 1809, p.2; cf. also Carey to Fuller, 2 August 1811, p.3, and 4 August 1814. On Marshman's "imperfections," which Carey "not unfrequently complained of" to Fuller and Ryland, see Carey's letter to Ryland, of 14 June 1821, declaring: "I still admit the same — but when the whole Christian world was engaged in a Hue and Cry against him, there could be no reason for me to say anything to increase the general odium. Upon the contrary I saw in him an injured Friend, whom it was my Duty to defend. This I have done, and think I have done right in so doing" [*sic*] (p.2).

Clearly, Carey was under no allusions. In 1814, he reported to Fuller that Marshman was fiercely protective of his children.[54] Four years later, he recorded that Marshman had been attacked by young BMS missioners for working to get his son accepted as a member of the Serampore Mission.[55] The Marshman family was criticized by the second generation of BMS appointees for its ambitious designs in the interest of its own enhancement by means of the Serampore Mission and its grand college.[56] However, Carey had no time for cheap attempts to vilify his veteran partner. He concurred with the sturdy rebuttals that John provided in a parallel attempt to set the record straight.

4. JOHN CLARKE MARSHMAN (1794-1877) AND BRITISH INDIA

In the midst of these circumstances, John Marshman grew to become a protégé, an employee, a colleague, a pamphleteer and an administrator at Serampore.[57] In the process, he made decisions that shaped his development as a lay missionary and led him to a career in journalism, education and business — mostly in British India. Quite deliberately, he did not become an ordained minister or a BMS missionary. So who was he, and what did he make of life?

1. Successor to the Serampore Trio

His very name poses questions. Where did it come from? Was it from

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[54] Carey to Fuller, 4 August 1814, p. 2.

[55] Carey to Ryland, 4 Oct 1818, p. 12; see below section 4.1. JCM sought to debunk this in 1830, concluding: "The sum and substance, then, of this great scheme of family aggrandizement is, that Dr. Marshman's eldest son has been a member of the Serampore Mission for the last eleven years, and has assisted his venerable Colleagues in sustaining the unexampled difficulties which have beset their path" ["Review of Two Pamphlets" (1830), 66].

[56] John (1820), Hannah (1820) and Joshua Marshman (1822-27) all met with the BMS committee in England in order to effect an amicable settlement between the BMS and Serampore, but their attempts were in vain. The Marshman family drew a lot of flack from young missionaries who were devoted to the BMS and who sailed for India in the 1810s with seeds of suspicion about the Marshmans already sown in their minds. Cf. Carey's letter of December 30, 1816, to Ryland in Marshman, ed., *Letters of Dr. Carey,* 5-6.

[57] Protégé: "one who is protected or trained or whose career is furthered by a person of experience, prominence or influence" [*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (1985), *s.v.*]. In defence of the Serampore Trio, he wrote pamphlets such as *Reply of Mr. J. C. Marshman to the Attack of Mr. Buckingham on the Serampore Missionaries* (London, 1826) and *Review of Two Pamphlets* (1830); see n.72 below.

his mother's grandfather, Rev. John Clarke, and his paternal grandfather, John Marshman?[58] Could it have been in honor of Dr. John Clarke, as a hero and forebear of the Serampore Marshmans? Indeed, did it derive from them all? If so, it would locate him strongly in British Puritan tradition: a tradition that he was to grow out of.

John Clarke (1609-1679) was an English Puritan physician who crossed the Atlantic and made his way to Rhode Island. There, with the help of (the Puritan, part-time Baptist) Roger Williams, he purchased land from the Indians. Between 1640 and 1644, Clarke became the first full-time Baptist to plant a church in the USA.[59] Williams came to be known as "the father of religious liberty in America" while Clarke is remembered for enabling the Rhode Island Colony to obtain its charter from Charles II (in 1663). With Rhode Island, British Baptists in Bristol developed close ties one hundred years later. Not by coincidence, both Carey and Marshman received D.D.s from its Brown University, in Providence.[60]

