

Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society

Newsletter 1996-97

This page contains all the articles published in the three volumes of the 1996-97 series. Scroll down to read the article you are interested in.

No 22 1996/7

Editorial	David Shacklock
Guavas the Tinner	David Shacklock
Uncle Tom Cobley	David Paton
Further Printed References	David Shacklock
Last Relic of the Plasterers Craft	
A remarkable Fellow	Trevor Beer
Rev SB-G at Home	Frank Kidson

No 23 1996/7

Editorial	David Shacklock
The year of 97	David Shacklock
SB-G's Folk Song Collection	
Letters to the Editor	
Mersea's Uncharitable Christian Soldier	
Book Reviews	
More References in Print	David Shacklock

No 24 1996/7

Editorial - Passing the Buck	David Shacklock
Roger Luxton - The Song Man	Brian Luxton
Books	
Baring-Gould (le Reverend Sabine)	J. de Premilly
Coming Men - The Rev SB-G	

SBGAS Newsletter, No 22.

Editorial

Saving the Ceiling

The Article on page 7, 'Last Relic of the Plasterer's Craft' (from The Western Morning News 1967), provides the background to Exeter's Royal Albert Memorial Museum project to restore the other half of the 17th century ceiling rescued by SBG at the beginning of this century, and exhibit it in the Museum's Local History Gallery. The pieces have been kept in the basement out of public view for 25 years, and the estimate for cleaning, rebacking, providing casts for missing sections and finally rehangng amounts to £12,000. The illustrations on pages 8 and 9 will give some idea of the eye-catching craftsmanship. Contributions will be welcomed by the Appeal Administrator at the Museum: Queen Street, EXETER, EX4 3RN.

The Local Vicar ?

Is there a 'throwaway' reference to SBG in the introduction of Who Really Killed Cock Robin? by Norman Iles (Hall 1986) on page 12: 'A folk singer told Cecil Sharp who usually collected songs with the help of the local vicar ... ' - i.e. did Cecil Sharp collect songs with his own local vicar, or must this have been SBG? *

SBG in Fiction - a Foretaste

One of our members, Laurie R. King, of California and Oxford, has just written a book, due for publication next year, which features SBG in a Dartmoor setting. The author kindly sent me a copy of her 1994 novel, just published in the UK by Harper Collins under their Collins Crime imprint, entitled The Beekeeper's Apprentice. This is a brilliantly crafted pastiche of Conan Doyle's Sherlock I lohnes, now retired to his bees in Sussex, but caught up in a series of crime adventures with a young female student who becomes his apprentice. As an interested, rather than addicted, follower of Sherlock Holmes, I found the plotting and characterisation thoroughly rewarding and stimulating. The Boston Globe accolades the author as their favourite to succeed P.D. James. At any rate my appetite is thoroughly whetted for 'the new adventures of Baring-Gould'. (Laurie R. King - The Beekeeper's Apprentice - Harper Collins 1986 £15.99.)

David Shacklock

* In fact this would have been Charles Marson, the Vicar of Hambridge in Somerset. It was at Marson's vicarage that Sharp first noted a folk song, 'The Seeds of Love', from Marson's Gardener, John England in August 1903. After that Sharp stayed regularly with Marson to collect songs and Marson co-edited 'Folk Songs from Somerset' with Sharp. However, Sharp, like Baring-Gould, would frequently use clergymen as his key contact in a location he was visiting. MRG

Guavas The Tinner

Appropriately dedicated to his archaeological friend Robert Burnard, SBG's novel of the Dartmoor tin industry in the times of Queen Elizabeth I was published by Methuen with the title page date of 1897. However it was evidently issued in time for the Christmas season of 1896 (the catalogue in my copy is dated Nov.1896).

The author introduces the historical background to the plot -namely the stannary laws of 1288 under King Edward 1, whereby the 13th portion of ore retrieved was due to the Crown. The third offence of theft under this law led to 'crucifixion' by the hand. Rough justice was the order of the day, and Guavas, a Cornishman, found himself the victim of his own success and local prejudice. His faithful wolf friend, and third party claims for his affections, provide the romantic interest.

Typical SBG observations on the social and topographical environment keep the reader enjoyably informed. 'Stream' tin and gold was collected until the supply ran out, and then mining started – but gold belonged to the Crown entirely. During the 13th century Dartmoor production dwindled from two thirds of the total, and by 1600 it was only 5% of the Cornish. However it was not until 1749 that the Annual Tinner's Parliament moved from Crocken Tor to Truro. We learn that the whole of Dartmoor was in Lydford parish under the Tudors; and at the end of chapter VI there is an interesting note on 'soul-cakes' and 'sin-eating' (compare the Levitical scapegoat, and see the following chapter, p.64). Gems of incidental philosophy/theology is found: for instance, in the tinner's comment on his tame wolf: "I cannot break him of what was placed in his nature. Therefore, I am obliged to keep him under restraint".

Altogether a gutsy tale of heart, mind and body.

David Shacklock

Uncle Tom Cobley

Onward Christian Soldiers: A Life of Sabine Baring-Gould. By W.E. Purcell (Longmans, 21s).

BARING-GOULD 1834-1924, my hymn book calls him, and prints

"On the Resurrection morning", "Through the night of doubt and sorrow," "Daily, daily sing the praises." "Hail the sign, the sign of Jesus," "Now the day is over," and "Onward Christian Soldiers." I was also dimly aware that he had written many volumes of the lives of the saints.

I had no idea of the immense range and vitality of his life and writing; and I am grateful to Mr. Purcell for putting it all together for us.

He wrote 130 books, 30 of them novels, and it was for this that he was at one time best known. J.M. Barrie wrote in 1890 "Of our eight or ten living novelists who are popular by merit, few have greater ability than Mr. Baring-Gould." Mr. Purcell hints that most of them were potboilers; but one of them at least, Mehalah, was a work of power. But these novels were but a part of a wider output of popular theology, church history, devotional books,

antiquarianism, and much else. Nor was it only a matter of sitting in a study; in his later years he spent much time with two friends collecting the folk-songs of Devon. One of them was "Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all." (I think Widecombe-in-the-moor might well put up a statue to Baring-Gould inscribed "To the Founder of our Fortunes from the Grateful Inhabitants" - the song alone must be worth many hundreds of pounds a year to them).

And literary output was only part of a life which included the regular work of a country parson, and raising a family of 15, and (once again) much else. It is in the book, and if eccentric vitality interest and amuse you, this is the book for you. It is full besides of other eccentrics - Hawker of Morwenstow for example, founder of the Harvest Festival who kept a pet pig which followed him on his pastoral visits but was left outside if the visited objected and who excommunicated his cat for killing a mouse on Sunday.

There are omissions, of course. I particularly regret that in his discussion of "Onward Christian Soldiers" and its critics, Mr. Purcell did not find space to give wider currency to the parody of verse 3 (which emanated, I think, from an ecumenical conference in the '30's) -

Like a mighty tortoise/Moves the Church of God; Brothers, we are treading/Where we always trod. We are not united/We always disagree

On things of faith and doctrine/While as for charity - !!

But to be more serious, he has resurrected the next verse which makes the transition from the Church to "Crowns and thrones may perish" - a fine eschatological verse that I hope will be restored (slightly amended) in future editions of our hymn books.

Affectionate ?

The "blurb" speaks justly of Mr. Purcell's "humorously affectionate" biography. This suggests (I think also justly) that the book does not quite get to grips with the man. (His own two volumes of Reminiscences were curiously impersonal). I would like to know more about that mill-hand

wife (did the other wives feel she was "not quite our class, dear"?) and what lay behind the element of brutality, and the immature cynicism that Mr. Purcell notes in the novels? And occasionally the writing is almost corny: "How or by what incident this rare creature took Sabine by storm, it is impossible now to say. Perhaps she was the lass by whose side he is said to have walked ... when 'Onward Christian Soldiers' first burst upon the world. Perhaps she was the girl he heard, in her cottage home, bemoaning the fact that she had no new bonnet for the occasion, and whom he told she would look as pretty without one ... Perhaps we cannot really know."

