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Memories

Crowd

Upon Me

T. C. HAMMOND,
M.A., Th.D.

Irish Church Missions, 11 Buckingham St., London, W.C.2.

IRISH CHURCH MISSIONS

CENTENARY YEAR: 1849-1949.

Canon T. C. Hammond, Principal of Moore College, Sydney, has been closely associated with the Irish Church Missions for over half a century. Before accepting a call to Australia in 1936, he was General Superintendent of the Society.

In March, 1949, the I.C.M. completes 100 years of work. During the Centenary Year T. C. Hammond's presence in Britain and Ireland has been of tremendous help and encouragement.

The following address was given at the 99th Anniversary Meetings in London on 25th May, 1948, when Rt. Rev. J. R. S. Taylor, (Bishop of Sodor and Man), presided. It is now published in connection with the I.C.M. Centenary Celebrations. Price 6d., by post 7d.

Information relating to the Society's work will gladly be sent on request.

"Memories Crowd Upon Me . . ."

REV. CANON T. C. HAMMOND, M.A., Th.D.

"THE BOY HAMMOND"

I WAS led to volunteer for work in the I.C.M. as a lay worker through the street preaching in Cork in the year 1895. If you happened to be at a railway station—no matter what—on a Saturday evening you would see batches of policemen, with their rifles, disembarking from the train; and you would hear the commands, "By the right; quick march". And if you asked any passer-by, "What are these policemen coming into Cork for?", you would be told, "They are coming for the preaching". Simple-minded English people would say—and English people are very simple-minded (Irish people say they wonder what is behind it!)—the simple-minded Englishman would say: 'It is very interesting that the Government should be taking such a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of the population as to pay the fares of these policemen to carry them up to the street preaching in Cork.' You are not told that the street preaching was a very riotous undertaking. You required to be young; and you required to be very active if you were going to carry on street preaching in Cork in those days. I earned notoriety under the name of "The Boy Hammond". I was one of the youngest of the group. On one occasion in the street preaching a section of the mob seized me by the shoulders, and the police, seeing that I was in danger, rushed forward, and dragged me by the legs, and I found myself suspended between earth and heaven. Then the police drew their batons, and whacked at the knuckles of the men who were holding me by the shoulders, and brought me back to safety. In Sydney a lady, one of the mid-Victorians—they are more Victorian there than they are here—said to me: "Now, Mr. Hammond, what were your thoughts when you were in that terrible position?" I said, "If you really want to know I will tell you; but you will be astonished." "I would really like to know" she said. "Well, my thoughts were—I wonder whether the buttons will hold!"

TRAINING IN CONTROVERSY.

After many experiences like that, too numerous to mention, I volunteered for the work in the Mission, and, in due course, I was admitted into the class-room; and we had there a fine training. I want to bear grateful testimony to my instructor, the Rev. Tom Anderson, who enlightened us concerning the intricacies of algebra and arithmetic, and interesting subjects of that kind; and Mr. Dormer who instructed us in the controversy with the Roman Church. He was himself trained by the then Superintendent of the Irish Church Missions, Dr. Macarthy. He played a very great rôle; he always spoke of him as "the Doctor". His instruction in the Roman controversy was very thorough.

ON THE GLASGOW BOAT.

I was going for a holiday on the boat to Glasgow. My wife had relatives in Glasgow, and she was in Glasgow at the time. She was not my wife then; so you can understand why I was so anxious to go! I was walking the deck of the ship, and a Roman Catholic priest came up to me, and said: "You are going to Scotland." "Well," I said, "as I am on a Glasgow boat, unless something terrible happens, I suppose I shall arrive there all right." He said: "You know they are nearly all Protestants in Scotland." "They are nearly all Presbyterians", I replied. "Protestantism is only a negation", this Roman Catholic priest went on to say. (He did not know that I was receiving instruction in the class-room of the I.C.M. or he would have been more cautious.) "I am not so sure about that", I said. (Just a few minutes before I had been in the smoke-room, and there I had seen half a dozen Scotsmen smoking and talking together.) "Anything you have as Protestants", the priest said, "you have got from us. Because Martin Luther wanted to marry a nun; and because Henry VIII wanted to divorce his wife, they both compiled a Bible." I had never heard that before. My knowledge of history revealed that Henry had other interests besides writing Scripture! I said to him: "Now we will come to the point. I will undertake to prove to you that the Roman Catholic sacrament of penance is an invention of the devil." "Well," he said, "I never heard the like of that before." I said, "There is no use our having a discussion on this between ourselves; it is getting a bit chilly; and I suggest that we go into the smoking-room; I will make my case, and you can make yours, and we will put it to the jury there. (I knew the jury were all strong Presbyterians!)