Joshua and Hannah Marshman's eldest son thus started life in one of Britain's largest international ports. Until the 1790s, Bristol had grown rich from supplying the West Indies and "Her Majesty's plantations in America" with large numbers of African slaves. At the same time, it was a center from which theologically educated young men sailed overseas on mission, some of whom were ardent opponents of the trade in human beings.[61] The

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[58] Hannah Marshman's grandfather was a Baptist minister from Frome, Somerset. See John Fenwick, *Biographical Sketches of Joshua Marshman*,5; cf. Chatterjee *Hannah Marshman,* 16-23.

[59] Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists* (New York, 1887), 669, 671. Cf. Thomas J. Nettles, *By His Grace and for His Glory. A Historical, Theological, and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990), 40. In 1652, John Clarke wrote *Ill News from New-England: or A Narative of New-Englands Persecution* [*sic*] (London, 1652). It is available in vol. II of *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (Boston, 1854).

[60] Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (3rd ed.; Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1973 [=1963]); *Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society* (Providence, Rhode Island, 1838), IV, 210-212. Fuller and Ward declined offers of a D.D. from Brown University (Providence, Rhode Island), which was the daughter of Bristol's Baptist Academy in England, where Marshman did his theological studies in the second half of the 1790s. Clarke was first pastor of the first Baptist Church in Newport, Rhode Island.

[61] C. M. MacInnes, *Bristol and the Slave Trade* (Bristol: Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 1963), 1-6, and Walter Minchinton's *The Port of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Bristol: Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 1962), 1-5, 22-23). Cf. Gordon A. Catherall, "Bristol College and the Jamaican Mission. A Caribbean Contribution", *Baptist Quarterly,* 35 (1994), 294-302.

Marshmans, however, did not consider themselves cut out for involvement in the abolitionist cause. Their calling turned out to be to minister in the very different world of South Asia.

After John arrived in Serampore at the age of five, he was provided with an education by his mother and her assistants in their school for English-speaking children. He must have been a bright child, given the fact that he went on to develop reading proficiency in Chinese, Greek, Latin and French and learned to speak "the Hindosthanee and Bengalee fluently."[62] This no doubt reflected the pioneer missionaries' concern to turn their children into potential mission recruits, with superior linguistic skills.[63] He evidently had a fairly spartan upbringing in keeping with his parents' "frugality for the sake of mission." But that was more than offset by the stimulating, cosmopolitan, educational environment of Serampore.[64]

This leads one to ask whether or not the younger Marshman was groomed for special service by the Baptist mission pioneers. To this question, an initial answer might be that his father at least treated him as his protégé, and that William Ward tended to view him as an under-study. One also observes that the Trio increasingly turned to him as a loyal subordinate, in the 1810s, and induced him to assume responsibility for various facets of their mission, including their college after 1818. With the passage of time — especially while Ward was on furlough and after his decease — the veterans found it increasingly difficult to depend on the services of most other second-generation mission personnel. So John was valued as a reliable associate, even though his spiritual formation was rather slow, uneven or circumscribed, by some Dissenting standards.

The next question focuses on the way in which the Serampore triumvirate brought John forward, while declining to take slightly older ordained BMS missionaries into their confidence. Was the veterans' approach out of order? Did elements of nepotism come into play, or not?

Here there is no easy answer. What we can do is take the Marshman family's experience into consideration and then pay particular attention to the pamphlet war in which the Marshman men and their (some-time missionary) opponents engaged between 1828 and 1831. The latter literature provides us

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[62] According to Ward in his letter to Ryland of 30 April 1817, p. 31.

[63] This probably reflected the educational philosophy that Carey followed for his sons as soon as they could read. They started learning Asiatic languages and Latin from as early as five years old. See Fuller's letter to David Brown, Anglican chaplain in Calcutta, dated 21 January 1811, p.18 (in bound Volume 3 of Fuller's Letters, BMS microfilm reel no.21). Carey's sons spent up to ten years learning Latin. Felix Carey had prodigious linguistic skills, especially in Indian languages. Cf. Marshman's letter of 24 February 1811 to Ryland.