But it would be unfair and ungenerous to carp. What stands out is the exuberant vitality of the man, his readiness to "have a bash" with vigour at anything he wanted to do. As Mr. Betjeman hints in the foreword, no one nowadays would get away with a tenth of what he did; and it would be the local authorities and the Inland Revenue as much as the church dignitaries who so failed to honour him or use his gifts as a popularizer that would stop him. But perhaps we ought to try harder. (B.W. 13.6.57)

David Paton

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Last Relic of the Plasterers' Craft

(An article by Kathleen French in The Western Morning News 1967)

If the planning consultants' report, on Exeter, with its recommendations • for a drama centre and theatre workshops, and one councillor's vision of a new college of art, art gallery and arts centre are fulfilled, Exeter will have a cultural centre which will reflect a golden age of 300 years ago -when men fostered crafts as well as the arts and patronised craftsmen who never dreamed of mass-production.

In North Street, bordering the "golden heart." is a shop which has been empty now for six months, but which began its life as a city mansion. It had a sumptuous drawing-room on the first floor, with an intricate plaster ceiling. Later it became of all things, a brewery, and then an antique shop. Before North Street was widened in 1818 - a plaque records the event - it was possible to shake hands across the street from the uppermost windows.

Later still soon after the turn of the present century, the larger part of the plaster ceiling - which would have had to be sacrificed for further road widening - was cut down and transported by horse-drawn wagon to Lewtrenchard. Here the famous squarson, Sabine Baring- Gould, had it re-erected piece by piece in the Long Gallery, where it remains in all its glory - 300 years old and good for many a decade yet.

This ceiling is an example of the interlacing square and kite-shaped panels formed by single- moulded ribs with floral sprays, strapwork and arabesques, which once abounded in the city, but of which no other example now remains. The destruction of plasterwork in Gandy Street and Bedford Circus was a serious loss; we can ill-afford to lose any more.

Sabine Baring-Gould has been accused of having a "magpie mind." Possibly, though, but for his acquisitiveness, this piece of fine craftsmanship would have perished for ever.

Now this house in North Street lies empty, dusty and forlorn, awaiting the long-delayed redevelopment of the centre of a city where elegant sedan chairs have given way to congested motor traffic. One hopes the plasterwork at least will be preserved, a relic of a craft which will probably never be revived.

A Remarkable Fellow

(Part of an article by Trevor Beer in The Western Morning News)

Many readers will know the hymn Onward Christian Soldiers, a battle hymn almost and one which echoed out of the schools I went to as a boy. It was written by the Rev. Sabine Baring- Gould, a remarkable fellow who wrote scores of books as well as collecting the folk songs of Devon and Cornwall and much else besides. Not only was he a prolific writer but the range and diversity of his work was incredible. From scholarly articles to romantic novels, his output touched people in every walk of life, as indeed it still does.

Born in Devonshire in 1834, he was almost 40 when he inherited the family estate at Lew Trenchard, moving there from East Mersea in 1881 and being installed as the incumbent of the local church. Once settled, the magic of the Westcountry washed over him and he began exploring the archaeology of the area, plus all aspects of folklore. A church minister, he was also a wise man learning from his personal experiences while travelling in Europe. He was fascinated by the myths and legends of the countryside and became a collector of strange and popular lore throughout his life, thus a preserver of our heritage. He looked beyond the everyday and the mundane with perceptive insight into the realms of possibility, a man with an open mind. We could do with a few more of those today.

Via his writings we can explore the interesting world of 'Cornish Characters and Strange Events', and their Devonshire counterparts. Baring-Gould deliberately chose the somewhat lesser- known characters, not the Raleighs and Drakes we can read about elsewhere, so providing us with fascinating glimpses of Westcountry life we may otherwise have missed altogether. I found a copy of his book on Dartmoor in a second-hand bookshop. It is excellent, and typical Baring- Gould, covering many aspects of the moor from topography to fox hunting and luminous mosses and from convicts to inscribed stones. I like that.

Baring-Gould's books are like walking along an old country lane, each step enjoyable and you never know what is around the corner. He is certainly one of our more interesting Westcountry writers.

The Rev. S. Baring-Gould At Home

From the *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, Saturday, September 16, 1911

To ramble over Dartmoor with Baring-Gould - (one gets into the habit of dropping the courtesy title "Mr." before double-barrelled names) - is a great privilege. It is a still greater one to spend a week as a welcome guest at Lew Trenchard, since the early years of the 17th century the ancestral home of the Gould family. For one who has so long recognised the sterling qualities that lie in the vast library which the pen of Mr. Baring-Gould has contributed to English literature during the past fifty years, there are few more gratifying joys than to sit at his hospitable board and to watch the twinkling humour that lights up his face, and that of Mrs. Baring-Gould in response to the badinage that passes round the table.

With a Yorkshire visitor it is, of course, a foregone conclusion that the young people of the family should air the modicum of dialect of that county which they possess, while Mrs. Baring-Gould - a Yorkshire lady - and the visitor smile indulgently at the effort and recall to each other half-forgotten words and modes of expression. And these young people are living replicas of the 18th century portraits that line the old oak panelled dining-room, and stair cases of Lew Trenchard. The young lady on my right, however, stoutly denies her similitude to Godfrey Kneller's portrait (painted in 1711) of her ancestor, the Hon. Joseph Sabine, Field Marshal, Governor of Ghent, and later Governor of Gibraltar. He died in 1739. We slyly hint that she repudiates, and with justice on her part, the double chin with which the painter has endowed her ancestor.

It is pleasant to have cosy evening chats with the novelist and antiquary, who combines with his literary position the offices of Lord of the Manor, Rector, Chairman of the Bench of Magistrates, and Squire of large tracts of wood and meadow land, besides being kindly advisor and helper to all who seek his counsel. By the old chimney of grey Devonshire granite, in a halo of tobacco smoke, we interchange ideas of literature, politics, of current incidents, and I hear many romantic stories of the doings of the Goulds, the Sabines, and the Barings. Of himself and of his writings it is more difficult to make him talk, for his modesty is as great as his talents.

"How many books have you written?"

"Haven't an idea. I really must make a list. I will do it the next time I am in the British Museum. I cannot trust my memory."

I urge him to do so, and mentally estimate his output at about two hundred volumes. His memory, however, is one of his greatest points, and as he is conversant with the literature of Germany, France, and some other countries which he reads in the original, his writings on historical and antiquarian matters have a value and breadth that nothing else can give.

Then an expedition is planned to explore the Dartmoor prehistoric remains, and he asks me if I am game to arise at seven in the morning. And so Dartmoor is reached by aid of motor, and friendly lift is given, when roads are non-motorable, by the Vicar of a Dartmoor parish, who, equally a lover of the wild moorland, accompanies us, and after a long tramp, and an examination of many curious remains, hospitably entertains us at the vicarage. In this long

scramble over rock, bent and bracken, Mr. Baring-Gould, in spite of his seventy-odd years, outwalks his companions, twenty and thirty years his juniors, even planning a further extension of the walk to the summit of a high and formidable "Tor." "Nobody is ever ill on Dartmoor," announces the vicar with enthusiasm, and our taste of Dartmoor air makes us quite believe the assertion.

In the quiet chats at Lew Trenchard, Mr. Baring-Gould tells me a great deal of much interest regarding himself and his forbears, that may be fitly reproduced here, and as he tells it we go round the house and examine the family portraits, about the originals of which hangs each a story.