Into the smoking room we went; and I said to those who were there, "Gentlemen, I have been having a little conversation with this reverend gentleman on the deck, and I have undertaken to prove to your satisfaction that the Roman Catholic sacrament of penance is an invention of the devil." "Fire away," they said.

"Now is it not true that in a Sacrament you require three things—matter, form, and Divine institution?" I asked. The priest opened his eyes; he did not expect a youngster in his teens to be talking like that. "Yes, yes, that is true", he replied. "It is the Divine institution that matters; but we will leave that on one side for the moment. Now with regard to the matter and form. Does not the Catechism of the Council of Trent say that the matter of this sacrament are the sins of the penitent, and we assume that the sins of the penitent are consumed by virtue of this sacrament?" "Yes, yes," agreed the priest. "That is the devil's part" I said. "He provides the matter—the sins. And the doctrine of Purgatory provides the form." Of course, here my jury gave a verdict unhesitatingly in my favour! The priest got very angry, and left the room in a hurry. That shows the careful instruction that we received. I have been for a long time a student of theology, longer than I like to think sometimes, and I must say here that the demand for accuracy, that you should be able to give day and date for the information you are conveying, was always insisted upon by the Irish Church Missions in those early days, and it proved a most invaluable help to me. If I may say so in the presence of the Bishop, one of our difficulties at the present time is that we are provided, even by Commissions, with very slovenly information. No student of the Irish Church Missions would have been guilty of some of the blunders that occur in the Report on Canon Law, especially with reference to the *Forged Decretals*. Irish Church Missions workers would put their fingers on that at once. The moment I read that part of the Report I put my finger on it at once. I hope their Lordships will put their fingers on it also, and send it to the place where it deserves to go.

THE DOUAY SCRIPTURES.

After I had finished my course—I cannot say "with joy"!—there were two branches of work open to me—the teaching work, and the Mission work—Tom Anderson had said that I would never make a teacher! I was rather anxious to get into the visiting work, and I persuaded my good mentor to let me do this, seeing that I was no good as a teacher. It came out that an idea had struck John Haig of the London Committee. He

had been in India; and he had an idea that we should go through the fairs and markets selling the Douay Testament.

That Douay Testament has an interesting history. In 1815 an enterprising fellow countryman of mine decided that he would publish the whole of the Douay Bible with full notes. There was a great splash about it, and it appeared in fortnightly parts. But, like many other Cork men, he went bankrupt; and he went bankrupt at a rather interesting point, for it was when the fortnightly parts were dealing with the Epistle to the Romans. That was just where the scheme broke down. He had employed a Presbyterian named Cummins to publish the Douay Bible in these fortnightly parts; and he found himself in an awkward position in regard to a large number of portions of Scripture. And this man decided that if he was to recompense himself for his loss, the only thing he could do would be to continue the publication.

But, of course, there was this difficulty, that he was a Protestant. And it was a rule of the Church of Rome that for such a work a man must have the licence of the Pope. That it still the case, and very few know it. Mr. Cummins was in this difficulty; but he said he would be glad to continue the publication of the Douay Bible in fortnightly parts provided that the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin was induced to give his imprimatur. He gave his imprimatur. But Mr. Cummins thought he would go farther afield; and he sent the Bible to England, and it came back to us from England. At that time the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act was greatly in the air. Daniel O'Connor got hold of the Bible, and denounced the notes. At that time, too, there was a Bible Society established, and its members said it was a great pity that our Roman Catholic brethren in Ireland were hindered from reading the Scriptures because of the question of authorization, and Protestant translations. They moved that there should be a translation of the Douay Testament issued *without notes*, and they approached the R.C. Archbishop of Dublin, about the matter, and he gave his imprimatur. As far as I know, it is the only Douay Testament *without any notes* that has ever been published in Ireland, or, indeed, in England. Some time later someone told a man named Scott, who was running a work for fallen women, a very excellent work—that the plates were for sale; and he purchased them for a mere song; and set up a printing-press. Very soon the Societies working in Ireland heard of these Testaments, and they pressed Mr. Scott for copies, until his printing-press was unable to stand the strain; and at length he handed it over to

the Hibernian Bible Society, and which continues to print the Testaments. The original plates were burned in the Rising of 1916.