[64] Cf. the letter of Fuller to Carey, 15 May 1809, p.2.

with a broad array of noteworthy evidence in the midst of serious allegations and rebuttals.

The saga began while John was still a teenager. We are informed that in 1812 junior BMS personnel in Bengal were already protesting at the way in which he was receiving preferential treatment — as if he were "the heir apparent" at Serampore.[65] William Johns, Joshua Marshman's young nemesis, recorded:

> Our complaint arose out of the fact, that letters on general missionary business, were received, opened, and read by John Marshman, or handed over to him to read, whilst Lawson and myself were sitting with him and Mr. Ward, circumstances of frequent occurrence. This young man, then only eighteen, attended to them as a partner in a commercial concern would do, without any reference whatever being made to us directly, or indirectly.[66]

William Carey's nephew, Eustace, felt put out, and declared in 1831:

> ... we have never entertained any feeling against him of the slightest personal hostility. When we knew him at Serampore, in 1816, we regarded him as a pleasant, worldly young gentleman, who was much at home in modern history and European politics, and possessed many of those agreeable qualities which facilitate introduction to general society. ... He had also a considerable talent for business. Yet we entertained no idea that he was a proper person to become a member of a Missionary body. ...

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[65] William Johns, M.D., F.L.S., F.H.S., "The Spirit of the Serampore System, as it existed in 1812 and 1813; with strictures on some parts of 'Dr. Marshman's Statement relative to Serampore' [*sic*], in a Series of Letters to a Friend" (London, 1828) in *Serampore Pamphlets, 1827-1828* (Bound volumes 6 and 10; also BMS Archives microfilm reel no. 53).

[66] *Ibid.*, 52. Johns was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in London and during 1812-1813 functioned as "Acting Surgeon to the Danish Prisoners of War" at Serampore. He was the only missionary that was sent back to Britain from Bengal; that was at least in part due to Joshua Marshman's mis-handling of Johns' case with the British authorities in Calcutta. See Carey to Fuller, 25 March 1813, and 5-12 May 1813, p.6. Johns was Marshman's most severe detractor thereafter. Johns' strong animus against Joshua Marshman and his family must be taken into account when one reads his allegations against them. Cf. A. Christopher Smith, "British Recruits for Serampore, 1800-1825," *Baptist Review of Theology*, 2, No.2 (1992), 13-14.

> Dr. Carey expressed to me while I was living at Serampore his anxiety that Mr. John Marshman should not come into the direction of the Mission, and assured me that he concurred in voting him a salary, from the persuasion that his becoming a stipendiary would disqualify him for being a principal: though I expressed a different opinion as to the probable effect of that arrangement.[67]

Johns believed that he saw something ominous at play. He commented rather sourly:

> ... John M., an interesting youth of eighteen [1812-13], was the favoured individual, to whom his father and mother looked, to do more than all the European brethren put together, and, I suppose, to take the entire charge, when Carey and Marshman, as well as Ward, shall be gathered to their fathers.

The proud young English surgeon then quoted remarks that Joshua Marshman made in a written defence of his eldest son in 1828:

> [John] early discovered the same devotedness to the cause which he saw actuating the mind of his mother. His attachment to Mr. Ward was so great, that he spent more hours with him in a day than he did with me [his father] in a week. His intimacy with him [Ward], and his strong affection for Dr. Carey, combined with the example of his mother, and his own love to the mission, interested and enlarged his mind at an early period. At the age of seventeen, ... he rejected the prospects of entering the law, &c. and declared that he should feel happier in supporting that cause for which they laboured, than in amassing wealth for himself.[68]

However, Johns took issue with the veracity of this assertion, declaring:

> As I have no controversy with Mr. John Marshman, I shall not make any remarks, as to what I know of his opinions and feelings, a year afterwards. I shall not hesitate to say, however, Dr. M. has here stated *what he wished,* rather than what was strictly