John Gold, or Gould, the Crusader, is the first-recorded of the family, and his monument and effigy, cross-legged is in Seaborough Church, Seaborough, being a Somerset parish, where the family have been settled from the 13th century. Then much complicated family history of inter-marriage, and how lands and manors pass from one branch of this family to another, all within easy range of Dartmoor. Then the family chronicles reach the purchase by Henry Gould of Lew Trenchard, about 1626, ever since which period the old manor house has been inhabited by a Gould. There is a portrait of a handsome young lady (early 18th century), and of the same, as a married lady, of a little later date, that depict a notable character who supplies the family ghost. Margaret Gould, a domineering old lady died in 1795, and her restless high-heeled shoes have tapped along the corridors within very recent years. At a coming of age ball of one of Mr. Baring-Gould's daughters she was visible, seated in the drawing room under her own portrait, to many visitors inquired "who the lady in black, with white lace, is?" My host tells me many tales of her vagaries, and as a boy had known one of the villagers who remembered her. Her son, commonly known as the "Scamp," had led a wild, reckless life (about 1760) and parted with many goodly acres of the Gould estate.

Her daughter had in 1767 married Charles Baring, brother to Sir Francis Baring, and the son of this union taking over the estate at the old lady's death in 1795 had, by royal warrant, assumed the name "Baring-Gould"; this gentleman was the novelist's grandfather, William Gould. He married Diana Amelia Sabine, a descendant of Joseph Sabine, the Field-Marshal whose portrait by Godfrey Kneller, with that of his wife and daughter are prominent among the family pictures in the Lew Trenchard dining-room. This couple had two sons, one of whom, Edward, born 1804, was the father of the subject of this article. The other son was presented to the living of Lew Trenchard, holding the same until his death, when he was succeeded by his nephew Sabine Baring-Gould, the subject of this article.

Edward Baring-Gould served on the staff of the Madras Light Cavalry, but upon the dislocation of his thigh by an accident, left India and married Sophia Charlotte, the daughter of Admiral Bond. By this marriage Sabine Baring-Gould came into the world. In the ball-room at Lew Trenchard, there is a portrait of the gentle mother and little Sabine, a fair-haired boy with an intellectual face, and this same golden-haired little boy lives again both in looks and name "Sabine Baring-Gould" in the person of the novelist's grandson, now about nine years of age.

Sabine Baring-Gould was born in Dix's Field, Exeter, on January 28, 1834. His father had a restless spirit and abhorred the dull life of a country squire at Lew Trenchard. Therefore

with his wife and family he spent most of his time on the continent, residing at Pau, in the South

of France, and at different towns in Germany. His son Sabine was put to school at Manheim. As a boy Sabine developed an antiquarian taste which does not appear to have belonged to either his father or grandfather. In 1850, while at Pau, he discovered the mosaic pavement of a Roman Villa, and drew the attention of the municipal authorities to it. Some excavation and clearing was made, but the guardians were lax, and the pavement disappeared bit by bit. As a youth he explored Dartmoor, and saved many a prehistoric relic and standing stone from vandal usage. His grandfather, imbued with the modern spirit, cleared away much of the fine old oak that, in shape of screen and bench ends, adorned the old church. It was Sabine who rescued these from the wood closet and who, when he came into possession, restored them to their places. In due course he went to Cambridge, to Clare College; and after being designed for the Army ultimately took Holy Orders.

In 1861 he made an expedition to Iceland, with the result that he published his "Iceland: its Scenes and Sagas." This was by no means his first book. "The Path of the Just" was issued in 1857. His connection with Yorkshire began in 1864, when he became curate to the Rev. John Sharp, vicar of Horbury. With that heart and soul so characteristic of the man he entered into church work with astonishing vigour. He established a mission room in a cottage house in the poorer district of Horbury, and finally built a Mission Hall without leaving a penny debt upon it.

From 1865 to the present time he found in the lady who became his wife a helper, and a help-meet of whom any man might be proud. Miss Grace Taylor, a native of Horbury, was associated with his mission work at Horbury and they were married in 1868. As wife, mother, and hostess she has won affection from his family, and the highest esteem of all who have come in contact with her. While curate at Horbury he wrote his most famous hymn, "Onward Christian Soldiers," at Whitsuntide, 1865. It was intended for the teachers and school children to sing as they marched from Horbury Brig to the Parish Church on Whit Tuesday. It was done in a great hurry, taken to the local printer, and copies struck off on Monday. It was originally adapted to an air by Haydn. In 1866 he was presented to the living of Dalton-in-Swaledale, and in 1871 to that of East Mersea in Essex. In this dreary place, in the Salt Marshes, he lived for ten years, and here his eldest son was born. So well Mr. Baring-Gould describes the place and its people, that we can realise that the characters in "Mehalah" are by no means overdrawn. Indeed, the novel was written among its scenes of action, and many of the characters in it drawn from living originals. It was Mr. Baring-Gould's first novel, and brought him £50 - with a subsequent payment of £35 - for rights of translation. "John Herring," a book published in 1883, brought double the money.

On the death of his father, in 1872, he inherited the family estate, but did not leave East Mersea till 1881, when he moved, on the death of his uncle, to Lew Trenchard, the living being in his own presentation. It may be mentioned that his literary work does not interfere with his clerical duties, for he takes three services every Sunday, and maintains a curate. Though he is generally known as a novelist, yet his novels are perhaps the least important of his literary work. Such works of fiction as "Court Royal," "In the Roar of the Sea," "Red Spider," and some others rank with the best of the later Victorian novels, but his

antiquarian and historical volumes for profound knowledge and grasp of subject are of the highest quality. "The Lives of the Saints," and its more recent companion, "Celtic Saints," will for ever remain standard. His antiquarian books, such as "Strange Survivals," "Curious Myths of

the Middle Ages," "Yorkshire Oddities," "Old Country Life," and a host of others are written in a charming manner, and with great lucidity of style. He has succeeded - a difficult task - in writing, on what to many might be dry subjects, in a popular and pleasing style, without in any way sacrificing anything of value to the earnest student of the subject he deals with.

"I have given up novel writing," says Mr. Baring-Gould, but he tells me of a work he has just finished, still in manuscript, that should prove of the highest historical value and interest to Yorkshire and other readers. It is, in fact, a history of the battles and engagements fought in Yorkshire by the invading Danes. He has turned up a new source for these facts, the Icelandic Sagas, which, having himself translated, he finds to contain information of the different Danish expeditions, and the Danish heroes who landed on the coast north of the Humber.

Budding writers may ask how is such literary skill obtained. I can merely mention that Mr. Baring-Gould writes much before breakfast, uses a quill pen, and that most of his work was done standing at a high desk. At home he is a busy man, and with many other matters beside literary work. He, however, finds plenty of time to entertain his visitors and callers. I think his chief asset is his ability to do things at once, and the firm grasp he immediately takes of his subject. The French and German languages he acquired as a boy, and his big library of their literature has stood him in good stead.

"I shall always be remembered," said Mr. Baring-Gould "by my folk-song collecting," but how, in 1888, he began the great work of gathering the folk-songs of Devon is so long and so interesting a story that it cannot be put in the few lines now left at my disposal.

How his heart was warmed to the old Devonshire songs and their singers only those who have heard him talk on the subject can tell. If any man had sympathy with the old country labourer whose songs and traditions he has so lovingly preserved, surely Baring-Gould is the one. There is a touching tenderness when he speaks of the old singers, and tells of such a one, perhaps now dead, from whom he had obtained a particular song.

The old folk-songs of Devon have for him great sacredness, and it is pleasant to listen to his stories of his long rambles in search of them and of nights spent in lonely inns where he had gathered round the board those old men in whose memories they linger.

Frank Kidson

SBGAS Newsletter, No 23.

Editorial

Jubilee Year. I have not come across much evidence so far that Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was observed in print by SBG, but it was the pinnacle of a great decade, as was her Golden Jubilee of the 1880s. She had come through some hard times to get there. The 1990s have been fairly 'horribles' for our own Queen: may she have more to celebrate by 2002.