WORK IN FAIRS AND MARKETS.

John Haig had this idea of distributing the Douay Testaments by visiting the fairs and markets. It was a most interesting work, and we had some most startling experiences. We used the bag in which we carried the Testaments as a table, and we set out our stores. My comrade was Mr. Savage, who is still working in the Mission. He should have retired long ago, but his work is still so valuable. He had a beautiful voice, and he used to sing in a very sweet tenor, and in that way we would gather the crowd, and we would offer them the Testaments. I would read a portion out of the Book, and the people would come up afterwards, and look through it, and some would buy it. One old gentleman came up, and he was very doubtful. He said, "I do not think it is genuine". I showed him the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin's imprimatur. But I could not get him to buy the book, when at last a bright idea struck me. There was a little note in the front of the Bible that said: "This Book has been printed from the stereotyped plates of the original edition". I said, "I need not explain to an audience of your intelligence what "stereotyped" means. That is the guarantee of the genuineness of the Book". He at once bought it, and I hope he read it!

A TALE OF COOKSTOWN.

Let me tell you a very interesting story of those early days. I was selling Testaments in Cookstown; and it was then a strong Presbyterian village; there were three Presbyterian Churches, one Church of Ireland, and one Roman Catholic Church; and it was a very fine centre for us because having so many strong Presbyterians around, we were always sure of protection if a Roman Catholic offered any violence. So it was an advantage to us for that reason.

All around the hills there were Roman Catholics living, and we sometimes sold as many as forty Testaments to them. One day an old woman came up to me, and she said: "Is there anything about holy water in that Book of yours?" "There is, madam," I replied. "I will show it to you."—I want to illustrate the fact that the Mission workers were alert.—"Here it is," and I read to her the story of the soldier who pierced the side of our Saviour, from whence flowed out blood and water. I said: "That is the only holy water mentioned; and it is the

only holy water that ever did anyone any good." She said, "It is a good Book anyway, and I will buy it."

Almost to the day the following year I was in that place again, and the old lady came up to me, and said, "You don't remember me". I said: "Well, I see so many people that it would be difficult for me to remember everyone". She said: "Do you remember me asking you if there was anything about holy water in your book?" I said, "Of course I do. How are you getting on with the book?" "It's a grand book," she said, "Me and me ol' man (that is an affectionate way of describing her husband), we read a chapter of that book every night before we go to bed. I have not said a word, you know,—for the priests are very learned men—(she did not know them!)—and it is not for me, or the likes of me, to say a word agin them. All I know is that I am trusting in the blood and water that flowed from the side of the Son of God." I am sure that in her simple faith, she accepted everything that was given to her, but I am also sure that through the entrance of God's Word she had light. Don't despise work of that kind.

MR. DONNOVAN'S TESTIMONY.

Years ago an attempt was made to prevent the Hibernian Bible Society continuing to print the Douay Testament; and the Society, and we who were interested in the colportage work, were asked to meet the committee and discuss the matter with the head of the Irish Colportage Mission which is associated with the I.C.M. I was there; my friend, Dr. Fred Gibson, the head of the Presbyterian Mission, was there; Mr. Donovan, head of the Wesleyan Mission, was there; and also the leader of the Denominational Colportage Society was present. We gave our views. But the thing that impressed the Committee, and decided the verdict that the Society should continue to publish the Douay Testament was the statement made by Mr. Donovan. He said: "Gentlemen, I was an Irish farm lad in County Cork. I went into the fair where some men were selling Testaments. I turned the Testament over. If it had ben a Protestant Testament I would have let it fall out of my hand; but I saw on it the imprimatur of the R.C. Archbishop of Dublin. I saw the encyclical letter of the Pope recommending the faithful to study the Scriptures; and I bought it; and through it, the Holy Spirit spoke to my soul. Would you ask me to withhold from my Roman Catholic brethren a Book that brought peace and blessing to my heart?"