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[67] Eustace Carey, "Supplement to the Vindication of the Calcutta Baptist Missionaries occasioned by Dr. Carey's 'Thirty-Two Letters,' Dr. Marshman's 'Reply to the Rev. John Dyer,' and Mr. John Marshman's 'Review'" (London, 1831), 112-113 [in Bound vol. 12 of *Serampore Controversy* (Pamphlets)]. On Eustace Carey as the Trio's *bête noire*, see Smith, "British Recruits," 14-16, and Carey's letter to Ryland, dated 30 May 1816. William Carey avowed in his letter to Fuller, dated 4 August 1814 (p.3), that he had always sought to avoid treating Eustace as any kind of favourite at Serampore.

> borne out by facts. Dr. M. has thus introduced his son, for a special purpose, it answers mine as well: to me it is a corroboration of what I had for years prognosticated, that he was the destined heir. — Dr. M. says, *'it was full seven years before he was formally elected a member of our union'*[emphases mine].[69]

Johns was chagrined at the favor bestowed on the junior Marshman, supposedly at the expense of the young BMS personnel. Yet the disappointed surgeon's account does have value as being the public testimony of an informed critic who had first-hand-knowledge of the Serampore Mission. He continued, albeit in a tone that smacked somewhat of "sour grapes":

> ... the time arrived when Mr. John M. was baptized; and in 1818, (I apprehend it was,) was solemnly inaugurated; in other words, 'formally elected a member of the union.' His various efficient services, 'even from the age of fourteen' [1808], are amply detailed in Dr. M.'s Statement. — And it is not to be wondered at therefore, that he is now the prime, if not the sole, mover of the vast machinery in the mission establishment, and in the College at Serampore. ... When Ward died, there was the same person to fill his place; — and he has for above two years superseded his father, who, at the present moment, is occupied in a distant part of the world [Britain], as a sub-lieutenant only.[70]

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[68] This was hardly surprising because Ward and JCM worked together in the Serampore Mission's print shop? Johns evidently quoted from Marshman's 1828 "Statement Relative to Serampore," pp. 54-55. In spite of this praise by his father, JCM never took the official step to become a missionary. Marshman senior's reference to JCM at the age of seventeen [1811] surely refers more accurately to JCM seven or eight years later [in 1818 or 1819?] On Johns' strong sense of self-importance, cf. Carey's letter to Ryland, dated May 30, 1816.

[69] On "The Serampore Union," see above, n.33.

[70] Johns, "The Spirit of the Serampore System", 54-55. On the Trio's procedure for admitting anyone to membership of the Serampore Mission from 1808 onwards, see the letter of Carey and Marshman to D. Templeton, dated 15 April 1820, p. 3. This contrasted with the Trio's posture towards the BMS as set forth in the letter that Carey wrote to Fuller on 11 August 1807: "We do not think ourselves at liberty to appoint our own Children to be Missionaries however well they may be fitted for it. The most we think ourselves authorized to do is to recommend them to the Society after we have made a proper trial of them" [*sic*] (p.2). In 1806, Marshman had proposed that missionary children could become "Assistants to the Mission, principally at out-stations," on a provisional basis and with financial support from Serampore [Marshman to Ryland, 25 May 1806, p.17, and 24 February 1811, p.12]. Felix Carey was supported thus.

