

konkrete applikationer af hans generelle og principielle ekklesiologiske, ekklesiopolitiske, antropologiske og kulturfilosofiske indsigter og påstande på specifikke og individuelle fortidige begivenheder, personer og tilstande.« - »Kristne fortidsmennesker eller fortidsmenigheder som vælgende og handlende under deres tiders og deres steds vilkår og begrænsning interesserer ham ikke, eller ikke så meget, at han har fundet det nødvendigt at lade det komme til udtryk i sin kirkehistorieskrivning.« (Sst.).

Men »Kirke-Speil« er jo ikke universitetsforelæsninger. Det lykkedes Grundtvigs modstandere at holde ham ude fra universitetet. Hvad han havde kunnet yde dér, må man søge i den reviderede udgave af det opsigtvækkende bekendelsesskrift »Kort Begreb af Verdens Krønike« VK 1812, som han udgav i 1817, og som var udarbejdet samtidig med hans store filosofiske artikler i tidsskriftet »Danne-Virke«. Dér vil man netop finde, hvad professor Balling søger. Men det, der skræmte samtidens historikere i Grundtvigs historiografi, var det udtalt kristne synspunkt, han hævdede. Hvis han havde begrænset sig til at skrive *kirkehistorie* dengang, ville hans stilling i åndslivet have været en anden. Nu var han trods sin pionérvirksomhed som historiker - udforskningen af den angelsaksiske historie og litteratur - udelukket fra en videnskabelig anerkendelse som historiker og i stedet gjort uskadelig som biskop.

Kirkehistorien var for Grundtvig ligesom kristendommen overhovedet et grundelement i verdens historie, og det er denne bestemmelse af *kirkehistoriens genstand*, som berettiger de 7 kirkehistorikere fra Århus - incl. professor Balling - til at konstatere en grundtvigsk tradition ved siden af den erslevske.

Men studiet af denne tradition og dens oprindelse kan ikke være afsluttet med denne fængslende og spændende bog. Der er som antydning flere spørgsmål, der endnu er uafklarede, fx. om det er den unge eller den ældre Grundtvigs historieopfattelse, der er værdifuldest som forbillede, når det gælder kirkehistorien. De to brødre Helveg repræsenterer hver sin side af den grundtvigske tradition. Min konklusion er derfor: de stillede problemer behøver stadig en nærmere undersøgelse.

Grundtvig og Oxforderne.

By A. M. Allchin.

Helge Grell: Grundtvig og Oxforderne. Grundtvigs møde med Oxfordbevægelsen og dens betydning for hans forfatterskab. Center for Grundtvig-studier, Aarhus Universitetsforlag 1995. 132 s. Kr. 178.

Once again Dr. Helge Grell has put all those concerned with Grundtvig's relations with England in his debt with a careful and thoroughly researched account of Grundtvig's last visit to England in 1843 and in particular of his meetings in Oxford with representatives of the Oxford Movement. The subject is one of considerable interest and relevance of the present time when the relations between the Church of

Denmark and the Church of England are under discussion in a very different time and context. Not the least valuable part of Dr. Grell's book is his discussion of two of Grundtvig's writings from 1842, the substantial articles »De ny Anglicaner«, published in *Nordisk Tidsskrift for Christelig Theologie* in that year and his treatise »Kirkelige Oplysninger især for Lutherske Christne«. With a clear and illuminating analysis Dr. Grell shows how closely Grundtvig follows Newman's own line of argumentation in the latter work, pointing to the places where Grundtvig agrees with Newman no less than where he disagrees with him. Reading these pages one can understand all the better Grundtvig's anger and frustration when his second conversation with Newman (in which at last, they seemed to be getting on to basic theological questions) was interrupted by a well meaning young clergyman of Evangelical tendencies and aristocratic family background to whom Grundtvig was somewhat indebted for hospitality and introductions. Mr. Waldegrave came in and Newman took the opportunity of slipping quietly away.

So although Grundtvig met both Pusey and Newman in June 1843, no true meeting of minds took place between them. Newman was already in his heart coming to the conclusion that he must accept the claims of the Roman Catholic Church, Pusey was cast down by illness and the bitter controversies which followed on the University's decision to ban him from preaching for two years, on account of his sermon on The Holy Eucharist. a Comfort to the penitent, (not on Baptism as stated on p. 97, one of the rare inaccuracies in Helge Grell's book). Grundtvig came to Oxford, but it was humanly speaking too late for any really fruitful contact with the leaders of the movement. At one level at least the whole expedition can be regarded as a failure.