Meanwhile our Society has a lot going on which may give rise to some modest celebration at our 10th anniversary in 1999. There is an upsurge of literary output, reported on under 'membership notes'. Research is continuing. Plans are being made for a possible SBG Museum - so look out for anything that may be being disposed of by others, and let a member of the committee know about it.

Surprises are in the air. Recently a bookfair colleague offered me two three-decker titles and a two-decker - with the possibility of more goodies to come; and on a short-break holiday in Essex I came across a copy of *The Antiquary* (vol.32, 1896) containing a long extract from a paper given by SBG as President of the Devonshire Association delivered on July 28th at Ashburton, and entitled *The Prehistoric Ethnology and Archaeology of Devon, especially of Dartmoor* - fairly impressive stuff.

David Shacklock

Year of 97

This was another productive year for SBG publications, with five volumes (if we exclude Guavas The Tinner - see Newsletter 22) and 14 articles, in 12 different journals and magazines. Both lists cover an amazing variety of subject matter and treatment.

A Study of St. Paul - his character and opinions - might more accurately have been subtitled, 'his character and my opinions', some of which are startlingly heterodox; but the book is a pleasure to read, typographically speaking, with good spacing and clear lettering, and the style, for a serious subject, thoroughly readable.

Bladys of the Stewponey is set in Shropshire in the late 18th century, and as the author explains in his preface, combines the environmentally fascinating cave systems near Kinver on the Worcestershire border with a plot from a German novel he had read 20 years earlier. The Stewponey is the name of the inn situated near the bridge over the Stour and Bladys is the widowed innkeeper's daughter. The book contains a five page appendix 'Burning for Petty Treason' and illustrations by F.H. Townsend (better known for his superb illustrations for several Kipling titles) and B. Munns. The frontispiece is reproduced on the cover of the Methuen paperback version in their series, The Novelist (No.103) - undated.

Perpetua: a story of Nimes in AD 213 was first published by Isbister in 12 parts in The Sunday Magazine vol.26, but copyrighted by the Churchman Company in the USA, then in volume form, grey/blue cloth and unillustrated. It is a fictionalised account of virgin martyrdoms in the early church. The title and author are singled out for the bound annual.

SBG was commissioned by Methuen to undertake The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, following the success of The Tragedy of the Caesars, but decided to limit his endeavours, as with St. Paul, to a study of his character and opinions, with the help of some newly accessible papers concerning Napoleon's early life. The result nevertheless is a fairly magnificent tome of 55 chapters on glossy paper, profusely illustrated (the listing takes up nine pages), two substantial appendices, and 51/2 page index.

Learmont Drysdale's operatic version of Red Spider may be getting an airing at the Society's Gathering later this year, but copies are very scarce, so there may be a 1997 adaptation on view.

Good Words vol.38 contains articles on 'Sideboards' and 'The Early Christian House at Rome', both illustrated by A. Twidle, with SBG's second daughter Margaret (Daisy) also providing illustrations for the latter. Chambers Journal vol.14 contains his two-column article on 'Tallies' - a fascinating and scholarly description of a domestic accounting system.

The remaining items still challenge my own hunting, and so I can do no more than list them: the Report of the Transactions of the Devonshire Association No.29 includes the 4th Report of the Dartmoor Exploration Committee (co-authored by Robert Burnard and others); the Journal of the Royal Institute of Cornwall No.13 has 'The

Ethnology of Cornwall'; Lady's Realm vol.2 and 3 have 'Can of Whortles' and 'Stephen Delves'; The Magazine of Art - 'Compton Wynyates'; Temple vol.2 - 'A Christmas Tree'; English Illustrated Magazine vol.18 has 'Colonel Halifax's Ghost Story' (reprinted in A Book

of Ghosts 1904, and now available in the Ash-Tree Press reissue); 'Dartmoor', in Travel vol.1; and the theme of the year, St. Paul, is dealt with in three further articles: 'Synagogue and St. Paul' (New Century Review vol.1), 'St Paul's Mind and Method' (Expositor 5th series vol.6), and 'St.Paul and Justification' (Anglican vol.1).

David Shacklock

Sabine Baring-Gould's Folksong Collection AD 1892

From the collections of the Devon Libraries Service

The Rev. Sabine Baring Gould (1834-1924) was squire and parson of the west Devon parish of Lewtrenchard for over forty years. He is today best remembered for giving us the words to the hymn, Onward Christian Soldiers. Less well-known are his efforts to collect and publish traditional Westcountry folksongs.

Baring Gould started collecting folksongs as a result of a conversation over the dinner table. He was concerned that the oral folksong tradition, by which words and tunes had been passed on by memory for generations, was dying away. Thus he spent hours listening to local singers, such as James Parsons, 'the Singing Machine' and transcribing their words.

These efforts led to the publication, just over one hundred years ago, of his large collection of folksongs under the title, Songs and Ballads of the West. But the published version is only part of the story. Fortunately he also presented his detailed working manuscripts to the Plymouth Public Free Library. These manuscripts come in two main parts; first there are some fourteen volumes of rough drafts of words and music which were made in the field. Secondly, Baring Gould prepared a hand-written volume (dated 1892) containing fair copies of 202 folksongs.

Widcombe Fair appears as Song No.16 in Baring Gould's fair copy manuscript. He sets down the words as sung to him by W.F. Collier of Horrabridge in July 1888, and also gives several variants of the tune collected from singers at Horrabridge, Kingsbridge, Merrivale Bridge, Two Bridges, and from Miss F.J. Adams 'as sung by her mother in 1822'. This indicates that he was hearing different versions of the song; indeed his rough field notes name Tavistock, and not Widcombe, as the site of the fair this song has now made world-famous!

Reading:

Sabine Baring Gould and H. Fleetwood Sheppard 1895 Songs and Ballads of the West.
W.E. Purcell 1957 On ward Christian Soldier- a Life of Sabine Baring-Gould, Parson,
Squire, Novelist, Antiquary etc. 1834-1924.

Letters To The Editor

Dear David,

Your 'throwaway vicar' (see Issue 22, Editorial) is not, in fact, SBG but another interesting ecclesiastical folk enthusiast, the Reverend Charles Latimer Marson, erstwhile vicar of Hambridge in Somerset. Marson met Cecil Sharp when they were both living in Adelaide and their friendship continued once they were both back in the UK, for a period of about 17 years. It was while staying with Marson at Hambridge in September 1903 that Sharp heard his first folk song, 'The Seeds of Love' sung by Marson's gardener, John England, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Marson and Sharp collaborated at first on the collection of songs in Somerset but with Marson, as with Baring-Gould, the friendship ended in acrimony. While Marson's name appears on the first three volumes of 'Folk-Songs from Somerset' it is absent from the remaining two volumes. Marson died in 1914 and Sharp did, at least, attend the funeral.

Marson was a successful writer, though not in the same league as SBG. It is not clear whether the two ever actually met through their mutual friend Sharp, though they must have known of each other. Marson has not been well served by time though, luckily, his papers and manuscripts are preserved in Oxford. Hugh Anderson, an Australian researcher that I met this summer, is writing a book about Marson and the man Hugh describes sounds a fascinating character.

Best wishes, Martin Graebe

Dear David,

Please find the attached reference to SBG's 'Cheap Jack Zita'. I found it in a book which I recently purchased entitled, 'Ouse's Silent Tide' by Rev. C.F. Farrar, originally published in 1921, my copy is the 1969 reprint. A 'gaulcher' was a clay digger.

I hope you find it of interest. Regards,
Raymond Scott

"Every Fenman knows of John Griggs, said to have been the last of the Fen pedlars, 1840 to 1902. He was the original of Baring Gould's 'Cheap Jack Zita,' a very graphic picture of Fen life. Originally a Fen 'gaulcher,' he took to peddling early in life and tramped the Fen roads and drowes and banks with his pack and later, obtaining a horse and van, covered the ground between Lynn and Lincoln. He amassed considerable wealth and died in retirement at Middleton in 1902."