In contrast to Johns's fulminations, William Ward's observation of John Marshman around the age of 22 (in 1817) merits consideration. This provided a much more upbeat reading of the young man. Ward wrote to Fuller's successor in the BMS Committee:

> [He] has devoted himself to the business of the Mission for several years wth unremitted ardour day and night. ... He is full of ardour in forming plans for the extension of the cause, & is resolved to devote himself to the Mission for life. I cannot doubt of his piety, tho' he is not yet baptized. ... This young man is rigidly sober and chaste, and has a high sense of honour. ... Should God deepen the work of grace in his soul, and keep him from the evil, I think there is hardly a young man on earth likely to do more good ... than he is ....[71]

All of which suggests that the young Marshman had real potential — even some portion of his father's zeal — and that his detractors did not have all truth on their side. But let us allow him to defend himself and his parents from the attacks made by Johns, Eustace Carey and William Yates.[72]

In 1830, as the contention between Joshua Marshman and his opponents rumbled wearily on, John Marshman sought to dispel the charge that he had happily consented to be the administrative "heir" of the Serampore Trio. He wrote:

> I had, it was true, been employed for seven years in various inferior departments, and had served such an apprenticeship as few of the Society's missionaries would have submitted to; but nothing had been determined concerning my destiny. Knowing the sentiments entertained of me by Mr. E. Carey, Mr. Yates, and Mr. Pearce, I rather repelled than courted the idea of being placed in a situation exposed to their attacks; and had made up my mind to embark for England at the close of 1818, and to apply [myself] to the study of the law. In September of that year, Mr. Ward's complaint threatened his life; and a consultation of physicians was held, who declared that there remained no prospect of his recovery, but from a voyage to Europe. After the consultation, he wrote me a letter ... in which he entreated me to remain and occupy his place for *eighteen* months, promising to return in that time; and adding, that unless I consented to his

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[71] Ward to Ryland, 30 April 1817, pp. 29-32. This letter was begun on 16 December 1816 and finished four months later, on 30 April 1817.

[72] In 1826, Yates admitted to the Trio that he and Eustace Carey had wronged the Serampore Trio and their close colleagues. See Smith, "British Recruits", 31, n.91. However, he lapsed in 1827 and collaborated with Eustace Carey in a renewed attack on them.

> proposal, he must continue in India, and die. To this I very reluctantly consented; and, with the full concurrence of his two colleagues, was admitted into the union.[73]

1818 thus proved to be a turning point in the role he played at Serampore. Several years later, Marshman visited the BMS Committee in London and undertook various diplomatic assignments on behalf of the Trio. After Ward's death, he penned many letters to the BMS which Carey co-signed. During his father's absence in the mid 1820s, he was chief administrator for the Serampore Mission. This paved the way for his assumption of joint managerial responsibility for the costly college, along with John Mack after 1837 — when the Serampore Mission ceased to exist. Mack died several years later, leaving it to John Marshman to assume total responsibility for the college — with his mother's support until 1847. After that, he had to battle on alone for eight years until an amicable settlement could be reached with the BMS for the college's future.

2. The Mission of an Extraordinary Layman

It is time now to take the measure of John Clarke Marshman, both as a person and as a promoter of Christian enlightenment in British India.

Temperamentally, he probably contrasted more strongly with his father than with his mother. More judicious than his sanguine father, he was more like William Ward as a person than any other member of the veteran troika. As his father noted, John spent much more time as a teenager with Ward than any other adult. "Ardour" John may have had for some time, but it was only reluctantly that he consented as a young man to throw in his lot at Serampore, rather than pursuing a more secular career. He spent many years working in Serampore's printing and publishing press. Never conspicuous for evangelistic zeal, he decided not to be baptized until he was 24 years old — which may help to account in part for the resentment expressed by young BMS personnel who believed that they had been passed over by his promoters.[74]

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[73] John C. Marshman, "Review of Two Pamphlets, by the Rev. John Dyer, and the Rev. E. Carey and W. Yates, in Twelve Letters to the Rev. John Foster" (Serampore, 1830), p. 64 in *The Serampore Controversy* (Bound volume 10 and BMS microfilm reel 53). However, this appointment did not make JCM a BMS missionary; it was only a formal arrangement internal to the Serampore Mission.