All over the world there are those who learn the message of God's Gospel through the Douay Testament. I know it says

"Do penance". Monsignor Ronald Knox in his recent translation renders it "Repent". They say the Church of Rome never changes. But although it says "Do penance" there is enough of God's blessed truth in that translation to bring light, and blessing, and peace to seeking souls.

I never cease to thank God for the opportunities I have had of selling the Word in fairs and markets. I remember on one occasion we had a tremendous riot. I had sold every Testament. One man had gone to the priest's house, and he alleged that the priest had said that the book was not genuine. I began to talk to the crowd, and they were rather interested in hearing what they regarded as a new spate of oratory; and they kept quiet for a little. Then I had an idea that someone was going to throw something from behind, and so I ducked. We dived for the hotel, followed by the mob; and we could hear the police whistles. And yet the New Testaments that we sold then were found by colporteurs in that district two years afterwards; and the people who had bought them produced these Testaments, so that the incident, unpleasant as it was at the time, was not altogether sheer loss.

ZEALOUS WORKERS.

I remember we had enthusiastic workers who did not altogether understand the Irish temper. Sometimes they learned, sometimes they did not. One enthusiastic young man addressing an open-air meeting in Ireland, said: "I have come here at the risk of my life to preach the Gospel to the poor Irish!" On one occasion we were having a meeting, and an old man came along. He had a three days' growth of beard, and appeared to be out of his element. One enthusiastic worker,—she really was a good soul, one of the salt of the earth,—made a bee-line for this man, and said to him, "Are you saved?" "No, madam" said he. "Come in here," said she, and she led him into a bicycle shed. "Get down on your knees" said she. He went down very gently, looking rather alarmed. "Pray," said she. "What am I to say?" "Call upon the Lord." "I do not know what to say." "If you cannot pray, then say this after me," said she: "Lord I am a sinner, a grievous sinner. Every commandment I have broken over and over again." The old man grabbed his cap, and slowly rose from his knees. "Excuse me," said he, "but this is no place for me!" You must not think that that worker was not used of God. That dear old soul lived in a room at the top of a house in order that she might win souls for Christ. I remember, when she died, going to that tenement house, and I saw the people who lived there. This

is what they said about her: "Well, she was queer, but if ever there was a saint of God on earth she was the one." I think I would pardon anyone telling me that I was queer, if I could persuade him that I was a saint of God on earth.

PRESENT NEEDS.

The Irish Church Missions has had its ups and downs. I understand from my brethren—and I like to think of them still as my brethren—that at present they are confronted with very great difficulties. They want more staff; and they want more funds. It is no longer possible to maintain the work at the same standard of salaries that were available in my time. It is no longer possible to do the work in exactly the same way. But there are still openings for the spread of the Gospel; it is still possible to instruct Roman Catholics; it is still possible to deal with the controversial problems that are thrust upon us when we enter on this work. It is still possible to take individuals, and by patient, earnest, and continuous labour to sow in their hearts and minds the seed of eternal life. It is possible, and it has been done.

This will be the last opportunity, as far as I see in the providence of God, that I shall have the privilege of addressing an annual meeting of the Irish Church Missions. You have done me the honour of making me a Vice-President, and I was impertinent enough to suggest that being far away in Australia, I should be perfectly harmless. But I believe you did it because you valued the work that God enabled me to do in the years gone by. I would plead with you who are its supporters that you will make every effort to establish the Irish Church Missions on so firm a footing that the light that was kindled nearly a hundred years ago may never be put out. I feel that what we should do is to make every effort to provide such resources as to secure, *at least*, that the doors of the Mission Church in Townsend Street should *never be closed*; that there will always be a minister of the Gospel, an ordained priest of the Church of Ireland, to witness there to our Roman Catholic friends; and, having made that consolidation as a sort of *ne plus ultra*, to go from that right on until we secure that there will be a witness throughout the land of earnest, God-fearing men and women who will continue the deputation work, the rescue work, the colportage work, the visiting work, that God may yet, in His great mercy, enable us to reap a harvest such as we have reaped in times gone by.