Mersea's Uncharitable Christian Soldier.

Your article on the Rev. S. Baring-Gould reminds me it must be at least 25 years since I first read 'Further Reminiscences.' At that time I knew little or nothing of East Mersea and the reverend had been dead just a few years. Long association with the island since almost compels anyone to comment on a book which to say the least is unkind to Mersea people, and is almost on a par with the celebrated treatise of Charles Dickens concerning the Great White Horse hotel at Ipswich.

Baring-Gould was at East Mersea from 1871 to 1881. He deals with about 12 months of this period, and dismisses the whole episode in about a dozen pages. It would appear he came to Essex on sufferance; having become cramped at Dalton, "it was a veritable relief to my perplexity," he says on being appointed here. Then comes the remark quoted by Mr. Waterhouse, followed by "I cannot say I liked the place or became attached to the people." This is not to be wondered at. It was up to him to get to know them better; it was difficult for them to approach him, for he was dashing all over the Continent, presumably on full pay.

"At a former period," he says, "wild fowl shooting was largely carried on by the islanders - they lay for hours in grey shallow boats and contracted ague and rheumatism." This apparently had been going on for generations and had lowered the mental and physical development of the islanders. It is important to remember here, he is talking about Mersea and not Tristan Da Cunha. It also proves the theory that children on the island who fail the eleven-plus, and suffer from rheumatism, at one time had ancestors who went duck-shooting.

Individuals Belittled

But that's not all. Onward goes the Christian Soldier to castigate and belittle individuals as well as the whole population. He mentions that at the eastern end of the island "were the remains of a Parliamentary camp" reputed to be haunted. A Mrs. Baker used to see this ghost, says the parson, "but only in her cups on her way back from the Dog and Pheasant." Having commented on the islanders' lack of education he now proceeds to use Mrs. Baker as the character in a novel, at the same time borrowing a Mersea name in the process. A case of having your cake and eating it.

His opposite number at West Mersea he just about tolerates. "Our nearest neighbour was Mr. Musselwhite, vicar of West Mersea, a kindly man, but not possessed of many interests or of much information." Mr. Cant, the strong Dissenter, must have been a match for him, but everybody else was dull and spent all their time eating and drinking.

Dialect "Vulgar"

There is more of the same sort. He finds fault with the gentry, the church organist, and the Essex dialect, which he says is "markedly vulgar." He even has a moan about the elements.

The ever-present wind that blew across the estuary was something that had to be endured. It was always there, piping away like a tin flute (it still does) and when visitors came, and the fire was lighted "I was wont to prepare my guests for it by telling them not to be uneasy if the souls of drowned sailors who had found a watery grave in the northern

waters were to be heard sobbing all night long because they couldn't get to the fire to warm themselves." The guests used to thank him for the information but were very emphatic in asking him not to elaborate on it too much. It would seem he had begun to come under the influence of Mrs. Baker.

The people living in Mersea nowadays are the descendants of those Baring-Gould couldn't get along with - and as far as I'm concerned they're all right. They in their turn have done a very practical thing in perpetuating the name of their parson. Opposite the rectory gates stands a row of council houses, "The Baring-Gould Cottages." It is possible these might still be standing long after "Onward Christian Soldiers" is forgotten - though I doubt it.

R. Hemstedt, 8 St. Albans Road, Colchester.

(Source and date unknown - does anyone have a copy of the article referred to in line 1 ? - Ed.)

Book Reviews

A Book of Ghosts. The Ash-Tree Press is to be congratulated on this excellently produced reprint, which includes the original David Murray Smith illustrations, two stories not in the 1904 editions, and a superb 12 page introduction by Richard Dalby with two full page plates (the cover of Purcell's biography, and the portrait heads from the Strand Magazine 1893), as well as a frontispiece portrait of SBG as an old man, and a specially commissioned cover illustration by Douglas Walters. It is a limited edition of 400 copies, published last November and well worth the retail price of £23.50.

The Report of the Transactions of the Devonshire Association (No.128, Dec.1996) includes a 25 page article by Dr. S.D.Trezise of Colyton entitled Local Colour in the Devon Novels and Short Stories of Sabine Baring-Gould. This is a brilliant, balanced and fascinating piece of scholarship, and a thoroughly readable addition to any SBG collection, or any literary person's files. It deserves to be made widely available in a more shelveable format!

Curious Myths of the Middle Ages has enjoyed more modern reprinting than any other SBG title. Here is a review of the latest edition, from the *Western Morning News*:

"This is an irresistible book that will turn you into a Baring-Gould fan if you are not one already. Here we have myths and legends from a time when people gave credence to bizarre and unlikely things.

There are the classic swan myths, the Sangreal, the man in the moon tales and many other nature legends and country beliefs that, no matter how you view them, belong as much in today's world as in the past and from which we surely have much to learn.

The stories, chosen for their intrinsic merit and worth to the modern reader, are brought up to date by John Matthews who is well known for his life-long study of traditional tales.

Baring-Gould's comments, left untouched, present the tales in a new light, and this fine book includes 12 stories from his 1869 collection, *Curious Myths*. An essay with each story gives the historical or mythological origins, and confirms Baring-Gould as a preserver of our heritage."

More References In Print

A Book of Exmoor - F.J. Snell - Methuen 1903 (published as companion volume to A Book of Devon/The West/Brittany) - 2nd ed.Apr.1923 - p.134 quote re. ponies at Bampton Fair.

Literary Rambles in the West of England - Arthur L. Salmon - C&W 1906 - p.46 story of couple deceived by practical joke; p.82 re. name Blampy; p.177 re.Hawker; p.192 re.Celtic saints; p.227 re. Forrabury & SBG's story 'The Pet' in The Vicar of Morwenstow.

Village Profiles - Chris Smith - Quay Books 1990 - p.146 re. Widecombe.

A Remembered Land - ed.Sean Street - Joseph 1994 - p.38f exc. from In a Quiet Village.

Folk Tales of All Nations - ed. F.H. Lee - Harrap Feb.1931 (rpt.Jan.1939) - p.vi SBG's classification.

English County Songs - coll/ed Lucy E. Broadwood & J.A. Fuller Maitland - Leadenhall Press 1893 - iii-vi ref. Songs of the West, composers & help with identification acknowledged.

Glory, Laud & Honour - Peter Harvey - Triangle/SPCK 1996 - p.97f on 'Onward Christian Soldiers' & 'Through the Night ... '

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Exeter Past - Hazel Harvey - Phillimore 1996 - p.60, 61 birth & baptism.

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St. Michael of the Rock Brentor, Devon - Charles K. Burton & Gerald L. Matthews 1955 (rev/rpt 1969) - p.4 qu. Margery of Quether, p.8 relates 3 incidents from A Book of Dartmoor.

Ghosts in Devon - J.R.W. Coxhead - Town & Country Press 1972 -(p.5) ref. Early Reminiscences, p.40-44 re. 'Old Madam'; p.46f Devon Curiosities p.592; p.84 bibliog.

English Fairy Tales - ed. Joseph Jacobs - BH 1975 (1st 1968) - p.289 -329 passim: notes ref.

Henderson's Folk-lore of the Northern Counties (1866) p.314-343; also refs. English Fairy Tales and Curious Myths.

English Folk-song & Dance - Frank Kidson & Mary Neal - CUP 1915 - p.43f 3 paras; p.63 ref.(anon) Songs of the West, p.68 ref.(anon)

A Garland of Country Songs; p.90f, 175 bibliog.

Folklore & Customs of Rural England - Margaret Baker - D&C 1974 (rpt.1975) - p.193 n.11,

17 (ch.5); p.195 n.7 (ch.7); p.197 bibl.