[74] More light is needed to explain why Stephen Neill surmised that JCM probably "was not an altogether easy man to deal with" [*The History of Christianity in India 1707-1858* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 506, n.62]. Did Neill conclude this simply from reading his large, two-volume work on the *Life and Times of CMW?*

So he was no Puritan, nor was he a neo-Puritan. Loyalty was his watchword. Christendom was his preferred environment. During the 1820s, he gradually distanced himself from the pious mission fervor that characterized Serampore in the 1800s and 1810s. In contrast to his father, about whom Ward wrote in 1805, "about business he has no settled recollection," John developed significant administrative abilities and got involved in secular activities wherever he could.[75] In short, he was a layman who was committed to education and journalism, who performed yeoman work in mission business in North India.[76]

He was neither a transitional figure nor a missionary in the way that his mentors were. Rather, he was a bi-cultural layman who became a Victorian Christian businessman. En route, he made significant literary and educational contributions to the British Raj. While John was still a young adult, William Ward summarized his services to Serampore thus:

> To him the Benevolent Institution [founded by his father] is indebted in a great measure for its prosperity ...; to him is to be attributed the invention of metal Chinese types; to him principally is to be ascribed the commencement of Native Schools, and the whole care and labour of carrying them on his shoulders; he compares the proofs of the Bible with the English translation; he keeps the School Accounts; superintends the sending out of the bills, &c.; assists his father in the Chinese, and is most active in the general concerns of the Mission.[77]

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[75] Ward to Fuller, 7 October 1805, p. 4.

[76] With a significant lack of accuracy, the DNB recorded that he "for twenty years ... held the position of a secular bishop, providing for a great body of missionaries, catechists, and native Christians, collecting for them large sums of money, while living, like his colleagues, on 200l. a year" [DNB (1893), 36:255]. The author of this article was G. C. Boase (presumably an Indian). Ever practical, like his mother, John Marshman established the Christian village of Johnnagar, one mile from Serampore, in 1826. This was to provide assistance to penurious mission converts: was it they who named the village after after him? Cf. the letter from Christopher Anderson to John Marshman, 18 September 1829, in Hugh Anderson. *The Life and Letters of Christopher Anderson,* (Edinburgh, 1854), 292. According to the *DNB* [(1893), 36:255], he also "started a Christian colony on a tract of land purchased in the Sunderbunds," but without success.

[77] Ward to Ryland, 30 April 1817, pp. 29-30. f. JCM, *Life and Times of CMW,* vol. 1, p.424. On Serampore's "Benevolent Institution for the Instruction of Indigent Children" in Calcutta, see Smith, *The Life of William Carey,* 152f. and Potts, *Baptist Missionaries,* pp.127-129.

He became a versatile and voluminous writer for educated laypeople[78] and ploughed his literary earnings into Serampore College — to the tune of £30,000 (pounds sterling) — to help it survive from 1837 until the BMS agreed to take it over in 1855. This he did, given his conviction, as a Christian in the period of Europe's Enlightenment, that the education of the natives was "the needful forerunner of Christianity.[79]

In order to retain his services at Serampore, it is quite likely that his father helped him engage in some pursuits, even over William Carey's objections! He became founding editor of the first vernacular Bengali newspaper, *Samachar Darpan* and of the first English newspaper in India, the *Friend of India* (both its weekly and later, quarterly, edition). He also gained distinction as the editor of the *Calcutta Review.* But he continued to carry the Serampore flag even after the Trio had passed away, consistently advocating "the cause of vernacular [sic] education at a time when the rising wave of English education threatened to carry everything before it."[80]

As an accomplished though amateur Orientalist, he may be said to have followed in his father's steps. He was thoroughly at home in Bengali and served as the official translator to the British Government of Bengal between 1834 and 1852.[81] According to G. C. Boase, in the British *Dictionary of National Biography*, he accepted this position unwillingly, and "henceforth was abused daily in the native newspapers as "the hireling of the government.' " Quite possibly, he viewed such well-remunerated service — at 1,000 pounds sterling a year[82] — as being the only way by which he could obtain significant funds to keep Serampore's college going. Shades of William Carey, who served the East India Company as translator for several decades!