And yet, and yet the matter is not so simple as that.

Helge Grell brings out very well the kind of ambivalence in Grundtvig's reactions to this visit and to all the meetings that took place. While he is in England, in his letters to the Queen and to his wife, he seems constantly hopeful and optimistic about his journey. When he returns to Denmark and begins to think over what has happened, he becomes much more critical and pessimistic. Letters written to his friends in the weeks after his return give a very different impression of things from those written earlier. This ambivalence towards the Church of England and the Oxford Movement in particular - one might almost call it a love-hate relationship - is something which needs further exploration. I do not think that we have yet got to the bottom of it. Despite everything Grundtvig was fascinated by Oxford, and those he met, or at least some of them, were fascinated by him.

Naturally one can not help wondering how far people understood him. When Grundtvig refers to the »barbaric« quality of his English, I think he is referring to his accent, which was undoubtedly strong (as was his accent when speaking German). But I do not doubt that in general he was intelligible. At least since the eighteenth Century the English have been attracted and impressed by people who speak their language with a strong foreign accent. It is like hearing a familiar melody played on an unfamiliar instrument. The younger dons whom he met in Oxford were captivated by his great learning and his imaginative and wide-ranging conversation, just as Nugent Wade had been a few years before in Copenhagen. Certainly parts of what he said would have baffled them, above all, when he began to interpret England's history and destiny in terms drawn from Norse Mythology:

but much could have been at least partly familiar and they felt enough kinship into what he was saying to be anxious to hear more and so they invited him back again at a second visit.

Naturally enough Grundtvig was pleased and gratified by their interest and attention. The invitation was accepted. Despite all the difference of language and background he found himself in a basically congenial intellectual milieu. It was a world of thought which was strongly »poetisk-historisk«. However much there might be disagreements on particular points of doctrine there was an underlying similarity of outlook, shared assumptions about the historic, poetic and sacramental nature of Christian faith. Reading the writings of the *British Critic* Grundtvig had become aware of these affinities. It was precisely these aspects of his own position which the Evangelicals he met with did not share, so with them the arguments seem to have been even fiercer.

One particular encounter is illuminating in this regard, the meetings with William Palmer of Magdalen. It is important to know that this meeting took place quite shortly after Palmer had returned from a long visit to Russia, where he had been trying to convince the bishops and theologians of the Church of St. Petersburg of the essential Orthodoxy of the Church of England and the validity of its ministerial orders. If there was a particularly violent clash on the subject of apostolic succession, this was part of what lay behind it. This meeting was perhaps as near as Grundtvig ever got to a direct confrontation with the Russian Orthodox Church. Yet despite of the disagreement both men seem to have felt drawn to the other; »vel en forvovent, aabenhjertig og i Grunden godvillig Karl« is Grundtvig's generous estimate of Palmer while Palmer's last letter to Grundtvig reveals a warmth, not only of admiration, but also of affection for the older man.

Grundtvig found much to criticise in the Church of England, and from 1812 onwards he did not hesitate to voice his criticisms. On the other hand, there are in his writings expressions of admiration for and attraction to the Anglican position, which have been to some extent neglected in Danish discussions of the question. Here is a point where I feel that Dr. Helge Grell himself has, for once, not been altogether balanced in his presentation of the matter. In the draft letter to Pusey of 1838, and in the drafts of letters to Archbishop Howley in 1829, Grundtvig says things about the Church of England which were not, I believe, simply dictated by diplomatic politeness. Similarly in his letter to Queen Caroline Amalie of July the 2nd 1843 he speaks of that church's »dybe Ærbødighed for den Apostoliske Troes-Bekjendelse og den oprindelige Christendom«, and he describes it as »langt mere kirkehistorisk end nogen anden protestantisk Stats-Kirke«. One can only surmise what might have been Grundtvig's reaction if he had had a better knowledge of the poetic and historic heritage of the post-reformation Church of England. One of the sadnesses of the story is that he never met John Keble, in fact he seems not even to have known of his existence. Perhaps in temperament Keble had more in common with Ingemann than Grundtvig, but it is tantalizing to speculate what might have been the result of a meeting between them.

It is part of the value of Helge Grell's study that it raises so many and such interesting questions and open doors to further inquiry. Once again we must express our gratitude to the author for these thoughtful and illuminating pages.