The Life & Letters of R.S. Hawker Vicar of Morwenstow - C.E. Byles - Lane/BH 1905 - refs.p.viii-xi re.controversy over SBG's biography of Hawker; other refs. p.6, 15, 17, 38, 42, 51, 80, 116, 183, 544, 599, 603f; & see Mrs. Hawker's letter in Athenaeum 8 Apr.1876; Christopher Harris in John Bull; William Maskell in Athenaeum 25 Mar & 17 June 1876.

The Romance of the Rhine - Charles Marriott - Methuen 1911 - refs. p.6, 31, 65, 68, 76f, 81, 84, 93f, 97, 122, 131, 166f.

Guide to Art Reference Books - Mary Chamberlain - Amer.Lib. Assoc. Chicago 1959 - no.343 p.56 Lives of the Saints.

SBGAS Newsletter, No 24.

Editorial - Passing the Buck

This issue will complete my eighth year as Editor and so, as arranged at the Society's committee meeting last November, my successor Keith Lister now takes on the task. He brings to it many skills, interests and contacts that will give the role a freshness and reinvigoration that it now needs - not to mention an authentic address! He takes over at a time when there are a lot of interesting things happening on the SBG scene - not least the publication of his own book.

A new editor must have 'editorial freedom', and we look forward to a new format, with different styles of feature and presentation within the covers.

In signing off, may I say what a privilege it has been to have been involved at the heart of SBGAS since its inception, and I would particularly like to thank our President and 'head of the clan' Merriol Almond, and other members of the family on both sides of the Pond for their warmth and

commitment to an association started by an interloper! While we are hardly in the same league as literary societies associated with the likes of Dickens and Wordsworth etc, nevertheless I feel sure we have scope for both expansion and sustainable interest over the next decade and beyond.

As Editor I have been most grateful for all the contributions that have come in over the years - please keep it coming for Keith, and why not welcome him to the task with a flurry of items, including any usable illustrative material. His address, in case you have mislaid your members' list, is: Charnwood, 13 Grove Road, Horbury, WAKEFIELD, West Yorkshire, WF4 6AG. Tel. 01924 276 697; e-mail K.Lister @ geo2.poptel.org.uk. It would, I am sure, help him for his first issue, due out in October, if you would get contributions to him by the beginning of September.

Finally, may I in your name thank Wendy Cleough for her cheerful and efficient work in producing such an immaculate typescript time after time. Any deficiencies in the issues you have received have been mine in the photocopying and assembly.

David Shacklock

Roger Luxton (1813 -1892) The 'Song-Man'

From "The Devon Family Historian" February 1997, by kind permission of the author, Brian C. Luxton

The genealogist often experiences difficulty in ferreting out colourful "particulars about the lives he researches and he has to content himself with bare facts. Once in a while he strikes lucky and can enrich his portrait with a more graphic account. For me one such character was Roger Luxton, the songman who in his old age lived at picturesque Croft Farm, Halwell, North Devon.

The usual details established from parish registers and census returns hinted only at the banality of Roger's life as an agricultural labourer in 19th century Devon. It was only when Norah Luxton in Newton Abbot sent me a reference to him contained in the Burnet Morris Index at Exeter that I began to find him interesting. The reference read "Roger Luxton c 1814, Croft Farm, Halwell "Song-man" (Baring-Gould "Old Country Life" Ed. 1890 Page 225)". Intrigued to learn more I asked Norah to consult Baring-Gould's book for an account. At Christmas 1995 Norah kindly forwarded a copy of S. Baring-Gould's interview with the song- man a hundred years ago.

Baring-Gould in his Old Country Life (published by Methuen 1895) page 275 presents a fascinating pen portrait of the Song-man who, he tells us, was once very famous for the ballads he sang at shearing haysel and harvest feasts. Roger, it seems, was a disgruntled old man when the clergyman met him but he gave an interesting explanation of why his ballads were out of fashion. The account, which is reported in the quaint Devon dialect used by the song-man provides a more authentic flavour to the story. Baring-Gould writes:- "At Halwell in north Devon, lives a fine old man named Roger Luxton, aged 76, a great-grandfather with bright eyes and an intelligent face. He stays about his grandchildren but

is usually found at the picturesque farmhouse of a daughter at Halwell called Croft. This old man was once very famous as a song-man but his memory fails him as to a good number of the ballads he was wont to sing. "Ah, your honour", said he, "in old times us used to be welcome in every farmhouse at all shearing and haysel and harvest feasts; but bless'y! now the farmers do `ten all learn the pianny and zing nort but twittery sort of pieces that have nother music nor sense in them and they don't care to hear us and any decent sort of music. And there be now no more shearing and haysel and harvest feasts. All them things be given up. `Tain't the same world as used to be 'tain't so cheerful. Folks don't zing over their work and laugh after it. There be no dances for the youngsters as there used to was. The farmers be too grand to care to talk to us old chaps and for certain don't care to hear us zing.

Why for nigh on forty years us old zinging fellows have been drove to the public houses to zing, and to a different quality of hearers too. And now I reckon the labouring folk be so tree-mendious edicated that they don't care to hear our old songs nother. 'Tis all "Pop goes the weasel" and "Eleven on the Rhine" now. I reckon folks now have got different ears from what they used to have and different hearts too. More's the pity." Norah Luxton consulted

two further books, "Songs of the West" by S. Baring-Gould and Fleetwood Sheppard (Methuen 1895) and "Songs of the West", new revised edition by S. Baring-Gould and F.W. Bussell (Methuen n.d.). These books contain four melodies and songs provided by Roger Luxton but Baring-Gould confesses to altering the words which he considered too bawdy.

"Plymouth Sound". Melody to a song of this name taken down from Roger Luxton. Baring-Gould thought the "original words not only very poor but somewhat coarse and undesirable" so he wrote new words.

"Furze Bloom". Melody taken down from Roger Luxton of Halwell to the words of the ballad "Gosport Beach". Baring-Gould considered the original words "could not possibly be inserted here" so wrote new words and seemingly a new title.

"The Blue Flame". Roger Luxton and others sang it. Baring-Gould believed "the words are objectionable" so wrote new ones. "This blue flame" is interesting. It was a common belief in the West of England that a soul after death appears as a blue flame; also that a blue flame comes from the churchyard to the house of the one doomed to die and hovers on the doorstep till the death-doomed expires, when the soul of the deceased is seen returning with the other flame, also as a flame, to the churchyard.

"Constant Johnny". The words and melody taken down from Roger Luxton of Halwell. It was in duet form, such lovers' duets being common in folk song. It seems to be based on a ballad written circa 1680.

"Charming Molly I do love thee / There's none other I adore Pierced by your beauteous eyes / My heart transfixed lies Say dearest Molly you'll be mine for evermore."

In the next verse she rejects him but then in the final verse they unite.

As a genealogist and historian of the Luxtons I can identify the song-man and add details concerning his life. Roger is a rare Christian name in the family but I knew that it was used in a branch living at Bratton Clovelly. I consulted a tree I had compiled and soon identified the songman as an agricultural labourer who, in the mid 19th century, lived at Broxcombe. Bratton Clovelly, about four miles distant from Croft Farm Halwell, where Baring-Gould met him.

Roger Kerslake Luxton, the sixth of nine children born to James Luxton and his wife Agnes Kerslake, was baptised at Bratton Clovelly on the 16 April 1813. Roger's ancestry can be traced back to his three times great grandparents, John Luxton and Wilmott Hatherley, who married at Iddesleigh, Devon on the 12 February 1688. His father, James Luxton baptised at Highampton, Devon on the 16 June 1774, was settled at Northlew where he married Agnes Kerslake on the 20 May 1798. Four of their children were baptised at Northlew before the family moved to Bratton Clovelly where Roger was born. Roger married Susanna Northcott at Bratton Clovelly on the 26 April 1833 and the young couple both signed the marriage register with their mark. In 1841 Roger, an agricultural labourer, lived in the parish with his growing family at Broxcombe and the couple had ten children born at Bratton Clovelly beginning with John on the 9 September 1833 followed by Ann 1835, Grace 1837, Henry C. 1838, Dinah 1840, twins Joanna and Agnes 1843, Susan 1847 and ending with twins Ellen and Betsey in 1853. Roger and his family were still residing at Broxcombe in 1861.