John Marshman went on to rank as a leading British scholar of Indian history and philology between the 1820s and 1870s. He compiled historical

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[78] He earned inclusion in the British *Dictionary of National Biography,* vol 36, s.v. which includes an exhaustive list of his works.

[79] George Howells and A. C. Underwood, *The Story of Serampore and Its College* (Serampore, 1918), 30. Cf. *DNB* (1893), 36: 255.

[80] N. L. Basak, *History of Vernacular Education in Bengal (1800-1854): A Review of the Early Trends and Experiments* (Calcutta: Bharati Book Stall, 1974), 83. K. Sengupta observes that although JCM was the editor, "the main editorial work was probably done by the Indians" [*The Christian Missionaries in Bengal, 1793-1833* (Calcutta, 1971), p. 132]. JCM was thus more of a managing editor. Cf. John D. W. Watts, "Baptists and the Transformation of Culture: A Case Study from the Career of William Carey," *Evangelical Review of Theology,* 17, No.3 (1993), 335.

[81] Cf. [anon.], "Memoir of John C. Marshman," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* New series, 10 (1878), xi-xii.

[82] Boase in *DNB*, 36:255.

treatises, some of which he and others turned into textbooks for Bengali schools.[83] His works included the highly remunerative *Guide to the Civil Law of the Presidency of Fort William [Bengal]* (1848). However, after returning to England, he never received the recognition due to one of his attainments.[84] Imperial Victorians preferred those who had risen through the ranks in line with their own metropolitan protocol.

5. MARSHMAN AND MELANCHTHON: MEN AT THE CROSS-ROADS

Serampore demanded much of the younger Marshman, and owed much to him. Without the extraordinary opportunities it proferred him as the favored son of some pioneer missionary educators and linguists, he would scarcely have made a notable mark in nineteenth-century mission history. But "greatness" was thrust upon him far more than it was sought by him. Filial piety was summoned by an incredible threesome from one who was not eager to be a missionary protégé. And there was the rub.

Serampore called for dedication. Those who responded to the call of the family enterprise invariably proceeded to make herculaean contributions to the cause. That meant burying one's dreams for the future — and then being misunderstood by outsiders for identifying so fully with the mission's agenda. Thus, Serampore came to symbolize the heroic. Built from monumental effusions of blood, tears, toil and sweat, it ever involved self-sacrifice on a sobering scale. That is why it became so hard for its members to divest themselves of it.

Loyalty to something larger than life thus won from John C. Marshman more than forty of the best years of his life. For Serampore stood for an ideal. It symbolized a quest for the magnificent, whatever the cost: man's utmost for the Highest. The fact that it is enshrined in monumental history is due in large measure to the younger Marshman. Between 1853 and 1859, after bidding a final farewell to India, he undertook a writing project on the Serampore Trio and their mission on an unprecedented scale, which has never been matched. The fruit of this was a two-volume *opus* which, until

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[83] He produced various historical treatises on India, from the earliest period until after the East India Company's rule, including *The History of India* (1842, and 3 volumes in 1863-67). According to N. L. Basak, "the chief value of these historical compilations lay in their utility as source books for future authors in the vernacular." Marshman's *Outline of the History of Bengal* (1840) was translated into Bengali in 1840 and 1848, as well as by the Rev. John Wenger in 1853. These were popular in the schools of Bengal for many years (Basak, *History of Vernacular Education,* 83).

[84] Neill, *History of Christianity,* 205.

recently, has done more than anything else to assist retrieval of the memory of an amazing mission band.[85]

Such was the legacy of the layman who followed in the train of Erasmus and Luther in nineteenth-century Serampore. A layman called Marshman who did not fit neatly into conventional religious or secular patterns — as if there was something of Melanchthon in him. Philip Melanchthon, the disciple and life-long friend of Luther, who was so profoundly influenced by Erasmus that he once considered himself to be an Erasmian Latinist. Melanchthon (né Schwartzerd, 1497-1560), the frequently-misunderstood Christian humanist and philologist whose concern for learning in Reformation Germany "left a deep mark on upper schools and universities, for which he wrote textbooks that lasted for several generations." Conciliatory Melanchthon, "the quiet reformer," whose doctrinal development went through many stages, who kept the Protestant Reformation going on an ecumenical track after the death of his great mentors.[86]

But such a comparison was never made by Carey. Obviously, it could not have been made in 1810, nor could it have been essayed for at least another ten years. We will consequently refrain from pursuing the matter any further, even though various "Lutheran" creations by veterans in the early sixteenth

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[85] Eustace Carey's memoir of his uncle (1837) was narrowly conceived; in no way was it missiologically analytical. All the major biographies of Carey and his cohorts (by George Smith, 1885, and S. Pearce Carey, 1923) have depended substantially on JCM's historiographical foundation. To move beyond that, one needs to delve deeply into the archival treasure trove of the BMS and associated collections.

[86] Manschreck, *Melanchthon,* 13-19, 29, 33, 346f. Melanchthon is interpreted by Manschreck as a blend between the Renaissance and the Reformation, two historical movements that have never been reconciled in Protestantism. He was an enigmatic figure who "did not fit into either one of the main streams of Protestant culture" (15) [*The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church,* F. L. Cross, ed. (2nd ed.; London: Oxford University Press, 1974), 898]. According to Hildebrandt, Melanchthon was the only humanist with whom Luther came to terms. On "the intricate problem of the friendship between Luther and Melanchthon" and the concessions that Melanchthon made to "elements outside the 'inner circle' of the evangelical faith," cf. Hildebrandt, *Melanchthon: Alien or Ally?,* xii and *passim*; also, cf. n.8 above. I am indebted to the specialist on Melanchthon, Dr. Timothy Wengert, church historian at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, for brining Manschreck's book to my attention and for encouraging me to consider Melanchthon's timeless significance further. Of course, JCM was no systematic theologian, but he does seem to have been characterized by a psycho-socio-cultural disposition and posture that finds parallels in Melanchthon.

and nineteenth centuries could not have been advanced without the help of a prodigious young partner in each case.

It must suffice here to note that there is some warrant for conceiving Erasmus and Luther *redivivus* in Serampore. But at this stage of the inquiry one runs the risk of drifting into speculation if one claims that broader parallel patterns may be discerned in the operations of religious reformation in pre-Victorian Bengal and sixteenth century Central Europe.

So we take leave of Erasmian Carey, Bengal's literary pioneer and Bible translator. The simple and subtle, the humble and honored pioneer, who contrasted so much with mercurial Marshman senior, Serampore's "loose cannon."[87] Anglo-Indian Carey, who contended for the faith in Asia in a low-profile manner; who left it to someone with a "Lutheran" psyche, like Marshman, to engage in heavy-duty public relations in a hostile environment[88]. But we remember that the father of that celebrated coastal mission was only *one* of three or four fine veterans: who relied on William Ward to maintain the vital psychological middle-ground in his team; who relied on Hannah as mother of the mission community, and on John as son, to keep the mission from collapse. *Sine quibus non.*

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[87] Marshman wrote to Fuller in 17 December 1808, quoting from Ward's journal "a note respecting me" which might have been quite injurious, viz., that "he [Marshman] is sometimes seized with a frenzy and then a falling bubble is a falling world, and next day it is all over." However, Marshman ostensibly took it in his stride, avowing "there is no man on earth whom I love better than Bro. W. — We have never clashed for an hour." For more of Ward's penetrating analysis of Marshman's personal style, see Ward to Fuller, 7 October 1805, p. 4.

[88] In contrast to his pace-setting mission promotion in Britain in the 1790s, Carey left it to Marshman and Ward, in Bengal from the 1800s onwards, to develop mission strategy for "taking all Asia for Christ." Cf. n.44 above. J. Hudson Taylor (CIM) was much more of an international mission strategist and public statesman than Carey ever was.