Susan Luxton, Broxcombe, was buried at Bratton Clovelly on the 1 February 1879, aged 66 years, but this entry in the burial register conflicts with her monumental inscription in the churchyard which records "Susanna, wife of Roger Luxton of this parish died January 27, 1880 aged 66 years." In the 1881 census, Roger a 66 year old widower, caretaker and agricultural labourer was living in the nearby village of Germansweek. When interviewed by Baring-Gould about 1889, Roger, aged 76, was living with a married daughter at Croft Farm, Halwell about four miles from Broxcombe.

Roger Luxton, described as a farmer aged 77, died from "pneumonia 17 days and old age" at Croft Farm, Halwell on the 23 January 1892. J. Box, his grandson, was in attendance when he died.

Brian C. Luxton

Books - The World Of Victorian Hymns

This is the subtitle of Ian Bradley's book *Abide with Me*, published on (51'4 June 2nd by SCM Press (hardback £30, paperback £14).

It is a thorough survey by a lecturer in the Department of Theology and Church History in the University of Aberdeen of Victorian hymnody in its cultural setting and in its impact on church, literature and society, then and since. Well printed and interestingly written, with fifty of its 300 pages providing appendices, indices, notes and bibliography, it has numerous references to SBG, and takes a supportive view of his most famous hymn, which has so often been disdained or bowdlerised in recent years.

Clare College 1326-1926, published by CUP in two magnificent volumes, including many colour plates, 1927,1930, contains a mini biography and references of SBG, and a b/w photograph not seen elsewhere, on p.255-263 of vol.I. Of special interest is some information about his first work of fiction *The Chorister*, and also his rendering of the Basque carol 'Hasten to Bethlehem'.

Other printed references are to be found in:

S.P.B.Mais - *We Wander in the West* - Ward Lock 1953 (p.90: Cranmere) *Burrow's Guide to*

Devon and Cornwall (p.138: *The Vicar of Morwenstow*) v STOP PRESS!!

Dr.Harold Kirk-Smith's book *Now the Day is Over* 6 has just been published - see the flyer for full details. Review due in next issue.

Tablette Bibliographique

Baring-Gould (Le Reverend Sabine)

Ecclesiastique et litterateur anglais magistrat de comte, Né en 1834,

Editors note, because this article is in French, it poses greater than usual challenges to the transcriber. I have looked through it for obvious errors but have not carried out a spell check. More importantly, I have not replaced all the accents lost on the process of converting to an electronic text. I hope that anyone who can read it in French will be able to correct it to their own satisfaction in their heads

Les hommes qui se font remarquer par l'importance et l'utilite de leurs travaux en meme temps que par l'elevation de leur caractere doivent etre signales, et, c'est a ce double titre que leur carriere doit etre retracee et proposee comme un exemple pour ceux qui veulent bien faire.

Le Rev. Sabine BARING-GOULD est ne a Exeter, Devon, le 28 janvier 1834 et appartient a une très ancienne famille etablie depuis plusieurs siecles dans le comte de Devon ou elle possedait de grands biens. Les Gould habitent depuis quatre siecles a Steverton et ont acquis, en 1620, le manoir de Lew Trenchard qui est toujours demeure leur propriete. L'heritiere du manoir epousa l'arriere grand-pere de M. Baring-Gould, M. Charles Baring, frere de sir Francis Baring, aTeul du comte de Northbrooke et des lords Ashburton et Revelstoke.

Le grand-pere de M. Baring-Gould, M. William Baring Gould, ajouta a son nom celui de Gould, nom de sa mere, en vertu d'une licence royale et herita ainsi des terres et des biens appartenant aux Gould. Il avait epouse la sceur du general sir Edward Sabine, president de la Societe Royale de Londres, K. C. B., descendant d'une vieille famille seigneuriale de la Bretagne.

Le fils aine de M. William Baring-Gould et son heritier, Edward Baring-Gould, epousa la fille de l'amiral Bond. M. Baring-Gould qui fait ('objet de cette notice est le fils aine de ce dernier aux bien de qui il succeda, en 1872.

Apt-es avoir fait ses etudes au college Clare, Cambridge, 06 il obtint, en 1856, le grade de maitre-es-arts, it fut d'abord nomme, en 1869, au benefice de Dalton, comte de York, par la vicomtesse de Down, puffs, en 1871, au rectorat de East-Mersea, Colchester, par la Couronne. En 1881, il prit la cure de Lew Trenchard dont il est patron, c'est-a-dire ayant, a ce titre, le droit de nomination a cette cure.

M. Baring-Gould a passé une grande partie de sa jeunesse dans le midi de la France et en Allemagne et a beaucoup voyage dans ces deux pays.

Il s'est livre, a cette occasion, a des etudes et a des recherches archeologiques tres interessantes. Il a decouvert et exhume, en 1849, un palais romain d'une tres grande etendue, pros de Pau (Hautes-Pyrenees), avec une grande surface de pave en mosalque. Il a

fait aussi des fouilles dans beaucoup de tombeaux situés dans les terres au nord de Pau. En 1850, il a dressé le plan et pris les proportions d'un ancien camp basque près de Bayonne, et pris le plan de beaucoup de dolmens et autres monuments préhistoriques en France.

Il a fait également, en 1861, un voyage scientifique en Islande.

On doit à M. Baring-Gould de nombreux ouvrages dans lesquels il a abordé, avec un égal talent, des sujets divers. Nous en rappellerons seulement les titres:

Les Sentiers du juste (Paths of the Just) 1860; Voyages en Islande (Travels in Iceland) 1862; Mythes du moyen-âge (Myths of the Middle Ages) 1868; Les prêcheurs qui ont suivi le moyen-âge (Post-Medieval preachers) 1865; Le trésor d'argent (The Silver store) poème 1868; Le livre des loups-garous (The book of Werewolves) 1865; L'origine et le développement de la croyance religieuse (The origin and development of Religious Belief) 1869-1870; Curiosités du vieux temps (Curiosities of Olden

Times) 1869; Vies des saints (Lives of the Saints) 14 volumes 1871-1877; In Exitu Israelis 1871, roman; Légendes de l'Ancien Testament (Legends of

the Old Testament) 1871; Les évangiles perdus et hostiles (The Lost and Hostile Gospels) 1874; Fantaisies du comté d'York (Yorkshire Oddities) 1872; Le Vicaire de Morwenstowe (The Vicar of Morwenstowe) 1877; L'Allemagne, son passé, son présent (Germany, past and present) 1878; Esquisses de sermons pour les prédicateurs (Sermons Sketches for Preachers) 1871; Conférences au village sur le Symbole (Village conferences on the Creed) 1873; La porte d'or (The Golden Gate) 1870-1871; Sermons du village pour une année (Village Preaching for a year) 1878-1881; La Chaire de Village (The Village Pulpit) 1881; Sermons du village pour une année (Village Preaching for a year) 20 série 1884; Le sac des prêcheurs (The Preacher's Pocket) 1880; Les mystères de la souffrance (The Mystery of Suffering) 1877; Les Sept dernières paroles (The

Seven Last Words) 1884; La passion de Jésus (The Passion of Jesus) 1885; La naissance de Jésus (The Birth of Jesus) 1886; Sermons pour les enfants (Sermons for Children) 1879; Notre église paroissiale (Our Parish Church) 1885;

Les romans suivants ont été publiés sous l'anonymat:

A travers le flot et la flamme (Through Flood and Flame) 1867; Mehalah, 1879; John Herring, 1883; Cour royale (Court Royal) 1885-1886.

D'autres sont en voie de publication, et entre les mains des éditeurs.

Les Gavroches, récit de la côte de la Corniche (The Gaverocks, a tale of the Cornish Coast); L'araignée rouge (Red Spider); Zitta. Ce dernier ouvrage, d'après une traduction autorisée par l'auteur, a déjà paru dans l'Indépendance Belge, sous le titre de Etelka.

M. Baring-Gould a été, en outre, rédacteur en chef du journal La Sacristie (The Sacristy), magazine d'art et de littérature religieuse.

M. Baring-Gould est magistrat pour le Comté de Devon et seigneur du manoir de Lew Trenchard.

Il a épouse en 1868 Mu' Grace TAYLOR et a un fils aîné, Edouard Sabine et plusieurs autres enfants. Il habite l'ancien château seigneurial de Lew Trenchard, dans une des plus belles

parties de l'Angleterre.

Ses armes sont:

Écartelées au 1er et au 4e, par sautoir or et azur; un lion rampant contrechange, pour Gould;

Au 2e et au 3e, azur une face or, en chef une tête d'ours coupée, pourpre, muselée avec un anneau, or.

Cimiers: 1er un demi lion rampant azur bezaute, Gould;

2e Un mulet argent entre deux ailes déployées, argent, Baring. Devise: Toujours sans tache. Paris, septembre 1885.

J. DE PREMILLY.

Coming Men - The Rev. S. Baring-Gould

(Part of an article from The London Figaro, January 1st, 1887)

There are many able preachers among the clergy, but there are few who possess the gifts which have secured for Mr. Baring-Gould a unique reputation in the literary world. Not that he has exposed himself to the charge of minimising the importance of his sacred duties. His parochial work has not been neglected. He did not mistake his vocation. There is no reason why a clergyman who has leisure and literary tastes should not make the most of them. Mr. Baring-Gould graduated B.A. at Clare College, Cambridge, in 1850, and M.A. in 1856. But he did not take holy orders until 1864, when he was ordained by the Bishop of Ripon, and appointed to the curacy of Horbury, near Wakefield. In 1867 he accepted the incumbency of Dalton, Yorkshire, and later was offered by the Crown the rectory of East Mersea, in the diocese of Rochester. In 1881 he became rector of Lew Trenchard, North Devonshire. This is the somewhat uneventful record of his clerical career.

But if he is not exactly known as a popular preacher, those who have heard him do not require to be assured that his pulpit discourses are far above the average in quality, and are characterised by intense earnestness of manner. Mr. Baring-Gould has published a large number of theological works which attest his erudition, and several volumes of sermons. It has, however, been one of his objects to explain the great truths of the Christian faith to children, and in this direction he has been as successful as in confirming the belief of persons of riper years. The children of Lew Trenchard are highly favoured. Mr. Baring-Gould is, no doubt, an advanced High Churchman, and it is open to anybody to differ from him in matters of doctrine. But no one who reads the addresses which, after being delivered, were published last year by Messrs. Skeffington, under the title of "The Parish Church," can complain that he is not able to show cause for his convictions or lacks the power to enforce them in plain and vigorous language. It has often been said that it is harder to preach to children than to grown-up people.

Mr. Baring-Gould can command the undivided attention of a congregation in the West-end of London, but he reserves some of his happiest thoughts for the consideration of the youthful sons and daughters of his humble parishioners. And yet it is not altogether to be regretted that he has not been preferred to a position in a populous town. Perhaps he has had the chance, and has declined to avail himself of it. But it cannot be denied that with the cares of a large parish he would have found it impossible to pursue his literary studies so freely. Literature has accordingly gained by his banishment from, say, London society, in which he would have been warmly welcomed.

The versatility of Mr. Baring-Gould is remarkable. Especially versed in mediaeval and antiquarian lore, his works of that character include "Post-mediaeval Preachers", published in 1865; "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages", one series in 1865, and the other in 1868; "Book of Were Wolves", 1865; "Appendix on Household Tales to Folk-lore of Northern Counties", 1866; "Curiosities of Olden Time", 1869; and "Legendary Lives of Old Testament Characters", two volumes, 1871. His theological works embrace "The Path of the Just", "The Origin and Development of Religious Belief", "Luther on Justification", two lectures delivered in 1870; "One Hundred Sermon Sketches for Extempore Preachers", "The Mystery of Suffering", "The Passion of Jesus", and "The Seven Last Words". He has also published "Secular versus Religious Education", in 1872; "Lives of the Saints", seven volumes in 1873; "The Power of the Press", and the "Life of the Vicar of Morwenstowe" - Mr. Hawker.

These do not by any means exhaust the list; there are two other departments in which Mr. Baring-Gould has used his pen with good effect. He not only preaches excellent sermons to children; he writes admirable stories for them. Little readers of that charming collection of contributions, "Just One More Tale", will endorse any tribute which may be paid to the author of "The Queen of Dentists" and "Wow-Wow". Mr. Baring-Gould does not aim over the heads of small folks. He seems to understand exactly what they want and what is best for them, and it may safely be affirmed that he has never failed to afford amusement.

But it is in quite another sphere of literary activity that, as some think, he has achieved the most signal success. The author of "John Herring" is a distinguished novelist. There are persons who hold that all fiction is objectionable, and that anyone who writes a novel is not qualified to teach religion. Happily, they are a diminishing, if not a vanishing, minority. The overwhelming majority of the community feel that fiction, so long as it is pure, is not merely harmless, but beneficial. Bad novels are not less objectionable than bad plays; but a good novel, with a skilful plot, sparkling dialogue, and a reasonable amount of love-making, is a thing to be thankful for, not a thing to moan over as evidence of the depravity of the age.

There is nothing ignoble about the mission of the novelist, who seeks to afford healthy relaxation to the weary minds of the multitude. Life would scarcely be worth living to thousands of poor souls doomed to spend their days in the Sleepy Hollows of England if it were not for the pleasure of reading the books from circulating libraries. Those who concede that novels are essential will assent to the view that the loftier they are in tone the better, and that it is an incalculable advantage when an author is also an individual who wears the white flower of a blameless life. Mr. Baring-Gould has not produced a page of fiction which is unworthy of him in his clerical capacity. He has not been foolish enough to introduce religion in his novels, but they are all saturated with the same spirit. In the pulpit

and his theological works Mr. Baring-Gould expounds Christianity in detail; in his novels he expounds

it in a general way, holding up to reprobation and scorn the wrong-doer and the hypocrite, surrounding with a halo of glory the upright and the honourable.

This is not the place to enter into a criticism of "Mehalah", or "John Herring", "Court Royal" or "Jacquitta". The last has only just commenced, but the early chapters are full of promise, and "The Gaverocks", which opens auspiciously in Cornhill this month, will excite much interest. Of the three others, "John Herring" has been most cordially appreciated, but "Mehalah" is, in some respects, the most fascinating. Mr. Baring-Gould has plenty of imagination, but he always turns facts and local knowledge to his account. The local colouring of "Mehalah" is, of course, one of its features, and it is quite within the range of probability that the pale counterparts of Glory and Rebow lived among the Essex marshes while Mr. Baring-Gould was rector of East Mersea. The original of John Herring may also exist in the West of England, and perhaps that extraordinary girl Johanna, the heroine of "Court Royal", was not entirely evolved out of the author's inner consciousness.

Mr. Baring-Gould's novels are not free from defects, but they are so bracing, so original, so interesting, so destitute of cant, and so wholesome that every fresh work of fiction from his pen is sure of a hearty welcome. Nevertheless, it does not follow that he has produced his best book. That will be published when he has become a dean and can devote the greater portion of his time to the yet more assiduous cultivation of those talents which have enabled him, according to his views, to be loyal to the Church and to make a name in the world.